

**Action Plan** - That part of a comprehensive plan that spells out in some detail how the plan's vision or goals are to be achieved. This includes a description of the responsible party, the specific actions to be taken and the time frame for completing the action. The time frame of the plan is usually between one and five years.

**Benchmark** - A performance monitoring standard that allows a community to periodically measure the extent to which the goals and policies of its comprehensive plan are met.

**Benchmarking** - The process by which a community evaluates indicators, data and performance against established benchmarks to identify its progress toward its planning goals.

**Brownfield** - An abandoned, idled or under-used industrial or commercial facility where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination.

**Building Face** - The wall of a building fronting on a street or right-of-way, excluding any appurtenances such as projecting fins, columns, pilasters, canopies, marquees, showcases, or decorations.

**Building Footprint** - The area of a lot or site included within the surrounding exterior walls or a building or portion of a building, exclusive of courtyards.

**Building Height** - Building height is the vertical distance from the curb level, or the approved ground level, opposite the center of the front of a building to the highest point of the roof in the case of a flat roof, to the deck line of a mansard roof, and to the mid height of the highest gable, hip, gambrel or pitched roof.

**Building Stepbacks** - These are the minimum distances that portions of buildings that are taller than the street level facade heights must be stepped back from the facade wall to create a discernible difference in the elevation to achieve the desired scale at the pedestrian level and, where an angle is specified, to minimize the effect of taller buildings on smaller-scale development located across the street. An additional benefit of building stepbacks is the disruption of high wind speeds that rush down the faces of tall buildings before they reach the sidewalk.

**Capital Improvement Plan** - A long-range schedule or budget, usually five years in length with annual updates, for capital expenditures. It includes a listing of capital projects, priorities, estimated costs, identification of methods of financing and a time schedule for completion. Capital improvements can include public land, facilities and buildings such as sanitary and storm sewer facilities, water systems, roads and highways, sidewalks, and parks and open space. A capital improvement plan is one of the major tools for implementing comprehensive plans.

**Central Business District** - The retail and commercial/service center of a city.

**Cluster Development/Housing** - A development/design technique that concentrates buildings in specific areas on a site to allow the remaining land to be permanently dedicated for common open space or to preserve historical, cultural or environmentally sensitive features.

**Compact Development** - The local government approves plans and enacts ordinances that emphasize compact, sustainable, and space-saving development (Smart Growth). This concept emphasizes neighborhoods, town centers, a mix of land uses, public transit, and pedestrian and bicycle access to shops, schools, transit, shopping, offices, and recreation. New development is confined to those areas where there are sufficient public facilities to accommodate the growth. Sometimes referred to as "New Urbanism" or "Transit-Oriented Development" (TOD).

**Comprehensive Plan** - The official public document adopted by a community as the policy guide for decisions about its future development and redevelopment. It consists of a vision for the community, background data, goals, policy statements, standards and programs for guiding the physical, social and economic development of a community. A comprehensive plan usually includes, but is not limited to, a land use plan, transportation

**Comprehensive Plan Amendment** - An amendment to the Comprehensive Plan can involve either a change to the text of the plan or a change on the Comprehensive Guide Plan Map which alters the land use designation of a particular parcel of property

**Conditional Use** - A conditional use is a use which, because of its unique or varying characteristic, cannot be properly classified as a permitted use in a particular district. After due consideration, as provided for in Madison Zoning ordinance, of the impact of such use upon neighboring land and of the public need for the particular use at a particular location, such conditional use may or may not be granted.

**Conditional Use Permits** - A Conditional Use is requested when a person wishes to use a property for something that is not generally allowed by the zoning ordinance, but which may, with certain conditions, be an acceptable and consistent use. The CUP is issued by the City Council and imposes special performance standards or restrictions on a property to ensure the use is in keeping with the surrounding properties. A CUP requires a public hearing.

**Cornice** - The cornice is the uppermost section of moldings along the top of a wall or just below a roof.

**Demolition** - Demolition is an act or process that removes, pulls down, tears down, razes, deconstructs or destroys an existing building wall facing a public street or, during any ten (10) year period, removes, pulls down, tears down, razes, deconstructs or destroys fifty percent (50%) or more of the area of the exterior walls of a building. This provision does not apply to the repair or replacement of windows, doors, or siding.

**Density** - The number of dwelling units permitted per acre of land.

**Design Standards** - A set of guidelines on the appearance and aesthetics of buildings or improvements that governs construction, alteration, demolition or relocation of a building or improvement, including land improvements.

**Easement** - A grant by a property owner of a right for a specific use of the property or a defined part to a second party.

