

BACKGROUND

In November of 2001, the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC) prepared and submitted a Comprehensive Planning Grant Application on behalf of Iowa County and 22 local jurisdictions. In April of 2002, the Comprehensive Planning Grant from the Office of Land Information Services (OLIS) was awarded. The following jurisdictions were included in the grant application:

TOWNS	VILLAGES	CITIES	COUNTY
Arena	Arena	Dodgeville	Iowa
Clyde	Avoca	Mineral Point	
Dodgeville	Blanchardville		
Eden	Highland		
Highland	Hollandale		
Linden	Linden		
Mifflin	Ridgeway		
Mineral Point			
Moscow			
Pulaski			
Ridgeway			
Waldwick			
Wyoming			

As part of the comprehensive planning program, each jurisdiction is required to formally adopt a public participation plan. Each jurisdiction identified above as well as the County, will be adopting their own public participation plan. The public participation plans will share commonalities, but allows each jurisdiction to utilize specific public participation tools that may be best for their particular jurisdiction.

INTENT/PURPOSE

Pursuant to Sec. 66.1001(4)(a), Wisconsin Statutes

“The governing body of local governmental unit shall adopt written procedures that are designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every state of the preparation of a comprehensive plan. The written procedures shall be provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative or amended elements of a comprehensive plan and shall provide an opportunity for written comments on the plan to be submitted by members of the public to the governing body and for the governing body to respond to such written comments.”

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Public participation efforts will be a combined effort between the local jurisdictions, SWWRPC, and UW-Extension. SWWRPC will be focusing on public participation efforts that serve the entire county as well as the cluster groups that have been established as part of the Iowa County Comprehensive Planning Process. For example, SWWRPC will be coordinating and distributing the county-wide survey, press releases and meeting notices for the cluster groups, holding county wide open houses, cluster group visioning sessions, etc. Local jurisdictions will be responsible for coordinating specific efforts on their individual local level. For example, each local jurisdiction is responsible for generating and posting local plan commission notices, posting cluster meeting notices, posting and conducting of at least one public hearing, etc.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

The table below outlines a number of ways the public can be involved in the Village of Avoca’s comprehensive planning process*.

	PUBLIC AWARENESS	PUBLIC EDUCATION <i>(Increasing Level of Involvement)</i>	PUBLIC INPUT	PUBLIC INTERACTION	PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP
PURPOSE	To increase the overall awareness of the comprehensive planning process.	To provide the public with information to assist in understanding the problems, alternatives, and solutions.	To obtain feedback on issues, alternatives, and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public to ensure that concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To place decision making in the hands of the public.
METHODS OF INVOLVEMENT	<p>1. Direct Mail A newsletter to all Village taxpayers and residents to increase awareness.</p> <p>2. Website Collect information for a specific project and provide meeting dates, project summaries, etc.</p> <p>3. Newspaper Articles Put articles or notices in the local newspaper or on local radio station, designed to attract public attention or patronage.</p> <p>4. Meeting Notices Post notices of cluster group and commission meetings.</p>	<p>1. Public Education & Information Meetings Conduct public education and informational meetings to improve the overall understanding of an issue and to improve communication.</p>	<p>1. Visioning Bring people together to develop a shared image of what they want their community to become.</p> <p>2. Public Participation Provide a box to accept comments and questions.</p> <p>3. Public Hearing Hold a public hearing where citizens will be given the opportunity to speak and react to a proposal in a public setting before elected officials.</p> <p>(Note: A public hearing is the minimal requirement for public participation under the Wisconsin “Smart Growth” Law.)</p>	<p>1. Focus Groups Try to form small groups to represent diversified interests as they relate to a particular subject area being discussed as part of the comprehensive planning process.</p>	<p>1. Plan Commission The Plan Commission will advise the Village Board on the Comprehensive Smart Growth planning.</p>

*Note: The Village of Avoca reserves the right to modify the steps above and to utilize additional steps, means, and/or methods in order to gain additional public participation or understanding throughout the comprehensive planning process.