

CHAPTER 4: Utilities and Community Facilities

Section 4.1 Introduction

Adequate infrastructure, utilities, community facilities and services are important in meeting existing and future community needs. They are the framework of a community's life and without them present day standard of living could not exist. The decisions made for the Town of Carson regarding the utilities and community facilities will have an impact on all present and future residents.

This chapter will describe the existing utilities and community facilities serving the community, and outline future desires and needs for Town residents.

Section 4.2 Public Utilities Inventory

A. Sanitary Sewer Service

There is no sanitary sewer service in the Town of Carson. Residents in the Town utilize private on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS), otherwise known as private septic systems, as allowed by the Portage County Private Sewage System Ordinance. The Village of Junction City has sewer service but there are currently no plans for expansion into Carson.

The Portage County Planning and Zoning Department administers the permitting and management of POWTS county-wide.

B. Water Supply

The Town relies entirely on private wells for water supply. Please see the groundwater section of the Agriculture, Natural and Cultural Resources chapter for further information.

Since potable water is obtained primarily from groundwater, consideration should be given to possible sources of contamination. One possible source is landfills. Landfills (also formerly known as dumps) have been around as long as people lived in Portage County, however, the locations of many of the smaller, private dumps are unknown. The amount of materials deposited in these was small, and the toxicities of the materials were likely fairly low as compared to current solid waste. All known landfills, except the current County Landfill located on Cty Rd QQ, have been closed. According to Department of Natural Resources Administrative Code, there must be 1,200 foot separation between a private well or reservoir and the nearest edge of an existing, proposed, or abandoned landfill. However, modifications to this requirement may be granted by the DNR, particularly where a proposed development is upgradient from the landfill site, in terms of direction of groundwater flow. Landfills in the Town are shown on Map 4.2.

C. Storm Water Management

The Town does not have a formal storm water management plan. However, responsibility for storm water management within the Town of Carson is split between Portage County and the Town. Storm water facilities consist mainly of ditches along the road network. Portage County maintains the ditches along the portions of County Highways within Carson, while the Town maintains any ditches along Town roads. Ditches along Town roads vary in size, ranging up to 4 feet in width. Drainage ditches and natural drainage ways direct the majority of surface water runoff into Mill Creek, which eventually flows into the Wisconsin River through the Town of Linwood.

D. Solid Waste and Recycling Facilities

The Town has a contract for solid waste and recycling services with Superior Onyx Waste Services based in Schofield, WI. Solid waste materials are picked up once a week and taken to a landfill, owned by Onyx, in Wisconsin Rapids. Recyclables are picked up once a month and taken to a separating facility in Schofield, WI. The Town is satisfied with its current level of service but will review potential changes as the need arises.

E. Corporate Utilities (Map 4.1)

1. Telecommunication Facilities – There are three cell towers located in the Town of Carson; one located near Cty Rd M and the Mill Creek, one near the intersection of USH 10 and Cty Rd E, and one west of Junction City along USH 10.
2. Power Generating Plants and Transmission Line – Carson receives its gas and electricity from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation. Currently, there are no power generation plants or substations located in Carson due to soil conditions. There are two 345 kV transmission lines that run through the Town, one in the southwestern corner of the Town, and the other running along the Wisconsin River.
3. Telephone and Internet Services – Telephone and Internet services for Town residents are provided through Ameritech, TDS Telecom, and Wood County Telephone Company.

Section 4.3 Community Facilities Inventory and Analysis

A. Municipal Buildings

Municipal buildings in the Town of Carson include the Town Hall, located at the intersection of Cty Rd M and Cty Rd O, and Town Garage, which is attached to the Town Hall. The Town Hall contains an administrative office and a public meeting room, which also serves as the polling place for the Town. The Town Garage provides storage for road maintenance vehicles and other equipment. Also at this site is a substation of the Rudolph Fire Department that is owned by the Town, but leased and managed by the Fire Department.

B. Police, Fire, Rescue, Emergency Response

Police protection and ambulance service is provided by Portage County. The Portage County Sheriff's Department provides protective services through random patrols and on a "call-out" basis. Portage County is divided into 3 districts for patrol purposes. The district in which Carson is located is bounded by STH 66 to the east and the Wisconsin River to the south, and the Portage County line to the west. During the day shift, 1 officer is assigned to each district, plus an additional officer "floats" throughout the County. During the night shift, 2 officers are assigned to each district, plus 2 additional officers float throughout the County. Officers may drive through the Town any number of times during each shift to check on businesses and residences.

