

# Town of Janesville Comprehensive Plan-2035

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September 8, 2009

**Prepared by:**

Rock County Planning,  
Economic & Community  
Development Agency



The *Town of Janesville Comprehensive Plan 2035* was prepared by Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development Agency staff with guidance and oversight provided by:

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## List of Abbreviations

A1-Exclusive Agricultural Zoning District  
AHI - Architecture and History Inventory (State of Wisconsin Historical Society)  
ALS - Arrowhead Library System (Rock County)  
ASI - Archaeological Sites Inventory (State of Wisconsin Historical Society)  
CDGB - Community Development Block Grants (United States Department of Housing and Urban Development)  
DATCP - State of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture  
EDA - United States Economic Development Administration  
EPA - United States Environmental Protection Agency  
ESOSA-Environmentally Significant Open Space Areas  
ETJ - Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction  
FSA - Farm Services Administration  
GIS - Geographic Information System  
HUD - United States Department of Housing and Urban Development  
LEED - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design  
LESA - Land Evaluation and Site Assessment  
MFL - Managed Forest Law (State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources)  
NHI - Natural Heritage Inventory (State of Wisconsin Historical Society)  
PCC - Highway Possible Contributing Circumstances  
PDR - Purchase of Development Rights  
POROS - *Rock County Parks, Outdoor Recreation, and Open Space Plan: 2009-2014*  
RIDES - Volunteer Driver Escort Program  
TDR - Transfer of Development Rights  
TIF - Tax Incremental Financing  
UCF-Utilities and Community Facilities  
USDA - United States Department of Agriculture  
WDNR - State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
WDOA - State of Wisconsin Department of Administration  
WDOR - State of Wisconsin Department of Revenue  
WHEDA - Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority  
WisDOT - State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
WISLR - Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads



## Preface

### I. Plan Overview

State of Wisconsin Statute 66.1001- *Comprehensive Planning* mandates that local governmental units prepare and adopt comprehensive plans to guide development through the year 2035. Per State of Wisconsin Statute 62.23(3)(a) a local governmental unit's comprehensive plan is to be made:

*“...with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the municipality which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity or the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development.”*

In 2005, the Rock County Planning, Economic, and Community Development Agency (Rock County), in conjunction with 12 other County municipalities including the Town of Janesville, was awarded a Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Planning Grant (see Appendix A) from the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) Comprehensive Planning Grant program, subject to State of Wisconsin Statute 16.965. Rock County is the administrator of the Comprehensive Planning Grant. The Town of Janesville (Town) has developed this *Comprehensive Plan (Plan)* with the assistance of the Rock County Planning and Development Agency (see Appendix B) to conform to the requirements of the Comprehensive Planning Law and to reflect the Town of Janesville's goals through 2035. The intent of this multi-jurisdictional effort is to promote coordinated and consistent planning across governmental boundaries and through governmental layers. This *Plan* focuses on a 25-year planning horizon through 2035.

### II. Purpose, Intent, and Use

The goal of the comprehensive planning process is to aide the Town of Janesville in generating goals for attaining a desirable development pattern, to recommend strategies and recommendations that the Town of Janesville can follow to achieve its desired development pattern, and to create a planning document which conforms to Wisconsin's *Comprehensive Planning* legislation, commonly referred to as “Smart Growth.”

The *Town of Janesville Comprehensive Plan-2035* may be used by local officials when revising and administering their ordinances, as well as when setting priorities for investments. The *Plan* may be the basis for reviewing future developments, considering transportation improvements, developing preservation standards and efforts, and for long-term decision making on land use of all types. The *Plan* is designed to be a guiding vision so that there is a consistent policy to follow and a clear goal for the future residents of the Town of Janesville.

In summary, this *Plan's* purpose and intent is to:

- Provide information and recommendations conforming to State of Wisconsin Statute 66.1001 and to promote coordinated and consistent planning across governmental boundaries and through governmental layers.
- State goals, objectives and policies that reflect the desires and direct the actions of the Town of Janesville so as to achieve its desired development pattern to the year 2035.
- Identify concepts and tools including programs and strategies, to achieve the goals, objectives, and policies stated in the *Plan*.

