



Chapter 7

Intergovernmental Cooperation



INTRODUCTION

Intergovernmental cooperation involves coordination, joint decision-making and planning with neighboring communities, agencies and regulatory authorities. The Village of Solon Springs does not exist in a vacuum, or on its own, but within a much broader regional framework of governmental units and jurisdictions. Decisions made by the village affect its neighbors, and vice versa. The Village of Solon Springs recognizes the importance of intergovernmental cooperation in reducing conflict, promoting efficiency and reducing costs.

Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law requires that the Village of Solon Springs coordinate with the following governmental units and jurisdictions.

- Town of Solon Springs
- Douglas County
- Solon Springs School District
- Northwest Regional Planning Commission
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Wisconsin Department of Administration

Relationship to Adjacent and Overlapping Jurisdictions

Relationship to the Town of Solon Springs

The Village of Solon Springs shares a common border with the civil town of Solon Springs. The village has extraterritorial authority which extends 1 ½ miles beyond its municipal boundary, into the unincorporated town. Under state law (Wis. Stat. § 62.23(7a)) the Village of Solon Springs may enact an extraterritorial zoning ordinance and map for adjoining unincorporated areas lying within its extraterritorial plat review area. The Village must follow a procedure that involves the adjoining town before enacting a permanent extraterritorial zoning ordinance. To date, the Village has not enacted an extraterritorial zoning ordinance and map.

Cities and villages have the power to annex lands within their extraterritorial boundaries (Wis. Stat. § 66.021). The power to extend municipal boundaries into adjacent unincorporated land allows a community to control development on its periphery, therefore, minimizing land use conflicts. The Village of Solon Springs has rarely exercised its annexation authority.

The village shares both fire protection and recycling/solid waste services with the Town of Solon Springs. Operation of the Solon Springs/Gordon Airport is also shared between the Village & Town of Solon Springs and the Town of Gordon. The Solon Springs Community Center is also shared, through a joint partnership between the Village and Town of Solon Springs. Portions of the Town of Solon Springs and the Town of Gordon are connected to the Village's sewer system.



While both the town and village utilize the same police officer, this position is not shared.

The Village and Town of Solon Springs contribute jointly towards other community events, organizations and services. Both entities contribute financially to the Solon Springs Development Commission, which oversees the business park. Both entities also contribute funds towards the annual Voyager Days celebration in June and to the 4th of July fireworks. Both the town and village also share operational expenses of the Solon Springs ball park.

The Joan Salmen Public Library is used by residents of the town and village; however the village pays maintenance costs. More town residents use this service than do village residents.

Relationship to Douglas County

The Village of Solon Springs is one of 22 governmental jurisdictions within Douglas County. The village was a co-participant with Douglas County in a multi-jurisdictional all hazard mitigation planning project in 2004, and in a multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning project in 2007. The village is responsible for administration and enforcement of its own ordinances, including zoning, subdivision and other land use regulations. Like Douglas County, the village levies taxes on property owners to pay for administration, public services and infrastructure.

Relationship to the Solon Springs School District

The Village of Solon Springs lies within the Solon Springs School District. The village maintains a cooperative relationship with the district but does not directly participate in administration, facility siting, or improvement issues. Residents living within the school district pay property taxes which partially fund the district's operational expenses. A potential opportunity for improved intergovernmental cooperation between the village and district is to strengthen communication and information distribution

Relationship to the Northwest Regional Planning Commission

Douglas County is one of 10 counties in northwestern Wisconsin which are members of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC), based in Spooner. Regional Planning Commissions are formed under Section 60.0309 of Wisconsin State Statutes to provide a range of services to local units of government within the RPC boundaries. 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 government. NWRPC, like all regional planning entities in Wisconsin, has authority to adopt advisory regional plans.



