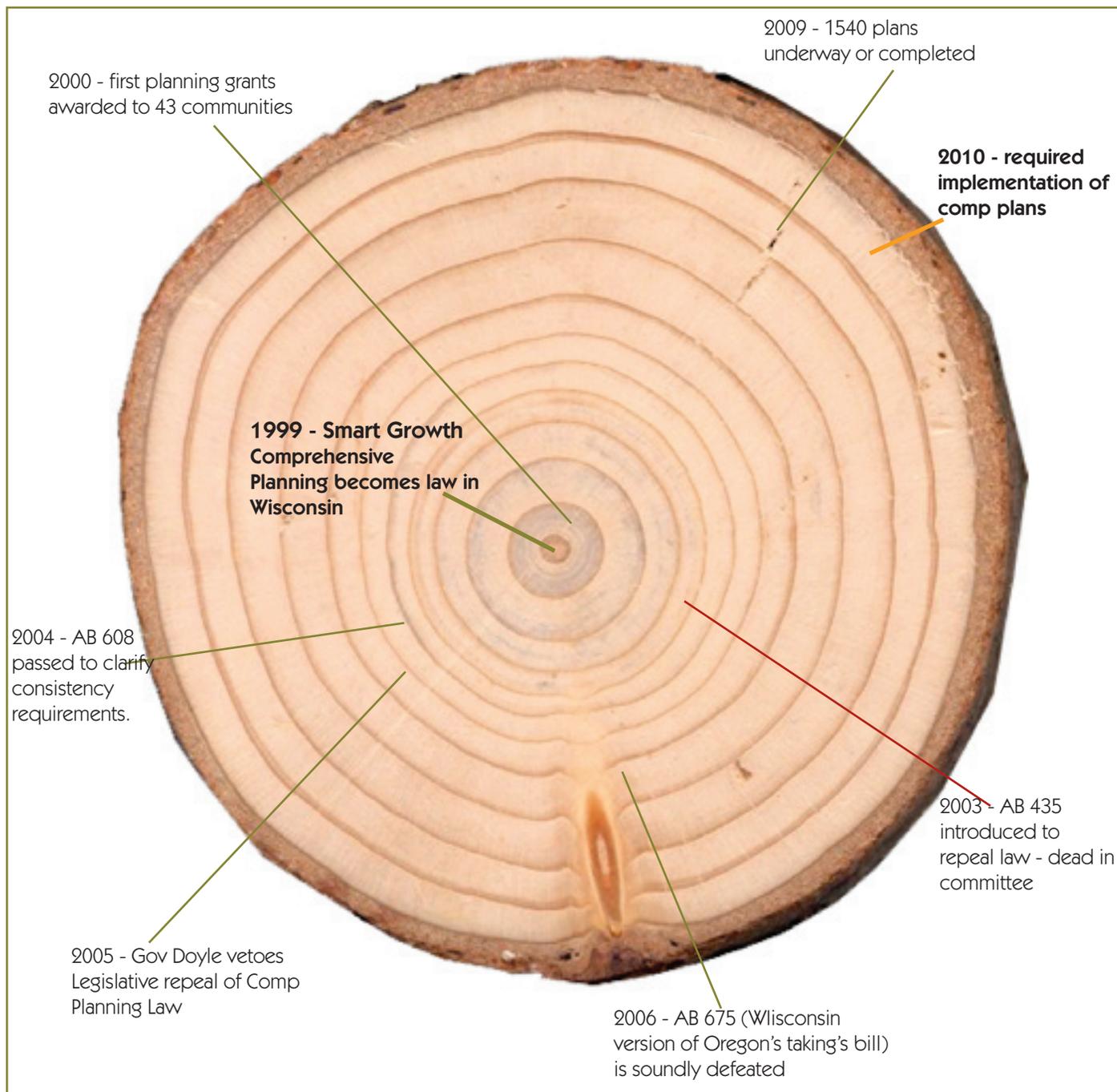


1000 FRIENDS OF WISCONSIN

# LANDSCAPES

Volume 13, Number 2

Fall 2009



## Smart Growth@10

*you can plan on it!*

# The Director's Desk

## 1000 Friends of Wisconsin

Created to advocate and promote uses of land, water and air that shape healthy communities where people want to live, work, and play.

Our work focuses on helping people make the connection between our land use and transportation decisions and our state's economic, environmental and cultural health.

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*Our website has daily updates:*

[www.1kfriends.org](http://www.1kfriends.org)

*Check out*

[www.co2gether.org](http://www.co2gether.org)

[www.wisconsinrta.org](http://www.wisconsinrta.org)

You could call Wisconsin's Smart Growth law a Weapon of Mass Participation. A decade ago, less than one-third of the state's communities had any kind of land use planning in place. The quality of these plans varied greatly and many of these plans were developed with little or no public input.

Today, thanks to the Smart Growth law, you are almost certainly living in a community that has asked for your help to put together a comprehensive plan for your community's future. Fully 85% of the state's communities (representing over 90% of the state's population) have developed – or are in the process of developing – a comprehensive plan.

Those plans are the result of public participation at a scale that is unprecedented for community planning.

