

# **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN .....	1-1
State Planning Legislation .....	1-1
HOW TO USE THIS PLAN .....	1-2
PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS .....	1-3
Plan Amendment.....	1-4
Public Participation Process.....	1-5
VISION STATEMENT .....	1-8



## PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The *Town of Morgan 20-Year Comprehensive Plan* is a legal document that provides the policy framework from which town officials will base their future land use decisions. This comprehensive plan was prepared to address the future development and preservation concerns affecting the town during the next 20 years. The goal of the plan is to efficiently accommodate the many needs of a growing community while establishing measures to preserve the town's open spaces, agricultural lands, natural features, and general country setting. The plan is to serve as a guide to ensure consistent decisions are being made in regards to environmental protection, farmland preservation, transportation expansion, housing development, location of public services, and compatible economic development.

The future land use map, referred to in this document as the General Plan Design (GPD), **Map 3.1**, is the cornerstone of the town's comprehensive plan. Several goals, along with detailed objectives, policies, and programs provide a roadmap for town officials and residents to follow as they work toward the implementation of the comprehensive plan. This GPD map shall be used for reference and in conjunction with the Oconto County's zoning ordinances, Town of Morgan ordinances, and other planning materials to guide future decisions on where and how the Town of Morgan should be developed as well as preserved during the next 20 years.

### **State Planning Legislation**

The *Town of Morgan 20-Year Comprehensive Plan* was prepared to appropriately address the following required nine elements of a comprehensive plan as outlined in s. 66.1001, Wis. Stats.

1. Issues and Opportunities
2. Housing
3. Transportation
4. Utilities and Community Facilities
5. Agriculture, Natural, and Cultural Resources
6. Economic Development
7. Intergovernmental Cooperation
8. Land Use
9. Implementation

Comprehensive Planning legislation s. 66.1001, Wis. Stats. further states:

“Beginning on January 1, 2010, if a local governmental unit engages in any of the following actions, those actions shall be consistent with that local governmental unit's comprehensive plan:

- (a) Official mapping established or amended under s. 62.23 (6).
- (b) Local subdivision regulation under s. 236.45 or 236.46.
- (c) County zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 59.69.
- (d) City or village zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 62.23 (7).
- (e) Town zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 60.61 or 60.62.
- (f) Zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands under s. 59.692, 61.351 or 62.231.”

## HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

The *Town of Morgan 20-Year Comprehensive Plan* consists of eleven chapters presented in two volumes along with an appendices. **Volume I: Town Plan** is comprised of Chapters 1 through 4. The content of these four chapters meet all the requirements outlined in s. 66.1001, Wis. Stats. The appendix to **Volume I** consists of planning materials generated during the preparation of the *Town of Morgan 20-Year Comprehensive Plan*. **Volume II: County Resources** contains Chapters 5 through 11, along with an appendix that details countywide background information and data.

**Volume I: Town Plan:** This volume describes how the Town of Morgan envisions itself developing during this 20 year planning period. It includes detailed background information and data, development strategies, land use projections, a General Plan Design (future land use map), and a plan implementation schedule.

***Chapter 1: Introduction*** - contains an overview of the purpose of the plan; the planning legislation; plan development process; and the vision statement.

***Chapter 2: Inventory, Trends, and Forecasts*** - extrapolates town specific background information and data compiled at the county level in chapters 5 through 11; identifies land use issues and conflicts; acknowledges continued land use trends; and projects future land use allocations for residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural needs.

***Chapter 3: Future Land Use Plan*** - illustrates a desirable future land use plan through a General Plan Design; designates area for farmland preservation; and defines the characteristics of the future land uses through a series of land use recommendations.

***Chapter 4: Implementation*** - details a work plan to implement the development strategies (goals, objectives, policies, and programs) of the comprehensive plan with identified stakeholders and projected schedule for completion.

***Appendices: Town Plan*** - contains town public participation materials- nominal group results; intergovernmental cooperation workshop results; 2007 town land use inventory; and other relevant input and materials generated or gathered during the plan development process.

**Volume II: County Resources:** The volume contains countywide background information that served as a basis in the development of the town's development strategies and General Plan Design.

***Chapter 5: Natural, Agricultural and Cultural Resources*** - provides a detailed description of the county's unique physical features.

***Chapter 6: Population and Housing*** - presents countywide historic demographic information along with future population and housing projections.

***Chapter 7: Economic Development*** – highlights labor force statistics; economic composition; and provides an analysis of existing and future economic conditions for the town and Oconto County.

***Chapter 8: Transportation*** - describes the county's existing multi-modal

transportation system.

**Chapter 9: Utilities and Community Facilities** - inventories all local and countywide utilities and facilities including schools and emergency services.

**Chapter 10: Intergovernmental Cooperation** - lists the results of three cluster level intergovernmental cooperation workshops held in April 2008 as well as programs to facilitate joint planning and decision making processes with other governmental units.

**Chapter 11: Land Use Controls and Inventory** – provides a detailed inventory of existing land uses for each community and the county as a whole.

