

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

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Final Draft  
8/18/2020

Final Draft  
8/18/2020

## PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This comprehensive plan for the Village of Lena was prepared to address the varied land use issues facing the village during the next 20 years. The goal of the plan is to establish measures to grow the village's economic base; improve the appearance and function of Main Street; provide housing and services for an aging population; and create a variety of recreational opportunities while maintaining the village's small-town feel. The plan is to serve as a guide to ensure consistent decisions are being made in regards to recreational enhancements, transportation improvements, housing development, public services expansion, and sound economic development. The *Village of Lena 20-Year Comprehensive Plan* is a legal document establishing the policy framework from which village officials will base their future decisions.

The cornerstone of this plan is the future land use map, referred to in this document as the General Plan Design (GPD), **Map 3.1**. To assist officials in working toward achieving the desired land uses for the village, a thorough list of development strategies provides a roadmap for officials and residents to follow as they work to implement the village's comprehensive plan. The GPD shall be used for reference and in conjunction with the Village of Lena ordinances and other planning materials such as a Tax Incremental Finance Project Plan to guide decisions on where and how the Village of Lena should be developed as well as preserved during the next 20 years.

### **State Planning Legislation**

The *Village of Lena 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 *Village of Lena 20-Year Comprehensive Plan* consists of eleven chapters presented in two volumes. **Volume I: Village Plan** contains Chapters 1 through 4, along with supporting appendices. The content of these four chapters meet all the requirements outlined in s. 66.1001, Wis. Stats. The appendix is comprised of planning materials generated during the preparation of the *Village of Lena 20-Year Comprehensive Plan*. **Volume II: County Resources** is comprised of Chapters 5 through 11. These chapters detail background information and data at the county level and a complete appendix with additional countywide resources.

**Volume I: Village Plan:** This volume describes how the Village of Lena 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 village 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; 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 timetable for completion.

***Appendices: Village Plan*** – contains public participation materials; nominal group results; survey results from a 2019 village survey and the results of the joint town and village community survey conducted in 2004; student focus group results; intergovernmental cooperation workshop results; and a glossary of terms.

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

***Chapter 5: Natural, Agricultural and Cultural Resources*** - provides a detailed description of the county’s unique natural and cultural 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 village 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 as well as programs to facilitate joint planning and decision making processes with other government units.

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

**Appendices: County Resources** - contains a countywide inventory of natural resource information; a county inventory of endangered and threatened species; nominal group results; economic SWOT results; visioning survey results; open house comments; current land uses; a detailed list of available housing, economic development, and transportation financial and technical resources; a glossary of acronyms and definitions; and other relevant input and materials generated or gathered during the planning process.

**PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

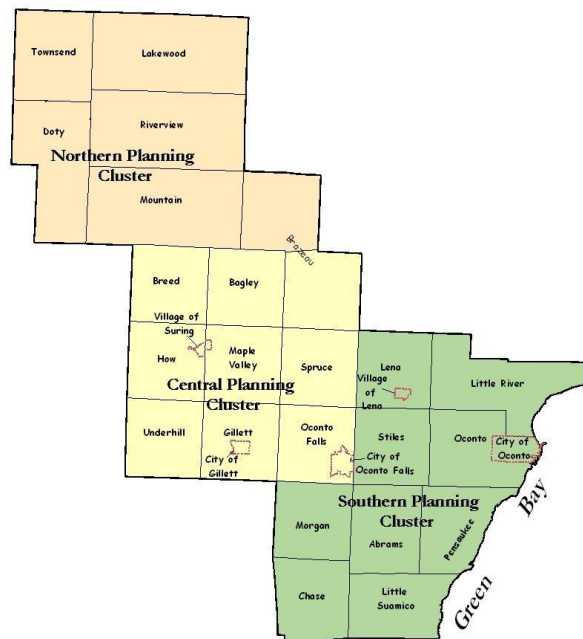
The Village of Lena was one of sixteen communities to enter into an agreement with Oconto County to submit a multi-jurisdictional application to the Wisconsin Department of Administration in 2005 for grant funding to assist in covering the cost of completing or updating their comprehensive plans. The application was successful and an award of \$263,000 was made to Oconto County in April 2006. Participating communities and the county were required to match the state grant with local dollars. Oconto County contracted the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission (BLRPC) to prepare each community’s comprehensive plan as well as the county’s plan.

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

Oconto County Planning Clusters



- Three (3) Open Houses were conducted, one in 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 Village of Lena Smart Growth Committee held its initial planning meeting with BLRPC staff in August 2007.
- Public meetings were held on a monthly basis to review materials and facilitate a number of activities such as the mid-point open house on January 16, 2008 to gather additional input from residents and landowners.
- The village'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 prepared along with the recommended land use strategies to guide future development and conservation of the village over the next 20 years.
- The Oconto County Planning and Zoning Committee and OCPAC finalized *Volume II: County Resources*. The resource document was then 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 village's plan was held during the month of June 2008 to allow citizens, landowners, neighboring communities, and other interested parties to review the completed draft of the *Village of Lena 20-Year Comprehensive Plan*.
- Lena's second open house was held on July 16, 2008 to allow the public to review the planning materials and provide input as to the contents of the draft plan.
- The required Public Hearing on the *Village of Lena 20-Year Comprehensive Plan* was held on July 16, 2008, and the Planning and Development Committee made recommendation for adoption of the plan following the public hearing. Any input received during the review, open house, and public hearing was considered and included in the village's comprehensive plan as appropriate.
- The *Village of Lena 20-Year Comprehensive Plan* was completed on July 16, 2008 with its adoption as an ordinance by the Lena Village 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 major amendment of the Village of Lena 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.