Relationship to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) is responsible for implementing the laws of the state and applicable federal laws to ensure protection of the state's natural resources. WDNR does have regulatory and enforcement authority within the Village of Solon Springs. The village maintains a cooperative working relationship with the WDNR. It is important that the village be informed of any changes in WDNR rules, policy, management, or planning.

Relationship to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WIDOT) is responsible for planning, building, and maintaining Wisconsin's network of state highways and interstate highway system. The Village of Solon Springs maintains a cooperative relationship with WIDOT.

Relationship to Other State Agencies

The Safety and Buildings Division of the Department of Commerce administers and enforces state laws relating to building construction and safety and health. Plan review and site inspection is part of the division's role in protecting the health and welfare of people in constructed environments. The Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) regulates the Farmland Preservation Program and agricultural practices. The Department of Revenue (DOR) has assessment responsibilities. The Village of Solon Springs has a cooperative relationship with these agencies.

INVENTORY OF EXISTING PLANS AND AGREEMENTS

Existing Plans

Following completion of this planning process, both the Village and Town of Solon Springs will have Chapter 66-compliant comprehensive plans in place. No comprehensive or land use plans were in place prior to this effort. The Village of Solon Springs may be affected by preexisting plans developed by Douglas County and the State of Wisconsin. These plans were reviewed during the comprehensive planning process to ensure consistency and avoid potential conflict. Existing state and county plans applicable to the Village of Solon Springs are identified in **Table 7.1**.



Table 7.1: Existing Plan Review, Village of Solon Springs

State of Wisconsin	Author(s)	Year
Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020	WiDOT	1998
Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020	WiDOT	2000
Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020	WiDOT	2000
State Recreational Trails Network Plan	WiDOT	2001
Midwest Regional Rail System	WiDOT	2000
Wisconsin Pedestrian Plan	WiDOT	2001
Translink 21	WiDOT	1994
Brule River State Forest Master Plan	WDNR	2003
Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2000-2005	WDNR	2000
State of Wisconsin Hazard Mitigation Plan	WEM	2001
Wisconsin Historic Preservation Plan; 2006–2015	WHS	2005
Douglas County		
Douglas County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2006-2020	County	2008
Douglas County Hazard Mitigation Plan	County	2004
Douglas County Outdoor Recreation Plan	County	2003
Lake Superior Lakewide Management Plan	LSBP	2004
Douglas County Land & Water Resource Management Plan	County	2005

Existing Agreements

Intergovernmental agreements are the most widely used formal agreements used by local units of government in Wisconsin. For many years, these agreements have been used in the context of sharing of public services such as police or fire services. Intergovernmental agreements can be used for many other purposes including revenue sharing, establishing boundaries, and land use within boundary areas.

The Village of Solon Springs has existing formal agreements with the Town of Solon Springs for sharing of fire protection and recycling/solid waste collection and operation of the recycling center. Formal agreements are also in place relative to the operation of the Solon Springs/Gordon Airport (V. Solon Springs, T. Solon Springs, and T. Gordon), operation of the Community Center and the sharing of municipal wastewater collection services.

No formal agreements are in place regarding the sharing of road construction or maintenance services, including snow plowing.



Table 7.2: Distinguishing between Intergovernmental Agreement Types

	General Agreements	Stipulations & Orders	Revenue Sharing Agreements	Cooperative Boundary Agreements
Used for	Services	Boundaries	Revenue sharing	Boundaries, services, revenue sharing
Binding with boundaries?	No	Yes, as long as any party is willing to seek enforcement of the agreement.	Yes, period fixed by participants (10 year minimum)	Yes, period fixed by participants (10 years or longer with MBR approval)
Notice required?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Public Hearing Required?	No	No	Yes	Yes
Referendum?	No	Binding referendum possible	Advisory referendum possible	Advisory referendum possible
Who Decides?	Participating municipalities	Municipalities involved in lawsuit, judge, area residents	Participating municipalities	Participating municipalities, MBR
Who Reviews or Comments?	Participating municipalities	Municipalities involved in lawsuit, judge, area residents	Participating municipalities, residents	Participating municipalities, MBR, area jurisdictions, state agencies, RPC, County, Residents

