



Public Participation Plan

Rewrite of the Downtown Plan & the Five-Year Update of the City's Comprehensive Plan

The City of Appleton, in collaboration with Appleton Downtown Incorporated (ADI) intends to develop a forward-thinking, visionary and implementable rewrite of the Downtown Plan and the five-year update of the Comprehensive Plan, which was originally adopted in 2010. Section 66.1001(4)(a) of Wisconsin Statutes specifically requires the governing body of the local governmental unit to adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation including open discussion, communication programs, information services and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage in the preparation of the comprehensive plan. The written procedures contained within this public participation plan satisfy this requirement. This plan will guide public participation throughout the City of Appleton's comprehensive planning process.

This public participation program offers citizens, businesses, interest groups and others an opportunity to participate throughout the planning process in a meaningful way to shape the future of the City including the downtown. This plan will, in part, determine where and how our residents live, work and play, and how they travel from one place to another. The success of the planning effort is largely dependent upon the degree to which the community "buys into" the process by actively contributing to the development of the plan and more importantly its implementation.

For additional details on public involvement activities see the project website – <http://www.envisionappleton.org/>.

Our public participation process will:

- Ensure all planning decisions are open to public comment;
- Produce better planning decisions;
- Support and add credibility to all City decision-making processes;
- Provide opportunities to disseminate information about the plan and process to all segments of the City;
- Strengthen the relationships between our decision-makers and citizens; and
- Develop a shared vision for the future of Appleton

Public Participation Opportunities

The City of Appleton established the following list of public participation methods to engage the community. These techniques are designed to maximize public participation throughout the planning process that will satisfy Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Legislation.

1. Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meetings (CPSC)

The CPSC will oversee the project and meet monthly (10 times) The various chapters of the Comprehensive Plan will be updated and developed at a series of meetings between the CPSC and the consultants. The meetings will be open to the public. The meetings will focus on the development of plans, policies, and programs to implement the City's vision.

2. Downtown Plan Sub-Committee (DPSC)

The current Downtown Plan will be updated under the guidance of the Downtown Plan Sub-Committee, which will meet regularly during Plan development and will also be open to the public. Recommendations from the Downtown Plan Sub-Committee will be sent to the CPSC.

3. Appleton Parks and Recreation Committee (APRC)

The Parks and Recreation Committee will prepare the plans, policies, and programs related to the Parks and Recreation chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The committees meetings are open to the public.

4. Community Workshops (5)

Workshop #1, #2: Issues and Opportunities

The SEH team will facilitate two community workshops to formally introduce the project and provide participants an opportunity to share views in greater detail. The workshops will be conducted in different areas of the City to encourage neighborhood participation. The team will facilitate small groups of participants in discussions concerning issues, opportunities and their vision for the City of Appleton. Facilitators will employ a SWOT analysis and a nominal group technique to organize and rank issues and opportunities. The results of the exercise will provide the foundation of the development of the project and community goals/objectives.

Workshop #3: Downtown Design Charrette

A design workshop will be conducted as a means of engaging key stakeholders and the broader public in focused design-based discussions and exercises to develop consensus around key land use, circulation, place-making, and redevelopment opportunities in the downtown study area and adjacent areas including the Fox River.

Workshop #4 and #5 – Draft and Final Project Open Houses

The project team will facilitate two open houses to review and comment on the the draft and final updated Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Plan with community members. The open houses may be held at an outdoor venue such as Houdini Plaza depending on weather conditions or piggy-backed onto an existing event such as a downtown farmer's market.

5. Online Survey

The purpose of the survey will be to obtain a broad level of citizen input regarding community-wide and downtown issues and opportunities. Content analysis will be conducted to develop key themes based on qualitative feedback.

6. e-Newsletter

The SEH team will produce four electronic newsletters (with review/input by City staff) prepared for distribution to the citizens of Appleton. Content will include progress of the study and information regarding time, location and topic of public engagement opportunities.

7. Press Releases:

The City and consultant will work together to produce press releases and other public information pieces at key points to facilitate widespread awareness and education of events and overall plan creation progress.

8. Interactive Website (<http://www.envisionappleton.org/>)

Using an interactive website, the project team will provide opportunities for 24-7 public input. The website will also be used to communicate project status, post draft work products, and solicit input on alternatives.

9. Formal Plan Updates/Presentations

The project team will provide updates to the Common Council, Plan Commission, and Appleton Downtown Inc. (ADI) Board during the study process.

10. Issues and Opportunities – Key Stakeholder Interviews

The project team, led by SEH staff, will solicit recommendations on key issues that should be addressed as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update. Key groups include but are not limited to: Common Council, Plan Commission, other city Boards and commissions. External stakeholders include but are not limited to: Fox Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau, Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce/Fox Cities Regional Partnership, Appleton Area School District, Appleton Downtown Inc., Appleton Northside Business Association, Realtor Association for the Fox Valley, Valley Home Builders Association and Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region.

11. Focus Groups and Interviews – Private Sector Interface

The project team will meet with key property and business owners including representatives of the development “delivery system” such as public officials, financiers, developers, property owners, brokers, institutional leaders and others in a round table (focus group) format. The purpose of these discussions will be for the team to understand opportunities and constraints to investment in the downtown from the unique perspectives of these individuals and organizations.

12. Focus Groups and Interviews – Arts, History, Culture and Sustainability

The project team will conduct up to two focus group meetings with key arts and culture, sustainability and historic preservation community leaders. The purpose of these discussions will be for the team to understand opportunities and constraints to investment in the study area from the unique perspectives of these individuals and organizations.

13. Neighborhood Meetings and Informal Public Input

Working closely with City staff, the project team will organize a meeting with neighborhood leaders in order to receive input on issues and opportunities at the neighborhood level including land use and urban design analyses. Participants will also be asked to identify relevant assets to support neighborhood development.

14. Topical Lectures – Community Conversations

The SEH team will plan and deliver two public presentations on topics related to aspects of the downtown plan. The SEH team and City may engage other local experts such as University professors, arts professionals or others to participate in these presentations or to develop

additional topical lectures. These lectures will be timed in conjunction with the design workshop described above.

15. Meeting in a Box

The consultant team will prepare a stand-alone public input activity called ‘Meeting in a Box’, which allows individual groups to brainstorm ideas for Appleton’s future. The City and its partner ADI will be responsible for administering use of the box. The consultant team will record all input gathered using the box and compile results into the public participation summary document.