

SHAPING OUR FUTURE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030



The East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (East Central), with the participation of the region's 10 counties, and its residents, is preparing a regional comprehensive plan under Wisconsin's new "Smart Growth" law. East Central has developed a public participation process, which provides several ways for you to be involved in the regional planning effort. Together, we need to determine what sort of region we want to live in, in terms of our community, our economy, and our environment. Once we decide how we want our region to look in the future, we will be able to develop a plan that will enable us to meet our goals.

WHAT IS SMART GROWTH?

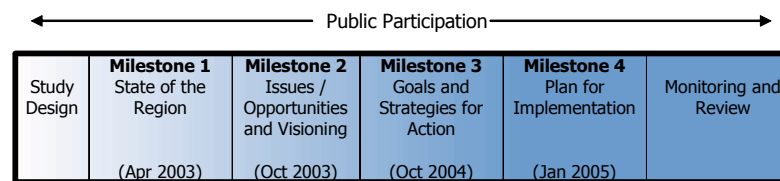
The term Smart Growth refers to giving priority to improving services, such as schools, roads, affordable housing, and transportation in existing communities, rather than encouraging new housing and commercial development, and new highways, in the countryside.

East Central, which celebrated 30 years as a regional planning agency in 2002, is trying to ensure that county and local government, interest groups, and citizens are all involved in deciding how to deal effectively with the growth management issues that will face this region in the future. For example, in our 10-county area in the past 20 years:

- 83,000 new jobs have been created;
- an area larger than the entire area of Winnebago County has been taken out of agricultural production;
- 60,000 new homes have been built, that is 8 new homes everyday; and
- as of 1997, the price of many of these new homes was out of reach of one-third of workers in the region who earn low-level wages.

The planning process has been divided into 4 main stages. MILESTONE 1: STATE OF THE REGION, which provides background information on the economy, housing, transportation and the environment, as well as an assessment of trends, was adopted in April 2003. Working in cooperation with technical advisory committees and citizens, we are now working on MILESTONE 2: ISSUES / OPPORTUNITIES AND VISIONING. This report has three objectives: to develop a vision for the future of the region; explore the impact of current and projected trends on the issues identified in the State of the Region Report; and identify core goals to help achieve the future we want for ourselves and for the next generation. MILESTONE REPORT 3 and MILESTONE REPORT 4 are scheduled for completion in October 2004 and January 2005 respectively.

Major Phases of the Regional Comprehensive Planning Process



The new regional plan will provide a comprehensive, policy framework. It will provide guidance for state, regional, county and local decision makers, on accomplishing coordinated and balanced development that will promote the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the region and all of its citizens.