

PART III: PROJECT CRITERIA

Limit Part III to 10 written pages. Limit all supporting documentation, maps, or other attachments to 10 additional pages. Refer to the Pages 11-15 for a description of information required in PART III.

Attach the written response for Part III, Sections A through F to Parts I and II of the application form.

Section A (30%):

Planning efforts that address the interests of overlapping or neighboring jurisdictions.

The Towns of Marion, Dakota, Wautoma, Rose, Bloomfield, Poy Sippi, and Aurora; Villages of Redgranite and Wild Rose; and City of Wautoma were successful in receiving Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) grants for undertaking Smart Growth multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning. These plans have been completed. This grant will enable the remaining municipalities that presently do not have Smart Growth-compliant comprehensive plans to prepare one in conjunction with the simultaneous preparation of a comprehensive plan for Waushara County. Ten of these plans are updates; Towns of Plainfield, Oasis, Hancock, Coloma, Richford, Springwater, Saxeville, Mt. Morris, and Leon and Village of Hancock; and two plans are new, Villages of Coloma and Lohrville. Each of these local plans, as well as the county plan, will be prepared to meet the requirements of Wisconsin Statute 66.0295.

Waushara County has been a proponent of a “bottom up” approach to comprehensive planning since the formation of its Land Use Planning Committee in 1994. It has been the County’s policy to encourage communities to prepare local plans by matching local dollars. However, since the County’s commitment to these local planning efforts pre-dates the passage of the Smart Growth legislation by several years, a number of these plans; Towns of Plainfield, Oasis, Hancock, Deerfield, Coloma, Richford, Springwater, Saxeville, Mt. Morris, and Leon and Village of Hancock; were begun and/or completed before the statutory requirements for comprehensive planning, as outlined in this legislation, were in place. Although these plans are relatively comprehensive, they could not fully anticipate the statutory requirements mandated by the legislation and therefore are not considered Smart Growth-compliant, as statutorily defined. As a result, many of these municipalities have indicated a commitment to updating their plans to comply with the statutory definition of a comprehensive plan.

In submitting this grant application, Waushara County is making known its intention to be a participating sponsor along with those municipalities which presently do not have Smart Growth-compliant plans. These local plans, along with the Smart Growth-compliant local plans, will provide substantive direction to Waushara County as it develops its comprehensive plan, which will be prepared as an independent document. Consistent with the County’s “bottom up” approach, the County will fully respect and incorporate the desires, expressed by the individual communities in their plans, as much as practicable. As an example, the County Land Conservation and Zoning Department has included the plans as a first level of reference for applications and projects. The County Board has established a policy which gives emphasis to the local plans when making local decisions. The policy directs County Departments and their corresponding committee to consider and respond to requests from municipalities to implement strategies in their municipal comprehensive plan, for example targeting specific areas for County parkland purchases. As part of the planning process, both at the local and county levels, particular attention will be given to achieving a high level of consistency in proposed land uses across municipal boundaries. This will be accomplished in part by having the municipal planning committees meet together to discuss land uses along borders and by reviewing the land uses identified in the plans that are being updated. To achieve a high level of consistency, the planning process has been overseen by the County Land Use Committee made up of representatives appointed by the elected bodies of all the municipalities. This committee shares ideas and brings up issues, such as the development of a setback or buffer from wetlands and the development of an agricultural zoning district that is consistent across the county, yet allows for some variation in zoning district regulations, such as minimum lot size.

This application for a multi-jurisdictional planning grant between Waushara County and the municipalities continues a tradition of collaborative planning efforts in the county. In 1995, the City of Wautoma and three adjacent towns worked with the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to complete the *Wautoma Area Land Use and Development Plan* to provide a guide for the area’s growth. Other multi-jurisdictional plans include the *Wautoma/Silver-Irogami Lakes Sewer Service Area Plan*, recently updated, and earlier versions dating from the mid-1980’s and 1996. Since the onset of local community planning in 1999, emphasis has been placed on grouping adjacent municipalities. Joint meetings for these early non-Smart Growth plans has proven to be an effective way to identify common issues, such as lack of employment opportunities, the loss of Christmas tree production and subsequent sale of land for other uses and concerns and exchange ideas on addressing them. The three DOA-funded planning grants in Waushara County successfully utilized this model of cooperative planning and idea-sharing. Although each municipality prepared its own

comprehensive plan, the use of joint committee meetings has enabled members of the individual planning committees to resolve concerns with proposals made by their neighboring municipality. As issues arise the County Land Use Committee and local planning committees have invited agencies, such as CAP Services (CAP), Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP), Wisconsin (WisDOT), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA), to provide additional information. These agencies have received committee mailings to keep them informed throughout the process.

