

## **ELEMENT 7 - INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

Intergovernmental cooperation involves collaborating with neighboring communities, school districts, and agencies to understand how their future planning and development activities may impact the Town of Sherman. 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.

### **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. In the future, should mutually beneficial opportunities for shared service contracts arise with adjoining towns, the Town of Sherman is open to considering such options.

Most towns adjacent to Sherman completed comprehensive plans in the mid 2000’s. The only neighboring jurisdiction comprehensive plan update was done in 2017 by the Town of Manitowish Waters (Vilas County) which borders Sherman on the east and south.

The Town of Sherman is open to participating in the planning efforts of adjacent communities and, likewise, is open to input from adjacent communities in their planning process. The Town of Sherman will consider the adjoining town’s comprehensive plans when making future land use decisions. The Town of Lac du Flambeau comprehensive plan was recently updated, in 2019.

#### **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 entire reservation is approximately 86,630 acres, with 14,595 acres located in the southeast portion of the Town.

### **County Governmental Units**

Since the Town of Sherman is an unincorporated area, the Town falls under the umbrella of the Iron County comprehensive zoning ordinance. Approvals for zoning changes, including conditional use permits, are granted through Iron County. Zoning changes and conditional use permits are passed onto the Town of Sherman for initial review and consideration. The Town expects that the County will consider recommendations provided by the Town's comprehensive plan. Likewise, the Town expects the County to understand that the ***Future Land Use Map*** provides a general pattern for future development.

Ashland County partially borders the Town of 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 proximity to other counties requires the Town of Sherman to communicate with these counties on a periodic basis. This communication helps to minimize potential problems that may arise on the sharing of services and facilities. Continued interaction between the Town and these counties is encouraged, especially relating to future land use decisions and potential development projects.

### **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 (2002), the Town of Sherman Comprehensive Plan (2005), and this Comprehensive Plan Update (2023).

### **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 coordinates 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 Chequamegon 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 or Glidden to attend school, the Town of Sherman should continue to work with the Chequamegon School District/Board.

### **Intergovernmental Comprehensive Planning Process**

On behalf of the Town of Sherman, the NWRPC contacted Iron County, the Chequamegon School District, state, and federal agencies regarding their available services.

### **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 diminished due to the concerted development of the 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 as follows:

- Fire Department Mutual Aid Agreement with Town of Mercer
- Fire Department Mutual Aid Agreement with Town of Lac du Flambeau
- Fire Department Mutual Aid Agreement with Town of Manitowish Waters
- Fire Department Mutual Aid Agreement with Town of Fifiel – Pike Lake Fire District
- Fire Department Mutual Aid Agreement with Wisconsin DNR
- Ambulance Service Agreement with Marshfield Medical Center-Park Falls (west of Mirror Lake Road)
- Ambulance Service Agreement with Town of Mercer (east of Mirror Lake Road)
- If needed, Sherman will dispatch a snowplow to assist on ambulance runs in the Town

- Informal EMS training with Fifield and Pike Lake EMS
- Snow Plowing Agreement with Town of Mercer for Wilson Lake Road and Dam Road

### **7.3 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS**

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

#### **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS**

##### **GOAL 1: TO HAVE INFORMED AND ENGAGED RESIDENTS.**

Objective 1: Improve public communication.

Action 1: *Encourage full-time and seasonal residents to sign up to receive Town emails.*

Action 2: *Utilize the Town's website and designated bulletin boards to provide information on Town matters.*

Action 3: *Create an informational packet for residents and other users of Town facilities and services.*

Action 4: *Form a work group to determine the capabilities of the Town website and work with the Town Board to make improvements.*

Objective 2: Broaden the Volunteer Base

Action 1: *Match up resident skill sets with various volunteer opportunities.*

**GOAL 2: TO HAVE COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH NEIGHBORING JURISDICTIONS.**

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

*Action 1: Meet periodically with Iron County Zoning to review standards and enforcement activity taking place at the County level.*

*Action 2: Participate in conditional use permit review to ensure the Town's goals are followed.*

*Action 3: Review periodic reports and updates provided by the County Supervisor.*

Objective 2: When feasible, cooperate with adjoining towns and government units regarding facility planning, services, and land-use policies to gain efficiency and regional development consistency.

*Action 1: Maintain awareness of opportunities that may arise and respond as appropriate.*

Objective 3: Maintain open lines of communication with the WDNR and Iron County

*Action 1: Contact WDNR personnel and Iron County departments as needed to share information and review relevant topics.*