

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

INTRODUCTION

The relationship a municipality has with school districts, neighboring communities, the county, the Regional Planning Commission, the state, and the federal government can impact residents in terms of taxation, planning, service provision, and siting of public facilities. An examination of these relationships and the identification of existing or potential conflicts can help a municipality address these situations in a productive manner.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Area Vision for 2030

In 2030, the Town of Aurora has been successful in forming strong partnerships with neighboring municipalities. Working together on the new STH 21 project has strengthened the ties that the Town has developed over the years with Waushara County, the Department of Transportation and its neighbors. This spirit of cooperation has led to more cost-effective delivery of municipal services by eliminating duplication and taking advantage of economies of scale. Furthermore, the Town along with Waushara County has been successful in working with the City of Berlin, the Berlin Area School District and Green Lake County on a number of projects that have enhanced the lives of the residents of the town. These partnerships have resulted in increased services to elderly and disabled residents and the youth of the town, enhanced emergency protection and a sense of community. The Town along with the City of Berlin continues to work together through exterritorial zoning on planning within the 1.5 mile border of the city. Through this avenue the town and city have been able to successfully plan for the growth that has been occurring.

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

Governmental Units and Relationships to Communities

Communities

Town of Aurora

The Town of Aurora shares its borders with the towns of Warren, Leon and Poy Sippi in Waushara County; the City of Berlin and the towns of Seneca and Berlin in Green Lake County; and the towns of Nepeuskun, Rushford and Poygan in Winnebago County. ~~The Town is adjacent to the City of Berlin and falls within the City's exterritorial zoning area (ETZA). As a result the town is a member of a joint committee, as provided under Wis. Stats 62.23(7a). This committee has the authority to make zoning changes within the ETZA and meets on a monthly basis. This effort has increased the level of communication between the towns of Aurora and Berlin and the City of Berlin.~~ As a result the Town of Aurora has developed a number of intergovernmental agreements that have resulted in increased benefits to town residents. Since towns cannot annex land from one another, the borders between the remaining communities are fixed and boundary disputes are non-existent. The town has established a good relationship with all its neighbors.

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Town of Bloomfield

The Town of Bloomfield shares its borders with the towns of Leon, Poy Sippi, and Saxeville in Waushara County; the towns of Fremont and Lind in Waupaca County; and the Town of Wolf River in Winnebago County. Towns cannot annex land from one another; therefore, borders between these entities are fixed and boundary disputes are non-existent. The town enjoys a good working relationship with its neighbors.

The North Lake Poygan Sanitary District has jurisdiction within the unincorporated village of Tustin. The service area also covers the shoreline area within the Town of Wolf River in Winnebago County. The planning boundary encompasses portions of Bloomfield, Poy Sippi, and Wolf River. The sanitary district works closely with Waushara County and Town of Bloomfield to monitor new construction within the sewer service and planning area boundaries and other sanitary sewer related issues.

School Districts

The area is served by four different public school districts; Berlin Area, Omro, Weyauwega-Fremont, and Wild Rose. The towns of Aurora and Bloomfield have not actively participated in any planning activities for the school districts. However, the towns would like to be more active with future issues when the need arises.

While school districts are working with area communities, additional communication and cooperation can be done that will benefit both the school districts and the communities. This may include sharing recreational facilities, utilizing existing school facilities for after school meeting space, and working together to coordinate the siting and utilization of new school facilities. Communities, school districts and local businesses can also establish agreements to work together on other issues. This can include partnerships to construct local buildings (sheds, garages, houses) that not only give students valuable life and work skills but also benefit individuals within the local community. Community service type projects by local students strengthen young people's senses of civic engagement and have life long implications. Local governments and school districts should establish a method of communication and explore ways in which they can work together. Joint cooperation between school districts will allow the goals of the comprehensive plan to be met while providing safe, efficient transportation, community services, and related amenities.

