

CHAPTER 7: UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

One responsibility of a community is to maintain a certain level of community services. To achieve it, they must continuously maintain, upgrade, and expand existing facilities in a cost effective manner based on future growth projections and the desires of the community.

Wisconsin Smart Growth Legislation requires the Utilities and Community Facilities Element to be a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of these facilities in the Town of Algoma. An inventory of the current situation is required; more importantly, the Legislation requires this element to provide guidance as to how the Town can meet projected needs at the appropriate time and in the appropriate manner.

This chapter, along with Chapter 2, "Framework Plan" addresses these requirements. The following section offers a summary of the detailed inventory contained in Appendix A-7.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

THE FACTS:

- ***The Algoma Sanitary District No. 1 provides sewer and water services to homes and businesses in the Town of Algoma, Town of Omro and portions of the City of Oshkosh.***
- ***0.554 MGD is currently being sent to the Oshkosh Treatment plant today, a total of 0.838 MGD of capacity would be needed by 2040 based on residential projections, well under the 2.08 MGD which is contracted for.***
- ***The Town of Algoma currently uses a combination of underground storm water, open ditch and basins to control stormwater runoff. Under Wisconsin Administrative Code NR216, the Town is required to have an MS4 general permit.***
- ***New stormwater standards are being developed by the Town and should be adopted before this planning process is complete.***
- ***The Algoma Sanitary District municipal water system is capable of serving the entire protected boundary area of the Town of Algoma. The water system has adequate source and volume of water production and storage to serve 2,000 homes and can expand as demand increases.***
- ***Since the Town does not have a mandatory hook-up requirement, not all properties within the sanitary district have access to public water. Current policy is that if seventy percent (70%) of a street requests water, the sanitary district may install a watermain for those who desire to connect, and are within a reasonable proximity to the watermain.***
- ***Algoma Sanitary District #1 has a Wellhead Protection Plan and Ordinance.***

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WHAT IT MEANS:

Essential public services such as sewer, water, stormwater management and waste disposal are critical to the quality of life of the Town's residents. Careful planning and coordination with future growth, development and major land use or transportation changes is needed to ensure that proper investments are made at the right time in order to maximize benefits and ensure the efficiency of service provision. While these basic systems can generally accommodate new growth throughout the planning period, some investments in maintenance or expansion may be needed. Some important items to keep in mind which may affect or alter planning for these services/facilities include:

1. An update of the Oshkosh Sewer Service Area Plan will be initiated by the ECWRPC within the next 3 years and the Town should be integrally involved in that process.
2. With the implementation of the Lower Fox River TMDL by the WDNR, some aspects of stormwater management may change and should be monitored by the Town. Communities are looking at more actively managing stormwater and drainage. Periods of significant rainfall have shown that stormwater, when not properly managed, can cause significant property damage to residential structures. In addition, unmanaged stormwater can negatively impact the quality of the streams, rivers and lakes in the watershed. The Town of Algoma will need to consider a more aggressive approach to the management of stormwater and drainage. A stormwater utility could potentially be used to fund projects to address present drainage issues; however, the Town has already examined this option and it did not result in a financially feasible outcome.

PLAN COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

- *Do you feel the Town is well prepared – planning wise, or financially - to provide these essential services as growth continues over the next 20 years?*
- *Do you think additional measures should be taken to ensure that existing infrastructure is used to its maximum extent prior to the extension/expansion of new infrastructure?*
- *Can the Town more effectively manage stormwater by using/shifting to more Green Infrastructure practices?*

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ENERGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

THE FACTS:

- ***American Transmission Company (ATC) owns and maintains a number of transmission lines in the area. Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) provides power to the entire Town.***
- ***ANR Pipeline Company (ANR) owns and maintains a natural gas transmission line that intersects the Town.***
- ***Multiple phone companies, ranging from land-based to cellular service, provide telephone and data services for Town of Algoma residents. There are 3 registered cellular towers/antennas in the Town***
- ***Due to the proliferation of internet service providers (ISP), area residents can choose from several national and local ISP's.***
- ***Recently, a number of communities surrounding Lake Butte des Morts and Lake Poygan have engaged in preliminary discussions with private sector companies who may be able to extend broadband fiber to residents and businesses around the lake using micro-duct conduit technology.***

WHAT IT MEANS:

The Town should be pretty well positioned with respect to energy and telecommunications services throughout the planning period. Although these services are provided by larger corporations and entities, the Town may still need to address localized issues related to the siting of facilities. New regulations governing 'small cell' facilities will need to be complied with in the future. Additionally, the Town may wish to more deeply consider the impacts of cellular and broadband technologies on its own operations as well as in relation to economic development.

PLAN COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

- ***How should the Town leverage cellular and broadband (and other) technologies to benefit its residents? Are you interested in engaging with other area communities to foster improved broadband service around the Pool Lakes?***

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PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES

THE FACTS:

- *The Town of Algoma is presently served by three public park areas, in addition to the Steinhilber Marsh Nature Area and Sheldon Nature Center.*
- *The Town has a current deficiency of 20.6 acres of local community recreational space for its population base. Future projections show this deficit grow to 48.3 acres during the life of the plan.*
- *The Town's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan calls for the following improvements:*
 - *Proposed Neighborhood Park(s). These parks should be located in an undeveloped area near between STH 21 and CTH E and between CTH E and 9th Street Road.*
 - *Special Use Park. A special use park is proposed near the western Town boundary, north of STH 21, but strong consideration should be given to relocating this facility south of STH 21, in the general vicinity of Clairville and CTH E.*

WHAT IT MEANS:

The Town needs to catch up on deficiencies with respect to traditional recreation facilities. Keep in mind that as the Town grows, these needs will likely increase. Additionally, recent public sentiments for new trails and trail connections should be considered not just from a transportation (walkability) perspective, but from a recreational one as well. Trail facilities are vital components to fostering healthy lifestyles and are becoming increasingly important as an amenity to attract young talent into the community.

