

CHAPTER 7 Intergovernmental Cooperation Element

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.

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 Almond 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 Almond shares borders with the Portage County Towns of Belmont, Buena Vista, Pine Grove, and the Waushara County Town of Oasis and Rose. The Village of Almond is located within the southern portion of the Town.

1. Village of Almond

The Town of Almond has agreements with the Village for provision of fire, rescue, and first responder services. The fire station is located on Main Street in the Village. The Town also shares solid waste and recycling services with the Village. More detailed information about these shared services can be found in the Utilities and Community Facilities element.

In addition, the Town has an agreement to use the Village Municipal Center for various meetings, as the Town has no municipal building of its own.

2. Adjacent Communities

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

Other agreements include First Responder services shared with the Towns of Buena Vista and Belmont. 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 at the Almond Fire Station. The First Responder program is supported financially by the municipalities involved in the Almond Fire District.

In addition, the Town has Mutual Aid Agreements with all surrounding Portage County communities, and Plainfield and Wild Rose Fire Departments located in Waushara County.

B. School Districts

The Town of Almond is served by two school districts; Almond-Bancroft School District and Tri-County Area 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 either district in issues pertaining to administration or siting of new facilities.

The Tri-County school district contracts with two local providers to offer bus service to students living outside the Village of Plainfield limits, while the Almond-Bancroft District offers bus service to students through one private contractor.

C. County

1. Portage County Solid Waste

The Town, along with the Village of Almond, contracts with Deluxe Disposal for handling solid waste and recycling materials. Waste is taken to the Portage County Landfill, while recyclables are taken to the County's Material Recovery Facility (MRF).

2. Portage County Highway Department

The highway department of Portage County maintains and plows County Highways 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.

3. Portage County Police and Ambulance

The Town 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.

4. Portage County Planning and Zoning Department

There are currently three different sections operating under the Planning and Zoning Department; the Planning and Groundwater Management Section, the Code Administration Section, and the Land Conservation section.

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 Almond participates in the Portage County Zoning program.

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

5. Portage County Parks Department

The Portage County Parks, including Wolf Lake, are open all year; however, they are only maintained by the Department from May 1st to October 31st. The Town interacts with the Parks Department on an as needed basis as issues arise.

D. State of Wisconsin

The two primary State agencies that the Town of Almond interacts with are the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). The DNR is responsible for natural resource protection, compliance monitoring, and

law enforcement. WisDOT 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

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. Commissioners stated that:

- They would like to see the current level of sheriff patrols maintained or increased.
- County Zoning enforcement could be improved, especially in the area of cleaning up of junked vehicles.
- The Town would like to work with Pine Grove and the County to investigate the siting of a licensed day care facility near Bancroft.
- The County Highway Department should install better rumble strips at the intersection of County Roads D and BB to improve traffic safety.
- They would like to see the ambulance response time improved.

Section 7.3 Issues/Conclusions Regarding Intergovernmental Relations

The Town would like to continue its intergovernmental agreements with surrounding communities and meet with them on a periodic basis to review how relationships and services can be improved.

Section 7.4 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Share services with other units of government whenever possible.

Objectives:

- 1.1 Continue shared agreements with adjacent units of government.
- 1.2 Local units of government work together to maintain appropriate public access to natural resources.
- 1.3 Communicate with surrounding municipalities for discussion of Land Use and other related issues.

Policies:

- 1.3 (a) Continue to meet with other government units as needed.
- 1.3 (b) Continue participation with the Portage County Towns Association.
- 1.3 (c) Explore additional opportunities for intergovernmental agreements.