

Chapter 8- Intergovernmental Cooperation

8.1 Introduction

Per State of Wisconsin Statute 66.1001 (2)(g), 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 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 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. 66.0311, 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.

As the Town of La Prairie looks to implement its new Comprehensive Plan, the greatest opportunities for success will come from strong leadership that promotes and encourages collaboration and consensus between various governmental entities.

Wisconsin ranks thirteenth nationwide in total number of governmental units and third nationwide in governmental unit per capita. Having so many governmental units allows for very local representation and means that Wisconsin residents have numerous opportunities to participate in local decision-making. However, the sheer number of governmental units with overlapping decision-making authority presents challenges. More governmental units can make communication, coordination, and effective action more difficult, creating a greater potential for conflict. More governmental units may also mean unwanted and wasteful duplication in the delivery of community services. Cooperation can help to avoid this.

The Town of La Prairie currently has cooperative agreements with the City of Janesville Fire and EMS departments that cover the northern two-thirds of the township and the Town of Turtle Fire and EMS departments that cover the southern one-third.

Cooperation between neighboring and overlapping units of government is one of the primary goals of the Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law. Achieving consensus among these adjoining communities will have a better opportunity to increase financial efficiencies and ensure a higher quality of life for all the residents of the town. For this reason this element is potentially the most important element the Town of La Prairie will be discussing.

8.2 Government Jurisdictions Adjoining Town of La Prairie

Rock County

The County of Rock was created in 1836 when the Towns of Newark, Plymouth, Center, Porter, Beloit, Rock, Janesville, Johnstown, Fulton, Turtle, La Prairie, Harmony, Milton, Clinton, Bradford, and Lima were taken from Milwaukee County and incorporated into Rock County. In 1838, the towns of Avon, Spring Valley, Magnolia and Union were added giving Rock County the boundary lines it presently possesses.

Rock County operates under the Board/Administrator form of government. The Rock County Board of Supervisors consists of 29 members. The Town of La Prairie is located in 7 & 29 of the County Board Supervisory Districts.

The County Board of Supervisors is the legislative authority with power to enact ordinances and adopt budgets. The board members are up for election every two years and elect one of its members to serve as County Board Chair.

The County Administrator serves as the Chief Administrative Officer with a number of responsibilities including the authority to hire and supervise appointed department heads and recommend an annual budget to the County Board. County officials that are elected are Sheriff, Clerk of Courts, District Attorney, County Clerk, Register of Deeds, County Treasurer and Coroner.

The Rock Court System includes 7 Branches each is presided over by a Circuit Court Judge who is elected to a six-year term.

The county has some jurisdiction within the town. In particular, Rock County has jurisdiction over land divisions, on-site sanitary systems, and floodplain, and shore land zoning areas. Rock County also maintains the roads in La Prairie Township.

City of Janesville

The county seat for Rock County is the City of Janesville. Settled in 1853, the City first prospered due to the accessibility of water power to fuel industries along the Rock River. Early growth of the City was driven by agriculture and the railroad. As of April 2008, the top five employers in the City are General Motors (note GM's anticipated closure by December, 2008), Mercy Health System, School District of Janesville, Rock County and LSS.

The City of Janesville last updated their Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Plan in 1989. A Park and Open Space Plan were adopted by Janesville in 2008, and they adopted a Consolidated Housing Plan in 2005. The City's last Solid Waste Management Plan was the 208 Water Quality Management Plan of 2007. Two neighborhood plans have been completed in the City: the NE Area Plan in 2000 and the SW Janesville Area Plan in 2002.

Janesville's Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1981, and their Land Division Ordinance was adopted in 1972. A Cooperative Boundary Agreement has been completed between the City of Janesville and the Town of Rock. Current policy for the City is that properties must be annexed before municipal water and sewer is extended to new properties. Land within the Cooperative Boundary Agreement is exempt from this policy.

The City of Janesville has Extraterritorial Platting Jurisdiction (ETP). State Statutes allow an incorporated village or city to extend land division review over surrounding unincorporated areas. In the case of the City of Janesville, that jurisdiction is 3-miles from the current city limits. This helps cities or villages ensure that development near its boundaries is compatible with existing development and that such development is designed in a way that promotes efficient delivery of public services in the future if the development ever becomes part of the city.