Over the past few years, the concept of area-wide planning has been stressed during the joint planning committee meetings. As a result, not only has this increased the level of communication but individual committees have come to acknowledge that events, projects, proposals, and related activities – both positive and negative – which occur in adjacent communities impact their community as well. This communication will be the basis to forming permanent planning and implementation committees that would address cross municipal concerns. Large scale projects, particularly those that have economic development impacts, such as the new prison in Redgranite, clearly have implications for municipalities throughout the county. With a greater recognition that their community still benefits when certain types of land use or activities are located in an adjacent municipality where they are more appropriate, a spirit of cooperation rather than competition has been fostered. This mindset extends to other aspects such as water quality and quantity, community services, and transportation. As an example, the development of multi-jurisdictional fire districts throughout the county. Another example is that some towns willingly contribute tax dollars to help neighboring communities provide services, such as libraries, that are used by their residents. The Waushara County Towns Association provides an additional venue where multi-jurisdictional cooperation is often employed to address common issues and concerns.

Waushara County and its municipalities face common issues regarding future growth. With no community larger than 2,500 residents, the county is expected to remain primarily a rural area. As a result, residents will continue to rely on larger urban centers in nearby counties for many of the shopping, service, and employment needs. A changing agricultural base has contributed to changes in the size, number, and type of agricultural operations. The aging population is creating additional employment opportunities for services to meet their needs. New medical facilities are being constructed or enlarged and must be staffed. New construction and remodeling of recreational homes for retirement use has created a demand for construction related jobs. The county is also attracting new residents, drawn by the area's natural amenities, who find that work commutes to the Fox Cities, Oshkosh, Stevens Point, and other employment centers are an acceptable trade-off for the area's quality of life. Recent highway improvements to U.S. Highway 10, State Highway 21, and Interstate 39 are making these urban centers more convenient, increasing the demand for rural non-farm residential homesites and threatening to make farmland too expensive for continued agricultural production. In addition, although not at the forefront yet, another major issue that will require coordinative planning among the jurisdictions will be WisDOT's long-term planning and potential construction activities involved with the designation of STH 21 as a connector highway in its Corridors 2020 Plan. The county's lakefronts, already largely developed, are being converted into year-round housing as their owners retire and city people look for recreation properties to eventually turn into retirement homes, further increasing the demand for health care and other eldercare services. These issues are complex and interrelated and, for the most part, transcend the ability of a single municipality to adequately address them. Using a multi-jurisdictional planning approach to address them is viewed as the most effective way to integrate and/or coordinate future land use and development strategies. The relationships established during this process will continue.

To underscore the value of cooperative planning and as a way of ensuring that the interests of all jurisdictions in the county are fully recognized, the County's Land Use Planning Committee has been expanded to include a representative (and an alternate) from each municipality. These representatives have an intimate knowledge of their local plans that were created by citizen committees and will be active participants in the planning process for developing the County's comprehensive plan. The committee meets as a whole, which facilitates an understanding of both unique and common concerns and issues and foster discussion on planning and implementation options that could be effectively implemented across jurisdictional boundaries. This will help the County determine an action plan for implementing those strategies and recommendations identified in the local plans as tasks that are best carried out at the county level, such as transportation and healthcare. In creating both local and countywide planning committees, individuals represent a diversity of age groups, occupations, and interests. Key players with area wide interests, including the school district, local merchants, farmers, realtors, and tradesmen and special interest groups such as sportsmen's groups and local historical societies have been, and continue to be, invited to serve on the committees. Local residents and property owners are actively encouraged to participate in committee meetings by being involved in discussions and decision making with committee members. Technical expertise and input from public entities including the Waushara County Zoning Administrator, University of Wisconsin- Extension (UWEX), WisDOT, DNR, WHEDA, schools, CAP, DATCP, Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC), Waushara County Economic Development Corporation (WCEDC), Tri-County

Regional Economic Development Corporation (TCREDC), Waushara Area Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), Waushara Convention and Visitors Bureau (WCVB), Waushara County Job Center (Job Center), and human service providers are in place to help throughout the planning process.

To promote plan consistency across jurisdictional boundaries, the local representative from each municipality will keep their elected officials informed on the progress of the county plan and issues of mutual interest and concern by giving a report at regular municipal meetings. Because Waushara County has consistently advocated a “bottom up” approach in developing its county plan, local officials, residents, property owners will be given ample opportunity to comment on specific plan proposals under consideration in their municipality. This will promote the evolution of policies that will be universally embraced, and hence more consistent across jurisdictional boundaries. It will enhance effective cooperative agreements between adjacent municipalities. These agreements between municipalities would require commitment and can be altered and change only by participants of all municipalities involved.

All municipal, county, and state plans will be reviewed for consistency by local and county committees. If inconsistencies are found the committees will recommend appropriate action to make the plans consistent with one another. For example, if a village plans to expand a commercial district into an area that the town has planned as residential, a compromise maybe to have a mixed use district with residential development on the second floor.