## **Public Participation Process**

### **Public Participation Plan**

The key component in drafting and adopting a comprehensive plan that fully addresses the village's future planning needs is gathering input from residents and land owners during the plan development process. In accordance with s. 66.1001(4), Wis. Stats., the Village of Lena approved "Procedures for Adoption or Amendment of the Village of Lena Comprehensive Plan" at their village board meeting on October 11, 2006. A copy of the resolution adopting the written public participation procedures is included as Appendix A of *Volume I: Village Plan*.

### **Community Survey**

A community survey was conducted in 2004, in conjunction with the Town of Lena, to solicit the feelings residents and landowners had toward existing village and town services and amenities and to gain their insight on what they thought the area would look like in the year 2025. The surveying process offered the basis for the creation of the vision statement; the background for drafting the goals, objectives, policies, and programs; and a general consensus on where and what type of development the area would experience in the future. A summary of the community survey's key findings are listed below.

- Land uses governed by local ordinances
- Quiet, peaceful, low crime
- Clean and neat appearance
- Endorse moderate housing development
- Promote Farmer's Right to Farm
- Desire expansion of existing farming operations
- Protect private property rights
- Protect agriculture land
- Encourage community participation in planning
- Intergovernmental cooperation
- Establishment of boundary agreements
- Desire moderate to small industry and farming operations
- Need activities for the youth

A second community survey was conducted in 2019 as part of the Village of Lena 20-Year Comprehensive Plan update. The focus of this survey like the 2004 survey was to solicit the feelings of residents and landowners and gain insight to assist in planning for the village. A summary of the survey's responses are listed below.

- Overall satisfied with village services
- Maintain public safety, streets, schools and low taxes
- Continue to work with village residents and landowners to ensure land use plans are

- promoting desired development within the village
- Prioritize sidewalk, street and curbing infrastructure improvements

The complete results of both community surveys can be found in Appendix B of *Volume I: Village Plan*.

### Nominal Group Exercise

On August 1, 2007, four members of the Village of Lena Smart Growth Committee participated in a Nominal Group Exercise to identify some of the most pressing issues to be addressed during this 20 year planning period. To further identify those issues most important to the village, each committee member was given three votes and asked vote for their individual top priorities. The following are the top five issues and concerns facing the village according to this issue identification process. All issues were considered during the preparation of the goals, objectives, policies, and programs listed in Chapter 4 of the village's comprehensive plan. The entire list of Nominal Group results can be found in Appendix C of *Volume I: Village Plan*.

1. Stable school
2. Office building for professionals
3. More residential
4. Commercial development along the highway
5. Industrial development
6. New government buildings
7. Main street improvements using existing infrastructure

A Nominal Group Exercise was also held during the preparation of the *Village of Lena 2015 Comprehensive Plan*. There were 18 concerned citizens participating in the exercise on **February 12, 1996**. They identified the following seven issues to be addressed during that planning process:

- Need housing
- Annex lands for future growth
- Adequacy of sewer and water for Stella Foods
- Develop stricter zoning restrictions in residential areas
- Full-time police
- Mobile home court (develop)
- Bigger library

### Student Focus Group

In addition to other traditional public involvement steps, the Village of Lena Smart Growth Committee wanted to gather input from high school students on how they feel about the village today and what they think it will be like in 20 years. There were four students from each of the four high school grades participating in the discussion on December 6, 2007. The following student comments are from the question, *how do you envision the village in 10 years?* Complete results of the student focus group can be found in Appendix D of *Volume I: Village Plan*.

- *Smaller-However, it would be bigger if the race track were to be built.*



- *Businesses not staying.*
- *Nothing to attract new residents.*
- *The condition of Main Street will be the result of future investment or the lack of it*
- *School at risk-consolidation with neighboring districts? Most class sizes are consistently in the mid-20s. Sophomore class is the largest at 45-senior class has 27 students. The result is a decline in the quality of sports.*
- *Dairy is not as popular and there will be a continued trend towards larger and larger operations. They do not think small niche farms will have a big impact on the area.*

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

### **Intergovernmental Cooperation Workshop**

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 workshop 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 and 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 E of *Volume I: Village Plan*.

#### **Positive Working Relationships**

- Shared services (emergency-mutual aid)
- 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
- 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**

- 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
- No central government building results in communication barrier. Residents seeking information on planning, information being given, information not properly communicated to town planning

### **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

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

### **Open Houses**

The Village of Lena held two “Open Houses” during the planning process. The first was held close to the planning mid-point on January 16, 2008 at the Lena Municipal Building. Approximately 10 residents, landowners, and other interested parties 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 village and county planning processes
- The 2004 village Air Photo
- A comprehensive planning summary
- A list of draft goals
- Planning vs. Zoning handout

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 July 16, 2008 at the Lena Municipal Building. It was held at the conclusion of the planning process 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 content and scope. Plan update materials were also made available on the Oconto County website throughout the plan update project.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

The following is the village's 20-Year Vision Statement as prepared by members of the Plan Commission:

***“In 2040, the Village of Lena is a healthy and vibrant community lead by progressive government officials and community leaders. The village’s diverse economy is comprised of industry, commercial services, and professional occupations that offer family supportive wages. The combination of affordable residential housing for all age groups; plentiful recreational and cultural opportunities; and a school district viewed as an academic leader makes Lena attractive to families seeking a community with strong qualities”.***

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