Towns Surrounding the Town of La Prairie

Town of Harmony

The Town of Harmony lies immediately to the north of the Town of La Prairie. It encompasses 22.6 square miles of area. Although predominately rural in character, there is a high level of urban influence that comes from a number of rural subdivision development and sharing a border with the City of Janesville. The 2007 estimated population is 2,464. The Town has its own zoning ordinance adopted in 1998 and also issues building permits for additions, and new construction.

Town of Rock

The Town of Rock lies immediately to the west of the Town of La Prairie. It contains 30 square miles of area, 29.5 of which is land and .5 square miles is water (Rock River). The unincorporated community of Afton is located within the Town. The 2007 estimated population is 3,338. The Town has its own zoning ordinance adopted in December 1982. The Town has its own building inspector that issues permits for additions and new construction. The Southern Wisconsin Airport is located within the Town but is now located in the City of Janesville.

Town of Bradford

The Town of Bradford lies immediately to the east of the Town of La Prairie. It contains 36 square miles of primarily prime agricultural land. Turtle Creek runs through the southern portion of the Town on its way to the Rock River. Unincorporated Emerald Grove and Avalon are located within the town boundaries. The current town-zoning ordinance was adopted in 2003. The 2007 estimated population of the Town is 1,035.

Town of Turtle

The Town of Turtle lies immediately to the south of the Town of La Prairie and has a current population of 2,429. It contains approximately 26.5 square miles of area. Turtle Creek, the Town's namesake, runs diagonally across the Town from northeast to southwest. The Town has its own public works department, and police department. The Town zoning ordinance was adopted in December 2005. The town shares its western border with the City of Beloit and a boundary agreement has been adopted sharing the pace and responsibility of future development.

Transportation Planning Jurisdictions

There are two separate metropolitan planning organizations designated for transportation planning in Rock County; the Janesville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Stateline Area Transportation Study (SLATS). SLATS and the Janesville Area MPO are just two of the twelve Metropolitan Planning Organizations responsible for transportation planning in the State of Wisconsin.

The Janesville Area MPO encompasses the City of Janesville, City of Milton and portions of the Towns of Janesville, Harmony, La Prairie, Milton and Rock. The MPO is staffed from within the City of Janesville's Community Development Department. A Technical Advisory Committee for the MPO makes recommendations to the MPO's 16-member Policy Board. In addition to representatives from the municipalities within the MPO boundaries, The Technical Advisory Committee is also comprised of representatives from Rock County, The City of Beloit, the

Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration, as well as a bicycle/pedestrian representative and a freight representative.

The SLATS Metropolitan Planning Area includes the City of Beloit and its surroundings, and crosses the state line into South Beloit, Rockton and small parts of Roscoe, Illinois and the surrounding areas of unincorporated Winnebago County, Illinois. The City of Beloit Engineering Division provides the staff support for SLATS. As with the Janesville Area MPO, a Technical Advisory Committee makes recommendations to a Policy Board. The SLATS Policy Board has eleven members. The SLATS Technical Advisory Committee is comprised of transportation engineers, planners and administrators from the member communities, as well as representatives from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration.

Public Transit Systems

Both the Cities of Beloit and Janesville operate transit systems. The Janesville Transit System has 6 routes, three of which offer nighttime service that runs until 10:15 in the evening. Beloit Transit has 5 routes, none of which operate in the evening. In addition to the routes that run throughout the two cities, there is a route called the Beloit-Janesville Express, which runs between the two cities. This route operates daytime, Monday through Friday. It originates at the Beloit transfer center and the Janesville transfer center, with stops at the Rock County Job Center, UW Rock County, Blackhawk Technical College, and various Rock Valley Community Programs.

The Rock County Council on Aging provides transportation for elderly individuals. Wheelchair lift-equipped vans can take patrons to specialized destinations, including to medical appointments outside of the County.

Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport

The Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport is located west of Highway 51, between the Cities of Janesville and Beloit. There is no commercial passenger air service at the airport. Rock County manages and operates the airport, and it is utilized strictly for corporate aviation and general aviation. Over 100,000 flights take place at the airport annually, and the airport site is approximately 1,300 acres in size.