Section B (25%):

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

Waushara County and each of the municipalities included in to this grant application will address all fourteen local comprehensive planning goals through the public participation process and by review of existing reports, plans, and studies, analysis and data trends, and assessment of alternative development scenarios. An innovative approach, found to be effective in earlier planning efforts, will use the citizens’ questionnaire as a tool to rank how important each of the state-ordered local comprehensive planning goals are to local residents. The questionnaire may be mailed, provided and collected at county events, such as the fair or drop boxes at local libraries. This will enable planning committee members to effectively allocate their time and resources focusing on issues most critical to their community and, equally important, gain a better perspective of the interrelationships between various land use issues, such as growth, environmental protection, and transportation and housing needs. The end result will be better and more clearly targeted strategies that lead to sound land use decisions by local elected officials.

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.*

As part of the planning process, an assessment of the adequacy of infrastructural systems will be conducted and areas where there are opportunities for accommodating new development will be identified and quantified. This goal will be addressed in the land use, housing, economic development and community facilities section of the plan. Promoting the development or re-development of vacant or underutilized sites and structures in areas where a full complement of services are currently available, compact and orderly development, and other implementation techniques developed by the planning committee members through discussion and brain-storming techniques will be used in addressing this goal. County and local plans will promote these areas as locations most suitable for future redevelopment through the use of zoning and other ordinances, incentives, and educational tools to target these areas for rehabilitation. Examples are community pride days, historic preservation programs, and listing available properties for business development. Funding programs and other potential tools that are available to help implement these efforts will be used including community block grants, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Historic tax credits, and Tax Incremental Financing (TIF). At the same time, however, given the county’s attractiveness for new residential development in outlying non-sewered rural areas, companion strategies that address this facet of new growth cannot and will not be ignored. By reviewing existing land use, geological, economic and demographic data enhanced with the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) software, appropriate land uses will be determined by the planning committee members for appropriate growth areas.

2. *Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.*

Traditional neighborhoods, as found in larger urban centers, are non-existent in Waushara County. Smaller sub-neighborhoods exist with heightened sense of community through interaction and connectedness in the City of Wautoma and most of the county’s six villages. In addition, nodes of concentrated populations with a connectedness are found around several area lakes and historic crossroad hamlets including Poy Sippi, Pine River, Saxeville, Dakota, Tustin and Richford. While these outlying areas are often auto-dependent for many of their service needs, goals that

encourage a development pattern that preserves and enhances multi-modal transportation options and provide safe corridors, particularly those that provide opportunities to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians, will be promoted between concentrated populations and the villages. This development pattern will provide the opportunity for alternative and affordable transportation for elderly and handicapped development proposals and the growth they generate, even in the incorporated municipalities. A companion element that will be promoted is a stronger vision of their role as an integral component of a broader neighborhood concept to create a heightened sense of community and connectivity. Intergovernmental cooperation opportunities for ride sharing, such as car-pooling, will be explored. As time passes it becomes more and more obvious that countywide ride sharing, bike paths, and trails become more valuable in the county due to a growing need. These will be implemented through zoning, local ordinances, and road construction projects. In addition to the transportation element, this goal will be addressed in the utilities and community facilities; and land use elements.

3. *Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.*

Protection of natural areas, locally and countywide, will be addressed through the agricultural, natural, and cultural resources; utilities and community facilities; and land use elements of the plans. Stewardship that engenders the wise use of its natural resources, whether they be its highly productive agricultural soils, blocks of woodland, non-metallic minerals, surface water, or groundwater reserves, is vital to Waushara County's economy. The county's glacial heritage has created a landscape that is rich in natural features. Waushara County is currently cooperating with the National Park Service (NPS), the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation (IAPTF), and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to develop the Ice Age Trail along the terminal moraine in the west central portion of the county. Waushara County's undulating topography offers an appealing mix of agricultural lands, open lands and woodlands along with numerous scenic lakes, streams and wetlands. These natural resources and the aesthetic, recreational, and wildlife values they provide are important to area residents and a primary reason that the county is attractive for new growth. To help address water quality, head waters of trout fisheries and lake issues, the county presently has a number of lake districts and a County Watershed Lakes Council. The planning process will incorporate the recommendations of the recently update County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, which was influenced by the completed municipal plans. Future updates of land and water resources management plan will incorporate ideas from the comprehensive plans. Developmental pressures, which cause problems, such as soil erosion, loss of shoreline buffers, habitat changes, will be addressed in the plan. While a varying degree of access and use of significant natural areas is often demanded by the public, and other areas high in natural resource value are often sought out for homesites, history has shown that these areas frequently are poorly suited for development. With this in mind, a major focus of both the local and county plans will revolve around an inventory of these resources and the identification of strategies that maintain their integrity by promoting their preservation, wise use, and long-term protection. A wide array of tools ranging from public ownership to private initiatives, zoning, and education will be used. Additionally, future land use maps will designate environmentally sensitive areas, such as wetlands, floodplains, and shoreland buffers. During the development of the plan and its implementation, input will be solicited from agencies, such as Army Corp of Engineers, DNR, Golden Sands Natural Resources Conservation Service, and DATCP.

