

CHAPTER 4 Utilities and Community Facilities Element

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 regarding the utilities and community facilities will impact all present and future residents.

This chapter will describe the existing utility and community facilities serving the community, and outline future desires/needs for the Town of Plover residents.

Section 4.2 Public Utilities Inventory

A. Sanitary Sewer Service

There is no municipal sewer service available in the Town. Residents in the Town utilize private on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS), otherwise known as private septic systems, as allowed by Wisconsin Department of Commerce Code 83 and the Portage County Private Sewage System Ordinance. An outcome of this planning process has been an agreement with the Village of Plover to provide sewer service to portions of the Town without annexation at some point in the future. More information regarding this agreement can be found in the Intergovernmental Cooperation element (Chapter 7).

Food processors McCain Food and Basic American Foods also have their own onsite wastewater treatment systems.

B. Water Supply

The primary source of water for residents in Plover is found in the groundwater aquifer and is obtained via private wells. The sand and gravel aquifer of the Central Sands region provides one of the most abundant sources of groundwater in the State. The aquifer potential throughout most of the Town is estimated at more than 1,000 gallons per minute. Large volumes of groundwater are utilized by area farmers for irrigated vegetable crop production. Pumping from large wells may result in a temporary drawdown of underground water levels, however, the substantial capacity and recharge rate of the aquifer generally maintains a normal groundwater level.

Approximately 45 percent of the Town is subject to a high water table, particularly in the southwestern and central portions. High groundwater conditions also occur periodically along a narrow zone which originates in the upper basin of the Little Plover River. This zone extends in a southwesterly direction, finally broadening out into the large, high groundwater area of the Buena Vista Marsh.

Groundwater quality has become a major concern in the Town of Plover and throughout Portage County. Domestic and agricultural by-products are thought to be the two major sources of groundwater pollution. Local soil conditions also contribute significantly to the problem.

The sand plain region is particularly vulnerable to groundwater contamination because of the coarse-textured, highly permeable soils, which allow pollutants to leach downward into the groundwater. Agricultural irrigation further increases the leaching process. Also, where the water table is high, pollutants have only a short distance to travel and little time to break down before reaching the groundwater level. State and Federal regulations advise that nitrate levels in drinking water not exceed 10.00 parts per million (ppm) for health reasons.

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. Landfills in the Town are shown on Map 4.2.

C. Storm Water Management

The Town of Plover has a limited storm water management system. Responsibility for storm water management is split between Portage County and the Town. The Town's management consists mainly of ditches along the local road network, while Portage County maintains the ditches along the portion of County Roads within the Town of Plover. The ditches along Town roads vary in size, ranging from 1 to 4 feet in width. Certain roads have been raised and replaced, with culverts put into place on both sides of the road for water drainage. The collected water flows into the drainage district located in the southern portion of the Town (Map 4.1).

Roughly one-third of the Town is located within the Portage County Drainage District. The District was established in 1905 to oversee the development and maintenance of a drainage ditch system for a large portion of the Buena Vista Marsh area in the southwestern part of the County. This development was funded by special assessments on landowners in the District. Drainage and reclamation has allowed much of this previously undeveloped area to be converted to productive agricultural use.

The Drainage District has maintained its active status, with assessments being levied against landowners for the cost of maintaining the ditches. There are approximately 12 miles of drainage ditches within the Town of Plover.

D. Solid Waste & Recycling Facilities

The Town of Plover currently contracts with Wittenberg Disposal, out of Wittenberg, WI for solid waste disposal and collection of recyclables. Solid waste is collected on a weekly basis and taken to the Portage County Landfill in the Town of Stockton on CTH QQ. Recyclables are picked up on a bi-weekly basis and taken to the Portage County Recycling Facility on Moore Road in the Village of Plover. This is mandated on the Town tax bill.

