

11. Intergovernmental Cooperation

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Intergovernmental Cooperation Vision

By 2035, intergovernmental cooperation efforts have enabled Evansville to establish partnerships with neighboring communities, State agencies, regional agencies, Rock County, and the Evansville Community School District to continue the provision of coordinated, cost-effective services. Annexations are considered based on service demands in a fashion to sustain the growth needs of the City, preserve farmland and respect the rural character of the surrounding Town.

Policies

The City of Evansville seeks to enhance the lines of communication between local area governments. This approach will help to create an environment where cooperation is possible and conflicts are minimized. Goals and supporting objectives are provided at the end of this chapter. Below are the City's policies:

- **Maintain cooperation with all neighboring municipalities, Rock County, State agencies, and the School District for mutual benefit.**
- **Communicate and coordinate with communities in Rock County to enhance the region.**

Goals

- **Maintain and improve communication with neighboring communities, the Evansville Community School District, the WDNR, WisDOT, Rock County and other intergovernmental partners.**
- **Discuss intergovernmental issues in a mutually beneficial manner.**
- **Understand and monitor decision-making responsibilities associated with the Fire District.**
- **Coordinate and share community facilities and services with neighboring communities, the Evansville Community School District and Rock County.**

Introduction

Intergovernmental cooperation involves working with neighboring communities and agencies to understand how their future planning activities will impact the City of Evansville. At a minimum, this involves sharing information about Evansville's plan with neighboring communities and agencies and vice versa. However, Evansville believes intergovernmental cooperation should not end with the sharing of plans. Instead, this process should be the beginning for joint planning and decision-making, conflict resolution, and other strategies to promote regional coordination.

The Comprehensive Planning Law prescribes that the City of Evansville coordinate with:

- Town of Union
- Rock County
- Evansville Community School District
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The City of Evansville may also benefit from coordination with the following additional governments, agencies, commissions and boards:

- Evansville School Board
- Town of Magnolia
- Town of Center
- Town of Porter
- Arrowhead Library System
- Town of Brooklyn
- Wisconsin Department of Tourism
- National Park Service
- Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
- Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP)
- Wisconsin Historical Society
- Rock County Supervisors
- Rock County Planning and Development Committee
- Evansville Housing Authority
- Evansville Ecumenical Care Closet Food Pantry
- Ice Age Trail Alliance

Intergovernmental Activities and Partners

Many intergovernmental programs already in effect impact the City of Evansville. This section highlights programs that are currently in place.

Adjacent Governmental Units

- Towns of Union, Magnolia, Center, Porter (Rock County)
- Town of Brooklyn (Green County)

The Town of Union surrounds the City of Evansville. As such, the City has direct interactions with the Town of Union. Evansville and Union coordinate with one another to provide fire protection service and emergency medical service through the Evansville Community Fire District and the EMS service area. The Town and City have also reached an agreement for the City's Police Department to strategically patrol around the Evansville Schools. The high school is located in the City, but one of the driveways into the school enters from the Town of Union on a township road. Through the agreement, the City police also patrols this area in the Town.

The City of Evansville's 1.5 mile extraterritorial jurisdiction extends into the Towns of Union, Magnolia, Center, and Porter. In the past, the City had extraterritorial zoning that extended into the Town of Union. An opportunity exists to re-establish extraterritorial zoning to require growth in the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the City that will utilize municipal services rather than low density rural development that will consume more farmland and impact surrounding rural character. From time to time, property owners in the Town of Union request annexation into the City of Evansville to accommodate development requests that require municipal water and sewer. This sometimes strains the relationship between Evansville and Union.

Portions of the Town of Magnolia, Town of Porter, and Town of Brooklyn, as well as the Town of Union, participate in the Fire District and EMS service area. (A more detailed description of this service, including equipment, response times and similar information is provided in the Utilities and Community Facilities chapter). These multi-jurisdictional efforts provide excellent service for the area. However, there are issues to be resolved with respect to making representation on the Fire District Board proportional to the funding provided by each jurisdiction.

Communities around Evansville share a common rural character, with a strong farming tradition. Residents of nearby communities enjoy access to Evansville's parks, library, and businesses and attend Evansville Community Schools. As a result, Evansville is an important destination point for residents of surrounding rural communities. Some of these resources are funded disproportionately by property tax levies on City residents, meaning some services used by township residents are paid for by City residents. The City should distribute funding of these services more fairly to reduce the impact on City residents.

At this time, surrounding communities manage their own public service programs (e.g., road maintenance and construction, garbage collection, snowplowing). However, as mutually beneficial opportunities for shared service contracts arise in the future, the City of Evansville is open to considering these options.

