

Intergovernmental

Element Name: Intergovernmental
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Introduction

Intergovernmental cooperation is any arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions communicate visions and coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve issues of mutual interest. It can be as simple as communicating and sharing information, or it can involve entering into formal intergovernmental agreements to consolidate and/or share resources such as equipment, buildings, personnel, and revenue. Intergovernmental cooperation is an essential part of the Medford planning process, as it has been the heart of the comprehensive planning effort. The county, towns, villages, and city not only share common boundaries, but also school attendance areas, watersheds, transportation and recreation routes, fire and emergency protection services, lakes, rivers, recycling programs and rural based economies.

Medford has established numerous relationships among organizations that have allowed resources to be shared and maximized. Medford needs to continue to coordinate and discuss issues and potential joint projects in efforts to provide desirable and valuable service to our residents and visitors of the City. Continued cooperation will ensure future dialog and accomplishments benefiting the City of Medford.

Short Term Plan Suggestions (0 to 5 Years)

Priority: 1 City and surrounding townships need to stay in communication on the following issues:

- (A) Extraterritorial zoning to insure that development plans for land use are compatible between the City and the townships in regards to annexation and zoning/planning.
- (B) Information on expansion into surrounding townships as soon as it becomes available.

Priority: 1 Continue to evaluate, improve, and update Emergency Preparedness Plans.

Priority: 1 Continue to evaluate and improve the following organizations and their respective relationships:

- (A) Medford Area School District
 - (1) Public and Parochial Schools
 - (2) Rural Virtual Academy
 - (3) Northcentral Technical College
- (B) Medford Police Department
- (C) Taylor County Sheriff's Department
- (D) Medford Area Fire Department

Medium Term Plan Suggestions (6 to 10 Years)

1. The City needs to establish dialogue with the townships to begin the process of formal boundary agreements. The discussions should center around boundary agreements, and cover policies and procedures for the following areas:
 - (A) Annexations
 - (B) Expansions
 - (C) Utilities
 - (D) Transportation; and
 - (E) Land Use.

Long Term Plan Suggestions (11 Plus Years)

1. Following the dialogue with the townships, policies and procedures need to be developed based on mutual agreement. These clearly defined policies and procedures should focus on annexation, expansion, utilities, transportation, and land use.

Relationship with Other Entities

Education

The Medford Area Public School District is a composite of city and rural areas contained in approximately 426 square miles. Included within the school district boundaries are the City of Medford, the Village of Stetsonville, and all or parts of the Townships of Browning, Chelsea, Deer Creek, Goodrich, Grover, Hammel, Holway, Little Black, Maplehurst, Medford and Molitor in Taylor County, and the Town of Bern in Marathon County.

The Medford Area Public School District works together with the two parochial schools located within the school district - Holy Rosary Catholic School and Immanuel Lutheran School. This allows the schools to share transportation, Title resources, and some educational classes.

The Medford Area School District has entered into a contract with the Rural Virtual Academy Charter School. The Rural Virtual Academy provides education to the K-8 non-traditional students. They serve disenfranchised students who learn best at home through a combination of virtual and parent/teacher instruction. The Rural Virtual Academy is supported by a consortium of five schools who will assist with governing the school, however, it is an instrumentality of the Medford Public School District.

The Medford Area School District has established a relationship with Northcentral Technical College (NTC). Numerous courses are taught at Medford Area Senior High that allow students to receive NTC credit. These courses are taught by certified instructors and the course use college level books and materials. Students receive regular technical college credit upon completion of the course and an official transcript with the grade(s) and credit(s) recorded at the technical college. Students enrolled in these courses also receive high school credit.

Relationship with Other Entities Continued

Federal Agencies

From time to time the City works with Federal agencies to facilitate and coordinate various activities including, but not limited to Census data collection, National Incident Management training, military voting, etc.

Fire Protection

The City of Medford along with the Towns of Browning, Chelsea, Goodrich, Grover, Hammel, Medford and Molitor formed a Joint Fire Commission. The Joint Commission consists of fourteen commissioners (one from each of the seven townships, and seven from the City). The Joint Fire Commission entered into a lease and services agreement with the City. This agreement is in effective until December 31, 2012. All operational, maintenance, and capital costs incurred by the Joint Fire Commission are paid by the participating municipalities pro rata on the basis of equalized valuation as of January 1st in the year the cost is incurred. Mutual aid agreements are in effect with Taylor County and surrounding municipalities. The City and Northcentral Technical College are in process of entering into an agreement for a fire training facility (splash tower).

Law Enforcement

The Medford Police Department is involved in a networking system of key agencies. The agencies are involved in monthly-annual meetings to plan, trouble shoot, train, and stay familiar with other agencies and personnel.

