

SAUK COUNTY

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

RFP Response | December 20, 2024

**THE
LAKOTA
GROUP.**

SB Friedman
Kapur & Associates
TADI



GET INTO IT

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE SAUK COUNTY, WISCONSIN

THE LAKOTA GROUP

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OUR SERVICES

Planning
Urban Design
Landscape Architecture
Historic Preservation
Community Engagement

December 20, 2024

Ms. Lisa Wilson
Director
Sauk County Land Resources & Environment Department
505 Broadway
Baraboo, WI 53913



Re: Sauk County Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update

Dear Ms. Wilson,

On behalf of **The Lakota Group, SB Friedman Development Advisors, Kapur & Associates, and TADI**, we are excited to submit our proposal to prepare Sauk County's next Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update. We believe that our extensive experience in community planning and design, public engagement, and crafting actionable implementation strategies uniquely positions us to support Sauk County's ongoing efforts to gracefully balance growth with preserving its natural and cultural heritage.

Challenges and opportunities abound in Sauk County's future. The County is likely to see continued growth as both a regional hospitality and service hub and as a relatively affordable alternative to Madison/Dane County. This, in turn, has ongoing implications for housing mix and affordability, roads and infrastructure, preserving open space, equitable investment, and hazard mitigation. Furthermore, effectively addressing most of these issues is going to require cooperation and coordination with the County's 22 municipalities and the Ho-Chunk Nation amongst other stakeholders.

As we embark on a process of hearing the community's voice about the future, it is important to remember there is no stock approach to making a plan or creating a vision. It starts with selecting the right partners, setting the appropriate work plan, and targeting a messaging and outreach program that fills the void with answers, education and factual data to soften the road bumps along the way.

Here is why the Lakota Group Team is the right partner to help craft the County's Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update:

- » **We are creative planners and strategic thinkers.** We have experience working with communities large and small to address critical issues, including sustainability, resiliency, achievable economic development, context-sensitive community design, sound transit and infrastructure investments, attainable housing choices, and local quality-of-life. Our creativity, passion, and expertise are perfectly suited for addressing the needs of this plan in a meaningful and impactful way.
- » **We bring national and regional-based experience, but also intimately understand the local issues.** Our team has worked around the country, which allows us to bring experience and objective thought to the issues faced by Sauk County, while ensuring that the plan will be steeped in the context, culture, and concerns unique to the County as its own place.
- » **We roll up our sleeves and work.** We are here to collaborate with community leaders, organizations, business owners, residents, developers, and others to create positive dialogue from the beginning. We strive to pinpoint the qualities that make each place special and to build ideas and visions from those assets. This is your County. We are your partners in writing this success story.
- » **We ensure our plans are implementable.** Our plans not only generate excitement and community consensus, but they are also written by experienced planners and accompanied by realistic implementation actions that ensure that the plan vision, goals, and initiatives come to fruition.
- » **The result of our work is proven.** It's been built and implemented – we've helped to transform communities throughout the country, resulting in significant economic development initiatives, programmed quality environments, and connected neighborhoods. But our greatest pride is the transformed community spirit that we resurrect.

As you will see in this proposal, we are passionate about planning and design, and we love engaging people to help them improve their sense of place. We look forward to discussing our proposal with you in person. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Freres", written over a large, stylized circular flourish.

Scott Freres, PLA ASLA
President, The Lakota Group



Minimum Qualification Summary

Founded in 1993, Chicago-based The Lakota Group is a boutique planning firm with active and award-winning portfolios in Historic Preservation, Urban Planning, Urban Design, Landscape Architecture, and Community Engagement.

Comprehensive planning is one of Lakota's specialties. Over the past five years we have completed comprehensive plans for Libertyville, North Chicago, and Winnetka, IL, Hobart, IN, Monticello, MN, and Burlington and Onalaska, WI. Additionally, we are working on plans for Fox Lake, Tinley Park, Woodridge, IL, Raytown and Webster Groves, MO, Gretna, NE, and Bloomfield, WI. Regardless of location, our plans are known for their robust and creative public engagement, sound analysis, accessible and engaging plan documents, and actionable implementation strategies. In September 2024, Lakota won APA Illinois' Daniel Burnham Award for our North Chicago Comprehensive Plan - Plan Comprensivo.

Siraj Asfahani, Senior Vice President, will manage implementation of the Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update process for Sauk County. He joined Lakota in 2016 and is a trained architect with extensive experience in planning, urban design and public engagement. Amongst other notable endeavors, Siraj led the development of the award-winning plan for North Chicago, referenced above. All other Lakota staff assigned to this project have graduate degrees or professional degrees in urban planning, architecture, landscape architecture plus prior public planning and engagement experience.



Why Lakota?

The Lakota Group is a premier planning firm based in Chicago with a national portfolio of work. The boutique nature of the firm means we provide highly personal and customized client services, with each project led and supported by senior staff. We understand that planning is not just about creating spaces; it's about crafting experiences, shaping communities, and leaving a lasting impact. This is why our boutique nature allows us to immerse ourselves in the nuances of every project, dedicating the time, expertise, and attention necessary to create solutions that truly resonate.

Background and Capabilities:

The Lakota Group is a premier planning firm with active and award-winning portfolios in Historic Preservation, Urban Planning, Urban Design, Landscape Architecture, and Community Engagement. The boutique nature of the firm means we provide highly personal and customized client services, with each project led and supported by senior staff. We understand that planning is not just about creating spaces; it's about crafting experiences, shaping communities, and leaving a lasting impact. This is why our boutique nature allows us to immerse ourselves in the nuances of every project, dedicating the time, expertise, and attention necessary to create solutions that truly resonate.

Our quest is simple: We want to improve communities.

By engaging residents through workshops, discussions and surveys, we strive to pinpoint the opportunities for improvement. We want clients to help us place ourselves in their frame of context: what would we want if we were the ones living in their town? Working in their building? Raising a family in their neighborhood? We want to listen, and we want to talk, and then we want to listen some more. Lakota acknowledges the issues, while also recognizing the strengths, shedding light on the qualities that make a place unique, and brainstorming the ways upon which they can be built.

Of all the commitments we make to the communities we serve, the most important is **listening**. We know how critical it is to meet people where they are and to ensure their voices are heard and valued.

Since the firm's conception in 1993, Lakota has completed award-winning assignments in more than 500 towns and cities across the country, gaining recognition for its work in landscape architecture, waterfront planning, site planning, design, and community engagement. Over the past five years we have completed comprehensive plans for Libertyville, North Chicago, and Winnetka, IL, Hobart, IN, Monticello, MN, and Burlington and Onalaska, WI. Additionally, we are working on plans for Fox Lake, Tinley Park, Woodridge, IL, Raytown and Webster Groves, MO, Gretna, NE, and Bloomfield, WI.

Office and Staffing:

Lakota is headquartered in Chicago's downtown Loop though one Senior Associate (Andy Cross) assigned to this project works remotely in Kenosha, WI. Given our previous and ongoing comprehensive planning projects in southern Wisconsin, we understand the time and commitment required to deliver a great result for Sauk County. We will endeavor to stack outreach and engagement activities to efficiently maximize our time in the field.

Lakota employs 18 full-time urban planners and designers, preservation planners, landscape architects, and community engagement specialists. All staff assigned to this project have graduate or professional degrees in urban planning, architecture, landscape architecture plus prior public planning and engagement experience. Two staff (Kevin Clark and Andy Cross) are AICP certified and two (Scott Freres and Kevin Clark) are licensed landscape architects in Illinois.

Project Management:

To ensure effective communication and quality control, Lakota's Vice President, Siraj Asfahani, will serve as project manager for this assignment. To facilitate project coordination, we will use web-based communication and word processing tools such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams to conduct update meetings with County staff, review project progress, exchange ideas and suggestions, develop schedules and review and edit documents. We will also provide regular (weekly or bi-weekly) written status updates, as well as summaries of key meetings and phone calls within seven days of their occurrence.

Lakota anticipates that all significant stakeholder engagement, community presentations, and site-related research will take place in person during pre-planned site visits to Sauk County. We will work with County staff to develop a preliminary calendar for these site visits during project kickoff; this shared calendar will be updated and refined as needed throughout the comprehensive planning process. Coordination and reporting meetings can also take place during Team on-site visits.

In terms of reporting, project monitoring, and project deliverables, Lakota will be responsible for fulfilling all requirements outlined in the RFQ document and negotiated in a contract with Sauk County. Lakota will notify the County of any material changes in schedule or budget of any individual task or subtask during the course of the project. We understand that any changes in scope, project timelines, or both will be documented through a project memorandum and/or amendment to the original contract with sign-off by both Lakota and County officials, through the appropriate approval process.

As project lead for this Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update, Lakota has a full-time accountant/bookkeeper that will oversee all cost and budget controls along with monthly billing by our Team sub-consultants. The Lakota Group is a privately-owned Illinois S-Corporation in continuous operation since 1993 with solid financial performance.





North Chicago Comprehensive Plan - Plan Comprensivo

The Lakota Group partnered with the City of North Chicago to craft an award-winning Comprehensive Plan, recognized with the APAIL 2024 Daniel Burnham Award. Recognizing the city's unique challenges as a majority African American community with a homeownership rate of just over 30%, the plan sought to address long-standing issues of neglected housing and the illegal conversion of single-family homes into non-conforming multi-family units. The Comprehensive Plan also fostered meaningful partnerships with local organizations like ReNew Communities, building the foundation for long-term, sustainable development.

One of the plan's most innovative aspects is its implementation strategy, which pairs strategies across different themes to build consensus and achieve comprehensive results. This Systems Thinking approach ensures that every initiative aligns with the city's broader goals and maximizes the impact of each step taken. The plan's integration of data analysis and visual aids ensures clarity and accessibility for all stakeholders. The North Chicago Comprehensive Plan sets a new standard for urban planning by blending creativity, financial prudence, and a deep understanding of community needs, positioning North Chicago for lasting growth and resilience.

NORTH CHICAGO, 

STATISTICS

Start Date: February 2023

Completed: August 2024

REFERENCE

Taylor Wegrzyn, Director
Economic & Community Development
(847) 596-8671
tayweg@northchicago.org



Onalaska Comprehensive Plan - Live Ona 2040

Onalaska is a unique city nestled in the bluffs of the Mississippi River valley. In response to residents' strong desire to shape the city's future, the City engaged The Lakota Group to update the community's comprehensive plan. Building upon the community's "LiveOna" branding, the planning process encouraged residents to reflect on the unique qualities that define Onalaska and consider how the city could continue to grow while preserving the small-town character they value.

Faced with growth pressures, rising housing costs, and limited land available for new development, the plan explored growth strategies, infill development, and urban design initiatives that leveraged the city's existing assets. The Comprehensive Plan is organized around key pillars, including Community, Commerce & Development, and Nature & Recreation, that highlight the core elements of Onalaska's identity. Each pillar includes strategies designed to support these values, while also aligning with the requirements of Wisconsin's Smart Growth Law. This approach provides a clear framework for guiding Onalaska's future growth in a sustainable and balanced way.

