



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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Located in northeast Wisconsin, immediately west of the City of Oshkosh, the Town of Algoma is strategically located along the southern shores of Lake Butte des Morts. With a population of nearly 7,000¹ people, the Town offers residents a high quality urbanizing environment with easy access to urban and natural amenities. The Town encompasses about 6,731 acres² and includes a mix of residential, commercial, institutional and recreational land uses.

PLANNING HISTORY

Algoma enjoys a long history of land use and comprehensive planning. This comprehensive plan updates an earlier comprehensive plan that was originally adopted in 2007. To comply with the “Smart Growth” legislation (Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001), a comprehensive plan “shall be updated no less than once every 10 years”. This plan update maintains compliance for this legislation.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the comprehensive plan is to assist local officials in making land use decisions that are harmonious with the overall vision of the Town’s future. Developing a comprehensive plan is a proactive attempt to define the policies and guidelines for future development. Comprehensive planning decisions evaluate existing facilities and future needs; promote public health, safety, community aesthetics, orderly development and preferred land use patterns; and foster economic prosperity and general welfare in the process of development. The plan evaluates what types of development will best benefit the community’s interests and long-term vision, while at the same time providing flexibility for landowners and protecting property rights.

PLAN COMPONENTS

The Town of Algoma Comprehensive Plan Update 2040 identifies a 20-year planning horizon and encompasses four major components:

1. A profile of the demographic, economic, and housing characteristics;
2. An inventory and assessment of the environment, community facilities; and agricultural, natural, and cultural resources;
3. Vision, goals, policies, strategies, and action items; and
4. A series of land use maps that depict existing and optimum land use patterns.

¹ WDOA, 2019 final population estimate, 6,908 people.

² Based on 2015 existing land use.

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The Algoma Comprehensive Plan addresses the nine elements required by Wisconsin Statutes §66.1001 and an additional chapter with appendices to better communicate and illustrate the intent of the plan.

1. Introduction
2. Issues and Opportunities
3. Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources
4. Housing
5. Transportation
6. Utilities and Community Facilities
7. Economic Development
8. Land Use
9. Intergovernmental Cooperation
10. Implementation
11. Appendices

Included within each element (Chapters 2-10), there is an introduction, an element goal, summary of key points and narrative, and framing concepts with strategies to achieve the stated goal. The goals, framing concepts, and strategies for each plan element provide an overall framework for the development of the Town of Algoma over the next twenty years within that stated element. This framework is meant to guide the implementation of the comprehensive plan by the staff, Planning Commission, and Town Board regarding future land use policies, regulations, and individual decisions with each considered somewhat flexible in application. Town of Algoma policies and ordinances should be reviewed annually and revised as necessary to accommodate for these goals, strategies, and action steps outlined in the comprehensive plan.

The comprehensive plan document was formatted in a manner which utilizes a consistent structure to develop and prepare the Town for productive growth:

- **Vision:** An aspirational description of what is to be achieved or accomplished in the mid-term and long-term future for the Town of Algoma. It is intended to serve as a clear guide for choosing current and future courses of action. It describes how the community will look, feel, and function over the next 20 years. The overall plan vision is contained in this Introduction Chapter.
- **Goals:** Broad and general expressions of a community's aspirations, towards which the planning effort is directed. The theme-oriented goals tend to be long-term and more of an ends rather than means. One overarching goal was developed for each of the plan elements.
- **Framing Concepts:** Framing Concepts were derived from the data analysis (Chapters 2-10 and Appendices) and discussions with the Plan Committee throughout the planning

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process. These provide more detailed discussions of key issues that were identified as well as big ideas expressed in relation to the goals. The Framing Concepts may include descriptions of overarching themes that this plan looks to achieve, or specific themes that are seen in the Town and what can be improved upon.

- **Strategies:** These are more specific and provide measurable objectives to help achieve the Chapter's goal. Strategies help guide action steps. Town policies should be reviewed so strategies can be completed.
- **Action Steps:** Action Steps show how to make these goals and strategies a reality. Outlining short-term, mid-term, and long-term steps the Town of Algoma can do to help achieve the goals in this plan. Creating a timeline for Action Steps can help keep the Town on track for achieving these steps as well as create resources to facilitate future action.
 - Short-term action steps can be achieved within one or two years.
 - Mid-term action steps are aimed to be completed between two and five years.
 - Long-term action steps are future actions that should be taken completed or more years out. Long-term action steps are larger projects that may take a lot of collaboration between partners and stakeholders.

OVERALL PLAN VISION

Based on the discussions with the Planning Committee during the plan development process, as well as resident opinions through Westward Ho Visioning Workshop, the following overall vision for land use within the Town over the next twenty years is as follows:

In 2040, the Town of Algoma is a thriving suburban community with housing, employment, and retail uses serving its residents and workforce. The importance on quality of life is reflected through strategic investments in amenities, which better create and connects its neighborhoods and community gathering places.

INTERRELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PLAN ELEMENTS

Although all required elements are presented as separate chapters, it is important to recognize that they are interrelated. For instance, transportation infrastructure allows for the movement of goods, services, and employees; likewise, land use and zoning affects the types of housing that can be built within the Town, thus affecting the affordability of housing.

Chapter 10: Implementation integrates the element goals and action steps into one table. Map 10 -1, Future Land Use depicts future land use and illustrates key items that affect land use that were identified in the other elements. These include, but are not limited to, natural resources,

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growth areas, potential upgrades to transportation infrastructure (trails and roads) and public infrastructure.

INTERRELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PLAN ELEMENTS

In addition to the individual goals stated within each element, the plan also addresses the following 14 goals outlined in Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning legislation Act 9 that was passed in 1999.

1. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.
2. Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
3. Protection of natural features, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
4. Protection of economically productive farmlands and forests.
5. Encouragement of land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal and state governmental utility costs.
6. Preservation of cultural, historic, and archeological 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 interest 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 that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit dependent and disabled citizens.

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PLANNING PROCESS

The Town's comprehensive plan was drafted in several phases over several months of planning. Each phase provided opportunities for public involvement, as specified in the Public Participation Plan (Appendix A).

The phases included the following key components:

1. Plan Kickoff Meeting with the Comprehensive Plan Committee.
2. Regular postings of draft plan materials and meeting notices on Algoma's website: https://townofalgoma.org/comp_plan_update/.
3. Scheduled (public) Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings to review, prepare, and discuss inventory information and policy / strategy responses:
 - a. Facilitation of a Westward Ho Visioning Workshop- Inventory/Analysis and Issue Identification;
 - b. Drafting of Goals, Strategies, and Framing Concepts for each element;
 - c. Preparation of plan implementation table with Action Items, along with a future land use map; and
 - d. Facilitation of an Intergovernmental Meeting.
4. Making plan available for the required 30-day review period.
5. Holding a Public Hearing; and
6. Town Board Adoption.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING

The Town hosted an Intergovernmental Meeting on September 28, 2020. Invitations, which included a link to the plan documents and future land use map, were sent to neighboring and overlapping jurisdictions, county departments, local governmental units, state agencies and those with non-metallic mineral interests within the Town.

The meeting was designed as an open forum for the Town to gather information from its neighboring communities and overlying governmental entities to determine effective ways in which they can better collaborate, communicate, and coordinate to help achieve the goals set forth in the comprehensive plan.

East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission presented at the Intergovernmental Meeting. Feedback was gathered from the Sanitary District as well as the City of Oshkosh. The Algoma Sanitary District noted the importance of installing sewer and water lines in the most efficient way possible, and the solution was to include a map with the future land use and the lines overlaid. The City of Oshkosh gave input on the annexation area of 2023, and the solution was confirming the land use and the annexation boundary. The Town Treasurer noted that the Steinhilber Wetland should remain a protected area.

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PLAN ADOPTION

PUBLIC HEARING:

After the required public hearing held in accordance with State Statutes, the comprehensive plan went before the Comprehensive Plan Committee on December 9th, 2020 (Resolution 2020-07) and the Town Board on December 16th, 2020 and was adopted unanimously by Resolution 2020-08 (Appendix B).