



Town Of Union

Burnett County Comprehensive Plan

“Public Participation Plan”

Adopted by:

Town of Union Comprehensive Planning Committee

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Appendix A - Planned Focus Groups

Town of Union Comprehensive Plan: Public Participation Plan

I. Background

A. Comprehensive Planning Law

Planning has been occurring in Wisconsin for decades. However, many people, organizations, businesses, and others were unhappy with the way planning was being conducted in the state. Adopted in October of 1999, Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning was the result of a coalition of stakeholders that rallied for the reform of Wisconsin's planning laws. The unique coalition of realtors, builders, and environmentalists all realized the short comings of past practices and supported change. Key parts of the comprehensive planning law include making planning decisions consistent with the comprehensive plan, requiring most local units of government to adopt a plan by 2010, and comprehensive plans be made up of nine elements: 1) issues and opportunities; 2) housing; 3) transportation; 4) utilities and community facilities; 5) agricultural , natural , and cultural resources; 6) economic development; 7) intergovernmental cooperation; 8) land use; and 9) implementation.

B. Public Participation Requirement

American democracy has practiced public participation in many forms throughout its history with varying degrees of success. The common theme however, is that the people must be heard. As we have matured as a country we have developed better methods of including the public in policy making and decision making. Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law recognizes that a simple public hearing at the end of a planning process is far from effective public participation. The comprehensive planning law requires public participation throughout the planning process. Specifically, Wisconsin State Statutes, Section 66.1001(4)(a) state...

"The governing body of a 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 stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan. The written procedures shall provide for a 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.”

The methods included in this public participation plan are intended to focus on awareness, input, education, and decision making. Through these methods decision makers will ultimately “hear” the people and be able to develop a comprehensive plan that serves the communities of Burnett County.

C. Planning in Burnett County

Burnett County’s most recent large scale planning effort was its 1998 Land Use Plan. The planning process included a comprehensive mapping effort and an extensive lake classification process. Since the adoption of the plan, many programs have been implemented including revisions to the zoning code, a unique shoreline preservation incentive program, and the expansion of county zoning to several more towns. In developing this plan, public participation was sought through surveys, web site, media releases, public meetings, and public hearings. Burnett County also has forestry plans, recreational plans, and others. Within the last ten years, three villages and several towns have also adopted land use plans. For many of the local units of government including Burnett County, the land use plan is getting out of date. Furthermore, the plan does not meet the State’s definition of a comprehensive plan.

During 2006 and 2007, Burnett County and many local units of government have been meeting and completing pre-planning activities on a comprehensive planning process. In September of 2006, the Burnett County Board of Supervisors and seven other local units of government passed a resolution supporting developing a comprehensive plan that meets Wisconsin’s Comprehensive Planning Law.

By creating this Public Participation Plan, Burnett County continues to move forward in the pre-planning stage of the comprehensive process. And, as in the past, public participation will be emphasized and valued.

Town of Union has reviewed the Burnett County Public Participation Plan and feels that the public participation tools that will be implemented throughout Burnett County per the guidance provided in the document effectively attempt to include the public in the planning process. The Town will post all public meetings in addition to supporting the public participation tools that will be implemented as part of the County Public Participation Plan.

II. Public Participation Plan By Method

A. Community Display/Exhibit (Awareness, Education)

Community displays will be used to create awareness of the comprehensive planning process and to educate the public about process, issues, and

alternatives. Typically displays can provide information but are not very good tools for input or for open dialogue. However, the displays will have information on how the public can provide written comments and attend future meetings. Locations for community displays may include but will not be limited to the following: Burnett County Government Center Lobby (Union), Webster Schools, Webster Public Library, Union Schools, Grantsburg Public Library, Grantsburg Schools, Hockey Arena (Union and Grantsburg). This method will be used to communicate to the public proposed, alternative and/or amended elements of a comprehensive plan.

B. Public Meetings Workshop Presentations (Education, Input, Decision Making)

Workshops will be provided to assist elected leaders understand the comprehensive planning process, pre-planning, the nine elements, and implementation tools. Topics such as adopting village powers, establishing a plan commission, and understanding the comprehensive planning law will be discussed. Open discussion between participants and presenters will be emphasized by designating question and answer sessions at the end of the sessions. Presentations will also be made to the general public throughout the planning process. Information provided will include trends analysis, mapping, survey results, and draft goals/objectives/strategies followed up with an open discussion. The public will be encouraged to attend by offering pie, ice cream, and other snacks at the meeting. Advance notice will be given for all public meetings and workshops using the methods described in this section.

