

ELEMENT 7 - INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Intergovernmental cooperation involves working with neighboring communities, school districts, and agencies to understand how their future planning and development activities may impact the Town of Sherman. At a minimum, this should involve sharing information about the Town of Sherman's comprehensive plan with neighboring communities and agencies and neighboring communities and agencies sharing their plans and initiatives with the Town of Sherman. However, Sherman believes intergovernmental cooperation should not end with the sharing of plans. Instead, this process should be the beginning for joint planning and decision-making, conflict resolution, and other strategies to promote regional cooperation. As part of the planning survey that was distributed to all landowners in the Town of Sherman, **85.3 percent** of respondents thought neighboring towns, cities, and counties should work together toward shared goals.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Vision – 20 Year Outlook

Through 2025, Sherman will strive to work cooperatively with adjoining and overlapping jurisdictions to provide residents with cost-efficient services for the betterment of each community. Town leaders will 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.

7.2 RELATIONSHIPS TO THE TOWN OF SHERMAN

The Town of Sherman shares a municipal border with the Lac du Flambeau Indian Reservation and six governmental units represented within four counties. In addition, the town must also coordinate with state, local, and regional organizations.

Adjacent Town Governments

The Town of Sherman shares municipal borders with the Towns of Agenda (Ashland Co.); Eisenstein (Price Co.); Fifield (Price Co.); Lac du Flambeau and Manitowish Waters (Vilas Co.); and Mercer (Iron County).

The town's relationship with all neighboring towns can be characterized as one of mutual respect and compatibility from a land use and political standpoint. The borders between the Town of Sherman and adjacent governmental units are fixed.

The Town of Sherman and its adjoining jurisdictions share a common rural character or "northwoods" ambiance. In the future, as mutually beneficial opportunities for shared service contracts arise with adjoining towns, the Town of Sherman is open to considering such options.

Several towns adjacent to Sherman are currently underway or have completed the development of comprehensive plans. The Ashland County Town of Agenda, which borders Sherman on the west and the Iron County Town of Mercer, which borders Sherman on the west and north, are currently developing a comprehensive plan. The Vilas County Town of Manitowish Waters, which borders Sherman on the east and south, adopted a Comprehensive Land Use Plan in 2003.

The Town of Sherman has requested to participate in the planning efforts of adjacent communities and, likewise, has encouraged them to participate in their planning process. The Town of Sherman will take into consideration each adjoining towns comprehensive plans when making future land use decisions.

Maintenance or improvement of the two roads that directly connect Sherman and other Towns (Springstead Road connects with the Town of Fifield to the south and Powell Road connects with the Town of Manitowish Waters to the east) may offer opportunities for cooperation in the planning process.

The Lac du Flambeau Indian Reservation

The Town of Sherman shares a border with the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indian Reservation. The Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians – organized under the Treaty of 1854, makes its home on the Lac du Flambeau Indian Reservation which is mostly located within southwestern Vilas County but substantial acreage exists within the Town of Sherman. The entire reservation is approximately 86,630 acres, with 14,595 acres located in the Town of Sherman.

The relationship between the town board and tribal council is amicable. Establishing an ongoing dialog between the town board and tribal council would open the lines of communication more directly, thereby allowing the elected officials to discuss relevant and sensitive issues on a timely basis.

County Governmental Units

Iron County has some jurisdiction within the town, particularly, as it pertains to zoning (both shoreland and non-shoreland), as Sherman has adopted Iron County's comprehensive county zoning ordinance. In areas where Iron County has jurisdiction, the county seeks input from the town before making decisions affecting the town. Likewise, the town has attempted to maintain that link of communication with Iron County by providing recommendations. Future cooperation will be especially important as it relates to:

- coordination with the Iron County Comprehensive Plan,
- enforcement of zoning and shoreland regulations, and
- revisions to the Iron County Zoning Ordinance and official map.

The town expects that the county will fully consider recommendations provided by Sherman's comprehensive plan. Likewise, the town expects the county to understand that the *Future Land Use Map* provides a general pattern for development.

Ashland County partially borders Sherman to the west, Price County partially borders Sherman to the south, and Vilas County borders Sherman to the east and partially to the south. This close proximity to other counties requires the Town of Sherman to communicate with these counties on a regular basis. This communication helps to minimize potential problems that may arise on the sharing of services and facilities. Continued interaction between Sherman and these counties is encouraged, especially relating to future land use decisions and potential development projects. Vilas County has completed a draft of the *Vilas County Year 2020 Comprehensive Land Use Plan*. The plan is scheduled to be adopted sometime in 2004.

Regional Governmental Units

Northwest Regional Planning Commission was formed under Section 60.0309 of Wisconsin State Statutes to provide a range of services to local units of government within the RPC boundary. RPC's provide planning assistance, assist local interests in responding to state and federal programs, serve as a coordinating agency for programs, and provide other technical and advisory assistance to local governments. The Town of Sherman is within the boundary of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC), which is based in Spooner, Wisconsin. The Town of Sherman and NWRPC have worked cooperatively on community projects in the past, such as in the development of the Town of Sherman Land Use Plan (January 2002).