The Medford Police, Taylor County Sheriffs Department, Taylor County Human Services, Taylor County District Attorney's Office are involved sexual assault/abuse task force. These work, train, and attend conferences together to be more effective in prosecution and investigation of sexual assaults.

The Medford Police, Taylor County Sheriff's Department, and the Wisconsin State Patrol conduct two traffic interdiction details. These details are a concentrated effort to check for drugs and wanted subjects. Several agencies, K-9 units, and additional personnel make a concentrated effort to stop traffic and equipment violations and then conduct interdictions. This has been a very successful program.

The Medford Police Department and the Taylor County Sheriff's Department share the law enforcement area of the Taylor County Courthouse. They also share trainers, equipment, and a firearm range. Their instructors train personnel from both departments and specialized equipment is available to all officers. They also share the evidence room as well as the impound lot.

All state certified trainers are members of statewide associations that are available for training, information, and legal update.

The Medford Police Department and the Medford School District share an officer (Police School Liaison Officer). This officer works in all public and private schools August-June, and then returns to regular patrol during the summer months. This officer is involved in training, crime investigations, truancy, D.A.R.E., and various other law enforcement and school functions.

Relationship with Other Entities Continued

Library Services

The Frances L. Simek Memorial Library is governed by a seven person Library Board comprised of six people appointed by the Mayor, and one person appointed by the Medford Area Public School District Administrator. The library receives its funding from both the City of Medford and Taylor County, and has a Library Board representative on the Taylor County Library Board. The library is a part of Wisconsin Valley Library Services and a member of a seven county shared system called V-Cat.

Mercury Green Tier Charter Program

The City recently became a signatory to the Mercury Green Tier Charter program along with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Municipal Environmental Group, and other municipal environmental group member communities. This program is designed to promote early compliance with mercury reduction requirements in exchange for greater certainty, increased flexibility, and greater agency resources. There is no cost to the City to participate in this program. Benefits include the following: (1) Assistance in creating and implementing a Mercury Pollution Minimization Plan; (2) Provides a Department of Natural Resources contact person to assist participating municipalities in this process. (3) Allows participating municipalities to share both their Mercury Pollution Minimization program and problem solving experiences. This coordinated work will be relatively low cost for municipalities, and may reduce the need for outside consultants. (4) Create outreach programs with dental facilities, schools, etc.

Municipal Electric Utility

The Medford Electric Utility is a municipal-owned utility providing electrical services to the City of Medford, and portions of six surrounding townships (Browning, Chelsea, Deer Creek, Greenwood, Little Black, and Medford).

Overlapping Local Governments

Within the boundary of Taylor County, there are a total of 22 townships, 4 villages, and one City. Each of the 27 governments is represented by elected officials that have been delegated the responsibility by their constituents to manage the affairs of their local governments. This is done by following state legislation that provides direction and authority. While issues occur from time to time, the City and its surrounding municipal neighbors work to resolve those issues using their vast judgement while representing their respective municipalities.

Recycling

The City of Medford, Taylor County (representing its 17-member municipalities), and the Joint Rib Lake Area Recycling Commission have entered into a recycling cooperative agreement. This consortium assists each participant in obtaining additional state funding.

Relationship with Other Entities Continued

Safety Training

The City belongs to the Northwestern Regional Safety Group which currently includes the City of Menomonie Department of Public Works, Marshfield Utilities, City of River Falls/River Falls Utilities, City of Rice Lake/Rice Lake Utilities, and the City of Barron/Barron Light & Water. The members contract with and share a Safety Coordinator. The Safety Coordinator coordinates Wisconsin Department of Commerce regulatory compliance and safety for these communities.

State Agencies - There are several state agencies that affect planning in the City of Medford. They include the following:

Wisconsin Department of Transportation - The City is located within the Wisconsin Department of Transportation Northwest Region, with its regional office located in Eau Claire. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation plays an important role in supporting all forms of transportation. The Department is responsible for planning, building, and maintaining Wisconsin's network of state highways, and interstates. The Department shares the cost of building and operating county and local transportation systems – from highways to public transit (City-shared taxi service) and other modes. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation plans, promotes, and financially supports statewide air, rail, and water transportation, as well as bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources - The City of Medford is located in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' northern region, with its regional office in Spooner. The Department of Natural Resources is dedicated to the preservation, protection, effective management, and maintenance of Wisconsin's natural resources. It is responsible for implementing the laws of the State and, where applicable, the laws of the Federal government that protect and enhance the natural resources of our State. It is the one agency charged with full responsibility for coordinating the many disciplines and programs necessary to provide a clean environment and a full range of outdoor recreational opportunities for Wisconsin citizens and visitors.

