

# Volume 2: Goals, Policies and Actions

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# Introduction

# INTRODUCTION



Sun Prairie High School

*Welcome to the City of Sun Prairie Comprehensive Plan! This plan is intended to guide decisions and actions affecting the growth and development of the City of Sun Prairie over the next two decades and beyond, consistent with the requirements of Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001*

*This chapter describes the structure of the plan, offers an overall vision for the future of the City, and addresses the issue of Sustainability.*

*This is Volume 2 of the plan, containing all policy content. See Volume 1 for relevant background data and analyses.*

## Plan Organization

This plan consists of two volumes.

**Volume 1** contains the background data and information that informed the creation of the plan. It has continued value to plan users as a resource for data on the many topics addressed in this plan.

**Volume 2** highlights the issues and opportunities of greatest interest to the City at the time that this plan was created and contains the goals, policies and actions that will guide the growth of the City over the next two decades.

Both volumes are organized around the nine required plan elements as outlined in state statutes:

- » Introduction (Chapter 1)
- » Issues and Opportunities (Chapter 2)
- » Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources (Chapter 3)

- » Utilities & Community Facilities (Chapter 4)
- » Intergovernmental Cooperation (Chapter 5)
- » Economic Development (Chapter 6)
- » Housing (Chapter 7)
- » Transportation (Chapter 8)
- » Land Use (Chapter 9)
- » Implementation (Chapter 10)

Many of these issues are interrelated and do not fall neatly into one chapter. Such issues may show up in multiple places. The topic of sustainability affects many aspects of the City and is woven throughout the plan, beginning with this Chapter 1.

## Goals, Policies & Actions

The policy content of this plan is organized into Goals, Policies and Actions.

### Goals

A goal is a general statement about a desired future outcome. Goals provide the big idea and direction but do not indicate how they will be achieved.

### Policies

Policies are rules of conduct to be used to achieve the goals of the plan. They are intended to be used regularly to guide City decisions. Some of the policies in the plan could also be stated as actions but have not yet been assigned to anyone to pursue action.

### Actions

Actions are specific activities that someone within city government should actively pursue, sometimes in coordination with non-governmental agencies. All actions are repeated in Chapter 10 - Implementation with approximate deadlines and responsible parties assigned.

## Plan Adoption and the Consistency Requirement

Under Wisconsin's comprehensive planning statute, a comprehensive plan must receive a public hearing and be approved by resolution by the Plan Commission, and adopted by ordinance by the City Council.

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning law requires that if a local government unit enacts or amends any of the following ordinances, the ordinance *must be consistent* with the comprehensive plan:

- » Official maps
- » Local subdivision regulations
- » General zoning ordinances
- » Shoreland/wetland zoning ordinance

Though adopted by ordinance, the plan itself is not an ordinance. This plan is not intended to be a literal "road map" for the City that provides a clear path from the present to a point twenty years into the future. Rather, it is intended to guide decision making in the years to come toward a unified vision expressed in this plan. Over

the course of time many factors will arise that will significantly influence the day-to-day decision making that occurs at the local government level, and in the community in general. This plan should continue to be consulted to ensure that such decisions contribute to the established vision in this plan.

## Overall Vision

Sun Prairie's vision statement is intended to set the general tone for the rest of the plan. It encapsulates the major themes woven throughout the plan.

**"The City of Sun Prairie seeks balanced growth, safe and healthy neighborhoods, and opportunity for all residents to pursue their dreams and live full lives."**

## Sustainability

In a community planning context, **Sustainability** refers to development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs<sup>1</sup>. A closely related concept is resilience, which refers to “the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems within a city to survive, adapt, and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience<sup>2</sup>.” Planning for sustainability typically considers the effects of local decisions and practices on the wider world as well, such as health and economic impacts on nearby communities, and global climate effects.

Planning a sustainable community requires consideration and balancing of three different perspectives: economic, environmental, and social. Sustainable decisions are those that look good through all three lenses, such as the construction of a stormwater pond that reduces long-term flooding costs (economic), improves river water quality (environmental) and creates a new recreation amenity in a park (social).

## Sustainability in Sun Prairie

Sustainability is a relatively new focus in community planning and development, but the balancing of various impacts in community decision-making is not a new practice – Sun Prairie has been doing this for many, many years. Local examples that show balance of economic, environmental and social impacts, and improve community resilience to future change, include:

- » The use of LED streetlights that use less energy and last longer.
- » The use of methane gas produced as a result of the wastewater treatment process to power equipment that is in operation at the water pollution control facility.
- » The use of a renewable, more environmentally sensitive, and more readily available deicing agent (a beet juice/salt water mixture) for City roadways.
- » An emphasis on redevelopment and reuse of under-utilized land and infrastructure in the City’s downtown and Main Street corridor.
- » An emphasis on multi-modal transportation and complete streets in Sun Prairie.
- » The installation of geothermal energy systems in Sun Prairie Utilities and the Sun Prairie School District projects.
- » The installation of a solar panel system on the roof of City Hall.

As a community, we have often achieved sustainable outcomes through a focus on efficiency, in-



*WPPI Solar Panels in Sun Prairie Business Park*

<sup>1</sup> This is a variant on the frequently cited definition for sustainable development from the 1987 Brundtland Commission Report *Our Common Future*.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.100resilientcities.org/>

cluding the efficient use of land and infrastructure and the efficient use of energy. Those efforts have improved our capacity to sustain our way of life in case of future changes such as energy costs spikes or a period of prolonged economic hardship.

**Sustainability in This Plan**  
Our Sustainability Commitment:

***Through this plan, Sun Prairie is reinforcing its commitment to the sustainability and resilience of our community. We will consistently consider the short-term and long-term impacts of our decisions on our economy, on the natural environment, and on the social vibrancy of our City. We seek outcomes that will enable future generations to enjoy the high quality of life that we enjoy here today.***

This plan features many specific actions and policies intended to improve our sustainability and resilience as described in our Sustainability Commitment. These are identified in each section with this sustainability icon:



**DID YOU KNOW?**

Sun Prairie High School has one of the largest applications of a ground-source geothermal HVAC system in the country with 343 vertical bores drilled 300' deep. Other energy efficient features of the building include a high performance building envelope, dedicated outdoor air energy recovery ventilation, occupancy sensors, daylighting controls, and a demonstration PV system. Other green features include low-flow water fixtures, waterless urinals, and native plants to reduce water consumption.

