

# **Public Participation and Education Plan**

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Report Prepared by:  
Mike Koles, UWEX Waupaca County Community Development Educator  
Dave Thiel, Waupaca County Economic Development Director  
Becky Roberts, UWEX/UWSP Center for Land Use Education  
Doug Miskowiak, UWEX/UWSP Center for Land Use Education

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Helene Pohl, Town of St. Lawrence

Terry Murphy, Village of Iola

Don Fabricius, Town of Farmington

Tom Wilson, Town of Farmington alternate member

Dick Eiberger, Town of Fremont

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# Waupaca County Comprehensive Plan: Public Participation and Education Plan

## **I. Background**

### **A. Introduction**

The concept of citizen participation is a fundamental principle of American democracy. In our system of governance, our representative leaders promise that we are a government “of the people, by the people, for the people”. This promise can be fulfilled to the extent that two actions occur. First, appointed and elected leaders must fulfill the responsibilities of informing, being informed by, and interacting with the public. Second, the public must reciprocate by learning from, teaching, and providing opinions to the leaders.

Failure to fulfill any of these responsibilities results in the lack of a fully effective representative democracy. At best, governments become less “governments for the people and by the people”, and more “service providers” for “taxpayers” (Hinds, 2001). At worst, governments become providers for the few token citizens that voice an opinion regardless of whether or not it is a majority one.

Waupaca County and the municipalities within its boundaries fully believe in and are committed to the promise of a representative democracy. To that end, the Waupaca County Board of Supervisors and local governing bodies pledge to the citizenry that it will inform, be informed by, and interact with the public throughout the comprehensive planning process. Furthermore, these leaders will actively work to provide and promote broad-based and continuous opportunities for public participation throughout the process so that they can learn from, teach, and hear opinions from the citizenry.

The Waupaca County planning process, which was adopted during the September 2003 County Board Meeting, offers multiple opportunities for the elected and appointed leaders and citizenry to become engaged. This Public Participation and Education Plan outlines those opportunities and expands on them in order to develop an atmosphere that will result in a grassroots, bottom up, citizen driven comprehensive plan.

## **B. Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law**

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law was adopted in October 1999. The law is a culmination of work by a unique coalition of groups representing various interests, including realtors, builders, and environmentalists. The law provides a framework for local community comprehensive planning and defines the components of a comprehensive plan. The definition provides communities with some guidance for local efforts and includes 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. The law requires that after January 1, 2010, local government actions that impact land use must be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

## **C. Public Participation Required in the Law**

In order to promote the promise of democracy, the Comprehensive Planning Law requires communities to foster public participation.

Wisconsin Statutes, Section 66.1001(4)(a)...

*"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 to respond to such comments."*

## **D. Waupaca County Comprehensive Planning**

In October 2000, the Chairman of the Waupaca County Board appointed the Smart Growth Advisory Committee to study whether or not Waupaca County and its municipalities should engage in comprehensive planning. The Committee returned an affirmative answer and in September 2001, the Waupaca County Board of Supervisors approved developing a comprehensive plan contingent upon receiving State grant funding. During this time period, 33 of 34 municipalities entered into contract with Waupaca County to complete comprehensive plans, thus creating a team of communities that will collectively work toward the development of one county and 33 individual community comprehensive plans. In July 2002, the Smart Growth

Advisory Committee selected Foth and Van Dyke as the project consultant. In November 2002, a grant application was submitted to the state and a grant was received the following February. During the ensuing months, representatives from each community, referred to as the Core Planning Committee, worked to develop and recommend a planning process to the County Board that fit their needs. The County Board approved the process and contracts with Foth and Van Dyke and the Waupaca County Economic Development Corporation (which will manage the project at the county level) in September 2003.