Over the past decade, citizens across the state took the opportunity to shape the future of Wisconsin. They were asked by local leaders to share their vision for the future of their locality. A shared vision was developed – a vision that considered the varied views of a diverse population. At times it was messy. Differing views clashed. Yet, today, communities across the state have created a vision and plans for how they will look 10 and 20 years from now. Those plans are locally designed by the people who have made those communities home.

Now we enter a tougher phase of planning. The law now requires communities to implement those plans. Starting in 2010, all land use decisions will have to be consistent with the plans. In other words, the vision that was created by local citizens in their adopted comprehensive plan will become the mandatory guide for future land use.

Of course, community views on development will inevitably change over time. Our law contemplates that change.

Plans will need to be updated to incorporate changing views. But planning will never go back to the domain of insiders. As long as we have our Smart Growth law, the greater public will always be in control of their future. Changes in the comprehensive plan must be adopted with public input.

With public participation, land use decisions are much more likely to reflect the broader community preference.

That makes Smart Growth a Weapon of Mass Satisfaction.

***Steve Hiniker***

🍁 Please support our fall appeal - appearing in your mailbox soon! 🍁

# Smart Growth@10

## *Time for Implementation*

*Steve Hiniker*

Just ten years ago, Wisconsin had no statewide plan for land use and we were all paying the price.

From 1950 to 1990, we lost nearly 4 million acres of farmland (that's larger than the entire state of Connecticut). We added over 10,000 miles of roads and more than doubled the miles we drive each year (almost 60 billion miles annually in Wisconsin). Over the same time period, our land area in southeastern Wisconsin expanded 17 times faster than the rate of population growth.



In northern Wisconsin, undeveloped lakes became an endangered species. Since the 1960s, about 60 percent of previously undeveloped lakes 10 acres and larger have been developed with one or more dwellings. Development pressure on the larger lakes has increased by 800% over the same time period. According to a study conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, unless we change our development patterns, all currently undeveloped lakes over ten acres will be developed by 2025.

In 1970, most people had never heard of forest fragmentation. Today it is one of the biggest threats to our northern boreal ecosystem. Forest fragmentation is disrupting the natural ecology of wooded areas throughout our northern forests.



By 1990, the land of Leopold, Nelson and Muir was slowly losing its identity, seemingly destined to become a sprawling exurb sandwiched between Chicago and Minneapolis.

In spite of all of these threats, the state had no plans for managing that growth. Nor did it have any organization trying to promote a rational strategy to address growth.

Things started to change in 1996. A group of activists, frustrated by inaction at the state level, were determined to direct growth in ways that benefited the state and individual communities. They eventually created an organization, called it 1000 Friends of Wisconsin and went to work.

### **1999 – Planning Comes out of the Closet**

In three short years that small group had made a huge difference. By working collaboratively with municipalities, counties, builders and realtors, 1000 Friends was able to spearhead the successful effort to pass Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law in 1999.

From the very start, the program had strong bi-partisan support. Starting with Republican Governor Tommy Thompson who worked with legislators to create the Smart Growth law, Democratic Governor Jim Doyle rescued the program from a repeal of the law contained in the 2005-07 state budget, which was orchestrated by a small group of legislators who misrepresented how the law worked.

According to the new law, starting in 2000, communities across the state would be required to enlist their residents in an open,



comprehensive planning process that would lead to informed choices about where and when future growth would take place. The planning would be open and comprehensive. Plans would have to address land use impacts related to transportation choices, housing, utilities, economic development, agriculture and intergovernmental concerns.

Gone were the days of “developer’s choice.” Decisions about development would take place openly and with public participation. Land use decisions would be made in a larger context.



There are a total of 1,923 local governments in Wisconsin. The law **requires** 1,242 communities to develop comprehensive plans by 2010. So far, 940 have final plans. That is, 85% of the communities required to have comprehensive plans have complied and there are another 600 plans underway. That means many of the local governments are **choosing** to do comprehensive planning. That represents a very good record of compliance for a new way of doing business in the state.

**2010 – The Teeth Sink In**

The focus now shifts to implementation. Until 2010, the plans are advisory. Next year, all land use decisions in communities that are required to have plans must be consistent with those plans.

That means that the vision that was created through the comprehensive planning process has a meaning that no other plans have had. Instead of gathering dust on a shelf, comprehensive plans are dynamic documents that will guide land use decisions in a community. The plan represents a vision and the actions of a community will have to make that image a reality.

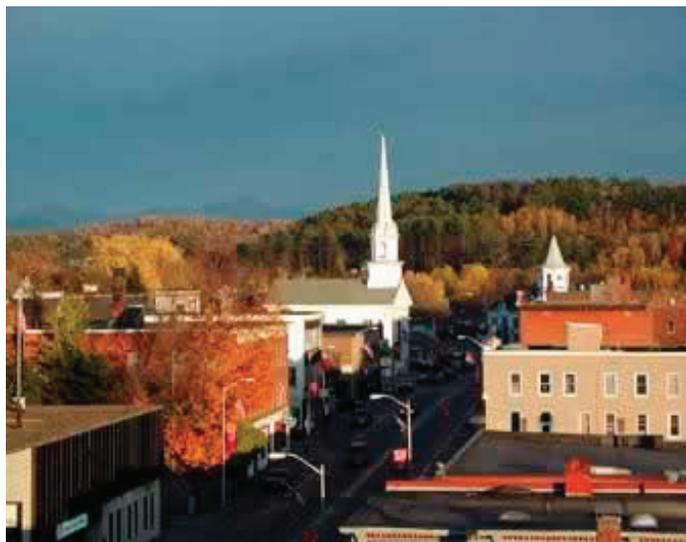
If a land use decision is not consistent with the plan, either the land use decision is not allowed – or the plan must be amended. That amendment must allow citizen input, ensuring public participation in changes to the plan.



