

CHAPTER 7 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION ELEMENT

Section 7.1 Introduction

The intergovernmental cooperation chapter identifies opportunities for establishing or maintaining cooperation between units of government. Cooperation improves lines of communication between different units of government, aids in the recognition and possible resolution of conflicts between jurisdictions, and allows for the identification of mutual service needs and improvements.

The intent of this chapter is to identify, inventory, and analyze existing and potential cooperative relationships for the Town of Linwood.

Section 7.2 Inventory and Analysis Intergovernmental Relationships

Inventory and examination of existing municipal relations allows for the understandings of how municipalities currently work together and how these relationships can be enhanced. As the Town of Linwood develops over the next 20 years it is important to continue to work with surrounding municipalities, school districts, and other governmental units.

A. Adjacent Units of Government

The Town of Linwood shares borders with the Town of Carson, Rudolph, City of Stevens Point, Village of Whiting, and Plover. A map of the Extraterritorial Area for Stevens Point, Whiting, and Plover can be found on page 75.

The Town of Linwood has agreements with these surrounding communities for aid in snow removal and road maintenance on local roads that are located along Town boundaries, except for Village of Whiting and Plover, which both lie across the Wisconsin River and road issues are not applicable.

First Responders are local residents who volunteer to be the first to respond to accidents and medical emergencies within the area. First Responders are dispatched by the Portage County 911 system respond in their personal vehicles and attempt to stabilize patients before EMTs and/or Ambulances arrive. Supplies and equipment used by local First Responders are kept at the Rudolph Fire Stations, one of which is located in the Town of Linwood. The First Responder program is supported financially by the municipalities who contract for services from the Rudolph Fire Department.

The Town is included in Mutual Aid Agreements with surrounding Portage County fire districts.

The Town also has a contract with Portage County to provide service for lost, abandoned, stray, injured, and neglected animals.

B. School Districts

The Town of Linwood is served by the Stevens Point School District. The primary forms of interaction with this entity is through payment of property taxes which, in part, help to fund the district. The Town has little participation with the districts in issues pertaining to administration or siting of new facilities. Town of Linwood currently has no public schools sited within its boundaries.

C. Portage County

1. Portage County Solid Waste

The Town of Linwood residents may contract with private disposal services for handling solid waste and recycling materials. The Town of Linwood currently offers a recycling service. The Town is currently studying a town-wide mandatory waste/recycling program.

2. Portage County Highway Department

The Highway Department of Portage County maintains and plows county roads in the Town. This Department also administers the dispersal of funds for local road projects as part of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Local Road Improvement Program and provides bridge inspections.

3. Portage County Sheriff and Ambulance

The Town relies on the Portage County Sheriffs Department to provide protective services through periodic patrols and on an "on-call" basis. The Stevens Point Fire Department operates the ambulance service for Portage County. The City of Stevens

Point and Portage County are currently up-grading the county ambulance service and a first responder contract.

4. Portage County Emergency Management

The Town of Linwood officials participated in NIMS (National Incident Management System) training course offered by Portage County Emergency Management office.

Municipal officials have primary responsibility for disasters which take place in the municipality. Additional support from Portage County Departments may include: Emergency Management assistance, Law Enforcement assistance, Emergency Medical and Public Health Services. Support from Private Agencies/Volunteer Groups include: American Red Cross and the Department of Natural Resources. State, Federal, and National Guard assistance should be channeled through the County Emergency Management Director.

5. Portage County Planning and Zoning Department

There are currently six different sections operating under the Planning and Zoning Department; they include Planning, Zoning and Code Administration, Land Conservation, On-Site Waste, Groundwater Management, Economic and Business Park Development.

The Planning and Groundwater Management Sections includes staff and resources to assist local communities in the preparation or amending of various plan documents including a comprehensive plan. Staff can also assist in water quality testing associated with siting new developments. The Town of Linwood has a representative on the Portage County Groundwater Citizens Advisory Committee.

The Code Administration Section staff is responsible for administering the County's Zoning, Wellhead Protection, Tower, Subdivision, Floodplain Zoning, Shoreland Zoning, Non-metallic Mining Reclamation, and Private Sewage System Ordinances.

The Land Conservation Section staff works with individuals to design and implement conservation practices. Assistance may be given to Towns upon request.

6. Stevens Point Urban Area Sewer Service Plan

The principal purpose of the Area wide Water Quality Management Plan (hereinafter referred to as the Sewer Service Plan) is to develop a twenty (20) year sanitary sewer service boundary for the Stevens Point Urban area, along with an institutional structure for implementing the Plan and managing the extension of sanitary sewage services within this urban area.