ONALASKA, WI 

STATISTICS

Start Date: June 2023

Completed: August 2024

REFERENCE

Katie Aspenson, AICP

City of Onalaska

Planning Director

(608) 781-9590

kaspenson@onalaskawi.gov



Burlington Vision 2040 Comprehensive Plan

The City of Burlington undertook a collaborative planning process with The Lakota Group, community residents, and stakeholders to create the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan outlines important policies and actions for a range of core community aspects including land use and development, the Downtown, housing and neighborhoods, open space and natural resources, transportation, historic preservation, quality of life, infrastructure and capital improvements, and community sustainability and resiliency. A robust community engagement process provided the opportunity for the voices of Burlington residents, business owners, stakeholders, community leaders, and local representatives to shape the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan was approved and will guide decision-makers about where Burlington is today, where it wants to go, and how it intends to get there.

BURLINGTON, WI 

STATISTICS

Start Date: June 2020

Completed: October 2022

REFERENCE

Carina Walters

City Administrator

(262) 342-1180

cwalters@burlington-wi.gov



Kansas City, Kansas, Historic Preservation Plan

The Unified Government of Wyandotte County-Kansas City, Kansas (UG) engaged The Lakota Group to develop a historic preservation plan as part of its Plan KCK Comprehensive Plan. The Plan aims to strengthen preservation practice in KCK, including issues concerning archaeology and cultural resource management, identifying, and designating new landmarks and historic districts, and enhancing the design review and administrative processes that guide the decision-making of the UG and its Landmarks Commission. Other goals involve opportunities for undertaking historic preservation-based economic development initiatives that promote adaptive use and building rehabilitation, conserving housing, and neighborhoods of traditional character, and ensuring historic places are resilient and prepared to withstand future disaster events.

KANSAS CITY, KS 

STATISTICS

Start Date: April 2023

Completed: February 2024

REFERENCE

Randy Greeves

Historic Preservationist

Unified Government of Wyandotte County
and Kansas City, KS

(913) 573-5763

rlgreeves@wycokck.org



2022-2032 Texas Statewide Historic Preservation Plan

For Texans, places of historic and cultural value provide connections to the many stories and narratives of the people and events that shaped the state and its communities. They also provide meaning and continuity in a time of constant change, serving as essential elements for community quality of life. Among the challenges the Statewide Historic Preservation Plan addresses are promoting the many benefits of preservation to local decision-makers, finding resources that enhance the important work of preservation partners, preserving the places of Texas' underrepresented communities, and supporting efforts that facilitate investments in historic buildings and places.

The THC engaged The Lakota Group to create this plan, working with partners including historical commissions, nonprofit preservation organizations, Main Street revitalization programs, archeology stewardship groups, Native American tribal governments, preservation professionals, government officials, developers, owners of historic properties, and Texans who care passionately about the state's heritage.

STATE OF TEXAS 

STATISTICS

Start Date: July 2021
Completed: May 2023

REFERENCE

Amy Hammons
Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276
Austin, TX 78711-2276
(512) 699-2360
amy.hammons@thc.texas.gov



Project Manager & Key Personnel:

Siraj Asfahani, AIA

Siraj Asfahani, Senior Vice President
1 E. Wacker Dr. Suite 2700, Chicago, IL, 60601
The Lakota Group, Chicago, IL

10 years at The Lakota Group
15+ years professional experience

American Institute of Architects (AIA International)
sasfahani@thelakotagroup.com
312-467-5445 x 227

Credentials & Work Experience:

Siraj Asfahani, Senior Vice President at The Lakota Group, brings over a decade of experience leading multidisciplinary teams and managing complex, high-impact planning projects across the country. With a focus on comprehensive planning, historic preservation, community engagement, and urban design, Siraj has worked extensively with government agencies, municipalities, state agencies, and regional organizations to deliver actionable and visionary plans. His strategic leadership ensures timely, cost-effective, and high-quality deliverables tailored to each community's unique needs.

Experience Managing Multidisciplinary Teams:

Siraj has extensive experience managing multidisciplinary teams composed of planners, designers, economists, and subject matter experts. He excels at coordinating staff assignments, setting clear deliverables, and ensuring alignment with project goals and schedules. Siraj's leadership is defined by transparent communication, rigorous quality control, and a commitment to collaboration—key factors in delivering complex projects on time and within budget. His expertise includes managing concurrent workstreams, identifying efficiencies, and maintaining momentum throughout the planning process.

Project Experience:

Below are two relevant projects managed by Siraj Asfahani within the past five years:

1. North Chicago Comprehensive Plan

Client: City of North Chicago, IL

Project Scope: Managed the creation of a comprehensive plan that tackled systemic challenges, including economic development, housing reinvestment, infrastructure improvements, and quality-of-life enhancements, while celebrating the city's diverse culture and identity.

Role: As project manager, Siraj led a multidisciplinary team through a multi-phased process that emphasized systems thinking—connecting issues like transportation, housing, and economic development to identify synergistic strategies. He prioritized inclusive community engagement, launching bilingual initiatives such as Plan Comprensivo workshops and Spanish-language materials to reach North Chicago's large Hispanic population. Engagement efforts included listening sessions, pop-up events, and creative tools like resident mailers to ensure all households could participate. Siraj also led efforts to develop realistic, phased implementation strategies grounded in local resources and capacity.

Outcome: The plan created a unified community vision while addressing complex local issues, including public safety concerns, aging housing stock, and workforce development. North Chicago has since leveraged the plan as a framework for actionable progress, earning the 2024 APA-Illinois Daniel Burnham Award for Outstanding Comprehensive Plan for its innovative approach and measurable outcomes.

2. Our Resilient Heritage - Texas Statewide Historic Preservation Plan

Client: Texas Historical Commission

Project Scope: Siraj led the development of Our Resilient Heritage, a comprehensive statewide historic preservation plan designed to guide preservation efforts across Texas for a ten-year period. The project addressed evolving preservation challenges while incorporating the unique needs and priorities of rural communities, urban centers, underrepresented groups, and local preservation organizations.

Role: Siraj managed a multidisciplinary team tasked with blending statewide priorities into actionable goals and strategies. He coordinated extensive engagement across Texas's diverse cultural and geographic landscape, conducting regional workshops, stakeholder interviews, and virtual input sessions. Special attention was given to elevating historically underrepresented voices through tailored outreach and storytelling initiatives. Under Siraj's leadership, the plan emphasized balancing preservation with economic development, disaster resilience, and adaptive reuse strategies that responded to emerging needs such as climate impacts and rapid growth.

Outcome: The resulting plan positioned Texas as a leader in forward-thinking preservation, providing clear guidance on aligning statewide policies with local implementation. It fostered collaboration across agencies and communities, resulting in tangible action steps to preserve Texas's architectural, cultural, and natural heritage. The inclusive planning process created a framework that resonated at both regional and state levels, ensuring broad stakeholder ownership and lasting impact.

Experience in Controversial Projects:

Siraj Asfahani brings a measured and empathetic approach to managing controversial or complex projects, fostering environments where all voices are heard, and the project's overarching goals remain at the forefront. His work is defined by his ability to navigate sensitive topics, facilitate constructive conversations, and guide diverse stakeholders toward consensus.

For example, in North Chicago's Comprehensive Plan, housing disparities and perceptions of reinvestment created polarized viewpoints among residents, property owners, and community leaders.

Siraj understood that successful outcomes required mitigating conflict while ensuring that all perspectives were acknowledged. Through thoughtful facilitation, he created safe spaces for open dialogue—whether through bilingual workshops, smaller listening sessions, or stakeholder interviews—allowing participants to express concerns and aspirations openly.

Throughout the process, Siraj emphasized active listening to validate community concerns while refocusing discussions on shared goals: building a plan that reflected the collective priorities and future vision of North Chicago. When tensions arose, he thoughtfully reminded participants of the broader purpose of the process—creating equitable solutions that served the community as a whole. By presenting data and real-life examples, Siraj helped clarify misconceptions and address fears with transparency, fostering understanding and trust among participants.

His commitment to maintaining open communication, fairness, and respect allowed the community to see their input reflected in the plan's direction. This ultimately transformed contentious conversations into opportunities for shared ownership, resulting in actionable strategies that balanced diverse perspectives. Siraj's ability to facilitate difficult discussions highlights his skill in navigating complex projects with professionalism and care, ensuring that even polarizing topics are met with collaborative, forward-thinking solutions.

Professional Client References:

1. Taylor Wegrzyn

Director of Economic and Community Development
City of North Chicago, IL
tayweg@northchicago.org
847-596-8671

2. Jodi Luka

Director of Economic and Community Development
Village of Fox Lake, IL
lukaj@foxlake.org
224-426-9852

3. Amy Hammons

Texas Main Street Program Coordinator
Austin, TX
amy.hammons@thc.texas.gov
512 463 5758



PROPOSED TEAM

THE LAKOTA GROUP



SCOTT FRERES
President &
Principal In Charge



KEVIN CLARK, AICP
Principal
Urban Design Specialist



SIRAJ ASFAHANI
Vice President
Project Manager



HANNAH BADER
Senior Planner



ANDY CROSS, AICP
Senior Planner



HANNA KROLL
Associate Planner

SB FRIEDMAN



FRAN LEFOR ROOD
Partner



CAREN KAY
Senior Vice President



ELENA CAMINER
Project Manager



DARIN BLANG
Senior Vice President



GREG GOVERNATORI
Associate



JEREMY SCHWARTZ
Associate

TADI



DEREK HUNGNESS
Senior Project Manager



JOHN CAMPBELL
Director of Traffic Safety
Services



SIRAJ ASFHANI AIA

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT | 2015 - PRESENT

PROJECT MANAGER

HOMETOWN

Beirut, Lebanon

EDUCATION

DePaul University

*Master of Sustainable Urban
Development
Chicago, IL
(2017)*

Harvard School of Design

*Master of Sustainable Urban Executive
Studies in Urban Design
Boston, MA
(2016)*

Lebanese American University

*Bachelor of Architecture
Minor in Graphic Design
Beirut, Lebanon
(2015)*

ORGANIZATIONS

- American Institute of Architects
- American Planning Association
- Chicago Architecture Foundation

EXPERIENCE

Years with Lakota: 10
Years of Practice: 15

**THE
LAKOTA ALLIES
GROUP. IN
PLACE**

Siraj is an accomplished architect and urban planner with a wealth of experience in comprehensive planning and land use strategies. With a robust focus on community engagement, Siraj champions innovative and sustainable planning solutions that are both practical and forward-thinking. Born and raised in Beirut, Lebanon, he is a staunch advocate for community resiliency and embraces the transformative power of unconventional design. Siraj holds a degree in Architecture from the Lebanese American University and a Master's degree in Urban Planning and Development from DePaul University in Chicago. Throughout his career, he has participated in and won numerous design challenges across Beirut, Dubai, and Chicago, showcasing his ability to blend creative design with practical urban planning.