4. *Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.*

Agriculture, silviculture (Christmas tree farms), and forestry are historically important components of the county's economy. Maintaining their viability is at the forefront of this goal. Residential and other types of development that infringe on lands devoted to agriculture and forestry compromise their ability to be efficiently and economically utilized. Compounding the problem is the notion held by many large landowners that their holdings are more valuable for development than continued use for crops and woodlands. And yet, as remaining agricultural and forested lands are broken into smaller and smaller blocks, the task for those who want to continue in agriculture and forestry becomes increasingly difficult. Because areas best suited for growing a variety of agricultural and forest products are often defined by their underlying soils, an important component of the plans will be to utilize soil surveys and existing land use maps to identify the prime soil areas and the large areas of agricultural and forest lands and develop strategies that protect these key areas from conflicting types of development. A particular emphasis will be placed on measures that preserve large contiguous blocks, where productive agricultural and forestry activities are most efficient. In addition to an evaluation of the effectiveness of existing zoning in addressing this issue, other implementation tools, such as conservation subdivision design applications, the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), easements, and deed restrictions, will be investigated. Additionally, estate planning, targeting in particular the farming community, is an educational tool that will be promoted. The potential to encourage financial planning that expands beyond the sale of land for retirement funding

will also be studied for its applicability. This will be addressed in the agricultural, natural, and cultural resources; and land use elements of the plans.

5. *Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.*

Waushara County's incorporated and unincorporated municipalities, although relatively small in population, share many of the growth issues faced by larger communities. In the incorporated communities, historically compact development patterns – a significant attribute of small service center communities – are being threatened by more automobile-dependent development on their peripheries. In outlying rural areas, development is scattered, a condition exacerbated by a recent trend toward large lot rural development. This situation stems from the perception that raw land prices, although having skyrocketed in recent years, are still a bargain in Waushara County. Another problem found in rural areas is that where concentrated nodes exist, their location historically has been driven by natural features, i.e., lakes, rather than by where services can be most efficiently provided. In many cases, although the development is concentrated, it may be too small in scale to cost-effectively provide municipal services, such as sewer and water, even though continued reliance on private on-site wastewater systems and wells potentially could pose a health/environmental concern in the future. We will develop policies that promote more compact and efficient development patterns to not only limit service costs but to make more "livable" communities. The objective will be to target projected growth based on appropriate density, land use, and land consumption such that higher density, mixed use development patterns will be encouraged in urban areas while development that minimizes service costs and reduces conflicts between residential development and other types of land use will be encouraged in rural areas. Sewer service area planning, municipal boundary agreements, intergovernmental planning activities and educational activities that encourage compact development are among the tools that will be assessed during the planning process. Public education is crucial to plan implementation and will be used in the plan implementation process.

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

The cultural resources element of these plans will include an overview of the history of the area with a strong emphasis on known historic and archaeological resources. Native American occupation precludes the settlement of the area by white settlers. Artifacts and other evidence from this time period that can be found in the county, include numerous effigy mounds, such as the Whistler Mounds Group (listed in the National Registry of Historic Places) in Hancock. Local historical museums are located in Hancock, Wild Rose, and Wautoma. While a number of historical and cultural sites have been documented, in reality, very little work has been done to inventory existing building sites and other historical sites, such as the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Halls in Hancock and Poy Sippi. As a result, these cultural historical resources that give insight into Waushara County and the State's past are in danger of being lost. While the cultural resources element will include an inventory of known cultural historical and archeological sites, it will also include strategies to inventory other sites of local and national interest, such as the Springwater Volunteer Covered Bridge in Saxeville and locations of local musical and theoretical performances in Mt. Morris and Coloma. The plan will include implementation strategies, such as the use of Historic Preservation Tax Credits, to protect the identified historical sites.

