

Intergovernmental Cooperation

A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions, including school districts, drainage districts, and adjacent local governmental units, for siting and building public facilities and sharing public services. The element shall analyze the relationship of the local governmental unit to school districts, drainage districts, and adjacent local governmental units, and to the region, the state and other governmental units. The element shall consider, to the greatest extent possible, the maps and plans of any military base or installation, with at least 200 assigned military personnel or that contains at least 2,000 acres, with which the local governmental unit shares common territory. The element shall incorporate any plans or agreements to which the local governmental unit is a party under s. [66.0301](#), [66.0307](#) or [66.0309](#). The element shall identify existing or potential conflicts between the local governmental unit and other governmental units that are specified in this paragraph and describe processes to resolve such conflicts.

The issue of intergovernmental cooperation is critical to address numerous issues that cross over political boundaries. Issues like watersheds, labor force, transportation, housing, natural disasters and many others do not conform to political boundaries. To provide quality and efficient services to residents the City of Columbus the city needs to explore sharing services where practical.

Existing Areas of Cooperation – County

Columbia County – Most of the City of Columbus lies in Columbia County. Columbia County provides a wide range of services for Columbus residents. Most of these services are statutorily required and typically are not offered at the local level. Some of these services include Emergency Management, Health and Human Services, Transportation, Land Information, Register of Deeds, and Veterans Services. Below is a listing of current agreements between the City of Columbus and Columbia County:

- HAZ-MAT agreement for Hazardous Materials response services offered by Columbia County.
- Senior Nutrition Program agreement to allow the Columbia County Aging and Disability Resource Center to use the senior center to conduct the Senior Nutrition Program.
- Radio Tower Agreement for maintenance of the public Radio Tower which serves the city's police, fire and emergency medical services
- Mutual Aid Agreements for emergency and fire services

Dodge County – A small portion of the City of Columbus located within Dodge County, which provides a wide range of services. The city has the following agreements in place with Dodge County:

- Stray Animal Contract with Dodge County Humane Society
- 911 Joint Powers Agreement with Dodge County Sheriff's Department

Mutual Aid Agreements – The City has mutual aid agreements with Columbia, Dane and Dodge Counties to provide additional Police, Fire or Emergency Medical Services outside of our service area to assist with in the case of a large event. The aid is reciprocated if there were an event in Columbus that needed additional Police, Fire or Emergency Medical Services.

Existing Areas of Cooperation – Local Government

Town of Elba – The Town of Elba is located in Dodge County just to the east of the City of Columbus. The city has an agreement in place to provide sanitary sewer to the Elba Sanitary District.

Village of Fall River – The village of Fall River is located approximately two miles to the northwest of the City of Columbus. In 2010 an Intergovernmental Agreement allowed the Village of Fall River to connect to the Columbus Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Existing Areas of Cooperation – Education

Columbus School District – The City of Columbus is within the Columbus School District. The city and school district have executed shared use agreements for:

- Athletic Fields and Bleachers
- Use of Council Chambers to televise School Board Meetings

Existing Areas of Cooperation – Services

Columbus Public Library – The Columbus public library serves the greater Columbus Area. In addition to serving residents of Columbus, the Library provides services to residents in the Village of Fall River, Town of Elba Town of Fountain Prairie and other surrounding communities.

Emergency Medical Services – Columbus is part of the Columbus Area Emergency Medical Services Group. The group was formed by an intergovernmental agreement between the City of Columbus, Town of Calamus, Town of Columbus, Town of Elba, Town of Fountain Prairie, Town of Hampden, Town of Portland and Town of York. The Columbus Area Emergency Medical Services Group contracts with lifestar to provide services for these areas.

Fire Services – Columbus is part of the Columbus Rural Fire Group. The group was created by an intergovernmental agreement between the City of Columbus, town of Elba, Town of Calamus, Town of Portland, Town of Columbus, Town of Hampden, and the Town of York. The agreement details the sharing of fire services and costs associated with the purchase and maintenance of Equipment.

State Agencies - The Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources and Transportation are the primary agencies the Columbus might deal with regarding development activities. Many of the goals and objectives of this plan will require continued cooperation and coordination with these agencies.

Tools for Intergovernmental Cooperation

- Shared Service Agreements Per 66.0301
Wisconsin Statute s.66.0301 entitled "Intergovernmental Cooperation" enables local governments to jointly do together whatever one can do alone. Intergovernmental agreements prepared under this statute, are the most common form of agreement and have been used by communities for years. The most common use has been for the sharing public services such as police, fire, or rescue.

- Boundary Agreement

Under Section 66.0307, Wisconsin Statutes, municipalities may prepare cooperative boundary plans or agreements. Each city, village, or town that intends to participate in the preparation of a cooperative plan must adopt a resolution authorizing its participation in the planning process

Cooperative boundary plans or agreements involve decisions regarding the maintenance or change of municipal boundaries for a period of 10 years or more. The cooperative plan must include: a plan for the physical development of the territory covered by the plan. It must also include; a schedule for changes to the boundary; plans for the delivery of services; an evaluation of environmental features and a description of any adverse environmental consequences that may result from the implementation of the plan; and it must address the need for safe and affordable housing. The participating communities must hold a public hearing prior to its adoption.

Once adopted, the plan must be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Administration for state approval. Upon approval, the cooperative plan has the force and effect of a contract. Working with the towns, the city could use this tool to establish boundaries in certain areas where it is logical and in the best interest to do so from a planning and service delivery standpoint.

- Municipal Revenue Sharing

Wisconsin Statute, 66.0305, Municipal Revenue Sharing, gives authority to cities, villages and towns to enter into agreements to share revenue from taxes and special charges with each other. The agreements may also address other matters, including agreements regarding services to be provided or the location of municipal boundaries.

Boundaries of the shared revenue area must be specified in the agreement and the term of the agreement must be for at least 10 years. The formula or other means for sharing revenue, the date of payment of revenues, and the means by which the agreement may be invalidated after the minimum 10 year period.

Goal

1. Continue to promote intergovernmental cooperation in the region

Objectives:

1. Coordinate planning for long-term City growth with Columbia and Dodge Counties, the Towns of Elba and Columbus, and the Village of Fall River.
2. Share or coordinate public services with other governmental entities to achieve cost savings and/or quality improvements for the mutual benefit of all participants.

Policies:

1. The City will seek cooperative agreements with nearby governments for the provision of public services whenever it can be demonstrated that doing so will achieve cost savings and/or quality improvements for Columbus residents.