

CHAPTER 7: Intergovernmental Cooperation

The Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter identifies opportunities for establishing or maintaining cooperation between units of government. Cooperation improves lines of communication between different units of government, aids in the recognition and possible resolution of conflicts between jurisdictions, and allows for the identification of mutual service needs and improvements.

The intent of this chapter is to identify, inventory, and analyze existing and potential cooperative relationships for the Town of Carson.

Section 7.1 Inventory and Analysis Intergovernmental Relationships

Inventory and examination of existing municipal relations allows for the understanding of how municipalities currently work together and how these relationships can be enhanced. As the Town of Carson develops over the next 20 years it is important for them to continue to work with surrounding municipalities, school districts, and other governmental units.

A. Adjacent Units of Government

The Town of Carson shares borders with the Portage County Towns of: Eau Claire to the north, Linwood to the south, and Hull on the east side of the Wisconsin River. The Wood County Towns of Sherry to the west and Rudolph to the south also share boundaries with Carson. The Village of Junction City is located within the northcentral portion of the Town.

1. Village of Junction City

The Town of Carson has informal agreements with the Village to maintain gravel roads along shared boundaries.

2. Adjacent Communities

The Town of Carson has agreements with surrounding communities for aid in snow removal and road maintenance on local roads that are located along Town boundaries.

Other agreements include First Responder services shared with the Town of Rudolph in Wood County. First Responders are local residents who volunteer to be the first to respond to accidents and medical emergencies within the area. First Responders are dispatched by the Portage County 911 system, respond in their personal vehicles and attempt to stabilize patients before EMTs and/or Ambulances arrive. Supplies and equipment used by local First Responders are kept in their vehicles or at their residences. The First Responder program is supported financially by the municipalities involved in the Rudolph Fire District.

The Town also has Mutual Aid Agreements with surrounding communities.

3. Extra Territorial Jurisdiction

Recognizing that land uses in town territory may affect neighboring cities and villages that may need to grow beyond their borders, state laws have long provided these municipalities with certain “extraterritorial” authority over adjacent town lands and have provided methods for them to expand their borders through annexation. This city and village extraterritorial

authority may, subject to the applicable laws, apply to planning, land division approvals, zoning and coverage of the city or village official map. The extra territorial jurisdiction for a city with a population of 10,000 or more is three miles from its corporate boundary, while the extra territorial jurisdiction for a city whose population is under 10,000 and for villages is one and one half miles from their corporate boundaries.

The City of Stevens Point's extraterritorial boundary extends into the eastern portion of Carson, while the extra territorial boundaries of the Villages of Junction City, Milladore, and Rudolph extend into other portions of the Town (Future Land Use Map 8.2).

B. School Districts

The Town of Carson is served by three School Districts; Stevens Point Area School District, Wisconsin Rapids School District, and Auburndale School District. The primary form of interaction with these entities is through the payment of property taxes which, in part, help to fund the districts. The Town has little participation with any of the districts regarding issues pertaining to administration or siting of new facilities.

C. Portage County

1. Portage County Highway Department

The Highway Department of Portage County maintains and plows State and County Roads in the Town. This Department also administers the dispersal of funds for local road projects as part of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Local Roads Improvement Program.

2. Portage County Police and Ambulance

The Town of Carson relies on the Portage County Sheriffs Department to provide protective services through periodic patrols and an "on-call" basis. The Stevens Point Fire Department operates the Ambulance Service for Portage County. See Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter for detailed information.

3. Portage County Planning and Zoning Department

There are currently seven different sections operating under the Planning and Zoning Department; they include Planning Zoning and Code Administration, Land Conservation, On-Site Waste, Groundwater Management, Justice, and Economic and Business Park Development.

The Planning and Groundwater Management Section includes staff and resources to assist local communities in the preparation or amending of various plan documents including a comprehensive plan. Staff can also assist in water quality testing associated with siting new developments.

The Code Administration Section staff is responsible for administering the County's Zoning, Wellhead Protection, Tower, Subdivision, Floodplain Zoning, Shoreland Zoning, Non-metallic Mining Reclamation, and Private Sewage System Ordinances. The Town of Pine Grove currently does not participate in the Portage County Zoning program.

The Land Conservation Section staff works with individuals to design and implement conservation practices. Assistance may be given to Towns upon request.

5. Portage County Parks Department

The Portage County Parks boat landings are open all year; however, they are only maintained by the Department from May 1st to October 31st. The Town does not have any municipal parks, but there is one County owned boat landing near the intersection of USH 10 and Lake View Dr. on the Wisconsin River. The Town interacts with the Parks Department on an as needed basis.

D. State of Wisconsin

The two primary State agencies that the Town of Carson interacts with are the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT). The DNR is responsible for natural resource protection, compliance monitoring, and law enforcement. The DOT is responsible for the planning and development of road networks and associated infrastructure and is the lead agency for the Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP). Town road improvement projects must be submitted as part of a two year improvement plan.

Section 7.2 Identification of Existing or Potential Issues and Conflicts with Other Governmental Units and Method of Conflict Resolution

The Town Plan Commission did not identify any specific conflicts with other governmental units; however, it did identify some issues that they felt needed further attention:

- School districts:
 1. Only meet once a year to collect taxes.
- Adjacent Local Governments:
 1. Road agreements regarding plowing and road maintenance are good.
 2. Service from Rudolph Fire and First Responders is good, however increased response time is desired.
 3. How will the boat landing on Hwy 10 be managed when new highway gets completed?
- State:
 1. The State is Carson's largest land owner. Payments don't cover cost of services.

Since no specific conflicts were identified at this time, the primary means of resolving future conflicts will be through improved communication from meeting more frequently with other units of government.

Section 7.3 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals/Objectives/Policies

Goal A Share services with surrounding communities when economically beneficial.

Objective A.1 Maintain or improve present level of communication with surrounding units of government.

Policy A.1 Periodically meet with surrounding communities to review intergovernmental agreements and discuss land use issues.