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

In submitting this joint application, the municipalities recognize that inter-governmental cooperation is crucial to the successful development and implementation of the county plan, as well as to the role it will play in shaping their individual futures. The municipalities and the County recognize the importance of coordinating their plans with the comprehensive plans that have been completed. It is imperative that these municipalities and the County continue to communicate and develop solutions to developing issues. Primary reasons for this are: 1.) Area issues, such as transportation economic development, and water quality, are inherently multi-jurisdictional and need to be addressed at a more comprehensive level than the individual municipality and 2.) As an advisory document, its success as a multi-jurisdictional plan will be determined largely by the extent to which local government units and specialized districts adopt its policy recommendations and introduce/amend local ordinances, effect cooperative boundary agreements, and in other ways implement strategies. The objective is to ensure consistency both along jurisdictional borders and among the local plans, as well as to provide a useful tool Waushara County can draw upon when it prepares its countywide comprehensive plan. From Waushara County's perspective, since the local plans are expected to be used largely as building blocks in the development of its comprehensive plan, their coordination will greatly facilitate the ability of the County to develop a "seamless" plan.

Intergovernmental cooperation between neighboring municipalities, as well as between local governmental entities and Waushara County, is regarded as an integral consideration in the analysis of the six substantive elements:

housing; economic development; transportation; utilities and community facilities; agriculture, natural and cultural resources; and land use. This element will be promoted throughout the planning process by involving the public from the onset and by the collaborative efforts of the individual planning committees. As the planning process evolves, an educational effort – successfully used in earlier plans – is envisioned to build consensus by promoting the “common good” over parochial interests. Newspaper articles and presentations at public meetings to keep elected officials and the public at-large apprised of specific areas of conflict that arise during the course of each plan’s development is another avenue that will be pursued to resolve conflicting viewpoints and build consensus. As Waushara County’s comprehensive plan is prepared, committee members representing each of the county’s local units of government will report back to their local elected officials on the progress of the county plan. This will provide the local officials an opportunity to provide feedback on specific concerns that may need to be resolved before they commit to supporting the county plan.

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

The planning effort will include ways to increase the vitality of downtown areas by identifying potential business opportunities and by seeking to improve their overall appearance. Several towns contain one or two small unincorporated hamlets, ranging in size from 100 to 300 residents, which function as social centers for their surrounding area. Motorists passing through these communities draw a visual image of the landscape through which they are traveling. With this in mind, the plans will promote actions and activities that these communities can take to create a more attractive and well-ordered setting, particularly along these main thoroughfares. With an eye on building a positive community identity, a variety of tools will be utilized as potentially applicable in both the incorporated and unincorporated municipalities. These include the adoption of village powers for the towns, the establishment of town plan commissions, and the establishment of design review committees charged with implementing design standards, and/or encouraging the local plan commissions to serve in this role. Since many of the downtown businesses are marginal, building owners often do not have the financial means to undertake improvements. One of the tasks, therefore, will be to educate building owners on cost-effective techniques and improvements they can make to enhance the appearance of their structures, including the rear of their buildings where additional parking is, or can be, provided. To facilitate implementation, the documents will include downtown revitalization and design standards for both pedestrian and auto-oriented commercial development and the promotion of mixed-use development. The plans will also promote the important relationship between downtown integrity and historic preservation and discuss techniques for partnering with the Chamber, WCVB, WCEDC, TCREDC, and other private interests in building stronger community identity.

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

Housing, particularly affordable housing for low and very low income households, has become an issue in many parts of Waushara County. As in most predominantly rural areas, wages are considerably lower than those in larger urban centers for comparable jobs. While housing values are also typically lower, housing costs as a percent of household income are higher. In Waushara County housing values are rising faster than income. As a result, the demand for affordable housing (typically measured by percent of household income allocated to housing costs) exceeds the supply. Another factor driving housing costs is the demand for vacation and retirement homes. As a result, housing values are beyond the reach of local residents with fixed incomes or low wages. A component issue is the short supply of rental housing, often the most viable housing option for lower income residents. The dynamics of the county’s migrant population is changing from families to individual males. In recent years, many former migrant families have relocated to the county permanently and are being assimilated into their respective community. This influx of new residents has also put a strain on the availability of affordable housing. With the county’s high percentage of elderly residents, other issues include their ability to maintain the condition of their housing, a particularly acute concern for those on fixed incomes, and the availability and affordability of alternative housing options structured to their health and income needs.

To address these and related concerns, an evaluation of each municipality’s and the county’s existing housing stock will be incorporated into the planning process to identify and assess current and future housing needs with specific emphasis on affordability, accessibility, and quality. Recommendations will focus on the number of units, single-family/multi-family housing mix, alternative housing options, and affordability. Techniques local governments and providers can use to expand the range of housing options available and make it more affordable will be promoted, such as education, funding programs, and working with CAP, WHEDA, Veterans Affairs. Close integration between housing, economic development, and land use elements of these plans will be pursued to foster consistency between economic goals and housing recommendations.