Although the planning area is served by two technical college districts, no classes are held within either Aurora or Bloomfield. The Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC) main campus is located in Appleton; a satellite campus is located in the City of Wautoma. The Moraine Park Technical College Campus is located in Fond du Lac. Classes are limited and the opportunity exists for area residents and communities to work with FVTC to increase the class selection.

Community Facilities

Due to the rural nature of Waushara County, many facilities are located in the City of Wautoma, Village of Redgranite or City of Berlin. Sheriff Officers are dispatched from the City of Wautoma. Fire protection is dispatched from the City of Berlin to the Town of Aurora, while two fire departments are located within Bloomfield. The Waushara County EMS operates a

service center in Poy Sippi to respond to calls in eastern Waushara County. Due to the proximity of the Town of Aurora with the City of Berlin, the town has established an agreement with the city for emergency service. For the most part, area school children travel daily to one of the incorporated communities (cities of Berlin or Weyauwega, or the villages of Fremont or Wild Rose) to attend public school. Finally, library facilities are located in the cities of Berlin and Weyauwega, the Town of Poy Sippi and the Village of Fremont.

Communities should periodically meet with providers of utility infrastructure (gas, electric, telephone, etc.), the WisDOT and the Waushara County Highway Department to discuss upcoming road construction and utility upgrades. Coordinating construction projects saves everyone time and money. Besides coordinating construction projects, local governments and school districts should work with utility companies and others to ensure that the technological infrastructure that is provided is sufficient to attract new growth. Infrastructure should include but not be limited to natural gas, electricity generation, telecommunications, and other similar services.

Currently all communities within the planning area have various intergovernmental agreements with one another in regard to public services and facilities. The three fire departments have mutual aid agreements with each other and the other districts/departments in both Waushara County and the adjoining counties. The Town of Aurora has an informal working agreement with the Marion-Warren Drainage District to assist in culvert and other drainage issues in the town. Communities should also strive to implement new intergovernmental agreements which involve senior citizens and other social services; park and recreational facilities; stormwater management; or other topics.

The towns of Aurora and Bloomfield have transportation related mutual aid agreements with the surrounding towns. The towns and their neighbors maintain responsibility for alternating road segments along common borders. For example, Bloomfield mows grass and provides snowplowing for a mile segment of 37th Avenue, and the Town of Wolf River supplies these services for the next mile of roadway.

County

The towns of Aurora and Bloomfield are located in Waushara County. Both towns have adopted county zoning and have therefore given the county jurisdiction over zoning matters including land divisions and private on-site wastewater systems. However, the County allows each town to comment on and approve all proposed development ~~(except within the City of Berlin ETZA portion of the Town of Aurora)~~ within its jurisdiction before it approves any final action. The County is also the permitting agent for on-site wastewater systems.

~~The City of Berlin ETZA committee has authority over zoning decisions within the Town of Aurora that fall within this area. Waushara County Shoreland Zoning ordinance takes precedence within the ETZA for lands that fall within the Town of Aurora.~~

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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. The communities and the County continue to maintain open communications with one another that work to foster good working relationships and mutual respect.

Region

Waushara County is a member of the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC). ECWRPC provides planning and technical assistance to counties, communities, businesses, interest groups and individuals within its region. These services include environmental management, housing, demographics, economic development, transportation, community facilities, land use, contract planning, and others. ECWRPC has worked with the towns of Aurora and Bloomfield on several projects over the years including the preparation of local and county park and open space plans, sewer service area planning, and the current comprehensive plan.

State of Wisconsin

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). The WDNR is responsible for the regulation, protection, and sustained management of natural resources within the state. The WDNR operates various programs in water and air quality management, habitat preservation, recreational trail development, and other programs. The WDNR helps local landowners successfully manage their woodlots for wildlife habitat and timber production throughout Waushara County. The WDNR also maintains environmental corridors which enhance surface water quality and stream habitat throughout the planning area. The WDNR maintains a service center in the Wautoma Industrial Park.

Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP). The overall mission of DATCP is multi-fold. The agency oversees programs which ensure the safety and quality of food, fair business practices for buyers and sellers, consumer protection, efficient use of agricultural resources in a quality environment, healthy animal and plant populations, and the vitality of Wisconsin agriculture and commerce. Since agriculture will continue to be an important economic industry within the planning area, many of the programs DATCP offers will benefit and help local citizens.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). WisDOT deals with issues related to all transportation uses in the planning area. WisDOT evaluates existing transportation infrastructure for bicycle and pedestrian trails as well as assists in planning efforts for future trails. The County maintains through an agreement with WisDOT the maintenance of the STH 21 and STH 49 corridors. Although there are no major expansion plans for these highways, the County and communities should collaborate with WisDOT to address transportation issues including a long-term vision for the STH 21 corridor and strategic locations for "Park & Ride" lots.

Intergovernmental Comprehensive Planning Efforts

The communities within the Group F planning cluster (Aurora, Bloomfield, and Poy Sippi) have met separately throughout the planning process to discuss issues related to each of the nine elements. By doing so, the municipalities have had minimal opportunity to discuss common goals and work together to resolve differences. The towns should establish an effective means of communication with neighboring communities to discuss land use goals and other policies as the need arises. Periodically, representatives from various agencies and businesses (WDNR, CAP Services, Waushara Area Chamber of Commerce, Waushara County Economic Development Corporation) should be invited to town board or plan commission meetings to talk and/or provide input into the implementation process.

Laws, Ordinances and Regulations

Cooperative Boundary Plans and Agreements. Cooperative boundary plans and agreements are joint planning efforts in which two or more municipalities establish a mutually agreeable plan to establish boundary lines, provide public services and facilities, share revenues, and establish land use criteria.¹ The majority of municipal boundary agreements are conducted between a town and an incorporated village or city. Cooperative boundary plans, which are subject to a minimum of a ten-year period, must be approved by the Wisconsin Department of Administration.

Extraterritorial Subdivision Regulation. Incorporated villages and cities can exercise plat review authority in unincorporated areas adjacent to their communities.² This allows incorporated areas the same authority to approve or reject a specific plat or CSM as if it were within its own jurisdiction. This authority extends to a distance of 1.5 miles from the incorporated boundary for villages and small cities and 3.0 miles for cities with population of greater than 10,000. The incorporated area must have a subdivision ordinance in place in order to exercise this authority.

Cities and villages can work to ensure that land use conflicts be minimized near the incorporated boundaries. If the incorporated area has more restrictive guidelines than the adjacent town, the city/village can require that the subdivisions meet the more restrictive regulations. A plat can be rejected if it conflicts with a city/village ordinance, fails to comply with state statutes, or fails to comply with the city/village master plan.

~~**Extraterritorial Zoning.** Incorporated villages and cities have been given authority to practice extraterritorial zoning authority if they have developed a zoning ordinance for the incorporated areas.³ This authority extends to a distance of 1.5 miles from the incorporated boundary for villages and cities with populations less than 10,000 and 3.0 miles for cities if the population exceeds 10,000. Extraterritorial zoning allows for smooth transitions between suburban and rural areas, reduces conflicting land uses, and promotes intergovernmental cooperation in planning for future community needs.~~

~~Three major steps are involved in the adoption of an extraterritorial zoning ordinance.⁴ First, the incorporated area must adopt and publicize a resolution to establish its intent to exercise its zoning authority within the extraterritorial area. Second, a joint committee with members from both the incorporated municipality and town must develop the specific zoning ordinance. Finally, the final plan must be adopted through the joint committee. The joint committee consists of three members from the city or village and three members from each affected town. This ensures that zoning cannot happen unless everyone agrees.~~

~~The City of Berlin has established an extraterritorial zoning area that extends into the Town of Aurora and includes sections 32 through 36.~~

¹ *Wisconsin State Statutes* s.66.0307.

