

CHAPTER 8

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Introduction

Intergovernmental communication, coordination and cooperation can make a significant difference in the implementation and administration of a comprehensive plan. Intergovernmental cooperation can be developed over time. This section explores the relationships between the Town of Black Brook and other municipalities, agencies and others; identifies existing and potential conflicts and offers processes to resolve conflicts and build cooperative relationships.

Of those that had an opinion about the working relationships between the Town of Black Brook and other entities such as adjacent school districts and towns, Polk County, DNR, and DOT, most felt that the Town has a good relationship with each entity.

Units of Government Influence on Black Brook

The first step in coordinating cooperation between various municipalities is to identify the adjacent municipalities and some of their existing plans. The Town of Black Brook is surrounded by a number of municipal units of government. The following is a list of towns, village, and city that border the Town of Black Brook and the various plans those units of government may have or are working on:

Polk County

- Town of Alden
 - Comprehensive Plan
- Town of Lincoln
 - Comprehensive Plan (in progress)
- Town of Clear Lake
 - Comprehensive Plan (in progress)
- Village of Clear Lake
 - Comprehensive Plan (in progress)
- City of Amery
 - Comprehensive Plan (in progress)
 - Airport Zoning
 - Stormwater Management Plan

St. Croix County

- Town of Cylon
 - Comprehensive Plan – Heartland Comprehensive Plan

School Districts

The Town of Black Brook falls into both the Amery and Clear Lake Districts. Both school districts were previously discussed in this Comprehensive Plan in the Utility and Community Facilities Chapter.

Indianhead Technical College

The Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College (WITC) provides educational programs resulting in Associate Degrees and Certificates throughout Polk County and parts Western Wisconsin. The nearest campus is in New Richmond.

University of Wisconsin – River Falls

The University of Wisconsin – River Falls (UWRF) provides undergraduate, graduate and continuing education courses which support the fine arts, liberal studies, technology, business and industry. The campus is approximately 40 miles to the southeast of Black Brook and is part of the University of Wisconsin System.

County and Regional Government Units

- Polk County
- West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Polk County has a number of plans that may have an influence on future growth in the Town of Black Brook. Some of the plans below were a coordinated effort between Polk County and West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The following is a list of the various plans developed by Polk County:

- Polk County Land Use Plan
 - This Plan was written to assist officials with decisions concerning how the various communities in the County should preserve its desired characteristics and make positive changes in an orderly fashion.
- Polk County Land and Water Management Plan
 - This Plan was written to identify and rank concerns that affect the County's Natural Resources as well as identify options for improvement implementations.
- Polk County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan
 - This Plan is intended to serve as a guide for the sustainable use and protection of the County's Forestlands.

- Polk County Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Polk County Hazard Mitigation Plan

State Agencies

- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation

The Wisconsin DNR is often the regulatory agency that is responsible for the protection and sustained management of woodlands, waterways, animal habitat and other natural resources.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining and improving State Highway 46 and U.S. Highway 63, the main potential commercial growth corridor in the Town. For this reason, cooperation and communication between the Town of Black Brook and the Wisconsin DOT are extremely important for the development of the Town.

Existing Town Plans

Although this is a Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Black Brook does have an existing park plan. This Plan was developed by the residents of Black Brook to assist in planning the future growth of the Town. A policy in this Plan is to maintain and update the Plan as necessary.

Current Agreements

The Town of Black Brook has a few existing agreements with some of the adjacent municipalities. Some of these agreements include the Town being part of both the Amery and Clear Lake Districts, and receiving fire and ambulance service from both city and village.

The residents of Black Brook have fire protection through the Amery, Clear Lake, and Deer Park Fire Departments. District boundaries are determined by mutual agreement between the Town and those companies that provide fire protection in the area. The Town has written agreements with both the City of Amery and the Village of Clear Lake to provide fire protection for the Town. Overall level of service for fire protection is good.

Ambulance service for the Town of Black Brook residents is provided by Amery, Clear Lake, and Deer Park EMS.

Future Cooperative Opportunities

Being bordered by a City on the North (Amery) and a Village to the East (Clear Lake) the Town must be prepared for possible extraterritorial authority of both communities. Both municipalities have the authority to plan out 1.5 miles from their municipal boundary limits. If both communities do exercise that right, it would cover a significant portion of the Town of Black Brook. That is why it is important to work together now so that in the future, extraterritorial zoning and plat review.

The Town strives for harmonious relationships with all neighboring communities and has a generally positive relationship with them. The Town should consider developing cooperative boundary agreements with both the City of Amery and the Village of Clear Lake so future growth and development can be directed and agreed upon in a cooperative effort.

There may be tasks in the future that will require collaboration between the Town of Black Brook and its adjacent municipalities. Some of these efforts will cross multiple boundaries because they are related to environmental conditions in the area:

- Watershed Studies
- Stormwater Management Plans
- Farmland Preservation
- Multi-modal Transportation Planning
- Natural Resource Plans

Potential Future Cooperative Efforts

As the City of Amery and the Village of Clear Lake grow, they have the potential to have an impact on the Town of Black Brook. It is important for the Town to work with these communities so future development will be acceptable to all entities involved. One way to achieve agreeable results for future planning is to develop a committee of all three municipalities that meet on a quarterly or semi-annual basis to discuss these issues. Any potential future conflicts should be presented at the joint meeting.

Benefits to Agreements

The Town of Black Brook has a lot to gain by being actively involved in intergovernmental cooperation. Some of the benefits are cost savings, consistency, reduction in litigation, addressing regional issues, and having foresight in understanding future needed services.

Possible Conflicts

The Amery Airport will soon have Airport Overlay Zoning that implements some restrictions on land within 3 miles of the runways and includes a large area of the Town of Black Brook. The Town of Black Brook should attend public meetings that discuss the potential future zoning restrictions.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Encourage adjacent government units to work together to achieve the goals of this Comprehensive Plan.

Objectives:

1. Share services when it is possible and feasible for both the Town of Black Brook and neighboring municipalities.
2. Establish agreements with adjacent municipalities that will benefit all parties involved.
3. Encourage adjacent government units to adopt and implement consistent residential development standards, policies and review practices.

Policies:

1. Promote open communication with adjacent government units.
2. Develop a consistent Park Plan among the neighboring municipalities in order to get the most efficient use out of the existing facilities.
3. Investigate opportunities for future cooperative agreements.
4. Update and maintain Town of Black Brook website.
5. Work with Polk County to develop a comprehensive zoning ordinance.
6. Develop a joint meeting committee with the City of Amery and Village of Clear Lake.
7. Consider participation in the Western Wisconsin Intergovernmental Collaborative (WWIC).
8. Provide a copy of this comprehensive plan to all surrounding or nearby local governments.
9. Create a cooperative understanding with adjoining towns for road maintenance.