The urban sanitary sewer service area boundary identifies the geographic land area within which sanitary sewer service could be made available by the year 2027 in a cost-effective and environmentally acceptable manner. This Sewer Service plan update is intended to address recent development trends within the Stevens Point Urban Area while developing an appropriate twenty-year sanitary sewer service boundary that accommodates growth while taking steps to safeguard environmentally sensitive areas and the quality of waters of the State.

West of the Wisconsin River – The west side of Stevens Point, including land in the Town of Linwood, is virtually limited to existing sewer service because of the presence of vast areas of floodplain and wetlands west of the Wisconsin River. The high groundwater, high bedrock, and clay soil limitations which are found in this area are basically overlain by the floodplains and wetlands which preclude future sewer development. A very small amount of expansion of the sewer service area west of the river is anticipated. However, for the most part, the lands, mapped as having development limitations in this portion of the urban area will fall outside of the 20 year sewer service boundary.

The designation of an urban area sewer service boundary is a major element of the overall planning process of this Sewer Service Plan. The boundary, which takes into account the projections of future population, land demands, environmentally sensitive areas, and extensive input on the part of elected officials represented on the Sewer Service Advisory Committee, can be found on the map on page 76. The map also illustrates the planned sewer service boundary for the local sewer jurisdictions.

D. State of Wisconsin

The two primary State agencies that the Town of Linwood interacts with are the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT). The DNR, along with the Army Corp of Engineers are responsible for natural resource protection, compliance monitoring, and law enforcement. The DOT is responsible for the planning and development of road networks and associated infrastructure and is the lead agency for the Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP). Town road improvement projects must be submitted as part of a two year improvement plan.

E. Federal Agencies

The Army Corp of Engineers provides assistance of wetland issues and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) provides disaster aid assistance.

Section 7.3 Identification of Existing or Potential Issues and Conflicts with Other Governmental Units

The Town Plan Commission did not identify any specific conflicts with other governmental units; however, it did identify some issues that they felt needed further attention. Commissioners stated that:

- Current level of sheriff patrols maintained or increased.
- County Zoning enforcement could be improved, especially in the area of cleaning up of junked vehicles and junk/salvage yards.
- Continue quality ambulance response service.
- Portage County governmental agencies need to improve communications with the township on issuance of permits.

Section 7.4 Issues/Conclusions Regarding Intergovernmental Relations and Possible Methods of Conflict Resolution

The Town feels that intergovernmental relations are, for the most part, satisfactory. General methods of conflict resolution that the Town may explore include negotiation, compromise, or third party mediation. At this point, Town officials think that the best method of resolution is to maintain communication with other units of government and various agencies to address particular issues before they escalate into a conflict.

Section 7.5 Vision for Intergovernmental Cooperation

The citizens of the Town of Linwood recognize that they have the responsibility to be active in the community decision-making, and the town government will rely on that participation as an integral part of their decision processes.

Key Vision Ideas for Intergovernmental Cooperation:

- A. The Town of Linwood will cooperate with other units of government to coordinate and share services in the most cost effective and efficient way.
- B. Citizen participation is encouraged by adjoining local elected officials and utilized in community decision-making processes.
- C. Citizen participation is encouraged by adjoining local elected officials and utilized in community decision-making processes.
- D. Our town government should have input into land use within our jurisdiction.
- E. Ordinances and regulations that are developed, implemented, and enforced in our town, will be coordinated with adjacent communities.

Section 7.6 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

A. Goals:

1. Improve relationships with other units of government.
2. Improve the permitting process.

B. Objectives:

1. Continue shared agreements with adjacent units of government.
2. Units of government work together to preserve, restore, and maintain appropriate public access to natural resources, such as: reserves, boat landings, and parks.
3. Communicate with Portage County Agencies and surrounding municipalities for discussion of Land Use and other related issues.
4. Support commerce and tourism throughout the county.
5. Preserve productive agricultural land countywide.
6. Identify, manage, preserve and protect natural resources throughout the Town.
7. Create and protect public green space and water resources in the Town.
8. Develop an area-wide transportation planning approach.
9. Designating areas to through roads, to eliminate dead end roads.
10. Annual meeting between adjoining municipalities should be encouraged to discuss mutual concerns and issues.
11. Change the permitting processing method to where the township will be notified first.
12. Portage County establishes ordinances or enforces existing ordinances regarding junk vehicles, junk/salvage yards, nuisances, and public health and safety issues.

C. Policies:

1. Continue to meet with other government units as needed.
2. Continue participation in the Portage County Towns Association.
3. Explore additional opportunities for intergovernmental agreements.
4. Portage County notifies Town of permits before issuance.

Extraterritorial Area Map

Stevens Point Urban Area Sewer Service Area Boundary Map