Fire services for Carson come from the Rudolph Fire Department. The combination volunteer/paid fire department is based out of Rudolph (located in Wood County) and serves mainly residential areas. There are 86 volunteer and 2 paid firefighters. They operate out of 4 stations throughout their service district, in which the Town of Carson owns one of these facilities, but is managed by the Rudolph Fire Department. In 1998/1999 the department added a large area to the fire protection district, creating their current 226 square mile service district.

Map 4.1: Community Utilities

They also provide and receive free mutual aid with many other fire departments in Wood, Portage and Marathon Counties. In 2000, 23 members completed Hazardous Materials Technician training and now assist the Portage County Hazardous Materials Team when called. Other services that they do include: BSL Emergency Medical Service, Vehicle Extraction, and Search & Rescue. Fire equipment includes:

- 6 Fire Engines
- 1 Truck/Ladder Company
- 7 Water Tankers
- 1 Rescue Squad
- 3 Brush/Wildland Vehicle

Ambulance service is provided by Portage County. The county has 4 ambulances that are staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and can respond anywhere in the county in minutes. They cover approximately 810 square miles and are the only ambulance service in most of that area. The County Ambulance is operated by the Stevens Point Fire Department, with locations on Franklin Street (Station 1) and Industrial Park Road (Station 2), both in Stevens Point. Station 1 houses both, an engine and ladder company, a rescue squad and three ambulances, has 6-8 firefighters/EMT's and the administrative staff. Station 2 houses an engine and ambulance, and has four personnel. Between the Stevens Point Fire Department and the Portage County ambulance service, there are a total of 17 firefighters/paramedics on staff. There are also 36 full-time trained ice/ cold water rescue personnel available, of which there are at least 10 on duty 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Rescue equipment includes:

- 6 medic trucks, including one equipped for confined space/water & ice rescue
- 1 Rescue air boat for water and ice rescue

C. Schools

The Town of Carson is divided between three school districts (see Map 4.2).

1. Stevens Point School District

The Stevens Point Area Public School District covers nearly 400 square miles, so transporting students is a significant activity and expenditure. During the 2002-2003 school year, the transportation department bused nearly 7,000 students to public and private schools with a fleet of 79 districted-operated and 1 contracted buses traveling 1.2 million miles. Typically, the district's annual cost for busing is about two-thirds of the state average, with a district budget of \$2.6 million. The Stevens Point School District is the 14th largest district in the State of Wisconsin and serves a population of approximately 50,000 and employs staff of over 900. The approximate student enrollment for the 2003-2004 school year is 7,400.

The Stevens Point Area Public School District includes the City of Stevens Point, Villages of Whiting, Plover, Park Ridge, Amherst Junction, Junction City; Towns of Linwood, Hull, Eau Pleine, Dewey, Carson, Stockton, Sharon, Plover Grant, and Buena Vista, as well as the Wood County communities of Milladore and Sherry.

The Stevens Point School District consists of ten K-6 grade elementary schools, two 7-9 grade junior high schools, and one 10-12 grade senior high school and an alternative school. Three charter schools lie within the secondary schools. Three of the elementary schools are charter schools and three additional elementary schools have applied for charter status. In addition the 45-acre Boston School Forest, located in the Town of Plover, is an educational facility used by students for environmental education programs throughout the school year.

2. Auburndale School District

A portion of the Auburndale School district is located in the Town of Carson. Residents of the Town and surrounding area currently have the opportunity to send their children to the Auburndale school district. There has been discussion in the past of closing the Kennedy Elementary school in the Village of Junction City; it is felt that if or when this would happen, more children would attend schools in Auburndale.

The Auburndale school district consists of one each of elementary, junior high, and high schools, located in the Village of Auburndale. The elementary school houses grades PreK-6 and has 34 teaching staff. The junior high houses grades 7-9 and has 26 teaching staff and the high school houses grades 10-12 and has 29 teaching staff. The district has 17 administrative staff.

3. Wisconsin Rapids School District

The Wisconsin Rapids Public School district facilities are located in the City of Wisconsin Rapids. The school district has a student population of approximately 6,000. Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools has ten K-6 elementary schools, two junior high schools (grades 7-9), one senior high school (grades 10-12) and one Charter School for At-Risk Students (grades 9-12). The school system has a high student achievement and a low drop out rate. Staff members are continuously recognized by state organizations and agencies for their professionalism and expertise.