The City, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and other State departments/agencies continue to coordinate and discuss issues and potential joint projects in efforts to provide desirable and valuable services to residents and visitors of the City. Continued cooperation will ensure future dialog and accomplishments benefiting the City.

The City also maintains a close working relationship with its State representatives.

Taylor County

As the County seat, the Taylor County Courthouse is located within the City of Medford. This close proximity allows various departments to frequently interact and share information. Examples included, but are not limited to:

- Election – Taylor County Clerk serves as the service provider for the State Voter Registration System. Both the City Clerk and County Clerk work closely on election administration and training.

Relationship with Other Entities Continued

Taylor County Continued

- Emergency Management – City and County personnel are actively involved in emergency planning.
- Health – Taylor County Health Department assists the City in various health issues.
- Register of Deeds – As this office records conveyances of real estate, trusts, mortgages, easements, and any form of transaction affecting the real estate, the City often receives historical information on properties.
- Property Tax Lister – Various City departments rely on the Property Tax Lister for data and information.
- Treasurer – Both the City Treasurer and County Treasurer are involved in the tax collection process, and share information as needed.

Taylor County Cooperative Extension

The Taylor County Cooperative Extension provides assistance in the areas of education, natural resources, and economic development.

Tax Incremental Finance Districts

Tax Incremental Finance is a financing tool that allows municipalities to invest in infrastructure and other improvements, and pay for these investments by capturing property tax revenue from the newly developed property. An area is identified (the tax incremental district) as appropriate for a certain type of development, and projects are identified to encourage and facilitate the desired development. Then as property values rise, the property tax paid on that private development is used by the municipality to pay for these projects. The tax paid to the school, county, and technical college district (the overlaying taxing jurisdictions) is also sent to the municipality to pay for the improvements. After the costs of the projects are paid off, the tax incremental district is closed and the value of all the new development gets shared by the municipality, schools, county, and technical college as it does for other property.

A Joint Review Board is required to review and approve Tax Incremental Finance Districts. The board is comprised of the following: (1) The president of the school board, or his/her designee with preference to the school district's finance director. (2) The director of the technical college district, or his/her designee with preference to the district's chief financial officer. (3) The county executive or the chairperson of the county board, or this person's designee with preference to the county treasurer. (4) The mayor, or his/her designee with preference to the person who administers the economic development programs or the municipal treasurer. (6) A public member chosen by a majority of the other members at the Joint Review Board's first meeting.

Programs & Implementation Tools

Implementation tools (programs) are the specific means by which the City of Medford can accomplish its plan goals, objectives, and actions. There are an infinite number of ways local units of government can cooperate and coordinator to implement their Comprehensive Plans. This section will describe four main avenues the City and its surrounding neighbors could utilize to help implement the intergovernmental cooperation element of this Comprehensive Plan.

Cooperating with Services

Cooperating with services may be the easiest area that the City and other jurisdictions can agree on. It can be a chance to build a base of success and positive feelings from which more challenging intergovernmental projects can be undertaken. Some ideas for how to cooperate with services include: (1) Voluntary assistance; (2) Trading services; (3) Renting equipment; (4) Contracting, (5) Sharing municipal personnel; (6) Consolidating services; (7) Joint use of a facility; (8) Special purpose districts; (9) Joint purchase and ownership of equipment; and (10) Cooperative purchasing.

Cooperating with Regulations

The City creates and administers ordinances, laws, and regulations. These ordinances, laws, and regulations are important as they play a key role in implementing this plan. How the City's ordinances relate to those of neighboring communities, and to the law of other jurisdictions could influence whether or not this plan is implemented. Examples of kinds of laws and ordinances that the City could cooperate with neighboring communities include: (1) General zoning ordinances; (2) Official Maps; and (3) Stormwater management ordinances.

Cooperating with Sharing Revenues

Sharing revenues can improve relationships between communities and other jurisdictions, enhance services for residents, and improve the area's functioning as a whole. An example of this could simply be two communities that apply jointly for a state or federal grant.

Cooperating with Boundaries

Boundary agreements may be the most challenging of all intergovernmental issues. Cooperative boundary agreements, although more associated with incorporated municipalities, affect our lives, impacting land uses and development, services, revenues, transportation, natural resources, and economic opportunities. Municipal boundaries can be altered through annexation, detachment, incorporation, consolidation, and intergovernmental agreements.

Summary

Intergovernmental cooperation provides an opportunity for the City and other governmental units (townships, schools, county) to work together to promote consistency in the future of our community. It is important that the City and other governmental bodies cooperate in an effort to strengthen their relationships, and when ever possible to eliminate any unnecessary duplication of services.

Intergovernmental



Taylor County Courthouse



Northcentral Technical College

Intergovernmental



Medford City Hall



Medford Town Hall