SIGNATURE PROJECTS

North Chicago Comprehensive Plan - North Chicago, IL

The North Chicago Comprehensive Plan serves as a strategic framework aimed at revitalizing and sustaining the community's growth through innovative and inclusive urban planning. As the project lead, Siraj orchestrated the plan under the auspices of The Lakota Group, focusing on creating a realistic and achievable roadmap for the city. The plan tackles essential areas such as economic development, community health, infrastructure improvement, and environmental sustainability. Significant emphasis was placed on systems thinking and inclusive engagement strategies, ensuring that the plan not only reflected the community's current needs but also its long-term aspirations. This comprehensive approach and dedication to including a wide array of community voices have not only fostered a sense of ownership among residents but also led to the plan's recognition with the Illinois APA Daniel Burnham Award for Outstanding Comprehensive Plan of 2024, highlighting its effectiveness and impact.

Fox Lake Community Reflections | Comprehensive Plan - Fox Lake, IL

The Fox Lake Reflections Comprehensive Plan is a visionary effort focused on revitalizing and guiding the future development of Fox Lake, IL. Aimed at enhancing the village's unique lake-centric lifestyle, the plan is structured around critical issues such as housing, economic vitality, mobility, and quality of life. Community engagement has been a cornerstone of this process, with events like 'Fox Lake Conversations' and various pop-up initiatives ensuring resident input shapes the plan's direction. Siraj and The Lakota Group have been instrumental in capturing the essence of Fox Lake, integrating public feedback into a coherent strategy that reflects both current needs and future aspirations.

Winnetka Futures 2040 Comprehensive Plan - Winnetka, IL

In 2019, the Village of Winnetka initiated the Winnetka Futures 2040 Comprehensive Plan, a collaborative effort to shape the village's trajectory for years ahead. By engaging in discussions with diverse community groups, the plan strikes a balance between preserving Winnetka's cherished traditions and embracing innovation. Meetings with the Plan Commission played a pivotal role in refining each aspect of the plan, ensuring a cohesive vision that addresses economic, environmental, and social considerations. Siraj co-managed the Winnetka Futures 2040 Plan, alongside Lakota's President, Scott Freres.

Texas Statewide Historic Preservation Plan - Austin, TX

Burlington 2040 Plan - Burlington, WI

Libertyville Comprehensive Plan Update - Libertyville, IL

Louisburg Comprehensive Plan - Louisburg, KS



FRAN LEFOR ROOD, AICP

PARTNER

Fran guides clients nationwide in reaching their community, economic and real estate development goals. She brings 15 years of experience in the field and innovative thinking to develop creative and implementable solutions to improve communities. Fran is currently directing the development of the 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Cook County, IL, which includes countywide housing needs, market and industry cluster analyses. She is also leading an economy and land use regional existing conditions report for the seven-county Chicago region in support of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's regional planning initiatives.

EDUCATION

Master's in Urban Planning and Policy
University of Illinois at Chicago

Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy
University of Chicago

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Planning Association (APA)/
American Institute of Certified Planners
(AICP)

Lambda Alpha International
Chicago Region Chapter

Urban Land Institute (ULI)
ULI Chicago Advisory Board Member

SELECT PUBLICATIONS

"The Nexus Between Land Use and Fiscal Balance" (with R. Bose)
APA Zoning Practice, 2019

PRESENTATIONS & PANELS

"Austin Central Avenue: Creating Austin's
'Main Street'"
Panelist, ULI Chicago Technical Assistant
Panel, 2024

"Engagement in Action: Building a
Community Vision through the 2024
Central Area Plan Update"
Panelist, APA-IL State Conference, 2024

"Financial Analysis for Land Use and
Development Decision Making"
Presenter, Fundamentals of Municipal
Finance, University of Chicago Harris
School of Public Policy & Lincoln Institute
of Land Policy, 2024

"Tackling Housing Affordability in
Wisconsin's Fastest Growing County"
Panelist, APA National Planning
Conference, 2024

PROJECT EXPERIENCE

Regional Housing Strategy • Dane County, WI

Led the development of a regional housing strategy; led monthly Housing Advisory Committee meetings with 80 stakeholders; and identified policies, programs and resources to address priority housing issues

Uplift Cook: Consolidated Plan and CEDS • Cook County, IL

Directing the preparation of the 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Cook County; includes countywide housing needs, market and industry cluster analyses, and engagement to create informed housing & economic development goals and strategies

Regional Existing Conditions Report • Chicago Region, IL

Leading the identification key indicators related to economic, demographic, land use and fiscal trends for the Chicago metropolitan region spanning seven counties; developing infographics and narratives for each indicator, to support Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's ongoing regional planning initiatives

Macon Area Transportation Study Freight Plan • Macon Region, GA

Led a demographic and socioeconomic analysis and long-term employment projections for industries that will impact the regional economy of the Macon-Bibb Metropolitan Planning Organization boundary

We Will Chicago Citywide Framework Plan • Chicago, IL

APA IL Chapter, Daniel Burnham Award for a Comprehensive Plan Winner, 2023
Co-led a multidisciplinary team to research and prepare a policy framework through a participatory process for the first citywide comprehensive plan in over 50 years

Comprehensive Plan Update • Tinley Park, IL

Leading a market analysis to inform a land use plan and implementation strategy as part of a comprehensive plan update for the Village of Tinley Park

Citywide Housing Study & Strategy • Sun Prairie, WI

Led a citywide housing assessment and conducted stakeholder outreach to identify unmet housing needs; prepared a menu of implementable strategies

Citywide Housing Study & Development Advisory • Wauwatosa, WI

Led a comprehensive housing study and needs analysis and formulated strategies to leverage housing opportunities and address challenges; led financial deal reviews for proposed mixed-use developments

Citywide Housing Needs Assessment and Toolkit • Naperville, IL

Conducted data-driven assessment to determine whether existing housing stock meets current and projected needs; identified housing-related issues and unmet needs, and identified programs and policies to address housing issues; led the evaluation and development of a voluntary inclusionary zoning ordinance for council consideration

DARIN BLANG, PE

Associate/Senior Vice President



EDUCATION

BS, Civil &
Environmental
Engineering
University of Wisconsin-
Madison, 1992

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2021-Present
Kapur, Madison, WI

2000-2021
Oneida Engineering
Solutions, Madison, WI

1992-2000
KL Engineering,
Madison, WI

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Council of
Engineering Companies
(ACEC)

REGISTRATION

Professional Engineer
WI (#33838)

PROFILE

Darin is an accomplished transportation engineer and planning specialist with 32 years of experience in transportation/civil engineering, site development, and the utility industry (gas, electric, fiber optic). He has successfully delivered hundreds of projects for WisDOT, DFD, counties, municipalities, and utility companies. He has a comprehensive knowledge of all phases of the transportation planning and design process including comprehensive plans, design, environmental documentation, agency coordination, public involvement, PS&E, and construction. He has skillfully managed major corridor studies, large rural reconstruction, interchange design, high-profile urban reconstruction, mill and overlay, and route alternative studies. Darin also has extensive experience leading public involvement efforts on controversial highway expansion projects and interchange projects. He has a proven record of uniting diverse groups of people with contrasting viewpoints, thus allowing schedules and budgets to be met. He has a strong technical background in civil engineering, as well as excellent leadership, communication, and financial management skills.

PROJECT EXPERIENCE

US 53, STH 35, & STH 16 Corridors, La Crosse, WI

US 51 (Stoughton Road) Central & North Segments, Madison, WI

City of Sun Prairie Multi-Use Path, Bird Street to Kroncke Drive, WisDOT SW Region & City of Sun Prairie, Dane County, WI

STH 19 & Grand Avenue, Grand Avenue & Blue Heron Boulevard Intersection Improvements, WisDOT SW Region & City of Sun Prairie, Dane County, WI

US 14 (South Avenue), La Crosse, WI

US 61, Lancaster, WI

I-39/90, Dane/Rock County Line to US 12/18, WI

US 2 Corridor Study, Ashland to Hurley, Ashland, & Iron Counties, WI

US 12/18, I-39 to CTH N, Dane County, WI

STH 23 Corridor Study, Fond du Lac County, WI

US 45 Corridor Management Plan, Wittenberg, WI

US 8, Polk and Barron Counties, WI

US 14/STH 11, Janesville to I-43, Rock & Walworth Counties, WI

STH 16, Dodge County, WI

STH 29/CTH Y, Marathon County, WI

STH 47/CTH A, Outagamie County, WI



DEREK HUNGNESS, PE, PTOE, AICP

Planning Expert

Specialties:

Travel Demand Forecasting
Multimodal Transportation Planning
Pedestrian and Bicycle – Comprehensive Plans
Traffic Impact Studies

Education:

Ph.D. Candidate, Transportation Infrastructure and Capacity Planning, North Dakota State University, degree expected December 2023

Master of Business Administration, Finance and Management, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, 2014

Master of Science, Civil and Environmental Engineering, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2005

Master of Community and Regional Planning, North Dakota State University, 1990

Certifications:

Professional Engineer (PE) State of Wisconsin No. 39081-006

Professional Traffic Operations Engineer (PTOE) Transportation Prof. Certification Board No. 2473

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Derek brings over 30 years of expertise in multimodal transportation planning and traffic engineering. His specialties include traffic impact assessment, transportation corridor preservation, safety studies, and regional travel demand forecasting. Often spearheading multidisciplinary transportation initiatives, Derek is deeply committed to fostering strong client relationships through direct engagement.

In addition to his professional pursuits, Derek holds a position as an Adjunct Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. There, he has curated and instructed courses in Traffic Impact Analysis, Geometric Design, Infrastructure Sustainability, and Senior Capstone Design. He is deeply invested in research, focusing on planning for autonomous vehicle deployment and the sustainability of transportation infrastructures and systems.

Recent Publications & Presentations:

Hungness, Derek. 2022. "Modeling the Impacts of Self-Driving Cars on Land Use." Presented at the 63rd Annual Transportation Research Forum International Meeting, St. Louis, MO, April 2022.

Hungness, Derek and Raj Bridgelall. 2022. "Exploratory Spatial Data Analysis of Traffic Forecasting: A Case Study." Sustainability 2022, 14, 964: 1-19.

Hungness, Derek and Raj Bridgelall. 2020. "Model Contrast of Autonomous Vehicle Impacts on Traffic." Journal of Advanced Transportation, 2020 (8935692): 1-10. Presented at 99th TRB Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 2020



Approach & Scope

Well situated in the driftless area of southwest Wisconsin, Sauk County is one of the state's most popular destinations. Offering a mix of dairy farms, forested ridges, cold water trout streams, and remnant prairie – it is environmentally rich and scenically beautiful. Historically, Sauk County inspired Aldo Leopold's seminal A Sand County Almanac, launched the Ringling Brothers circus empire, and was home to the Badger Ammunition Plant, once the largest such facility in the world and a continued topic of cleanup and reuse. Add in communities like Baraboo, Reedsburg, Prairie du Sac, and Spring Green and in what other County can you rock climb, see world famous architecture, dine on a historic main street, and visit one of the largest water parks in the country all in one day?