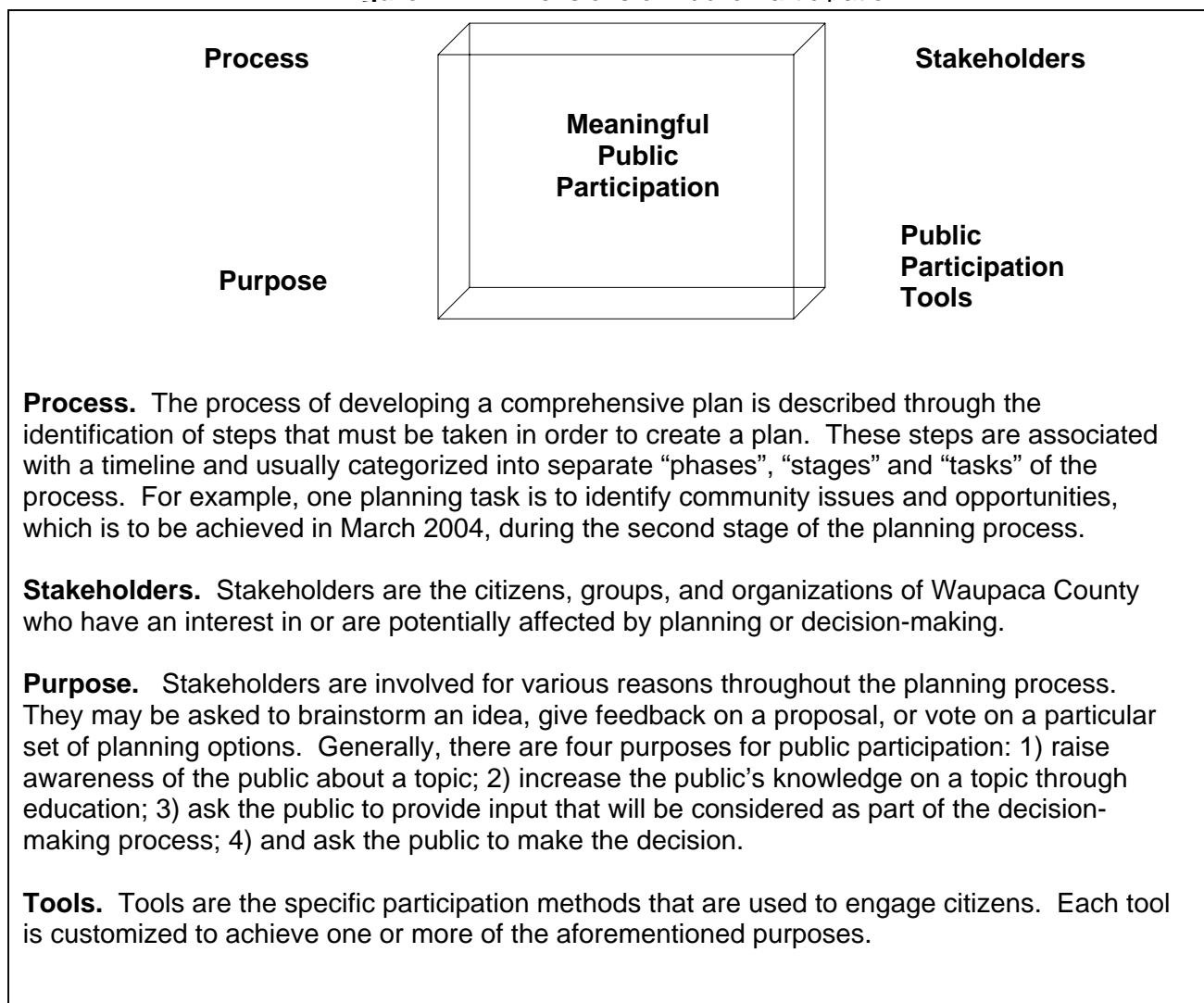
During the development and following the approval of the planning process, a committee of five community representatives from across the county, referred to as the Public Participation and Education Subcommittee, worked to learn about public participation and develop the Public Participation and Education Plan. This document is both intended to be adopted by the County Board and to be used as a template for each municipality so they can adopt *“written procedures that are designed to foster public participation”* at the local level (*Wisconsin Statutes Section 66.1001(4)(a)*). It is recommended that local municipalities either adopt this document as is or enhance public participation efforts as desired.

