

**Introduction**

The Town of Center’s relationship with neighboring municipalities, school districts, state agencies and Outagamie County can significantly impact planning, the provision of services, and the siting of public facilities. An examination of these relationships and the identification of potential conflicts will help the town address these situations in a productive manner.

**Intergovernmental Cooperation Vision**

In 2025, the Town of Center and Outagamie County work cooperatively to make sure roads are well maintained and serviced. Annexation is planned, based on service demands, and coordinated in a fashion to ensure that both communities have preserved their community identities.

After much coordination with local school districts, two elementary schools have been built in the town.

Town leaders keep residents informed on all matters pertinent to Town operations and land development issues and pursue opportunities to provide coordinated, cost-effective services with neighboring governments.

**Governmental Units and Relationships to the Town of Center**

The Town of Center shares borders with five municipalities. In addition, the town must also coordinate with local school districts, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), the ECWRPC and Outagamie County.

**ADJACENT GOVERNMENTAL UNITS**

- Town of Black Creek
- Town of Grand Chute
- Town of Freedom
- Town of Ellington
- City of Appleton

The Town of Center’s relationship with the four adjacent towns can be characterized as one of mutual respect and compatibility from a land use and political standpoint. Towns cannot annex land from one another. Therefore, the borders between the Town of Center

and the adjacent towns are fixed and boundary disputes are non-existent. The Town of Center acts as a buffer between the urbanizing areas in the Town of Grand Chute and the other more rural towns. Public services (i.e. road maintenance and construction, etc.) are conducted individually by each town, but opportunities for shared services to reduce costs by improving efficiencies will be considered.

The City of Appleton is growing toward the southern boundary of the Town of Center. The City has the ability to annex properties. In preparing this plan, the Town of Center reviewed the *City's Future Land Use Plan* and used it as a guide for defining land uses in the southern portions of the town. This will help to ensure compatibility between town and city development.

### SCHOOL DISTRICTS

- Freedom Area School District
- Hortonville School District
- Seymour School District
- Shiocton School District

Despite the fact there is not a public school building located in the Town of Center, the town is part of **four different school districts**: Freedom, Hortonville, Seymour and Shiocton. The school district boundaries are illustrated on the *Utilities and Community Facilities Map*. The town's relationship with the school districts can be characterized as cooperative. These relationships must continue and be strengthened to coordinate growth with school capacity. The town believes, given anticipated levels of residential development, at least one of the school districts will need to construct an elementary school building in the town. The desire for school facilities is reflected in the vision presented at the beginning of this chapter.

Though the challenge is great, the Town encourages the school districts to coordinate with one another to revise the district boundaries in the town. The current boundaries are very irregular and difficult to follow. A less jagged, more linear boundary that considers school locations would benefit the school districts, particularly with respect to bussing costs, and town residents.

### COUNTY AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT UNITS

- Outagamie County
- East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC)



The Town of Center is located in Outagamie County. The county has some jurisdiction within the town. In particular, Outagamie County has jurisdiction over land divisions, on-site sanitary systems, greenway trail coordination, and zoning (including shoreland-wetland and floodplain areas) of the town. Outagamie County also maintains many county roads in the Town of Center.

The relationship between the Town of Center and Outagamie County can be characterized as one of general agreement and respect. In those areas where the county has jurisdiction in the town, the county attempts to get input from the town before making decisions affecting the town. Likewise, Center has attempted to maintain open communication with Outagamie County. Continued cooperation will be especially important as it relates to zoning as a tool to implement this plan.

Outagamie County and the Town of Center are part of the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC). The Town of Center has little direct interaction with the ECWRPC. The town acquired mapping data, demographic statistics, and policy information for this comprehensive planning effort from Outagamie County and the ECWRPC.



### STATE AGENCIES

- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)

WDNR and WisDOT are the primary state agencies the Town of Center must coordinate with to achieve the goals and objectives of this plan.

WDNR has a major role in the Town of Center with respect to the arsenic advisory area. The agency is an important partner for mapping the exposure area, monitoring the situation and providing information and resources to the town to address the issue. Given the level of arsenic exposure and the potential impact on residents, the town and WDNR must work together.

The activities of the WDNR are discussed further in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element (Chapter 7) of this plan. Additional information is also available on-line at:  
[www.dnr.state.wi.us](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us)

WisDOT is also a key player in the planning and development of pedestrian/cycling facilities. In addition, WisDOT is responsible for the maintenance of the STH 47 corridor. It will be important for the Town of Center to continue to coordinate with WisDOT with respect to this roadway. More specifically, the Town of Center and WDOT should work together as partners on the STH 47 corridor study (currently underway) and to develop an official map for the town that identifies internal travel routes.



For additional information about WisDOT activities in the Town of Center, refer to the Transportation Element (Chapter 5) of this plan. Additional information is also available on-line at:  
[www.dot.state.wi.us](http://www.dot.state.wi.us)

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.

## **Intergovernmental Comprehensive Planning Process**

To facilitate intergovernmental coordination, the Town of Center sent all adjacent municipalities, school districts, Outagamie County and the ECWRPC a letter at the on-set of the planning effort. This letter was intended to notify these agencies and communities of the Town of Center planning process. Likewise, this letter extended an open invitation for participation in the development of this plan.

On an element-by-element basis, the Town of Center contacted adjacent local government units, school districts, and state agencies again to complete inventories of available services, facilities, and programs. For example, during the development of the Transportation Element, WisDOT was contacted to obtain information available related to transportation facilities and programs in the Town of Center. Likewise, WisDOT was provided a preliminary copy of the Transportation Element to review and comment upon. This same courtesy was extended to the WDNR during development of the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element.

