

# ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ELEMENT

Appendix

A-3

**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 Town of Highland's comprehensive planning process\*.

	<b>PUBLIC AWARENESS</b>	<b>PUBLIC EDUCATION (Increasing)</b>	<b>PUBLIC INPUT Level of Involvement)</b>	<b>PUBLIC INTERACTION</b>	<b>PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	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.
<b>METHODS OF INVOLVEMENT</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. News Release</b> Mass mailing of a newsletter to be included with the tax bills.</li> <li><b>2. Meeting Notices</b> Posting of cluster group and plan commission meetings.</li> <li><b>3. Attendance at monthly Plan Commission, Cluster, and Countywide meetings.</b> Encourage public input.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Displays / Exhibits</b> Distribute informational items to the public at election polls and at recycling/garbage collection sites to encourage feedback.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Opinion Surveys</b> To gather data in order to determine values, preferences, and interests of citizens as they relate to public issues.</li> <li><b>2. Public Hearing</b> To provide opportunity for citizens to speak and react to a proposal in a public setting before elected officials.  (Note: A public hearing is the minimal requirement for public participation under the Wisconsin "Smart Growth" Law.)</li> <li><b>3. Visioning</b> A process by which a community envisions the future it wants, and plans how to achieve it. Brings people together to develop a shared image of what they want their community to become.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Focus Groups</b> Form a small group representing diversified interests as they relate to a particular subject area being discussed as part of the comprehensive planning process and to place decision making process in the hands of the public.</li> </ol>	

\*Note: The Town of Highland 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.