## **II. The Public Participation Process**

### **A. The 4 Dimensions of Public Participation**

Public participation efforts that successfully engage the citizenry and link their involvement to decision-making focus on effectively coordinating the four dimensions of public participation. The four dimensions include: 1) the planning process; 2) stakeholders; 3) purpose; and 4) tools. Simply, during any given stage in (1) the planning process, a certain set of (2) stakeholders will be engaged for a certain (3) purpose using specific types of (4) public participation tools (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. 4-Dimensions of Public Participation**



## 1. The Process Dimension

The Waupaca County Comprehensive Planning Process is separated into 8 stages. Certain tasks are associated with each of these stages. These stages include: 1) Pre-planning; 2) Education and Background Information Gathering; 3) Identification of Issues, Opportunities, and Desires; 4) Element Education and Setting Goals and Measurable Objectives; 5) Constraints Identification; 6) Land Use Goals, Objectives, and Mapping; 7) Decision-Making and Policy and Program Development; and 8) Document Revision and Approval. The tasks associated with these stages are outlined in **Appendix 1**. A timeline that identifies specific meetings is included in **Appendix 2**.

## 2. The Stakeholder Dimension

All citizens, groups, landowners, organizations, parties, etc. who have an interest in or are potentially affected by comprehensive planning are stakeholders in the comprehensive planning process. The Public Participation and Education Subcommittee conducted a stakeholder analysis in order to identify key stakeholders who should be actively invited to participate in the process. **Table 1** lists these stakeholders and will provide guidance to the committee and local communities as they attempt to engage the public.

**Table 1. Stakeholder Analysis**

### **Housing Element**

- 1) Developers
- 2) Building Contractors
- 3) Realtors
- 4) Residents in Low Income – Moderate Income Housing
- 5) Residents in Retirement Homes – Seniors
- 6) Residents in Manufactured Housing
- 7) CAP Services
- 8) Renters
- 9) Homeowners
- 10) Condo Owners

### **Cultural / Historical Preservation Element**

- 1) Area Historical Societies
  - a) Waupaca
  - b) Marion
  - c) Iola
- 2) Public Libraries
- 3) Winchester Academy



**Table 1. Stakeholder Analysis (continued)**

**Agriculture Element**

- 1) Farm Bureau
- 2) Large Landowners / Lessees
- 3) Landowners
- 4) Farmers
  - a) Dairy
  - b) Beef
  - c) Orchards
  - d) Cash Crop
  - e) Elk
  - f) Truck
  - g) Young – Old
  - h) Family – Ag Business
- 5) Horse Owners – Any Horse Organizations
- 6) Land Trusts

**Natural Resources Element**

- 1) Environmental Groups (such as)
  - a. Hook & Gun Clubs (Conservation Clubs)
  - b. Lake Districts
  - c. Land Trusts (Northeast Wisconsin)
- 2) Department of Natural Resources
- 3) County Waste/Recycling
- 4) Anti-DNR/Private Property Rights Groups
- 5) Non-metallic Mining Interests
- 6) Snowmobile Clubs
- 7) County Land Conservation Department
- 8) Parks Departments

**Transportation**

- 1) Department of Transportation
- 2) Public Works Departments
- 3) Airport
- 4) Cab/Bus Companies
- 5) School Districts (school buses)
- 6) Bicycle/ Walking Trail Enthusiasts
- 7) Snowmobile Clubs
- 8) County Highway Department
- 9) Parks Departments

**Utilities / Community Facilities Element**

- 1) Sewer & Water Districts
- 2) Public Works Departments
- 3) Industries
- 4) Utility Companies
- 5) Emergency Government
- 6) Fire Departments
- 7) Ambulance
- 8) Sheriff Police
- 9) Cell Tower/Telecommunication Interests
- 10) Parks Departments

**Table 1.** Stakeholder Analysis (continued)

<p><b><u>Economic Development Element</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Commercial – Retail - Tourism</li> <li>2) Industrial/Manufacturing – Large - Small</li> <li>3) Chambers of Commerce</li> <li>4) Department of Transportation</li> <li>5) Lumber Companies</li> <li>6) Airport</li> <li>7) Golf Courses</li> </ol> <p><b><u>General</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) School Districts – Administration</li> <li>2) Youth</li> <li>3) Retirees - Seniors</li> <li>4) Service Clubs (e.g., Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions)</li> <li>5) Religious Groups</li> <li>6) Different Income Levels</li> </ol>
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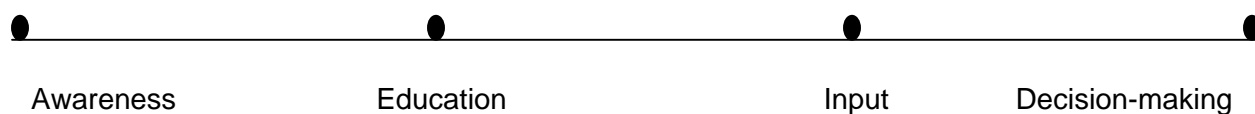
### 3. The Purpose Dimension

