State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan

The Nine Key Elements

A city's **Comprehensive Plan** is like a roadmap for how the community should grow and change over the next 20 years. State law requires that it include the following parts:

1. Issues & Opportunities

This section provides background about the community and sets overall goals.
It includes:

- Population, household, and job forecasts
- Demographics (age, education, income, employment trends)
- A vision statement and main objectives for the community's future

2. Housing

Plans for making sure there's enough housing for current and future needs.
It covers:

- The age, condition, value, and occupancy of existing homes
- Policies and programs to:
    - Offer housing choices for people of all ages and income levels
    - Provide options for people with special needs
    - Make land available for workforce housing
    - Maintain and improve existing housing

3. Transportation

Plans for all ways of getting around, such as:

- Roads and highways
- Public transit
- Walking, biking, scooters, and accessibility for people with disabilities
- Rail, air, water, and trucking

It also compares local plans to state and regional transportation plans and identifies future transportation needs.

4. Utilities & Community Facilities

Plans for essential services and facilities, including:

- Water, sewer, stormwater, and waste management
- Parks, cemeteries, and recreation
- Electricity, telecommunications, and energy facilities
- Schools, libraries, health care, childcare, police, fire, and rescue services

This section describes what exists now, when updates or expansions will be needed, and how to meet future demand.

5. Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources

Plans for conserving and managing resources such as:

- Groundwater, forests, farmland, wetlands, wildlife, and natural habitats
- Historical and cultural sites
- Parks, recreation areas, and open spaces
- Environmentally sensitive areas

6. Economic Development

Plans to support and grow the local economy.
It includes:

- An analysis of the local labor force and business base
- Desired types of new businesses or industries
- Strengths and weaknesses in attracting businesses
- Locations for business development
- Strategies for redeveloping contaminated (brownfield) sites
- Available county, regional, and state economic development programs

7. Intergovernmental Cooperation

Plans for working with neighboring communities, school districts, and other government units.
It addresses:

- Shared services and facilities
- Agreements with other jurisdictions
- Potential conflicts and ways to resolve them

8. Land Use

Plans for how land will be used in the future.
It covers:

- Current types of land use (housing, agriculture, commercial, industrial, etc.)
- Future demand and price trends for land
- Redevelopment opportunities and conflicts
- Projections of land use needs for the next 20 years (in 5-year steps)

- Maps showing current and future land uses, sensitive areas, and areas to be served by public utilities

9. Implementation

Plans for putting the comprehensive plan into action.
It includes:

- Specific steps and timelines
- Possible changes to zoning and subdivision rules
- A way to track progress toward goals
- A process to update the plan at least once every 10 years