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.*

The efficient delivery of services locally and throughout the county is a major focus and goal of the planning effort and is a key to determining the future land use in each community. With this in mind, the plans will review and assess the area's past and anticipated growth to determine the most logical pattern of future land use that should be promoted at both the local and county levels. This will be accomplished by analyzing both past and future population and development trends, existing land use patterns, and historical and projected market trends. The amount of land, as well as the adequacy of existing infrastructure needed to accommodate future growth, will be closely correlated with a determination of the types, densities and distribution of future growth. Implementation of this goal is expected to occur largely through future changes in county and local zoning and subdivision ordinances, and through increased coordination and cooperation between communities, the County, schools, and utilities. In addition with the growth in the elderly population and to comply for Federal requirements, the public services and infrastructure, as well as regulations for commercial and industrial uses, will be reviewed to determine if they accommodate handicap individuals and related implementation strategies will be reviewed. This will be addressed in the land use; utilities and community facilities; and economic development elements of the plan.

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.*

As in many other rural areas of the state, providing adequate employment opportunities is an important concern facing local officials and business leaders. Compared to their urban counterparts, wage rates for similar jobs, particularly in the manufacturing and higher end service sectors, are lower, and often the overall range of available jobs require a less skilled labor force. Both of these are contributing factors, which lead many potential members of the labor force, particularly young people, to leave the area, opting for higher educational opportunities or seeking employment elsewhere. Other county residents choose, or are forced, to commute to other communities for employment. Over time, a vicious cycle evolves as potential employers offering well-paying jobs become wary about locating in the area, fearing that the labor pool of skilled employees is inadequate for their needs. The growing senior citizen population in the county could supply the part time low income labor in many cases. Some of the mechanisms are already in place to address these issues. For example, web sites maintained by East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and the Tri-County Regional Economic Development Corporation provide an updated listing of industrial parks and sites, making potential businesses aware of industrial park space availability in the area. These web sites are linked with organizations that assist with economic development, including Forward Wisconsin, Wisconsin Department of Commerce (DOC), Job Center, WHEDA, CAP, and the Wisconsin Angel Network. There is also a countywide economic development organization in place working on many of these issues and the Tri County Regional Economic Development Corporation, a collaborative effort involving Waushara, Marquette, and Green Lake counties, has recently been formed. With the dual objective of increasing both the number and range of employment opportunities, it is anticipated that other strategies that focus on ways to retain and attract business, such as TIF and BIDs, will be at the forefront of accomplishing this goal. Other tools used will be zoning and promoting the quality of life. These strategies will be determined by reviewing existing land use, amenities, traffic statistics, and demographics. This will be included in the agricultural, natural, and cultural resources; economic development; and land use elements of the plans.

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

Experience has shown that any discussion that subjugates private property rights for the public good will be heated and contentious. Without question, achieving a balance between individual rights and community interests will require a planning process that is sensitive to a wide variety of interests. To promote an effective balance, it will be a priority to make public participation and input an integral part of the planning process, using a citizen's questionnaire for the local communities and other initial needs and issues identification activities through ongoing publicly noticed committee meetings, and ultimately public informational meetings. Planning committee members are unlikely to reach consensus on strategies or implementation techniques some perceive as unfair or heavy handed. It will be equally difficult for local officials to enact these types of recommendations should they be proposed. Therefore, keeping private property rights at the forefront and addressing issues from concerned citizens is essential to each plan's ultimate success. An educational course by UWEX will be offered to planning committees to learn about balancing private property rights and public interests. This will be a part of all elements especially land use; agricultural, natural, and cultural resources; and transportation elements.

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

Maintaining the “flavor” of the attractive landscape found in individual communities, as well as the entire county, will be this goal’s primary focus. The wealth of natural features in the county and the aesthetic, recreational, and wildlife values they provide, are important to area residents and a major reason why Waushara County is experiencing new growth. These features also attract many visitors and visitor dollars into local economies. While outlying rural areas feature an appealing fabric of agricultural and other open lands bordered by woodlands and interspersed with lakes, streams, and wetlands, Waushara County’s incorporated communities are unique in their own right and have an interesting history to tell. Redgranite and Lohrville, for example, developed around large granite quarries, which remain important physical and historical landmarks. The influence of long abandoned railroad rights-of-way can still be seen in the historic structures and pattern of land use in each of the other communities. These natural and man-made features are all considered assets that make an important contribution to the quality of life found here. During the planning process, citizen input will be sought so that those features and characteristics most important to them can be identified and strategies proposed that minimize the potential for compromising their integrity by misguided development decisions and in appropriate types and intensities of land use. In preserving these unique areas, complementary strategies that provide opportunities to strengthen their aesthetic, cultural, and economic components, such as design guidelines, historic preservation efforts, and heritage tourism promotion and events, like the Bank Robbery reenactment in Wild Rose. The unique qualities and site in the communities will be identified by the municipal planning committees and at public meetings using information from the area historical societies, the community survey, and a review of existing land uses. Zoning will be used to preserve and create these opportunities. This will be addressed in the land use; agricultural, natural, and cultural resources; and economic development elements.