The ultimate purpose for involving citizens in planning is to fulfill the promise of developing a community that is “of the people, by the people, and for the people” by making decisions that best address their needs and concerns. In order to learn from, teach, and receive opinions of the public, elected and appointed officials attempt to involve citizens in four basic ways:

- a. Raise public **awareness** of the planning project and related planning issues
- b. **Educate** the public about these issues so that an informed opinion can be given
- c. Gather **input** from the public regarding their opinions
- d. Engage the public in **decision-making**

These methods can be conceptualized in a hierarchy or continuum (**Figure 2.**), which is explained further below.

**Figure 2.** Public Participation Continuum



### **Awareness**

Awareness raising efforts are intended to inform and update the public about the planning effort. Building awareness must occur prior to citizens providing input. Simply, the public must first know about a meeting before they can attend. Effective awareness tools not only state the 'when,' 'where,' and 'what' of the event, but also stimulate citizen interest.

### **Education**

Education efforts are intended to increase the public's capacity to provide informed input and make informed decisions. Input can certainly be given and decisions made absent education, but they would be characterized as uninformed. Just as a general prefers to have his or her soldiers properly equipped and trained for battle, community leaders prefer to receive informed input and have knowledgeable decisions made.

### **Input**

Input efforts are intended to help decision-makers learn more about the community and also better understand what citizens value, believe in, or desire. Gathering public input helps them create planning products or make decisions that reflect the existing situation of the community as well as citizen ideals.

### **Decision-making**

Decision-making is the highest level of public participation. Decision-making authority is placed in the hands of the citizens through the use of tools like planning committees or commissions.

## **4. The Tools Dimension**

Public participation tools, like other planning tools, help achieve planning tasks. Some planning tasks rely upon non-participatory tools. For example, population and housing projections are used to analyze demographic trends. Other planning tasks can only be accomplished with the assistance of the public; therefore, the achievement of these tasks is reliant upon the use of tools that engage the public. Public participation tools that have been chosen for the Waupaca County Comprehensive Planning Process are discussed in Section III.

### **III. Public Participation in the Waupaca County Comprehensive Planning Process**

This section of the Public Participation and Education Plan is divided into two parts. Part A describes the tools that will be used to raise awareness throughout the planning process. Part B describes tools that will be used to educate, gather input, and involve citizens in decision-making during each distinct stage in the process.

#### **A. Awareness Raising Tools**

##### **Newsletters**

A newsletter will be used to update the public on recent progress in the planning process and inform them of upcoming events. It is both an awareness and educational tool. It will be published roughly 4 times per year, thus making it possible to have an issue provided between every major stage of the planning process. The newsletter will be sent to all local elected officials, planning committee members, and appointed officials involved in the process. Hard copies will be provided at the libraries and courthouse. Communities can choose to send to additional citizens at their expense. Periodic planning updates can also appear in existing newsletters already in circulation within the community (e.g., school district newsletter, nonprofit groups, etc.)

##### **Community Display**

A display that highlights major milestones in the planning process will be located in local libraries and the courthouse.

##### **Website**

A comprehensive planning website will be continuously updated and used as a site to post planning documents, maps and other pertinent information. A calendar will also be used to post upcoming opportunities for involvement.

##### **Placemats**

Placemats will be given away free to area restaurants. They could be updated several times throughout the process to reflect new planning information.

##### **Yardsticks**

The committee will investigate the use of yardsticks as an awareness tool.

### **Mass Media**

Media outlets, such as, radio, newspapers, and buyer's guides will be used to the greatest extent possible. Additionally, the editor from each local newspaper will be asked to become a non-voting member of a cluster committee.

### **Public Notice and Comment**

All meetings in the planning process are open to the public and public input is encouraged. Notice of all meetings will be legally posted. A portion of each agenda will be appropriated for public comment.

