

VIII. Intergovernmental Cooperation

s. 66.1001(2)(g) Wis. Stats

“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. 66.0301, 66.0307 or s. 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.”

8.1 Overview

Given the number and range of public and quasi-public entities that can affect the daily lives of Town residents, intergovernmental cooperation is an important consideration in this Plan.

Cooperation can take many forms (Figure 8.1). Relationships may be informal, based on verbal agreements or other informal arrangements. Alternatively, cooperation may be more formally expressed in a legally binding agreement. Most intergovernmental cooperation is done for the purpose of delivering services or exercising joint powers. Some cooperation is undertaken to receive services or make cooperative purchases.

Figure 8.1: Examples of Intergovernmental Cooperation

- Transfer of territory (annexation, detachment)
- Sharing information, staff, resources, etc.
- Communication
- Consolidation or trading of services
- Regional planning
- Special purpose districts serving multiple jurisdictions
- Joint ventures
- Revenue Sharing
- Boundary agreements
- Areawide service agreements
- Joint use of facilities
- Cooperative purchasing

Intergovernmental relations can be described as vertical or horizontal. Vertical relationships are those linking a municipality to governments of broader jurisdiction. For example, the relationship between a local unit of government to the state and federal governments is vertical.

In vertical relationships, actions of one level of government often have a direct bearing on the others. For the most part, this relationship occurs in a top-down fashion. For example, when the state adopts a statewide policy plan, it in essence directs future activities of counties, villages, cities and towns. For example, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation has adopted a number of statewide policy plans that directly affect transportation activities within the jurisdictions of local units of government. It is therefore imperative that when such policies are considered, local units of government, individually or cooperatively, work with the appropriate state bodies to develop a mutually beneficial relationship.

Horizontal relationships describe the connection of towns to one another and to other adjacent municipalities. Together, these relationships cut across each of the functional elements of this Plan.

Over the years, and most recently with the Kettl Commission report, there has been a statewide push for consolidating governmental services at the local level. The Commission on State-Local Partnerships (Kettl Commission) calls for the creation of “growth-sharing areas: within which local units of government would collaborate to serve the needs of their citizens.” The report recommends that local governments adopt “Area Cooperation Compacts” with at least two other governments in at least two functional areas including: law enforcement, housing, emergency services, fire, solid waste, recycling, public health, animal control, transportation, mass transit, land-use planning, boundary agreements, libraries, parks, recreation, culture, purchasing or e-government. The Commission also advocates for the reform of state aids to municipalities.

8.2 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Enhance intergovernmental cooperation.

Objectives:

1. Foster cooperative working relationships with neighboring municipalities.
2. Continue to share services with neighboring jurisdictions to provide for residents and businesses in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible.
3. ~~Work with Dane County the Middleton Town Board in developing land use plans, policies, ordinances and enforcement of such.~~

4. Enhance and expand cooperation between the Town of Middleton and neighboring municipalities through intergovernmental agreements, cooperative boundary agreements or other means.

Policies:

1. Provide a copy of this Plan to all surrounding and overlapping government jurisdictions.
2. Maintain existing service sharing agreements with neighboring communities, and explore opportunities to create new alliances.
3. Coordinate with other jurisdictions the siting, building and redevelopment of public facilities and the sharing of public services when possible.
4. Coordinate with the Middleton-Cross Plains School District and other local school districts and agencies when possible to develop, utilize and maintain recreational facilities. This includes cooperation in obtaining funding (e.g. grants) as well as coordinating the shared use of these facilities.
5. Coordinate with neighboring municipalities to protect the various watersheds within the Town of Middleton. The Town should cooperate with other jurisdictions to identify and reduce or mitigate the negative impacts on these watersheds from newly developed impervious surface areas as well as point and non-point sources of pollution.
6. Work with the state, county and neighboring jurisdictions to coordinate the protection and preservation of environmental corridors that cross jurisdictional boundaries.
7. Consider the suitability of joint services where consolidating, coordinating or sharing services will result in better services or cost savings.
8. Form a committee to explore the opportunities and issues regarding the incorporation of the Town of Middleton.
9. Investigate the feasibility of additional agreements with the City of Middleton to establish a mutually agreed-upon municipal boundary and timeline for achieving it.
10. Investigate the feasibility of establishing additional intergovernmental agreements and/or cooperative boundary agreements with neighboring municipalities with which the Town of Middleton has no existing agreements (i.e. City of Verona, Town of Verona, Town of Cross Plains, Town of Springfield).

11. Coordinate planning decisions with guidelines set forth by the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission. Planning decisions should take into consideration the availability or lack of sanitary sewer service and other utilities and community services.
12. Coordinate with neighboring municipalities to plan for the provision of water to Town residents where necessary, and to protect private wells within the Town.

Goal 2: Encourage Citizen Participation

Objectives:

1. Provide opportunities for residents' involvement in the functions and operations of the Town.
2. Encourage residents to become involved in their community.
3. Educate new residents regarding services provided by the Town.

Policies:

1. Provide citizens with up-to-date information on community events, issues affecting the Town, planning processes and their opportunities to participate.
2. Seek out and utilize the skills and expertise of residents to serve on volunteer committees.

8.3 Appendix G: Intergovernmental Cooperation Background Information

For further information regarding intergovernmental cooperation, refer to Appendix G.