Not surprisingly, Sauk County continues to be one of the fastest growing counties in Wisconsin. Though still honoring its agricultural and manufacturing roots, much of the County's population and economic growth is linked to its plethora of recreational and tourism amenities that continue to attract vacationers, second-home buyers, and job seekers. This has made Sauk County one of only five Wisconsin counties where the leisure and hospitality industry comprise the largest single group of employers. More recently, growth has been further buoyed by homebuyers seeking more affordable housing options outside of Madison/Dane County, as well as retirees and remote workers drawn to the area's environmental beauty and quality of life.

Today, communities across Wisconsin must respond and be resilient to economic challenges, plan for needed investments in infrastructure, ensure the adequate and equitable distribution of community services, promote high-quality built environments, and further preserve their natural resources.

Therefore, with continued growth comes many important questions for Sauk County:

1. How to best steward, protect, and enhance natural, agricultural, open space, and recreational resources
2. How to strengthen the tourism industry while identifying new ways to diversify the economy and support smaller communities
3. Where to invest in critical infrastructure and transportation networks to promote sustainable development
4. How and where to increase the quality, diversity, and supply of attainable housing
5. How to preserve, foster, and support the area's unique culture and heritage while welcoming new development and change
6. How to mitigate the impacts flooding, storms, and other natural hazards
7. How to promote and support regional collaboration with 22 townships, 14 villages, 3 cities, and the Ho-Chunk Nation (amongst others)

The Lakota Team understands that addressing these questions and establishing a balanced and graceful path forward for the County will require both robust public outreach and the broad synthesis of a range of other planning materials. Amongst other actions, we will engage stakeholders whose perspective may not be adequately represented in prior plans, such as the Amish community and members of the Ho-Chunk Nation. Furthermore, we will hold listening sessions with leaders from each of the County's major municipalities to make sure that the new county plan aligns with local plans and identify opportunities for additional regional cooperation.

The Lakota Team also understands the importance of having an effective, realistic, and approachable comprehensive plan. Sauk County does not have a large staff dedicated to municipal planning, so this plan needs to provide a practical, achievable path forward that includes active buy-in and participation from other departments. Similarly, outreach to the County Board will need to show how this new comprehensive plan provides a useful but also flexible and adaptable framework for guiding future investment and development.



PHASE 1

ENGAGE & ASSESS

The focus of Phase 1 is to establish a dynamic, county-wide community planning process that engages a diverse range of stakeholders, all 22 municipalities, and unique community groups. This phase will provide a comprehensive baseline of Sauk County's current conditions through robust engagement, field analysis, and stakeholder input. During this phase, we will develop an existing conditions and diagnostic report that documents the foundation of knowledge gathered and defines how findings will inform planning goals and strategies.

TASK 1.1: Kick-Off & Tour (Mtg 1)

We will initiate the process with a comprehensive Kick-Off Meeting involving Sauk County administration, the Land Resources and Environment Department, the Steering Committee, and key county stakeholders. The purpose of this meeting is to introduce the planning team, confirm the project's goals and objectives, outline the scope of work, and review the schedule and deliverables. Ahead of the meeting, we will provide a data request detailing the materials needed for this effort, including GIS data, shapefiles, aerial imagery, and any relevant 2D or 3D information. During the Kick-Off, we will discuss the availability and organization of data to identify gaps and clarify how this information will support the planning process.

Engagement strategies will also be a key focus of the Kick-Off, with a discussion on tailored methods to effectively reach Sauk County's diverse populations. This includes strategies for engaging rural communities, urban centers, and underrepresented groups such as the Amish community, with an emphasis on incorporating trusted outreach partners to facilitate genuine and inclusive participation.

Following the Kick-Off Meeting, we will embark on an extensive County Tour guided by county staff to gain first-hand insights into Sauk County's land use patterns, infrastructure, and regional character. This tour will include key hotspots such as portions of major highways to observe regional connections, representative rural landscapes and agricultural preservation areas, as well as urban centers like Baraboo or others to identify development patterns and local opportunities.

Natural resource assets, such as river corridors, forests, and recreational areas, will also be highlighted to understand their role in the county's identity and economy.

This targeted exploration will allow us to identify areas of opportunity, challenges, and unique county assets that warrant further analysis. Additional field tours will be conducted throughout the process as it is necessary to focus on specific areas identified by the Steering Committee, stakeholders, or emerging priorities.

TASK 1.2: Community Engagement Program

We will develop a Community Engagement Plan that outlines a comprehensive and inclusive strategy to reach Sauk County's diverse populations, including its rural communities, small towns, and underrepresented groups such as the Amish community and Ho-Chunk Nation. This plan will ensure engagement is accessible, flexible, and meaningful, with strategies designed to reflect Sauk County's unique geography and cultural diversity.



While the full engagement plan will be developed in collaboration with Sauk County, we share here some of the key tactics we have in mind:

- » **Engagement Tours:** Two County Engagement Tours in Phase 1 and Phase 2, with interactive stops at 5-7 key locations across the county, timed to coincide with high-attendance events such as fairs and festivals.
- » **Toolkits for Local Leaders:** Engagement Toolkits for Community Champions, providing trusted local leaders with resources like Ideas Walls, input forms, and facilitation guides to collect input within their networks and at accessible public spaces, including Town Halls, libraries, and community centers.
- » **Conscious Engagement:** Culturally Tailored Outreach, facilitated by paid representatives from the Amish community and Ho-Chunk Nation, ensuring trusted, genuine, and accessible engagement.

The engagement plan will outline specific methods, a schedule of activities, and shared expectations for outreach throughout the process.

TASK 1.3: Ideas Wall & Input Station Toolkit for Municipalities

To ensure broad participation and gather high-level input early in the planning process, we will create an Ideas Wall and Input Station Toolkit for municipalities to install at Town Halls, City Halls, libraries, and other public spaces across Sauk County. This toolkit will include a visually engaging Ideas Wall display, interactive maps, and an easy-to-use input form where residents can share their thoughts on key topics such as growth, natural resource preservation, housing, and infrastructure needs.

Designed to be user-friendly and self-guided, these stations will remain active for the entire first phase of the planning process, allowing residents to provide input at their convenience. Municipal staff or volunteers will have simple instructions to maintain and monitor the stations, and all feedback collected will be submitted to our team at regular intervals.

TASK 1.4: Project Brand & Website

To ensure accessibility and transparency, we will develop a distinct project brand and a dedicated project website. The logo and branding will reflect Sauk County's regional character, helping distinguish the planning process and build excitement for community participation.

The project website will serve as a hub for updates, engagement tools, meeting materials, and opportunities to provide input throughout all phases of the project.

TASK 1.5: Review of Existing Plans

We will conduct a thorough review of existing plans and studies to ensure that the 2025-2027 Sauk County Comprehensive Plan Update builds upon previous planning efforts while addressing current and future challenges. This process will focus on analyzing relevant findings, recommendations, and priorities from key county-wide documents, including the 2009 Sauk County Comprehensive Plan: Positioning Sauk County for the Future, the 2018 Sauk County Housing Study and Needs Assessment, and the 2024 Invest Sauk Economic Plan, among others. Additionally, we will closely examine plans related to critical regional assets, such as the Baraboo River Corridor Plans, farmland preservation strategies, outdoor recreation, hazard mitigation, and natural resource management, to ensure these priorities are integrated into a cohesive county vision.

In parallel, we will conduct a detailed review of comprehensive plans for all 22 municipalities within Sauk County, including its cities, villages, and townships. This will allow us to identify shared opportunities, address localized challenges, and ensure alignment between local and county-wide goals. By synthesizing insights from these various documents, we will develop a clear understanding of the existing planning landscape, enabling the updated comprehensive plan to serve as a unified, forward-thinking framework that reflects the unique needs and priorities of Sauk County and its communities.

TASK 1.6: Mapping & GIS Analysis

We will develop maps that tell stories, including land use, zoning, opportunity sites, parks and open space, level of service, traffic volumes, and other existing conditions maps, as needed. The Team will work with the county and other agencies to supplement our data with other materials for use in developing exhibit maps for the State of the County and Final Comprehensive Plan reports. Maps and exhibits will be refined during the planning process as additional data and information is gathered.

TASK 1.7: Field Work & Land Use Inventory

Field investigations will be conducted across Sauk County to comprehensively assess existing conditions, land use patterns, and areas of opportunity or constraint. Given the county's size and diverse landscape, fieldwork will be carried out through a regionalized approach, ensuring that we document rural, urban, and natural resource areas effectively while considering Sauk's unique challenges and opportunities.

We will start by reviewing existing land use inventories, zoning maps, GIS data, and past planning documents to establish a baseline understanding of land use characteristics across the county. Key areas of focus will include:

- » **Agricultural Lands:** Verification of active agricultural operations, prime farmland preservation areas, and land under development pressure.
- » **Natural Resources:** Field documentation of significant environmental assets, including the Wisconsin River corridor, Devil's Lake State Park, wetlands, and other critical habitats.
- » **Urban and Rural Communities:** Identification of community growth patterns, housing densities, and infill or redevelopment opportunities within cities, villages, and unincorporated townships.
- » **Tourism and Recreational Areas:** Assessment of access, infrastructure, and visitor impacts at high-traffic destinations like Wisconsin Dells, Baraboo, and other recreational hotspots.
- » **Transportation Networks:** Ground verification of road infrastructure conditions, connectivity gaps, and multimodal opportunities, particularly in underserved or high-growth areas.

To achieve this, the team will conduct on-the-ground assessments across subregions of the county, documenting land use conditions through field mapping, photography, and site observations. Visits to key opportunity sites identified during Steering Committee discussions will help evaluate their development or preservation potential, while direct engagement with local stakeholders such as property owners, business owners, and community leaders will provide important contextual perspectives. This data, verified through GIS analysis, will form the basis of a county-wide assessment, highlighting existing land use characteristics, challenges, and key opportunity areas for development, preservation, or future investment. This hands-on approach will ensure that the comprehensive plan's land use strategy and future growth framework are grounded in an intimate understanding of Sauk County's diverse landscape.

TASK 1.8: Stakeholder Interviews & Listening Sessions

We will conduct targeted interviews and listening sessions with a wide range of stakeholders across Sauk County, including municipal leaders, county staff, institutional leaders, agency representatives, department heads, business owners, agricultural stakeholders, tourism advocates, and environmental groups. Recognizing the importance of inclusivity, we will also engage underrepresented voices, such as members of the Amish community and the Ho-Chunk Nation, through culturally appropriate outreach methods.

The purpose of these interviews and sessions is to gain a comprehensive understanding of Sauk County's priorities, opportunities, and challenges, including perspectives on growth, economic development, natural resource preservation, housing diversity, infrastructure investments, and quality of life. To ensure all municipalities are represented, we will conduct one-on-one interviews with representatives from each of Sauk County's 22 municipalities to align local priorities with county-wide goals. We anticipate hosting a combination of small group discussions and one-on-one interviews—some in-person and others virtually—over a series of days to provide flexibility and ensure broad participation.

TASK 1.9: County-Wide Engagement Tour

To meaningfully engage residents across Sauk County at the outset of the planning process, we will organize a County-Wide Engagement Tour during Phase 1. This tour will include stops at 5-7 key locations strategically chosen to ensure accessibility and broad geographic coverage, while also aligning with high-attendance community events such as fairs, festivals, or farmers' markets. By meeting residents where they already gather, we will maximize participation and ensure that input reflects the voices of Sauk County's diverse population.