*Kevin Pomeroy*

The comprehensive plan is meant to be dynamic – changing with changing times, changing economics and changing demographics. While communities are encouraged to revisit their plans as needed, all communities are required to update their plans at least once every ten years.

All land use decisions carry a certain amount of controversy. Undoubtedly, there will be lawsuits to test the definition of consistency. But, for the first time in the state’s history, comprehensive planning with public participation is the law. It may be the state’s best chance to hold on to the legacy of Gaylord Nelson, John Muir and Aldo Leopold.



# Comprehensive Planning in Wisconsin

## *A New Tool for Municipalities*

**Richard J. Stadelman**

*Executive Director, Wisconsin Towns Association*

With the passage of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning law in the state budget of 1999 (Wis. Act 9), now ten years ago, the vast majority of Wisconsin towns, villages, cities, and counties have taken on the responsibilities of preparing a comprehensive plan for their community, setting their vision for future years and decades to come. Where have we been in Wisconsin since the enactment of Wis. Act 9? Where are we going as a result of this Act?

There are two very significant results of the development of Smart Growth comprehensive plans in Wisconsin:

First, Wisconsin's law, by requiring citizen participation to develop the plans at the local level, has engaged the many diverse interests of each community to conduct the surveys and focus groups, discuss the goals and vision for the future, and recommend the final draft plans to locally elected leaders of their community. This strong citizen participation has resulted in strong citizen consensus with long-term support for the comprehensive plans adopted.

Second, these plans are community-based plans for each town, village, city, and county, not state or regionally imposed plans from above or afar. Community planning has been done by citizen volunteers serving on comprehensive planning committees and plan commissions in each of the participating towns, villages, cities and counties. While consultants have assisted in mapping and bringing ideas to the citizen-based committees, the committees and commissions preparing the final drafts have taken a hands-on approach to make the final product - their community plan - to be adopted by their own locally elected officers.

While the planning process in Wisconsin has had many positive benefits on communities that have developed their plans, there are still challenges that face these and all communities in the next years and decades ahead.

The comprehensive planning law (Sec. 66.1001(1)(g) of Wis. Statutes) requires that local governments address "intergovernmental cooperation" as one of the nine elements. Many towns, villages, and cities have not been able to bring meaningful cooperation with their

neighbors. If comprehensive planning is to be more beneficial in the next decade, municipalities should strive to use this element of their plans to resolve boundary disputes to create positive growth and development for their region, not just their own municipal interests.

Another challenge, while each of the nine elements of the comprehensive planning law have varying degrees of significance for each community, one area of great importance for rural communities is to develop plans to sustain working lands (productive agricultural and forest lands) for the long-term future, while recognizing the need for residential growth across the state. With the enactment of the "Working Lands Initiative" in the most recent state budget, requiring the updating of county farmland preservation plans, towns and counties should seek to integrate their existing comprehensive plans with the county farmland preservation plans to sustain prime agriculture land in their communities. At the same time, these local plans need to recognize the need and desire for residential growth in ways that will not conflict with preserving our most productive agricultural lands.

These same principles of balancing growth with sustaining the most productive lands should also become a goal for our forest lands in Wisconsin. Comprehensive planning should be the tool for sustaining our largest industries of agriculture and forestry in Wisconsin, to produce the products that create and sustain the many value-added jobs in manufacturing plants in towns, villages, and cities that we all want for our state.

From 1999 to the present, Wisconsin has begun the statewide development of community-based plans. Citizen-prepared and community-adopted plans have been at the heart of the past ten years. Now local communities need to work to use the plans to sustain their own community vitality and that of the region. Using plans to resolve the boundary disputes and sustain our largest industries in Wisconsin, should be the goal for the next ten years and beyond for all involved in comprehensive planning.



# Smart Growth Success Stories

## *Madison and Bayfield*

**Kevin Pomeroy**

*1000 Friends Planning Director*

**Madison** - process began in the fall of 2002

It's no surprise to anyone familiar with the engaged citizenry of Madison that any project claiming to "guide the future growth and development of the community over the next two decades" would be neither quick nor with few words. The three-year Comprehensive Planning process included an intensive public participation program that ultimately produced a two volume, 600 page Comprehensive Plan. The process began in the fall of 2002 with a series of open houses where citizens were asked what they liked and disliked about their community. The participants also identified five major themes which guided the remainder of the planning process.

