

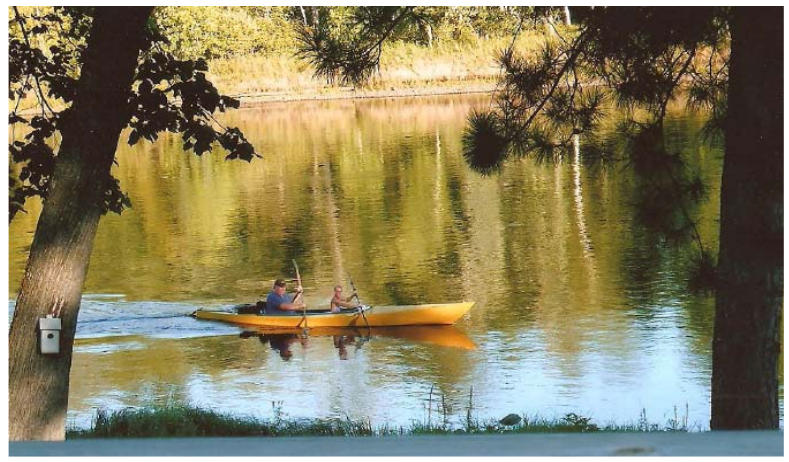


CITY OF CORNELL

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2009-2029



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Cornell...
*Home of the Historic Wood Stacker
and Brunet Island State Park*

VISION STATEMENT AND OVERALL GOALS

Vision Statement

The City of Cornell is dedicated to promoting and preserving the community's logging heritage while maintaining a small town atmosphere and will continue to provide a friendly, safe, and welcoming atmosphere, while encouraging responsible growth by protecting its historic and natural character. Cornell is committed to providing a wide variety of recreational and tourist opportunities for residents and visitors alike and protecting the pristine environment. The Chippewa River, Brunet Island State Park, and the Cornell Stacker are three important symbols of the area and the City will continue to support efforts ensuring that all three will be maintained for future generations to enjoy. Cornell welcomes residential, commercial, and industrial development that help to achieve that goal.

Overall Goals

1. Preserve the integrity of Main Street and keep it as a business district.
2. Support the recreational opportunities and facilities in the City and surrounding area while exploring future opportunities.
3. Establish an identity that draws tourists and specialty shops to the City.
4. Maintain a family-friendly environment while promoting a sense of community pride.
5. Promote responsible growth and development while protecting the scenic beauty of the entire area.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Location and General Regional Context

The City of Cornell is beautiful, friendly community located in the northeast corner of Chippewa County, Wisconsin and is surrounded by the Towns of Cleveland and Estella (see *Map 1-1*). Cornell and surrounding area has an abundance of wildlife, clean air and relaxed pace of life that will capture you. Cornell is a small but progressive community located on the scenic Chippewa River.

The City is at the convergence of State Highways 27, 64, as well as the Scenic "River Road", State Highway 178. These main highways make access to Cornell easy and enjoyable. State Highway 64 is a major east-west highway corridor passing through Cornell and State Highway 27 is the primary north and south route from Cornell. State Highway 29, a four-lane freeway with limited access is a primary east-west route for North Central Wisconsin, and lies just 15 miles to the south. U.S. Highway 53, a major north-south route for Western Wisconsin, lies 19 miles to the west. All of these routes provide thoroughfares to employment and goods and services for City residents.

The City was established in 1913 and will be celebrating its centennial in 2013. Originally, the area primarily prospered from logging, farming, as well as the transporting of goods through the railroad, which is no longer there. Much of the City's heritage is tied heavily to the logging industry.

Cornell has the only remaining standing pulpwood stacker in the world and is located in the Mill Yard Park. The stacker was used in Cornell from 1913 until 1972. The 175 foot monument to the area's logging era laid the foundation for the development of the entire Chippewa Valley. Also located in Mill Yard Park are the Cornell Visitors' Center and Native American Museum (open May through October).