C. Media Releases (Awareness)

Media releases will be used throughout the planning process as primarily an awareness tool. Burnett County is served by two newspapers, the Burnett County Sentinel and the Inter-County Leader. Several radio stations may also run the media releases as public services announcements or incorporate the media releases into their local newscast. A comprehensive media contact list will be developed prior to the comprehensive planning kick off. Wisconsin Public Radio and WOJB (La Courte Oreilles – Chippewa operated) will be included on the list. This method will be used to communicate to the public proposed, alternative and/or amended elements of a comprehensive plan.

D. Open Houses (Awareness, Education)

Open houses will have maps, charts and other information on display with professional staff on hand to answer questions. This method provides the opportunity to review information and proposals and participate in open discussion. Open houses will be held in easily accessible places and publicized using media releases, mailing lists, and the web site to name a few. The public will be encouraged to attend by offering pie, ice cream, and other snacks at the open house. This method may be used to communicate the public of proposed, alternative and/or amended elements of a comprehensive plan.

E. Website (Awareness, Education, Input)

A web site (www.burnettcounty.com/compplan/) will be developed to provide an all inclusive source for comprehensive information. The site will provide awareness of the process, education regarding the comprehensive planning elements, and contact information for providing written comments via U.S. mail and email. Contents of the web page will also include background data used for analysis in the planning process, meeting information, and PDF version of the comprehensive planning newsletter. This method will be used to communicate to the public proposed, alternative and/or amended elements of a comprehensive plan.

F. Mailing Lists

During the comprehensive planning process, citizens can sign up to be included on the comprehensive plan mailing list. The list will be used to notify the interested citizens of upcoming meetings, presentations, e-newsletters, and other important events. Information will be gathered from sign in sheets at meetings and from the comprehensive planning web site. This method may be used to communicate to the public proposed, alternative and/or amended elements of a comprehensive plan.

G. Newsletter (Awareness, Education)

Newsletters will be mailed to all elected officials in Burnett County. The newsletter will also be available on the comprehensive plan web site. The newsletter will keep elected officials in touch with the process, key issues, meeting dates, and resources they can use during the process. This method may be used to communicate to the public proposed, alternative and/or amended elements of a comprehensive plan.

H. Written Comments (Input, Decision Making)

Written comments can provide a clear record of questions asked during the planning process and also helps people to clearly articulate their questions. The public can submit comments by:

- Email at the UW Extension Burnett County Office;
mike.kornmann@ces.uwex.edu
- Via US Mail to:
Burnett County Comprehensive Plan
7410 County Road K #107
Union, WI 54872
- Written comments at public meetings, presentations and open houses will be accepted. A written comments box will be clearly placed at the meeting place. A verbal announcement will be made reminding attendees of the box and the availability of making written comments.

All comments will be recorded and responded to in a appropriate manner. Committee meetings will have a specific agenda item to review written

comments submitted and consider comments as it pertains to the planning process and comprehensive plan.

I. Public Hearings (Input, Decision Making)

Public hearings will be used in according to state statutes in the adopting and amending the comprehensive plan. Thirty days notice will be given prior to the hearing in Burnett County's official newspaper with the notice including date, time, and place of the hearing, a summary of the plan, where to review the entire plan, who to contact for more details, and how a copy of the plan can be obtained. Comments at the hearing will be discussed after the hearing is closed. This method will be used to communicate the public of proposed, alternative and/or amended elements of a comprehensive plan.

J. Survey (Input)

Surveys are one of the most effective methods of gaining information from the public. A survey will be used to determine information on issues that is unknown and/or has likely changed from the survey completed in the 1998 Land Use Plan. Questions will be developed in key areas and sent to property owners in Burnett County. Scientific techniques will be used to obtain a high return rate.

K. World Café (Input)

A Cafe Conversation is a creative process for leading collaborative dialogue, sharing knowledge and creating possibilities for action in groups of all sizes. The seven design principles of World Café are: (1) Set the context; (2) Create hospitable space; (3) Explore questions that matter related to each of the nine elements required under comprehensive planning legislation; (4) Encourage everyone's contribution; (5) Cross-pollinate and connect diverse perspectives; (6) Listen together for patterns, insights, and deeper questions; (7) Harvest and share collective discoveries. A world café discussion will be used to identify issues and opportunities related to each element in the comprehensive plan. This technique will allow for open discussion with everyone involved in the process.