A number of post-secondary education opportunities for Town residents are available. State Universities include: the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in Stevens Point; the University of Wisconsin-Marathon County located in Wausau; the University of Wisconsin-Wood County/Marshfield in the City of Marshfield; and the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh in Oshkosh. Technical colleges include: Mid-State Technical College in Stevens Point and Wisconsin Rapids; North Central Technical College in the City of Wausau; and Fox Valley Technical College, with locations in Appleton, Oshkosh, and Waupaca. All of these facilities are within an hour of Carson.

D. Parks

There are currently no Town parks, but there is dedicated parkland located in Carson on Green Tree, Sarafin Court and Second Lake Dr. There is access to the Wisconsin River and a boat landing through Town land on: Martin Island Drive, Sleepy Hollow Road and Riverview Drive.

E. Cemeteries

The Town of Carson has one cemetery and one burial site that are estimated to adequately serve the residents through the time frame of this plan. They are located as follows:

- ST. BARTHOLOMEW CEMETERY, Section 28, on County Road M, between Oak Road and Mill Creek.
- PIERCE GROOVER BURIAL PLOT (2 graves), in section 13, south of Junction City on County Road O, to the first four corners and then east just past the first house on the left.

Map 4.2 Community Facilities

Health Care Facilities

There are no health care facilities in Carson. The closest facilities are located in the City of Stevens Point, with the largest being St. Michael's Hospital and Rice Medical Center. This facility is located approximately eleven miles from the center of the Town. Other facilities that serve Carson residents are located in Wisconsin Rapids, approximately 20 miles to the southwest, and Marshfield, which is approximately 30 miles to the west of Town.

F. Child Care Facilities

There are no licensed child care facilities located in the Town of Carson. The closest facilities exist in the city of Stevens Point. For a complete list, contact the Regional Division of Children and Family Services at:

2811 8th St. - Ste. 70
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
Phone: (715) 422-5080
Fax: (715) 422-5091

G. Libraries

The Town of Carson does not have a public library. However, the Charles M. White library, affiliated with the Portage County Library system, is located on Main Street in downtown Stevens Point, approximately 12 miles from the center of Carson. There is also a Plover branch, located at 2151 Roosevelt Drive, approximately 17 miles from the center of Carson. Hours for the Plover branch can be obtained by calling 715-341-4007. More detailed information about the Portage County Public Library can be obtained via the internet at: <http://library.uwsp.edu/pcl/> or by calling the library system at: 1-800-264-0766.

Section 4.4 Summary of future needs

The vast majority of Town residents are likely to continue using private on-site wastewater treatment systems through this plan horizon (2025). Some systems may need replacing; however, due to the low projected population increase and overall density, the Town does not anticipate the need for a municipal wastewater treatment facility through this planning period.

It is also likely that requests for more telecommunications towers will occur near the new Highway 10 facility when it is completed; however, changes in technology may actually lead to a reduction in towers.

Contracts and agreements with other service providers such as; fire, solid waste and recycling, snow plowing and road maintenance will be periodically reviewed.

Section 4.5 Utilities and Community Facilities Issues Identified by the Plan Commission

The following issues were derived from a review of the existing inventory and local input during the planning process:

- How can development be limited in flood prone areas?
- To what extent should public space be provided?
- How can the Town ensure standards are being met when utility lines are sited? Current criteria are not being followed when cables are buried.
- How will the Town address the need for more cemetery space?

Section 4.6 Utilities and Community Facilities Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal A Maintain a level of services to efficiently meet community needs.

Objective A.1 Consideration for flooding is given to the design and construction of bridges within the Town.

Objective A.2 Wisconsin River access points are maintained for provision of emergency services.

Objective A.3 Work with utility companies for proper siting and installation of utility lines.

Objective A.4 Continue working with existing emergency service providers to ensure the safety of Town residents.

Policy A.1 Work with County to maintain public access to Wisconsin River.

Policy A.2 Review service contracts as needed.

Policy A.3 Encourage the County to adopt a Ground and Storm Water Management Ordinance.

Goal B Provide criteria and direction for protecting and developing land.

Objective B.1 Encourage the development of recreational opportunities for the youth of the Town.

Policy B.1 Community parkland should be dedicated within or adjacent to proposed development.

Policy B.2 Development plans are reviewed by the Town Plan Commission.

Goal C Protect public green space and water resources throughout the Town.

Objective C.1 Development densities are limited in designated areas of the Town to protect water resources.

Goal D Share services across County or municipal borders whenever possible.

Objective D.1 Meet with appropriate governmental units and agencies to review the sharing or expansion of services and facilities as the need arises.