



VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.

2018 City of Fort Atkinson Comprehensive Plan Draft 1 Summary – November 27, 2018

Below is a summary of the most significant changes and updates from the 2008 City of Fort Atkinson Comprehensive Plan to the 2018 version. We wanted to highlight them for your review and discussion, though comments on other elements of the draft Plan are welcome.

Issues and Opportunities Identified (P.13)

- The City has experienced minimal growth over the past ten years but is expected to grow by between approximately 1,400 and 2,800 residents over the 20+ year planning period.
 - Additionally, during the same time period the City is projected an increase of between 600-1,200 households.
 - It is also projected that the City will need to annex between 250-500 new acres of land to accommodate the projected growth (assuming all undeveloped land in the city is utilized) and develop 35 new acres of active parkland within the City limits by 2040.
- Overarching national trends present an opportunity for Fort Atkinson as people's options, choices, and preferences change.
 - People are living longer, having less and waiting longer for kids, increased student debt, larger Latino populations, and stagnant wages/rising poverty.
- Housing diversity will be needed to accommodate empty nesters, young professionals, and new families, especially multi-family options to help fill the missing middle housing gap.
- The City's future growth will be influenced by its regional position close to metro areas and by its constraints to expansion.
- Future economic growth will focus on both new development and redevelopment of key buildings, sites, and corridors, fostering business park infill development, continued efforts of downtown revitalization, and improving the marketing of the City's assets.
- Key local opportunities revolve around leveraging existing educational, cultural, and recreational resources to attract new residents and visitors, improving connections between multi-modal transportation options throughout the city, adapting to continuously changing technological advancements, improving public health, and preparing for climate adaption and resilience.

Data Trends (P.16-22) (P.146) (P.162)

- Between 2000-2016 the City’s population grew by 7%, but only 1% between 2010-2016.
- Median age went up from 37 in 2000 to 39 in 2016.
- The Hispanic population has increased from 4% in 2000 to 12% in 2016.
- Since 2000, housing vacancy rates have remained low, but the total number of housing units has been stagnant. In addition, gross rents have steadily increased while owner-occupied costs have stayed flat.
- Average household size in 2016 was 2.4, however it is projected to decrease to 2.0 people per household by 2040, consistent with national trends.
- Both the number of families (+6%) and individuals (+8%) in poverty within the City have risen between 2000-2016.
- In 2015, 30% of all households in the City were considered “housing cost burdened” because they spend over 30% of their income on housing costs, while 13% spend over 50%. Both are similar figures to Wisconsin and Jefferson County.
- Overall, the City’s median household income rose slightly between 2000-2016, but since 2010 has decreased by roughly \$5,000 per household.

Implementation Matrix (P.194)

<u>Focus Area</u>	<u>Action Item</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>	<u>Previously Identified</u>
Administrative	Rewrite the City’s Zoning Code.	In Progress	Yes
Administrative	Rewrite the City’s Land Development and Division Code.	In Progress	Yes
Administrative	Use social media and other communication forms to involve and educate more diverse communities on city processes, functions, and planning.	In Progress	Yes
Downtown Revitalization	Concentrate time and funding on key sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creamery building • Chamber of Commerce building • Corner of Madison Ave. and N. Main St. • Surface parking lots along Main St. • Vacancies along Main St. 	In Progress	Yes
New Development	Partner with the Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium/Thrive ED in implementing the 5-year Strategic Plan.	In Progress	