1. The Comprehensive Plan, in its broadest form, is a statement of what the community will strive to achieve and what the City hopes to become
2. Madison is part of a dynamic and growing region
3. The City will enhance its unique qualities
4. The Comprehensive Plan will seek to balance the need to accommodate growth and change with the desire to conserve and enhance the special qualities that make the City of Madison a great place to live, work, and play.
5. The City of Madison must grow in a sustainable manner to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

A series of public meetings were held to prioritize primary issues and explore a variety of alternatives. A mail survey of Madison residents confirmed that development should be guided toward already developed neighborhoods rather than allowing it to occur in rural undeveloped areas. Discussion kits were provided to help community groups organize meetings on Comprehensive Plan issues.



*photos: Kevin Pomeroy*

During the spring of 2004, a parallel planning process produced the Downtown Advisory Report identifying key issues that would be included in the Comprehensive Plan. Also during 2004, City planning staff began drafting the Comprehensive Plan's goals, objectives, policies and implementation recommendations by reviewing and analyzing the background information and input from public meetings, workshops, committees and the Plan Commission.

By May of 2005, a draft of the Comprehensive Plan was released. A series of public meetings were held to offer citizens additional opportunities to learn about and offer comments on the Draft Plan. Input was also received by mail, email, and through an interactive website comment form.

A revised draft of the Comprehensive Plan was released for public review and discussion at the end of October 2005 with referral to the appropriate City boards, commissions and committees, and for a public hearing. The Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Common Council on January 17, 2006.

The plan identified a complete rewrite of the zoning code as a priority project. Most of the existing code dates back to 1966 and has been patched together with hundreds of amendments making it difficult to use and impeding many attempts at creating the kinds of mixed use neighborhood developments that are encouraged in the Comprehensive Plan. The 2½ year zoning code rewrite project will be completed in the summer of 2010.

The Madison Comprehensive Plan is a testimony to how important it is to engage the public in a real discussion that establishes the basic guiding principles, policies and specific recommendations for the future of the city. The plan stitches together many layers of plans, helps existing plans reinforce each other, creates links to more detailed planning activities and creates a framework to make informed decisions. In a fast growing place like Madison it's critical to have a road map for accommodating growth that doesn't sacrifice the unique qualities of this very special place.



## Bayfield - community embraced planning for decades

The tiny city of Bayfield along the shore of Lake Superior just does things differently. Although the city wasn't required to adopt a Comprehensive Plan until 2010, they started the process in 2000 right after passage of the Smart Growth legislation. Bayfield has embraced community planning for decades as a strategy to help address some of the issues faced by such a popular tourist destination. Bayfield defines planning as an inclusive process that "empowers the small community by identifying the many elements that shape a community and providing citizens with ample opportunity to participate in designing their future."



The planning process was coordinated by a volunteer task force representing a cross-section of the community. The Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute of Northland College facilitated the work of the task force which met at least monthly and sometimes as often as weekly over a 14-month period. Community residents were offered many opportunities to provide input on the vision and assisted with goals, objectives and policies. A two-day community visioning workshop attracted 120 community residents and a mail survey of all Bayfield households elicited a very high 50% return rate. Input on the comprehensive planning was received from half of Bayfield's 611 residents by the completion of the process.

Bayfield didn't stop with the typical plan in a binder that sits on a shelf and is only seen by a couple of dozen people. They produced a user-friendly synopsis of the plan in the form of a well-designed poster. The idea of condensing a 150-page planning document to both sides of a 21 x 33 inch poster at first seemed heretical to the tome-producing planner in me, but it works. The poster has the highlights and the important stuff: community history, goals tied to core values, land use map, a well articulated vision, the condensed "elements" required by the "Smart Growth" legislation, and they even found room for 16 thumbnail photos of the task force members. You don't put your photo, even a thumbnail, on something you're not proud of.

The 2002–2022 Bayfield Comprehensive Plan contains 240 actions (found in the complete plan document) that implement the goals and objectives. That's one action for every 2½ residents so they've been busy and have gotten a lot done. They installed the cleanest wastewater treatment plant on all of Lake Superior, they're greening the Apple Festival, published an "Earth Care" booklet of practical eco tips, and in 2006, the City and Town of Bayfield joined the nearby Cities of Ashland and Washburn, and the Town of La Pointe by adopting a resolution for sustainability with a shared goal of working together to create a regional eco-municipality. The resolution reinforces the vision of the Comprehensive Plan and supports the grassroots efforts of "Sustainable Bayfield" and the regional work of the "Alliance for Sustainability."

We all have a lot to learn from this community effort and the thoughts of volunteers like Task Force member Heidi Nelson, "I was honored to have been part of this. I am very proud of Bayfield for having foresight in the 60's and 80's to think of planning and to continue with it now. I love this community and – especially in this trying time – how it stands behind all of its citizens. It's the least I can do to keep this community alive and vital."



# Green Tier Legacy Communities

## *Communities that make a Difference*

**Bill Rattunde**

*1000 Friends Green Tier Legacy Community Coordinator*

The staff of 1000 Friends of Wisconsin have been hard at work over the past 9 months developing a powerful new tool for municipalities across the state to review and improve their environmental and economic performance.

Our goal is to create an opportunity for communities across the state to save energy, save money and create a better place to live – and to be able to document those results. We are also working with the State to provide appropriate incentives and technical assistance to those communities for their participation in this program.

