

What Is A Plan?

A plan can be:

- **A Layout** - a drawing or diagram of the arrangement of something
- **An Intention** - something that somebody intends or has arranged to do
- **A Program** - a method worked out in advance for doing something (achieving an objective)

A Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is a tool for guiding the future of a community. Its purpose is to establish a common vision for the future of a community (intention) and then determine policies that will help attain that vision (program). Once adopted, the Plan is used to:

- *Coordinate local programs and activities,*
- *Guide land use decisions and regulations, and*
- *Meet identified public needs.*

Why Plan?

Planning is an activity that helps people identify desirable and undesirable outcomes and develop strategies to produce preferred results. Planning can provide:

- **Context** - evaluate where we are and where we are heading (the 'bigger picture')
- **Direction** - identify things we want to do or accomplish
- **Focus** – direct attention to the overall goals of the organization
- **Efficiency** - coordinate efforts and produce consistent results

Planning provides the opportunity to evaluate what is happening or might be anticipated in the future and then establish the strategies to ensure that the desired results are achieved.

While preparation of a POCD is required by the general statutes (and there may be financial implications from having an older POCD), the key reason for preparing a POCD is to ensure that policies / programs are helping move the Town in good directions.

Who Plans?

A plan is typically prepared by the organization(s) responsible for longer term thinking and/or implementation. However, a municipal plan can differ from other types of plans because there may not be clear lines of command or control due to elected officials, diverse responsibilities and autonomous agencies.

A POCD is primarily an advisory document. A POCD is adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission. However, the Plan will only be effective with the diligent efforts of the residents and officials of Madison to implement its recommendations.

When To Plan?

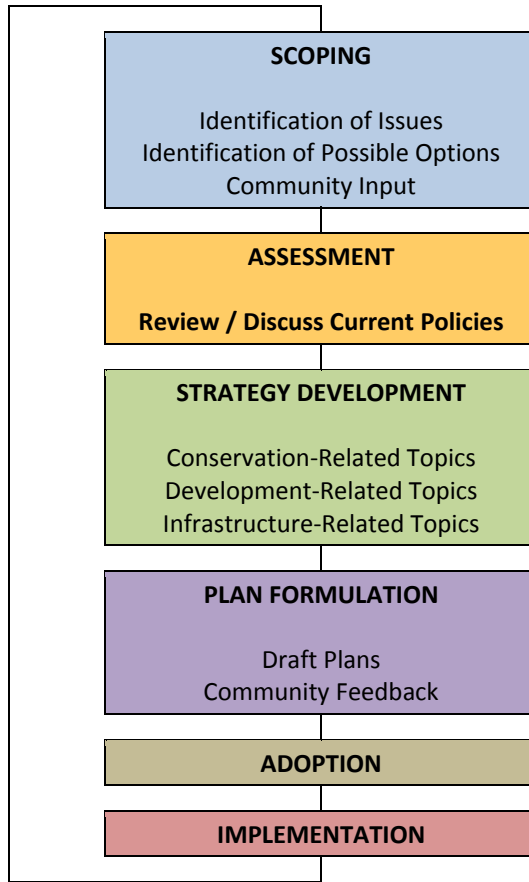
While planning works best as an on-going activity, it should be undertaken when:

- **Change** - the assumptions underlying a previous plan change significantly
- **Problem / Opportunity** - a problem or crisis emerges or an opportunity arises
- **Time** - the passage of time merits a review of programs and policies

If planning is deferred, avoidable problems may occur and/or opportunities may be missed.

By state law, a POCD must be reviewed on a regular basis.

How Might The Plan Be Prepared?



It is anticipated that this POCD will be an update of the 2000 Plan.

As a result, the process is designed to review the programs and policies in that Plan and identify areas for improvement.

Community input is designed to be a meaningful part of the process.

GOOD PLANNING SHOULD:

- Establish a long-term vision that guides short-term actions in a consistent way.
- Be based on open discussion and consensus.
- Establish basic parameters for future decision making.
- Provide information on the logic and parameters of a recommendation.
- Be flexible in the face of changing circumstances.
- Be a continuous, iterative process where implementation leads to new goals.

FAILING TO PLAN MAY:

- Result in decisions that are inconsistent, inefficient, or conflict with other goals.
- Result in conflicts over the future directions.
- Establish precedents that constrain future solutions.
- Complicate future decisions due to the lack of understanding of previous efforts.
- Foreclose or constrain future options.
- Result in a series of “one shot” efforts that are never implemented.