

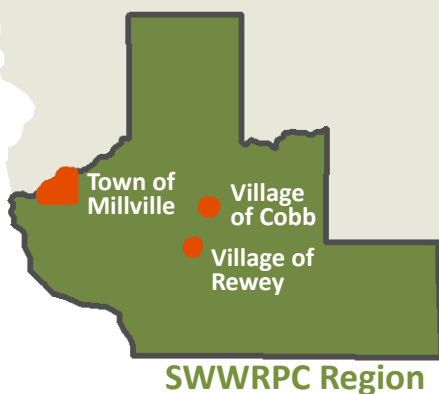
Part III: Project Criteria

Project Overview

Over the course of the past seven years, Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC) has assisted nearly every municipality within its five-county jurisdiction to create unique and tailored comprehensive plans. Results of this multi-level and far-reaching effort are threefold: 1) SWWRPC and local governments developed an intimate and formalized knowledge of both the unifying and distinct features of the SW Wisconsin region; 2) SWWRPC has learned from the comprehensive planning process and established increasingly effective tools to best capture local perspectives and needs in plans; and 3) Previously reticent communities have witnessed the success of comprehensive planning efforts among their neighbors and requested assistance in the development of their own plans at this time.

SWWRPC seeks to capitalize on this enthusiasm and timely knowledge to complete comprehensive plans for the remaining local governments (which would bring our regions' comprehensive plan coverage to over **80%**), and also develop a regional comprehensive plan to unite and promote consistency among the planning efforts within our five-county region. This effort will greatly enhance and protect the Southwestern Wisconsin way of life. See **Attachment A** for a map of completed comprehensive plans.

Applicants for this multi-jurisdictional grant include the Town of Millville, the Village of Cobb, the Village of Rewey, and SWWRPC. Each is strongly bound together by a shared rural heritage; nestled within rolling agricultural lands of the Driftless geography and hemmed in on three sides by major urban centers that attract much of the vicinity's new residents, business and industry. Recognizing that this rural heritage can pose various challenges to our communities, it also offers limitless opportunities for well-thought and locally-appropriate development. Because shared assets are spread over a large land area, promotion and coordination to build regional capacity can be challenging without a strong, established, and collaborative comprehensive plan.



Section A: Overlapping & Neighboring Jurisdictions

a. Participants & Coordination

This collaborative planning project includes the Town of Millville, the Village of Cobb, the Village of Rewey, and the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC), enabled as a governing jurisdiction by Wis.Stat. 66.0309. These jurisdictions will develop and adopt their comprehensive plans with the assistance of SWWRPC staff. The SWWRPC Comprehensive Plan will be adopted as a master plan for its five-county region, as defined and required under Wis. Stats. 66.0309.

Millville, Cobb, and Rewey each rest in the heart of the five-county region and share in the regional cultural and economic legacy. Issues affecting these three communities are representative of those affecting the five-county jurisdiction at large, and vice versa. See **Attachments B & C** for regional characteristics.

SWWRPC will coordinate planning efforts by implementing a rigorous schedule and assembling and distributing much of the background information (data, maps, and workbooks) in advance of meetings with local planning commission members. As part of the regional plan, a *Regional Conditions & Trends Report (RCTR)* in which background data and maps for each of the *Nine Planning Elements* will be gathered, analyzed, and projected as required by Wis.Stat. 1001(2). This report will assist SWWRPC conduct a robust analysis of the data as it pertains to each of the *Nine Planning Elements* in each of the four plans. See **Attachment D**.

Planning commissions will meet regularly with SWWRPC Staff to develop their own comprehensive plan. Experts from federal, state, regional, county, and local agencies and organizations will be brought in through workshops, advisory committees, and Regional Summits to provide insight on each of the *Nine Planning Elements* of the comprehensive plan.

Eight technical advisory groups (Community Facilities & Utilities; Agricultural & Natural Resources; Cultural Resources; Housing; Transportation; Economic Development; Intergovernmental Cooperation; and Land Use) will be established to advise the creation of the regional comprehensive plan. These groups will each be led by one member of the SWWRPC Planning Commission and will contain local representatives from each participating county as well as regional stakeholders specializing in the relevant field. An additional advisory group, overseeing the Issues & Opportunities and Implementation elements, will be made of all the

Regional Planning Commission (15 planning commissioners that represent Richland County, Iowa County, Green County, Lafayette County, and Grant County). See **Attachment E**.