Wisconsin Department of Administration, [Guide to Preparing the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element of a Local Comprehensive Plan.](#)

Potential Intergovernmental Agreements

There are several different types of agreements which the Village of Solon Springs may wish to consider in the future. It may be possible for the Village to **trade services** with adjoining municipalities. The Village of Solon Springs and one or more of adjoining jurisdictions could exchange snowplowing services for equipment, labor, or other services. The village could also seek to **rent equipment** from other municipalities, rather than buying equipment. Renting could potentially the village money and provides the renter community with income from otherwise idle equipment. The village could also expand the **sharing of municipal staff** between municipalities. This is currently done to a limited extent, but could be expanded to include contracted staff (i.e. engineering, planning, property assessment, etc.). The Village of Solon Springs could consider additional **consolidation of services** with adjoining municipalities. The village currently shares some services with the Town of Solon Springs, including fire protection and solid waste/recycling. The village could explore other opportunities to consolidate services with adjoining jurisdictions, or with Douglas County. Consolidation can make a particular service feasible when it otherwise might have been cost-prohibitive or inefficient. In the future the Village of Solon Springs could consider the **joint purchase and ownership of equipment** as another way to reduce municipal costs.



Existing & Potential Conflicts

Land use conflicts may arise through sights, sounds, smells, or other activities on the landscape. This type of conflict is relatively common in cases where residential land use infringes upon areas of agricultural use. Typically, these types of conflict represent conflicts with individual landowners as both agricultural and residential uses are generally considered “desirable” land uses by the community.

The second type of land use conflict arises when a use conflicts with the wishes of the larger community. For example, a proposed utility project or large-scale landfill may be widely opposed by the community as a whole. These types of conflict can sometimes be difficult to avoid completely due to existing regulations and because these conflicts may involve many independent jurisdictions. This is the type of conflict that was associated with the recent development of the Arrowhead-Weston transmission line. This complex project involved many jurisdictions, interest groups and landowners, with many differing points of view. Had the project been part of the long-range local planning process in each affected jurisdiction, perhaps some of the conflict may have been avoided.

Land Use Conflicts

The potential for intergovernmental conflicts were evaluated during the examination of plans of adjacent and overlapping jurisdictions, relationships with adjacent communities, and as part of overall plan development. No major points of conflict have been identified; however it is possible that conflict may arise in the future.

On January 31st, 2008, the Village of Solon Springs entered into a joint planning agreement with Douglas County. This agreement identifies the relationship of local plans to the overall Douglas County Comprehensive Plan. The agreement addresses county/local unit conflict with the following statement, “The County agrees to incorporate town (and village) land use plans in the county comprehensive plan provided they are consistent with county responsibilities to address regional issues, comply with state mandates and address potential land use conflicts in areas where municipalities abut on another.” This agreement mandates consistency among the multi-jurisdictional planning participants and greatly reduces the potential for land use conflict as a result of the planning process.

While many measures have been taken to assure consistency among the plans of adjacent and overlapping jurisdictions, it is possible that conflict may arise in the future. A recommended conflict resolution process was identified in the 2007 Douglas County Multi-jurisdictional Planning Grant application for use during the planning process and following plan adoption. Please refer to **Appendix A** for the full text of the suggested conflict resolution process.

Other Conflicts



Intergovernmental conflicts beyond the scope of land use can also strain municipal relationships and result in reduced future cooperation between jurisdictions. A potential conflict between the Village and Town of Solon Springs is tax equity. The Town and Village of Solon Springs have shared tax levies for services shared between them (i.e. fire, solid waste/recycling). The Town of Solon Springs has a higher assessed property valuation than does the village. Because of lower property values, residents of the village are paying proportionally more for the same services than residents of the town.

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