

Compass Points

Kenosha County's Comprehensive Planning Newsletter

Community Chat: Economic Development

On October 25, 2007, *Community Chat*, a local cable-access (Channel 14) talk show hosted by UW-Extension's Annie Jones, focused on Kenosha County's multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning efforts and the state of the County's economy. Guests John Roth, Director of Long Range Countywide Planning, and Todd Battle, Director of the Kenosha Area Business Alliance, Inc. (KABA), were invited to speak about the comprehensive planning process and current trends in economic development.

John Roth provided an overview of the multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning process for Kenosha County and Wisconsin's "Smart Growth" law. In addition, increasing development pressures from Illinois indicate a need to plan regionally for the future, and the County has been meeting with McHenry County to discuss shared planning issues and potential joint efforts.

Todd Battle stated that the County's economy has been growing over the last ten to fifteen years, and continues to remain healthy. He further pointed out the importance of the diversification of businesses and industries as a source of economic sustainability and strength. He also highlighted the County's ability to attract businesses due to its location, available labor force, good education opportunities at K-12 and higher levels, and the ongoing quality of planning which has built the capacity of local infrastructure to support increased development.

Due to Kenosha County's location between Milwaukee and Chicago, growth will not only continue, but will accelerate in the future. According to the most recent population estimate from the U.S. Census Bureau, there are about 95,000 residents in the City of Kenosha. By 2010, it is expected that the City will surpass Green Bay to become the third largest in the State, after Milwaukee and Madison. Both Mr. Roth and Mr. Battle emphasized that Kenosha County and its communities should invest in development projects that will improve the quality of life for residents and maintain, as much as possible, the natural beauty, open space, and agricultural resources that now characterize much of the County.

Future community chats are planned to explore the issues of land use and agricultural and natural resources.



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Your Comprehensive Planning Team:

- ◆ **John Roth**
Director of Long Range Countywide Planning
Kenosha County Planning and Development
- ◆ **Todd Roehl**
Principal Planner
Kenosha County Planning and Development



- ◆ **Richard Kania**
Principal Community Assistance Planner
SEWRPC
- ◆ **Kate Madison**
Community Assistance Planner
SEWRPC



- ◆ **Annie Jones**
Community Resource Development Educator
Kenosha County UW-Extension
- ◆ **Kristen Lie**
Community Planning Educator
Kenosha County UW-Extension



Summary of Draft Chapter VII: Issues & Opportunities Element

The issues and opportunities element is intended to define a desired future for Kenosha County and each participating local government. It is one of the nine elements required by the *Wisconsin Statutes*, and must contain forecast information for the County, and a statement of overall goals and objectives to guide future development and redevelopment of the County to the year 2035.

Population and Household Projections

Since future demand for land, housing, transportation services, utilities, and other community facilities is directly tied to future population, household, and employment levels in the County, this chapter contains alternative projections for population and households through the year 2035. (Employment projections are provided in Chapter XIII: “Economic Development Element.”)

Local governments are now being asked to consider the alternative projections and to decide which is most likely to be realized in their community by 2035, or to provide their own locally-derived projection. These will then be used to compile the countywide population and household projections.

Visioning and Issues & Opportunities

The Kenosha County Multi-Jurisdictional Advisory Committee (MJAC) was responsible for preparing the following vision statement for the comprehensive plan:

“From the lakeshore to the prairie, from the urban to the rural communities, Kenosha County seeks to maintain a high quality of life; protect its natural and cultural resources; encourage business, industry, tourism, agricultural, and recreational opportunities; and sustain a healthy and safe future for all its citizens.”

The visioning process that was used to develop the vision statement, issues, opportunities, goals, and objectives included careful consideration of the data collected and mapped during the inventory phase of the plan and community input gathered through public participation efforts.

Through the visioning process, the following general planning issues and opportunities were identified for Kenosha County:

- ◆ Agriculture and Farmland Preservation
- ◆ Community Character
- ◆ Economic Development
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Energy
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Intergovernmental Cooperation
- ◆ Natural Resources Preservation and Protection
- ◆ Planning for Future Growth and Development
- ◆ Public Utilities and Community Facilities
- ◆ Recreational and Cultural Opportunities
- ◆ Transportation and Transit Services

Further explanation of each issue, as well as the overall goals and objectives addressing each of the general planning issues, can be found in the complete draft chapter at www.co.kenosha.wi.us/plandev/smart_growth/documents/ChapterVII.pdf

OVERALL PLAN GOALS

- ◆ Preserve and enhance Kenosha County's natural resources, including Lake Michigan, open space, and agricultural land.
- ◆ Preserve and enhance the natural, historic, and cultural character of Kenosha County.
- ◆ Encourage sustainable development of land for business and residential use.
- ◆ Encourage a balanced and sustainable allocation of space between various types of land uses to meet the social, physical, and economic needs of County residents.
- ◆ Promote a range of affordable housing choices for all income levels, age groups, and physical abilities in Kenosha County.
- ◆ Improve transportation infrastructure and land use design to support a range of transportation choices for all citizens.
- ◆ Maintain and enhance the existing level of public services in Kenosha County.
- ◆ Support and encourage sustainable energy options in public and private development.
- ◆ Identify and encourage desirable and sustainable businesses and job development.
- ◆ Attract and retain jobs that provide employment opportunities for County residents.
- ◆ Identify economic and educational opportunities that will help ensure job growth for future generations.
- ◆ Encourage intergovernmental cooperation.
- ◆ Ensure Kenosha County Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan is a “living document.”