² *Wisconsin State Statutes* s.236.10.

³ ~~*Wisconsin State Statutes* s.62.23.~~

⁴ Ohm, B. 1999. *Guide to Community Planning in Wisconsin*.

INTERRELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PLAN ELEMENTS

Economic Development

Communities should partner with community, county, and regional economic development groups; the local chamber of commerce; organizations such as CAP Services; state agencies such as Wisconsin Department of Commerce and UW-Extension; area school districts and technical schools; local businesses and others which promote economic development. Since the economy of the individual communities in the Group F cluster is dependent on the economy of all the municipalities in the area, all communities within Waushara County and the Tri-County region must work together.

Housing

Housing choices that reflect the needs of individual households are an integral part of comprehensive planning. Economic development professionals, housing providers, local government officials, county departments and consumers should work together to promote the development of housing that meets the needs of all income levels within the area. Communities should continue to work with and forge new ties with agencies such as CAP Services, United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS), the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, and private entities to ensure that an adequate amount of affordable housing is present.

Transportation

Communities should work with WisDOT, Waushara County and ECWRPC to resolve local, regional and state transportation related issues. Congestion and safety near the intersection of STH 21 and STH 49 should be resolved through coordination with WisDOT and the County. STH 21 corridor planning should be collaborated through a joint effort with input from all communities along the corridor; WisDOT, WDNR and other state agencies; regional planning commissions; interested citizens; and others.

Roadway projects must be jointly coordinated with public utilities, local emergency rescue departments, community departments, school districts and others to ensure that repairs are made cost-effectively and on a timely basis.

Utilities and Community Facilities

Coordination of road construction projects and utility upgrades can save everyone time and money. If a community is aware of a needed utility upgrade on a local street, they may also decide that it would be cost-effective for them to resurface the roadway after construction has occurred. Likewise, if a utility knows that a local road is going to be under construction, they may decide to upgrade their facilities at the same time.

Coordination of new school facilities is also vital. Communities need to plan for increased traffic, reuse of former buildings, and needed public infrastructure (roads, sewer, water, police and fire protection). Multi-use and extended use of buildings can also save the community money. A school facility is an ideal location to hold evening classes for adults, as well as

recreational programs and public meetings. In some instances, school districts have worked with communities to construct joint library projects and recreational facilities (swimming, gym and weight room).

Communities and the County should work together on joint and regional park and recreational programs and facilities. Some of the larger facilities such as a ski or tubing hill, ice rink and swimming pool maybe too costly for one entity to tackle alone. Moreover, the use of these facilities is not limited to the residents of one community but is usually enjoyed by the residents and visitors of the entire area. Countywide recreational leagues may also be something that can be investigated. One community alone may not have enough participation to field a sufficient number of teams to support league play, but with input from a number of communities in the area, this may become feasible. Some things that could be investigated may include soccer (adult and youth), baseball (adult and youth), volleyball, or others.

Agricultural Resources

The economy and the character of the area are dependent on a viable agricultural community. Preserving productive agricultural land and maintaining a critical mass of farmers in the area to sustain the local agribusiness are tasks that can not be tackled alone. It will take input and support from communities, farmers, economic development groups, local agencies, and citizens alike. The goals, objectives and strategies that communities and the County develop during the comprehensive planning effort will have a direct impact on the agricultural economy.

Natural Resources

Preserving the natural resources of the area is a joint effort. Natural resources do not stop at municipal boundaries. The actions and policies of one community impact the resources of another. A topographic divide separates surface water drainage between the Upper Wisconsin River Basin to the west and the Upper Fox River Basin to the east in the western portion of Waushara County. For this reason, the county has a number of pristine class 1 trout streams and exceptional water resources. The success of the County and the individual community's protection of these resources will impact the quality of the surface and groundwater for communities downstream and down gradient. To protect these valuable resources, communities must work with the WDNR and County to ensure that the actions and policies that they are using are effective in protecting water quality.

