

BACKGROUND

In November of 2001, the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC) prepared and submitted a Comprehensive Planning Grant Application on behalf of Iowa County and 22 local jurisdictions. In April of 2002, the Comprehensive Planning Grant from the Office of Land Information Services (OLIS) was awarded. The following jurisdictions were included in the grant application:

TOWNS	VILLAGES	CITIES	COUNTY
Arena	Arena	Dodgeville	Iowa
Clyde	Avoca	Mineral Point	
Dodgeville	Blanchardville		
Eden	Highland		
Highland	Hollandale		
Linden	Linden		
Mifflin	Ridgeway		
Mineral Point			
Moscow			
Pulaski			
Ridgeway			
Waldwick			
Wyoming			

As part of the comprehensive planning program, each jurisdiction is required to formally adopt a public participation plan. Each jurisdiction identified above as well as the County, will be adopting their own public participation plan. The public participation plans will share commonalities, but allows each jurisdiction to utilize specific public participation tools that may be best for their particular jurisdiction.

INTENT/PURPOSE

Pursuant to Sec. 66.1001(4)(a), Wisconsin Statutes

“The governing body of local governmental unit shall adopt written procedures that are designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every state of the preparation of a comprehensive plan. The written procedures shall be provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative or amended elements of a comprehensive plan and shall provide an opportunity for written comments on the plan to be submitted by members of the public to the governing body and for the governing body to respond to such written comments.”

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Public participation efforts will be a combined effort between the local jurisdictions, SWWRPC, and UW-Extension. SWWRPC will be focusing on public participation efforts that serve the entire county as well as the cluster groups that have been established as part of the Iowa County Comprehensive Planning Process. For example, SWWRPC will be coordinating and distributing the county-wide survey, press releases and meeting notices for the cluster groups, holding county wide open houses, cluster group visioning sessions, etc. Local jurisdictions will be responsible for coordinating specific efforts on their individual local level. For example, each local jurisdiction is responsible for generating and posting local plan commission notices, posting cluster meeting notices, posting and conducting of at least one public hearing, etc.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

The table below outlines a number of ways the public can be involved in the Town of Ridgeway’s comprehensive planning process*.

	PUBLIC AWARENESS	PUBLIC EDUCATION <i>(Increasing Level of Involvement)</i>	PUBLIC INPUT	PUBLIC INTERACTION	PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP
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PURPOSE	To increase the overall awareness of the comprehensive planning process.	To provide the public with information to assist in understanding the problems, alternatives, and solutions.	To obtain feedback on issues, alternatives, and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public to ensure that concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To place decision making in the hands of the public.
METHODS OF INVOLVEMENT	<p>1. The Town of Ridgeway has been very active in land use regulation and control since 1992 and has had an extensive Land Use Ordinance. As a result, the citizens of the Town of Ridgeway are aware of the land use regulations within the Town.</p> <p>2. Meeting Notices Newsletters and meeting notices are posted encouraging residents to attend meetings of the Land Use Commission.</p>	<p>1. Displays / Exhibits To make the public more aware and informed, newsletters are sent out quarterly emphasizing Smart Growth and the requirements of the comprehensive plan.</p> <p>Bulletins and posters are posted in the Town Hall and people are encouraged to view and ask questions.</p> <p>2. Public Education & Information Meetings Public meetings.</p>	<p>1. Opinion Surveys Opinion surveys have been sent to all residents and the resulting information reviewed and discussed by the Land Use Commission.</p> <p>Citizens are encouraged to attend the town annual meeting to speak and react to the Smart Growth information. They will be encouraged to participate in discussions on what they envision for the Town of Ridgeway in the future.</p> <p>2. Public Hearing Provide opportunity for citizens to speak and react to a proposal in a public setting before elected officials.</p> <p>(Note: A public hearing is the minimal requirement for public participation under the Wisconsin “Smart Growth” Law.)</p>	<p>1. Work directly with the public to ensure that concerns are consistently understood and considered. Hold a Public Meeting for citizens to interact with planners and elected officials..</p>	<p>1. Plan Commission The Land Use Commission is the official planning body and is responsible for comprehensive planning activities and advises the town board on local land use issues.</p>

*Note: The Town of Ridgeway reserves the right to modify the steps above and to utilize additional steps, means, and/or methods in order to gain additional public participation or understanding throughout the comprehensive planning process.