

**Town of \_\_\_\_\_, Winnebago County**  
**Public Participation Plan for Amending the Comprehensive Plan**

**This document is provided as an example of a public participation plan. Towns should work with their corporation counsel and others to ensure that their adopted public participation plan complies with all requirements.**

**Introduction**

The Town of \_\_\_\_ adopted a comprehensive plan on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, pursuant to the authority in Sec. 66.1001(4)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes. That plan was adopted following a thoughtful public process involving local residents, town officials, and others.

Although a comprehensive plan is designed to describe a long-term vision for how a municipality will develop in the coming years, it is not a static document. An adopted plan can be amended from time to time to address changing circumstances and priorities. Any of the following can propose an amendment to the Town's comprehensive plan:

1. the Town Board,
2. the Town Chair,
3. the Plan Commission,
4. a resident of the town,
5. a person having title to land within the town, or
6. a person having a contractual interest in land to be directly affected by a proposed amendment.

The procedure for amending an adopted plan follows the same requirements used to adopt the initial plan. This public participation plan describes the ways in which residents and other are to be involved in considering any amendments to the adopted plan.

**Objectives for Public Involvement**

Public participation is intended to achieve the following objectives to the greatest extent possible:

- Give the public access to information related to the plan and any amendments.
- Give the public meaningful opportunities to provide input.
- Engage people of all races, ethnic backgrounds, and income levels.
- Strengthen the sense of community and civic engagement.
- Ensure that everyone has the opportunity to be involved throughout the process.
- Ensure that all decisions are subject to public oversight.
- Produce better planning decisions.
- Support and add credibility to all Town decision-making processes.
- Strengthen the relationship between decision makers and citizens.

**Public Participation Opportunities**

1. **Website.** The Town may post information on its website, including documents, meeting agendas, and minutes.
2. **Press Releases.** The Town may issue press releases and other public information pieces at key points in the process to facilitate awareness and education of events and overall plan creation progress.
3. **Written comments.** The Town Board and the Plan Commission will always welcome written comments. The Town may respond to written comments as appropriate.
4. **Advisory committee.** If the Town initiates a 10-year update of the comprehensive plan, the Town Board may appoint an ad hoc advisory committee of at least three people to work on the update. Alternatively, the Plan Commission can work on the update.
5. **Meetings.** All meetings will be open to the public and allow opportunities for public comments.
6. **Meeting Notices.** The Town will post meeting notices for each meeting and event in a timely manner at accessible locations, and the notices will meet the requirements for proper notification regarding date, time, location, etc.
7. **Open house.** Depending on the nature of the proposed amendment, the Town Plan Commission may host an open house to present the proposed amendment and to solicit feedback from town residents and others.
8. **Notification of resolution.** If the Plan Commission adopts a resolution recommending amendment of the plan, the Town Clerk shall forward a copy of the resolution to the Town Board and to all of the following:
  - a. The clerk for Winnebago County
  - b. The clerk of every local government unit that is adjacent to the Town of \_\_\_\_\_;
  - c. The Wisconsin Land Council;
  - d. The State of Wisconsin Department of Administration;
  - e. The East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission; and
  - f. The public libraries that serve the Town of \_\_\_\_\_.
9. **Public hearing notice.** After the Plan Commission recommends the amended plan, the Town shall publish a Class 1 public notice at least 30 days in advance of the public hearing. At the discretion of the Town Clerk or Town Chair, other notice may be provided. The public notice shall contain the information set forth in Sec. 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes.
10. **Other notice for public hearing.** At least 30 days before the public hearing, the Town Planner shall provide written notice of the public hearing to all of the following:
  - a. An operator who has obtained, or made application for, a permit that is described under Sec. 295.12(3)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes.
  - b. A person who has registered a marketable nonmetallic mineral deposit under Sec. 295.20 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

- c. Any other property owner or leaseholder who has an interest in property pursuant to which the person may extract nonmetallic mineral resources, if the property owner or leaseholder requests in writing the town provide the property owner or leaseholder notice of the public hearing.

In addition, the Town, at least 30 days prior to the public hearing, shall provide written notice of the public hearing to those persons who have requested to receive notice of any proposed ordinance that affects the allowable use of the property owned by the person.

11. **Public hearing.** Allowing for proper public hearing notice, the Town Board will hold a public hearing to consider the plan as recommended by the Plan Commission.
12. **Distribution of adopted plan.** If the Town Board adopts an ordinance amending the Town's comprehensive plan, the plan and adoption ordinance shall be distributed by the Town to recipients listed in paragraph 8, above.
13. **Other activities.** The Town may in its discretion employ other means to involve the public in the review and adoption of the proposed amendment.

**The town may do other things to involve the public. Examples of such efforts are listed below.**

1. **Community survey.** A community survey will be distributed to all households in the Town. The survey will be designed to obtain public opinions and preferences on key subjects addressed in each of the nine comprehensive plan elements.
2. **Issue identification meeting.** The Plan Commission will host meeting to refine/reaffirm the Town's long-term vision and to create public awareness of and provide education about the planning process and to answer questions. Plan Commission members will lead an exercise that will engage community participants in a discussion about issues and opportunities that should be addressed in the comprehensive planning process. Participants will also set their top priorities over the next 20 years by ranking issues and opportunities.
3. **Visual preference survey.** The Town will conduct a visual preference survey (VPS) to evaluate the visual quality of various types of development (i.e., single family residential, apartments, retail establishments, industrial buildings, office, etc.). A group of residents will be asked to take photographs of buildings, places, and features of the community that they like and do not like. The public will rank these photographs to determine visual preferences for different types and styles of development. The results can be used to create specific plan recommendations and implementation ordinances to facilitate the types and styles of development the public prefers. The VPS can be a powerful and effective planning tool for gauging the public's opinions about the visual quality of development and land use patterns that the community desires.
4. **Stakeholder interviews.** Plan Commission members will/may conduct one-on-one interviews with stakeholders to gain additional input for the comprehensive planning process.

**Note: If an activity is listed (i.e., the town will/shall) be sure it is done as described; otherwise the procedural requirements may not be satisfied and call into question the amendment if adopted.**

The Town Board for the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ adopted this public participation plan on \_\_\_\_\_, 2015, and shall remain in effect until it is repealed or amended.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk