

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 for the Town of Eau Pleine.

Section 7.1 Analysis and Inventory of Intergovernmental Agreements

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 Eau Pleine 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 Eau Pleine shares borders with the Portage County Towns of Carson to the south and Dewey to the east. The Town of Eau Pleine also shares part of its southern edge with the Village of Junction City. The Marathon County Towns of Knowlton and Bergen are to the north, while the Wood County Town and Village of Milladore are to the west.

1. Adjacent Communities

The Town of Eau Pleine 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 Village of Rudolph. 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 Rudolph Fire Station, adjacent to the Town Hall. The First Responder program is supported financially by the municipalities involved in the Rudolph Fire District.

The Town also has Mutual Aid Agreements with the surrounding communities.

B. School Districts

The Town of Eau Pleine is served by the Stevens Point and Auburndale school districts. 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.

C. County

1. Portage County Highway Department

The Highway Department of Portage County is responsible for maintenance and plowing of State and County roads in the Town. The 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 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, including DuBay Park, are open all year; however, they are 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 Eau Pleine 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. With the significant amount of DNR owned wetlands (Mead Wildlife area) in the Town, there is significant monitoring. 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:

- How can the presence of the sheriff's department be increased?
- How can the condition and maintenance of County roads be improved?
- Why does the Town get billed a 4.5% billing fee from the County Highway Dept?

Section 7.3 Issues/Conclusions Regarding Intergovernmental Relations and Methods of Conflict Resolution

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. General methods of conflict resolution that the Town may explore include negotiation, compromise, or third-party mediation.

Section 7.4 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives and Policies

A. Goals:

1. Share services across boundaries whenever possible.
2. Maintain good working relationship with state agencies.
3. Improve the condition and maintenance of County roads within the Town.
4. Work to resolve conflicts with other units of government.

B. Objectives:

1. Maintain open lines of communication with other units of government.
2. Periodically review shared service agreements.
3. Work with other Townships to implement building inspection program.
4. Communicate road needs to Portage County Highway Department.

C. Policies:

1. Periodically meet with other units of government to discuss common issues and shared service agreements.