E. Corporate Utilities

1. Telecommunication Facilities - There is one cell tower located within the Town.
2. Power Generating Plants and Transmission Lines – There are no electric generation plants or high voltage transmission lines in the Town of Plover. The Town currently receives its electricity from two sources: western portions of the Town are served by Consolidated Water Power Company, while eastern portions are served by Wisconsin Public Service Corporation. Natural gas service is provided to some residents west of County Rd F by Wisconsin Gas Company; east of County Road F by Wisconsin Public Service Corporation.

Map 4.1: Community Utilities

3. Telephone and Internet Services - Telephone services for the Town are provided by Wood County Telephone Company, out of Wisconsin Rapids, and Ameritech. Cable service is provided by Charter Cable, out of Stevens Point. Wood County Telephone Company is also used for Cable and Internet services, including High-Speed Internet.

Section 4.3 Community Facilities Inventory and Analysis

A. Municipal Buildings

The Town of Plover Town Hall and Garage are located adjacent to each other, on Hoover Avenue. The Town Hall contains the Town Clerk's office and meeting space for public meetings. The Town garage provides storage for road maintenance and other Town owned equipment.

B. Police, Fire, Rescue, Emergency Response

The Town of Plover is currently served by the Portage County Sheriffs Department. 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. Plover is located in all three of the districts: one district is bounded by STH 66 to the north, the Portage County line on the east, and STH 54 on the south and west, the other district is bounded by STH 54 on the north and east, Portage County line in the south and east, with the Wisconsin River on the north. 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.

The Town currently contracts with the Village of Plover for fire service. The fire station is located on Post Road in the Village of Plover and consists of a full-time Fire Chief, a full-time Fire Captain and forty-two "paid-on-call" firefighters. The Village has had a First Responder program in place since 1984 which became an Emergency Medical Technician – Basic (E.M.T.-B) Level Program in June of 2003. The First Responders had approximately 500 calls in 2002. The Village's fire equipment consists of the following (2000 inventory):

- 2000 Rescue Unit – covers the southern part of Portage County
- 1991 Ford – a quick response mini-unit for grass and forest fires with 200 gallons of water
- 1996 Class A Pumper Unit - 1,000 gallons of water/1,500 gallons per minute pump
- 1984 Class A Pumper Unit – 750 gallons of water/1,000 gallons per minute pump
- 1976 Class A Pumper Unit – 750 gallons of water/1,000 gallons per minute pump
- 1984 – 100' Aerial Platform with pre-piped waterway and a 2,000 GPM Mid-ship Pump with a 6.5 KW diesel generator on board
- 29 self-contained breathing apparatus cylinders
- 23 extra cylinders
- Jaws of Life for industrial, farm and car accidents
- Upgraded Hazardous Material Unit – 1994 truck with a 28 foot trailer fully equipped for hazardous material spills and items for confined space rescue.

The Village of Plover's primary service area includes: the Village of Plover, the Towns of Plover and Stockton, and 12 sections in the Town of Buena Vista. The Village of Plover Fire Department has Mutual Aid Agreements with all 11 fire departments in Portage County, including the City of Stevens Point Fire Department, and four departments from Wood County.

Ambulance service is provided by Portage County. The County has four 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 Plover is served by the Stevens Point and Wisconsin Rapids School Districts for primary and secondary education (Map 4.3). Post-Secondary educational facilities near to the Town of Plover are located in Stevens Point, Wausau, Wisconsin Rapids, and Marshfield.

1. Stevens Point Area Public School District – The Stevens Point School District has ten elementary schools that serve approximately 3,797 students in kindergarten through sixth grade and two junior high schools that serve approximately 1,900 students. The junior high schools have a seventh through ninth grade alignment. This district has one high school, SPASH (Stevens Point Area Senior High), a tenth through twelfth grade high school which serves approximately 1,950 students. The district also provides an alternative high school for those students who need a more personal and individually guided curriculum.

