



# WALWORTH COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## FACT SHEET NO.1

September 2007  
Revised August 2009

### Background

In 1999, the Wisconsin Legislature enacted a new law, often referred to as the State's "Smart Growth" law, that provides a new framework for the development, adoption, and implementation of comprehensive plans by counties, cities, villages, and towns. The law, which is set forth in Section 66.1001 of the *Wisconsin Statutes*, requires county and local units of government to have an adopted comprehensive plan by January 1, 2010, in order to be able to continue to administer zoning, subdivision, and official map ordinances. The law further requires that those ordinances be consistent with the comprehensive plan beginning on January 1, 2010. The State law specifies matters which must be addressed in a comprehensive plan, requiring that a plan include the following nine elements: issues and opportunities; land use; agricultural, natural, and cultural resources; housing; transportation; utilities and community facilities; economic development; implementation; and intergovernmental cooperation.

In response to this planning requirement, Walworth County, in cooperation with 13 civil towns in the County, has initiated a planning effort that is intended to result in a multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan that satisfies the State planning requirements. Initially, each of the cities, villages, and towns in Walworth County was invited to participate in the planning process. Ultimately, 13 towns committed to partnering with the County in the multi-jurisdictional plan—including the provision of requisite local funding. The Regional Planning Commission is providing staff support for the planning work under contract with the County and participating towns. The 13 participating towns are:

Town of Darien	Town of LaGrange	Town of Sugar Creek
Town of Delavan	Town of Richmond	Town of Troy
Town of East Troy	Town of Sharon	Town of Walworth
Town of Geneva	Town of Spring Prairie	Town of Whitewater
Town of LaFayette		

The end product of the planning effort will be a long-range plan for the year 2035, which Walworth County and the 13 participating towns would be able to adopt as their comprehensive plan.

### Timeframe for the Planning Work

The first phase of the planning process, the "inventory," or data collection phase, was completed in 2007. This phase involved gathering the information on existing conditions and trends in the County that is required as a basis for developing the comprehensive plan. This work included the conduct of a countywide public opinion survey on a broad range of planning issues.

During 2008 and 2009, work focused on the identification of issues and opportunities; the preparation of long-range projections of population, households, and employment which the plan will seek to accommodate; and the preparation of the various elements of the comprehensive plan itself: land use; agricultural, natural, and cultural resources; housing; transportation; utilities and community facilities; economic development; implementation; and intergovernmental cooperation.

The comprehensive plan is scheduled to be completed in fall 2009. The County Board and each participating town will hold a public hearing prior to adopting the plan.

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## **Smart Growth Technical Advisory Committee**

The comprehensive plan is being prepared under the guidance of the Walworth County Smart Growth Technical Advisory Committee established by the County Board. The membership of the Committee includes one representative appointed by each participating town and five representatives from the Walworth County Board of Supervisors. The Advisory Committee membership, schedule of meetings, and meeting agenda and minutes are posted on the comprehensive plan website.

## **Relationship to Prior Planning Efforts**

Long-range planning is not new in Walworth County. The Walworth County land use, park and open space, and farmland preservation plans address many of the required elements of a comprehensive plan. Many local units of government in the County, including many of the partnering towns, have already adopted local land use or master plans. In addition, areawide plans adopted by the Regional Planning Commission provide an important framework for county and local planning. The multi-jurisdictional planning process is being carried out in a manner that builds upon past planning efforts, expanding upon those as appropriate to meet the requirements of the State planning law.

## **Public Participation**

Public participation is a key component of the comprehensive planning process. A public participation plan has been approved by the Smart Growth Technical Advisory Committee, the County Board, and each of the participating towns, and is also posted on the comprehensive plan website.

Opportunities for public comment are provided at each meeting of the Smart Growth Technical Advisory Committee and at other informational meetings and hearings during the course of the planning process. The comprehensive plan website includes a link that may be used by the public to comment at any time on any aspect of the planning process or the comprehensive plan itself.

Another means to obtain public input in the planning process—a countywide public opinion survey—was conducted in 2007. The survey sought public input on many of the issues that are being addressed in the comprehensive plan. A survey questionnaire was sent to a random sample of resident households throughout Walworth County and non-resident owners of residential property. A report describing the survey findings is posted on the comprehensive plan website.

## **Comprehensive Plan Report**

A draft report documenting the comprehensive plan may be reviewed on the comprehensive plan website. A printed copy of the draft report is also available for review at each public library in Walworth County.

## **Comprehensive Plan Website**

The Walworth County comprehensive plan website can be accessed at:

[www.sewrpc.org/smartgrowth/walworthcounty/](http://www.sewrpc.org/smartgrowth/walworthcounty/)

The website includes links to a wide range of materials pertaining to the comprehensive planning effort: the Smart Growth Advisory Committee roster; meeting schedules, minutes, and agenda; draft report materials; and staff contacts.

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