We have worked with the State to create a framework under the Green Tier program that allows communities to enter into a voluntary but legally binding



commitment to reduce their use of fossil fuels in a broad spectrum of activities. The Green Tier program is a statewide program administered by the Department of Natural Resources that rewards corporations or communities for programs that achieve superior environmental performance. Superior environmental performance means environmental improvements that go beyond what is required under regulations. Green Tier participants receive recognition and incentives from the State for their participation in the program.

Our program is called the Green Tier Legacy Community program and is intended to complement other sustainability programs such as the Natural Step (Eco-Municipalities) or Energy Efficient Communities. Under the Green Tier program, efforts by a community

are documented on an ongoing basis (assuring continuous improvement and a commitment that amounts to more than a one-time pledge) and regulatory benefits are made available to those communities. Communities that are already participating in other sustainability programs are perfect candidates for the Green Tier Legacy Communities – though any community that wants to achieve sustainability goals is encouraged to participate.

A Green Tier Legacy Community participant would implement efficiency measures and document costs and savings. This documentation gives accountability to taxpayers and provides the State with evidence that a community is making progress in reducing pollution that would not otherwise have occurred.

The recommendations of the 2008 Governor's Task Force on Global Warming provided the impetus for this program. Many of the key recommendations of the Task Force involve policies and decisions that are made at the local level, such as municipal operations and services, as well as zoning and other land use issues.

Green Tier Legacy Communities will focus on the following program and policy areas:

### *Municipal Operations*

- Municipal Fleet Operations
- Building Design, Maintenance and Operations
- Roadway Design and Operations (Complete Streets, energy efficient roadway lighting, etc.)
- Urban Forestry

### *Municipal Services*

- Transit
- Recycling and Waste Management

### *Land Use*

- Focus on Infill Development
- Brownfield Redevelopment
- Traditional Neighborhood Development

Communities would establish their own baseline and targets for improvement. Documented continuous improvement would be required for ongoing participation in the program.

It is our goal to have a group of pilot communities as our first Green Tier Legacy Community Charter members by early 2010. We hope the greatest “legacy” will be an enhanced quality of life for generations of residents in those communities willing to envision a more sustainable future.



# The Tipping Point

## *New Approaches to Water Quality Issues*

**Kate Morgan**

*1000 Friends Water Policy Director*



The 6th Annual Clean Rivers Clean Lake Watershed Planning Conference was held August 31 at Discovery World on Milwaukee's beautiful lakefront. While the content of the breakout sessions changes each year with current research, information, and presentations about innovative projects, a core vision connects the various sessions—our issues are regional as are the solutions; and to achieve success, innovation and collaboration are essential.

It's easy, however, to view conferences, such as this one, as "preaching to the choir." So, throughout the day, I found myself asking the question: what does it take to ripen this vision so that it moves beyond the view of a few and becomes a motivating force for change and action in many? At the end of the Clean Rivers Clean Lake conference, I saw this event as part of the answer to that question. This annual conference is helping create a "tipping point" for a new approach to address water quality and habitat restoration that will bring us closer to the goal of "fishable and swimmable" waters.

In his bestseller, *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell outlined several key elements which help an idea or movement reach critical mass and move beyond isolated implementation to wider adoption. One element is the involvement of a group of people who are information specialists, persuaders, and connectors who bring diverse people together around an idea. Another is the "stickiness" of the idea or how well the idea can anchor in the imagination of a wider group. The third element identifies the importance of the context within which the idea is brought forth. Throughout the conference, I saw the interplay among these three elements.

I watched the "persuaders" and "connectors" at work, both formally and informally, building support, suggesting possibilities, and linking opportunities. While this may be the "choir," the people who comprise this choir exert wider influence as they interact with countless others beyond the confines of the conference, spreading

up-to-date information and encouraging engagement. And new leaders are emerging from within this choir.

The "stickiness" of the vision of a regional, collaborative approach to our water resources is evidenced in the emergence of strong coalitions and initiatives. Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District continues to lead the way with its Water Quality Initiative, BMP grants, Greenseams and Every Drop Counts programs. The Southeastern Wisconsin Watersheds Trust (SWWT) is stepping into a leadership role with its commitment to making measurable progress toward improving water resources in the region through cost-effective and science-based, collaborative projects.

The UW-Milwaukee Great Lakes WATER Institute, the largest center for freshwater research on the Great Lakes, is poised to expand its invaluable work through the establishment of the College of Freshwater Studies. In addition, a coalition of non-profit organizations, of which 1000 Friends is a part, through the generous support of the Joyce Foundation and under the auspices of SWWT, has the potential to lay the framework for improvements in water quality and water resources in the Kinnickinnic and Menomonee Rivers as well as be a model for this work regionally.

This is a remarkable time to be working on water quality and restoration issues in the Great Lakes and Southeastern Wisconsin. Water issues, regularly featured in local and state news, have become part of the public discourse. With the passage of the Great Lakes Compact, appointment of a Great Lakes czar, and new influx of federal funding through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, Great Lakes issues have moved into the national arena.

The Clean Rivers Clean Lake VI conference was an opportunity to recognize that we are indeed at a tipping point.



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

**Steve Hiniker**

*Executive Director*

## Legislative Session

Governor Doyle signed the state budget on Monday, June 29th. It was the first time since 1977 that the budget was signed on time and will be enacted before the start of the new biennium. The budget made some of the deepest cuts the state has ever faced but there were some high points. Following is a summary of budget actions.

