

MONROE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RECOGNIZED NATIONALLY

October 6, 2016

PRESS RELEASE:

The City of Monroe's Comprehensive Plan was adopted by City Council earlier this year after a year and a half long planning process. The plan has now been nationally recognized as an example of excellence in comprehensive planning by the American Planning Association (APA). The APA notified City staff of the recognition this week after the plan was submitted to the APA's Comprehensive Plan Standards Recognition Program Pilot earlier this year. The program is designed to recognize communities who have integrated sustainability into comprehensive plans adopted or amended within the last five years.

Monroe's plan was recognized with the "Bronze Level" designation, meaning it achieved a scoring of 70-79% based on the grading criteria. Monroe's plan achieved 70%. Other status levels include Silver with a score of 80-89% and Gold with a score of 90-100%. The APA has only announced the Silver and Bronze Level recognition at this time. Monroe shares the Bronze Level status with only two other communities: Los Angeles County, California and the City of Issaquah, Washington. Five communities were recognized with the Silver Level Status, including Des Moines, Iowa and McLean County, Illinois. Monroe was the smallest community by population to receive recognition at either level.

The Review Summary issued by the APA identified Monroe's plan as a "superior comprehensive plan for a municipality of 11,000 persons." Noting that the plan had deep public involvement to identify issues facing the community and devised effective responses. Monroe scored particularly well in the criteria related to the Livable Built Environment; Responsible Regionalism; and the attributes of Content and Characteristics. In addition, the plan received eight innovation points for its high quality for a small jurisdiction, the use of authentic citizen participation and values-based planning to solve problems and capture opportunities; its commendable commitment to form-based zoning implementation of the plan; and its engaging presentation to keep the document "off the shelf."

The APA will issue the City of Monroe an official certificate of recognition along with featuring the plan on its website and in its member newsletter. The plan will also be formally recognized at the 2017 National Planning Conference in New York City this coming May.

Monroe's Comprehensive Plan project was approved and funded by the Monroe City Council in late 2014. The Mayor and City Council along with the City's Plan Commission and staff members oversaw the project. Primary facilitation and management of the project was contracted out to the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Additional planning partners included Green County Development Corporation and Green County UW-Extension. The planning process which began in early 2015 and completed in early 2016 involved over 15 public input meetings attended by over 100 unique individuals. A community survey that ran during the process garnered over 570 responses. Comprehensive Plans are required under Wisconsin State Statute and serve as a local government's guide to community physical, social, and economic development. They are intended to provide a rational basis for local land use decisions with a twenty-year vision for future planning and community decisions.

The City of Monroe along with other community organizations and private residents have moved quickly in 2016 to explore ways to address issues identified in the Comprehensive Plan including the planned acquisition of land for new development; the approval of re-writing the City's zoning code; exploring new ways to address housing and development issues; the approval of an unleashed dog park; improving the visibility of biking in Monroe and many other initiatives.

Attachments: Announcement Letter; Review Summary





American Planning Association

Making Great Communities Happen

October 5, 2016

Martin Shanks
City of Monroe
1110 18th Avenue
Monroe, WI 53566

Dear Martin,

On behalf of the American Planning Association, I am pleased to inform you that the *Monroe Comprehensive Plan* has received Bronze recognition from APA's Comprehensive Plan Standards Recognition Program Pilot. We are proud to recognize your plan as an example of excellence in comprehensive planning.

Attached to this letter you will find a summary scorecard and notes from plan reviewers. A web banner with the recognition level is attached as well, and you soon will receive an official certificate from APA. Next week APA will inform chapter leaders of the recognized plans and feature them on our website and in our member e-newsletter Interact. We also will notify both national and local media of your achievement. APA will formally recognize your plan and others at the 2017 National Planning Conference in New York City in May. We will provide you more information about NPC recognition as the conference date approaches.

We appreciate your participation in this pilot program and congratulate you on your achievement. Please feel free to contact Anna Read at aread@planning.org if you have any questions or comments to share.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David C. Rouse'.

David Rouse, FAICP, ASLA
Managing Director of Research and Advisory Services

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Review Summary: Monroe Comprehensive Plan

Overall, the Monroe Comprehensive Plan is a superior comprehensive plan for a municipality of 11,000 persons. It clearly represents deep public involvement in identifying issues facing the community and devising effective responses. It is an enthusiastic and engaging document that should engender momentum towards its goals.

The table summarizes the comprehensive plan scoring by categories of Sustaining Places evaluation criteria. Of the 11 evaluation categories, Monroe particularly strong results for the categories of Livable Built Environment, Responsible Regionalism, and the attributes of Content and Characteristics.

The plan was awarded eight innovation points in recognition of its high quality for a small jurisdiction, using authentic citizen participation and values-based planning to solve problems and capture opportunities; its commendable commitment to form-based zoning implementation of the plan; and its engaging presentation to keep the document “off the shelf.”

Issues of weakness relative to the Standards that could be beneficially addressed in the next plan update include those addressed within the Harmony with Nature and Interwoven Equity principles, as well as by including alternative growth scenario analyses in support of a final land-use plan selection and addressing the fiscal impacts of community planning.

Additionally, the plan would benefit from greater use of quantitative benchmarks and targets that enable a better understanding of existing conditions and monitoring of progress toward goals. And greater detail in implementation measure descriptions will provide more confidence and accountability in real action.

Scorecard Summary

Principle	Score
Livable Built Environment	23
Harmony with Nature	4
Resilient Economy	12
Interwoven Equity	15
Healthy Community	9
Responsible Regionalism	21
TOTAL PRINCIPLES SCORE	84
Processes	
Authentic Participation	12
Accountable Implementation	17
TOTAL PROCESSES SCORE	29
Attributes	
Content	24
Characteristics	24
TOTAL ATTRIBUTES SCORE	48
INNOVATION POINTS	8
REVIEWER PLAN SCORE	169
TOTAL POINTS AVAILABLE	243
PLAN SCORE PERCENTAGE	70%

Level of Achievement

Bronze