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

The county’s relatively small population and lack of sizable communities have resulted in an increasing dependence on urban centers in nearby counties for employment, shopping, and health and other services. While the historical emphasis has been the inter-connectivity with other communities within the county, as well as to these larger communities, there is also a growing need to promote intra-connectivity aspects of transportation planning. A key component is to expand transportation options available to local residents for trips within the immediate area. This will be especially important because of the age structure of local residents. With senior citizens making up an increasingly higher percentage of the population, a greater dependence on other modes of transportation can be expected. The Waushara County Commission on Aging and a non-profit group operate van pools for elderly and disabled residents. The plans will assess the adequacy of these existing transportation providers and look at ways to expand services for elderly and other transportation-dependent residents for trips both within and to locations outside of the area. The plans will promote bicycling and walking as transportation options with complementary health benefits. As part of this strategy package, the plans will promote land use patterns and support infrastructure such as urban sidewalks and safe bicycle and hiking accommodations. As related to inter-area transportation, the plans will also promote opportunities for collective transportation options, such as park and ride lots and car-pooling for work and other trips outside of the area. It is also expected that a particularly crucial component of the planning process will be the coordination of WisDOT’s long-range planning strategies (i.e., STH 21) with local planning goals. This will be addressed in the land use; agricultural, natural, and cultural resources; and transportation elements.

Section C (20%):

Planning efforts that identify smart growth areas as defined under s. 16.965.

The collective population of Waushara County has grown by an estimated 28.5% since 1990, twice the the State population growth rate of 14.1%. Although nearly every municipality has shown some increase in population, much of this growth is in the form of scattered rural residential and vacation home development and seasonal home conversions. This type of growth is not only inefficient from a service standpoint, it is also depleting the amount of land available for productive agriculture and forestry and diminishing the economic viability of lands still dedicated to those activities. An aging population, due in part to the area’s popularity as a retirement location, presents an additional set of challenges.

The strength of these plans will revolve around the formulation of strategies that encourage development and redevelopment of areas where infrastructure and other services presently exist, or can be economically provided, and companion strategies that steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas and other critical resources. Smart growth areas will be identified by review the location of existing land uses, such as dense residential development pedestrian accessible retail; utilities, such as municipal water, sewer, and access to natural gas; community facilities, such as parks, libraries, and churches; transportation services, such as local roads, sidewalks, and trails; and environmentally

sensitive areas, such as wetlands and trout streams. Potential smart growth areas are not only going to be identified in or near incorporated villages and cities, but also in the towns in areas around lakes and unincorporated rural hamlets that have one or more characteristics of a smart growth area, including sewer, denser residential development, pedestrian accessible retail and park areas. Identification of these smart growth areas will be influenced by input from the public, through such venues as joint meetings of the municipal planning committees and the County Land Use Committee.

Tools, such as zoning, education, financial and development incentives, and the construction and enhancement of public infrastructure and community facilities will be used to encourage and shape smart growth areas. These tools will be used to encourage growth patterns that will lead to efficiencies in servicing provisions, help protect important environmental features, and maintain the integrity of outlying rural lands for other land uses. Complementary policies related to agricultural activities, forestry, mineral extraction, preservation of open space and highway corridors will also be developed. At the same time, as ongoing plans have revealed, if the plans fail to acknowledge the reality that there is a demand for residential development and other intensive land uses in outlying rural areas or fail to seek out ways to accommodate it, they are doomed to failure. Because this type of development poses unique challenges that will require a balance of economic, environmental, and aesthetic considerations, it is essential that policies be developed that allow development to co-exist within a setting of traditionally rural activities and land use.

Section D (12%):

Planning efforts, including subsequent updates and amendments, that include development of implementing ordinances, including zoning, subdivisions and land division.

It is important to remember that each local comprehensive plan is an advisory document intended to provide a consistent policy framework with overall goals and objectives that will be used to guide subsequent local planning decisions and efforts undertaken by the participating municipalities and their consultants. Once adopted, each plan will be a working document that is maintained on a continuous basis by each municipality. Each plan will be reviewed annually by the towns, villages, and County and if necessary updated to address any conflicts that arise between the elements of the plan, assess implementation process and to consider additional implementation strategies and objectives. Each plan is also expected to be an integral component of the county's comprehensive plan and since, with one exception, the participating towns are presently under county zoning, Waushara County will play an important role in ensuring that it is successfully implemented and kept up-to-date. Waushara County's comprehensive plan will follow a "bottom up" approach, integrating the goals, objectives, strategies, and recommendations from the local plans to the greatest possible extent. The intent is to build consensus among municipalities with a specific focus on attempting to resolve land use related issues along common boundaries so that the future land use in the county document will be as seamless as possible. Individual communities have found that they can rely on Waushara County – at their request – to implement specific recommendations made in their plans. Communities will request the County update the County Zoning Ordinance and for implementation strategies that involve the County. With all but one town currently under county zoning, the Waushara County Zoning Committee has been using these local plans to guide their zoning decisions. The Zoning Committee's policy has been to allow the town boards to have final approval of all zoning decisions made. Local informative materials will be distributed by the County at the time that a permit is obtained.

