
Public Participation Plan for the Town of Burke Comprehensive Planning Process

Introduction

In 2013, the Town of Burke began updating its comprehensive plan to comply with Wisconsin's "Smart Growth" planning law. A key required component of the state's new planning legislation is to actively involve local residents and community stakeholders throughout the comprehensive planning process. Encouraging public participation is a key goal in the Town's planning effort. The Town believes that public participation will help ensure that the resulting comprehensive plan accurately reflects the vision, goals, and values of its residents and business community.

Section 66.1001(4)(a) of Wisconsin Statutes specifically requires the Town's governing body to adopt by resolution written procedures designed to foster public participation—including open discussions, communication programs, information services and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided—at every stage in the preparation of the comprehensive plan. The written procedures must provide for wide distribution of the comprehensive plan, an opportunity for the public to submit written comments on the plan, and provisions for the Town's response to such comments. This document meets this statutory requirement.

Approach

The Town of Burke has agreed on a set of participation activities designed to foster public participation throughout every stage of the comprehensive planning process. These activities are described below. The Town's list of participation events have been selected because they typically return public input with relatively modest public expenditures. By actively involving and engaging the public, the Town will meet both the letter and spirit of Wisconsin's "Smart Growth" legislation and will follow these general approaches:

- The Town will encourage the widest degree of public involvement possible within budget constraints, to produce a plan that truly reflects the ideas, desires, and objectives of most residents and property owners.
- The Town will use the Smart Growth Steering Committee as a foundation for the process, with input from the Town's other committees and staff.
- All meetings are open to the public, and will be noticed as required by state open meeting regulations.
- All public meetings will provide at least some opportunity for public comment. Several of the meetings are particularly meant to encourage wide participation from the public. Other meetings are intended to be work sessions for the Smart Growth Steering Committee.
- The Town will share information and materials for the comprehensive plan update on its Web page throughout the planning process. Press releases will also be provided to local media outlets at key times during the planning process.
- The Town will inform neighboring and overlapping governments to encourage regional cooperation.

Selected Techniques to Involve the Public

1. Smart Growth Steering Committee Meetings: Monthly Smart Growth Steering Committee meetings are planned over the course of the planning process. The Committee, appointed by the Town Board, consists of representatives from the Town Board, the Plan Commission, and Town Staff. The Committee will be tasked with reviewing background and demographic materials, developing the plan document and objectives, and recommending the final plan to the Plan Commission and Board for review and adoption. All Committee meetings will be noticed and held as open public meetings, and

will provide for a public comment period. Some Committee meetings are specifically intended to solicit public input throughout the meeting, while others will be Committee work sessions with a limited public comment period.

2. Direct Notification to Property Owners: The Town will send a letter to property owners informing them of the planning process and letting them know how to provide input. The letter will also clearly explain areas that are covered by existing plan(s) will not be changing as a result of the updated Comprehensive Plan. A map will be included that clearly depicts which areas are covered by existing plans.
3. Use of Internet: The Town will share information and materials on its Web page—www.townofburke.com—throughout the planning process. In addition to legal posting and publishing requirements, the Town also intends to publicize and promote the planning process, provide information on upcoming meetings, supply the results of meetings, along with draft plan documents and maps.
4. Intergovernmental Cooperation: As the Town is completely surrounded by other incorporated municipalities and there are a significant amount of infrastructure that is the responsibility of other agencies, the Town will incorporate the 2007 Cooperative Plan with the City of Madison, City of Sun Prairie, and Village of DeForest without change. As required by statute, the Town will provide draft plan materials to adjacent and overlapping governments for review and comment.
5. Public Comment at Plan Commission Meeting: The Plan Commission will formally act on the completed draft Comprehensive Plan near the end of the planning process. This will be a public meeting and will provide an opportunity for written public comment to be reviewed by the Plan Commissioners.
6. Formal Public Hearing: The Town will hold one formal public hearing on the draft Comprehensive Plan and the adopting ordinance prior to adoption. All members of the public will have an opportunity to present testimony and offer comments at that public hearing. The public hearing will be noticed and held per the requirements of Wisconsin Statutes, Section 66.1001.

Opportunities for Comments/Responses on the Draft Comprehensive Plan

This section addresses statutory requirements to provide wide distribution of the plans, opportunities for written public comments, and an approach to respond to such comments.

The Town will provide copies of draft plan materials though the Web page, at Town Hall, and by mail in digital format to adjacent and overlapping governments, to owners of property, or to persons who have a leasehold interest in property pursuant to which the persons may extract nonmetallic mineral resources as required by statute, and to members of the participating public as requested. The Town may charge for public copies an amount equal to the costs of time and materials to produce such copies.

Public comments will be solicited and responded to at every stage of comprehensive plan creation. Steering committee meetings provide an opportunity for oral and written input, and at the public hearing(s) near the end of the process

Written comments on the comprehensive plans may also be mailed, faxed, or e-mailed to the Town Clerk. Comments may also be communicated by telephone or in person to Steering Committee members and/or the consultant. The Town will respond to written comments via mail, e-mail, fax, telephone, meeting, and/or through consideration of appropriate changes in the comprehensive plan.