This *Plan* may be utilized as:

- A policy document, providing consistent direction with which to guide the Town’s day-to-day planning, rezoning and development decisions to 2035.
- A guide to creating ordinances and regulations to uphold *Comprehensive Plan* policies
- The basis for decision making on constructing future developments, transportation improvements, development of preservation standards and efforts, and long term land uses of all types.
- A guide to setting priorities for major investments
- A permanent record and statement of the Town’s overall vision until 2035.

Another key component of the *Comprehensive Planning* legislation is the identification of basic planning goals held by the State of Wisconsin and intended as a guide for community *Plan* development. To that end, the State of Wisconsin awarded Grant money to the Town of Janesville based, in part, on the description of how the Town plans to achieve or address these 14 local comprehensive planning goals prescribed in State Statute 16.965.

1. *Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructures and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial areas*
2. *Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.*
3. *Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources*
4. *Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests*
5. *Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and low costs*
6. *Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites*
7. *Encouragement of cooperation and coordination among nearby units of government*
8. *Building community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards*
9. *Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for all income levels within the community*
10. *Providing infrastructure, services and developable land adequate to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses*
11. *Promoting expansion or stabilization of the economic base and job creation*
12. *Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals*
13. *Planning and developing land uses that create or preserve unique urban and rural communities*
14. *Providing an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that meets the needs of all citizens*

The identification of common goals can be challenging, as specific values held by different people in different locations can vary widely. The goals proposed above represent principles that a community must consider during the planning process, and may want to strive for, however, an equally important part of the *Plan’s* purpose is to identify goals that are in the community’s best interest.

### III. *Plan Structure and Content*

Wisconsin's *Comprehensive Planning* legislation identifies nine Elements must be addressed in a town comprehensive plan in order for the plan to be in conformance with the law. This *Plan* addresses each of these Elements in a separate Chapter (1-9) in the order listed below.

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

This *Plan* has been developed with the interrelationships of each of the nine Elements in mind (Chapters 1-9). There are goals, objectives, policies and recommendations pertaining to and contained within each of the Elements. Additionally, the Future Land Use Map (Map 5.3 contained in the Land Use Element) provides an overall vision of how the Town of Janesville plans to look in the year 2035. The result is a *Comprehensive Plan* that is compliant with Wisconsin's *Comprehensive Planning* legislation.

This *Plan* has been created to be consistent with other planning documents that are relevant to the Town of Janesville. The relevant plans include: the Rock County Comprehensive Plan-2035, the Farmland Preservation Plan, the Land Records Modernization Plan, the Natural Hazard Mitigation and the Rock County 2008-2014 Parks, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan. Each of those plans have been developed by and are being administered by Rock County and are applicable to the Town insofar as the Town is under County jurisdiction. Therefore, this *Plan* has been developed to be consistent with and to follow the intent of each of those plans.

Each of the *Town of Janesville Comprehensive Plan-2035* Chapters contains the following components:

- Overview
- Inventory of existing conditions and past trends
- Maps and Figures displaying information throughout each Chapter
- Identification of planning issues and opportunities
- Goals, objectives, policies and programs

## **IV. Comprehensive Plan Development Process**

### **Citizen Participation Plan**

A key component of the *Plan* development process included a “Citizen Participation Plan” agreement, whereby the Town of Janesville resolved to follow a prescribed process for involving the public in *Plan* development (see Appendix C). The intent of the Citizen Participation Plan was to foster public participation throughout every step of the planning process. The Town of Janesville and Rock County staff conducted visioning workshops, held open Element work sessions and provided for public input at regularly scheduled Town of Janesville Board meetings. Input derived from Town residents per the Citizen Participation Plan and the recommendation of sound planning principles by qualified staff provided the basis for development of the *Town of Janesville Comprehensive Plan-2035*.

### **Visioning Workshops**

In order to identify the Town of Janesville’s priorities for community development, as well as key issues and concerns to be addressed, Rock County staff held a two-part Visioning Workshop on July 27<sup>th</sup> and August 17<sup>th</sup> of 2006, at the Janesville Town Hall. Those in attendance were given the opportunity to provide their opinions and concerns regarding the present and future development of their Town through exercises and discussion. This process was intended to establish a framework from which the Town would make future planning decisions. The visioning process and the complete list of questions and results of the visioning sessions can be found in Appendix D.

The visioning process was vital to *Plan* development and provided focus and direction, as well as identification of a Town Vision Statement that was used as a framework upon which this *Plan* is based. The Vision Statement is presented in Chapter 1 and again in the Implementation Chapter (Chapter 9) of this *Plan*.

