

# CHAPTER 8

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

For the City of St. Croix Falls to implement their comprehensive plan successfully, they will need to have working relationships with neighboring jurisdictions as well as Polk County, St. Croix Falls School District, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning, St. Croix Falls Chambers of Commerce, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, National Park Service, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

Throughout the planning process neighboring jurisdictions as well as the St. Croix Falls School District and county and state agencies were contacted for information, advice and input. Much of the time information and exchange of ideas was done over the phone or via email while other times neighboring jurisdictions were invited to discuss issues at the plan commission meetings. Through continued cooperation with surrounding communities and governmental units there is a greater chance for long-term positive results, which may include:

- Cost Savings
- Early Identification of Issues
- Consistency
- Understanding
- Trust

### Existing Intergovernmental Relationships

The City of St. Croix Falls currently has a number of different governmental agreements with state agencies as well as neighboring municipalities. The following is a list of current intergovernmental agreements:

- Fire protection agreement with the Town of St. Croix Falls.
- Mutual aid agreement with Chisago County, MN for police protection.
- Street sweepers agreement with the City of Taylors Falls.
- Mutual agreement with the City of Taylors Falls to keep the Highway 8 bridge lit.
- Mutual agreement with the Town of St. Croix Falls in keeping Highway 8 lit.
- 911 agreement with Polk County
- Property tax deferral agreements with the School District, County and Wisconsin Indian Head Technical College.

## **Issues**

Some of the larger issues or problems that arose during the planning process were related to future land use, densities of new development, future extension utilities, and placement of new roads. Below are some of the issues that came up during the planning process and the parties that were involved.

## **Transportation**

St. Croix Falls neighbor to the west is Taylors Falls, Minnesota with the St. Croix River acting as the border. The two communities are connected to one another by the USH 8 bridge which is currently a two-lane bridge. USH 8 acts as a primary link between Minneapolis St. Paul and Northwestern Wisconsin. Because of the popularity of the area and the expected high rates of growth, there is concern about how to handle increased traffic volumes. Because of the importance of the USH 8 corridor to the area, it is vital that St. Croix Falls is proactive in voicing their concerns and ideas related to change of traffic flow patterns in and around the area.

### **Policies**

- Continue to work with transportation planners from both the Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Transportation as well the Polk County Highway Department to help determine, and plan for increased traffic flows along the USH 8 corridor.
- Encourage the State Transportation Planners to consider local planning findings, goals, objectives and policies when planning for major changes to the USH 8 corridor.

As St. Croix Falls grows outward, there will be a need for further expansion and building of new roads. As seen on Map T-4, most of the road expansion outside the City limits is expected to occur to the east, with a limited amount occurring to the north. Because the City of St. Croix Falls is surrounded by the Town of St. Croix Falls to the north, south and east, there will be an increasing need for the two Municipalities to work together. During the planning process the Town of St. Croix Falls was provided an opportunity to offer input and suggestions regarding placement of roads and will continue to be involved in any future road placement.

### **Policies**

- Continue to work with the Town of St. Croix Falls in locating the best locations for future road corridors in and around the City.
- Work with the Town of St. Croix Falls as they develop their comprehensive plan, and make modifications as needed to ensure a safe and efficient road network in the Town and City.

## **Annexation**

As the City of St. Croix Falls expands outward the possibility of land annexation will continue to increase. The City of St. Croix Falls future land use map L-4, shows that the areas most likely to be annexed are located east of the City limits on either side of the USH 8 corridor.

As annexations occur, there will be a number of issues that will need to be addressed, some of which include: extension of municipal service, loss of property tax revenue for the Town of St. Croix Falls, zoning and land use differences, housing densities and types of development that will occur upon the annexed property. As the Town of St. Croix Falls develops their own comprehensive plan, issues dealing with annexation will need to be readdressed to ensure that continued growth meets the goals, objectives and policies of both municipalities.

## **Intergovernmental Agreements**

There are a number of different options available to communities to help deal with annexation related issues. Some of the intergovernmental cooperation tools available include: General Agreements, Revenue Sharing Agreements and Cooperative Boundary Agreements. During discussions with the Town of St. Croix Falls interest was shown in formulating agreements with the City. It was felt that agreements should be further explored As the Town of St. Croix Falls develops their comprehensive plan.

## **Policies**

- Work with the Town of St. Croix Falls in exploring different intergovernmental agreement options available, that will help the Town deal with the potential loss of property tax revenue along the USH 8 corridor.
- Assist the Town of St. Croix Falls in formulating a cost effective plan to deal with sewer and water service extension.

## **Schools**

The School District of St. Croix Falls has over the years and continues to have a very good working relationship with the City of St. Croix Falls. Like many small communities the school acts as a focal point for the community and is an integral part of the City. The St. Croix Falls School District is currently comprised of three separate school facilities. The facilities consist of two Elementary Schools and a Middle School/High School. With the exception of the Dresser Elementary Schools, all of the other district buildings are located on the St. Croix Campus. The School District currently feels that the St. Croix Elementary School needs to be replaced and that there needs to be upgrades to the High School. At the 2002 November election the St. Croix Falls School District brought to referendum three separate building issues, all of which were voted down. However, the school will continue to face problems regarding lack of space and outdated facilities which will need to be addressed sometime in the future.

## **Policies**

- Assist the School District in addressing future building upgrades and expansion needs.
- In the event of a school expansion project, address any safety issues with the Blanding Woods Road, Simonson Road and Louisiana Street intersection.
- Revisit policies periodically on how to enhance the sharing of recreational areas between School and City.
- Continue to explore ways to share school services with the public including gyms, computer labs and community education programs.

## **Resolving Disputes**

Over time, the City of St. Croix Falls may find that it has differing ideas and visions than neighboring communities. But conflicting ideas can have positive effects. Resolution in a positive manner can increase future communication and foster mutual respect. One technique for resolving disputes that the City may consider is the formation of a focus group. A focus group consists a panel of citizens selected in a manner agreed upon by all of the parties. The citizens hear presentations from the parties and, after hearing the issues, deliberates and renders an advisory opinion. The communities will then decide to accept or reject the advice of the focus group.

## **Goal**

- The City of St. Croix Falls will evaluate projects on an ongoing basis to determine which, if any, communities or governmental agencies may need to be involved. Respective representatives will be informed of the issue and provided a chance to listen and give input on the matter.

## **Contacts**

Below are listed neighboring community and governmental agency contacts. These may be used as starting points when a possible action by the City may affect neighboring communities and agencies.

### **WisDOT-Superior**

District Planning Projects Engineer  
Transportation District 8  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
1701 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Superior, WI 54880

**WDNR-Spooner Office**

810 West Maple Street  
Spooner, WI 54801  
715-635-2101

**Polk County Highway Department**

Commissioner  
518 Main Street P.O. Box 248  
Balsam Lake, WI 54810  
715-485-8700

**West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**

Director.  
800 Wisconsin Street  
Mail Box 9  
Eau Claire, WI 54703  
715 836-2918

**School District of St. Croix Falls**

Superintendent  
P.O. Box 130  
St. Croix Falls, WI 54024  
715 483-9320

**Town of St. Croix Falls**

Chairman  
Town Hall  
1303 200<sup>th</sup> St. & US Highway 8  
<http://co.polk.wi.us/Townships/StCroxFalls.htm>

**City of Taylors Falls**

637 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Taylors Falls, MN 55084  
651-465-5133