Cornell and surrounding area offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities. The City is a trailhead for the 20-mile Old Abe Trail (which links directly to the Chippewa Falls Urban Trail), for biking, walking, rollerblading and snowmobiling. The City of Cornell is also part of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. Brunet Island State Park, on the north edge of the City, offers camping and other outdoor recreation opportunities. There are a number of links to Wisconsin's extensive snowmobile trail network from the City. The City is also home to several community activities throughout the year that attract visitors from around the state including: a fair the second weekend in June, fireworks on July 3rd, the Gospel Bluegrass Jamboree the first weekend in July, a car show, the Chippewa

River Rendezvous the fourth weekend in August, Pork 'n the Park, an annual Christmas parade in December, and an annual craft and art fair.

Every August, Cornell has its annual Chippewa River Rendezvous where one can walk the banks of the beautiful Chippewa River and travel back in time to the late 1600's. Demonstrations abound including 1840 fur trade camps. This event draws many visitors from our surrounding areas.

The natural setting of the Cornell area provides an attractive environment for residents and visitors. The topography is quite varied and reaches its lowest elevation at the Chippewa River.

The Chippewa River, a major Wisconsin river that runs through the City of Cornell, provides a picturesque setting and endless recreational opportunities. The Cornell area is also home of the Brunet Island State Park. Located right on the Chippewa River, the park is filled with woodlands, trails, campsites, suitable for camping, swimming, hiking, biking, fishing, and snowshoeing in winter.

The City residents enjoy the "small town" feel they have been able to maintain while still providing jobs and recreational opportunities to many area residents.

Cornell is located only 115 miles from Minneapolis/St. Paul; 370 miles from Chicago; 280 miles from Milwaukee; 190 miles from Madison; 152 miles from Superior; and 45 miles from Eau Claire.

Cornell has several active organizations such as lion's club, legion, VFW, Knights of Columbus, Camaraderie Club, Church Organizations, Cornell Development Association (CDA), and local Scout groups.

City Origins

Cornell has a rich history going back 100 years before the American Revolution when French fur traders had explored the upper reaches of the Chippewa River laying the foundation for an extensive fur industry. Fur trader's diaries and reports record this as a land rich in furs, timber, and potential water power.

Jean Brunet and Ezra Cornell played interesting roles in the history of Cornell. Cornell was first known as Brunet Falls named after Jean Brunet who came to the area. In 1828, he was highly respected by Indians and Whites as a teacher, guide, explorer, and peace maker. Ezra Cornell often visited Brunet's home looking for lands to build Cornell University.

In 1867 the New York Mfg. Co. was organized to further his plan for a paper mill and town at Brunet Falls. Mr. Cornell died before his plans could be realized leaving his land holdings as endowment to Cornell University.

Around 1905, Cornell was platted as a town for the Cornell Land Co. to develop the lands and their resources.

Comprehensive Planning Law

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law or "Smart Growth Law" was passed in October 1999 as part of the State's biennial budget. This law requires that by January 1, 2010 every town, village, and city engaging in land use activities such as official mapping, local or county subdivision ordinances, zoning, or zoning in shorelands and wetlands in shorelands, must be guided by a comprehensive plan. Smart Growth was enacted to encourage long-range planning for communities and provide consistency in land use decision making.

Smart Growth planning also calls for public participation throughout the entire planning process. Before 1999, public participation and a public hearing were not required for adoption of a local plan.

State statutes require the plans to consist of nine elements, each focusing on an important sector of your community. These elements are:

- Issues and Opportunities
- Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Utilities and Community Facilities
- Land Use
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Implementation

The goal of Smart Growth is to ensure that communities look at how all of these elements intertwine and affect each other, creating an awareness and overall cohesive vision for the City of Cornell. All of the above elements are covered in this Plan.

Plan Purpose

The purpose of the City of Cornell's Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that the qualities of the community that residents enjoy remain and areas that can be improved upon are addressed. The plan will act as a guide for not only City government, but also local organizations, community residents, and developers and will look at, not only Cornell, but how the City fits into the regional context.