**Appendices: County Resources** - includes natural resources information; economic SWOT results; a detailed list of available housing, economic development, and transportation financial and technical resources; existing countywide land use inventory; a glossary of definitions; and other relevant input and materials generated or gathered during the plan development process.

## PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Town of Morgan was one of sixteen communities to enter into an agreement with Oconto County to submit a multi-jurisdictional application to the Wisconsin Department of Administration in 2005 for grant funding to offset the cost of completing/or updating their comprehensive plans. The application was successful, and an award of \$263,000 was made to Oconto County in April 2006. The comprehensive planning grant required recipients to put forth a local match, which could be distributed over a three year period. Oconto County contracted with the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission (BLRPC) to assist in the preparation of the local plans as well as the county's comprehensive plan.

The 36 month multi-jurisdictional planning process was divided into three separate phases:

**First Phase:** Inventorying countywide background information to be used for preparation of the county resource document.

- Countywide background data was collected, analyzed, and presented for review.
- Oconto County Planning Advisory Committee (OCPAC) and communities within the three planning clusters reviewed and provided input on the countywide background materials.
- Three (3) Open Houses were conducted within each of the county's three Planning Clusters (Southern, Central, and Northern). These Open Houses were held in May and June 2007 to allow the public to review countywide background materials, ask questions, and provide feedback.



- A draft of *Volume II: County Resources* was prepared to be used as reference during the completion of the local and county comprehensive plans.

**Second Phase:** Completion and adoption of the local comprehensive plans and adoption of *Volume II: County Resources*.

- The Town of Morgan Plan Commission held its initial planning meeting with BLRPC staff in July 2007 to begin updating the *Town of Morgan Comprehensive Land Use Plan* prepared by Robert E. Lee and Associates, Inc, and adopted by the Morgan Town Board on April 16, 2001.
- Public meetings were held on a monthly basis to review materials and facilitate a number of activities such as Nominal Group Exercise and two Open Houses to gather additional input from residents and landowners.
- The town's vision statement was developed along with the land use goals, objectives, policies and programs by using results from the various issue identification workshops and background data.
- A preliminary General Plan Design was created along with recommended land use strategies to guide future growth, development and conservation within the town over the next 20 years.
- The Oconto County Planning and Zoning Committee and OCPAC finalized *Volume II: County Resources* document. The resource document was distributed for the thirty-day review process and adopted by the Oconto County Board of Supervisors on August 21, 2008.
- The required thirty-day review of the town's plan was held during the month of July 2008 to allow citizens, landowners, neighboring communities, and other interested parties to review the completed draft of the *Town of Morgan 20-Year Comprehensive Plan*.
- Morgan's second Open House was held on August 5, 2008 to allow the public to review the planning materials and provide input as to the contents of the plan.
- The required Public Hearing on the *Town of Morgan 20-Year Comprehensive Plan* was held on August 5, 2008, and the Plan Commission made recommendation for adoption of the plan by the Town Board following the public hearing. Any input received during the review, open house, and public hearing was considered and included in the town's comprehensive plan as appropriate.
- The *Town of Morgan 20-Year Comprehensive Plan* was completed on August 18, 2008 with its adoption as an ordinance by the Morgan Town Board.

**Third Phase:** Completion and adoption of the *Oconto County 20-Year Comprehensive Plan*.

- The Oconto County Planning and Zoning Committee and OCPAC utilized the background information and data gathered during the first planning phase, along with the adopted local comprehensive plans and county resource document completed during the second phase, to prepare the *Oconto County 20-Year Comprehensive Plan*.

## **Plan Amendment**

The first amendment of the Town of Morgan 20-Year Comprehensive Plan began in 2018 with assistance from Oconto County Planning. The updated Town of Morgan 20-Year

Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2020. The focus of this amendment was to update the existing land use data, general plan design, land use recommendations, goals, policies, and implementation steps. The second plan amendment occurred in 2023. The focus of this amendment was to update ordinance and resolution references and include land use recommendations regarding solar and wind energy systems to multiple land use classifications.

## **Public Participation Process**

### **Public Participation Plan**

The key to drafting and adopting a comprehensive plan that fits the town's future planning needs is gathering input from residents and land owners at all plan development stages. In accordance with s. 66.1001(4), Wis. Stats., the Town of Morgan approved "Procedures for Adoption or Amendment of the Town of Morgan Comprehensive Plan" at their Town Board meeting on September 14, 2006. A copy of this public participation plan is included as Appendix A of *Volume I: Town Plan*.

Open meetings were held monthly to review background data, finalize each plan element, and create the General Plan Design. Along with these planning meetings, the following steps were used to gather additional input from the public.

### **Nominal Group Exercise**

On August 7, 2007, the Plan Commission (seven members), town clerk, and one resident participated in a Nominal Group Exercise to identify some of the most important issues the town should address in the future. Each person was given three votes and asked to vote for the issues they thought were priority. The following are the top five issues and concerns facing the town according to this specific issue identification process. All issues on the list were considered during the preparation of the goals, objectives, policies, and programs for the town's comprehensive plan. The entire list of results can be found in Appendix B of *Volume I: Town Plan*.

