

**Comprehensive Plan
“Recommended Plan”
for Public Review**

**Town of Watertown
Jefferson County**

Adopted _____, 2017



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Town of Watertown Comprehensive Plan

Town Board

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Resolution # 409

**Adoption of the
Town of Watertown Comprehensive Plan**

WHEREAS, the Town of Watertown has deemed it is in its best interest and that of its citizens to develop a Comprehensive Plan that would address the needs of the Town of Watertown, and;

WHEREAS, the Town of Watertown has requested the assistance of Martenson & Eisele, Inc. in the development and finalization of the Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Watertown, and;

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan was developed with input from the Town Board, the Town of Watertown Plan Commission, interested residents and property owners of the Town of Watertown, and other interested municipalities, organizations, and agencies, and;

WHEREAS, copies of the Comprehensive Plan have been made available to the residents and property owners of the Town of Watertown at the Town Hall and through the town web site and;

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan addresses and complies with the nine elements identified in Section 66.1001 of the State of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Legislation, and;

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan identifies where growth should occur, makes recommendations for future development in the Town of Watertown through the use of text, tables, and maps, and includes a mechanism for the review and update on the Plan on a regular basis, and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Town of Watertown Plan Commission to recommend to the Town of Watertown Town Board the adoption of the *Town of Watertown Comprehensive Plan* by ordinance.

Passed and adopted this 10 day of April, 2017.



Attest: Town Clerk, Jim Wendt

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Town of Watertown Comprehensive Plan
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Preface – Comprehensive Plan Update

Introduction

In 2015, the Town of Watertown contracted with the firm of Martenson & Eisele to update the Town's comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan was originally adopted in November, 2002.

The plan is intended to meet the requirements of Wisconsin's Smart Growth legislation, Wisconsin Statute 66.1001. The comprehensive plan is a statement of public policy concerning future conservation and development and should be consulted by the Plan Commission and Town Board when making decisions regarding land use over the next 20 years and beyond.

The comprehensive plan also contains goals, objectives, policies and programs to address the following nine elements:

1. Issues and opportunities;
2. Housing;
3. Transportation;
4. Utilities and community facilities;
5. Agricultural, natural and cultural resources;
6. Economic development;
7. Intergovernmental cooperation;
8. Land use; and
9. Implementation.

In addition to meeting the requirements of Wisconsin's Smart Growth legislation, this plan is intended to:

- Encourage conservation and the orderly use and development of land;
- Stimulate public participation in the planning process;
- Establish a dialogue between residents and elected officials regarding local issues;
- Strengthen local control of land use by promoting intergovernmental cooperation with the county and reinforcing policies established by the Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan; and
- Address annexation and the loss of land and tax base by identifying areas to be developed with sewer and water and establishing a foundation for cooperative boundary agreements with the City of Watertown and Village of Johnson Creek.

Trigger Events for Updating the Town of Watertown Comprehensive Plan

Many changes and trigger events have occurred to warrant the Town to seek an amendment to the comprehensive plan. These events can be summarized as follows:

- An update to the comprehensive plan consistent with the comprehensive planning legislation (Stats. 66.1001) is needed. The Statute states a municipality should update their comprehensive plan at least once every ten (10) years.
- During the late 2000's, the Town experienced the construction of a four lane State Hwy 26 By-Pass around the City of Watertown. The By-Pass which was open to through traffic in 2012, changed numerous local road access points and consumed significant agricultural acreage. On the other hand, the By-Pass established a logical growth boundary for the City of Watertown, aiding in long range planning decisions.
- In 2008, the United States slipped into an economic recession that significantly altered the US, state and local economies. Unemployment rates rose. Housing and business development stagnated. Contrary to these trends, the agricultural economy, in which Watertown is significantly vested, fared well and the demand for farmland rose due to strong crop prices.
- In July 2009, the State of Wisconsin revised Chapter 91 of WI Statutes launching the "Working Lands Initiative". Wis. Stats. Chapter 91 addresses the changes and requirements of the new Farmland Preservation Program.
- As a requirement of the Chapter 91 revisions, Jefferson County was required to have their outdated Farmland Preservation Plan amended and certified by DATCP (Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection) by December 31, 2012. The planning effort was undertaken and completed.
- On September 27, 2011, DATCP Certified the Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan.
- On February 15, 2012, the Jefferson County Board adopted the new DATCP Certified Jefferson County Agriculture Preservation and Land Use Plan.
- In March, 2012, the Jefferson County Board adopts the revised Farmland Preservation Zoning District as part of the county zoning ordinance, which was certified by DATCP under the new Chapter 91 provisions. The certified (A-1) farmland preservation district enables farmers currently enrolled in the program to obtain farmland tax credits.
- In December, 2012, the US Census releases the 2010 census information for all units of government.
- Due to a combination of factors, social and preferential trends have emerged. Generational preferences from age groups such as the Millennials, Baby Boomers and others are impacting housing, transportation and land use choices.

Consistency Between Plan and Zoning Documents

The Town of Watertown utilizes the Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance to administer zoning within the Town. As part of the zoning review process, the Town Planning Commission and Town Board are asked to review rezoning and land division requests. The Town's

recommendation is forwarded to the County for final action. In the context of reviewing proposed land use changes, there are several documents that must be referenced in order to ensure consistency. The following documents are key to the understanding and execution of managing land use decisions in the Town:

- ***Town of Watertown Year 2025 Comprehensive Plan:*** Originally completed and adopted in November, 2002, this plan defined areas for residential and commercial development along with recommendations for services, agriculture preservation and implementation. The plan was developed consistent with the then recently developed comprehensive planning legislation outlined in Wis. Stats. 66.1001. This Plan has been updated through this planning process and is now titled: ***Town of Watertown Comprehensive Plan.***
- ***Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance and Map (No.11):*** This document and map was updated and amended in March 2012 to meet the requirements of the Wis. Stats. Chapter 91 (Working Lands Initiative) and continues to be the governing zoning ordinance for the Town. Zoning decisions should be consistent with town and county plans.
- ***Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan:*** On September 27, 2011, DATCP Certified the Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan. On February 15, 2012, the Jefferson County Board adopted the new DATCP Certified Jefferson County Agriculture Preservation and Land Use Plan. The plan should coincide closely with the areas zoned for farmland preservation in the town's A-1 zoning ordinance which is eligible for farmland preservation credits.

Consistency Between Plans & the Town Zoning Ordinance