Each tour stop will feature a series of interactive and engaging activities designed to spark meaningful conversations and gather valuable feedback. These activities will include interactive issue booths where residents can share their priorities on housing, economic development, transportation, and natural resource preservation; visual preference surveys to identify preferred development approaches; and mapping exercises that allow participants to pinpoint areas of opportunity, growth, or preservation. Additional tools such as idea boards and comment walls

will provide opportunities for residents to share their aspirations and concerns about Sauk County's future.

To ensure the engagement process is fully accessible and inclusive, input opportunities will be mirrored online through the project website, offering digital versions of the exercises for those unable to attend in person. Leading up to the tour, we will launch a comprehensive promotional campaign with posters, press releases, email outreach, and social media announcements to generate awareness and excitement.

TASK 1.10: Department Heads Virtual Working Session

To ensure alignment across all county departments and gather valuable insights early in the process, we will organize a Virtual Working Session with Sauk County department heads. Prior to the session, we will distribute a set of prompting questions to encourage thoughtful input on key topics such as current priorities, challenges, and opportunities related to housing, economic development, infrastructure, transportation, natural resources, and community services.

During the session, department heads will have the opportunity to share perspectives, highlight ongoing initiatives, and identify gaps or areas for collaboration. This focused discussion will provide critical context to shape the plan's foundation and ensure it reflects the operational realities and priorities of Sauk County departments. Feedback gathered during this session will be incorporated into the Phase 1 assessments and engagement summary to ensure department-level expertise is integrated throughout the planning process.

TASK 1.11: Phase 1 Engagement Summary

The team will compile and synthesize all engagement collected during stakeholder interviews, the County-Wide Engagement Tour, and the Ideas Walls stationed in communities across Sauk County into a comprehensive Phase 1 Engagement Summary Memo. This memo will provide a clear and organized overview of the key themes, priorities, and concerns raised by residents, stakeholders, and community leaders. It will highlight emerging trends, regional perspectives, and community-specific insights that will serve as a foundation for identifying key issues and opportunities. The summary will ensure that all voices gathered during Phase 1 are meaningfully reflected as we transition into the next phase of the planning process.

TASK 1.12: Steering Committee Meeting (Mtg 2)

Following the completion of Phase 1 community engagement activities and initial assessments, we will convene a Steering Committee Meeting to review and validate the preliminary key issues and opportunities identified through our analysis and conversations with Sauk County communities. This session will focus on presenting findings from the Phase 1 Engagement Summary Memo, including themes gathered from stakeholder interviews, the County-Wide Engagement Tour, and Ideas Walls stationed throughout the county. Additionally, we will share early observations from our land use, demographic, economic, and other baseline assessments.

The purpose of this meeting is to confirm that the emerging priorities and challenges align with the lived experiences and aspirations of Sauk County residents, ensuring we are on the right track before drafting the full State of the County Report. The Steering Committee will provide input to refine these findings, identify any gaps, and highlight areas that may require further exploration. This collaborative discussion will set the stage for a robust and accurate understanding of Sauk County's conditions, serving as a critical checkpoint in the planning process.

TASK 1.13: State of the County Report

We will compile a comprehensive State of the County Report that synthesizes the feedback gathered through community engagement activities, including stakeholder interviews, the County-Wide Engagement Tour, and Ideas Walls, alongside an in-depth analysis of Sauk County's conditions. This report will provide a detailed and holistic overview of the county's current situation and emerging opportunities, serving as a foundation for the development of the comprehensive plan.

The analysis will encompass a range of factors relevant to Sauk County, including demographic trends, land use patterns, zoning considerations, transportation networks, natural resource preservation, agricultural landscapes, tourism and economic development opportunities, housing supply and affordability, infrastructure conditions, and resilience to natural hazards. The report will also highlight unique regional assets such as the Baraboo River Corridor, Devil's Lake State Park, and the Wisconsin Dells, while identifying key challenges and opportunities across the county's rural and urban communities.

The State of the County Report will include a diagnostic assessment that outlines how the findings from Phase 1 will inform the development of goals, strategies, and policies in the next phases of the planning process. Upon completion, the report will undergo a thorough review by the Steering Committee to ensure its accuracy, completeness, and alignment with the county's priorities and future vision. A downloadable version of the report will be posted on the project website, ensuring it is accessible to all stakeholders and the public, promoting transparency and fostering a shared understanding of the findings and key takeaways.

- **Land Use, Zoning, and Development Analysis**

Sauk County's landscape is a mosaic agricultural lands, forests, prairies, and riparian areas interspersed with small towns and growing urban areas. The county's existing zoning ordinances, Comprehensive Plan, and Farmland Preservation Plan all prioritize preserving agricultural, natural, and cultural resources. We will evaluate the impacts that continued development is having on the county's land resources and identify additional opportunities to ensure that growth is gracefully balanced with maintaining the region's character.

- **Demographics and Market/Economic Analysis**

This will analyze the demographic profile of Sauk County residents and its regional context to include population trends by household type, size, and income, employment within the region and overall trends, as well as commuter trends by demographic group. As of 2022, Sauk County's population was approximately 65,664, with a median age of 41 years. The county has experienced steady population growth, with a 0.361% increase from 2021 to 2022. The median household income rose by 7.72% during the same period, reaching \$72,930. We will integrate the information gathered from stakeholder interviews as well as firsthand experience of County departments.

- **Housing Assessment**

Sauk County's housing landscape is shaped by its diverse mix of urban centers, small towns, and rural communities, each offering unique opportunities and challenges for growth. Unlike a single municipality, housing trends across the county reflect varying dynamics—from more urbanized areas like Baraboo and Reedsburg

that offer higher-density housing options to rural townships where single-family homes and agricultural properties dominate. We will assess Sauk County's existing housing stock, occupancy rates, and trends, identifying how regional influences, such as proximity to major highways (12 and 14) and interstates (60 and 65), impact housing demand and affordability.

This analysis will examine how urban versus rural environments create differing housing pressures and opportunities, particularly as the county continues to attract new residents, including retirees, remote workers, and commuters seeking more affordable options outside the Madison metro area. We will also explore how demographic shifts—such as aging populations, smaller household sizes, and workforce housing needs—are influencing housing supply and demand. Trends in seasonal and secondary housing, driven by Sauk County's appeal as a recreational and tourism hub, will be factored into our analysis, alongside challenges such as housing affordability for renters and first-time homebuyers.

- **Retail and Commercial Assessment**

Sauk County's retail and commercial landscape is equally diverse, driven by its blend of urbanized areas, rural main streets, and tourism destinations. In more urbanized areas, such as Baraboo and Reedsburg, retail and commercial nodes are poised for growth, benefiting from higher population densities and regional traffic patterns. By contrast, smaller towns and rural areas often serve as community hubs, with local businesses and service-oriented establishments playing a critical role in economic resilience and community character. The tourism economy—centered around destinations like the Wisconsin Dells, Devil's Lake State Park, and the Baraboo River Corridor—adds another layer of commercial activity, particularly in hospitality, dining, and retail sectors that cater to seasonal visitors and second-home owners.

We will evaluate existing retail and commercial inventories, vacancy rates, and market dynamics to identify areas of opportunity for growth, revitalization, or targeted investment. Special attention will be given to how regional economic influences and access to key transportation corridors can position certain areas for commercial success, while ensuring that rural main streets and smaller communities remain economically vibrant.

- **Industrial Assessment**

Sauk County's industrial sector is shaped by its unique mix of agricultural, manufacturing, and emerging technology industries. Industrial activity spans diverse scales, from small, locally oriented businesses to larger operations in plastics, metal fabrication, and food processing that contribute significantly to the regional economy. Proximity to major highways such as 12, 14, 60, and 65 positions certain areas of the county to attract new industrial investment, particularly as industries continue to evolve with trends like automation, advanced manufacturing, and sustainable practices.

We will assess the industrial economy across Sauk County, analyzing existing industrial hubs, employment trends, and potential growth opportunities. Special attention will be given to how regional influences and transportation access can create new opportunities for industrial development in both urbanized and rural areas. This assessment will explore ways to foster balanced, sustainable economic resilience across the county by aligning with emerging industrial trends and ensuring local businesses are well-positioned to thrive in an evolving economic landscape.

- **Transportation Assessment**

Sauk County's transportation network is critical to its economic vitality, quality of life, and regional connectivity. The county benefits from an extensive system of rural highways, interstates, local roads, and recreational trails that serve agricultural operations, small towns, tourism destinations, and commuters traveling to nearby urban centers like Madison. This diverse transportation landscape creates opportunities for improving access, safety, and mobility while preserving the county's scenic and rural character. We will evaluate transportation infrastructure county-wide, analyzing road conditions, seasonal traffic demands, freight movement, and multimodal opportunities such as bike trails, pedestrian connections, and transit options. Special consideration will be given to high-traffic corridors leading to key destinations like Devil's Lake State Park, the Wisconsin Dells, and the Baraboo River Corridor, ensuring these assets remain accessible while supporting local economic activity. Our assessment will build upon the 2024-2030 Highway Improvement Plan and the 2024 Great Sauk State Trail Master Plan,

aligning with recent investments in roadway upgrades and trail expansions. These plans will provide a foundation for understanding existing priorities and opportunities to integrate future sustainable infrastructure.

- **Park & Open Space Assessment**

Sauk County's abundant natural resources and recreational spaces are integral to its identity, offering residents and visitors unparalleled opportunities to connect with nature. From Devil's Lake State Park and the Baraboo River Corridor to smaller community parks, trails, and protected lands, the county's diverse mix of open spaces supports outdoor recreation, tourism, and quality of life. These assets also play a vital role in preserving the county's natural beauty, fostering environmental stewardship, and contributing to economic activity through tourism and second-home ownership.

We will assess the county's parks and open spaces to evaluate their level of service, distribution, and amenities, ensuring all residents—whether in urban centers, small towns, or rural areas—have access to high-quality recreational opportunities. Building upon existing plans such as the 2024 Great Sauk State Trail Master Plan, the 2025 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, and the 2022 White Mound County Park Master Plan, we will identify gaps in connectivity, opportunities for new parkland, and enhancements to existing facilities. Special consideration will be given to flood resilience, natural resource preservation, and sustainable maintenance strategies that ensure long-term protection of these vital spaces. This assessment will explore opportunities to expand trail networks, improve access to recreational areas, and integrate



new programming or amenities that align with evolving community needs, such as health and wellness initiatives.

- **Infrastructure and Opportunity Sites**

Sauk County's infrastructure is the backbone of its growth and development, supporting everything from rural agricultural operations to urbanized centers and tourism destinations. Our team will conduct a thorough assessment of critical infrastructure systems, including water, sewer, stormwater management, and broadband connectivity, with a focus on community resiliency and sustainable development. In collaboration with county staff and local stakeholders, we will identify opportunity sites—areas with potential for growth, redevelopment, or preservation. These sites may include underutilized properties, brownfields, or key corridors near major transportation networks. Infrastructure improvements will be assessed for their ability to support economic development, housing expansion, and regional connectivity while addressing challenges such as stormwater management and emergency preparedness. This analysis will provide the county with clear strategies for leveraging infrastructure investments to drive growth and resiliency across its communities.