Throughout the plan development process, the Town of Center worked closely with Outagamie County and the ECWRPC to coordinate plan-mapping resources and obtain detailed information related to zoning, agricultural preservation, quarry operations and general demographic data.

On September 25, 2003, as the draft comprehensive plan was nearing completion, the Town of Center hosted an intergovernmental meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the plans of other local agencies and governments and attempt to coordinate the *Town of Center Comprehensive Plan* with the goals and objectives of these other local plans. Participants were also given the opportunity to view and comment on the *Draft Future Land Use Map*. This collective “meeting of the minds” provided a unique opportunity to discuss area growth, development, transportation, education, and other concerns. Prior to this meeting, a copy of the Draft Intergovernmental Element was available on the Internet for review and comment.

## **Intergovernmental Cooperation Programs**

With the endorsement of Outagamie County, the Town of Center contracts with a private hauler for solid waste collection and curbside recycling pickup. Outagamie County provides police protection. Mutual aid agreements for fire protection exist between the town and its neighbors. In addition, the Town of Center also has participated in joint road ditch clearing efforts with neighboring towns and shared municipal equipment with neighboring towns from time to time.

As growth and change continues in the area, land use will remain a controversial topic. The Town of Center has the opportunity, under State Statutes 66.023 and 66.30, to pursue a boundary agreement with the City of Appleton. If boundary agreements were completed, the town and the city could work together to make rational decisions about

where growth will occur, including the setting or changing of boundaries, and how public services (including sewer and water) could be provided. Other intergovernmental agreements, such as shared tax revenue, could also be pursued with Appleton.

## **Existing and Proposed Plans**

### **ADJACENT GOVERNMENTAL UNITS**

The Town of Freedom has adopted its Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan and the Town of Black Creek is working on its plan. The Town of Center's planning consultant, OMNNI Associates, worked with both the Town of Freedom and Town of Black Creek on their plans. Using the same consultant has allowed for additional insights and coordination between plans.

The Town of Ellington is also nearing completion of its own Smart Growth Plan. The Town of Grand Chute does not have an adopted Smart Growth Plan, but has a comprehensive plan that will be updated before 2010.

To ensure compatibility with planning goals and objectives of the *Town of Center Comprehensive Plan*, the town would like to participate in the planning efforts of its neighboring communities.

### **SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

The four school districts serving the town extend into neighboring communities. As such, development in neighboring communities may have an impact on the districts need to expand. The Town of Center wishes to remain involved in the siting of future schools to ensure that the goals and objectives of this plan can be met. This will become more important as Center and neighboring communities continue to grow, bringing additional residents (and students) to the area. At this time, the school districts have no plan to construct any new facilities in the town.

### **COUNTY AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS**

**Outagamie County** has not adopted a comprehensive plan in accordance with 1999 Wisconsin Act 9. However, the county has been working toward the start of such a plan for some time. The Town of Center will participate in any county planning efforts to provide information about the town plan, including local goals, objectives, and visions for the future.

The **ECWRPC** has not yet adopted a comprehensive plan. ECWRPC has completed the first of three milestone reports. Planning information is available on-line at [www.eastcentralrpc.org](http://www.eastcentralrpc.org). It will be important for the town to participate in regional planning efforts as the ECWRPC continues its planning process.

## STATE AGENCIES

The Town of Center's relationship with the state of Wisconsin mainly involves state aids for local roads and the administering of various state mandates to towns. Moreover, there is some forested land in the town that is managed through the WDNR Managed Forest Program. In the near future, the WDNR is scheduled to develop statewide watershed plans. The plans for Bear Creek may have an impact on the Town of Center. Furthermore, coordination with WisDOT will continue to be important with respect to the future of STH 47.

## Intergovernmental Policy

The Town of Center will seek to cooperate with all neighboring municipalities, the county, state agencies, and school districts for mutual benefit.

## Intergovernmental Goals

1. Improve lines of intergovernmental communication.
2. Resolve annexation and boundary disputes with the City of Appleton.
3. Continue to seek new ways to coordinate and share community facilities and services with neighboring communities and Outagamie County whenever efficient.

## Intergovernmental Objectives

1. Host a bi-annual summit with the communities and agencies identified in this chapter to discuss concerns, plans, exchange ideas and report implementation achievements. This summit may be facilitated by the County or co-hosted with neighboring communities.
2. Participate in the "Smart Growth" planning activities of neighboring communities, Outagamie County, and the ECWRPC.
3. Coordinate with Outagamie County to extend trails (Refer to the *Future Land Use Map* and Chapter 4).
4. Notify the appropriate school district about proposed residential developments and rezonings so the districts may plan for additional school children. Encourage the school district to provide input into these decisions and consider opportunities for school construction in the town.
5. Work with WisDOT as a partner to plan for development adjacent to the STH 47 corridor.
  - a. Become involved in the preparation of the STH 47 corridor study.
  - b. Partner with WisDOT to develop an Official Town Map that identifies points of access and supporting town road networks to limit traffic impacts on STH 47.
  - c. Notify WisDOT of proposed development projects and rezonings near STH 47 so WisDOT may plan accordingly for needed improvements.
6. Coordinate with the ECWRPC with respect to the permitting and reclamation of quarry operations.

7. Coordinate with WisDOT and WDNR to ensure transportation facilities are safe and natural features are protected.
8. Develop a boundary agreement with the City of Appleton to establish expansion areas for a minimum of 10 years.
9. Expand and continue to explore the potential for mutual services with neighboring towns (including road development and maintenance, garbage collection, etc.).