

30 Years



1000 FRIENDS
OF WISCONSIN

HISTORICAL TIMELINE

OCTOBER 8, 2026



The Very Beginning

- In 1995, then-Gov Tommy Thompson appointed a “Strategic Growth Task Force” to deal with growing concerns about sprawl.
- The task force concluded its work one year later by issuing their Land Use Report. However, they agreed to continue working together on statewide reform and 1000 Friends of Wisconsin was born.
- The first fundraising letter was sent in November 1996 with a simple ask: 1,000 people to donate \$100 each to get the ball rolling.



30 Years



1000 FRIENDS
OF WISCONSIN



Gaylord Nelson

Honorary Chair

1000 Friends of Wisconsin

First Fundraising Letter, 1996:

"We have an historic opportunity to impact land use policy in Wisconsin and to reverse the trend toward more sprawl. 1000 Friends of Wisconsin is determined not to let this opportunity slip by. Through research, legislative advocacy and public education, 1000 Friends is turning the tide in the fight against sprawl."

Celebrating 30 Years

THE FIRST DECADE OF 1000 FRIENDS OF WISCONSIN

30 Years



1000 FRIENDS
OF WISCONSIN

1996

FIRST
FUNDRAISING
LETTER GOES
OUT

1000 Friends of
Wisconsin and The
Land Use Institute
are incorporated.

Nolen I Conference

1997

MADISON
OFFICE OPENS

First staff hired

First Board of
Directors
established

FIRST ANNUAL
BOARD OF
DIRECTORS
MEETING

Land Use Planning
initiative is introduced
as part of the state's
budget

BEGIN
LOBBYING

Dave Cieslewicz
hired as the first
Executive Director

First renewal letter
goes out

REACH 1000
MEMBERS

Andrea Dearlove
hired as first
Executive Director,
Land Use Institute

1998

FIRST WEBSITE
+ EMAIL ALERT
NETWORK

WISconservation
Legislative Agenda I

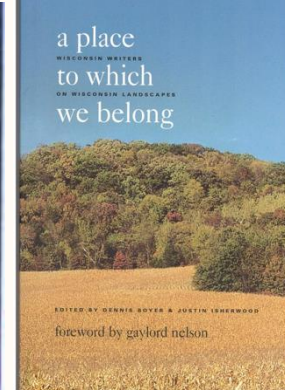
Rural Counsel Project

The City Ethic Report

1999

LEGISLATION
PASSES

Smart Growth
Comprehensive Planning
Law is passed, one of the
first and most successful
in the country



Celebrating 30 Years

THE FIRST DECADE OF 1000 FRIENDS OF WISCONSIN

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1000 FRIENDS
OF WISCONSIN

10TH ANNIVERSARY!

2000

LISA
MACKINNON
HIRED AS
POLICY
DIRECTOR

Citizens' Guide II

Forest Fragmentation
Pilot Project

Wingspread
Conference

2001

EMBRACING
SMART
GROWTH
CONFERENCE

5 Year Anniversary:
New Logo
Introduced

Nolen II Conference

2002

PABST FARMS
PROJECT

Deb Nemeth
becomes
Development
Director

2003

DAVE
CIESLEWICZ
ELECTED
MAYOR OF
MADISON

Comp. Planning Law
Defense Round #1

SMART
GROWTH
REPEAL
EFFORT FAILS

Steve Hiniker hired
as Executive
Director

Kevin Pomeroy
begins as Planning
Director

2004

MAJOR HIGHWAY
REFORM BILL
PASSED

Board Member Bud
Jordahl named to
Wisconsin
Conservation Hall of
Fame

2005-2006

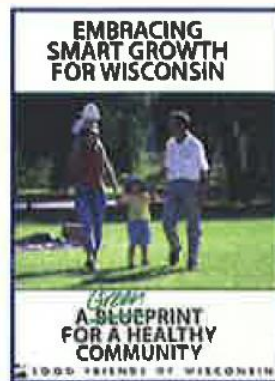
GOV. DOYLE
VETOES COMP.
PLANNING LAW
REPEAL

3,000 members

Nolen III Conference

Eco-Tour in Sweden

Land Institute merged



Celebrating 30 Years

THE SECOND DECADE OF 1000 FRIENDS OF WISCONSIN

30 Years



1000 FRIENDS
OF WISCONSIN

2010

BOARD
FOUNDER
EMILY EARLEY

Inducted into
Wisconsin
Conservation Hall of
Fame



2012

GREEN TIER
LEGACY
COMMUNITIES

1KF develops
this new initiative
with the DNR and
other partners

Charter member



WIS. ACTIVE
COMMUNITIES
ALLIANCE
(WACA)

New Group Forms

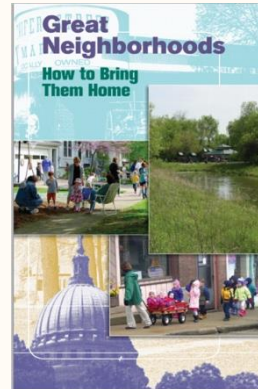


2014

OPPOSE I-94
WIDENING



WisDOT proposes
to widen I-94 in
Milwaukee County
between 16th &
70th Streets



2015

GREAT
NEIGHBORHOODS
PROGRAM
BEGINS

Emphasis on
transportation choice,
public health, and
strengthening the local
economy



2016

NEW LOGO



First version of the
current logo is
adopted



20TH
ANNIVERSARY!

NEW
LEADERSHIP

Steve Hiniker retires
Deb Nemeth
becomes new
Executive Director



Celebrating 30 Years

THE THIRD DECADE OF 1000 FRIENDS OF WISCONSIN

30 Years



1000 FRIENDS
OF WISCONSIN

2017

WISCONSIN
ACTIVE
TOGETHER
(WAT)

Network forms after
state repeal of
Complete Streets
Law

I-94 MKE



Governor Walker
rescinds the I-94
project in Milwaukee
between 16th &
70th Streets

2020

ACTIVE
WISCONSIN



WACA & WAT merge
under 1000 Friends
of Wisconsin

2022

BOARD
FOUNDER ARLEN
CHRISTENSON

Inducted into
Wisconsin
Conservation Hall
of Fame

HOUSING
ELEMENT/
TOGETHER FOR
HOMES

More housing
supply, choice, and
affordability for
Milwaukee

I-94 MKE

Governor Evers
revives the I-94
project in Milwaukee
between 16th & 70th
Streets

RETHINK 794

Gregg May kicks off
initiative to make it
a boulevard &
reconnect the grid



Celebrating 30 Years

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1000 FRIENDS
OF WISCONSIN

2023

COMMUNITY
TRANSPORTATION
ACADEMY

Teach transportation
advocates issues and
empower them to
organize and impact
their communities

2024

CHANGING OF
THE GUARD

Deb Nemeth
announces her
pending retirement

2025

MADISON FOR
MORE
NEIGHBORS

More housing supply,
choice, and
affordability for
Madison

NEW
LEADERSHIP

Trevor Roark named
new Executive
Director

NEW TEAM

Rory Swanson
Raphie Torralba
Jen Walker

2026

GROWING TEAM -
HOUSING ONWARD
WISCONSIN

Tehila Cohen
Ali Hoffman
Ken Smith

30TH
ANNIVERSARY!

BETTER
STREETS
MADISON

Reconstruct a
Stoughton Road for
people!