### Regional Transit Authorities

RTAs can create jobs and a stronger economy by empowering communities to operate cost-effective, balanced transportation systems.

- RTAs were approved for Chippewa Valley, Dane County, Southeastern WI, and Chequamegon Bay. A controversial proposal to allow Dane County to spend up to 25% of any sales tax generated by the RTA on roads was vetoed. The governor also vetoed a binding referendum to let voters decide whether to adopt a half-cent sales tax for regional transportation improvements.
- Provisions for RTAs in the Fox Valley and Milwaukee County were vetoed.
- The sales tax that would have funded the creation of a Milwaukee County Transit Authority and dedicated funding for Kenosha and Racine bus lines were cut while an \$18 car rental fee to fund the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority was kept intact.
- The budget prohibits RTAs from using any tax money raised for anything other than regional transit issues—i.e., no roads, no parks, and no public safety efforts.
- The final budget eliminated the mandate that local communities must hold referendums on whether to create

an RTA or impose sales tax but allows local communities to decide if they want to have referendums.

### Working Lands Initiative

The Working Lands Initiative provides much-needed updates to Wisconsin's Farmland Preservation Program and creates new incentives and tools for local communities and landowners to protect farmland.

- The Working Land Initiative was included in the final budget.

### Renewable Energy

The Wisconsin Energy Independence Fund's purpose is to develop the next generation of renewable energy technology and programs in Wisconsin.

- This budget does not provide any funding for the program but does ensure that the program will be funded at a base level of \$14.85 million in 2011.

### Urban Forestry Grants

Urban Forestry Grants fund projects that improve a community's capacity to manage its trees.

- This budget provides \$524,600 for the Urban Forestry Grants fund.

### Wind Turbine Siting bill passes in both houses

**AB256./SB185** This legislation creates uniform siting standards for wind energy projects in Wisconsin. The law directs the PSC to receive public input, including that from a shareholder's committee, and to then develop rules for permitting standards. Currently, over 600 megawatts of proposed wind projects are on hold in Wisconsin due to the absence of uniform regulations.

The new law will help Wisconsin improve environmental quality and become more energy independent while creating jobs in the clean energy economy. The bill now goes to the Governor for his signature.

### State lawmakers to introduce "Clean Energy Jobs Bill"

After many months of drafting the recommendations of the Governor's Global Warming Task Force as new legislation, state legislators are ready to introduce the comprehensive bill in October. The legislation is designed to curb global warming emissions, reduce energy consumption, create jobs, help the economy and give a big boost to livable communities.

The bill will call for the following:

- New investments in clean, renewable energy such as wind and solar power so we can reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and create thousands of new jobs.
- Improving our transportation system by providing individuals and businesses with protection from oil price spikes, such as the one experienced during 2008. New

investments include improved transit and intercity rail.

- Promoting healthy, walkable communities that reduce reliance on automobiles by enhancing pedestrian and bicycling facilities to promote walking and biking as transportation options.
- Help communities to incorporate walkability into neighborhood design.
- Incorporate energy efficient design into buildings, reducing energy costs.

Visit the 1000 Friends website for updates on this important legislation.

## Smart Growth Legislation

As Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law enters its 10th year and the requirement that communities make land use decisions consistent with their comprehensive plans, the coalition of groups that got the bill passed are now seeking changes to the law.

While most of the changes are technical, at least one of the proposed changes will be controversial. (To see the text of the proposed changes, visit [www.1kfriends.org](http://www.1kfriends.org))

The major provisions of the proposed changes:

### 1. Define "consistency"

Starting in 2010, all zoning and subdivision decisions must be "consistent" with the comprehensive plan – but "consistent" is not defined. The proposed amendment states:

"Consistent with" means "furthers, or at least does not contradict, the goals and policies contained in the local comprehensive plan."

### 2. Clarify that comprehensive plans are advisory

Clarify comprehensive plans are advisory in nature and do not create regulatory requirements independent from other requirements. The proposed amendment states: "The comprehensive plan is a guide to the physical, social, and economic development of a local governmental unit. The adoption of the comprehensive plan by ordinance does not make a comprehensive plan itself a regulation."

### 3. Clarify what must be consistent with the comprehensive plan

Under current law, confusion exists as to what actions must be consistent with the comprehensive plan and with which parts of the plan these actions must be consistent. For example, if a community makes a zoning change, does the zoning change have to be consistent with the land use map, the housing element, the economic development element, or every word of every section of the plan? Because plans are supposed to be visionary, rather than regulatory, in nature, this could present tremendous confusion.

The new regulations will attempt to:

- Clarify that only the ordinances have to be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

- Create an appeal process at the local level to allow the community an opportunity to review and address challenges to the consistency requirement

- Emphasize that local decisions under the comprehensive plan are to be given great deference by the courts.

### 4. Extend consistency requirement for certain communities

Under current law, all land use decisions must be consistent with an adopted comprehensive plan by 2010. While 85% of all communities in the state will likely be able to comply with this provision, some communities have legitimate reasons why they will not make the 2010 deadline.