A major review of local and county plans is expected to occur following the release of full demographic data from the 2010 census; periodic reviews and, if needed, amendments will be made to address unforeseen circumstances. The timing and scope of WisDOT's plans to upgrade the Highway 21 corridor is one example of an impact on the area's future demographics that cannot be fully anticipated at the present time. To encourage and assist the municipalities implement policies included in their plan, an appendix will be dedicated to a variety of model ordinances, such as those pertaining to zoning, subdivision, sign control, and other aesthetic/design applications; a template boundary agreement; and a structure and guidelines for implementing conservation subdivision design and other innovative approaches to development.

Section E (12%):

Planning efforts that provide opportunities for public participation throughout the planning process.

Public participation throughout the planning process is an important ingredient of every aspect of each plan's preparation and is essential to achieve support for its adoption by both local citizens and the elected officials who serve them. Experience has shown that a commitment to soliciting early and ongoing public input pays dividends in understanding the range and depth of issues and ultimately leads to a document that proposes well-considered recommendations and strategies that are more likely to gain acceptance. As a first action, broad based citizen committees reflecting a spectrum of diverse interests and viewpoints will be selected to guide the evolution of each local plan. Public participation will be particularly important during the preparation of the county comprehensive plan, which will be simultaneously prepared with ongoing local planning activities. The County Land Use Committee will be comprised of membership from each

community to ensure that local issues and viewpoints are represented. It will be the responsibility of these local representatives to keep their elected officials apprised of progress on the county plan and to serve as a sounding board for their perspectives.

The planning consultant facilitates the meeting, provides some of the background research, and writes the document. University of Wisconsin-Extension provides education on topics of concern to the committee and issues related to the plan to enable the committee to make informed decisions. The planning committee decides what is included in the plan and approves the contents of the final document with ultimate adoption authority lying with the Plan Commission members and the town boards, village boards, or County Board as per Statute 66.1001. General public participation in the form of nominal group visioning sessions followed by a widely distributed citizen's questionnaire will be used to gain insight on issues and opportunities. Additionally, local residents will be strongly encouraged to attend meetings of the planning committee. All committee meetings will be publicly noticed, a sign-up sheet maintained, and time allotted for public comment. An announcement of every meeting is sent to the local newspapers and radio stations. The meeting dates are listed on the Waushara County UW-Extension web site. Written comments will also be encouraged. As a complementary action, special issue-based meetings devoted to gathering additional public input or disseminating educational materials will be held to more fully understand particularly controversial issues. The media will be called upon to keep area residents abreast of progress on the plans both through in-person reporting, as well as through the publishing of press releases issued to them.

In addition to participating in the regular meetings to develop the plan, the public will be invited to attend open house or public comment meetings at the end of the process. At this meeting a brief summary of the plan to date will be given and the public will be given an opportunity to comment on the plan to the comprehensive planning committee. This meeting will take place prior to the public hearing upon the completion of the plan. A public hearing will be held in accordance to Wisconsin Statute 66.1001(4)(d) prior to the town boards, village boards, or County Board adopting the comprehensive plan. The town boards, village boards, or County Board will publish a class one notice at least 30 days prior to the public hearing. The notice will include 1) the date, time, and place of the public hearing, 2) a summary of the comprehensive plan, 3) contact information, and 4) where the plan can be viewed.

Other efforts to encourage public participation include widely distributed UWEX's brochure on planning and the planning process, a annual display booth at the Waushara County Fair, and the distribution of all adopted plans to area libraries. Waushara County's website also has an extensive "page" devoted to comprehensive planning activities. All planning committee meetings (both county and local) are posted on the website along with copies of all adopted plans. The website also provides a link to the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission websites, which provides a wide variety of other planning-related information. UW-Extension will request to be invited to speak to local organizations on the planning process that is taking place in the county. As part of the presentation, members of the local organizations will be encourage to participate in the planning process and at least read the papers and look at draft copies of the plan to stay informed about the comprehensive planning that is taking place.

Section F (1%):

Planning efforts contemplated for completion within 30 months from the date the grant is awarded.

The planning schedule calls for the completion and adoption of the comprehensive plans of Waushara County and each of its participating municipalities in the 30-month period allowable for a multi-jurisdictional planning process commencing with the signing of a grant contract.