The following agencies and organizations will be among those invited to participate in the nine technical advisory groups: University of Wisconsin-Platteville, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, & Consumer Protection.

b. Plan Review

SWWRPC will strictly adhere to ‘bottom-up’ planning in these comprehensive plans by assembling a comprehensive summary, which does not yet exist, of all planning efforts within the five-county study area affecting both the local plans and the regional comprehensive plan. A complete listing of existing plans can be found in **Attachment F**. The regional and local applicants will use this summary to compare their plans and regulations against those of their neighboring jurisdictions, to identify discrepancies and conflicts as well as opportunities for cooperation. This will assure that new plans develop strategies to align with one another, and also avoid potential conflicts.

c. Consistency & Border Issues

SWWRPC will assure consistency within the comprehensive plans through an inventory and analysis of existing plans and programs. Areas of conflict and inconsistency will be identified and staff will assist jurisdictions develop policy alternatives to resolve conflicts and strengthen their comprehensive planning goals. The regional comprehensive plan will rely on the *Regional Conditions & Trends Report* to assure consistency between regional planning strategies and those at the county and local level. The technical advisory groups will provide local knowledge and expertise to assure that policies and strategies developed from the regional planning process are practical and can be implemented with confidence.

Border issues between local jurisdictions will be addressed through Intergovernmental Cooperation Workshops. With the assistance of UW-Extension and SWWRPC, participants will work with their neighboring planning commissions to identify areas of conflict and opportunity through a series of exercises. Discussion topics and questions will identify shared issues and assets as well as methods to resolve conflicts and to develop cooperative agreements. The workshop

structure will assure consistency between neighboring plans while identifying potential areas of conflict and opportunity that the regional plan can address. Most border issues in Southwestern Wisconsin involve annexation, extension of services, and extraterritorial powers. Developing a consistent method of addressing border issues will build confidence in the comprehensive planning process and strengthen relationships throughout the region.

d. Minimizing Jurisdictional Conflicts

By identifying areas of conflict and discussing them with their neighbors at the Intergovernmental Cooperation Workshop, jurisdictions can develop cooperative agreements and methods with which to resolve conflicts that are agreeable to both parties. With the assistance of UW-Extension, SWWRPC, as a neutral ‘third party’ using the workshop as a vehicle for discussion, will assist jurisdictions to develop these agreements and methods.

The regional plan will use data collected and synthesized from the *Regional Conditions & Trends Report* along with an inventory of all intergovernmental agreements and areas of potential conflict within the five-county region. The regional plan will take all intergovernmental agreements and potential conflicts into account when developing regional strategies and programs to maximize their effectiveness and appropriateness. The Intergovernmental Cooperation Advisory Group will assist SWWRPC in identifying areas of conflict and cooperation in the region that could benefit from a regional strategy or program.

e. Extraterritorial Boundaries & Intergovernmental Cooperation

The Intergovernmental Cooperation Workshops will feature presentations from the Towns Association, the League of Municipalities, and the Wisconsin Department of Administration’s Municipal Boundary Review Bureau to provide participants with the information needed to develop cooperative agreements among neighboring jurisdictions. In some cases, jurisdictions may opt to develop extraterritorial plat review, extraterritorial zoning, or some other form of cooperative land use agreement. With the assistance of UW-Extension, SWWRPC will provide technical assistance to draft such agreements and provide an arena for discussion to take place. The comprehensive planning process will provide participants with the opportunity to learn about and develop cooperative agreements with their neighbors and build stronger relationships fostering healthy development throughout the region.

f. Cooperative Agreements

Most jurisdictions in Southwestern Wisconsin benefit from some form of cooperative agreement with their neighbors. Fire protection, emergency medical services, law enforcement, transportation, healthcare, and education are common and essential to providing the level of service needed throughout our region. SWWRPC will inventory and analyze those agreements for each participating jurisdiction as part of the Utilities & Community Facilities element of the comprehensive planning process for each plan.

Some plans will result in the continuation or expansion of existing agreements; others may result in the creation new agreements (i.e. Extraterritorial commission). SWWRPC will assist participants to develop agreements, or to establish methods for developing agreements, as part of the Intergovernmental Cooperation element of the comprehensive planning process. Examples of typical agreements include boundary agreements, water and sewer extension agreements, and annexation schedules.