For example, one community has struggled with local leadership that has opposed Smart Growth ever since the law was passed and blocked all community efforts to plan. That leadership was ousted in the last election and the new leadership wants to move ahead but cannot comply with the 2010 deadline. While we are sympathetic to the legitimate needs of some communities for an extension, we do not support an extension for communities that continue to deliberately delay.

The amendment proposes a two-year extension of the 2010 deadline for adopting a plan for communities that have not applied for, or received a grant, prior to 2008 and passes an ordinance that states the community will adopt a comprehensive plan by 2012.



Kate Morgan, 1000 Friends Water Policy Director, led the effort to produce this new publication - **Greater Milwaukee Water Quality Connections**.

Using pictures and examples, the book tells the story of how local efforts make the difference in taking care of the waters of Southeastern Wisconsin.

Check it out on our website [www.1kfriends.org](http://www.1kfriends.org) or email: [friends@1kfriends.org](mailto:friends@1kfriends.org) to request a copy.

This publication was made possible through the generous support of the Joyce Foundation and the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewage District.

Steve Hiniker was a contributing writer and Heather Mason of MMSD did layout and design.



# 1000 Friends Survey Results 2003 and 2009

## *Take a Look!*

Last Spring, we asked our members to complete a survey to which we had a huge response with many thoughtful comments. We sent out a similar survey in 2003. Below, you can see what members are thinking now compared to 6 years ago! If the year is listed before the choice it means that the question was asked only in that year due to changing circumstances.

**2003**                      **2009**

**1. Choose the top 3 program areas that are most important to you.**

- |   |            |            |
|---|------------|------------|
| • Fighting poorly planned development and sprawl  | <b>68%</b> | <b>78%</b> |
| • Promoting a balanced transportation policy      | 48%        | <b>72%</b> |
| • (2009) Implementation of Comprehensive Planning |            | <b>66%</b> |
| • (2003) Defending the Smart Growth Law           | <b>54%</b> |            |
| • Educating and lobbying legislators              | 35%        | 36%        |
| • Developing new models for healthy communities   | 29%        | 30%        |
| • Technical assistance to communities             | 12%        | 21%        |

**2. From your personal perspective, what do you see as the biggest threats to your overall quality of life during the next 5 years?**

- |                                 |            |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|------------|
| • Loss of natural areas/forests | <b>73%</b> | <b>60%</b> |
| • (2009) Global Warming         |            | <b>45%</b> |
| • Traffic congestion            | 43%        | 39%        |
| • Water pollution               | 55%        | 36%        |
| • Loss of farmlands             | 44%        | 36%        |
| • (2009) Economic downturn      |            | <b>33%</b> |
| • Population growth             | 36%        | 30%        |
| • Lack of affordable housing    | 10%        | 15%        |
| • Declining neighborhoods       | 14%        | 12%        |
| • (2003) Property taxes         | 9%         |            |

**3. How do you get to work? WOW!**

- |      |            |            |
|------|------------|------------|
| car  | <b>64%</b> | <b>47%</b> |
| bike | <b>13%</b> | <b>28%</b> |
| walk | <b>10%</b> | <b>14%</b> |
| bus  | <b>9%</b>  | <b>11%</b> |



- In 2009, we asked what is the best long-term solution to reducing traffic in your area? 99% said improving public transportation and developing communities where people don't have to drive so much. 1% said building new roads.
- When asked if you felt your community leadership was headed in the right direction - 33% said yes, 53% said mixed and 9% said on the wrong track.
- Both then and now the majority of our members feel we are an effective voice in the legislature and have the organizational power to hold elected officials accountable. Members also continue to believe we supply reliable information in emails, on our website and our newsletter.
- In 2003 - **78%** said they had contacted local officials regarding land use issues and **62%** had been involved with land use planning in their community. *It worked! Look at where we are with Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning today!!*
- In 2009 - **69%** said they had contacted a local official regarding transportation issues. *That bodes well for the future of transportation in the state of Wisconsin!*

**We'll continue to work for your interests and keep you informed.  
Please stay involved!**



Kevin Pomeroy

# Around the State

## Eau Claire Memorial High School class promotes Smart Growth

*Erin Layde*

Students in my Environmental Science course studied Smart Growth because it was a “solution” to the problems associated with Urban Sprawl (one of our units). The students became very interested in Smart Growth because they realized that many of the environmental problems that we studied over the course of the year were related to our dependency on cars, which is directly linked to the way our cities and suburbs are designed.

After studying several examples of Smart Growth cities and principles, the students became very passionate about this type of development happening in Eau Claire. They realized that not only are Smart Growth neighborhoods good for the environment, they are also really “cool.” They became really interested in the other benefits such as energized neighborhoods, places for people of all ages to gather, the concept of a walkable neighborhood, and health, economic, and aesthetic benefits. When they studied our own city, they realized that we are already doing these types of things in several areas including our downtown but that there were many other places that could benefit from Smart Growth principles.

One example is our school neighborhood. Students have open campus for lunch and most students drive to fast food restaurants that are only a few blocks from school. There is a road, Hastings Way, with several lanes and no safe way to cross, preventing them from walking/biking. We consulted some city and regional planners and realized that making these types of changes required several groups of people and that just making an appearance at a city council meeting, for example, wasn't going to make a great difference because so many different groups needed to be on board. We decided as a class to invite everyone in the city that we could think of that could help make these changes happen. Students divided into groups and each group chose a topic to research and present.