Cultural Resources

The cultural and historical features of a community help define it. Preserving these resources that residents feel have made meaningful contributions to the community's heritage allows a connection to the past and an opportunity to pass this heritage onto future generations. Communities should work together to seek funding from the Wisconsin Historical Society to identify and evaluate historical, architectural and archeological resources in the area. Joint efforts should be made to ensure consistency between communities on planning related issues that affect cultural and historical resources. Finally, communities and the County should work together to educate citizens and elected officials about the importance of these resources and how they can be protected.

Land Use

Land use brings the other elements together. The future land use map illustrates existing and future development based on the goals, objectives and strategies that each community has established. Land use decisions of one community have a direct impact on other communities. Communities should work together to jointly develop visions of how land along joint borders should be developed or preserved. When new development or land divisions occur in these areas, joint input should be obtained before decisions are made. The City of Berlin currently exercises extraterritorial jurisdictions within a 1.5 mile boundary of its incorporated limits. Extraterritorial zoning not only gives the city input on how these areas are to develop, but it also strengthens communication in the area. Joint planning will continue to give the Berlin area cohesiveness in the direction development should take and area-wide consensus in the decision making process that will ultimately shape the future of the entire area.

POLICIES

State, Regional and County Policies

State

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) routinely engage in master planning for natural resource management and transportation purposes. The University of Wisconsin Extension office located in Wautoma serves as an educational resource for County residents.

Waushara County is located within the Northeast Region of the WDNR. The Northeast Region has a regional office in Green Bay and a service center in Wautoma. A master plan is developed for each property that WDNR owns. This plan establishes goals and objectives for how the property will be managed and developed.⁵ In addition, the master plan delineates adjacent lands or related parcels that should be acquired in the future to expand the property. The master plan discusses not only the proposed future of the property, but also the benefits it will provide to local communities. In order for the WDNR master planning process to be effective, local participation from the affected communities is needed. All citizens affected by the WDNR owned land should consider becoming involved in the planning process or attending meetings related to the projects.

Waushara County is located within the North Central Region of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). The North Central Region has regional offices in Wisconsin Rapids and Rhinelander. WisDOT has prepared several master plans specifically for various modes of transportation as well as a highway improvement plan.⁶ Although the plans are adequate to 2020, these plans will be periodically updated. Group F communities should take a proactive role in all transportation planning processes in the future to ensure that, as existing transportation facilities are expanded to meet the existing and future needs of the individual communities, the planning area, Waushara County, and the State of Wisconsin, other local concerns are addressed.

⁵ Wisconsin DNR. 2005. *Property Master Planning*. http://dnr.wi.gov/master_planning/.

⁶ Wisconsin DOT. 2005. *Plans and Projects*. <http://www.dot.state.wi.us/projects/mode.htm>.

Regional

East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has adopted the first two of four milestones in their regional comprehensive planning process. It is anticipated that the final milestone report will be adopted in 2007. The communities within the planning cluster should use the information identified in the first two milestone reports and actively participate in the remaining planning effort.

County

Waushara County Comprehensive Plan. While Waushara County has not adopted a smart growth comprehensive plan in accordance with s.66.1001, it does anticipate completion of a county-wide plan within the next 5 years. It is the responsibility of the communities within the Group F planning cluster to actively participate in the county-wide plan and to promote the incorporation of their land use planning decisions into the overall Waushara County plan.

Waushara County Land and Water Management Plan. Waushara County has recently adopted the County Land and Water Management Plan. This plan was developed by the County Land Conservation Committee with assistance from a citizen advisory committee that included representatives from the WDNR, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Central Wisconsin Windshed Partners, and Watershed Lakes Council. It is the responsibility of the communities within the planning cluster to review and implement this plan within their respective jurisdictions.