**Ecosystem** - An interacting system formed by a biotic community and its physical environment.

**Eminent domain** - The authority to take private property for a public purpose upon payment of just compensation.

**Entrance, Main** - The main entrance is the entrance which faces the front lot or is closest to the front lot line and which entrance provides direct access to the principal use.

**Final Plat** - The final plat is the second stage of the platting process and is the approval of the plat by the City Council. All lot boundaries, blocks, easements, and public facility dedications are shown on the final plat. The final plat is recorded with Dane County and this becomes the legal description of the subject land. The application for final plat is submitted when the City Council has approved the preliminary plat, or when the legal description needs to be cleaned up on an existing lot of record.

**Floodplain** - The area adjoining a water course that has historically been covered by high water, usually defined by a calculated 100-year flood."

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR)** - The floor area ratio of the building or buildings on any zoning lot is the floor area of the building or buildings on the zoning lot divided by the area of such zoning lot. The floor area ratio requirements, as set forth under each zoning district, shall determine the maximum floor area allowable for the building or buildings in direct ratio to the area of the zoning lot.

**Frieze** - A frieze is a horizontal band that runs above doorways and windows or below the cornice. The frieze may be decorated with designs or carvings.

**Functional Class** - Identifies a public roadway according to its purpose and hierarchy in the local or statewide highway system.

**Goal** - A statement that describes, usually in general terms, a desired future condition. Goals are often about long-term expectations rather than short-term concerns.

**Greenfield** - Farmland and open areas where there has been no residential, commercial or industrial activity.

**Growth Management** - The use by a community of a range of techniques to determine the amount, direction, rate and type of growth desired and to channel that growth into designated areas.

**Indicator** - Information that is a sign, symptom, product or index of the state of the larger system. In comprehensive planning, indicators are measurements that provide citizens with clear information about a community's past trends and current realities.

**Infrastructure** - Public facilities and services needed to support and sustain industry, residence, commerce and all other land use activities. It includes transportation, water and sewer, energy, telecommunications, recycling and solid waste disposal, parks and other public spaces, schools, police and fire protection, and health and welfare services.

**Land Use Map** - A map, usually officially adopted, that geographically and specifically locates existing and future land uses such as residential, commercial, industrial and institutional (public areas and buildings) that have been established in the land use plan.

**Land Use Plan** - A basic element of a comprehensive plan that designates the present and future location, form, class and extent (size) within a planning jurisdiction for residential, commercial, industrial and institutional (public areas and buildings) use or reuse. The land use plan includes a map and a written description of the different land use areas or districts. The land use plan serves as the guide for official land use decisions.

**Life Cycle Housing** - A housing supply designed to meet the needs of individuals and families as they go through different stages of life so they can, if they wish, remain in the same community throughout their lives.

**Lot Area** - The lot area is the area of a horizontal plane bounded by the front, side and rear lot lines.

**Nonconforming Building** - A nonconforming building is any building which does not comply with all of the regulations of Madison Zoning ordinance or any amendment hereto governing bulk for the zoning district in which such building is located or is designed or intended for a nonconforming use.

**Nonconforming Use** - A nonconforming use is any principal use of land or buildings which does not comply with all the regulations of Madison Zoning ordinance or of any amendment hereto governing use for the zoning district in which such use is located.

**Objectives** - These are similar to goals but much more specific. They are attainable, measurable and are to be achieved within a stated period of time.

**Official Controls** - Ordinances and regulations that control the physical development of a city, county or township, and implement the goals and objectives of a comprehensive plan. Official controls may include zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, site plan regulations, sanitary codes, building codes and official maps.

**Official Map** - A legal document that permits cities, counties and townships to protect sites for future roads, rights-of-way and other public use if based on the comprehensive plan.

**Ordinance** - A term for a law or regulation officially adopted by a lesser unit of government such as a county board, township board or city council.

**Permitted Use** - A permitted use is a use which may be lawfully established in a particular district or districts, provided it conforms with all requirements and regulations of such district in which such use it located.

**Planned Unit Development (PUD)** - A Planned Unit Development (PUD), is both a type of building development as well as a regulatory process. A PUD is a designed grouping of varied and compatible land uses, such as housing, recreation, commercial centers, and industrial parks, all within one contained development or subdivision.

**Planning Commission** - An appointed body that is the legal entity through which planning is carried out. It is advisory to the city council.

**Plat** - A recorded document prepared by a registered surveyor or engineer that defines property lines with their monuments, attendant roadways, power and phone lines and other easements, common elements and so on. It also may contain covenants and restrictions that encumber the properties created by the plat.

