

Comprehensive Plan
Village of Elm Grove, Wisconsin



November 2007

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Plan Date : November 27, 2007

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

General Overview

The development of this Comprehensive Plan is the combined effort of nearly one and a half years amongst Village staff, elected officials, Plan Commissioners, residents and property owners. An Ad Hoc Comprehensive Planning Committee was established to oversee the development of the Village’s first-ever comprehensive plan. The planning process included several venues to gather public input, including:

- A public open house
- A public hearing, as required by Wisconsin Statutes
- Three (3) Plan Review Meetings (a collective review session that included the Board of Trustees, the Plan Commission and the Ad Hoc Comprehensive Planning Committee)
- Three (3) project newsletters
- A community-wide opinion survey

All factors of development are explored in the Comprehensive Plan, including social, economic, and physical. Viable communities grow in all three areas and a balance should be achieved to provide a quality environment for residents.

- **Social component:** Village character, including civic identity and the “small town” character, as well as public facilities that encourage social interaction, as identified by residents through the community-wide survey.
- **Economic influences:** Preservation and enhancement of the existing commercial base.
- **Physical factors:** The form, function and location of new development and redevelopment, transportation systems and infrastructure.

All together these factors influence one another, current residents, and the attractiveness for existing properties owners, as well as new residents and businesses.

The Comprehensive Plan is a legally adopted tool intended to aid in future land use, zoning and regulatory decision making in the Village of Elm Grove.



Smart Growth

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a framework for future redevelopment of the Village, and to meet the requirements of Wisconsin “Smart Growth” Comprehensive Planning legislation (enacted by the State Legislature in 1999 and signed into law on May 10, 2000). This Plan focuses on the nine “Smart Growth” elements that include:

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

Effective Date

This plan is adopted under the authority granted by Section 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The Elm Grove Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Village Board of Trustees on November 27, 2007.

Village Character

Village character is a descriptive term that refers to distinctive features of the Elm Grove community. Typical attributes of a community or region that express character include historic architecture, neighborhood scale, natural resources, human-scaled public amenities and spaces.

The “preservation of community character” is a common urban planning objective for developed municipalities such as Elm Grove. As a community within the Milwaukee metropolitan area, Elm Grove makes great efforts to preserve its character while at the same time accommodating new development.

The physical form and characteristics of Elm Grove are not dissimilar from traditional suburban areas in that it is host to residential neighborhoods, a traditional downtown commercial center and recreational amenities. What is unique is that all of these attributes find themselves within an area less than 4 square-miles in size. It is important to keep in mind that the Village of Elm Grove is primarily a single family, residential community and given the limited acreage, there is a heightened level of sensitivity to redevelopment and preservation of all forms of land use.

To a large degree, residents identify the “small hometown village” character as a highly valued community asset. Such character is demonstrated in the form of above ground stormwater channels (i.e. natural drainage ditches), narrow roads, the absence of curb and gutter (excepting downtown and limited residential areas) and multiple park settings. Preservation of the small hometown village and natural community character generates competition between the need to preserve historic and natural resources and accommodate residential and business development. Therefore, preserving the essential components of Elm Grove’s character will be considered in formulation of actions and strategies of this Comprehensive Plan.

Relevant Prior Planning Studies

This Comprehensive Plan is the first community-wide planning tool for the Village. This document incorporates and considers proposals/recommendations from a number of planning studies that have been generated throughout the Village’s history. Moreover, this Plan merges previous efforts in a manner that demonstrates the longstanding commitment the Village citizenry has made to improve the quality of life for the community. In the Appendix of this Plan are synopses of planning efforts engaged in by the Village. These summaries include information related to: the date of the effort/project; germane goals and objectives; public participation activities; project issues and specific recommendations associated with the subject matter. Topics addressed by the various studies and documents include land use planning, stormwater management, transportation (including bicycles and pedestrians), downtown revitalization, municipal water, land use controls (e.g. zoning) and intergovernmental cooperation.



