

SEWRPC Community Assistance Planning Report No. 301
A MULTI – JURISDICTIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FOR RACINE COUNTY: 2035

Chapter XVII

SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Racine County and all 17¹ cities, villages, and towns began working together in 2005 in a joint planning process to prepare a multi-jurisdictional County comprehensive plan. As part of the planning process, the County and local governments identified existing desirable land uses and important natural resources that should be preserved to maintain the high quality of life in Racine County. A desired land use pattern for the year 2035 for Racine County and for each of the participating local communities was also identified.

The County and local comprehensive plans were prepared, in part, to comply with the requirements of Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law, which took effect in 1999. The law, set forth in Section 66.1001 of the *Wisconsin Statutes*, requires County and local governments that enforce general zoning, shoreland zoning, subdivision, or official mapping ordinances to have an adopted comprehensive plan by January 1, 2010. The Wisconsin Department of Administration awarded a comprehensive planning grant to Racine County in 2006 to help fund preparation of the County multi-jurisdictional plan. The plan was developed with sufficient detail to be adopted as a local comprehensive plan.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In 2006, a Racine County Multi-Jurisdictional Advisory Committee (MJAC) was formed to guide the preparation of a multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan for Racine County. The MJAC assisted in the development of a public participation plan, reviewed draft plan chapters, gathered public comment, provided input during the plan development process, and recommended the plan for adoption by the Racine County Board and each of the participating local governments. The 18 member MJAC was created by the Racine County Board and is made up of one representative from each of the local government bodies and one member from the County Board. The members of the MJAC are listed on the inside front cover of this report.

From September 2006 to May 2009, the MJAC met 24 times. The MJAC also established one work group, the Racine County Comprehensive Plan Housing Work Group, which provided additional review and input in the development of the housing element. Work group members are listed on the inside back cover of this report.

¹ *The Town and Village of Rochester were consolidated as the Village of Rochester in December 2008, reducing the number of local units of government from 18 to 17.*

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To ensure opportunities for public involvement in the planning process, a public participation plan (PPP) was adopted by the Racine County Board of Supervisors and by each of the participating local governing bodies. The PPP outlines a series of outreach efforts and public participation sessions designed to gain input from County residents throughout the comprehensive planning process. The public participation efforts are summarized as follows:

- **Comprehensive Planning Web Site** – A Racine County web page was created to inform citizens about comprehensive planning, the County’s multi-jurisdictional planning process, how to become involved in this process and how to make public comments. Over time, all documents, including draft chapters of the plan report and 2035 local land use maps, and other resources related to the planning process have been added to the site and it has become a valuable resource for community leaders, county officials, citizen advisory committee members and local government staff. This web page can be viewed at: <http://racine.uwex.edu/cnred/SmartGrowth.html>.
- **Public Opinion Survey** – A countywide comprehensive planning public opinion survey was conducted in May of 2007 and included a wide range of questions on topics such as housing, transportation, agricultural and natural resources, land use, and economic development. The report documenting the results of the survey is available on the Racine County comprehensive planning website and at public libraries.
- **Countywide Public Informational Meetings** – A series of countywide public informational meetings were held in the fall of 2007 to provide background information on the planning process, to present the inventory information developed as part of the plan, and to conduct a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analyses. The SWOT analysis is a planning tool used to identify a community’s current assets and liabilities and related issues that should be taken into account when developing the comprehensive plan. A series of countywide public informational meetings was also held in the spring of 2009 to provide information on the individual plan elements (all elements except the intergovernmental cooperation and implementation elements) and to solicit comments from the public.
- **Comprehensive Plan Newsletters and Chapter Fact Sheets** – Newsletters were prepared quarterly during the planning process. The newsletters provided information on various comprehensive planning activities and brief summaries of plan document chapters as the chapters were completed. The chapter fact sheets provided summaries of individual chapters. The newsletters were provided to MJAC members and to local libraries and local government bodies. The newsletters and fact sheets are available on the Racine County comprehensive planning website.
- **Racine County Fair** – A comprehensive planning booth was on display at the Racine County Fair in 2007 and 2008. The booth included inventory data maps, fact sheets, and newsletters, which were on display for public comment. Staff were present to explain the information, data, maps and answer questions.
- **Local Plan Review/Update Meetings** – Individual meetings were held with each local government body to review and update community land use plans. This included a review of the existing land use plan map, plan objectives and policies, and the development of projections of future population, household, and employment levels to be used in the comprehensive plan. In the case of the Town of Norway where a land use plan did not exist, a separate committee was established by the Town to develop the necessary map and information.
- **Plan Review** – Joint open house/public hearings were held in each of the participating cities, villages, and towns in the summer of 2009.

PLAN ELEMENTS

The comprehensive planning law requires the County and each local plan to include the following nine elements:

- Issues and Opportunities
- Land Use
- Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources
- Housing
- Transportation
- Utilities and Community Facilities
- Economic Development
- Implementation
- Intergovernmental Cooperation

The Racine County multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan addresses each of the required elements in the manner described below.

Issues and Opportunities Element

This element includes overall goals, objectives, policies and programs for the County for the plan design year of 2035 as well as background information related to demographic trends, age distribution, educational levels, income levels, and employment characteristics within the County and its communities. This element also includes projections of population, households, and employment levels to the year 2035. Background information is included in Chapter II, *“Inventory of Population, Housing Stock, and Economic Base;”* projections of population, households, and employment are included in Chapter VII, *“Population, Household, and Employment Projections;”* and a description of the development of comprehensive plan goals is included in Chapter VIII, *“Issues and Opportunity Element.”* Specific plan objectives, policies, and programs are included in each of the other plan elements.