**Point Pollution** - A discrete, identified source of pollution, such as a wastewater discharge outlet or smokestack.

**Policy** - A course of action or specific rule of conduct to be followed in achieving goals and objectives.

**Preliminary plat** - A plat is a map of land subject to a common development plan that shows the location and boundaries of streets, individual lots or parcels, and other site information. There are two stages to the platting process

**Principle** - A general rule of conduct to be followed in achieving goals and objectives.

**Purchase of development rights** - The acquisition by government or nonprofit entity of rights to develop a parcel of land. Development rights are held in the public interest. The landowner receives the difference in price between the fair market value and the protected, lesser use and retains all the rights of this lesser use. This is useful in protecting agricultural land, historic sites and sensitive environmental areas.

**Rezoning** - A rezoning of a property is proposed when the zoning ordinance does not permit a desired use at a certain location. Requests for rezoning should be discussed in terms of their effect on the purpose and intent of the Comprehensive Plan, as well as their effect on the general health, safety, and welfare of the City. Generally, a rezoning hearing is held in conjunction with a subdivision and/or a Comprehensive Plan amendment. An amendment to the zoning ordinance is requested when an existing zoning designation does not allow for a desired use, but the use is generally compatible with the overall zoning designation. Zoning amendments are typically used for planned developments.

**Site Plan** - All commercial, industrial, institutional, and multiple residential buildings must be reviewed and approved by both the Planning Commission and City Council. The review is to assure that the site plan meets proper zoning performance standards (setbacks, height, landscaping, parking stalls, etc.) and that the appearance of the building meets community standards.

**Stakeholders** - Those individuals, groups and interests directly affected by a comprehensive planning process or proposed developments.

**Strategic planning** - A disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does and why it does it. A strategic plan usually includes a vision statement, assessment of both the organization's external and internal environment, identification of the strategic, long-term issues facing an organization or community and development of strategies and implementation programs in the form of an action plan to deal with the strategic issues. The distinguishing features of a strategic plan are that it is focused, long-range and action-oriented.

**Story** - A horizontal division of a building, from the floor to the ceiling above it.

**Subdivision** - The division of a tract or parcel of land into two or more lots, either by platting or meets and bounds description for sale or development.

**Subdivision regulations** - Regulations and standards enacted by a community to control the proposed subdivision of land into lots or parcels. The standards may include procedures for subdivision review and approval (preliminary and final plats), design standards, improvements required (streets, sanitary and storm sewers, water supply, etc.) and dedication of land for parks and open space, streets, and so on.

**Sustainable development** - Development that maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. It is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Tax increment Financing** - A public financing tool whereby revenue bonds are issued to pay for the improvement of, or provision of, new public infrastructure in a defined area necessary to support and encourage its development. The community assumes the debt obligation. The assessed value of property in the defined area is frozen for a specific period for the general revenue purposes of the community, and the additional taxes generated by the increased valuations in the district created by the development are used to amortize the bonding. A "but for" test is generally required

**Traditional Neighborhood Design** - Community design typical of communities built in the first part of the 20th Century and considered to be more "people-oriented" and "human" in scale. Characteristics may include narrow streets oriented to pedestrian and bicycle use, compact development patterns and mixed land uses, and the use of front porches and other features to encourage the interaction of residents.

**Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)** - The landowner receives compensation from a developer for the development rights associated with the property which the developer can transfer to other location approved by the local government to create more compact development on the new site.

**Variance** - A variance is an exception granted by the City Council from the zoning requirements of a particular zoning district. Variances can be granted when performance standards, such as setbacks, cannot be met due to unusual physical site characteristics, called a 'hardship'. A hardship is related to the physical characteristics of the land, such as slopes or mature trees. The property owner must prove there is a hardship and the variance requested is necessary to alleviate a physical hardship caused by unusual circumstances. Variances cannot be used to either establish or enlarge a use which is not otherwise permitted in the zoning district.

**Vision** - A description of a realistic and credible desired future for a community or organization. A vision is a key part of a strategic planning process.

**Watershed** - The physical land area that naturally drains into a lake, river or stream system.

**Wetland** - An area inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency sufficient to support vegetation types adapted to wet soil conditions. Wetlands include bogs, fens, marshes and swamps.

**Zero Lot Line** - The location of a building on a lot in such a manner that one or more of the building's sides rests directly on a lot line.

**Zoning** -The division of a community (city, township or county) by local legislative regulation into areas or zones that implement the comprehensive plan.

**Zoning Map** - A map that identifies and defines a community's various zoning district boundaries and the uses permitted by zoning ordinance within those boundaries. See also land use map.

**Zoning Ordinance** - The legally established text for implementing the vision, goals and policies of a comprehensive plan. Zoning regulates the use of land within the community's jurisdiction.