

# Introduction

## Wisconsin’s Smart Growth Legislation

Wisconsin’s planning legislation, first adopted more than five decades ago, was significantly changed in 1999. On October 27, 1999, Governor Thompson signed 1999 Wisconsin Act 9 into law, and two subsequent amendments were made for technical reasons<sup>1</sup>. In 2004, another amendment reduced the number of local programs or actions with which a comprehensive plan must be consistent. Under the amendment, the actions which must be consistent with a plan are official mapping, local subdivision regulation, and zoning ordinances, including zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands.

<b>Nine Elements of a Comprehensive Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Issues and Opportunities</li> <li>▪ Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources</li> <li>▪ Economic Development</li> <li>▪ Housing</li> <li>▪ Utilities and Community Facilities</li> <li>▪ Transportation</li> <li>▪ Land Use</li> <li>▪ Intergovernmental Cooperation</li> <li>▪ Implementation</li> </ul>
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The new law is often referred to as Wisconsin’s smart growth legislation. This legislation has a number of important provisions as discussed below.

### Local Comprehensive Planning

Local units of government (counties, towns, villages, and cities) are not required to adopt comprehensive plans. However, if a local unit of government wants to regulate land use after January 1, 2010, it must make land use decisions consistent with an adopted plan. Section 66.1001 of the Wisconsin State Statutes requires that a comprehensive plan, at a minimum, address the following nine elements: Issues and Opportunities; Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources; Economic Development; Housing; Utilities and Community Facilities; Transportation; Land Use; Intergovernmental Cooperation; and Implementation. The comprehensive plan is to be

#### Exhibit A-1. Local Comprehensive Planning Goals

1. Promoting redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.
2. Encouraging neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
3. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitat, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
4. Protecting economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
5. Encouraging land use densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental, and utility costs.
6. Preserving cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.
7. Encouraging coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
8. Building community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.
10. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
11. Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional, and local levels.
12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Planning and developing land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
14. Providing an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, and safety that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

<sup>1</sup> Amendments were included in AB 872 in May of 2000 and 2001 Wisconsin Act 16 signed in August 2001.



adopted by the governing body through an ordinance. As such, the plan becomes much more than a reference document.

**Funding**

The legislation created a competitive grant program to help finance the preparation of comprehensive plans.

**State Planning Goals** Although the legislation does not dictate local land use policy, it does include 14 planning goals (Exhibit A-1). State agencies are encouraged to design their programs, policies, infrastructure, and investments to support these local planning goals.

**Purpose of Plan**

This plan was prepared to comply with the state requirements. In the absence of this plan, the City could not legally take actions with regard to zoning, subdivision regulations, or official mapping after January 31, 2010. Exhibit A-2 lists the areas that must comply with a municipality’s adopted comprehensive plan. This plan is intended to provide a long-range perspective of 20 years.

**Exhibit A-2. Governmental Actions that Must be Consistent with a Municipality’s Adopted Comprehensive Plan**

▪ Official maps	▪ Local subdivision regulations
▪ Zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands	▪ Zoning regulations

Source: §66.1001(3), Wis. Stats.

**Adoption Process**

Prior to starting the planning process, the City Council adopted a public participation plan, consistent with state requirements (§66.1001(4)a, Wis. Stats.) to document the manner in which city residents would be involved in the preparation, review, and approval of the plan.

The City Council established a 15-member advisory planning committee and gave it the responsibility to develop the first draft of the plan. Work on this plan began with the first committee meeting on February 27, 2003. In all, the committee met more than 25 times to work on the plan and review various drafts. After the committee finished its work, it submitted a draft plan to the City’s Plan Commission for its consideration.

The Plan Commission reviewed the draft, as prepared by the committee, and made minor changes prior to sending it to the City Council with its recommendation for adoption on November 22, 2004. On \_\_\_\_\_, 2005 the City Council adopted this plan by ordinance, which is included as Appendix A.

Following plan adoption, a copy of the adopted plan was mailed to the surrounding towns, Wisconsin Land Council, and others as required by state law.

**Organization of Plan**

This plan is organized into chapters that, for the most part, follow the elements identified in state law. Goals, objectives, and policies relating to each of the plan



elements are included as a separate chapter. This is done to allow a reader to easily cross-reference goals, objectives, and policies and see how they work together to achieve the plan’s vision.

All of the forecasts as used in this plan are included in Chapter C. Here again, this was done to allow the reader to see how the forecasts relate to one another.

The chapter entitled “General Provisions” includes some of the legal provisions relating to this plan and how it will be used, interpreted, and amended.

### ***Supporting Documents***

In addition to this document, a number of support documents were prepared during the planning process. These include a public participation plan, survey results from the community survey, and a report that summarizes the major activities and decisions relating to the preparation and adoption of the City’s first smart growth plan. Each of these is available from the City’s Planning and Zoning Department.

