

# 7 Intergovernmental Cooperation

## 7.1 Intergovernmental Cooperation Chapter Purpose and Contents

This element includes a brief summary of existing intergovernmental relationships followed by a series of goals, objectives, and recommendations to identify opportunities for joint planning and decision making in the Town of Hancock. This element also provides a description of identified or potential conflicts between Hancock and overlapping or adjacent jurisdictions.

Recommendations were developed through the public participation process, and through review of the *Town of Hancock Community Management Plan (2005)*. Goals and objectives related to intergovernmental cooperation developed as part of the community management plan have also been included in this comprehensive plan. New goals, objectives, and recommendations were added where identified through the public participation process or in areas necessary for compliance with Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law.

## 7.2 Summary of Existing Conditions for Intergovernmental Cooperation

The following section identifies existing intergovernmental relationships or agreements that may affect the Town of Hancock or its affiliates. Existing relationships were identified by the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC). A complete analysis of intergovernmental relationships can be located in the *Town of Hancock Comprehensive Plan Volume Two: Existing Conditions Report*.

### Adjacent Local Governments

- The Town of Hancock shares its borders with the towns of Plainfield, Oasis, Deerfield, Richford, Coloma, and the Village of Hancock in Waushara County; and the towns of Leola, Colburn, and Richfield in Adams County.

### School Districts

- The town is served by the Tri-County Area School District.
- The Tri-County Area School District owns over 300 acres, including an 82-acre conservation easement in the northeast corner of the Town of Hancock. This property is open to the public and includes part of Goose and Bullhead Lakes.

### Local and County Community Facilities

- Due to the rural nature of Waushara County, many facilities and services are shared jointly between neighboring communities as well as provided through agreement with the county.
- Police protection for the Town and the other communities within Waushara County is provided by the Waushara County Sheriff's Department that dispatches officers from the City of Wautoma. To provide a more visual presence in the area, the Hancock Fire Department serves as a satellite headquarters for the Sheriff's Department every Saturday afternoon.
- Fire protection and First Responders, are shared jointly between the Town and Village of Hancock and the towns of Deerfield and Colburn, through the Hancock Volunteer Fire Department located in the Village of Hancock. To better serve the three communities, the fire department maintains mutual aid agreements with Marquette, Adams, Portage and Waushara counties.
- Emergency medical services for the majority of the county are provided by the Waushara County EMS.
- An ambulance, shared jointly between the Coloma Fire Department and the Village of Plainfield, resides half time in the Village of Coloma and half time in the Village of Plainfield in alternating months, to improve service for the communities in the western part of the county.

- The towns of Hancock and Deerfield share the area community center, located at 420 N. Jefferson Street, with the Village of Hancock.

#### **Extraterritorial Areas**

- The Town of Hancock is located within the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the Village of Hancock. However, the Village does not exercise extraterritorial authority over zoning or subdivision regulation.

#### **Existing Relationships with Waushara County**

- The Town has adopted county zoning and has therefore given the county jurisdiction over zoning matters including land divisions and private on-site wastewater systems.
- Communities work with the various county departments to coordinate road construction and maintenance; solid waste and recycling efforts; senior citizen and other social services; and park and recreational facilities and programs.

#### **Existing Regional Relationships**

- The Town of Hancock is located in Waushara County which is a member of the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

#### **Existing State Relationships**

- The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is responsible for corridor planning and maintaining I-39, which bisects the Town.
- The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources develops a variety of regional planning documents to protect natural and environmental resources in the Town. The Department also provides programming for environmental preservation and recreational facilities development.

### **7.3 Intergovernmental Cooperation Issues and Opportunities**

Intergovernmental cooperation is an essential component of the comprehensive plan. Building relationships between public, quasi-public, and private entities can increase service efficiencies and capabilities that will provide the Town of Hancock with better services. The following intergovernmental cooperation issues and opportunities were identified through the public participation process.

#### **Lake Associations**

Area lake associations and the local government support each other and have a positive working relationship. Continuation of governmental support for activities such as preparing grant applications to curb invasive species is essential for maintaining area surface waters and upholding property values.

#### **Sanitation**

Waushara County is responsible for permitting and inspecting private onsite wastewater treatment systems. The Town is concerned that older facilities on some properties are in poor shape and leach effluent into area surface waters and drinking water supplies. The Town is working with Waushara County to identify areas of primary concern.

#### **Economic Development**

Many small communities in Waushara County are in need of economic development assistance. This includes a desire for programming and funding to help small businesses succeed. Greater intergovernmental assistance is desired to ensure local communities in Waushara County compete in a regional marketplace.

**Repair Programming**

One of the major issues identified in the Hancock area (village and town) was exterior repair of residential and commercial structures. Small communities often lack the capacity and resources to collect and administer exterior home/business improvement programs. Greater intergovernmental assistance at the county or regional level would help small communities to repair properties that may not be code compliant and may help to maintain property values.

**Village of Hancock**

The Town of Hancock has a good working relationship with the Village of Hancock. Currently, the communities share the Hancock Community Center, and often coordinate on lake issues and other planning needs. There may be a long-term issue if Hancock Community Center is not used for Meals on Wheels. At the county level, there is a plan to develop a new services center in the City of Wautoma. If this occurs, area communities should coordinate to determine new programming opportunities for the Hancock Community Center.

**7.4 Existing or Potential Conflicts and Process to Resolve Conflicts**

Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law requires that the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element identify existing or potential conflicts between the Town and other governmental units, including school districts, and describe processes to resolve such conflicts.

