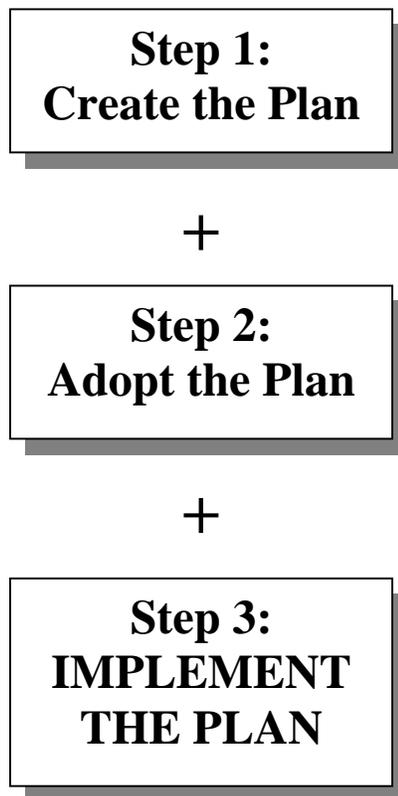


CHAPTER SEVEN: Implementation

THE FINAL PLANNING STEP

The Comprehensive Plan is an official planning and policy document for the County. Its primary purpose is to help guide decision-making processes over the “life” of the Plan. However, without proper implementation, the goals, objectives and strategies will have little impact on growth and development in Yellow Medicine County. Several implementation steps will need to be taken in order to successfully reach the “visions” outlined in this Plan. To assist the County in the identification of these activities Chapter Seven includes the following information: a time frame for implementation activities; a list of priority projects, both immediate and long range, the County should focus its implementation efforts on; and the review and updating process for the document in the future.

THE PLANNING PROCESS



Step 1 + Step 2 + Step 3 = Successful Comprehensive Planning

TIME FRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Source: Information for parts of this section was obtained from “Under Construction – Tools and Techniques for Local Planning” Minnesota Planning – June 2002

This Plan is designed to be a 20-year planning tool. Progress towards meeting the visions, goals, objectives and strategies will likely occur in increments or phases rather than all at once. The County does not have the time or financial resources to address all of the goals in the short-term. As a result, the County should determine the timing of its implementation activities in phases. Implementation steps can be divided into:

- **Ongoing activities** that are already happening and will continue throughout the implementation and review processes.
- **Immediate activities** that begin with the adoption of the Plan and are typically completed, or significant progress has been made, within the first year.
- **Short-term activities** that start within three years of the Plan’s adoption.
- **Mid-term activities** that begin three to ten years after the Plan’s adoption.
- **Long-term activities** that look ten years out and beyond.
- **Priority activities** are considered ongoing, immediate and short-term activities that should be given precedence.

PRIORITY ACTIVITIES

There are a number of activities in the Plan. To completely address all of the issues, goals, objectives and strategies identified in this Plan, the following priority list was established to help focus the County’s implementation efforts on key areas addressed throughout the Plan. This list should be examined often by those in charge of implementing this Plan and updated as projects and activities are completed or as new issues, goals, objectives and strategies are developed. *It should be noted that although these projects and activities are listed as priorities, they will only be completed as the County’s staff time and financial resources will allow.*

Priority Activities

- **Review and update the County’s land use controls so they conform to this Comprehensive Plan.** These land use controls include the County’s zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, flood plain ordinance, feedlot ordinance and shoreland ordinance. Prior to updating these ordinances the following should occur:
 - Establish a task force to examine the current dwelling density regulation of one non-farm dwelling per 40 acres and determine if this density requirement should be changed.
 - Create a task force that reviews and recommends changes to the County’s feedlot regulations.
- **Create a task force that examines ways to expand the County’s Housing and Redevelopment Authority services.**
- **In accordance with Minnesota Statute 469.1082, establish a committee that examines options for a county economic development service provider.**
- **Establish an ordinance that addresses aggregate mining in the County.** The ordinance should include mine closure and reclamation requirements.
- **Develop an ordinance that regulates wind turbines.**
- **Adopt a “Right to Farm” Ordinance and disclosure statement for all non-farm development in the County.**

REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Process

It is difficult to implement a comprehensive plan that sits on the shelf and collects dust. In order to effectively implement a plan and achieve the identified goals and strategies the comprehensive plan must be periodically reviewed. The following provides example steps for reviewing this Plan and implementing activities identified herein:

- **Form a Comprehensive Plan Review Committee**

This committee should meet at least twice a year, more often if needed, to review the Plan. The County Board should designate a county staff person to lead the review committee process. County officials, staff and appointed individuals could serve on this committee. Since this is a *comprehensive* plan, the committee could also be made up of all the department head officials or staff. Yellow Medicine County already has department head meetings. Designating some of these meetings for comprehensive plan review could be one way to establish a regular review process.