State Agencies

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and the Wisconsin Department of Revenue are the primary state agencies the Town of Sherman must coordinate with to achieve the goals and objectives of this plan.

WDNR takes a lead role in wildlife protection and the sustainable management of woodlands, wetlands, and other natural wildlife habitat areas. **WisDOT** is responsible for planning and development of state highways and other multi-modal transportation systems. Through the **DOR** shared revenue program, the State of Wisconsin distributes tax revenues to municipal and county governments for use at their discretion. Open communication and participation in land use, natural resources, and transportation decisions, which may impact the town, is an important priority for intergovernmental cooperation in the future.

Federal Agencies

There is no federal land or agencies located in the Town of Sherman that require intergovernmental processes.

School Districts

The Town of Sherman is served by the Park Falls School District. The town's relationship with the school district can be characterized as cooperative. Regular and open communication is critical to ensure the cooperative relationship will continue to be strengthened. Since school-age children travel to Park Falls to attend school, the Town of Sherman must continue to work with the Park Falls School District/Board.

Intergovernmental Comprehensive Planning Process

On behalf of the Town of Sherman, the NWRPC contacted Iron County, the Park Falls School District and state and federal agencies regarding their available services. For example, during development of the *Utilities and Community Facilities* element the Park Falls School Districts was contacted to gather information on current and future enrollment and existing facilities, and to determine if future expansion of district facilities was planned.

The multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning process between Sherman and adjoining towns and counties allowed for greater interaction and understanding of local issues impacting one or more units of government.

Conflict Resolution Process (CRP)

As part of this planning process, the Town of Sherman was asked to identify existing/potential conflicts between adjoining and overlapping governmental units. The Town of Sherman did not identify any current or foreseeable conflicts with adjoining towns. Potential conflicts related to land use decision-making have been greatly diminished due to the concerted development of local multi-jurisdictional planning process. Although, it is important to recognize that future variables may result in conflict, planning for potential future conflict between jurisdictions requires a process to resolve such disputes. The conflict resolution process developed for Iron County outlines the appropriate steps to be taken by the local governing body to resolve these disputes in a logical, systematic, and equitable manner. **See Appendix C for detailed description of the conflict resolution process.**

Agreements with Neighboring or Overlapping Jurisdictions

The Town of Sherman has established both formal and informal agreements with adjacent and overlapping units of government.

Please list below:

1. Fire Department Mutual Aid Agreement with Town of Mercer
2. Fire Department Mutual Aid Agreement with Town of Lac du Flambeau
3. Fire Department Mutual Aid Agreement with Town of Manitowish Waters
4. Fire Department Mutual Aid Agreement with Town of Fifield – Pike Lake Fire District
5. Fire Department Mutual Aid Agreement with Wisconsin DNR
6. Ambulance Service Agreement with City of Park Falls (west of Mirror Lake Road)
7. Ambulance Service Agreement with Town of Mercer (east of Mirror Lake Road)
8. If needed, Sherman will dispatch snowplow to assist on ambulance runs in the Town
9. Informal EMS Service from Pike Lake EMS
10. Snow Plowing Agreement with Town of Mercer for Dam Road

7.3 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS

A set of recommended goals, objectives, and actions were developed to assist the Town of Sherman on intergovernmental cooperation issues.

GOAL 1: PROVIDE BETTER PUBLIC COMMUNICATION ON TOWNSHIP ISSUES.

Objective 1: Establish a liaison/resource to coordinate and provide information to the public concerning township issues.

Action 1: *Budget for Town Newsletter and recruit/appoint someone to coordinate.*

Action 2: *Develop a pamphlet to inform property owners about township resources, services and best use practices for maintaining the Town of Sherman's character. (See page 7-2 of Land Use Plan for detailed information on this pamphlet.)*

GOAL 2: PROMOTE INTERACTION AND COOPERATION WITH ADJOINING TOWNS AND OTHER GOVERNMENT UNITS FOR SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM PLANNING.

Objective 1: Coordinate with Iron County Zoning for enforcement of local and county regulations within the township.

Action 1: *Budget for Town Newsletter and recruit/appoint someone to coordinate.*

Action 2: *Participate in conditional use permit review to ensure the townships goals are adhered to.*

Objective 2: Continue cooperation in planning for facilities, services and land use policies with adjoining townships for maximum efficiency, cost reduction and regional development consistency.

Action 1: *Contact Chairmen of adjacent Town's to determine their interest in attending meeting to start discussions concerning this Objective.*

Objective 3: Encourage increased communication with the Department of Natural Resources for land management and recreational use policies.

Action 1: *Contact DNR personnel and determine if a regular meeting (annual, quarterly ??) between Town and DNR is feasible.*