L. Focus Groups (Input)

Focus groups will be established to provide expertise and input to the Land Use, Solid Waste, and Surveyor Committee. A focus group will be established for each element or more specifically the areas noted in Appendix A. The responsibility for each group will be to provide input to the Land Use, Solid Waste, and Surveyor Committee on identifying issues and developing strategies.

M. Ex-Officio Committee Members (Awareness, Input)

Ex –officio members will be asked to serve with the Land Use, Solid Waste, and Surveyor Committee. A representative from each newspaper will be

asked to participate throughout the entire process increasing the committee by a total of two (2).

N. Planning Theme Competition (Awareness, Input)

Youth will be involved in the planning process through a Planning Theme Competition. By incorporating a visioning exercise with area high schools, students will be asked to develop a theme and logo for the comprehensive plan. The winning class will win an award. Presentations will be submitted to the Land Use, Solid Waste, and Surveyor Committee and they will select a winning theme to use for the comprehensive plan.

III. Public Participation Plan By Planning Stage and Adoption Process

As pre-planning and conditions evolve minor amendments to the public participation plan will be made. The major methods outlined above will be used in conjunction with a planning process similarly outlined below.

A. Preplanning and Committee Formation

Planning Activities:

- ☐ Determine readiness for planning
- ☐ Profile existing Plans
- ☐ Build capacity to conduct planning
- ☐ Identify planning participants and stakeholders
- ☐ Design the planning process
- ☐ Identify opportunities for public participation and education
- ☐ Establish roles, responsibilities, and membership of groups involved in planning
- ☐ Establish budget and Identify funding sources
- ☐ Develop media contact list

Public Participation Activities:

- ☐ Web Site – Develop base comprehensive web site
- ☐ Public Meetings – Hold coordination meetings with local units of government
- ☐ Public Meetings/workshops – Train elected officials and plan commissioners on comprehensive planning and public participation plan
- ☐ Media release announcing development of comprehensive plan web site and other comprehensive planning resources
- ☐ Formally invite and appoint ex-officio members
- ☐ Accept and respond to written comments
- ☐ Mail newsletter

Data Collection and Analysis (Stage 2)

Planning Activities:

- ☐ Identify data and information needs

- ☐ Gather technical, spatial and citizen based data
- ☐ Analyze and interpret data to derive patterns and trends
- ☐ Provide information to citizens and other decision makers

Public Participation Activity:

- ☐ Kick off meeting and open house for public explaining process
- ☐ Media release announcing public participation activities
- ☐ Update web site
- ☐ Youth visioning program and theme competition begins
- ☐ Hold open house and public meeting presenting data trends
- ☐ Workshops for plan commissioners and elected officials
- ☐ Set up community displays
- ☐ Develop and send out community survey
- ☐ World Café Conversation Meeting – Community input on issues and opportunities
- ☐ Mail newsletter
- ☐ Accept and respond to written comments

Issue Identification (Stage 3)

Planning Activities:

- ☐ Identify key community issues, challenges, opportunities and desires
- ☐ Verify and support issues using local data and analysis
- ☐ Prioritize issues

Public Participation Activity:

- ☐ Review survey and World Café Conversation results
- ☐ Media release announcing public participation activities
- ☐ Select planning theme and logo; recognize youth participation
- ☐ Review input form advisory committees and have open dialogue
- ☐ Update web site
- ☐ Accept and respond to written comments
- ☐ Mail newsletter

Develop Goals and Objectives (Stage 4)

Planning Activities:

- ☐ Develop goals and measurable objectives related to planning issues
- ☐ Develop indicators to monitor progress towards stated goals and objectives

Public Participation Activities:

- ☐ Media release announcing public participation activities
- ☐ Mail newsletter
- ☐ Update website
- ☐ Public meetings
- ☐ Accept and respond to written comments

Strategy Development (Stage 5)

Planning Activities:

- ☐ Develop planning alternatives to meet goals and objectives
- ☐ Identify places suitable for achieving goals and objectives
- ☐ Identify possible strategies to implement planning alternatives
- ☐ Evaluate impacts of alternatives
- ☐ Select preferred alternative and strategies

Public Participation Activities:

- ☐ Media release announcing public participation activities
- ☐ Mail newsletter
- ☐ Open House
- ☐ Review input form advisory committees and have open dialogue
- ☐ Update website
- ☐ Public meetings
- ☐ Accept and respond to written comments

Plan Review and Adoption (State 6)

Planning Activities:

- ☐ Present plan for community residents and officials to review
- ☐ Make changes to resolve plan inconsistencies and reflect public concerns
- ☐ Zoning Committee recommends final draft of plan for adoption
- ☐ Governing body holds public hearing and formally adopts plan

Public Participation Activities:

- ☐ Media release announcing public participation activities
- ☐ Share draft plans with adjacent and overlapping government jurisdictions
- ☐ Distribute draft plans via web site, libraries, coffee shops, Burnett County Government Center
- ☐ Mail newsletter
- ☐ Community Displays
- ☐ Open house and public meeting
- ☐ Accept and respond to written comments
- ☐ Notice public hearing according to state statutes

Plan Evaluation, Monitoring, and Amendments (Stage 7)

Planning Activities:

- ☐ Monitor progress towards achieving stated plan goals objectives and indicators
- ☐ Review and revise plan and associated implementation tools as needed

Public Participation Activities:

- ☐ Update implementation of comprehensive plan activities on web page
- ☐ Share amendments with adjacent and overlapping units of government
- ☐ Notify property owners and lease holders of changes of comprehensive plan through
 - Web site
 - Notices in paper
 - Public hearing
 - E - Mailing lists
 - Other

APPENDIX A

Planned Focus Groups

Housing

- Real Estate Agents
- Banks
- Builders
- Indianhead Community Action Agency
- Burnett County Housing Authority
- Developers
- Lumber yards
- Elderly
- Habitat for Humanity
- Church
- St. Croix Chippewa Housing Authority
- Health & Human Services
- Nursing Homes
- Lake Associations
- Hotels – Campgrounds

Economic Development

- Burnett County Development Association Rep.
- Chambers of Commerce Reps.
- Grantsburg Industrial Development Rep.
- Union Tourism Commission Rep.
- BCRCA Rep.
- Tavern League Rep.
- Medical Rep.
- Dept. of Commerce Rep.
- Wis. Dept of Tourism
- St. Croix Tribe Rep.
- Workforce Development??
- School Rep.
- WITC

Natural Resources

- Logger
- Forester
- Hunter
- Fisherman
- DNR
- County Forester
- Wisconsin Woodland Owner Association
- Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Association or other lake association rep.
- Realtor
- Snowmobile Association Rep.
- ATV Assoc. Rep.
- Crex Meadows board member
- National Park Service Rep.
- Burnett County Land Water and Conservation Department

Cultural Resources

- Burnett County Historical Society
- Burnett County Sentinel
- Inter-County Leader
- Grantsburg Historical Society
- St. Croix Chippewa
- Wisconsin Historic Society
- Community Theater
- Schools
- Local Historians
 - Clayton Jorgenson
 - Vernon Peterson
 - Leona Cummings

Agriculture

- Farmers
- Burnett Dairy Cooperative
- Wineries
- Farmers Market
- Future Farmers of America
- Ag suppliers
- Nurseries
- Master Gardeners
- Farm Services Agency
- Land and Water Conservation Department
- DATCP

Transportation

- County Highway Commissioner
- State Patrol
- Wis. Dept. of Transportation District Office Rep.
- County Sherriff
- Burnett County Development Association Rep.
- Emergency Services Director
- Cyclist
- Pedestrian
- Handicapped Representative
- Conservationist
- Town Rep.
- Village Rep.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

- St. Croix Chippewa
- Towns Association Rep.
- Village Rep.
- Dept. of Corrections
- Dept. of Administration
- National Park Service
- Burnett County
- School Districts (Union, Webster, Grantsburg)

Land Use

- Realtors
- Lake Associations

- Ag
- Foresters
- Transportation
- Emergency Services
- Schools
- Economic Dev. Groups
- Local Units of Government

Community Facilities and Utilities

- Power Companies – Northwestern Electric Company & Polk Burnett Electric
- Waste Management; Allied Waste
- Telephone: Farmers Independent; Centurytel; Uniontel
- Cell Phone Providers
- Villages and Village Residents Government
- Septic Systems Company
- Hospitals
- Emergency Service Organizations
- Ham Radio Operators
- Library Rep.
- Schools