TASK 1.14: Steering Committee Meeting (Mtg 3)

We will convene a Steering Committee Meeting with Sauk County administration, the Land Resources and Environment Department, and key stakeholders to review the State of the County Report. This session will provide an opportunity to discuss the findings and insights compiled during the Phase 1 assessment, including key trends in land use, demographics, housing, economic development, natural resources, and transportation networks.

The Lakota Team will gather feedback from the Steering Committee to refine and finalize the report, ensuring it accurately reflects the county's current conditions, challenges, and opportunities. Revisions will incorporate comments and additional context provided during the meeting to ensure alignment with stakeholder priorities. The finalized State of the County Report will serve as a foundational document, guiding the development of goals, strategies, and policies in the next phases of the comprehensive planning process.



PHASE 2

ENVISION

During Phase 2, the Lakota team, in collaboration with Sauk County leadership, the Steering Committee, and key stakeholders, will develop a comprehensive land use strategy and vision for the county's future. Through interactive visioning sessions, community workshops, and targeted outreach, we will explore planning ideas and concepts that address critical issues such as economic development, housing diversity, rural preservation, natural resource management, and multimodal transportation systems. The outcomes of this phase will establish guiding principles, goals, and strategies that reflect Sauk County's unique needs and aspirations, ensuring a well-balanced, sustainable, and resilient future.

TASK 2.1: Scenario Planning for Growth and Development

We will develop a set of **alternative growth scenarios** that explore how Sauk County could evolve over the next 10-20 years. These scenarios will be informed by population trends, economic projections, infrastructure capacity, and natural resource considerations. Specific attention will be given to balancing rural preservation with economic growth, supporting tourism and housing affordability, and strengthening transportation networks. Stakeholders and the Steering Committee will evaluate the trade-offs and benefits of each scenario, helping identify a preferred growth strategy that reflects Sauk County's long-term goals.

TASK 2.2: Steering Committee Thematic Working Session

To ensure depth in strategy development while maintaining efficiency, we will organize a half-day workshop featuring a series of targeted focus group sessions. This event will bring together stakeholders, subject-matter experts, municipal leaders, and residents to collaboratively develop actionable strategies around the following themes:

- » **Housing and Economic Development:** This group will focus on addressing housing affordability, availability, and diversity across the county while identifying opportunities for economic growth. Strategies will include attracting workforce housing, supporting small businesses, and leveraging regional economic influences, particularly along major corridors and in proximity to Madison.

- » **Agriculture and Rural Preservation:** Discussions will center on protecting farmlands, promoting sustainable agricultural practices, and identifying ways to support the agricultural economy. The group will explore farmland preservation tools, opportunities for agri-tourism, and strategies for balancing rural character with development pressures.
- » **Transportation and Connectivity:** This group will address the county's transportation needs, including road maintenance, multimodal options, and improving access to key destinations. Stakeholders will explore ways to enhance rural and regional connectivity, promote safer roads and trails, and address emerging trends such as electric vehicle infrastructure.
- » **Parks, Trails, and Natural Resource Stewardship:** Participants will focus on improving access to recreational spaces, enhancing trail systems, and protecting natural resources. Strategies will include identifying gaps in park access, addressing resiliency challenges like flooding, and fostering sustainable management of the county's natural assets.
- » **Community Health and Resiliency:** This group will explore strategies to enhance public health, equity, and community resilience. Discussions will address access to services, active lifestyle promotion through parks and trails, and preparedness for climate change and natural hazards.

While these initial themes provide a starting point to guide the conversations, additional themes and priorities will emerge during the working session. The planning team will actively capture and incorporate these new insights into the comprehensive plan, ensuring that all perspectives and emerging issues are fully represented.

Each focus group will be facilitated by the planning team, supported by a collective of experienced subject matter experts and subconsultants, and structured to foster meaningful dialogue grounded in practical, real-world considerations. Through activities such as mapping exercises, case study reviews, and guided discussions, participants will collaboratively identify realistic strategies that address both local needs and regional opportunities.

The findings and recommendations from these focus groups will be synthesized into Thematic Summaries, providing clear insights into the priorities, challenges, and opportunities unique to Sauk County. These summaries will serve as a critical foundation for the next phase of the planning process, ensuring that the comprehensive plan is both actionable and reflective of the county's diverse perspectives and needs.

TASK 2.3: Draft County-Wide Land Use Strategy

Building on the outcomes of workshops, focus groups, and scenario planning, we will develop a Draft Land Use Strategy that serves as a guiding framework for Sauk County's future growth and preservation. This strategy will integrate the core elements of the comprehensive plan—housing, economic development, transportation, land use, natural resources, and resiliency—into a cohesive and balanced vision.

The Land Use Strategy will include a Future Land Use Map that reflects both the unique character and evolving needs of Sauk County's diverse communities, from its rural agricultural areas and natural resource assets to its small towns, urban centers, and key opportunity sites. Each land use category will align with local and regional priorities, supporting sustainable development, economic vitality, and the preservation of critical natural and cultural resources.

TASK 2.4: Systems Thinking

With the foundational strategies identified through Steering Committee discussions, focus groups, and community engagement, we will now employ a systems-thinking approach to explore the interdependencies between Sauk County's planning themes. This deep dive will allow us to evaluate how strategies for one area—such as housing or economic development—can influence and support others, including transportation infrastructure, natural resource preservation, and rural resiliency.

The team will map relationships between priority strategies, identify areas of synergy, and uncover opportunities to align goals for greater impact.

Activities such as interconnectivity mapping, scenario discussions, and collaborative exercises will encourage participants to think holistically about Sauk County's challenges and opportunities, ensuring no topic is addressed in isolation.

The outcomes of this task will shape a more cohesive and actionable set of strategies that reflect the county's broader goals while maximizing benefits across sectors. This systems-thinking lens will help refine strategies into a unified, integrated framework that balances local priorities with county-wide needs, positioning Sauk County for long-term, sustainable success.

TASK 2.5: County-Wide Virtual Community Open House

As part of Phase 2, we will host a County-Wide Virtual Community Open House to share the progress made in shaping Sauk County's vision for the future and to gather valuable input before strategies are developed. This virtual event will provide residents with an accessible and inclusive opportunity to engage in the planning process, ensuring participation from communities across the county, regardless of location or mobility.

During the open house, we will provide a concise presentation summarizing the findings, themes, and preliminary directions that emerged from earlier assessments, community engagement efforts, focus groups, and scenario planning. Participants will have opportunities to engage with key topics—such as housing, economic development, transportation, agricultural preservation, and natural resources—through interactive tools like live polling, Q&A discussions, and virtual comment boards.



For those unable to attend the live event, the presentation and engagement materials will be posted to the project website, alongside an online feedback form to ensure broad participation. This virtual open house serves as a critical checkpoint in Phase 2, ensuring that residents have a meaningful opportunity to validate the preliminary work and provide input that will guide the development of strategies in the next phase.

TASK 2.6: Community Engagement Toolkit

Recognizing the geographic scale and diversity of Sauk County, we will develop a Community Engagement Toolkit to ensure every community, including those we may not visit during the second Community-Wide Engagement Tour, has an opportunity to provide meaningful input.

The toolkit will be shared with municipalities, townships, libraries, schools, and other community hubs, enabling them to engage residents locally and independently.

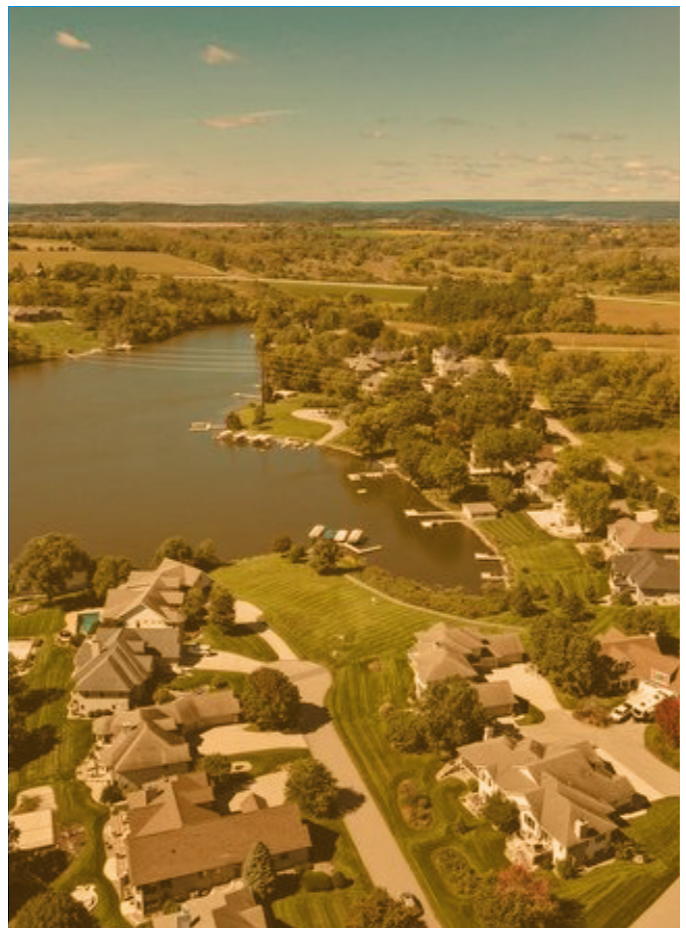
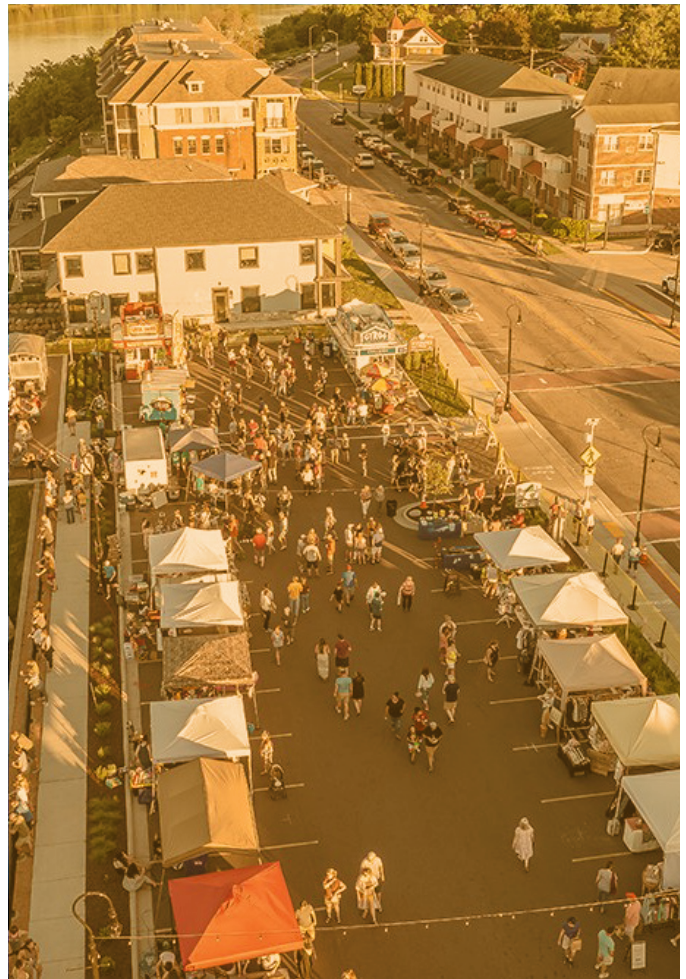
The toolkit will include:

- » **Informational Materials:** Clear and concise summaries of the comprehensive plan process, key themes, and emerging strategies.
- » **Interactive Input Tools:** Visioning worksheets, mapping exercises, and prioritization activities that allow community members to provide feedback on topics such as land use, housing, transportation, economic development, and natural resource preservation.
- » **Digital Access Options:** QR codes and links directing residents to online tools such as surveys, virtual input boards, and project information on the comprehensive plan website.
- » **Facilitation Guides:** Simple instructions for local community champions, municipal staff, or volunteers to guide residents through the toolkit and collect input effectively.