A FAA operated control tower is manned at the airport, from 6:00 a.m. to 9 p.m. each day. There are three runways. Their lengths are 7,300 feet, 5,000 feet and 6,701 feet. Two of the runways are 150 feet wide, while the third is 75 feet wide. All taxiways are 50 feet wide.

Emergency personnel are on-site at the airport, as are crash, fire and rescue vehicles. The on-site fire station is managed by the City of Janesville. There is on-site security provided by the Rock County Sheriff's Department. There are eight snow removal vehicles that operate at the airport.

There are several services based at the Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport. These include fuel sales, rental, repair, instruction, hangers and charter services. An automobile rental agency is located at the airport. There is a terminal that offers a restaurant and conference room, as well as an aircraft sales dealership.

The Rock County Board has recently adopted an airport overlay zoning and land use plan. The plan will aid in keeping the Southern Wisconsin Airport a viable mode of transportation in the

region throughout the 25-year planning period and beyond. The western 1/3 of the town lies within the outermost zone that regulates land uses. There is currently a height-zoning ordinance in effect.

Housing Authorities

City of Janesville

The City of Janesville Community Development Authority (CDA) has the authority to plan and implement the community development programs, housing projects and redevelopment projects. The CDA reports to the City Council and consists of five citizen members and Council members.

City of Beloit

The City of Beloit Housing Authority assists in providing adequate and affordable housing, economic opportunity and a suitable living environment. It provides loans for low-income, elderly and disabled residents of the greater Beloit area.

Rock County

Services provided by Rock County include the preparation of grant applications subsequent contract administration to assist in providing safe, and sanitary housing in the unincorporated areas, smaller cities and villages in Rock county. Some of the prevalent programs being operated by the County are to assist low income families to become home owners; to assist households with special needs, very low income and the elderly in improving their homes; to improve the energy efficiency of Rock County housing; and to administer the revolving housing loan fund for the rehabilitation of low and moderate family housing units as funds are available.

Economic Development Corporations

The Rock County Economic Development Alliance is a cooperative effort by economic development professionals, to promote development efforts throughout the County. They aim to attract business and industry to the area. They maintain economic and demographic data and market available industrial properties in the County.

In addition, individual cities in the County head their own economic development efforts. The non-profit association called *Forward Janesville* works to ensure the continued health and prosperity of business and industry in the Janesville area. In Beloit, the group *Greater Beloit Works* organizes economic development activities and efforts in the region surrounding and including the City of Beloit.

In smaller communities in the County, economic development efforts are often folded into the functions of the Chambers of Commerce.

Chambers of Commerce

There are six separate chambers of commerce throughout Rock County. The communities of Janesville, Beloit, Milton, Edgerton and Evansville each have in place their own chambers, while Orfordville and Footville have a collective chamber of commerce. Each of these chambers works to support and promote their local business communities while encouraging and assisting new business growth. A board of directors governs them each and they organize various events, newsletters and fundraisers, aimed at improving the economic vitality of their communities.

Rock County Land Conservation

The County's Land Conservation office provides educational, technical and conservation planning assistance to landowners, land users and communities throughout Rock County. They have a staff of five, and are governed by a committee comprised of County Board Supervisors as well as one representative from the USDA-FSA.

Some of the programs Land Conservation is involved in include the Farmland Preservation Program, the Land and Water Resource Management Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Animal Waste Management Program, Well Abandonment, and Wildlife Damage Claim Program. They also work with the Town of Beloit to acquire funds for the Gypsy Moth Program, and they organize a yearly Clean Sweep, where Rock County residents can safely dispose of household and agricultural hazardous waste.

UW-Extension

Rock County UW Extension extends the knowledge and resources of the University of Wisconsin to the people where they live and work. Cooperative Extension offices develop practical educational programs tailored to local needs and based on university knowledge and research.

The program areas that the local extension office is involved in are 4-H Youth Development, Nutrition Education, Horticulture, Family Living and Agricultural. A popular program organized by the office is the Community Garden Program located adjacent to the sheriff's department off of Highway 14. This past season 140 plots were rented to local gardeners.

School Districts

There are three school districts that are located within the Town. These are the School Districts of Janesville, Beloit Turner School District, and Clinton Community School District.

The School District of Janesville is the largest in the County. It has an enrollment of approximately 10,400 students and includes 12 elementary schools, 1 charter school, 1 academy, 3 middle schools and 2 high schools.