SWWRPC will also provide a comprehensive inventory and analysis of all cooperative agreements within the region to inform the regional plan. The Utility & Community Facilities Advisory Group will work with SWWRPC to identify shared regional issues and opportunities as well as develop regional strategies and programs that will strengthen existing cooperative agreements and identify new areas for cooperation.

g. Multi-Jurisdictional Plan

The Department of Administration’s Comprehensive Planning Grant Manual defines multi-jurisdictional plans as: “..two or more neighboring local governmental units participating in the development of a comprehensive plan that covers the jurisdictions of those

local governmental units which is adopted separately by each unit under s. 66.1001, Wis. Stats.” (FY 2009 Comprehensive Planning Grant Manual, Page 5).

Furthermore, the State of Wisconsin defines local government unit as: “...a city, village, town, county or regional planning commission that may adopt, prepare or amend a comprehensive plan.” (s. 66.1001 Comprehensive planning (1) DEFINITIONS).

And the State of Wisconsin supports comprehensive planning with grants to local governmental units as described below: “...a county, city, village, town or regional planning commission.” (s. 16.965, Wis. Stats).

This project is a collaboration between four government units: the Town of Millville, the Village of Cobb, the Village of Rewey, and Southwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The three local governments represent two of the five counties making up Wisconsin’s Southwestern Region. The three local plans will be developed in concert with one another and also coordinate with their neighbors’ comprehensive plans to promote intergovernmental cooperation and consistency among plans within the same region. These three plans will be incorporated into their respected county-wide comprehensive plans, and, in turn, will inform the regional comprehensive plan. This ‘bottom-up’ approach will assure consistency among plans and build confidence among local government at large in the comprehensive planning approach as a method for decision-making. See **Attachment G**.

Section B: Methods for Achieving Goals

SWWRPC will assist participants address each of the 14 Planning Goals within one or more of the *Nine Comprehensive Planning Elements*. Table A below

Table A: Nine Planning Elements

Nine Planning Elements	14 Comprehensive Planning Goals													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1: Issues & Opportunities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
2: Utilities & Community Facilities	x				x	x	x			x			x	x
3: Ag, Natural & Cultural Resources	x		x	x		x	x		x	x		x	x	
4: Housing	x	x			x	x	x		x	x			x	
5: Transportation	x	x		x	x	x	x							x
6: Economic Development	x			x	x		x	x		x	x		x	x
7: Intergovernmental Cooperation	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
8: Land Use	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
9: Implementation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

outlines the goals that will be addressed within each element. Following, are detailed descriptions of each goal. While each goal is important to comprehensive plans, in Southwest Wisconsin, goals relating to natural resources and alternative energies, road network continuity, and economic development will garner additional attention for their heightened local pertinence.

Goal 1: Redevelopment, Infill, & Existing Structure Rehabilitation

Many communities in Southwestern Wisconsin have buildings and open lots within their 'downtown' that are under utilized and have the capacity to sustain local commercial, office, and residential uses. Vacant areas within the commercial business district already served by local services and are within walking distance of other commercial and civic uses make ideal sites for infill development. Identifying these infill sites within the 'downtown' will encourage a more efficient use of existing infrastructure that contributes to the local identity of the community.

SWWRPC will assist participants in identifying sites suitable for redevelopment by using existing land use maps and the WisDNR's Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS). Preference will be given to those sites already served by local infrastructure and that complement existing land uses.

Within the Housing element, SWWRPC will assist participants to assess current housing conditions and develop strategies encouraging home ownership, rehabilitation of existing structures, and access to a variety of housing choices. To support participant's housing strategies, SWWRPC will identify relevant programs, such as loan programs and building codes that encourage rehabilitation of existing structures; grant resources for revitalization of deteriorated structures or contaminated sites; and concurrency polices and capital improvement plans that promote sustainable infrastructure expansion.

Goal 2: Neighborhood Designs Supporting Transportation Choices

The transportation and land use elements will be coordinated to promote an efficient use of space that offers safe, convenient access to transportation options and better connectivity within transportation networks. In Southwestern Wisconsin, traffic demand includes commuters, tourists, commercial truck traffic, rail, agricultural equipment, Amish buggies, and recreational vehicles. Each of these traffic types has conditions for success that sometimes interfere with the needs of other traffic types.

At the local scale, development patterns that reduce the reliance on the automobile and encourage walking and biking, help to promote healthy lifestyles while providing access for all ages, incomes, and abilities. Traditional neighborhood building patterns that include sidewalks provide a pedestrian friendly alternative to the cul-de-sac development pattern. In addition, those development patterns tend to use space more efficiently, minimizing the costs of street and utility infrastructure. Concentration of uses and increased density at areas already served by transportation networks strengthen 'downtowns' and existing neighborhoods and allow opportunities for transit-orientated development. In cases of 'greenfield development', clustered housing patterns offer a more acceptable alternative by preserving open space while reducing the costs of infrastructure.

