

TOWN OF MERCER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

January 2024

Mercer Planning Commission

WHAT IS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

Per a WI law enacted in 1999, every community must have an official plan that details how each WI community wishes to grow in the next 20 years: its vision of what that growth should look like. It must include its goals, objectives, policies, and process for achieving its desired growth. Any future mapping, land division, or zoning ordinances must be consistent with that plan. **Mercer's Updated Plan must be completed by 2025!**

By WI Statute, one of the Planning Commission's jobs is to prepare and recommend an updated Comprehensive Plan for adoption by the governing body.

WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

To ensure that MERCER'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN truly reflects the vision of growth that community members wish for the town, during the next year, the Mercer Planning Commission will be publishing when and where PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSIONS will be held.

Q: What elements will you be asked to comment on?

A: The NINE basic focus areas will include

- *CURRENT AND FUTURE ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN MERCER,
- *HOUSING,
- *TRANSPORTATION,
- *UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES,
- *AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES,
- *ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- *INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
- *LAND USE
- *IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

Q: Where and when will you find notices of these Public Participation Meetings?

A: At least a week before each of the Public Input Meetings, notices will be placed on the Town of Mercer website (townofmercer.com) and the Mercer Library website (mercerpubliclibrary.org). Notices will also be posted at the post office, bank, Snow's Family Market and in "The Iron County Miner." In addition, email notices will be sent to Mercer nonprofit organizations. Of course, the Planning Commission is also hoping you share the information with your friends and neighbors.

Q: Will you need to attend a meeting to contribute your input to the updated Comprehensive Plan?

A: No, you will not need to attend a meeting. You can share your thoughts and comments about specific growth topics by forwarding them to the Mercer Town Clerk either via email at tomiron@centurytel.net, by mailing them to P.O. Box 149, Mercer 54547, or by dropping them off at the Town Office at 2657W Railroad Street.

How do you want Mercer to grow in the next 20 years?

The Planning Commission needs your help to map out that growth.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

*Kathy Tutt, Chairperson

*Dave Gentile

*Dave McNutt

*Opal Roberts, Town Board Supervisor

*Chuck Schroeffer, Town Board Supervisor & Liaison

*Bonnie Banaszak, Secretary

DID YOU KNOW?

... The town cannot apply for grant funding for any type of community project unless it has a current **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**.

... Any enactments or amendments of Mercer mapping, land use/division, and/or zoning ordinances must be consistent with the **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**.

WHY HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

>LOOKS AT THE PAST AND PRESENT: The Plan collects useful information about the town, such as historical trends, present conditions, and where it is heading.

>LAYS OUT A ROADMAP TO THE FUTURE: A Plan clarifies the town's vision for the future: its goals, values and aspirations.

>GUIDES LAND-USE REGULATION: It provides a solid basis for land-use regulation and makes decisions of land use more predictable. > IS

PROACTIVE NOT REACTION: It helps the town identify and resolve issues about land use early, so they don't become conflicts.

> COORDINATES COMMUNITY ACTIVITY: It considers all of the town's policies, programs, initiatives, services, plans, regulations, responsibilities, and systems.

>SAVES MONEY \$\$: A Plan identifies functions within a jurisdiction, or between jurisdictions, that conflict with each other, are duplicated, or could be strengthened through coordination.

>PRESERVES LOCAL CONTROL: The Comprehensive Planning Law promotes a bottom-up, not top-down, approach. The state does not adopt or certify a local Comprehensive Plan.. Instead, the community's governing body adopts it.

>PRESERVES LOCAL AUTONOMY: The Comprehensive Planning Law does not change the legal relationship between jurisdictions. Local governments continue to have the same powers and authority over land use that they had before the law was passed. >

>PROMOTES PROPERTY RIGHTS: The Comprehensive Planning Law makes planning more transparent and open to the public, including landowners, than prior to the law.

>PROMOTES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Planning together for the future helps communities retain existing businesses, attract new ones, revitalized downtowns, develop affordable housing, and recommend steps to improve infrastructure.

>PROMOTES INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION: With the aid of a Plan, communities can identify ways to cooperate with other jurisdictions, identify existing or potential conflicts, and lay out processes to resolve conflicts.

>PROTECTS RESOURCES: Planning together helps a community protect what it treasures most: historic building forests, farmlands, bluff areas, wetlands, scenic areas, downtown main streets, lakes, rivers, etc.