Existing or Potential Conflicts

There have been no existing or potential conflicts identified. The Town provides few services, and since the Village of Hancock does not exercise extraterritorial controls, there are no short-term boundary issues. Similarly, since this comprehensive plan was developed utilizing joint meetings with the Village, no known conflicts exist. The Town is content with a majority of current service provision provided through Waushara County. However, should service delivery fail to meet service expectation (including inspection of sanitary systems), Hancock should seek to communicate formally with the providers in an effort to discuss service gaps and identify solutions.

Process to Resolve Conflicts

Waushara County encourages towns, villages, and cities to coordinate with each other and the County on planning efforts. The intergovernmental cooperation element is intended to avoid and minimize potential conflicts though conflicts may still occur. When conflicts arise, there are several techniques available for dispute resolution. Dispute resolution techniques can be broken into the following two categories:

1. Alternative dispute resolution techniques such as negotiation and mediation.
2. Judicial and quasi-judicial dispute resolution techniques such as litigation and arbitration.

In the event that a conflict does occur, utilization of an alternative dispute resolution process will be encouraged in an effort to avoid costly and lengthy litigation. If these efforts are unsuccessful, facilitated negotiation utilizing a Dispute Resolution Panel may be used, followed by mediation. Arbitration and litigation are the remaining stages and tend to be slower and more costly than the foregoing stages.

Dispute resolution techniques are usually used to resolve conflicts and tense situations, but they can also be used to avoid them. It may be easier in the long run to prevent disputes, thus avoiding the time, trouble, and expense of resolving the dispute by maintaining open communication.

## 7.5 Intergovernmental Cooperation Policies

The following policies have been identified by the Town of Hancock for coordinating with school districts and adjacent or other local governments for siting, building, and sharing public services.

### School Districts

The Town of Hancock will coordinate with the Tri-County Area School District for siting and building public facilities and sharing public services. Hancock is especially interested in participating in any structural development or site planning that may occur on district-owned lands in the northeast corner of the Town.

### Local Governments

The Town of Hancock will coordinate with adjacent and other local governments for siting and building public facilities and sharing public services whenever feasible.

## 7.6 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations

The following section identifies goals, objectives, and recommendations to guide the future development of various cooperative practices and agreements. The goals and objectives identify what should be accomplished, whereas the recommendations focus on identifying the action necessary to achieve the desired outcome. Wherever possible, existing prerogatives were carried over from the *Town of Hancock Community Management Plan (2005)*.

### **Goal 7.1: Work together with neighboring municipalities and Waushara County when issues or opportunities arise that can be more effectively addressed cooperatively.**

#### Objective(s)

- a. Create cost efficiencies through economies of scale.
- b. Take advantage of technical expertise and opportunities for better and/or more diverse equipment and training.
- c. Continue improving levels of service.

#### Recommendations

7.1.1 Create a joint committee of the Town and Village of Hancock to identify areas of mutual benefit including cooperative agreements or shared facilities/services.

7.1.2 Convene a joint meeting with the Village of Hancock and Town of Deerfield to discuss a three-way agreement for use of the village's municipal sewer service capabilities to serve new development, especially around Pine Lake, Fish Lake.

7.1.3 Encourage government officials to support intergovernmental agreements and partnerships especially those that are environmentally and fiscally responsible.

7.1.4 Improve working relationships with other governmental entities by encouraging representatives from various agencies, businesses, departments, and Waushara County to periodically attend regular town board or plan commission meetings.

7.1.5 Provide periodic reports to the Waushara County Sheriff's Department related to existing and potential law enforcement issues.

7.1.6 Continue to coordinate with WisDOT and the Waushara County Highway Department on upcoming road construction projects.

7.1.7 Improve communication with the Tri-County Area School District on district-owned lands located within the Town. Coordinate all improvements that may occur on these lands that may have economic or recreational impact.

7.1.8 Coordinate with Waushara County Aging and Disability Resource Center and the Village of Hancock to ensure availability of local senior programming, including Meals on Wheels.

7.1.9 Work with the Waushara County Emergency Services Department to determine availability of grant opportunities for acquisition and distribution of NOAA emergency radios at reduced costs.

**Goal 7.2: Improve natural resources quality and opportunities for recreation by coordinating with other entities.**

Objective(s)

- a. Enhance local recreation facilities.
- b. Improve water quality in lakes and streams.
- c. Obtain grant funding.

Recommendations

7.2.1 Work cooperatively with other entities, including the Village of Hancock and Waushara County, in meeting and addressing common public park service issues.

7.2.2 Identify the parkland needs of present and future Town residents and determine how those needs will be met within the Village, Town and County.

7.2.3 Determine how planned or existing recreational parklands can be coordinated with trail development. This includes working with the Department of Natural Resources to identify natural easements and grant opportunities to development an interconnected linear trail system.

7.2.4 Encourage the County Sheriff to monitor activities and litter problems at public boat landings.

7.2.5 Consider submitting grant requests jointly between the Town and Village of Hancock.

7.2.7 Foster cooperation between Lake Districts / Lake Associations within the Town and the Wisconsin DNR to control invasive species.

7.2.8 Support workshops, programs, events and other activities that promote improvements in the local water quality through interagency collaboration.

**Goal 7.3: Encourage countywide availability of economic development and home repair assistance programming.**

Objectives

- a. Increase the availability of regional programming assistance.
- b. Promote use of available programming to increase economic development opportunities and improve code compliance.

Recommendations

7.3.1 Coordinate with the Village of Hancock and other jurisdictions to demand increased funding availability for new business development or exterior maintenance through Waushara County.

7.3.2 Establish a joint Town/Village working group to explore the possibility of developing an industrial/business park venture.

7.3.3 Work with UWEX to hold seminars on business development. Continue ongoing relationships with UWEX staff to increase the availability of education programming related to improving entrepreneurship in Hancock.

7.3.4 Work with Waushara County to identify, inspect, and mitigate nuisance properties.