SWWRPC will assist participants in evaluating existing policies and make recommendations that will enhance and improve the relationship between transportation and land use. By examining existing zoning codes and subdivision ordinances, jurisdictions can promote development patterns that support a range of transportation choices that are safe, convenient, and efficient. On the regional scale, SWWRPC will work with local, state, and regional organizations and agencies along with the Transportation and Land Use Advisory Groups to develop a comprehensive strategy for regional transportation that effectively meets the needs of different user groups and promotes healthy development.

Goal 3: Natural Areas Protection

Southwestern Wisconsin is located along both the Wisconsin River and Mississippi River within the 'Driftless Area'. The rolling hills and river valleys are a great source of agricultural and recreational activity as well as home to a variety of wildlife and plant species. SWWRPC will use geographic information system (GIS) technology to map the region's natural environs: watersheds, surface water, wetlands, soil types, slopes, floodplains, vegetation and forested areas, natural wildlife corridors, bedrock depth, and groundwater depth. In addition, SWWRPC will compare these maps with land use maps to identify open spaces and existing environmentally-sensitive areas. See **Attachment D**.

At the local scale, SWWRPC will assist participants to develop a natural resource strategy incorporating a variety of environmental and wildlife protection techniques, such as stormwater management, design guidelines/standards, zoning, floodplain regulation, erosion control, wellhead protection, and conservation subdivisions.

At the regional scale, local, regional, state, and fed-

eral agencies along with the Agricultural & Natural, Resource Advisory Group will assist SWWRPC identify environmentally sensitive areas and develop strategies to protect and enhance the natural landscape while providing for adequate supply of agricultural and developable land.

Goal 4: Economically Productive Area Protection

Agriculture is the primary economic engine in Southwestern Wisconsin. Most of the land in the region is dedicated to agriculture through cropland, livestock, dairy, timber, and non-metallic mining. It is vital to the future of the region that these industries have an adequate supply of land to operate safely and efficiently. With the assistance of WISCLAND, FSA, NRCS SSURGO soils data, and the Wisconsin Division of Forestry's "Planners Toolbox", SWWRPC will inventory and analyze existing local, county, and regional farmland and forestry management plans to identify areas for protection. Using this data, SWWRPC will conduct a version of a Land Evaluation/Site Assessment (LESA) to identify areas to be protected as agricultural production areas. The results of this analysis can be used to assist local and county governments develop farmland preservation plans.

SWWRPC will assist participants develop strategies to protect and promote agricultural activity using techniques such as land use, forest and farmland preservation; conservation easements; conservation subdivision design; exclusive agricultural zoning; and purchase and transfer of development rights. In addition, contiguous development patterns that make use of infill sites and traditional neighborhood design will help to preserve more of the surrounding environs for agricultural use. Extraterritorial agreements between cities/villages and towns can help mitigate annexation and encourage development to occur within or adjacent to existing infrastructure that maximizes the amount of contiguous open space and agricultural lands.

At the regional scale, SWWRPC will work with local, county, and state agencies, along with the Agricultural & Natural Resource and Economic Development Advisory Groups, to develop strategies that enhance and protect the region's agricultural infrastructure and expand it to accommodate additional uses, including alternative energy (wind, biomass, etc.), niche market production (cheese, beer, wine, etc.), and farmers' markets.

Goal 5: Land Uses, Densities, & Regulations Promoting Efficient Development

Sparse residential developments scattered across the

rural landscape can threaten agricultural production and reduce efficiency in infrastructure. SWWRPC will work with local and county governments to encourage contiguous development patterns and to avoid the 'leap frog' residential enclaves located within prime agricultural land.

By inventorying and mapping the existing land uses and land use ordinances in the region, SWWRPC will identify areas at risk of losing an adequate supply of agricultural and open space for economic development, wildlife habitat, health and safety, and recreation. In addition, SWWRPC will demonstrate the additional costs of community services when local jurisdictions allow inefficient development patterns to occur.

At the local scale, SWWRPC will assist participants to develop strategies promoting dense, multi-use, contiguous development using a variety of techniques such as zoning, infill development, driveway ordinances, density requirements, traditional neighborhood design, and impact fees.

At the regional scale, SWWRPC will work with local, county, and state agencies along with the Land Use Advisory Group to develop a regional strategy that encourages efficient and coordinated land uses through regional programs and recommendations.

