

Element 11

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

11.1 INTRODUCTION

Recognizing that the Town of Bass Lake Comprehensive Plan must reflect the people it serves, the Town of Bass Lake encourages citizen input throughout the development of the plan. Public participation procedures must provide for a broad dissemination of proposals and alternatives, public meetings after effective notice, opportunity for written comments, communication programs, information services, provisions for open discussion, and consideration of and response to public comments. These enhanced procedures augment the minimum public notification requirements required by law.

The Town of Bass Lake's Public Participation Plan forms the basic framework for achieving an interactive dialogue between local, state, and federal decision-makers and the citizens of the Town of Bass Lake. This plan outlines the public participation strategy for the development, evaluation, and eventual adoption of the comprehensive plan for the Town of Bass Lake. The creation of the Public Participation Plan is the first step in meeting the requirements of Wisconsin's comprehensive planning legislation and will apply throughout the local planning process leading to the adoption of the Town of Bass Lake Comprehensive Plan.

The Town of Bass Lake will comply with the Public Participation Plan as appropriate to the situation. As the planning process develops, it should be expected that deviations from the plan might be warranted.

11.2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

General

The main goal of the Public Participation Plan is to make the citizens of the Town of Bass Lake aware of the progress of the comprehensive planning process and to offer the public opportunities to make suggestions and comments during the process. To reach these goals, the Town of Bass Lake has adopted the following plan to encourage public participation through the planning process. Taken individually, the activities described in this plan are not expected to reach and inform each and every resident and property owner of the Town of Bass Lake. Collectively, however, the plan activities are designed to effectively and efficiently provide a broad-based dissemination of information and maximize the opportunity for citizen involvement and comment.

The majority of the public participation activities will focus on public information, education, and input. Public meetings, workshops, and open houses will provide opportunities for the public to openly discuss comprehensive planning issues with planning committee members, town board supervisors, and consultant staff. Formal public hearings will also be conducted as part of the plan adoption process to allow public testimony to be made regarding the comprehensive

plan. During the comprehensive planning process, every effort will be made to ensure that public meetings are held at locations convenient to all citizens of the Town of Bass Lake. Other public participation activities will be explored to inform and receive input from residents that may not be able to attend public meetings and hearings.

Provisions for Open Discussion

The Town of Bass Lake will ensure that public meetings allow for an open discussion of the relevant issues at hand and those public hearings allow for appropriate testimony. When public meetings or hearings are conducted, the Town of Bass Lake will make every effort to ensure those who choose to participate in the planning process have the opportunity to actually have their opinions heard. To accomplish this, the following actions will be implemented:

- an agenda will be established that clearly defines the purpose of the public meeting or hearing, the items to be discussed, and any actions that may be taken;
- the scheduled date, time, and place will be convenient to encourage maximum participation by the town residents and property owners;
- a clearly identifiable facilitator or chair will conduct the meeting or hearing in an orderly fashion to ensure that all attendees have an opportunity to offer comments, discuss issues, or provide testimony; and
- the facilitator or chair will provide opening remarks that clearly outline the purpose of the meeting or hearing, describe procedures attendees should use during the meeting or hearing when offering input, and describe how the public input will be used.
- As appropriate, an overview of documents or proposals to be considered will be discussed.
- All persons attending the meeting or hearing that desire to participate should be allowed to do so. However, specific factors such as the meeting or hearing purpose, number in attendance, time considerations, or future opportunities to participate may require that appropriate constraints be applied. These constraints will be clearly outlined by the facilitator or chair if the need arises.
- All attendees will be encouraged to sign in using a provided sign in sheet.
- Meetings and hearings will be recorded by appointed committee members.
- Meeting summaries will be transcribed and made available as soon as possible following the meeting or hearing.
- Special arrangements will be made under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with sufficient advance notice.

Opportunity for Written Comments

Detailed comments can most often be better expressed through written format. To encourage the citizens of the Town of Bass Lake to express written comment throughout the planning process, the following steps will be taken:

- all meeting and hearing notices will include the name, address, and e-mail address (if applicable) of person(s) to whom written comments should be sent along with any deadlines for submitting comments, when warranted; and
- persons speaking or testifying will be encouraged to concisely express their comments and provide specific details in written format.

Consideration of and Response to Public Comments

The various methods for involving the public and soliciting public opinions and comments during the comprehensive planning process are defined herein. These methods represent the initial steps for bringing public comment into the decision-making process. The following steps will be taken to ensure that public recommendations and comments are taken into consideration by the decision-makers when developing the comprehensive plan.

- Time will be reserved subsequent to the close of a meeting, hearing, or comment deadline and prior to the actual decision or recommendation being made to ensure that decision makers can adequately review all relevant materials or comments.
- Decision-makers may reconvene a public hearing for the purpose of addressing public comments.
- The record (written comments or testimony, tape recordings, or transcripts) of hearings and meeting summaries will be compiled by appointed committee members and made available to decision makers for their review and consideration.
- Substantive comments pertaining to studies, analysis, or reports, along with appropriate responses, will be included in the published documents itself.
- Relevant comments or testimony will be addressed through the findings-of-fact portion of the decision maker's written decision or recommendation.