The Comprehensive Plan can provide a variety of benefits to a community by coordinating community activities, departments, or policies; protecting resources like historic buildings/locations or forest/agricultural/wetlands/etc.; promoting

economic development by revitalizing downtowns, developing housing/facilities, and retaining existing businesses; and save the community money through intergovernmental cooperation.

Plan Development Process

Planning is a comprehensive and continuous process. The Comprehensive Planning Committee was established for the purpose of developing the Comprehensive Plan. Upon completion of the Plan, the Plan Commission will be the group responsible for updating the Comprehensive Plan.

The City has incorporated all of the nine required elements into their plan. Each chapter was addressed individually before moving on to the next chapter. When all were complete, the Comprehensive Plan was reviewed as a whole, checking for any inconsistencies.

Planning is a continuous process and the needs of the City will continuously change with social, physical, and economic factors.

Completing the Comprehensive Plan is just the beginning of planning for the community. Local officials must examine, explain, and revise the plan when necessary. It must be kept current and used often.

Regional Planning Jurisdictions and Government Agencies

While the City of Cornell plans for its own future, it also is within multiple planning and government agency districts that do their own planning. Available plans will be reviewed by the entities below including the City of Cornell to address any inconsistencies between them. Some of the planning and government agencies that will be contacted include:

- West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Chippewa County
- Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation

Public Involvement and Public Participation Policy

Wisconsin State Statutes Section 66.1001 requires that a public participation plan/policy/procedure be developed for the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan. The plan/policy must address public meeting notices, publications, and open discussions must be written for every stage of the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan.

It is required that the local governing body that adopts any comprehensive plan or amendments to a plan must do so with the use of a resolution, passed by a majority vote. Once a comprehensive plan is adopted one copy must be provided to the following: every governing body within the boundaries of the local government unit; the clerk of all adjacent governing bodies; the Wisconsin Land Council; the Wisconsin Department of Administration; the regional planning commission, and the local public library.

Wisconsin State Statutes also requires that all comprehensive plans must meet the minimum requirements; the resolution shall not be adopted by the regional planning commission if those requirements are not met.

The City of Cornell acknowledges, in order for the Comprehensive Plan to be utilized effectively, it must be created and embraced by local residents. The City has crafted a Public Participation Plan that helps identify key stakeholders for each element and various methods to generate public involvement. The outline of the Public Participation Plan, along with the Public Participation Resolution passed by the City Council can be seen in Appendix A.

In January of 2008, the City Council established the Comprehensive Planning Committee to guide the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The City also hired Cedar Corporation out of Menomonie, to help facilitate this process and assist with the preparation of the Plan.

Initial public involvement was generated through a community wide survey. The Comprehensive Planning Committee thought it was important to send out a community wide survey to gauge how residents would like to see their community in 20 years. The ideas and thoughts generated from this survey were used to develop the City's vision statement and goals, objectives and policies for the plan.

The Comprehensive Planning Committee also held an open meeting on a monthly basis where citizens could attend and participate in the planning process. A periodic press release was also sent out describing the work that was being completed, issues being discussed, and encouraging those interested in the planning process to attend.

Informational materials were also made available in an Open House format at the November 2008 national elections. A public hearing was also held before the City Council where residents were given time to comment on the draft of the Plan.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies for Achieving the Goals

Each chapter in the City of Cornell Comprehensive Plan contains goals, objectives, programs, policies, and actions. These identify the long range vision

City of Cornell Comprehensive Plan 2009-2029

of the City in relation to each element. All goals, objectives, programs, policies, and actions may not be attainable for various reasons, therefore, it is important for these to be continuously reviewed and revised.

Goals: A general desire or wish of what the City of Cornell hopes to accomplish related to that chapter.

Objectives: What the City hopes to achieve by addressing the goals.

Policies: A policy can include a program, policy, recommendation or action that may consist of a new ordinance, ordinance revision, further planning, community support of an idea, etc. These are considered reasonable methods to use to achieve the goals.