Goal 6: Architectural, Historic, & Archeological Site Preservation

Local architecture and places of historic significance contribute to the cultural identity and heritage of the region. Southwestern Wisconsin is blessed with some of the oldest buildings in the State and many 'Prairie Style' buildings designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and his apprentices. Preserving these structures and places is important not only for its cultural significance, but as a means of economic development through tourism.

Using the Wisconsin Architecture and Historic Inventory (AHI) and the Wisconsin Historic Preservation Database, SWWRPC will identify local and regional places of historic and archeological significance. SWWRPC will work with participants to update and amend the inventory and identify those places in which communities wish to protect and enhance/promote. Preservation strategies will utilize a variety of techniques such as zoning, conservation easements, overlay districts, design review, and design standards. In addition, participants will be encouraged to invest in and promote their unique architecture and historic places as opportunities for economic and cultural development.

At the regional scale, SWWRPC will inventory the sig-

nificant places within the region with the assistance of the Cultural Resource Advisory Group. The inventory will be used to identify opportunities for tourism and prioritization for preservation investment. The results will help develop a regional strategy that encourages the preservation of the region's heritage while developing it into an economic development tool for tourism.

Goal 7: Coordination & Cooperation Among Units of Government

Conflicts and issues between towns, villages, cities, and counties are common and require cooperation and coordinate to be mitigated. Annexation, extraterritorial powers, and zoning are examples of areas in which intergovernmental cooperation is essential for success. Intergovernmental cooperation agreements, formal or informal, are some of the techniques used to overcome obstacles.

SWWRPC will work with local and county governments to encourage intergovernmental cooperation at all levels of government. With the assistance of the UW-Extension, SWWRPC will conduct an Intergovernmental Cooperation Workshop in which presentations from the Towns Association, the League of Municipalities, and the Wisconsin Department of Administration's Municipal Boundary Review Bureau to provide participants with the information needed to develop cooperative agreements among neighboring jurisdictions. Participants and their neighboring jurisdictions will have an opportunity to discuss and develop intergovernmental cooperative agreements and design a method to resolve existing and potential conflicts.

At the regional scale, SWWRPC will provide a comprehensive inventory of all intergovernmental cooperation agreements, conflicts, potential conflicts, and conflict resolution techniques found in all of the comprehensive plans within the region. With the assistance of the Intergovernmental Cooperation Advisory Group, SWWRPC will develop a regional strategy that promotes healthy relations between local and county governments and provides a mechanism for identifying and resolving conflicts.

Goal 8: Building Community Identity by Revitalizing Main Streets & Enforcing Design Standards

Downtowns located in the villages and cities in Southwestern Wisconsin were once the local retail, civic, and cultural centers of our region. The arrangement of commercial and civic buildings along the 'main street' strengthened the business district while shaping the community's identity. The relocation and modification

of transportation infrastructure along with changes in the economy have drawn activity away from the traditional downtown and displaced it along high-volume transportation corridors. This disinvestment in the downtown has left many of the historic buildings in disrepair and many local businesses struggling from a lack of activity. In order to revive the community's identity and local economy, many different groups are refocusing their efforts toward revitalizing the downtown.

SWWRPC will work with local governments, groups, and concerned citizens to develop a shared vision for their downtown through surveys and workshops. The shared vision will be used to construct a downtown revitalization strategy that reflects the interests and ambitions of its constituents. With the assistance of the Wisconsin Department of Commerce-Main Street Program, SWWRPC will help local jurisdictions develop strategies that include variety of revitalization techniques such as design guidelines, façade improvement funding, and sign ordinances.

At the regional scale, SWWRPC will work with the Economic and Cultural Resource Advisory Groups to develop a regional strategy that encourages investment in downtowns. In addition, SWWRPC manages a revolving loan fund to help finance local projects that contribute to downtown revitalization efforts.

Goal 9: Adequate Supply of Affordable Housing

A variety of housing choices can be found in most communities in Southwestern Wisconsin. Assuring that those choices remain in the future is essential to attracting new and retaining existing residents and businesses. Healthy communities are able to provide for a complete life-cycle of housing choices: apartments, manufactured homes, town homes or condominiums, single-family homes, assisted-living facilities, and retirement homes each at a variety of economic levels. Using demographic and housing trends, SWWRPC will assist participants in identifying those choices that are missing from their community's life-cycle of housing. A housing strategy will be developed to address those needs through a variety of techniques: zoning, incentives, infill development, and public/private partnerships.