### **Element Workshops and Informational Meetings**

Workshops and meetings consisted of Rock County staff presenting information on each topic contained within the *Plan*, as well as providing an opportunity for the general public to review, comment, and discuss the *Plan* in its formative stages. This process ultimately provided the opportunity for all interested parties to help to shape the *Plan’s* content and structure. Workshops and Informational Meetings (either held as Special Meetings or as part of the regularly scheduled Town Board Meetings) were held for all *Plan* Elements.

### **Open House and Public Hearing**

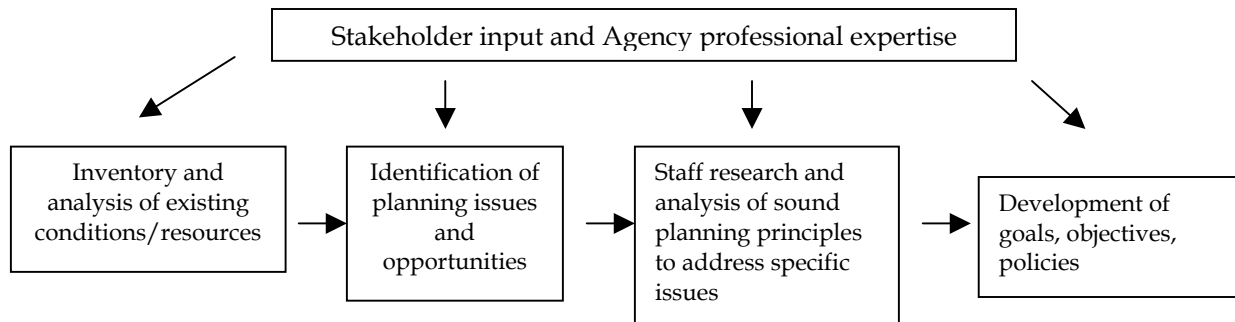
An Open House followed immediately by a joint Public Hearing of the Board of Supervisors and the Planning and Zoning Committee was held on August 24, 2009 to provide the public with an opportunity to review, comment, and discuss the final draft of the *Comprehensive Plan* in its entirety, however, no members of the general public were in attendance at the either event. Similar to Workshops, Open Houses are another method by which to engender citizen input in the final stages of the *Plan* development process. An additional Public Hearing was held to provide a final opportunity for public opinion on the *Plan* to be officially heard prior to adoption of the *Plan* on September 8, 2009.

**Goal, Objective and Policy Development**

Stating goals, objectives, and policies within the *Comprehensive Plan* provides a way for the *Plan* to achieve the best interests of the community and ensure achievement of the *Plan’s* vision statement. Goals address general ideas and values that express the public interest and provide an end toward which to direct the planning process. Objectives are more specific, providing detailed direction toward achievement of goals. Policies consist of rules or courses of action used to ensure *Plan* implementation and achievement of goals and objectives.

Development of goals, objectives, policies is vital in both providing a plan with direction and focus, and ensuring implementation of the plan. Figure I below displays the process that was used to develop this *Plan’s* goals, objectives, and policies. This process utilized input derived from Town residents, elected and appointed officials, other interested parties, and the professional expertise of Rock County staff.