School District

The City appreciates the quality service provided by the Evansville Community School District and the fact that the schools are a draw to the area for new residents. Regular and open communication will continue to ensure that this cooperative relationship will endure and be strengthened as the City's growth continues. Through intergovernmental efforts, it is believed that operating efficiencies of both the City and the School District can be improved and additional services may be made available to area residents.

The City has routinely participated in District committees and input sessions. This participation has resulted in understanding the siting challenges of a new youth center, referendum planning, COVID-19 related decisions, and construction of a walkable replacement of the J.C. McKenna Middle School building. The City was able to plan for

an attractively updated streetscape, and arrange its scheduled street rebuilding projects to accommodate the timing of Middle School construction. Continued coordination with the district should be prioritized.

Evansville Housing Authority

The Evansville Housing Authority owns and operates the South Meadows Apartments, offers rental assistance through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Section 8 program, and administers the City's Community Development Block Grant funds. City communication and collaboration with the Housing Authority is important to ensure Evansville maintains an adequate supply of affordable housing as growth occurs.

Rock County

The City of Evansville is located in Rock County. The County provides many programs, services, and facilities (e.g., parks) that are available to Evansville residents. Rock County programs that most directly impact Evansville residents include:

- County highway maintenance and improvement programs
- Sheriff's office cooperation with local police departments
- Library funding support (to help cover the costs of County residents who use the Eager Free Public Library)
- Rock County Transit and Paratransit services
- Rock County Human Services
- Blackhawk Technical College
- Rock County Development Alliance

Most County services and programs are concentrated in Janesville and Beloit. Access to these services has been challenging to Evansville residents in need, particularly those residents that cannot drive. The City of Evansville encourages the County to consider opportunities to open satellite offices, provide additional outreach programs, and improve transportation access.

In those areas where Rock County has jurisdiction, the County attempts to get input from the City of Evansville before making decisions affecting the City. Likewise, the City maintains communication with Rock County by providing recommendations. City-County communication is a priority, particularly with respect to County road improvement projects. Future communication will also be especially important as it relates to:

- Water quality
- Stormwater management
- Agricultural and natural resources
- Coordination with the Rock County plans, including their:
 - Comprehensive Plan
 - Farmland Preservation Plan
 - Parks, Outdoor Recreation & Open Space Plan
 - Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) Program Manual
- Economic development
- Public safety
- Social services
- Workforce development and job training

State and Federal Agencies

- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)
- Wisconsin State Historical Society
- United States Postal Service
- National Park Service

WDNR and WisDOT are the primary state agencies with whom Evansville must coordinate to achieve the goals and objectives of this plan. Given the size of the historic districts in the City, as well as funding opportunities that are available, the Wisconsin State Historical Society is also an important partner in planning. More information about the programs and services available through the Wisconsin State Historical Society is included in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter.

WDNR takes a lead role in wildlife protection and the sustainable management of woodlands, stormwater regulations, wetlands and other natural wildlife habitat areas. Management of the hunting lands located immediately south of the City is also an important area for cooperation between the City and the WDNR. The WDNR has also worked with SOLE-Save Our Lake Environment Inc. to manage the fish stock in Lake Leota.

WisDOT is a key player in the planning and development of highways and some of the pedestrian/cycling facilities in the City and region. Evansville and WisDOT have been in communication regarding transportation planning in the area. WisDOT held some of their public meetings for the US Highway 14 Corridor Management Plan in Evansville. During Evansville's comprehensive planning process, WisDOT emphasized that it seeks guidance from local plans when planning for future road projects. This emphasizes the importance of Evansville's long range planning, even for projects the City does not directly control, such as US Highway 14.

Open communication and participation in land use and transportation decisions that impact the City of Evansville will remain important priorities for intergovernmental cooperation.

Intergovernmental Comprehensive Planning Process

To facilitate a planning environment open to intergovernmental cooperation, the City of Evansville sent adjacent municipalities, the WDNR, WDOT, the Evansville Community School District, and Rock County an invitation to participate in an intergovernmental meeting held in October of 2003. The purpose of this meeting was to:

- Provide notification of the City's planning effort at an early point in the program so intergovernmental cooperation opportunities could be an integral part of the plan;
- Learn about existing plans and initiatives developed by these agencies and communities that may impact Evansville; and
- Discuss intergovernmental successes, challenges and opportunities.

Throughout the 2022 update planning process, City of Evansville planning staff consulted adopted plans of surrounding Towns, Rock County, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Rock County officials, School District representatives, neighboring communities, and State agencies were consulted to complete inventories of available services, facilities and programs. The School District, the Police Department, EMS, and Fire District were important resources during development of the *Utilities and Community Facilities Element*.

Existing and Proposed Plans

Adjacent/Nearby Governmental Units

The Town of Union adopted their Comprehensive Plan in 2006.