- **Create an Annual Work Plan**

The comprehensive plan review committee should annually (more often if needed) assess the Comprehensive Plan's goals, objectives and strategies along with other emerging issues in the County to *develop a list of ongoing, immediate, short-term, mid-term and long-term activities* (see the "Time Frame for Implementation" section in this chapter). From this list, identify a *list of priority projects and activities*. Update this list of priority projects as activities occur. One way to go about identifying these activities is to determine what **has** been done, what **has not** been done, what **has changed** since the Plan was written and what should be **added** to the Plan. Use the six major planning areas identified in the Plan – *housing, agriculture, business/economic development, transportation, natural resources/parks/recreation and county services* – to help categorize activities.

- **Assignment of Responsibilities**

Implementation activities should also include the party responsible for completing the activity, whether its County staff, the planning commission, another organization like the Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission or a private consultant or engineer.

When creating an annual work plan, other things to consider include:

- **Special Task Forces/Committees**

Certain issues and activities may be controversial or technical and could require extra time and attention before the activity is completed. Creating special task forces or committees to address these issues and activities may prove beneficial, efficient and cost effective. The County may also choose to involve the public, other units of government, state and federal agencies, regional organizations and other key stakeholders in this process. Be inclusive. Include technical assistant professionals for their expertise and experience when needed. The

County should work jointly with the cities and townships in the County as well as surrounding counties and communities to avoid duplication and find cost-effective solutions.

- **Identify and Maintain Inventories**

Annually take inventory of what is available in the entire County and in the communities and counties that are your neighbors and evaluate how they could impact the strategy or activity you need to address. Be inclusive and detailed in the data you collect. Each year this task will get easier. Maintain a future land use map that reflects anticipated growth and land use change in the County as well. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) capabilities can be a real asset here in creating a visual reference that can be layered to get the “bigger picture”. It can assist in making future land use decisions, determine the need for changes or upgrades, and to facilitate cooperative efforts between potential partners.