Their Power Point presentation went over very well and several of my students were asked to join city committees. One developer said he was currently planning a development and was planning to go with a more traditional model, but after listening to our presentation, was considering a Smart Growth neighborhood.

***Erin Layde is the Environmental Studies teacher at Eau Claire Memorial High School who led this project.***

Imagine this...

A vibrant, energized hub that attracts local businesses and people of all ages.

A place where one could get a cup of coffee, shop, and eat a delicious meal all without driving a car.

Imagine all of this in Memorial's backyard.... Hastings Way!



A slide from the Power Point presentation.

### “High School Class Presents Eau Claire City Council With Smart Growth Plan”

*Eau Claire Leader-Telegram 6/4/2009*

“We are kind of at a turning point in history,” said Eau Claire Memorial High School senior Seth Hoffmeister at a public meeting held by an environmental sciences class on its smart growth project for the city. The class told City Council members, business leaders, planners and other students that people will become less dependent on cars and will need more transit and urban design focused on pedestrians -- a direction already set by Eau Claire in a long-range plan and through such projects as a bike trail system, Phoenix Park and North Barstow Street redevelopment.

He and other students, reports Eau Claire Leader-Telegram writer Joe Knight, also would like the city to ensure a shuttle for Oakwood Mall; to narrow, landscape and build a pedestrian bridge over South Hastings Way that leads to a mixed-use area near the Mega Pick'n Save parking lot; and to construct a downtown bus transfer station with ground-level restaurants and commercial space, topped by second-story condos and apartments.

The city is working on some similar suggestions, said Eau Claire Public Works Director Brian Amundson, mentioning a bike trail link and a possible roundabout, both for South Hastings Way.

Mega Vice President Brick Hopkins called students' vision of a pedestrian mall interesting, noted that the Hastings Way store needs an overhaul, and added, “I think it opened our eyes to think outside the box a little for the redevelopment of the site.”

## Welcome Lynn Hobbie 1000 Friends new Board member

Lynn Hobbie is a Senior Vice President at Madison Gas and Electric Company. She oversees the company's energy efficiency and renewable energy programs as well as new products and services, corporate communications, economic development and marketing. She is currently on the board of the Wisconsin Public Utilities Institute and was previously on the board of the Energy Center of Wisconsin, as well as the Mayor's Energy Task Force and the Madison Energy Committee for the City of Madison.



"The focus of 1000 Friends on long-term sustainability for our communities is work that I'm pleased to help support through service on the Board."

## Obama Administration picks 1000 Friends Board member Stan Gruszynski

Stan Gruszynski has been named State Director for USDA Rural Development in Wisconsin. Rural Development administers and manages over 40 housing, business, and community infrastructure and facility programs as laid out by Congress through a network of 6,100 employees located in 500 national, state and local offices. These programs are designed to improve the economic stability of rural communities, businesses, residents, farmers and ranchers and improve the quality of life in rural America. USDA Rural Development has an existing portfolio of over \$114 billion in loans and loan guarantees.



### Now Available!

### "Land Use and Wetlands: A Local Decision Makers' Guide to Wetland Conservation"

Adding to the tools that aid local governments in Smart Growth and comprehensive planning initiatives, the Wisconsin Wetlands Association (WWA) is pleased to present *Land Use and Wetlands: A Local Decision Makers' Guide to Wetlands Conservation*.

The purpose of the publication is to improve wetland conservation and reduce wetland controversies by providing town, village, city and county land use officials with basic information about how wetlands contribute to the economic health, public safety, and quality of life in Wisconsin's communities. Practical steps that local governments can take to improve consideration of wetlands and wetland laws in land use decision-making are also identified.

Developed with the support of a Wisconsin Coastal Management grant, WWA staff worked closely with 1000 Friends of Wisconsin and other partners to frame the benefits of protecting and restoring wetlands in terms that are useful and relevant to the day-to-day concerns of local land use decision makers.

The Local Decision Makers' Guide can be viewed or downloaded for free from WWA's new local government outreach webpage at: [www.wisconsinwetlands.org/localgovs.htm](http://www.wisconsinwetlands.org/localgovs.htm).



🌻 Special thanks to Della Haugen for taking the great photos at our Friends and Founders event.

🌻 Thanks to Eddee Daniel for the beautiful photo on the inside cover of the Spring newsletter.



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## It's time to think about Community Shares Workplace Giving Campaign

1000 Friends of Wisconsin is a member organization of Community Shares of Wisconsin along with 52 other member agencies that promote social, economic, and environmental justice at the local, state, and national level. Member agencies like 1000 Friends will receive 100% of your gift when it comes through Community Shares.

If your workplace offers a workplace giving campaign through Community Shares, please designate 1000 Friends this year. And, when given the choice to receive an acknowledgement, please say **yes**. Otherwise, we are not given notice of your gift and you will not receive our newsletter.

To learn more about Community Shares of Wisconsin's Workplace Giving Program, or to start a Community Shares campaign at your workplace, call 608.256.1066 or visit [www.communityshares.com](http://www.communityshares.com)