<u>Focus Area</u>	<u>Action Item</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>	<u>Previously Identified</u>
Targeted Redevelopment	<p>Concentrate time and funding on key corridors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northeast Corridor including Kmart, Smith Motors, Loeb-Lorman Salvage Yard, and former Thomas Industries • Janesville Ave. • Madison Ave. from Main St. to Robert St. • Sherman Ave. from Main St. to Robert St. • Whitewater Ave. • Rockwell Ave. • Fort HealthCare Campus (if they move) 	In Progress	Yes
Transportation Planning and Improvement	<p>Increase the connectivity of multi-use trails and on-street bicycle facilities at key locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Along Main St. • Convert the railroad line from N. Main St. to the city limits • Hackbarth Rd. shoulder extension • Connect Glacial Trail to Co. K • Milwaukee Ave. and Zida St. to Bark River • McMillen St. to Rock River • Madison Ave. to Wisconsin Hwy 26 • Expand the Riverwalk to the north side of the Rock River • Montclair Pl. connection to Dorothy Carnes Park 	In Progress	
Transportation Planning and Improvement	Using the Safe Routes to School Plan, identify and install new sidewalk facilities.	In Progress	
Administrative	Conduct an annual review of the Comprehensive Plan.	Short	Yes
Administrative	Participate in the Fort Atkinson School District 5-year Strategic Planning Process.	Short	
Administrative	Develop a new internal process to include review of the Comprehensive Plan during the annual Capital Improvement Planning process.	Short	

<u>Focus Area</u>	<u>Action Item</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>	<u>Previously Identified</u>
Downtown Revitalization	Complete an area plan for downtown to analyze assets and identify specific opportunities.	Short	
New Development	Move the community gardens to Jones Park and market the existing site for new residential, infill development.	Short	
New Development	Develop an area plan for the far Northwest side in preparation for the future Fort HealthCare relocation.	Short	
Recreational Assets	Develop a marketing campaign with local economic development organizations to promote the city to new residents and tourists through branding Fort Atkinson as active, healthy, and recreation-focused with many amenities.	Short	
Recreational Assets	Create new fundraising methods to increase donations towards the skatepark.	Short	
Targeted Redevelopment	Implement the recommended strategies of the 2018 TIF Feasibility Study, when completed.	Short	
Fostering Sustainability	Purchase or integrate energy efficient and/or renewable energy sources into any new city equipment, remodeling, or new facilities.	Short	
Administrative	Attempt to establish boundary agreements with all surrounding units of government.	Medium	Yes
Downtown Revitalization	Work with the Chamber of Commerce to attempt to establish a Downtown Business Improvement District.	Medium	Yes
Downtown Revitalization	Implement new streetscaping, wayfinding, and beautification elements along Main St.	Medium	

<u>Focus Area</u>	<u>Action Item</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>	<u>Previously Identified</u>
New Development	Develop a partnership with UW-Whitewater to help local entrepreneurs utilize the school's resources, Incubator, and Small Business Development Center.	Medium	
New Development	Partner with local universities and economic development agencies to promote agricultural-based industry in Klement Business Park.	Medium	Yes
Recreational Assets	Seek Stewardship and other recreational facility grants to help fund new parks and recreation infrastructure.	Medium	
Fostering Sustainability	Partner with local farms and agriculture groups to establish a Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program.	Medium	
Transportation Planning and Improvement	Partner with Jefferson County and Fort HealthCare to increase the routes, hours, and options for transit services in the city.	Medium	
Transportation Planning and Improvement	Adopt a new sidewalk evaluation and replacement ordinance.	Medium	
Transportation Planning and Improvement	Adopt a Complete Streets policy.	Medium	
Transportation Planning and Improvement	Complete an Official Map for the city.	Medium	Yes
Transportation Planning and Improvement	Partner with local bicycle shops and bicycle manufactures to bring bike-share to key locations along the Glacial Heritage Trail.	Medium	
Administrative	Update the Comprehensive Plan before 2029.	Long	Yes

<u>Focus Area</u>	<u>Action Item</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>	<u>Previously Identified</u>
Administrative	Participate in the Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan and Farmland Preservation Plan updates.	Long	
Downtown Revitalization	Explore the concept of a Town Square on South Water Street West next to the Rock River.	Long	
Transportation Planning and Improvement	<p>Improve the streetscaping and road conditions along:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whitewater Ave. • Riverside Dr. • Janesville Ave. • Hackbarth Rd. • Robert Street Bridge 	Long	
Transportation Planning and Improvement	Consider a park and ride facility near one of the Wisconsin Hwy 26 bypass interchanges.	Long	

Comments