



WISCONSIN TOWNS ASSOCIATION  
**Urban Towns Committee**



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# Urban Towns Face Many Challenges



# TOGETHER We Can Overcome Them

The Urban Towns Committee (UTC) was created in 1988 in response to growing challenges facing Wisconsin's urban and urbanizing towns\*. It has grown to over 100 members who meet to learn, discuss mutual concerns, and plan various and multiple strategies to better serve town citizens and preserve local control in a changing environment. The UTC helps all towns by expanding our lobbying capabilities in Madison. This is increasingly critical to towns as other organizations continue to invest in lobbying in the more and more political environment. Our lobbyists work hand-in-hand with Mike Koles and the WTA Board to promote legislation that empowers all towns to continue to deliver efficient, responsive public services. Furthermore, the UTC works to educate and energize our grassroots to build awareness of the transportation, boundary, land use and other issues being discussed in Madison. And, just as important, UTC members benefit from networking with other local officials who share similar experiences, concerns and goals. Through education and networking the UTC mobilizes the grassroots and combines that with lobbying to make meaningful change in Madison.

*\*Urban and urbanizing towns are not based on population / location and are fully described on the back side.*

### **What is an “urban town”?**

It's not about population or location! Urban towns and villages are both small and large in population and are present in all corners of Wisconsin. Do you face urbanizing development challenges? Are you having budget problems because of increased demand for services due to growth? Or, perhaps the increased demand is from only a few new residents that just “moved to the country” and want more services? Do you find the need to engage in sound capital improvement planning? Are the policies and actions of other governments, such as, annexation, sewer extensions, zoning, and extra-territorial powers, negatively impacting you? Do you feel strongly about some administrative rules, laws, or policies that need to change in Madison? *If you answered yes to just one of these questions, then Urban Towns membership is for you.*

### **Why should we join?**

The Urban Towns Committee addresses the concerns noted above and many more through education, networking, and lobbying. Again, if you answered yes to just one of the questions, you will be greatly served by your membership!!!

**For a Strong Voice in Madison:** *This is absolutely critical!* The importance of investment in Urban Towns membership cannot be understated. Many legislators represent city districts and have little contact with town governments, giving them few opportunities to hear our perspective on important policy issues impacting your town. The UTC was formed to help fill this gap. Without your membership in UTC, our lobbying power in Madison would be profoundly and negatively impacted. Your investment empowers us to speak together with a strong voice.

**For Opportunities to Learn and Network:** The UTC provides membership meetings that feature an educational program, legislative update, and networking “cracker barrel” that empowers you to brainstorm with other leaders that are encountering similar issues. The UTC also co-sponsors the WTA website ([www.wisctowns.com](http://www.wisctowns.com)).

**To Help Set Our Priorities:** As an integral part of the WTA, the UTC helps bring urban, urbanizing, and rural town issues together. This promotes the interests of all towns, while also accommodating the special challenges facing some towns. The UTC offers a forum to voice urban town issues and each year helps shape WTA's Legislative Agenda.

**To Help Tell Our Story:** Towns – large and small – are the heart of Wisconsin. We are economic engines. The raw products that drive manufacturing, construction, agriculture, and tourism come from towns, and much of final product is produced and consumed in towns. We maintain 55% of the road system and deliver essential local government services to 30% of Wisconsinites and 95% of the state. And, our per capita costs are much lower than cities. Towns are the heart of our democracy, and if we don't invest in our democracy and local decision making, slowly, but surely someone will take these away. *If you agree that we must continue to educate policymakers and the public about our importance, then it's time for you to join the UTC.*

### **Are you able to invest only pennies a day?**

Annual dues are \$0.25 per resident with a dues maximum of \$2,500 (they are not part of the basic WTA dues). For a town with 1,000 people, that is only \$0.68 per day and for a town with 10,000 people that's only a penny every two weeks per person. *Can you invest in education, networking, and a voice in Madison so that we can preserve local decision making?* If you can, please call the WTA office at 715-526-3157 for a membership form.