

Chapter Eight: Intergovernmental Cooperation

This chapter is focused on “intergovernmental cooperation,” defined as any formal or informal arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions communicate visions and coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve land use, transportation, natural resource, utility, facility, services, or other issues of mutual interest. In a state with over 2,500 units of government and a movement towards greater efficiency, it is becoming increasingly important to coordinate decisions that may affect neighboring communities and overlapping jurisdictions (e.g. school districts).

This chapter contains a compilation of background information, goals, objectives, policies and recommended programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions. It incorporates by reference all plans and agreements to which Jefferson is a party under §66.0301, §66.0307, and §66.0309, Wisconsin Statutes. It is intended to promote consistency between this *Plan* and plans for neighboring jurisdictions.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Recommendations Summary

- Work with WisDOT on transportation projects that will benefit the City, such as the STH 26 Bypass.
- Continue to be involved in regional planning efforts such as the Jefferson County Economic Positioning project and the Glacial Heritage Area project.
- Collaborate with Jefferson County to keep the County courthouse, offices, and other services downtown.

Existing City Plans

City of Jefferson, Wisconsin Comprehensive Master Plan, 1998

In 1998, Vandewalle & Associates prepared the City’s comprehensive plan. The plan made recommendations for lands within the City’s urban service area. New “Traditional Neighborhood” residential development was proposed for the County Grounds, eastern and western portions of the City. Industrial development was proposed for a large area immediately north of Jefferson between STH 26 and CTH Y with single family residential development along the Rock River. It was further recommended that the City develop and adopt an official map. These and other recommendations were made prior to detailed planning for the STH 26 improvements between Janesville and Waupan. With the selection of a “west bypass” alternative for the City and anticipated construction in 2009, many recommendations of the 1998 plan need to be re-evaluated.

Existing Regional Framework

Map 1 shows the boundaries of Jefferson’s neighboring or overlapping jurisdictions. Planning documents for these local, regional and state jurisdictions were analyzed during the City’s planning process to identify mutual planning issues or potential conflicts. The following is a summary of this analysis:

Important State Agency Jurisdictions

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation’s (WisDOT) Southwest Region office, located in Madison, serves a 16 county region including Jefferson County.

The DNR provides service to all Jefferson County residents out of six South Central Wisconsin offices including Madison, Fitchburg, Janesville, Poynette, Dodgeville, and Horicon. There are no known conflicts between the City’s plans and the plans and actions of these State agencies.

Jefferson County

Being in the path of the Madison-Milwaukee development, Jefferson County is concerned about preserving their historic agricultural land use base. Recommendations in the 1999 Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan advocate for long-term growth in the county's communities (mostly villages and cities) that have existing infrastructure and that are served by existing services with the intent of protecting and preserving the natural resources and rural character of the county's many undeveloped and pristine areas. The Plan identifies all lands, besides environmental corridors, that are outside of communities' 20-year urban service areas as Agricultural Preservation Areas. The County's plan is considered a strong model for fostering agricultural preservation, environmental protection, and vibrant cities and villages.

The County's 1999 plan defines a 20-year Urban Service Area for the City of Jefferson—where development on public sewer and water service is envisioned. The County's plan also envisions all lands, besides environmental corridors, that are outside of the City's Urban Service Areas as being Agricultural Preservation Areas. These areas are identified as appropriate for long-term farming use and very limited non-farm development—generally a maximum of two or three house lots per farm.

At the time of writing, Jefferson County was in the process of updating its 1999 plan to meet state comprehensive planning requirements by the year 2010. Several initiatives are underway that will feed into that effort, including an exploration of different approaches to preserving farmland and farming and the Glacial Heritage project, which is designed to connect communities and parks with environmental corridors and trails.

Also, the Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium is leading preparation of a County-wide economic positioning initiative. The purpose of the initiative, which began in summer 2007, is to set an economic framework for the future of Jefferson County. The project is focused on gaining a comprehensive understanding of the County's place-based assets and locational advantages, identifying emerging economic opportunities that are based on these assets and global trends, and identifying catalytic projects and an initial implementation plan. Scheduled to be completed by the end of 2008, Jefferson County intends to incorporate the outcomes of this initiative for the economic development chapter of the County's new comprehensive plan.

There are no known conflicts between this *City of Jefferson Comprehensive Plan* and these County plans and initiatives. In fact, the City is supportive of these efforts and endeavors to be an active player within them.

Town of Jefferson

The Town of Jefferson borders the City to the east, south, and west. Its 2005 estimated population was 2,208 residents. According to the Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan, a significant portion of Town lands outside the City's boundaries are planned to remain agricultural, with significant areas to the east designated as environmental corridor. The Jefferson Marsh is located just east of the City in the Town. There are no known conflicts between this *City of Jefferson Comprehensive Plan* and the plans and policies of the Town, where they exist.

Town of Aztalan

The Town of Aztalan borders the City to the north, and in 2005 had an estimated population of 1,497 residents. At the time of writing, the Town was in the process of developing its comprehensive plan.

Jefferson School District

The Jefferson School District serves the entire City of Jefferson, as well as portions of the towns of Jefferson, Hebron, Sullivan, Concord, Farmington, Aztalan, and Oakland. Enrollment in the District has been relatively stable over the last several years. Nevertheless, coordination on future school-community planning issues, including growth management, school siting, and recreation, is a critical recommendation of this *Plan*. This is discussed in Chapter Five: Utilities and Community Facilities.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goals:

- a. Promote mutually beneficial intergovernmental relations with nearby and overlapping governments, and with the Jefferson School District.

