

## Chapter 8 - Intergovernmental Cooperation

State of Wisconsin Statute, Comprehensive Planning, 66.1001 (2) (g), states the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element of a community's comprehensive plan is intended to be: *"A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions, including school districts, drainage districts, and adjacent local governmental units, for siting and building public facilities and sharing public services. The element shall analyze the relationship of the local governmental unit to school districts, drainage districts, and adjacent local governmental units, and to the region, the state and other governmental units. The element shall consider, to the greatest extent possible, the maps and plans of any military base or installation, with at least 200 assigned military personnel or that contains at least 2,000 acres, with which the local governmental unit shares common territory. The element shall incorporate any plans or agreements to which the local governmental unit is a party under s. 66.0301, 66.0307 or 66.0309. The element shall identify existing or potential conflicts between the local governmental unit and other governmental units that are specified in this paragraph and describe processes to resolve such conflicts."*

### Introduction

The primary goal of a governmental unit is to best serve the interests of its constituents in the most responsible, efficient, and economical manner. The contemporary governing model, in which a broad array of overlapping governmental units provides varying levels of service, requires a cooperative, constructive relationship between these units to ensure achievement of this goal.

However, cooperative, constructive relations between governmental units is often difficult, as these units will likely have disparate opinions and methods of how to most responsibly, efficiently, and economically serve their constituents. Furthermore, impediments to cooperative, constructive intergovernmental relations are often exacerbated when overlapping governmental units, such as a County and a Town, provide different services to the same constituents.

Thus, given the contemporary governing model, compromise and communication between governmental units is vital to ensure constructive, cooperative intergovernmental relations, so as to ultimately achieve government's goal of serving all constituents in the most responsible, efficient, and economical manner.

### Goal and Objectives

#### Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal

*Continue to encourage mutually beneficial relations between the Town of Turtle and other governmental jurisdictions, to increase efficiencies and evade conflicts.*

*Objective:* Maintain open communication and cooperation among area governmental entities, while improving proficiencies and cost savings by sharing services and provisions.

### Inventory of Jurisdictions

This section identifies these various governmental units by category, and where relevant, their enabling legislation, governing structure, duties and powers, and long-term planning interests.

## General-Purpose Districts - Town, County, and City

General-purpose districts provide a wide array of vital services, including but not limited to, police and law enforcement, street repair and maintenance, and water management, to residents living within their borders. These districts, termed local government units, conform to municipal boundaries and include Towns, Counties, and Cities. General-purpose districts are organized, with powers and duties granted, per *State of Wisconsin Statutes, Chapters 59, 60, 62, and 66*. These *Statutes* designate Counties and Towns as unincorporated local government units, generally providing a narrower array of services to a predominately rural population, and Cities as incorporated government units, generally providing a broader array of services to a predominately urban population. The Town is served directly by two general-purpose districts (Town of Turtle and Rock County) and shares a border with, or is in close proximity to, four other general-purpose districts (three Towns and one City) in the State of Wisconsin, as well the neighboring counties in Illinois. The following identifies these districts:

### Town of Turtle

The Town of Turtle is governed by a Town Board, comprised of an elected Chairman and 4 elected supervisors. The Town Board oversees the daily operations of Town services and sets the Town's long-term policies by creating, modifying, or repealing Town ordinances, approving the Town budget, and appointing a six-member Planning Commission, as well as a number of committees, which Town Board members also sit on. The Commission hears planning and development proposals, and provides a recommendation regarding proposals and applications to the Town Board. The Town also has a Clerk/Treasurer, Assessor, Fire Chief, Police Chief, Highway Superintendent and Building Inspector. The Town has fixed boundaries, and its long-range planning interests include preservation of productive agricultural lands and responsible housing development in appropriate, designated locations.

### Rock County

Rock County, comprised of 20 Towns, three Villages, and six Cities, is governed by a Board of Supervisors, consisting of 29 elected members representing the County's various geographical regions. The County Board of Supervisors, headed by a Chair, sets the County's long-term policies by creating, modifying, or repealing County ordinances, approving the County budget, and staffing various committees governing the County's services. The Board of Supervisors also appoints a County Administrator, responsible for overseeing the daily operations of County services. The Town is within Rock County. The County has fixed boundaries, and its long-range planning interests include preservation of productive agricultural lands and responsible housing, commercial, and light development in appropriate, designated locations.

### Town of Beloit

The Town of Beloit is governed by a Town Board, comprised an elected Chairman and 4 elected supervisors. The Town also has their own Administrator, Clerk, Building Inspector, Code Enforcement Officer, Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, and Recycling Coordinator.

The Town is currently working on their Comprehensive Plan, to be completed by the end of 2009, with assistance from the firm R.H. Batterman. They are considering the possibility of incorporation.

### Town of La Prairie

The Town of La Prairie is governed by a Town Board, comprised an elected Chairman and 4 elected supervisors. The Town also has a Clerk, Treasurer and Assessor, and outsources to the firm R.H. Batterman to conduct building inspection services.