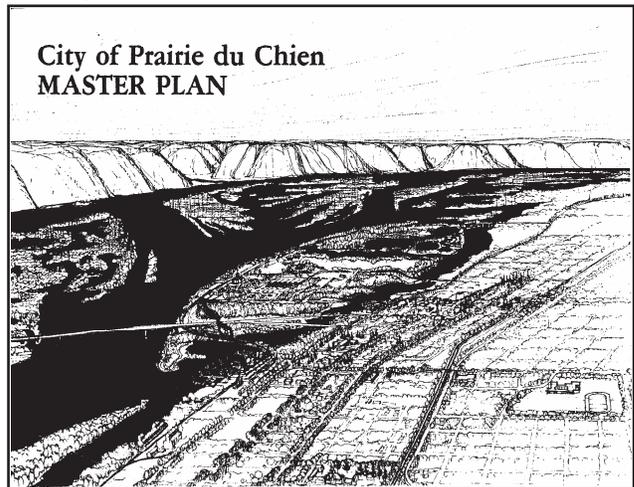
### ***Previous Planning Efforts***

#### ***Local Plans***

The following plans have been prepared specifically for Prairie du Chien:

- ◆ *Prairie du Chien General Plan (1967)*. It is believed that this was the City’s very first plan.
- ◆ *Master Plan (1981)*. The plan was the City’s second comprehensive plan. It is believed that no amendments were made to the plan since adoption.
- ◆ *St. Feriole Island Reuse Plan (1981)*. The plan presents an overall picture of how the island should be developed in the future and is considered part of the City’s overall master plan. It was updated in 1986.
- ◆ *Prairie du Chien Stormwater Master Plan (December 1993)*. The plan presented a general overview of the City in terms of stormwater management. Existing facilities were evaluated and various alternatives were defined to address the identified deficiencies.
- ◆ *Prairie du Chien Recreation Plan (April 1994)*. The plan was prepared to guide future recreational development in the City. The report included many recommendations and a set of goals and objectives. The plan was revised in 1995 and 1998 to reflect new priorities and accomplishments.

**The City’s 1981 Plan**



- ◆ *Storm Water Planning and Preliminary Engineering* (December 1997). The report focused on construction of a north-south interceptor from the existing south detention basin and Welter Industrial Park area to the Godden Pit. In addition, improvements to Godden Pit were considered along with other improvements to the existing storm sewer system.
- ◆ *City of Prairie du Chien Transportation Master Plan* (December 1997). The study looked at existing and proposed transportation facilities within the extraterritorial boundaries of the City. Existing conditions were evaluated and recommendations made for additional transportation facilities.
- ◆ *Prairie du Chien Area Transportation Study* (August 2000). The plan was prepared by Prairie du Chien Area Transportation Study Advisory Committee which consisted of representatives from the towns of Prairie du Chien and Bridgeport, City of Prairie du Chien, Crawford County, the cities of Marquette and McGregor, Iowa. The purpose of the project was to prepare a long-range transportation plan for state and federal highways that travel in and through the Prairie du Chien area.
- ◆ *Downtown Development Master Plan*. (2004). This plan primarily focused on the form and function of the City's downtown. Regional and local opportunities were identified and character sketches were utilized to convey a development theme for the downtown. Nineteen recommendations were detailed in the plan.
- ◆ *Bike Plan* (August 2004). This plan presents a detailed set of goals, objectives, and policies relating to bike use in the City. A future bike plan map identifies the preferred location for new facilities.
- ◆ *Environmental Assessment for the US 18/Marquette Road Corridor Study* (July 2002). This study was the follow-up to the 2000 Transportation Study and looked in detail at the transportation needs and locations for area transportation improvements. The study should be completed by early 2005 with a Finding of No Significant Impact. The City of Prairie du Chien, the towns of Bridgeport and Prairie du Chien, and Crawford County participated in the process.

### ***Statewide and Regional Plans***

A number of statewide policy plans have also been prepared (Exhibit A-4). Each of these were reviewed as part of this planning effort. These will be discussed in more detail in the remainder of the plan.



**Exhibit A-4. Statewide Plans: 1994 to 2002**

<b>Title</b>	<b>State Agency</b>	<b>Year</b>
<i>Translink 21</i>	Department of Transportation	1994
<i>Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan: 2020</i>	Department of Transportation	1998
<i>Midwest Regional Rail System</i>	Department of Transportation	2000
<i>Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020</i>	Department of Transportation	2000
<i>Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020</i>	Department of Transportation	2000
<i>State Recreational Trails Network Plan</i>	Department of Transportation	2001
<i>Wisconsin Pedestrian Plan</i>	Department of Transportation	2001
<i>Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2000-2005</i>	Department of Natural Resources	2000
<i>State Rail Plan</i>	Department of Transportation	Pending
<i>Wisconsin Historic Preservation Plan; January 2001–December 2005</i>	Wisconsin Historical Society	2001
<i>State of Wisconsin Hazard Mitigation Plan</i>	Wisconsin Emergency Management	2001

***Plan Monitoring and Amendment***

From time to time, it will become necessary to amend this plan. The specific details regarding the amendment process are outlined in Chapter L.

***Community Survey***

A written questionnaire was sent to a sample of households in the City during April, 2003, in an effort to collect resident opinions and preferences on a number of important questions relating to the preparation of this plan. Of the 1,285 surveys that were mailed out, 446 were returned for a response rate of 35 percent, which is a good response rate for a single mailing. Results are incorporated throughout the plan where appropriate. All of the results were compiled into a report which is on file at the City’s Planning and Zoning Department.

