

**City of Verona  
2008 Comprehensive Planning Process**

**Comment Card**

Any person, organization, agency or other group that would like to provide suggestions, ideas, feedback on drafts, or other input for use in creating the City of Verona Comprehensive Plan must use this form. *Completed* forms should be returned to a) the Department of Planning and Development at Verona City Hall, 111 Lincoln Street, b) the front desk of the Verona Library, or c) to [Bruce.sylvester@ci.verona.wi.us](mailto:Bruce.sylvester@ci.verona.wi.us). Completed forms will be provided to the Comprehensive Plan Committee for review and consideration. Questions can be directed to Bruce Sylvester at 848-9941 or [Bruce.sylvester@ci.verona.wi.us](mailto:Bruce.sylvester@ci.verona.wi.us)

1. Your Name:

**Arthur Dent**

2. Your Home Address:

**203 S. Shuman, Verona**

3. Agency, organization or group for whom you are submitting comments—if any:

**none**

4. Chapter Number and Name you wish to comment on—if any:     *(For example: Chapter 3—Transportation)*

*(Note: Please use one comment card for each chapter. For example—fill out one comment card for Chapter 3—Transportation and a *separate* comment card for Chapter 8—Land Use.)*

**Chapter 2 - Housing**

5. Comments, suggestions, feedback on a draft chapter, or other input:

*(Note: If you are commenting on a specific draft chapter—please reference the date of the draft chapter and please be as specific as possible by providing page numbers, table numbers, or other specific references from the draft chapter to help us incorporate your suggestions/ideas.)*

Page 17, CR Zoning

CR zoning should continue to be used so that smaller homes on smaller lots are an option for home buyers. Other municipalities have zoning districts that are similar to Verona's CR district, so there is nothing unusual about the zoning requirements. Verona's smaller quantity of older existing homes (that are often smaller than new homes) makes CR zoning all the more important.

CR zoning was misunderstood by Verona's house builders when it was created. Their complaints seemed to stem from their inability to fit their standard house designs on the smaller lots and their unwillingness to use different house designs that would fit. This is not an inherent problem with CR zoning.

I suggest changing references from "affordable" housing to "less expensive" or "lower cost" housing because this is more accurate.

I also think it is important to determine if CR zoning has actually resulted in lower priced homes and to include this information in Chapter 2. Perhaps looking at sale prices or assessed value is a way to approach this.

### Page 27, types of housing

All of Verona's current residential zoning districts require quite low densities in my opinion. Verona will continue to be a low density suburban-style community and the residential densities allowed by right should be kept low to reflect it. Higher density projects should continue to be allowed only through the Conditional Use process.

I think an objective should be to keep the average gross residential zoning at a fairly uniform number throughout the city. In neighborhoods that have higher density housing developments, there should also be compatible non-residential land uses so that the average is kept uniform.

The northeast quadrant of Verona is an excellent example of good growth. There is a mix of housing types, a good mix of neighborhood-oriented commercial (shops, restaurants, office uses, day care, etc.) and gridded streets with sidewalks. The parks, ponds, library, and soccer fields are wonderful public spaces. I hope that future growth in Verona follows this pattern.

As an aside, I think the design standards for higher density projects should be raised. Citizens (including elected officials) seem to dislike some of the recent higher density housing because the developers have crammed huge boxy buildings on their lots while meeting only minimal standards for function and appearance.

### Page 28, in-fill developments

The reasons cited for "encouraging" the placement of higher density housing in the downtown area do not exist in Verona in my opinion. Downtown does not have a large concentration of jobs, shopping opportunities are limited, mass transit options (the bus) are minuscule and the downtown is not pedestrian friendly.

The author David Sucher writes that "... density is simply a by-product of people trying to be at the same interesting spot. One doesn't start with density. Certainly one doesn't start the *political process* with density. One ends with density because a place is diverse and intriguing and people want to be there."

The policy questions should be: will Verona allow in-fill development when proposed by a developer and what standards will be applied to proposed projects? If done correctly, new residential construction within an existing neighborhood can be a good thing because it may strengthen the residential character. If done wrongly, it degrades the quality of life for the residents. Recent in-fill projects have not improved their neighborhoods in my opinion over what they replaced.

### Page 33, residential phasing plan

The impetus for the residential phasing plan was the turmoil within the Verona Area School District after some failed referendums. The members of the School Board and administrators thought that if voters would not approve funding for new schools then residential growth should be limited. The school district provided the guidelines for the Plan Commission to adopt. Now that the school district has a new cast of players and their situation seems to have changed, it is imperative that the Comprehensive Plan committee consult with the current School Board and the administrators about the residential phasing plan. The VASD should be added to the stakeholders list if not already on it.

I think the residential phasing plan is particularly appropriate for Verona to have as one of its guidelines because of the fast growth rate, and it should be kept.

### Page 43, housing programs

This section needs a lot more work for the final report. Merely listing the available programs is not sufficient. There should be an analysis of who could be helped by each program. There should be policies outlined about how these programs will be used by Verona residents to achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Other general comments

- Chapter 2 says very little about how the stock of existing housing fits into the overall plan. I think the relatively small quantity of older houses affects housing costs in Verona by raising the selling price and limiting the availability of “starter homes”. There should be a high priority placed on preserving the quantity and quality of existing housing stock for that reason, and this should include the preservation of residential *neighborhoods* as well as individual houses.
- Housing policies should be integrally tied to transportation policies. It is the regional and (to a lesser extent) local transportation systems that affect housing more than anything else. Highways M and 18/151 have a huge impact on Verona. City residents will continue to travel outside the city for employment, shopping, etc. almost exclusively by car. Therefore the location, type, density, and all other decisions about housing should be based on the location of transportation arteries.
- Since the Madison Metro bus system is the only large scale mass transit system in the Madison area that can serve Verona, I think that city officials should work closely with Madison Metro to make Verona a part of their system. Work with Madison Metro bus system to establish land use criteria, street locations, criteria for bus stops, and so forth.
- If the Comprehensive Plan is to apply to a post-consolidation city, then it should address existing and future housing in the current township.

*Please use the reverse side of this page for any additional comments.  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT!!*

Optional: Please provide your phone and e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_