The Town's Comprehensive Plan was just recently completed with Assistance from Rock County Planning and Development. The Town is not planning for development of any additional lands, and land directly adjacent to the Town of Turtle's north boundary is predominantly planned for agricultural preservation, with existing residences located along Townline Road.

#### Town of Clinton

The Town of Clinton is governed by a Town Board, comprised of an elected Chairman and 4 elected supervisors. The Town also has a Clerk, Treasurer, Appraiser and contracted Building Inspector.

The Town's Comprehensive Plan is currently being completed with assistance from Rock County Planning and Development. The Town is planning for residential growth extending both east and west of the Village of Clinton, which would abut the north end of the Town of Turtle's eastern boundary.

#### City of Beloit

A Council, comprised of a President and six Councilors, governs the City of Beloit. The Council sets the City's long-term policies by creating, modifying, or repealing City ordinances, approving the City budget, and staffing various committees governing the City's services. The Council also appoints the City Administrator, tasked with overseeing the daily operations of City services.

The City adopted a Comprehensive Plan in March of 2008, with assistance from Vandewalle and Associates. In 2003 the City's Economic Development Plan was completed, and their Stormwater Management Plan followed in 2004. Regarding highway corridors, the City completed their Gateway Plan in 1999 and Highway Corridor Plans for the Gateway Extension and Freeman Parkway are currently underway. Regarding neighborhood plans, the Merrill and Westside Asset Plans were completed in 2002. A Solid Waste Management Plan has also been completed for the City. Beloit's last zoning ordinance was adopted in 1999, and their Land Division Ordinance was adopted in 2002.

#### Winnebago County, Illinois

Winnebago County borders the western half of Turtle, to the south. It had a 2000 population of 278,418 people and covers 520 square miles. Rockford is the county seat. A Future Land Use Plan Map, and accompanying goals, objectives and policies have been drafted as part of their 2030 Land Resource Management Plan, adopted in 2008.

#### Boone County, Illinois

Boone County borders the eastern half of Turtle, to the south. It had a 2000 population of 41,786 people and covers 290 square miles. Belvidere is the county seat. They have a Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 1999.

### **Special-Purpose Districts - School and Other**

Special-purpose districts differ from general-purpose districts by providing a single, or a few, focused services, including but not limited to, public education, fire protection, sewer service, and water management, to residents living within their borders. These districts often cross general-purpose district boundaries, and are organized, with powers and duties granted, per *State of Wisconsin Statute, Chapter 60* and *120*.

#### School District of Beloit

This District serves over 7,100 students. It has 12 elementary schools, 1 charter school, 2 middle schools and 1 high school. A School Board of 8 elected members, with a Superintendent to oversee the District's daily operations, governs it. Some Town islands surrounded by city are within this District.

*Beloit Turner School District*

This District serves over 1,200 students. It has 2 elementary schools, 1 middle school and 1 high school. A School Board of 7 elected members, with a Superintendent to oversee the District's daily operations, governs it. Most of the western portion of the Town is within this District.

*Clinton Community School District*

This District has 1 elementary school, 1 middle school and 1 high school. A School Board of 7 elected members, with a Superintendent to oversee the District's daily operations, governs it. The eastern portion of the Town is within this District.

*Stateline Area Transportation Study (SLATS)*

The Stateline Area Transportation Study (SLATS) Planning Area includes the City of Beloit and its surroundings, including all of the Town of Turtle. It crosses the state line into portions of Winnebago County, IL as well. The City of Beloit Engineering Division provides the staff support for SLATS. A Technical Advisory Committee for SLATS makes recommendations to a Policy Board made up of 11 members. This Technical Advisory Committee is comprised of transportation engineers, planners and administrators from the member communities, as well as representatives from the WisDOT, and Illinois Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration.

**Government Representation Districts**

State Senate district 15 covers the Town of Turtle, in addition to much of the rest of Rock County. State Assembly district 45 covers the Town of Turtle, in addition to the rest of the eastern portion of the County and the City of Beloit.

There are two United States Senators representing the entire State of Wisconsin, and eight members of congress. The Town of Turtle is within congressional district #1.

**State**

State governments wield all governmental powers reserved to them, per the United States Constitution. The State of Wisconsin's Constitution dictates the structure of the State government, delineating three branches, the Executive, Legislative and Judicial. The State's Constitution is carried out through various statutes, administrative codes, and legislative acts. Administration and enforcement of these statutes, codes, and acts is undertaken by State agencies. The Town is served by various State agencies. The following identifies these agencies:

*Department of Transportation (WisDOT)*

This Department plans, promotes and financially supports statewide air, rail, water, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation systems. This Department is responsible for planning, building, and maintaining the network of state highways and the Interstate highway system in the State of Wisconsin, and also shares the costs of building and operating County and Local government transportation systems. WisDOT has a central office in the City of Madison. The Town is also in the Department's Southwest Region, with offices located in the City of LaCrosse and Madison.

Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)

This Department is dedicated to the responsible management of the State of Wisconsin's natural resources. This Department is responsible for implementing the laws of the State and the Federal government (where applicable) that protect and enhance the State's natural resources, as well as coordinating the many disciplines and programs necessary to provide a clean environment and a full range of outdoor recreational opportunities for citizens of, and visitors to, the State of Wisconsin. WDNR has a central office in the City of Madison. The Town is also in the Department's Southcentral Region, with an office located in the City of Janesville.

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)

This Department is responsible for protecting water and soil, and animal and plant health, promoting the State of Wisconsin's agriculture at home and abroad. DATCP has a central office located in the City of Madison. The Town is also in the Department's Madison Region, with an office located in the City of Madison.

State of Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

This Authority links State of Wisconsin residents and communities to affordable housing and economic development opportunities, by providing construction, rehabilitation, and permanent mortgage loans to eligible sponsors of housing projects for low and moderate-income households. The WHEDA office located in the City of Madison serves the Town.

**Federal**

The United States Government is organized on principles put forth in its Constitution. The United States Constitution delineates three branches of government, the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial, and reserves numerous rights for States. The Constitution is carried out through various laws, regulations, and legislative acts. Administration and enforcement of these laws, regulations, and acts is undertaken by Federal agencies. The Town is served by various Federal agencies. The following identifies these agencies:

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

This Department manages the Nation's agricultural resources by expanding markets, both domestically and internationally, for agricultural products, providing financing to expand rural housing, utilities, infrastructure, and job opportunities, reducing food borne hazards, improving health through food assistance and nutrition education, and managing agricultural lands cooperatively with other levels of government and the private sector. A USDA field office located in the City of Janesville serves the Town.

United States Housing and Urban Development Agency (HUD)

This Agency is responsible for national policy and programs that address the Nation's housing needs, thereby improving and developing the Nation's communities. The Town is in HUD's Region 5, with an office located in the City of Milwaukee.

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

This Agency implements federal regulatory laws, through enforcement and by setting national standards that states enforce through their own regulations, to protect human health and the environment. Almost half of this agency's budget goes towards grants to state environmental programs, various non-profits organizations, and other entities. Additionally, this agency works with various partners, including state and local governments to conserve water and energy, minimize greenhouse gases, re-use solid waste. The Town is in EPA's Region 5, with an office located in the City of Chicago, Illinois.

## Intergovernmental Cooperation Issues and Opportunities

This section identifies the Town's Issues and Opportunities regarding Intergovernmental Cooperation.

### Potential Concerns and Conflicts

Town officials feel the only concern or conflict regarding intergovernmental cooperation between the Town of Turtle and other jurisdictions is the City of Beloit's unwillingness to extend sewer and/or water, unless the property being serviced is annexed. The Town would like the City to consider perhaps adjusting special fees to unincorporated properties being served with these utilities, but not requiring annexation.

### Land Use Planning Coordination

Turtle is fortunate to have a Cooperative Boundary Agreement with the City of Beloit, which helps to stave off land use disagreements. However, the City still frowns upon development in the unincorporated Town that is not hooked up to their urban infrastructure. And, for that reason the City would like to negotiate an amendment to the original 1999 agreement.

In addition, land use planning involves more than merely deciding where development will take place. There are other aspects, such as trail and recreation planning. Trails often need to cross numerous jurisdictions to be vast and interconnected enough to attract users, and Turtle should continue to cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions in this regard. Also, park and recreation facilities in the Town have the potential to provide more and improved offerings if

### Sharing of Provisions

The Town of Turtle, like all local governments, has the task of providing essential services to taxpayers. Effectively providing those services, without increasing taxes or relying on ever dwindling federal and state aid, is becoming more of a challenge. For that reason, it makes sense to explore opportunities to share provisions, such as equipment and labor.

The Town already shares provisions to some extent, with the City of Beloit, Town of La Prairie and with the County. With the City of Beloit and with the County, snow plowing and police protection duties sometimes cross boundaries for the sake of efficiency and convenience. The Town of La Prairie contributes to maintain Turtle's cemeteries, and the Turtle Fire Department serves the southern portion of La Prairie. However, it could prove beneficial to explore further opportunities to share provisions, such as equipment and labor. Perhaps there are ways for Turtle to trade provisions, or rent them to other jurisdictions and vice versa, for a nominal fee. Consolidating services is another option, or making joint purchases of equipment, with shared ownership.

## Intergovernmental Cooperation Policies

- 1) Continue open communication with neighboring communities.
- 2) Work with the City of Beloit to extend Cooperative Boundary Agreement.
- 3) Explore opportunities and benefits of potential contracting, service consolidation, and/or provision sharing among Turtle and other jurisdictions.
- 4) Participate in a Growth Management Coalition led by Rock County.
- 5) Participate in and promote regional transportation, land use and economic development efforts.