

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 Plover.

Section 7.1 Inventory and Analysis 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 Plover 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 Plover shares borders with the Portage County Towns of Buena Vista to the southeast, Grant to the southwest, and Stockton to the east and the Village of Plover to the north. Also, some northern areas of the Town are adjacent to the City of Stevens Point.

1. Village of Plover

The Town of Plover has agreements with the Village for provision of fire and first responder services. The fire station is located on Post Road in the Village. In addition, the Town co-owns the Plover Cemetery with the Village of Plover. More detailed information about these shared services can be found in the Utilities and Community Facilities Element of this Comprehensive Plan.

In response to increasing pressure from Village of Plover development requests, the Town and Village of Plover recently entered into an intergovernmental agreement that addresses revenue sharing, permanent Town/Village boundaries, and provision of sewer and water without annexation. This agreement is attached to this document as Appendix F, and is illustrated in Map 8.4 of the Land Use Element.

2. City of Stevens Point

As stated in the Issues and Opportunities element, the Town of Plover and the City of Stevens Point entered into a mutual boundary adjustment agreement in 1995 that earmarked two areas of the Town for future annexation into the City. As part of this agreement, sewer and water services would be provided to these areas for a period of ten years before annexation was to take place. The annexation is scheduled to take place in two phases, with the second phase being completed at the end of 2007. The boundary adjustment, when completed, will result in the Town's population decreasing by approximately 500 residents.

3. Adjacent Communities

The Town of Plover has agreements with surrounding Towns for 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 Plover. 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 Plover Fire Station. The First Responder program is supported financially by the municipalities involved in the Plover Fire District.

The Town participates in Mutual Aid Agreements with surrounding communities. The Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) is the system used to implement this program. MABAS is a system through which the Village of Plover Fire Department can request assistance from participating area fire departments in the form of additional equipment and fire fighters. Requests are made according to predetermined lists, called “Box cards”; each box covers a specific set of needs and equipment. Currently there are five boxes (1-5) that can be utilized at any time. These “boxes” allow fire departments to quickly request additional help when needed.

B. School Districts

The Town of Plover is served by two school districts; the Stevens Point and Wisconsin Rapids 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 participates with both districts on issues pertaining to administration or siting of new facilities via referenda.

The Stevens Point District offers bus service through district-operated buses and one contracted bus to transport students. The Wisconsin Rapids School District contracts with private bus companies that provide bus service to students.

C. Portage County

1. Portage County Solid Waste

The Town of Plover currently contracts through the Portage County Solid Waste Department for curbside pick up of solid waste and recycling materials. Waste is taken to the Portage County Landfill in the Town of Stockton, while recyclables are taken to the County’s Material Recovery Facility (MRF) in the Village of Plover.

2. Portage County Highway Department

The Highway Department of Portage County maintains and plows State and County Highways in the Town. This Department also administers the application process for local road projects as part of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation’s Local Roads Improvement Program. Portage County also provides contractual services for major road projects within the Town.

3. Portage County Police and Ambulance

The Town relies on the Portage County Sheriff’s Department to provide protective services through patrols and “on-call” support. Extra services are rendered when necessary. Portage County also provides the Ambulance Service for the Town. See the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter of this Comprehensive Plan for more detailed information.

4. 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. Other services provided by planning staff include: assembling and analyzing project data, conducting research, developing implementation tools and ordinances, and advising public officials and other agencies in general planning, zoning and development matters. In addition, 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 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 Galecke Park, 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 Plover 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.

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

The Town will 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. Strive toward on-going improvement of intergovernmental relationships.

B. Objectives

1. Communicate with surrounding municipalities for discussion of land use issues along adjacent boundaries.
2. Share services with other municipalities and counties when possible
3. Work with other Portage County municipalities to help promote economic development.
4. Work with other units of government to help preserve natural resources and open spaces in the Town of Plover.

C. Policies

1. Meet with adjacent units of government as needed.
2. Periodically review intergovernmental agreements (e.g. boundary agreements, snow plowing, road maintenance, shared revenue, etc.)