1. Land divisions limited-no sub-divisions
2. Protect farmland
3. Monitoring groundwater usage and quality
4. Develop trails
5. Right to use land as owners wish

As part of the plan amendment process that began in 2018, the town reviewed and discussed these prior nominal group results as well as county nominal group results. These results and the additional discussion assisted the town in the plan update process.

### **Intergovernmental Cooperation Workshop Results**

An Intergovernmental Cooperation Workshop was conducted on April 16, 2008 for communities located in the southern region of Oconto County. Representatives from each of the communities within the planning cluster were invited to attend the workshop, along with neighboring municipalities, school districts, civic and recreational clubs, Oconto County staff, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and other entities and departments that have an interest in and/or direct impact on the implementation of the area's

comprehensive plans.

The goal of the workshops was to gather input on any current land use issues or conflicts that need to be addressed during the development of the local comprehensive plans as well as the county's plan. Some examples of positive working relationships and current or anticipated future issues and conflicts are listed below. Those in attendance were also asked to provide potential resolutions to those land use problems. Examples of some of the resolutions discussed during the meeting are also listed below. A comprehensive list of positive working relationships, current or future land use issues and conflicts, and potential resolutions are attached as Appendix C of *Volume I: Town Plan*.

### **Positive Working Relationships**

- Shared services (emergency-mutual aid)
- Extra territorial planning area between Oconto Falls and Stiles
- Trans-county and town agreements for road maintenance and snow plow
- Cluster meetings – good source of information-education
- Mar-Oco landfill – good working relationship with Marinette County
- County recently updated 911 system – has mutual aid with surrounding communities/counties to help with disaster response
- Coordination between county and local zoning
- Economic Development: countywide and county funded OCEDC
- Mutual aid agreements on wildland fire suppression between WDNR and many town and village fire departments
- Support summer recreation programs

### **Existing or Potential Land Use Conflicts**

- Potential conflict of town ordinances with county ordinances
- Surrounding agricultural land (possibility of rezoning/annexation)
- Increased residential development can negatively impact important environmental features
- Increased recreational demands may lead to conflicts
- This region is extremely important environmentally and future development should be planned with that in mind
- Development of Hwy 141 corridor
- Keep water ways free (keep housing off water ways)
- Enforcement of ordinances and/or conditions in conditional use permits
- Initiatives/incentives for commercial to locate in town but yet, promote preservation of farmland – some type of incentive

### **Resolutions**

- Sharing of information between communities (e.g. meeting minutes)
- Informal get-togethers to share information between towns and county
- Information discussions between incorporated communities and towns re: extraterritorial planning areas
- Inter and Intra communication
- Shared planning
- Standardize ordinances – consistency with county – remove duplication and unnecessary items



- Sharing information on troubles between neighbors – local meetings
- Locate funding sources – to continue these meetings and planning processes
- Communities place own ordinances on a website so public can access
- Get town websites out to public – make people aware that they are out there – also promote county websites – utilize newspapers to promote
- Coordination between towns and county to find more efficient ways to implement and enforce ordinances – let county help as much as they can

As part of the plan amendment process that began in 2018, the town reviewed and discussed these prior intergovernmental cooperation workshop results. These results and the additional discussion assisted the town in the plan update process.

## Open Houses

Two “Open Houses” were held during the planning process. The first was held close to the planning mid-point on March 4, 2008 at the Morgan Town Hall. Approximately 20 residents and landowners attended the event. Several displays and informational pieces were available for review, including:

- A 2007 Land Use Map
- A draft General Plan Design
- A draft vision statement
- An overview of the town and county planning processes
- The 2004 town Air Photo
- The purpose of the comprehensive plan
- A list of draft goals
- Planning vs. Zoning handout

A short presentation was given on the displays and the planning process. Those in attendance were encouraged to attend future meetings and provide input as to the contents of the plan. They were offered the opportunity to provide written comments on the displays and the overall planning process.

The second open house was held on August 5, 2008 at the Morgan Town Hall. This open house was held at the conclusion of the planning process and proceeding the public hearing to allow the residents and other interested persons the opportunity to review the completed draft plan and give input as to its contents and scope.

As part of the plan amendment process, an open house was held to provide residents and any interested persons an opportunity to review the updated plan materials and give input as to its contents and scope. Plan update materials were also made available on the Oconto County website throughout the plan update project.

<b>VISION STATEMENT</b>
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The following is the town's 20-Year Vision Statement as prepared by members of the Plan Commission:

*“The Town of Morgan is home to people who value a rural place to live and work. Healthy natural areas contribute positively to the scenic beauty of the town, promote an abundance of wildlife, offer a variety of recreational outlets, and maintain clean ground and surface water.*

*People in Morgan understand the fact that the land is the heart of the town's economic livelihood and promote sustainable land use practices through the implementation of this comprehensive plan for future generations to enjoy.”*