There is a School Forest located within the Town, with 16 acres owned and managed by the Stevens Point Catholic Schools and 176 acres owned and managed by the Stevens Point Area Public Schools (total of 192 acres). This provides educational opportunities for elementary and secondary students regarding natural and agricultural resources.

2. 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.
3. University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point (UWSP) - UW-Stevens Point has approximately 8,700 students within four academic colleges: College of Natural Resources, College of Letters and Sciences, College of Fine Arts, and the College of Professional Studies. The College of Natural Resources is the largest undergraduate college of natural resources in the nation. In total, there are 100 program choices within 49 majors, plus 78 minors and 16 graduate programs. There are 400 faculty and teaching academic staff, 200 non-teaching academic staff, and 350 support staff within the school, resulting in a 20 to one student/faculty ratio. UWSP is consistently named one of the top Public Midwestern Universities-Master's in *U.S. News and World Report's* college rankings.

Map 4.2 Community Facilities

4. Mid-State Technical College - Mid-State Technical College has nearly 16,000 full- and part-time students that enroll at the college each year. The college has over 40 career options available through one- and two-year technical diplomas and two-year associate degrees in business, service & health, and technical & industrial fields. Mid-State Technical College includes campuses in Stevens Point, Marshfield, and Wisconsin Rapids; a center in Adams; and several outreach sites.
5. University of Wisconsin-Marathon County - UW- Marathon County is a 2 year UW campus and is located near downtown Wausau, consisting of the main campus building, 1 residence hall (Marathon Hall), and the UWMC Fieldhouse. Average enrollment is just over 1,000 students per year. There are 14 departments which consist of 79 teaching staff, with an average of 20 students per class. The school offers both Associate and Bachelor Degrees.
6. North Central Technical College - Northcentral Technical College's central campus in Wausau is supported by regional campuses in Antigo, Medford, Phillips, Wittenberg, and Spencer. The college has approximately 2,450 full-time equivalent students, and approximately 18,000 people taking at least one class annually. There are 40 one- and two-year programs available at the college, which students can obtain an Associate Degree, Technical Diploma, or a Technical Certificate.

D. Parks

The Town of Plover currently has two community parks and one county park within its boundary. Community parks include Forest Lake Park, located between Forest Lake Dr. and STH 54; and Bluebird Park, located in the Bluebird Subdivision.

Galecke Park, located off Park Drive, is a County park that is 34 acres in size and includes 1,600 feet of Wisconsin River frontage. Amenities include picnic and restroom facilities, a public shelter, and a boat ramp.

The Isherwood Hall is located in the Town of Plover at the intersection of STH 54 and Isherwood Rd., east of Interstate 39/51. It does not offer outdoor recreation facilities, but does enhance opportunities in the area. This is operated as a community meeting hall by the Community Club, a Town civic group. Meetings are held regularly here by the 4-H Club, but any group may rent the hall.

E. Cemeteries

The Town of Plover has three cemeteries that will adequately serve the residents through the time-frame of this plan. The Town of Plover owns 2 1/3 of these cemeteries, with only owning part of the Plover Cemetery. They are located as follows:

- MAINE CEMETERY, Section 2, Township of Plover, Portage County, WI, located on Hoover Avenue, just south of STH 54.
- MEEHAN CEMETERY, Section 26, Township of Plover, Portage County, WI, located on Club Forest Drive and Pierce Avenue.
- PLOVER CEMETERY, Section 21, Township of Plover, Portage County, WI, located on River Drive.

F. Health Care Facilities

There are no health care facilities of any kind in the Town. Residents use the Village of Plover branch of Rice Clinic, located on Plover Road, as well as services in the City of Stevens Point for health care needs. St. Michael's Hospital and Rice Medical Center, located in Stevens Point, are the largest facilities in the County. Other health care services located in the Stevens Point/Plover urban area available to Town residents include dental, chiropractic, sports medicine, and podiatry.