Beloit Turner School District has over 1,200 students, approximately 13% of which are there on open enrollment. It serves portions of the City of Beloit and much of the unincorporated Town of Beloit, Town of Turtle residents and a small portion of the Town of La Prairie. This district has 2 elementary schools, 1 middle school and 1 high school.

Clinton Community School District serves the Village of Clinton and the surrounding area. It has 1 elementary school, 1 middle school and 1 high school.

These three school districts are a part of the Cooperative Educational Services Agency (CESA) District 2. This district covers seven counties in south central Wisconsin and contains over 136,000 students.

Universities/Colleges/Vocational Schools

There are many opportunities for higher education in La Prairie Township, with two 4-year colleges, one 2-year college, one technical college and other small private and correspondence programs readily available.

Beloit College is the only 4-year college in the County. It is located on a 40-acre campus on the northern edge of the downtown in the City of Beloit. It has an enrollment of approximately 1200 students, hailing from all over the country and from more than 40 different nations. It is a private liberal arts school, founded in 1846. Fifty different majors are offered at Beloit College, along with 30 different minors and several pre-professional programs.

The University of Whitewater lies just outside Rock County to the northeast. This four-year college provides 46 undergraduate and 13 master's degrees to approximately 11,000 students. It was founded in 1868 and is the state's second normal school.

University of Wisconsin Rock County is a two-year liberal arts transfer campus, which is one of 13 in the state. This institution is located in Janesville, at 2909 Kellogg Avenue, and had a fall 2006 enrollment of 930 students. In recent year, enrollment has steadily increased. UW-Rock County offers freshman and sophomore general education courses, transferable to Wisconsin's 4-year schools. Also, UW-Milwaukee, UW-Whitewater and UW-Platteville each have collaboration with UW-Rock County, where students can attend class at the UW-Rock County campus, and earn bachelor degrees for these 4-year institutions.

Blackhawk Technical College has two locations in Rock County. The central campus is located at 6004 Prairie Rd., between the cities of Beloit and Janesville, while another, smaller campus is located on Janesville's north side, at 1740 Highway 14. Blackhawk Tech offers a number of Associate degree programs, ranging from various office and computer courses to criminal justice, culinary arts and many degrees in the medical field. Diploma programs and Certificate programs are also offered at the school, mostly focusing on technical and medical fields. Apprenticeship programs for a number of specialty laborer jobs are also administered through Blackhawk Tech. In addition, the school offers an aviation program at the Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport.

8.3 State and Federal Agency Jurisdictions

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is organized into 8 district offices, of which Rock County is located in District 1. Columbia, Dane Dodge, Grant, Green Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette and Sauk counties join Rock in District 1. The District offices are located in Madison.

WisDOT is a key player in the planning and development of highways and pedestrian/cycling facilities in the town. In addition, WisDOT is responsible for the maintenance of USH 11/14. Currently, the US14/Wis 11 Corridor Study is being conducted. It is important for the Town of La Prairie to continue to coordinate with the WisDOT and surrounding communities on this project.

Open communication and participation in land use and transportation decisions, which may impact the town, is an important priority for intergovernmental cooperation in the future.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is aligned into 5 geographical regions. Rock County is located in the South Central Region. Other counties in the South Central Region are Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Grant, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Richland and Sauk.

It is the mission of the DNR to protect and enhance the natural resources of the State of Wisconsin. It is dedicated to the preservation, and protection of the State's natural resources. It also implements the laws of the government that protect the navigable waters of the state for coordinating the many programs to provide full range of outdoor recreational opportunities such as boating, fishing, and the use of recreational trails.

The Rock County Snowmobile trail is an example of such a trail. The monies obtained from registration fees of the state's snowmobiles provide trail maintenance, signs and oversight through the volunteering of the many local snowmobile clubs in the county.

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)

Given the importance of agriculture in the Town of La Prairie, DATCP plays an important role in the town. DATCP policies, programs and directives impact local agricultural operations.

The mission of DATCP is to serve the citizens of the state by assuring:

- The safety and quality of food
- Fair business practices for the buyer and seller
- Efficient use of agricultural resources in a quality environment
- Consumer protection
- Healthy animals and plants
- The vitality of Wisconsin agriculture and commerce

Government Representation Districts

United States Senator Herb Kohl was elected to the senate in 1988 and reelected in 1994, 2000, and 2006. Russ Feingold, a Janesville native, was elected in 1998 and reelected in 2004.