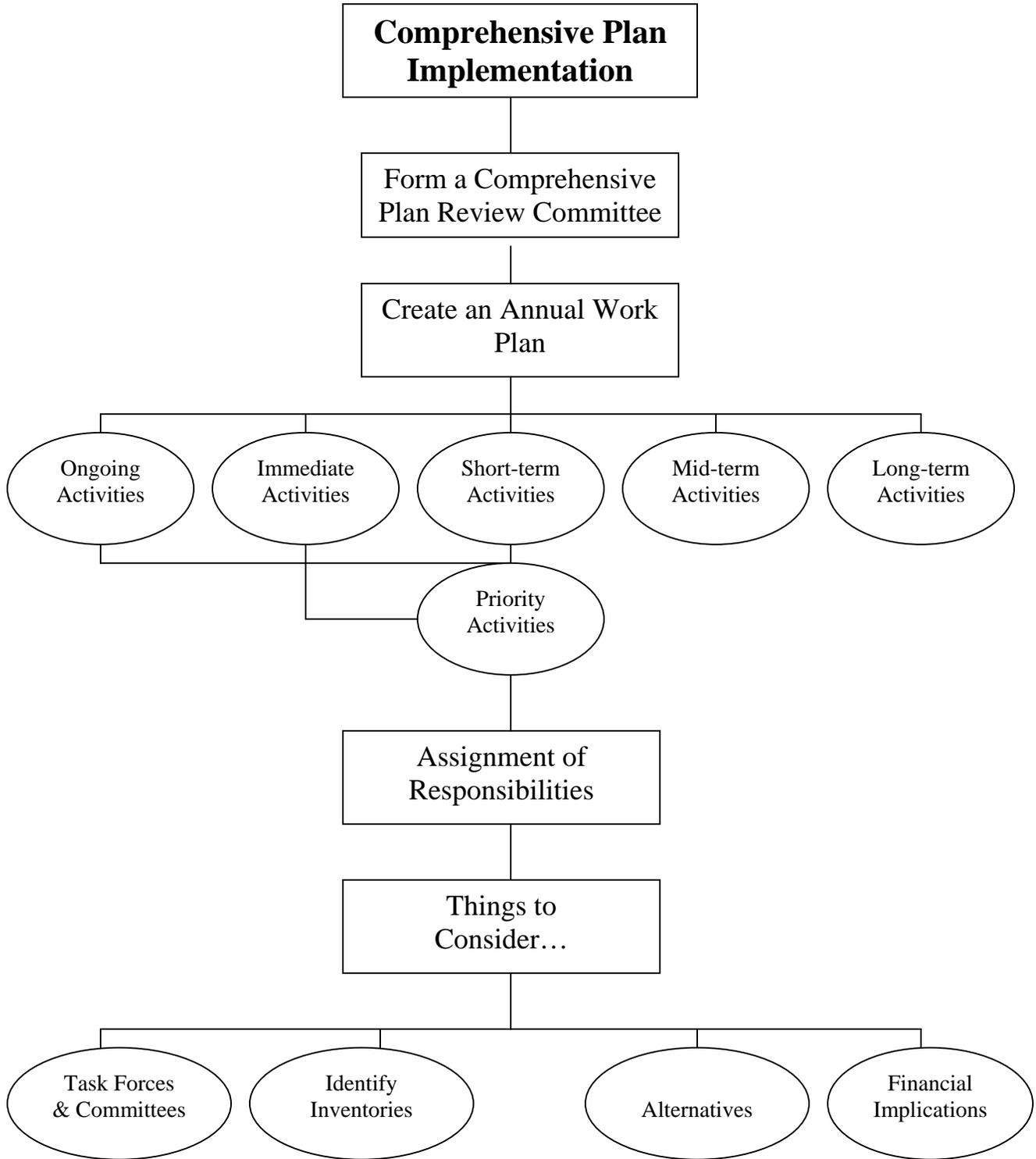
- **Alternatives**

Consider all your options – be creative, ask the experts, look at what others have done, don’t “reinvent the wheel”, learn from others successes and failures and plan for the future. Make use of the current and projected demographics and census data. Consider the population’s diverse needs (young, old, disabled, different ethnicity, incomes) remembering it is impossible to be everything to all. Coordinate your efforts and use other adopted plans and ordinances as reference points. Try to be comprehensive in your approach but realize that it is almost impossible to plan for everything. Be flexible.

- **Financial Implications**

Determine what the activity will cost. Then determine how it can be paid for. Consider the current budget(s); cost sharing or joint ventures; user or dedication fees; funding programs; grants or loans; bonding referendums; donations or fund raising; public and private partners; taxes; and capital improvement.

Implementation Summary



UPDATING THE PLAN

Even though this Plan is designed as a 20-year planning document, this **does not** mean the Plan should be updated every 20 years. The County should regularly review this Plan to make sure it remains up-to-date with changes, needs and issues in the County. The following are examples of when a comprehensive plan should be updated or amended:

- After completion of several implementation activities
- After significant physical, economic, technological, infrastructure or demographic changes occur or are projected to occur
- When changes in priorities, trends, issues and needs happen
- When regulatory changes by the state or federal government occur
- After a Census is completed and the new demographic data is available
- Prior to adopting or amending any regulatory control that is **not** in harmony with this Plan. State Statute 394.23 specifies that when a county adopts a comprehensive plan by ordinance, the plan “*must be the basis for official controls...*”. State Statute 394.21 defines official controls as “*legislatively defined and enacted policies, standards, precise detailed maps, and other criteria, all of which control the physical development of a municipality or a county or any part thereof or any detail thereof, and are the means of translating into ordinances all or any part of the general objectives of the comprehensive plan. Such official controls may include but are not limited to ordinances establishing zoning, subdivision controls, site plan rules, sanitary codes, building codes, housing codes, and official maps*”.

A good benchmark for doing a complete review and update of a comprehensive plan is at least once every five years. Depending on the frequency and pressures from some of the examples above, a plan may need to be updated more often but definitely not less often. A comprehensive plan that is reviewed and updated periodically will not become outdated and is much easier to implement. A major revision of a comprehensive plan should include citizen participation.

Minnesota State Statutes 375.51 explains the process for updating or amending a county comprehensive plan. A public hearing is required before the enactment of any ordinance adopting or amending a comprehensive plan. Notice of the hearing must be published in the official county newspaper not less than ten days before the hearing.