Land Use Element

This element includes a compilation of goals, objectives, policies, and programs to guide future land use development and redevelopment. This element also includes background information on historic and existing urban and rural land uses, land use trends and values, and the spatial distribution of future land uses. Background information on land uses is included in Chapter III, *“Inventory of Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources,”* and Chapter IV, *“Inventory of Existing Land Uses and Transportation Facilities and Services.”* Land use plan goals, objectives, policies, and programs and the description of the land use plan, along with associated data and map for the Racine County planning area for the year 2035 is included in Chapter IX, *“Land Use Element.”* Planned land use data and maps for each of the participating communities is included in Appendix IX-2.

Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element

This element includes a compilation of goals, objectives, policies, and programs for the conservation and management of agricultural, natural, and cultural resources. This element also includes background information on existing resources. Background information is included in Chapter III, *“Inventory of Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources.”* Plan recommendations for the preservation of agricultural, natural, and cultural resources, along with specific goals, objectives, policies, and programs are included in Chapter X, *Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element.”*

Housing Element

This element includes a compilation of goals, objectives, policies, and programs for the provision of an adequate housing supply to meet existing and future housing demands. This element also includes an assessment of the existing housing stock. Background information on existing housing in Racine County and its communities is included in Chapter II, *“Inventory of Population, Housing Stock, and Economic Base.”* Plan recommendations for

the provision of housing to meet the future needs of the County, along with specific goals, objectives, policies, and programs are included in Chapter XI, *“Housing Element.”*

Transportation Element

This element includes a compilation of goals, objectives, policies, and programs to guide the future development of various modes of transportation. This element also includes background information on existing transportation facilities. Background information is included in Chapter IV, *“Inventory of Existing Land Uses and Transportation Facilities and Services.”* Plan recommendations for the provision of transportation facilities to meet the future needs of the County, along with specific goals, objectives, policies, and programs are included in Chapter XII, *“Transportation Element.”*

Utilities and Community Facilities Element

This element includes a compilation of goals, objectives, policies, and programs to guide the future development of utility and community facilities. This element also includes background information on existing utility and community facilities. Background information is included in Chapter V, *“Inventory of Utilities and Community Facilities.”* Plan recommendations for the provision of utility and community facilities to meet the future needs of the County, along with specific goals, objectives, policies, and programs are included in Chapter XII, *“Transportation Element.”*

Economic Development Element

This element includes a compilation of goals, objectives, policies, and programs to guide the development of the economic base and employment opportunities in the County. This element also includes background information on the existing labor force and economic base. Background information is included in Chapter II, *“Inventory of Population, Housing Stock, and Economic Base.”* Plan recommendations for economic development to meet the future needs of the County, along with specific goals, objectives, policies, and programs are included in Chapter XIV, *“Economic Development element.”* The development of this element relied heavily on the existing County economic development plan as documented in *The Racine County Economic Development Plan 4.0.*

Implementation Element

This element includes a compilation of the key action policies and programs that have the highest priority to begin the implementation of the comprehensive plan. This element also identifies proposed changes to any applicable zoning ordinances, official maps, or subdivision ordinances to implement the objectives, policies, and programs identified in the comprehensive plan, as well as the process for adopting and amending the plan. Implementation recommendations are included in Chapter XV, *“Implementation Element.”*

Intergovernmental Cooperation Element

This element a compilation of goals, objectives, policies, and programs for joint planning and decision making between adjacent local government units and school districts, as well as between local, county, and State government units and agencies. Plan recommendations with respect to intergovernmental cooperation are included in Chapter XVI, *“Intergovernmental Cooperation Element.”*

PLAN ADOPTION

As noted earlier, the County multi-jurisdictional plan was developed with sufficient detail to be adopted as a local comprehensive plan. At the request of the City of Racine, a separate plan report is being prepared for adoption by the City. The City plan document will be based substantially on the County comprehensive plan document. All of the other participating communities are adopting the County plan as their local comprehensive plan.

A comprehensive plan must be adopted by an ordinance enacted by the governing body. The Racine County Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan must therefore be adopted by an ordinance of each local governing body and the County Board of Supervisors. All nine elements must be adopted simultaneously. At least one public hearing must be held by the local governing body and the County Board prior to adopting the plan. Section 66.1001(4)(b) of the *Statutes* requires that an adopted comprehensive plan, or an amendment to a plan, be sent to

all governmental units within and adjacent to the county or local government preparing a plan; the Wisconsin Department of Administration; the regional planning commission (SEWRPC); and the public library that serves the area in which the county or local government is located.

Each of the local governing bodies (Town Board, Village Board, Common Council), upon the recommendation of the city, village, and town plan commissions, adopted the multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan as their local comprehensive plan in the summer of 2009. Following local adoption of the plan by all the participating communities, the County Board of Supervisors, upon the recommendation of the EDLUPC, adopted the comprehensive plan on _____,2009.

PLAN UPDATES AND AMENDMENTS

The comprehensive planning law requires that adopted comprehensive plans be reviewed and updated at least once every ten years. County and local governments may choose to update the plan more frequently. While there is no limit on the number or frequency of amendments that may be made to a comprehensive plan, the public participation, plan review, and plan adoption procedures required for a full comprehensive plan also apply to plan amendments. The Implementation Element (Chapter XV) recommends a procedure to be used for amending the plan.

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