**Figure I  
Goal, Objective, and Policy Development**



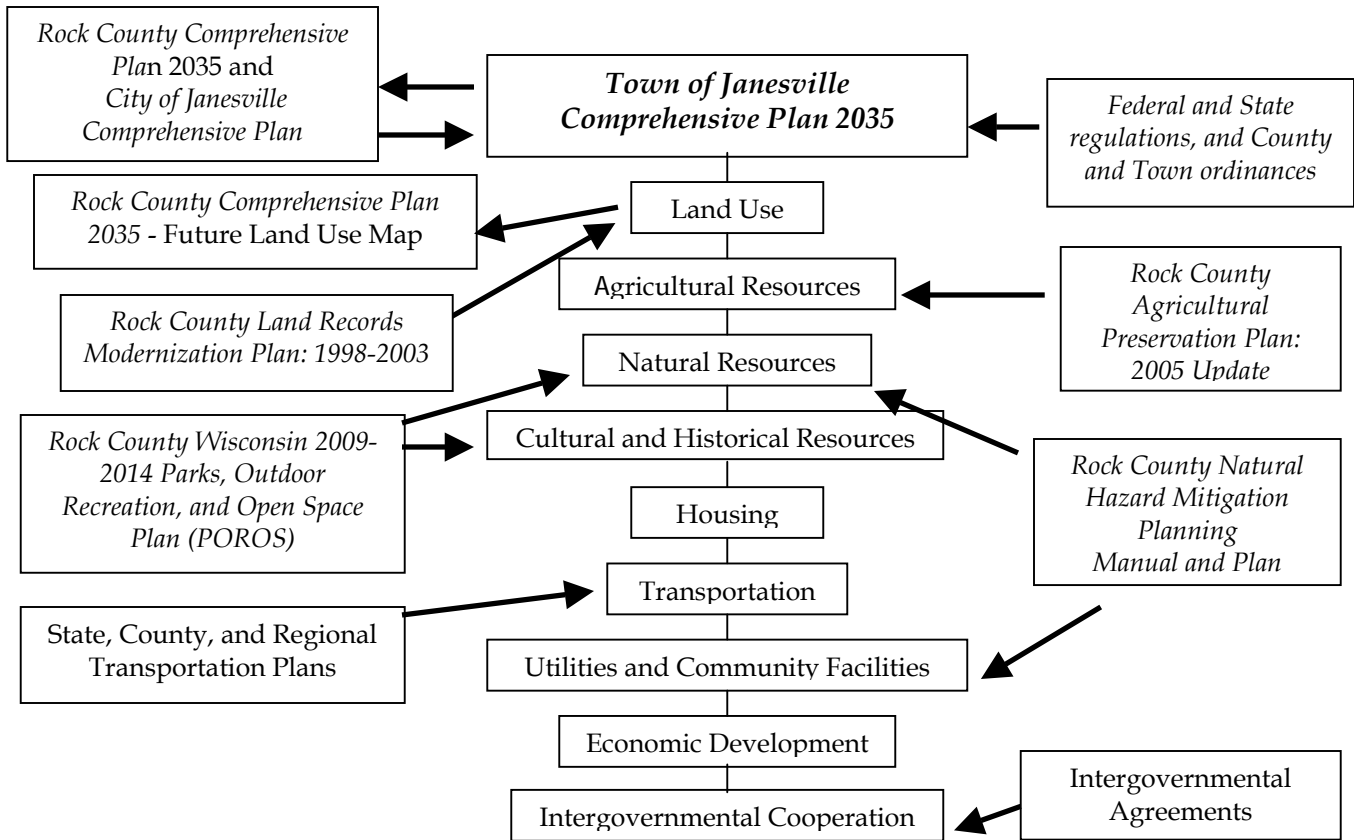
**Element Integration**

An underlying principle of State of Wisconsin Statute 66.1001 – *Comprehensive Planning* recognizes all aspects of a community’s planning and development are interrelated and interdependent. Economic development is reliant on prudent land use, just as preservation of agricultural resources is dependent on the careful siting of new housing. Thus, this *Plan* provides ideas and concepts as well as goals, objectives, and policies in each Chapter that are consistent with those found in all other Chapters of the *Plan*. This internal consistency helps to assure that the overall direction and intent is clear throughout the *Plan*. The interrelationships and interdependency of the intent of each Chapter of this *Plan* is evidenced in the replication of many of this *Plan’s* polices for differing goals and objectives.

**Integration of Associated Plans**

The goals, objectives, and policies stated in this *Plan* are consistent with goals, objectives, and polices stated in various other planning documents and regulatory measures at the Federal, State, County, and City/Village/Town level. Figure II provides a conceptual overview of the integration of this *Plan’s* goals, objectives, and policies with these various other planning documents and regulatory measures.

**Figure II  
Plan Integration**



**Tools Identification**

Tools are the means by which a community can implement and/or achieve policies, in order to reach its goals and objectives. This *Plan's* tools were identified by Rock County staff based on sound planning principles, as well as from input gathered from Town residents, elected officials, and other interested parties. These tools, in the form of existing programs and strategies, and innovative new ideas and concepts, were so identified as they provide the surest means to implement and/or achieve this *Plan's* policies.

**V. Future Directions**

Completion of this initial *Plan* is not the end of the Town planning process. This *Plan* will be reviewed and updated within five years of completion, and thereafter at a minimum of once every ten years. This periodic review ensures that Town planning will continue to evolve and adapt to unforeseen issues and opportunities, and new trends and concepts.