At the regional scale, housing trends identified by the *Regional Conditions & Trends Report* will identify opportunities and threats to the region. With the assistance of the Housing Advisory Group, SWWRPC will develop a regional strategy for housing that encourages a variety of housing choices fulfilling the life-cycle of any given community. SWWRPC will also identify

communities where housing strategies can be used to attract new businesses to the region. SWWRPC will also inventory existing housing programs such as home ownership programs, rehabilitation and redevelopment projects, partnerships between financial institutions and housing authorities, and changes in code language and/or enforcement to identify gaps.

Goal 10: Adequate Infrastructure, Public Services, & Developable Land

To assure an adequate supply of infrastructure, public services, and developable land, SWWRPC will assist local jurisdictions assess their current capacities as well as identify trends for future demand. SWWRPC will compare trends in land use, community facility and utility infrastructure, economic development, population, and housing to assist participants develop strategies anticipating the future needs of their community in an efficient and sustainable manner. Maps and data on the location and capacity of community facilities, infrastructure, and services will be used in conjunction with existing land use maps to plan for future expansion.

At the regional scale, infrastructure and public service needs identified by the *Regional Conditions & Trends Report* will be incorporated into a regional strategy for improvements. SWWRPC will work with the Community Facilities & Utilities and Land Use Advisory Groups to assure that the needs of the region are being met.

Goal 11: Expansion or Stabilization of the Economic Base & Employment

The Southwestern Wisconsin regional economy relies on healthy business practices as well as a skilled workforce. Economic development strategies must take into consideration both the type of businesses and the type of workforce needed to provide for expansion or stabilization of the economic base. Retaining and growing business in the region requires coordination among local businesses and institutions of learning. The Economic Advisory Group will work with representatives from University of Wisconsin-Platteville as well as Southwest Technical College to identify opportunities and concerns that affect the regions' workforce.

SWWRPC is the federal Economic Development Administration's (EDA) designated district responsible for the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs). The CEDs document identifies projects in which eligible municipalities, development agencies, non-profit organizations, and colleges may access EDA funding. The Economic Development Advisory Group will assist SWWRPC in identifying potential CEDs projects as part of the regional comprehensive planning

process. In addition, SWWRPC administers the Regional Revolving Business Loan Fund to assist existing and future businesses in the region.

Goal 12: Balancing Individual Property Rights with Community Interest & Goals

Land Use planning attempts to balance individual property rights among all members of a given community. In order to balance those rights, a community must uncover the 'community will' from which a set of values and preferences can provide direction for decision-makers. Public participation is the vehicle in which a community discovers its 'community will' and develops a relationship between government and its constituency.

SWWRPC will assist participants develop a public participation plan that maximizes public involvement at every stage of the planning process. A variety of techniques will be used to bring the community into the planning process such as community surveys, visioning workshops, open meetings, and public hearings. With the assistance of the UW-River Falls Survey Research Center, SWWRPC will conduct a community survey. Results will be used throughout the planning process to inform the local planning commission. A community visioning workshop will provide participants with a direction from which to build a policy framework for their comprehensive plan. Planning commission meetings will be open to the public and designed to encourage participation. Public hearings will be held to assure that the comprehensive plan honestly represents the community for which it is intended.

At the regional level, SWWRPC will use the results of all the town, village, and city community surveys to inform the Regional Planning Commission at each stage of the planning process. In addition, SWWRPC will host a series of Regional Summits in which the technical advisory committees will conduct a "town hall" discussion open to the general public. The goal of the Regional Summits is to identify regional issues, bring stakeholders together, and develop implementation strategies that are sound and practical.

Goal 13: Land Uses that Create or Preserve Varied & Unique Communities

A community's 'vision' is the engine that drives a comprehensive plan. That vision is based on the shared interests and values of a given community. It provides the foundation and establishes a framework in which a plan's goals, objectives, and policies are built.

SWWRPC will assist participants in developing a 'vision' that accurately represents the 'community's will'

and provides insight and direction into the future. Using a series of visioning workshops, SWWRPC will assist participants in uncovering community values and interests and assembling it into a vision statement.

At the regional level, SWWRPC will assist the Regional Planning Commission develop a regional vision that effectively represents the interests and values of all members of the region. SWWRPC will provide an inventory and analysis of all the comprehensive plan vision statements within the region and call attention to shared interests, concerns, concepts, and ideas that could be used to assemble a regional vision. Building on local and county vision statements will assure consistency and reveal common ideas that may drive regional strategies.

Goal 14: Integrated, Efficient, & Economical Transportation System

Transportation networks rely on the coordination of many different transportation systems to operate safely and efficient. Because the plans used to develop those individual transportation systems occur at different levels of government, it is important that regional planning commissions coordinate those efforts.