The Town of La Prairie is located in the 1st Congressional District of Wisconsin represented by Paul Ryan, a native of the City of Janesville. Congressman Ryan has been elected since 1998. Geographically, the 1st Congressional District is located in the eastern half of the county including the Cities of Milton and Janesville. There are a total of eight congressional districts in Wisconsin. The 1st Congressional district entails all of parts of 6 counties in southeast Wisconsin.

Judith Robson is the State Senator representing the 15th Senate District. Senator Robson has been serving the district in that capacity since 1998. Before that she was the state representative elected in June 1987. The 15th Senate District covers the entire county except Magnolia and Union Township. It also includes the Towns of Richmond and Whitewater in Walworth County and south half of the City of Whitewater.

The Town of La Prairie is in the 45th Assemble District and its representative is Chuck Benedict. Representative Benedict has been elected since 2004. Besides the Town of La Prairie, the 45th District covers the Towns of Harmony, Johnstown, Bradford, Turtle, Clinton, and the Town of Richmond in Walworth County, the City of Beloit, the northeast portion of the City of Janesville and the Village of Clinton.

8.4 Potential Concerns and Conflicts

An important part of this element is to identify any concerns or conflicts with other local governmental jurisdiction; whether it is city, village, town or County. Resolution is not necessary but existing and potential conflicts need to be identified and the processes described for attempting to resolve them.

1. Annexation policy with the City of Janesville.
Possible Solution: Boundary agreement.
2. The City of Janesville’s Future Plan is inconsistent with the Town’s especially in Sections 5, 8, 17, 18, and 19.
Possible Solution: Work cooperatively and engage in ongoing discussions with the City.
3. Highway 11-bypass extension.
Possible Solution: Continue to monitor and work with Rock County and the state DOT in studying the Highway 11 bypass route location.
4. The regional traffic flow through the Township should be addressed.
Possible Solution: Continue to work with the County and State in designing a future traffic flow pattern.
5. Rising costs of maintaining town roads.
Possible Solution: Discussing ways to share costs with adjoining entities for road maintenance.

8.5 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

The goals, objectives and policy provided in this section generally seek to enhance the lines of communication between area governments. This approach will help to create an environment where coordination is possible and conflicts are minimized.

Goal # 1

Continue open communication with adjoining communities, school districts, Rock County and state agencies.

Objective: Build and maintain consensus among adjoining governmental entities, to achieve cooperation and a unified area vision.

Policies: Town of La Prairie should work with adjacent jurisdictions to utilize comprehensive plans so that long-range decisions are well thought out and consistent.

The Town should participate in an annual “summit” with adjoining municipalities to discuss the comprehensive plan and any long-range developments that may affect the Town of La Prairie.

Pursue the development of a boundary agreement with the City of Janesville to establish future expansion areas for a minimum of 10 years. This effort could be coordinated with the Town of Harmony and the existing boundary agreement with the Town of Rock.

Continue to work with Rock County to assure that the county understands the town's plan and works together, as a partner with the town on planning and zoning issues.

Emphasize agricultural economic development with adjoining municipalities as a regional benefit.

Continue to work with county, state and federal agencies in providing sound transportation planning for the town including consideration of multi-modal forms of transportation.

In order to reduce conflict, periodic meetings should be held between officials of adjacent communities to discuss common issues, potential problems, and to acquire an understanding of the position of the other municipality. Meeting agendas and minutes from municipal meetings should be shared with adjoining communities.

Goal # 2

Continue to seek new ways to coordinate and share community facilities and services with neighboring communities and Rock County.

Objective: Promote and encourage mutually beneficial methods to increase efficiencies, for cost savings and to provide services to taxpayers more proficiently.

Policies: Participate in County-level transportation, land use and agricultural economic development efforts.

A joint meeting should be held with adjoining municipalities to discuss efforts to avoid duplication of services and the potential for consolidation government services.

Promote and encourage mutually beneficial methods to increase efficiencies, for cost savings and to provide services to taxpayers more proficiently.

Stay informed on activities of the School Districts to ensure the Town has the opportunity to be involved in decisions that affect town residents, such as building improvements, tax issues and transportation.