## **B. Public Participation Tools by Planning Stage**

### **Stage 1: Pre-planning**

#### **Tasks to be Achieved:**

- ✓ raise public awareness about planning
- ✓ educate citizens about planning
- ✓ citizen representatives develop planning process
- ✓ citizen representatives negotiate consultant contract and project budget
- ✓ citizen representatives establish ground rules and responsibilities
- ✓ citizen representatives create public participation and education plans

#### **Tools to be Used:**

##### **County Board (used for decision-making)**

As of the writing of this document, the County Board had already approved comprehensive planning contingent upon receiving a grant, approved contracts with Foth and Van Dyke and the Waupaca County Economic Development Corporation, and approved the planning process. The County Board is also responsible for adopting a Public Participation and Education Plan.

##### **Core Planning Committee (CPC) (used for input gathering and decision-making)**

The Core Planning Committee is responsible for developing the County Comprehensive Plan. As of the writing of this document, each local governmental unit had already appointed a representative to the Core Planning Committee. The County Board Chair appointed two members from the County Board. The CPC has already:

- ✓ recommended a contract inclusive of an agreed upon planning process.
- ✓ appointed the Public Participation and Education and Management Subcommittees.

During this stage the Core Planning Committee is also responsible for:

- ✓ approving the planning process Ground Rules and Responsibilities.
- ✓ recommending a County Public Participation and Education Plan to the County Board.

Management Subcommittee of the Core Planning Committee (used for input gathering and decision-making)

The Management Subcommittee is comprised of one representative from each Cluster and was appointed by the CPC. During this stage the Management Subcommittee has already:

- ✓ recommended a contract inclusive of an agreed upon planning process to the CPC.
- ✓ recommended planning process Ground Rules and Responsibilities to CPC.

Public Participation and Education Subcommittee of the Core Planning Committee (used for input gathering and decision-making)

The Public Participation and Education Subcommittee (PPE) is comprised of one representative from each Cluster and was appointed by the CPC. During this stage the PPE is responsible for:

- ✓ recommending a Public Participation and Education Plan to the CPC.

Local Governmental Units (used for decision-making)

As of the writing of this document, local governmental units had already adopted resolutions, thereby entering into contract with Waupaca County, to complete a comprehensive plan for the County and each municipality and appointed a CPC member. During this stage in the process they are also responsible for:

- ✓ adopting Village Powers (if applicable).

**Stage 2: Education and Background Information Gathering**

**Tasks to be Achieved:**

- ✓ raise awareness about planning process
- ✓ educate citizens and local plan commissions
- ✓ local governments form local plan commissions or committees or both
- ✓ citizen experts field check data

**Tools to be Used:**

Local Governmental Units (used for decision-making)

During this stage, local governmental units are responsible for:

- ✓ appointing a plan commission or committee or both.
- ✓ adopting a local Public Participation and Education Plan.
- ✓ working with county interns to field check and update the existing land use data.
- ✓ appointing 3 members to the Cluster Committee.

#### Formation of Cluster Committees *(used for input gathering and decision making)*

Clusters are groups of communities in 5 regions of Waupaca County that will meet on the same evening in the same location in order to expedite and increase coordination of the planning process. Each Cluster Committee is comprised of 3 representatives from each local unit of government in the cluster. The Cluster Committee is the placeholder for education and discussion of intergovernmental cooperation.

#### Plan Commission Workshops and other Educational Efforts/Counseling *(used for awareness and education)*

Two Plan Commission workshops, individual community education programs on planning fundamentals and the Waupaca County process, and individualized counseling will be used to increase the public's capacity.

#### Kickoff Cluster Informational Meeting *(see Cluster Informational Meeting #1 in Appendix 2 for more detail) (used for awareness, education, and input gathering)*

A kickoff cluster informational meeting will be held in each cluster to increase awareness and understanding of the process. The citizens at the meeting will select a Chair and Vice-Chair.

### **Stage 3: Identification of issues, opportunities and desires**

#### **Tasks to be Achieved:**

- ✓ identify community issues and opportunities
- ✓ develop planning slogan

#### **Tools to be Used:**

##### Slogan Contest *(used for awareness raising and education)*

Local youth will be invited to participate in a contest to develop a slogan for the Waupaca County planning process. First place: \$125 and use of slogan. Second place: \$50. Third place: \$25. The slogan contest will occur in Fall, 2004.

Survey (used for input gathering)

A survey will be used to identify citizen opinions regarding issues, opportunities, desires, and goals.