11.3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Public Meetings and Workshops

Planning Group Meetings & Workshops

The Town of Bass Lake will hold public meetings and workshops to assimilate information collected relevant to the nine elements of the comprehensive plan, including but not limited to issues and opportunities: housing; transportation; economic development; intergovernmental

cooperation; land use; utilities and community facilities; natural, agricultural, and cultural resources; and implementation. Through local public meetings, residents will be able to become an instrumental part of their community's planning process. By participating in meetings and workshops, citizens can aid their elected officials and planning committee in creating a vision for their community's comprehensive plan. Interested citizens can have input into the planning process.

Meeting/Hearing Notices

Official meeting notices will be prepared for any of the above public meetings or hearings conducted pertaining to the comprehensive planning process. At a minimum, the requirements of §19.31 pertaining to public meetings and notification will be met. The town clerk or other town staff will place meeting notices at the town's designated posting location(s). In all cases, notices will be forwarded to the town's official paper and other newspapers as deemed appropriate. It is recommended that meeting notices be posted at least one week prior to the meeting. All public hearings will follow the same public notice recommendations except all public hearings will be published as per a Class II notice.

Civic and Community Presentations

Throughout the planning process, representatives responsible for development of the comprehensive plan will meet with local civic and community organizations to discuss the development of the comprehensive plan. In addition to presenting information, information will be collected at the civic and community functions as it pertains to the development of the comprehensive plan.

Newsletter Mailings

An annual newsletter during development of the comprehensive plan will be developed to inform residents and property owners about comprehensive planning and other issues related to the development of the comprehensive plan. The newsletter will include a list of contacts from which citizens can gain additional information and an address or e-mail where comments can be sent.

Community Displays

The development of public displays will be prepared during the course of the project and could be displayed at locations throughout the town or county.

Mailing Lists

As public participation proceeds, interested citizens will have opportunities to place their name on a mailing list to receive additional information regarding the planning process via direct mail or e-mail where applicable. The consultant will compile and maintain this mailing list. Names to be included on the mailing list will originate from meeting and hearing sign-in sheets, written correspondence, recognized community organizations, as well as through individual requests. This list will also be used for newsletter circulation, special mailings, and notices as appropriate.

Periodic Articles

As the public participation process proceeds, interested citizens and community leaders may request more detailed information on land use related topics than desired by much of the general

public. To provide more detail to citizens and key officials showing an interest in the comprehensive plan, articles will be prepared from time to time by the consultant or UW-Extension staff.

Planning Document Dissemination

Documents that contain or describe the proposed plan's policies, maps, or recommendations will be made available for public review. Such documents will be made available well in advance of opportunities for public discussion or testimony. Such documents will be made available ten (10) calendar days prior to any public meeting or hearing scheduled for their discussion or a decision.

Documents may be disseminated as follows:

- digital versions may be posted on the consultants website;
- a copy will be delivered to a local library;
- a copy will be delivered to each elected official and/or key staff;
- a copy will be placed at the town hall for citizen review; and
- a copy will be available for review at the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, 1400 S River Street, Spooner, WI 54801 during normal business hours.

Public Hearings

Once the final draft of the Town of Bass Lake Comprehensive Plan is completed, the Town of Bass Lake with assistance from the consultant will conduct a public hearing to receive public comment on the proposed plan. As plan development progresses, a schedule for these meetings will be prepared.

Hearing Notices

The Town of Bass Lake will place legal notice of hearings in the official newspaper. Hearing notices shall be published as required by local and state requirements.

Prior to the town enacting an ordinance approving the comprehensive plan, a hearing shall be conducted preceded by a Class 1 public notice that is published at least 30 days before the hearing is held. The town may also provide notice of the hearing by any other means it considers appropriate. According to the comprehensive planning legislation, the Class 1 notice shall contain at least the following information:

1. the date, time, and place of hearing;
2. a summary, which may include a map, of the proposed comprehensive plan or amendment to such a plan;
3. the name of an individual employed by the local governmental unit who may provide additional information regarding the proposed ordinance; and
4. information relating to where and when the proposed comprehensive plan may be inspected before the hearing and how a copy of the plan may be obtained.

11.4 TOWN OF BASS LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADOPTION PROCESS

The Town of Bass Lake will follow the procedures for adopting the comprehensive plan as listed in §66.1001. The first step in the adoption process is being met by the adoption of this document that details written procedures that are designed to foster public participation throughout the comprehensive planning process.



Pete Sanders, Chairman

Attest: 
Shirley Miller, Clerk

Approved by the Town of Bass Lake, Board of Supervisors on: Dec. 9, 2002