With the assistance of local, county, and state agencies, SWWRPC will inventory and analyze existing transportation plans and proposed projects that will affect the local participants and the region. SWWRPC will assist local participants in developing transportation strategies that reflect the unique concerns of their jurisdiction.

At the regional scale, the Transportation Advisory Group will work with SWWRPC to develop a regional transportation strategy that coordinates the existing plans and projects and identifies future needs and concerns for the region.

Section C: Smart Growth Areas

a. Identifying Potential Smart Growth Areas.

SWWRPC will assist participants locate 'smart growth areas' by comparing the community's vision statement and goals with its existing land use and infrastructure. A comprehensive series of maps (soils, slopes, bedrock, community facilities and utilities, transportation, natural resources, cultural resources, school districts, etc.) will be used to help eliminate inappropriate sites and identify those sites where development would be most cost-effective and efficient. Preference will be made to contiguous and infill sites that redevelop under-utilized land while protecting environmentally-sensitive features. This will help discourage 'leap frog'

development and in turn, encourage an efficient use of space and infrastructure.

b. Describing the Implementation of Smart Growth Areas.

SWWRPC will assist participants develop implementation strategies for smart growth areas. Examples of smart growth areas elsewhere and a list of resources and tools will be provided. A variety of techniques for implantation may be used such as zoning ordinances, PUD guidelines, TDR/PDR programs, density bonuses, official mapping to include rights-of-way, concurrency policies, sewer service plans, TIF districts, special utility districts, conservation subdivision ordinances, etc.

c. Developing Smart Growth Areas Cooperatively with Adjacent & Overlapping Jurisdictions.

With the assistance of the UW-Extension, SWWRPC will assist participants coordinate their smart growth areas with neighboring or overlapping jurisdictions primarily through the Intergovernmental Cooperation Workshop. During the workshop, smart growth area concepts will be shared with one another to identify opportunities for cooperation or conflict. SWWRPC will provide technical assistance to develop cooperative governmental agreements when needed.

d. Changes that Prompt Identification of Smart Growth Areas.

As the economic and social climate changes, so too must plans for future. The region is getting older and the global economy has forced many manufacturing jobs overseas. Energy independence has risen as a national security issue and a local energy issue. Though it is too early to tell, the financial problems the Nation is having may have local effects.

If the region is to sustain itself, it will need to support the demands of an aging population through health-care, transportation, housing, and social services. Local industry and learning institutions must work together to build a regional workforce and economy that is sustainable and pertinent to Southwestern Wisconsin. Southwestern Wisconsin is also primed to be, and should continue to become, a leader in alternative and renewable energy through wind generation and biomass.

SWWRPC is strategically positioned to take on these and other regional challenges. By assembling a regional comprehensive plan founded in all existing local plans, the SWWRPC regional comprehensive plan will be able to leverage support for region-wide initiatives for infrastructure, agriculture, natural resources, cultural resources, housing, transportation, economic development, intergovernmental cooperation, and land

use. Through regional cooperation and coordination, SWWRPC can help communities reach their goals and build a more sustainable future for the entire region.

Section D: Updates, Amendments, & Ordinances

a. Developing or Updating Ordinances & Other Implementation Strategies for Consistency.

SWWRPC will assist participating local jurisdictions to identify needed changes or updates to their respected ordinances, codes, and programs as part of their Implementation element. Each jurisdiction will identify those changes needed and develop a schedule for changes to occur. SWWRPC will also assist those jurisdictions develop methods to ensure plan updates and to review the progress of implementation.

To maintain consistency, many communities make changes to their existing ordinances and plans in the comprehensive planning process. To assure consistency between respective county and jurisdictional plans during this process, adopted comprehensive plans from jurisdictions will be addressed in respective county plan.

Following project completion, and in accordance with their implementation plan, the planning commissions will update, amend, or create ordinances as needed to ensure consistency within their comprehensive plans.

b. Identify Land Use Issues Related to New, Anticipated, or Potential Transportation Facilities or Improvements.

Two major transportation projects affecting the region are the designation of State Highway 60 (STH 60) as a Wisconsin Scenic Byway and the Rail Restoration Project 15 (RR15).

The new designation of STH 60 is an important step toward realizing a regional tourism initiative focused on the scenic beauty and natural resources of Southwestern Wisconsin. The vision includes local history, archeology, geology, farm markets, apple orchards, and berry patches. A guide to small town festivals and events could be developed to expand local economic opportunities while strengthening the identity of the region.