G. Senior and Child Care Facilities

There is one hospice facility, which assists terminally ill seniors with specific needs, located near the Town of Plover, in the City of Stevens Point. There are several Community Based Residential Facilities (CBRF) for senior care, ranging in capacity from 8 to 52 persons. These are located near the Town of Plover, in the Village of Plover and in the City of Stevens Point.

There are three adult family homes located in Portage County, all with a maximum capacity of four persons, with two of these homes located in the Village of Plover.

Two adult day care facilities are located within Portage County, one in the Village of Plover with a maximum capacity of ten persons, and the other in the city of Stevens Point with a maximum capacity of forty persons.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Health and Human Services, no person may for compensation provide care and supervision for 4 or more children under the age of 7 for less than 24 hours a day unless that person obtains a license to operate a child care center from the Department. This does not include a relative or guardian of a child who provides care and supervision for the child; a public or parochial school; a person employed to come to the home of the child's parent or guardian for less than 24 hours a day; or a County, City, Village, Town, School District or library that provides programs primarily intended for recreational or social purposes. Child care centers are licensed by the state from one of five regional licensing offices. There are 2 different categories of state licensed child care; they depend upon the number of children in care:

- Licensed **Family** Child Care Centers provide care for up to 8 children. This care is usually in the provider's home, but it is not required to be located in a residence.
- Licensed **Group** Child Care Centers provide care for 9 or more children. These centers are usually located somewhere other than a residence and may be small or large in size.

There is one licensed child care facility located in the Town. The next closest facilities exist in the Village of Plover and 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.

H. Libraries

The Town of Plover does not have a public library. Residents make use of the library in the Village of Plover, which is affiliated with the Portage County Public Library System. The Charles M. White public library in Stevens Point is the next closest facility available to residents. Public internet service is available at all Portage County library locations. A complete list of facilities and services can be obtained on the internet at: http://library.uwsp.edu/pcl/index_4.htm.

Section 4.4 Utilities & Community Facilities Issues Identified by the Plan Commission

- Storm Water Management: There is scattered flooding wherever there are low roads, such as Shady Lane and Eisenhower Avenue. In addition, the DNR has placed limitations on stormwater abatement near Park Dr. How will the Town address problems or concerns associated with stormwater management?
- Water Supply: The Town of Plover has some nitrate problems, with amounts ranging from 7-20ppm. This affects mainly commercial operations, such as the campground. To what extent can the Town protect the quality of groundwater?
- Parks: To what extent will the Town address a lack of restroom facilities at any of the parks within the Town?
- Telecommunication Facilities: Some residents have expressed a desire for better cell phone reception. How will the Town address the increased demand for communication towers?
- Power Generating Plants and Transmission Lines: Whenever possible, residents want transmission lines to follow the roads, instead of cutting through farm fields. To what extent can the Town regulate service line (e.g. gas, electric) placement?
- Rescue: What can the Town do to improve emergency service response time?

Section 4.5 Utilities & Community Facilities Goals, Objectives and Policies

A. Goal: Continue to provide adequate services and utilities to Town residents.

B. Objectives:

1. Encourage the development of well qualified child care facilities.
2. Support a strong First Responders program.
3. Towers and like structures are in keeping with community character.
4. Work with utilities to assist in the siting of pipelines and transmission lines.

C. Policies:

1. Continue to work with the Village of Plover to maintain the provision of municipal sewer without annexation within certain areas of the Town.
2. Allow unsewered residential lots to be no less than 1 acre in appropriate areas through the use of efficient development patterns, cluster septic systems, or shared wells.
3. Recommend that antennas be co-located whenever practicable.
4. Towers should not impede agricultural operations.
5. Work with the Sheriffs Department, Portage County Drainage Board, and DNR to enforce trespassing laws.
6. Recommend that transmission lines follow road right of way to maintain the integrity of agricultural fields and operations.
7. Utility lines should be buried whenever possible.
8. Encourage the use of cluster septic systems to allow for increased housing density.