The Towns of Center and Porter coordinated with the Towns of Avon, Newark, Plymouth and Spring Valley and the Village of Footville to adopt a multi-jurisdictional plan in 2005.

The Town of Magnolia adopted a Land Use, Transportation, and Farmland Preservation Plan in 2007.

To ensure compatibility with the goals and objectives of this plan, the City of Evansville will continue to participate in the planning efforts of its neighboring communities as opportunities arise.

Evansville Community School District

The Evansville Community School District has built facilities to accommodate a significant number of new students coming to the district. Whereas other districts build facilities to accommodate existing student populations, the Evansville Community School District has built facilities to accommodate anticipated growth over the next several years. The District adopted a strategic plan in 2022. Additional information about school facilities is provided in the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter.

Rock County

Rock County completed and adopted their comprehensive plan in 2009. There are many other plan documents that the County has prepared that were reviewed in order to develop this plan. These documents include:

- Rock County Park, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan
- Rock County Land and Water Conservation Plan
- Rock County Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) Program Manual
- Rock County Agricultural Preservation Plan

Information from these documents is profiled in the corresponding chapter of this plan. For example, pertinent recommendations from the *Rock County Park, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan* are highlighted in the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter and Transportation Chapter (related to trails).

State Agencies

The WDNR maintains property management plans, including a plan for DNR-owned land in the City.

WisDOT has completed a series of statewide planning documents for use in the development of local comprehensive plans. These documents include plans for the state highway corridors, bicycle corridors, rail corridors, and air transportation. These plans were used as an important reference when preparing the Transportation Chapter of this plan. Furthermore, WisDOT's *USH 14 Corridor Management Plan* identifies potential projects in the Evansville area over the next 20 years.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals and Objectives

These Intergovernmental Cooperation goals and objectives serve as a way to put the vision statement into action, through a series of to dos. Below are Goals and objectives for the Intergovernmental Cooperation Chapter:

| Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal #1 | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Maintain and improve communication with neighboring communities, the Evansville Community School District, the WDNR, WisDOT, Rock County and other intergovernmental partners. | | | |
| Supporting Objectives | Champion / Partner | Potential Funding Source | Milestone Date |
| 1. Continue to actively participate in the comprehensive planning activities of neighboring communities and Rock County. | Community Development Director | NA | Continuous |
| 2. Participate in the planning activities of the Evansville Community School District. | City Administrator & Community Development Director, Plan Commission | NA | Continuous |
| Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal #2 | | | |

| Discuss intergovernmental issues in a mutually beneficial manner. | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Supporting Objectives | Champion / Partner | Potential Funding Source | Milestone Date |
| 1. Re-establish periodic joint Plan Commission meetings between the Town of Union and the City of Evansville. | City Administrator & Community Development Director, Town of Union | City Budget | 2025 |
| 2. Work collaboratively with the Town of Union during the City's review of extraterritorial subdivision within the Town of Union. | City Administrator & Community Development Director, Plan Commission | City Budget | Continuous |
| 3. Maintain relationships with MadREP and Rock County Economic Development | City Administrator | City Budget | Continuous |
| Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal #3 | | | |
| Understand and monitor decision-making responsibilities associated with the Fire District. | | | |
| Supporting Objectives | Champion/ Partner | Potential Funding Source | Milestone Date |
| 1. Coordinate with the Fire District to review past call record and annual costs to assess the actual share of costs and services each community pays and receives. | City Administrator | NA | 2025 |
| 2. Revise the payment structure as needed to fairly distribute costs among communities; work with the Fire District to revise. | City Administrator, Common Council | NA | 2025 |
| 3. Revise the voting structure of the Fire District to allow participating communities to vote in proportion to their financial contribution to the district. | City Administrator, Common Council | NA | 2025 |
| Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal #4 | | | |

Coordinate and share community facilities and services with neighboring communities, the Evansville Community School District and Rock County.

| Supporting Objectives | Champion / Partner | Potential Funding Source | Milestone Date |
|---|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Investigate opportunities to consolidate and share services with neighboring communities and the school district to reduce costs. | City Administrator, Municipal Services Committee, & E-U | City Budget | Continuous |
| 2. Pursue opportunities for the City and the Evansville Community School District’s aquatic and recreation programs to collaborate in ways that will allow them to provide indoor and outdoor services in a cost-effective manner. | Eager Free Public Library & School District | City & School District Budgets | Continuous |
| 3. Provide additional transportation choices for the elderly and residents without vehicles to provide access to employment and services in Madison and Janesville. | Rock County, Plan Commission | WisDOT & Private Providers | Continuous |
| 4. Investigate opportunities to partner with Rock County, Evansville Community School District, and Blackhawk Technical College to expand apprenticeship and job training programs. | AWARE, Economic Development Committee | City Budget | Continuous |