The toolkit will be distributed at the beginning of the engagement tour and remain available throughout Phase 2. Communities will be encouraged to share their completed toolkits with the planning team, ensuring that their perspectives are incorporated into the ongoing strategy and goal development process.

TASK 2.7: Community Vision, Goals, and Strategies | Final

Utilizing the feedback received, we will proceed to create definitive sub-chapters of goals and strategies for each topic and planning subject area. This framework document encapsulates the essence of Phase 2: Envision in the planning process. It will be made available on the comprehensive plan website as a downloadable version, facilitating community feedback.



PHASE 3

PLAN & IMPLEMENT

In Phase 3, the Lakota team will synthesize the strategies, goals, and community vision developed during Phase 2 into a comprehensive and actionable plan. This phase focuses on creating an implementation roadmap that ensures strategies are realistic, measurable, and achievable. We will collaborate closely with the Steering Committee, stakeholders, and community members to refine the plan, confirm priorities, and identify tools and resources for success. A phased implementation approach will establish short-, mid-, and long-term actions, ensuring the plan delivers results while remaining adaptable to Sauk County's evolving needs.

TASK 3.1: Aligning County Vision with Municipal Readiness

To kick off Phase 3, we will organize a series of local input meetings with municipal leaders from Sauk County's cities, towns, and villages. These meetings will provide a platform to share the county-wide Vision, Goals, and Strategies developed in Phase 2 and gather feedback on how these objectives can support local communities.

Key objectives of the meetings include:

- » **Presenting the County-Wide Vision:** Share the comprehensive plan's overarching goals and strategies, emphasizing how they were shaped by input from municipalities and county residents.
- » **Identifying Local Benefits:** Discuss how the county-wide strategies can be implemented to address local needs, from housing development to infrastructure improvements.
- » **Uncovering Gaps and Challenges:** Solicit input on potential barriers municipalities face in leveraging county-wide strategies, such as capacity limitations, funding constraints, or policy misalignments.
- » **Fostering Collaboration:** Explore opportunities for partnerships between the county and municipalities, highlighting resources, programs, or technical assistance that could enhance local readiness.

The outcome of these meetings will be a deeper understanding of how municipalities perceive the county-wide strategies, what adjustments or additional support may be needed, and how the Local Implementation Guide can address these gaps effectively.

TASK 3.2: Implementation Framework Development

Building on the strategies and priorities identified, we will develop a clear and actionable Implementation Framework that translates the comprehensive plan's goals into realistic, achievable steps. This framework will include:

- » **Actionable Recommendations:** A detailed set of strategies, policies, and programs, categorized by theme, that reflect Sauk County's priorities and vision.
- » **Phasing and Prioritization:** A prioritized list of actions organized into immediate-term (0-1), short-term (1-3 years), mid-term (4-7 years), and long-term (8-10 years) timeframes, balancing immediate needs with long-term aspirations.
- » **Responsible Parties:** Identification of the county departments, municipal partners, and external stakeholders best positioned to lead or support each action.
- » **Funding and Resource Strategies:** Potential funding sources, grant opportunities, and partnerships to advance key actions.
- » **Performance Metrics:** Tailored benchmarks and indicators to monitor progress and measure the plan's success over time.

The Implementation Framework will act as a roadmap for decision-making, guiding investments, programs, and policies while ensuring accountability and progress.

TASK 3.3: Department Head Working Session

Following the development of the draft Implementation Framework, we will host a working session with Sauk County department heads and key agency leaders

to ensure the framework is practical, achievable, and aligned with operational realities. Ahead of the session, we will share a summary of the framework along with key questions to gather initial thoughts on capacity, resource needs, and potential challenges. During the session, we will collaboratively review the draft recommendations, clarify departmental roles and responsibilities, discuss resource availability and funding gaps, and explore opportunities for inter-departmental coordination. Feedback gathered will help refine the framework to ensure it aligns with existing operations and policies while identifying areas that may require additional support. This working session will ensure that the Implementation Framework is actionable and positions Sauk County's departments for successful and coordinated execution of the comprehensive plan's goals.

TASK 3.4: Steering Committee Meeting

Following the Local Input Meetings and development of the draft Implementation Framework, we will convene a Steering Committee Meeting to review feedback from municipalities and discuss how county-wide strategies align with local priorities. This meeting will focus on presenting key findings, addressing identified gaps or challenges, and refining the Implementation Framework to ensure it is practical, actionable, and tailored to the realities of Sauk County's diverse communities. By validating priorities and gathering input, this session will strengthen collaboration between the county and its municipalities, setting the stage for developing a comprehensive, implementable plan.

TASK 3.5: Draft Comprehensive Plan

We will prepare a full Draft Comprehensive Plan document that weaves together the findings, vision, goals, and implementation strategies developed throughout the planning process. The Draft Plan will include:

- » **Executive Summary:** A concise and engaging overview of the plan's purpose, key findings, vision, and highlights of major recommendations.
- » **Core Chapters:** Thematic chapters addressing housing, economic development, agriculture and rural preservation, transportation, natural resource stewardship, community health and resiliency, land use, and more. Each chapter will include specific goals, strategies, and actions.
- » **Future Land Use:** A county-wide Future Land Use Map identifying key opportunity areas for growth, rural preservation zones, and areas for reinvestment and infrastructure improvements.
- » **Systems Thinking Integration:** Cross-cutting strategies that address interconnected priorities, ensuring a cohesive and holistic approach to planning.

- » **Implementation Framework:** A clear roadmap for advancing the plan's goals.

The Draft Comprehensive Plan will include high-quality graphics, maps, and visuals to enhance understanding and make the document accessible to a wide audience.

TASK 3.6: County-Wide Engagement Tour 2

The second County-Wide Engagement Tour will focus on presenting the refined goals, strategies, and actions developed during Phase 2, ensuring these elements reflect Sauk County's needs and priorities as identified through earlier engagement and analysis. This tour will consist of interactive open houses and pop-up events at 5-7 key locations, strategically chosen to ensure accessibility for residents across urban centers, small towns, and rural communities.

During these sessions, we will share the draft strategies and implementation framework, providing clear context on how they address key themes such as housing, economic development, transportation, agricultural preservation, natural resource stewardship, and community resiliency. Each event will feature a short presentation summarizing the planning process to date and highlighting major opportunities and priorities. Participants will engage with interactive topic stations designed to gather input on the proposed strategies, evaluate their feasibility, and identify local considerations for implementation.

Feedback collected during the tour will be used to refine the strategies and ensure the comprehensive plan is actionable, practical, and tailored to Sauk County's diverse communities. This effort ensures that residents and stakeholders remain key partners in shaping the final plan and its path toward implementation.

TASK 3.7: Steering Committee Review & Refinement

Following the County-Wide Virtual Community Open House, we will reconvene the Steering Committee to review feedback gathered from residents, municipal leaders, and stakeholders. This meeting will focus on identifying any remaining gaps, addressing concerns, and refining the Draft Comprehensive Plan to ensure it reflects the collective priorities and aspirations of Sauk County. The Steering Committee will provide input on final revisions to the plan's goals, strategies, and implementation framework, ensuring alignment with local and county-wide needs.

TASK 3.8: Final Plan Revisions

Based on feedback from the Steering Committee and community input, we will finalize the Comprehensive Plan to produce a polished, actionable document. The final plan will incorporate any adjustments needed to address stakeholder comments, refine strategies, and enhance clarity. All sections—including the Future Land Use Map, Implementation Framework, and Systems Thinking integration—will be updated to reflect the shared vision for Sauk County's future. Final graphics, visuals, and narrative components will ensure the plan is accessible, engaging, and ready for adoption.

TASK 3.9: Amplify Awareness

To build momentum and ensure the plan's goals are embraced county-wide, we will implement a targeted Plan Awareness Campaign. This campaign will include:

- » **Communications Toolkit:** Materials such as posters, fact sheets, infographics, and a downloadable summary document highlighting key components of the plan. These tools will be shared with municipalities, schools, libraries, and other local hubs to educate residents and stakeholders.
- » **Digital Promotion:** Online outreach through the project website, social media, and newsletters to raise awareness about the plan's final recommendations and next steps.
- » **Pilot Messaging:** Development of one or two "showcase strategies" or quick wins that demonstrate immediate action and inspire confidence in the plan's long-term vision.

TASK 3.10: Plan Approvals and Adoption

We will work with Sauk County staff and the Steering Committee to guide the Comprehensive Plan through the formal adoption process. This will include presenting the final plan to the County Board and relevant committees, conducting public hearings for final community input, and assisting with any needed revisions. Once adopted, the plan will serve as the county's guiding document for future investments, policies, and development decisions, providing a clear vision for a resilient and thriving future.





Engagement & Outreach

A successful engagement approach sparks meaningful dialogue, supports informed decision-making, and builds enthusiasm for the planning process. It should be dynamic, adaptable, and enjoyable—even when it embraces a degree of unpredictability. Community outreach goes beyond simply listening; it has the power to reshape conversations and inspire collective action.

We recognize that no single method works for every situation. Our approach will combine proven strategies with fresh ideas to create an inclusive, accessible, and tailored engagement program. By collaborating with diverse stakeholders, we aim to amplify all voices, ensuring representation across sectors and communities, including traditionally hard-to-reach groups.

Our strategy will reflect Sauk County's unique character while balancing tradition and innovation, blending in-person events with digital tools, and bridging formal and informal spaces. Inspired by our work with diverse communities, we will design an outreach process that cultivates widespread participation, fosters excitement, and creates a shared vision for Sauk County's future.



ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

Our approach prioritizes accessible, flexible, and meaningful outreach, ensuring we meet Sauk County residents where they are—whether online, at local events, or in their day-to-day lives. Through innovative tools, trusted local champions, and engaging formats, we will create a dynamic and inclusive process that captures diverse perspectives from every corner of the county.