Objectives:

- a. Work with the surrounding towns, other nearby local governments, Jefferson County, local school districts, and State agencies on land use, natural resource, transportation, and community development issues of mutual concern.
- b. Explore an intergovernmental boundary and land use agreement between the City and nearby municipalities.
- c. Cooperate with neighboring governments, school districts, Jefferson County and State agencies on providing shared services and facilities, in particular efforts to retain local schools.
- d. Participate in County-level transportation, land use, and economic development efforts.
- e. Stay informed on activities of the School District to ensure the City has the opportunity to be involved in decisions that affect City residents, such as building improvements, tax issues, and transportation.

Policies:

- a. Provide copies of this *Comprehensive Plan* and future amendments to surrounding governments.
- b. Continue intergovernmental and shared service agreements for public facilities and services and consider additional joint services and facilities where consolidating, coordinating, or sharing services or facilities will result in better services or cost savings.
- c. Work with the Jefferson School District on pursuing specific opportunities and challenges identified in this Plan, including school retention, long-term facility needs, and logical use and management of open space and recreational lands and facilities.
- d. Work with the surrounding towns on future comprehensive planning efforts, with a goal of achieving consistency with this City of Jefferson *Comprehensive Plan*.
- e. Consider boundary agreements with the City of Fort Atkinson and the Village of Johnson Creek to substantially reduce pressure for competitive annexations and utility extensions, reduce public subsidies for peripheral infrastructure, and stabilize and clarify extraterritorial areas and policies.
- f. Continue to work with Jefferson County in areas related to growth management, farmland preservation, plan implementation, grant opportunities, and local and County ordinance development.
- g. Work with agencies like the Jefferson Area Chamber of Commerce and the Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium to help advance the economic viability of the Jefferson area.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Programs and Recommendations

Intergovernmental communication, coordination, and cooperation are critical in implementing many of the recommendations in this *Plan*. This section builds off some of the key policies listed above, setting forth recommendations for enhanced relations with adjacent and overlapping jurisdictions. It focuses in particular in areas and relationships that are not described extensively in other chapters of this *Plan*, and where potential future conflicts may be the greatest without concerted future action.

1. *State Issues*

WisDOT and WisDNR are actively involved in programs and policies which directly effect, and are affected by, local land use decisions. The promotion of the policies of these agencies by this plan is an imperative coordination tool. Specifically, this coordination is accomplished by reflecting the recommendations of the adopted land use and transportation plans for southern Wisconsin. State policies are also implemented through the aggressive promotion of best practices for the mitigation of land use impacts on transportation facilities and environmental resources. Finally, and most importantly, the benefits of controlled growth and compact development served by sanitary sewer facilities which are promoted and implemented through this plan, are unquestionably the most effective way of accommodating population pressures in a manner which minimizes adverse impacts.

2. *County Issues*

At the time of writing, Jefferson County was in the process of preparing a comprehensive plan meeting the State's comprehensive planning legislation. There are no known conflicts between this City *Plan* and the County's planning efforts. However, the City intends to advocate for full inclusion of the City's *Plan* in the County comprehensive plan and collaborate on other initiatives.

Additionally, as detailed in Chapter Six: Utilities and Community Facilities, the City intends to collaborate with Jefferson County to keep the County courthouse, offices, and other services Downtown.

3. *Regional Issues*

Because many of the City's goals and objectives relate to issues that transcend municipal boundaries (e.g., transportation, natural resource, farmland preservation, land use), the City intends to maintain an active and open dialogue with surrounding communities and counties. A few specific opportunities include:

- Remaining involved in the Jefferson County Economic Positioning project: At the time this Plan was being prepared, the Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium (JCEDC) was leading an initiative to advance economic development county-wide. The project has identified the following key economic assets for Jefferson County:
 - Regional location
 - Agriculture and food
 - Corporate presence and manufacturing diversity
 - Emerging bioenergy
 - Water and natural resources
 - Small-town living
 - Cultural heritage

Building on these assets, the project will explore opportunities that may be the foundation or building blocks for a future vision for the County. The City will attempt to stay actively involved in this process and to generally take advantage of the services offered by the JCEDC.

- Staying involved in the Glacial Heritage Area Project: This project, administered by WisDNR, is described in the Natural Resources chapter of this Plan. Because Jefferson is located within the Project's primary study area, illustrated in Figure 31, it will be important for the City to remain involved in the ongoing feasibility, study process.

4. *Local Issues*

The City of Fort Atkinson prepared its comprehensive plan concurrently with the City of Jefferson. This provided an opportunity for discussion about issues of mutual concern including mutually agreed extraterritorial jurisdiction boundaries (not overlapping), long-range urban growth boundaries, locations and techniques for permanent community separation through open space and other approaches, and future land use compatibility with airport operations. This open communication should continue in order to help both

communities to better understand each community's interest and priorities for growth and preservation. While a formal intergovernmental boundary/land use agreement is not in place at this time, an agreement may be considered in the future.

If at some point in the future an intergovernmental agreement is pursued, there are two main formats for intergovernmental agreements under Wisconsin Statutes which the communities may consider. The first is available under Section 66.0301, which allows any two or more communities to agree to cooperate for the purpose of furnishing services or the joint exercise of any power or duty authorized under State law. While this is the most commonly used approach, a "66.0301" agreement is limited by the restriction that the municipalities must be able to exercise co-equal powers. Another format for an intergovernmental agreement is a "cooperative plan" under Section 66.0307 of the Wisconsin Statutes. This approach is more labor intensive and ultimately requires State approval of the agreement, but does not have some of the limitations of the "66.0301" agreement format.