Focus Groups (used for input gathering)

5 focus groups will be used to identify “expert-based” issues, opportunities and desires related to the planning elements.

Cluster Workshop #2 (see Appendix 3 for more detail on each workshop) (used for awareness raising and input gathering)

Cluster Workshops will be used to identify citizen based issues, opportunities, and desires.

Core Planning Committee (used for input gathering and decision-making)

The CPC will finalize the issues, opportunities, and desires for the County Comprehensive Plan.

Local Committees/Commissions (used for input gathering and decision-making)

Local committees/commissions will finalize local issues, opportunities, and desires statements.

**Stage 4: Element Education and Setting Goals and Measurable Objectives**

**Tasks to be Achieved:**

- ✓ education related to each element
- ✓ develop goals and measurable objectives related to planning elements

**Tools to be Used:**

Education Programs (used for education)

Education programs will be held during cluster meetings to increase knowledge of planning related topics as they pertain to the elements.

Local Committees/Commissions (used for input gathering and decision-making)

Local committees/commissions will develop goals and measurable objectives for each of the planning elements during three separate cluster workshops (#3, #5, and #7). Three other cluster workshops will be used to share draft goals and objectives with the public and receive feedback (#4, #6, and #8)



### **Stage 5: Constraints Identification**

#### **Tasks to be Achieved:**

- ✓ develop, review, and prioritize potential development/land use constraints
- ✓ develop future land use categories that will be applied to a map

#### **Tools to be Used:**

##### Education Programs (used for education)

Education programs will be held during focus group, CPC, and cluster informational meetings (#9) to increase understanding of constraints identification.

##### Focus Groups (used for input gathering)

Focus groups will be held to identify “expert-based” constraints, which will be used as a foundation for a discussion.

##### Core Planning Committee (used for decision-making)

The CPC will choose constraints for the County Comprehensive Plan.

##### Cluster Committees (used for decision-making)

The Cluster Committees (meetings #9, #10, #11) will choose constraints for each cluster and select future land use categories. During Cluster Informational Workshop #12, the public will be actively invited to give feedback on land use goals, objectives, and future categories.

##### Newspaper Flyer (used for awareness)

Distribute County constraints map and necessary narrative in the local and county newspaper.

### **Stage 6: Land Use Goals, Objectives, and Mapping**

#### **Tasks to be Achieved:**

- ✓ review and finalize future land use categories
- ✓ review and finalize land use goals and objectives
- ✓ review and finalize future land use map

**Tools to be Used:**Core Planning Committee (used for input gathering and decision-making)

The CPC will finalize future land use categories, land use goals and objectives, and the future land use map for the County Comprehensive Plan.

Local Committees/Commissions (used for input gathering and decision-making)

The Local Committees/Commissions will finalize future land use categories, land use goals and objectives, and the future land use map for the local plans during Cluster Workshops (#13, #14, #15).

**Stage 7: Decision-making and Policy and Program Development****Tasks to be Achieved:**

- ✓ Recommend plan policies, programs, and implementation tools

**Tools to be Used:**Local Committees/Commissions (used for input gathering and decision-making)

The Local Committees/Commissions will develop local plan policies, programs, and implementation tool recommendations for the local plans (#13, #14, #15, #16).

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Core Planning Committee (used for decision-making)

The Core Planning Committee will develop plan policies, programs, and implementation tool recommendations for the County Comprehensive Plan.

**Stage 8: Document Revision and Approval****Tasks to be Achieved:**

- ✓ public review and comment on draft plan
- ✓ adopt plans via ordinance

**Tools to be Used:**Local Committees/Commissions (decision-making)

The Local Committees/Commissions will recommend final draft of local plan for adoption.

Open House (used for input gathering)

An open house will be to allow for review and written comment on the proposed plan.

Public Hearing *(used for input gathering)*

A public hearing will be held in each local community to allow for review and comment on the proposed plan.

Local Governmental Units *(used for decision-making)*

The local governing bodies will adopt local plan through an ordinance.

County Planning and Zoning Committee *(used for decision-making)*

The County Planning and Zoning Committee will recommend final draft of County Comprehensive Plan to the County Board.

Public Hearing *(used for input gathering)*

A public hearing will be held in to allow for review and comment on the proposed plan.

County Board *(used for decision-making)*

The County Board will adopt a County Comprehensive Plan through an ordinance.