- **Project Branding & Website:** A cohesive project brand will capture the spirit and identity of Sauk County while building excitement for the planning process. The project website will serve as the central hub for all updates, engagement opportunities, and materials. Features will include interactive tools, downloadable resources, surveys, and progress videos to keep residents informed and engaged throughout the process.
- **County-Wide Engagement Tours with Pit Stops:** Engagement tours will bring the planning process directly to residents, stopping at high-traffic events like fairs, farmers' markets, and festivals. Each "pit stop" will feature interactive activities—mapping exercises, issue boards, and quick visual surveys—allowing residents to weigh in on key priorities in a casual, welcoming setting.
- **Social Media Campaigns:** We will launch dynamic social media campaigns to reach a broad audience, including younger demographics and busy families. Tailored posts will share progress updates, spotlight county assets, and invite participation through polls, videos, and interactive challenges (e.g., "Map Your Sauk" or "Your Voice, Your County" prompts). This digital engagement will complement in-person outreach while encouraging ongoing dialogue.
- **Local Engagement Toolkits:** To extend the reach of engagement, we will provide toolkits to municipalities and community champions. These kits will include Ideas Walls, input forms, interactive maps, and facilitation guides for hosting mini-sessions in local libraries, Town Halls, schools, or other community spaces. This ensures consistent input, even in areas we may not visit during tours.
- **Community Pop-Ups & Open Houses:** Pop-ups at local events and open houses during key project milestones will offer residents hands-on opportunities to provide input. Stations will include visioning tools, live "voting" exercises, and maps highlighting growth, preservation, and infrastructure opportunities.
- **"Lakota on the Street" County Edition:** Inspired by spontaneous street interviews, we'll hit key spots—like Main Streets, festivals, and markets—with a camera and microphone, asking residents quick, thought-provoking questions about their hopes for Sauk County's future. These candid insights will bring energy and relatability to the planning process.
- **Walkshops & Rural Drives:** Whether walking through vibrant downtowns or driving rural corridors, these interactive tours with residents will help us explore key areas of interest, challenges, and opportunities in real-time.
- **Collaborative Working Sessions:** Structured workshops with county departments, local leaders, and stakeholders will foster collaboration and ensure county-wide strategies align with local priorities. These sessions will provide real-time opportunities to connect overarching goals to practical local needs.
- **Virtual Open Houses & Digital Tools:** Virtual workshops, live polls, and interactive surveys will provide accessible opportunities for residents to participate from home. Paired with ongoing project website updates, this ensures that feedback is gathered at every stage.
- **Community Storytelling & Video Content:** Through short videos, we will highlight local voices, sharing stories of Sauk County residents and their connection to the county's future. Whether it's a farmer, business owner, student, or senior, these stories will amplify personal perspectives and build excitement for what's to come.
- **Social Media Challenges:** Fun, light-hearted challenges—like "Hidden Gems in Sauk" photo submissions or "What's Missing in Your Community?" polls—will generate buzz while collecting valuable input.
- **Interactive Toolkits for Schools:** For a youth-focused perspective, we will create engagement kits designed for schools. Activities may include visioning exercises, map-building, or creative prompts for students to share their hopes for Sauk County's future.





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PROPOSED SITE VISIT AGENDA & DATA REQUEST

TO: John Wheeler, Executive Director, Sacramento Mountains Foundation
FROM: Matt Cole, Director of Preservation Planning, The Lakota Group
CC: Scott Freres, President, The Lakota Group
Josh Bloom, Director of Community Strategies, The Lakota Group
Jerry Hoffman, Principal, Hoffman Strategy Group
Dan Sheridan, Principal, Hoffman Strategy Group
DATE: November 11, 2024
RE: Alamogordo AVD Properties Assessment & Strategic Plan

PROPOSED SITE VISIT AGENDA:

Monday, November 18th - Lakota Team arrives in Alamogordo mid-to-late afternoon

- Dinner or drinks with John Wheeler and available Sacramento Mountain Foundation Board members, potential Steering Committee members, etc. (if people are available). Time/Location TBD.

Tuesday, November 19th

- Meet with John Wheeler and available Sacramento Mountain Foundation Board members, potential Steering Committee members, etc. to discuss:
 - Fundamental project goals
 - Timeline
 - Date/resource request
 - Stakeholders
 - Tailored engagement strategy
 - Plans for next site visit
- Lakota Team tour of Alamogordo with John Wheeler

Wednesday, November 20th - Lakota Team departs Alamogordo late morning

- Lakota Team conducts additional reconnaissance and photo-documentation of Alamogordo.

Planning | Urban Design | Landscape Architecture | Historic Preservation | Community Engagement

CHICAGO • MADISON • PHILADELPHIA • SARASOTA

DRAFT Fox Lake Comprehensive Plan - Project Timeline



Date: 6/26/2024

		MILESTONE	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
PHASE 1: Engage + Assess	TASK 1.1: Staff Kick-off Meeting	Meeting	17						
	TASK 1.2: Community Engagement Plan	Memo							
	TASK 1.3: Steering Committee Meeting		17						
	TASK 1.4: Fox Lake Conversations	Event		30					
	TASK 1.5: Project Brand and Website								
	TASK 1.6: Information Gathering								
	TASK 1.7: Field Work and Land Use Inventory								
	TASK 1.8: Mapping and GIS Analysis								
	TASK 1.9: Stakeholder Interviews and Listening Sessions	Event							
	TASK 1.10: Community Open House and Speak-Out	Event			16				
	TASK 1.11: State of the Village Report	Memo							
	TASK 1.12: Steering Committee Meeting	Meeting							

		MILESTONE	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
PHASE 2: Envision	TASK 2.1: Policy Objectives and Alternative Scenarios	Memo							
	TASK 2.2: Steering Committee Meeting	Meeting							
	TASK 2.3: Draft Land Use Strategy and Sub-Area Plans								
	TASK 2.4: Economic Development Strategies								
	TASK 2.5: Steering Committee Meeting	Meeting							
	TASK 2.6: Community Open House and Pop-Ups	Event							
	TASK 2.7: Systems Thinking								
	TASK 2.8: Shared Vision, Goals, and Recommendations	Memo							
	TASK 2.9: Key Recommendations	Meeting							

PROPOSED BUDGET

Sauk County Comprehensive Plan					The Lakota Group				SB Friedman			Kapur Engineering			TADI	
Wednesday, December 18, 2024																
					Staff Hours				Staff Hours			Staff Hours			Staff Hours	
Work Scope/Phases/Tasks/Hours/Fees					A	B	C	D	A	B		A	B		A	B
Engage & Assess																
TASK 1.1: Project Kick Off, Steering Committee Meeting (Mtg 1), & Tour	6	6	6	6					12	12		4			1	
TASK 1.2: Community Engagement Program	2	8	8													
TASK 1.3: Ideas Wall & Input Station Toolkit for Municipalities		16	24	24											1	
TASK 1.4: Project Brand & Website		6	6	12												
TASK 1.5: Review of Existing Plans		16	6					2	4			4	4	4	8	8
TASK 1.6: Mapping & GIS Analysis		8	8	8								2	4	4		
TASK 1.7: Field Work & Land Use Inventory	2	8	8													
TASK 1.8 Stakeholder Interviews & Listening Sessions	2	24	24	24				4	4			4				
TASK 1.9: County-Wide Engagement Tour 1		16	16	28								4				
TASK 1.10: Department Heads Virtual Working Session	2	2	2	6								4			2	2
TASK 1.11: Phase 1 Engagement Summary		2	6									4	2	2		
TASK 1.12: Steering Committee Meeting (Mtg 2)	2	2	2	2								2			2	
TASK 1.13: State of the County Report	4	16	16	24				4	17	55		4			2	
TASK 1.14: Steering Committee Meeting (Mtg 3)	4	8	12						4	4		2			2	
Subtotal Phase 1 Hours	24	138	144	134	4	39	79	34	10	10	18	10				
Subtotal Phase 1 Fees	\$8,640	\$33,120	\$30,240	\$20,770	\$1,500	\$14,625	\$16,669	\$7,446	\$1,950	\$1,690	\$3,780	\$1,880				
Total Phase 1 Fee: \$142,310					\$92,770				\$32,794			\$11,086			\$5,660	

Envision																
TASK 2.1: Scenario Planning for Growth and Development	4	12	8					12	12		4	2	2		16	
TASK 2.2: Steering Committee Thematic Working Session	4	4	2								2				2	
TASK 2.3: Draft County-Wide Land Use Strategy		12	8					4	2		8	6	6		1	
TASK 2.4: Systems Thinking	2	2	2								2				1	
TASK 2.5: County-Wide Virtual Open House	2	6	6	8							2					
TASK 2.6: Community Engagement Toolkit		2	4								2					
TASK 2.7: Community Vision, Goals, and Strategies Final	2	4	2					2	6	12	4	4	4			2
Subtotal Phase 2 Hours	14	42	32	8	2	22	26	24	12	12	20	2				
Subtotal Phase 2 Fees	\$5,040	\$10,080	\$6,720	\$1,240	\$750	\$8,250	\$5,486	\$5,256	\$2,340	\$2,028	\$4,200	\$376				
Total Phase 2 Fee: \$51,766					\$23,080				\$14,486			\$9,624			\$4,576	

Plan & Implement																
TASK 3.1: Aligning County Vision with Municipal Readiness	2	2	2	6						2						
TASK 3.2: Implementation Framework Development	4	4	8	8				4	4		4	4	4			
TASK 3.3: Department Head Working Session	2	2	2	2							4					
TASK 3.4: Steering Committee Meeting #4		2	6					10			4				1	
TASK 3.5: Draft Comprehensive Plan	2	2									12	8	8			
TASK 3.6: County-Wide Engagment Tour 2	2	16	16	24							4				2	
TASK 3.7: Steering Committee Review & Refinement	2	2	2	2							4					
Task 3.8: Final Plan Revisions		8	8	16							8	4	4			4
Task 3.8: Amplify Awareness		8		8							4					
TASK 3.7: Final Approvals & Adoption	2	4	4								4	4	4		2	
Subtotal Phase 3 Hours	16	50	48	66	0	14	4	50	20	20	5	4				
Subtotal Phase 3 Fees	\$5,760	\$12,000	\$10,080	\$10,230	\$0	\$5,250	\$844	\$10,950	\$3,380	\$3,380	\$1,050	\$752				
Total Phase 3 Fee: \$63,676					\$38,070				\$6,094			\$17,710			\$1,802	

Fee By Firm					\$153,920				\$53,374			\$38,420			\$12,038	
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Project Fee Total =	\$257,752	A. Principal	\$360	A. Partner	\$375	A. Transit / Infra. Lead	\$219	A. Sr. PM	\$210
6% Expense Estimate =	\$15,465	B. Senior Vice President	\$240	B. Senior Vice President	\$375	B. Associate	\$195	B. Director	\$188
Total Project Budget =	\$273,217	C. Senior Associate	\$210	C. Project Manager	\$211		\$169		
		D. Associate	\$155						

Total Project Budget = \$273,217

We are receptive to discussing the project budget, and should the need arise to make adjustments, we are open to exploring potential modifications within the scope to ensure a balanced approach.

THE LAKOTA GROUP.

