

REVIEW OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR BARABOO, WISCONSIN

Baraboo, Wisconsin is a community approximately 90 miles north of Platteville with a population of approximately 11,000 residents. The University of Wisconsin – Baraboo is located in West Baraboo which is adjacent to Baraboo and is considered part of the Baraboo economic, commercial, and residential area. Note: West Baraboo also has a Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan. In addition the surrounding township also have their own Smart Growth Comprehensive Plans.

Baraboo's Comprehensive Plan was finalized in 2005 with a number of different sections to the Plan. In my review I looked at three areas specifically, those being Chapter Two: Issues and Opportunities, Chapter Three: Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources, and Chapter Four: Land Use. Rather than spend a lengthy amount of time on each, I am going to give you a brief overview of Chapter Two which in many ways is comparable to Platteville in defining specific issues which were reviewed.

Chapter Two:

1. Baraboo sees itself growing in population at a significant rate which would result in a projected population of about 16,000 residents by the year 2025.
2. They looked at demographics trends and concluded that the population is growing older and there will be a need to consider different types of housing, transportation, and other services.
3. The Comprehensive Plan also indicated Baraboo has a large number of college level residents making up almost 1/5 of the population. This they concluded was because of the University of Wisconsin Baraboo campus and the fact Baraboo is the county seat.

4. Household size for Baraboo is declining and is smaller than surrounding communities.
5. The labor force in Baraboo has a high percentage in the manufacturing sector with the next highest in the Health, Education, and Social Services sector.
6. Baraboo, like Platteville is the largest community in the county and is the focal point for a diverse range of employers because of the highly educated workforce.
7. The labor force in many respects is comparable to Platteville because the majority of the employment is in education, health, and professional related services.
8. Baraboo in its evaluation of forming a Comprehensive Plan had set up a number of ways to gather information and allow residents to give input into the process.
 - They set up a Vision Setting Workshops to look at Baraboo's Values, Trends facing the community, and the hopes and dreams of the residents of Baraboo.
 - They did a Key Planning Issues Exercise to look at the Community Character, Land Use, Pace of Development, Housing, Economic Development, Transportation, Environment, Intergovernmental Issues, Community Facilities and Services.
 - They had Focus Groups who looked at Downtown Business and Economic Development, Local Realtors, Local Developers, and Affordable Housing Interests.
 - They looked at Environmental Issues, schools, church and religious groups, and looked at Historic Preservation Interests.
 - They did Community Leader Interviews who were selected by the Steering Committee.
 - They did a Community Survey.
 - They had Intergovernmental Meetings with the county, surrounding villages and townships.

9. They also developed different scenarios which they presented to the community for input and discussion.