The Badger State Trail, under the federal Rails to Trails Act (R2T), when complete, will connect Madison and the Jane Addams Trail, which is part of the Grand Illinois Trail System. The RR15 railroad right-of-way is owned by the multi-county Pecatonica Rail Transit Commission (PRTC) and this corridor is preserved un-

der the federal Rails-To-Trails Act. RR15 will increase the flow of commerce into Southwestern Wisconsin and is expected to provide hundreds of new jobs and new property tax bases for local communities by utilizing one of the most efficient and environmentally-friendly form of transportation – railroads.

c. Identify Innovative Plan Implementation Techniques.

Following adoption, SWWRPC will assist plan implementations through a variety of methods. Workshops, focus groups, interactive web-based resources, and conferences are just a few of the hands-on and participatory means through which SWWRPC will guide implementation communications and assure action is achieved. Using these tools, SWWRPC will coordinate with other regional organizations, interest groups, and agencies with which the RPC has established relationships and working partnerships. In this fashion, SWWRPC will assure that implementation occurs without duplication of effort or ‘top-down’ dictations. Instead, SWWRPC’s implementation methods will coordinate with, and compliment, the ‘bottom-up’ planning process that has been instrumental in the creation of the plans.

d. Describe the Level of the Applicant’s Zoning Authority.

The Village of Cobb and the Village of Rewey each retain local zoning authority. The Town of Millville has adopted the Grant County Zoning Ordinance. SWWRPC has no zoning authority, although it assists local jurisdictions in the development and administration of zoning regulations and trains local planning commissioners in zoning best practices.

The RPC has no zoning authority. By state law, RPC comprehensive plans, while required, are advisory. However, SWWRPC as the regional unit of government, has Statutory legitimacy and comprehensive representation of the people of Southwestern Wisconsin. It is the responsibility of SWWRPC to provide guidance and engage in activities that benefit the region.

Section E: Public Participation

a. Identify the Process for Determining & Adopting Public Participation Procedures

SWWRPC has an established history of assisting communities adopt public participation plans. Working with each participating jurisdiction, SWWRPC will provide an extensive list of relevant public participation measures, including public meetings, surveys, workshops, and print outreach materials. If not already done, SWWRPC will also assist participating communi-

ties establish and operate a planning commission. SWWRPC staff will then work one-on-one with participant communities to select the best-fit public participation methods from these options, and develop a Public Participation Plan that meets the specific needs of that community. When complete, the governing body of each jurisdiction will adopt their Public Participation Plan by resolution.

b. Propose Creative, Innovative Public Participation Efforts.

SWWRPC has relied heavily on public participation in every past comprehensive planning effort: a process that has enabled the RPC to excel at ‘bottom up’ planning and local empowerment.

Through these experiences, SWWRPC understands what methods work best and is excited to make greater use of new technologies to garner still more public input and involvement, especially over a large, regional land-area as will be an increased concern in the creation of a regional comprehensive plan. SWWRPC has had success with web-based participation in the past, and plans to make greater use of its’ website in the future by providing interactive PDF-based mapping and Google Earth multi-dimensional visualizations.

While these innovations will bring greater depth to public participation, they are not a replacement for traditional methodologies. The RPC will continue to rely on robust public participation efforts for each of the three local plans and the regional plan, including surveys, focus groups, mailings, public meetings, and news/press releases.

c. Provide a Variety of Opportunities for Broad Public Participation Throughout the Planning Process.

Each jurisdiction will provide opportunities for public participation based on their Public Participation Plan. All project meetings will be properly noticed, open meetings to the general public. SWWRPC will provide local jurisdictions with informational press releases for the initial ‘kick off meeting’ to raise awareness of the planning process. Prior to the public hearing, draft plans will be made available for public review at local libraries, government offices, and the SWWRPC and its website.

Citizens will participate on local planning commissions. With the assistance of the UW-River Falls Survey Research Center, SWWRPC will conduct a community survey. SWWRPC will assist local jurisdictions with conducting a visioning workshop.

d. Provide Opportunities for Neighboring and Overlapping Jurisdictions to Participate.

With the assistance of the UW-Extension, SWWRPC will conduct Intergovernmental Cooperation Workshop in which participating jurisdictions and their neighboring jurisdictions will have an opportunity to discuss and develop intergovernmental cooperative agreements and design a method for resolving existing and potential conflicts.

Section F: Timeline

The project will be complete in 30 months. Please refer to the Project Timeline included at the end of Part IV.