Summary of Draft Chapter X: Housing Element

One of the nine required comprehensive plan elements, the housing element provides an assessment of the existing housing stock in Kenosha County, a description of government housing programs, information on existing policies and ordinances which affect housing, and a list of goals, objectives, policies and programs to ensure adequate housing for current and future residents.

Existing Housing Stock

In 2006, there were about 67,000 total housing units in Kenosha County. The majority of housing units (67%) were single-family homes.

Existing Housing Costs

In 2006, the fair market rent was \$596 for a one-bedroom apartment, and \$739 for a two-bedroom apartment. The median selling price for a single-family home was \$169,200. This was slightly lower than the Region (\$187,672) and a 45% increase from the median price of \$116,700 in 2000.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines housing affordability as households paying no more than 30% of their monthly gross income for housing costs. Based on the HUD affordability standard, the minimum household income needed to afford a median priced home (\$169,200) in 2006 in Kenosha County was \$64,312. In 2006, a household earning the County's estimated median income of \$54,989 could afford a \$140,000 home.

Housing Programs

Chapter X outlines government sponsored housing programs to assess the government's potential to help meet housing needs. Programs include those administered by HUD, the Wisconsin Department of Commerce Division of Housing and Community Development, the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA), the USDA Rural Development Program, the Kenosha County Housing Authority, and the City of Kenosha Housing Authority.

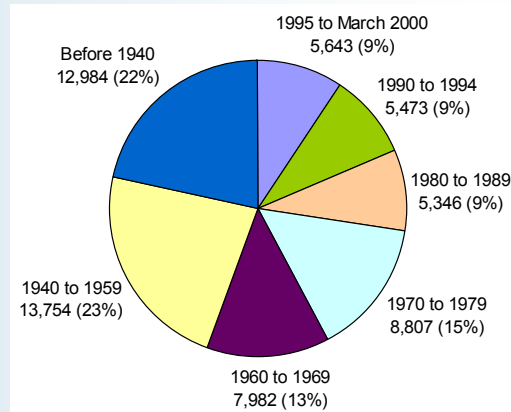
Existing Community Policies and Regulations Affecting Housing

Housing unit types (single-, two-, and multi-family homes), lot size, density, housing floor area, and building setbacks are controlled by community zoning regulations. Since these factors typically impact housing prices, this chapter examines regulations throughout Kenosha County to identify the extent to which they allow or exclude relatively lower-cost housing options.

Housing Goals, Objectives, Policies & Programs

This element also includes goals, objectives, policies and programs to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand and provides a range of housing choices to meet the needs of all income levels, age groups, and physical abilities. Most recommendations focus on households earning less than the County's median income and housing for an aging population and persons with disabilities. Objectives, policies, and programs are provided in the draft chapter at www.co.kenosha.wi.us/plandev/smart_growth/documents/capr-299chapter-10_revision1.pdf

YEAR BUILT FOR HOUSING UNITS
IN KENOSHA COUNTY: 2000



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and SEWRPC

HOUSING GOALS

- ◆ Promote a range of affordable housing choices for all income levels, age groups, and physical abilities in Kenosha County.
- ◆ Promote the addition of an adequate number of housing units to the current housing stock to meet demand through 2035.
- ◆ Promote adequate housing choices for consumers.
- ◆ Allocate sufficient land for housing development and to accommodate current and future populations.
- ◆ Encourage the development of "life-cycle" housing (a range of housing options that meet people's preferences and circumstances at all of life's stages—e.g., unmarried working adult, families with children, elderly couples).
- ◆ Promote safe and decent housing for all Kenosha County residents.
- ◆ Encourage energy-efficient housing.
- ◆ Promote a range of affordable housing choices for all income levels in the County.
- ◆ Promote the conservation of the existing housing stock as one source of affordable housing.
- ◆ Promote a range of affordable housing choices for Kenosha County's aging and disabled population.
- ◆ Promote housing options that allow elderly and disabled persons to remain in their homes.
- ◆ Promote a range of housing choices for households of all sizes.
- ◆ Promote the distribution of a variety of housing structure types and sizes including single-, two-, and multi-family homes across for all income and age groups.
- ◆ Promote fair housing practices in Kenosha County.

Send us your e-mail address
and we can e-mail you the next
newsletter!

kristen.lie@ces.uwex.edu

