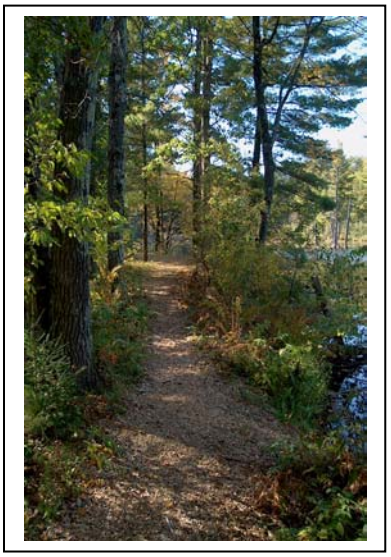
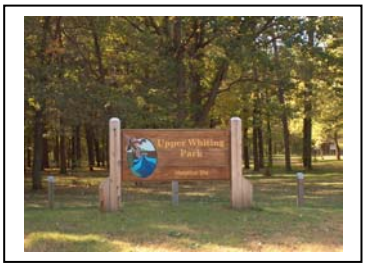
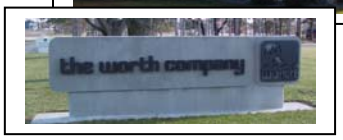
2004
Comprehensive Plan







Village of Whiting
Portage County, Wisconsin

2004
Comprehensive Plan

Adopted by the Village of Whiting Plan Commission on August 30, 2004

Adopted by the Village of Whiting Board on October 12, 2004

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Skip Karl - Member
George Meeks - Member
Dave Pozarski - Member
Al Walkush - Member
Tim Wright - Member

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Jerry Walters - Trustee
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Developed by the Village of Whiting, with the assistance of
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Introduction

Welcome to the Village of Whiting Comprehensive Plan. This Comprehensive Plan is the center-piece of the community development planning process, stating our community's development goals and outlining public policies for guiding future growth. It establishes an identifiable destination that allows both the governing body and private interests to plan and budget with an idea as to the direction the Village may move in the future, and helps to ensure that future growth is not only anticipated, but planned for. The Plan functions as a practical guide to coordinate day-to-day decisions so they make sense in the future.

The Portage County Comprehensive Planning Process and the Village of Whiting

The Village of Whiting Comprehensive Plan has been completed as a part of a larger, County-wide planning project. In November 2000, the Portage County Planning and Zoning Department submitted an application for a State of Wisconsin planning grant to help fund the creation of County-wide comprehensive plans that would meet the newly enacted State Statute requirements for long range planning (see SS 66.1001). The Statute stipulates that by January 1, 2010, all towns, villages, cities, and counties that make decisions regulating land use will need to base those decisions on an adopted comprehensive plan. In January 2001 grant funds totaling $504,000 were awarded to Portage County to assist with the project. Two separate "large area" plan documents are to be developed: an Urban Area plan which encompasses the City of Stevens Point, Villages of Park Ridge, Whiting and Plover, and a portion of the unincorporated Towns of Hull, Stockton, Plover, Linwood and Carson; and the Portage County Comprehensive Plan, which includes each of the seventeen unincorporated Towns (Alban, Almond, Amherst, Belmont, Buena Vista, Carson, Dewey, Eau Pleine, Grant, Hull, Lanark, Linwood, New Hope, Pine Grove, Plover, Sharon, Stockton) and six incorporated rural Villages (Almond, Amherst, Amherst Junction, Junction City, Nelsonville, Rosholt) that make up the rest of the County. In addition to the large area plans, the project includes the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan for each of the County's individual units of government.

In June 2001, a committee made up of representatives from each unit of government within Portage County was appointed to draft these plan documents. The ***Portage County Comprehensive Planning Joint Steering Committee*** adopted a "Public Participation Plan" on July 25, 2001. The Participation Plan detailed the different ways that residents of the County would be invited and encouraged to participate in the formulation of the Comprehensive Plans. The Village of Whiting adopted this Public Participation Plan to guide its own planning process on May 7, 2003 (Appendix A).

The first step in soliciting public involvement was a County-wide opinion survey, which was conducted in the second half of September 2001. Over 30,000 surveys were mailed, with an intended target of one for every household within the County. Over 6,600 of the households responded, a return rate of approximately 22%. The survey responses provided information on residents feelings in the areas of: County trends and land use; housing; utilities and community facilities; agriculture, natural and cultural resources; commerce and employment; transportation; and quality of life within the County (Appendix B). In order to follow up and build on the information gathered in the survey, a series of Hopes and Concerns Workshops were held in various locations around Portage County. A wide variety of County residents participated in the Workshops. To include as many groups as possible, workshops were scheduled in towns and villages across the County, as well as junior high and high schools, UW-Stevens Point (with both faculty and students), and the Lincoln Center.

After completion of the Hopes & Concerns workshops all of the response information was forwarded to the Portage County Comprehensive Planning Joint Steering Committee, who used a series of meetings to boil the information down to 44 summarizing "issue statements". This list then became the basis for a series of six visioning sessions held across Portage County during the spring of 2002. Again, all of the public input was returned to the Joint Steering Committee for review and discussion. An Urban Area Vision Statement and a Rural Vision Statement were approved in the fall of 2002. These Vision Statements were used as a foundation for the Urban Area and Rural Area Comprehensive Plans, respectively, and their ideas resonate throughout the individual local unit plans.

State Statute 66.1001(Appendix C) defines minimum requirements for what content should be included within a comprehensive plan. These requirements include nine "elements" or chapters describing: *issues and opportunities; housing; transportation; utilities and community facilities; agriculture, natural and cultural resources; economic development; intergovernmental cooperation; land use; and implementation.* The Village of Whiting has used the required elements as an outline for its plan document.

As previously stated, the Village of Whiting plan was completed as part of a larger grant project. When Portage County, representing its twenty-seven constituent municipalities, made application to the State of Wisconsin for grant funding to offset costs of the project, it was required to include in its plan development process the methods that would be utilized to address a number of planning concepts detailed in the State Statutes. Section 16.965(4) of the State Statutes describes these concepts (see attached Appendix C for the complete text of this section). Listed below is the primary intent of the section:

4) In determining whether to approve a proposed grant, preference shall be accorded to applications of local governmental units that contain all of the following elements:

(b) Planning efforts that contain a specific description of the means by which all of the following local, comprehensive planning goals will be achieved:

1. *Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services, and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, land industrial structures.*

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 relatively low municipal, state governmental, and utility costs.*

6. *Preservation of cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.*

7. *Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.*

8. *Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.*

9. *Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.*

10. *Providing adequate infrastructure and public services, and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.*

11. *Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base, and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional, and local levels.*

12. *Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.*

13. *Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.*

14. *Providing an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety, which meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.*

These 14 planning concepts are not required "elements" (chapters) of the plan, but rather are ideas or themes that need to be referenced or addressed within the text of the planning grant application and subsequent planning documents. They have been addressed within the Village of Whiting and other individual comprehensive plans within the Portage County planning project.