PLAN COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

- *Is the Town committed to planning for and accommodating increased needs for recreation during the planning period? Are you in agreement with the Comprehensive Recreation Plan's proposal to locate new park facilities within areas targeted for new growth and development?*
- *How can the Town improve the walkability of its community? Should a separate trail system (bike & pedestrian) be planned for in more detail?*

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OTHER FACILITIES

THE FACTS:

- *There are no cemeteries within the Town of Algoma.*
- *The Town of Algoma does not have a hospital. However, the Aurora Medical Center –and Mercy Medical Center are located nearby in the City of Oshkosh.*
- *Currently, there are three licensed nursing homes within the Town totaling about 105 beds.*
- *Two childcare facilities are located within the Town.*
- *Town of Algoma residents are served by the Oshkosh Public Library in the City of Oshkosh and by the Carter Memorial Library in the City of Omro.*
- *The Algoma Town Hall, located at 15 North Oakwood Road, was originally built by the Town as a school facility in 1947. The Town Hall is not currently meeting the needs of the town.*

WHAT IT MEANS:

Beyond basic services, a number of other public and private facilities exist within the town which provides direct services and assistance to support daily life. Overall, standards indicate that with the expected range of growth for the Town, there may be some deficiencies in terms of space or level of service in some of these arenas. For example, as the population ages, additional capacity may need to be developed for nursing home and assisted living accommodations. With the increased prevalence of dual-income households, the importance of reliable and affordable childcare will also play a critical role in maintaining the economy. Deficiencies also exist with the Town's administrative offices and planning should begin for its replacement.

PLAN COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

- *Where do you feel the Town needs to focus on in terms of future municipal facility (Town Hall) investment during the planning period, if any?*
- *How should the Town work with child day care providers or nursing home/assisted living service providers to ensure that its population's current and future needs are met?*

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PUBLIC SAFETY & EMERGENCY SERVICES

THE FACTS:

- *The Town of Algoma does not have a Police Department. Police support comes from the Winnebago County Sheriff's office*
- *The Town of Algoma does not have a jail. Situations involving incarceration are handled at the Winnebago County Jail.*
- *Town of Algoma residents are served by the Winnebago County court system.*
- *The town-owned Fire Department is completely staffed by 28 active volunteers.*
- *The Town of Algoma has a PPC fire rating of 6, where 1 is the best fire protection rating and 10 is the worst rating.*
- *A new fire department facility or new models of fire protection service may be warranted during the planning period.*
- *The Algoma Fire Department responds as first responders along with Oshkosh Emergency Medical Services.*

WHAT IT MEANS:

Adequate fire protection and emergency response services important not only for keeping communities safe, but for providing prospective residents and businesses with lower insurance rates and the peace of mind that, in the event of a fire, they will be protected. In general, the Town's emergency response services provide good service and are expected to have adequate capacity to accommodate growth – particularly with the approval of the new fire station facility. Even so, since the Fire Department is generally considered a volunteer organization, and the fact that some staff work outside of town, raises concerns about future levels of volunteerism and the availability of firefighters in the event of a day-time fire.

PLAN COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

- *Do you see any shortfalls in current emergency response services? If so, where?*
- *Do you think any significant changes or expansions are needed for fire protection services during the 20 year planning period?*
- *How do you think changes/demands in medical services will affect Town of Algoma residents as they age?*

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PUBLIC EDUCATION & SCHOOL FACILITIES

THE FACTS:

- *Two public school districts provide education to the Town of Algoma (Oshkosh Area School District and Omro School District). The Oshkosh Area School District covers the majority of the Town of Algoma. The Oshkosh Area School District is currently working on a master plan for the school system and a draft report was being completed at the time of this element's preparation and hence, future facility needs are not available at this time.*
- *In general that if needed, both Carl Traeger and the Oakwood elementary schools have available acreage for expansion.*
- *One private school is located in the Town of Algoma: Wyldewood Christian School*
- *There are no institutions of higher education in the Town of Algoma, however; UW-Oshkosh and Fox Valley Technical College have facilities in close proximity.*

WHAT IT MEANS:

Education of the Town's residents is critical for quality of life and economic development. Good schools and good school districts continue to be a major factor for attracting growth and talent. The quality of the OASD's facilities and programs are of particular benefit in terms of the Town's continued pattern of attracting young families. The Town also has good access to post-secondary education opportunities. As growth continues, having a good workforce will be somewhat dependent on the availability of education and training.

PLAN COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

- *Do you foresee the need for new school facilities or expansions during the planning period? Do you feel that communication between the Town and the OASD is adequate in order to better plan for or react to needs in the local education system?*
- *How should the Town leverage its access to the post-secondary education system and its facilities?*

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POTENTIAL FRAMING CONCEPTS:

Framing Concepts provide more detailed discussion of the big ideas expressed by the Town for inclusion on the plan based on the background information provided. Framing Concepts may include conceptual maps that show where in the community particular goals and policies apply, detailed description of specific policy directions, diagrams, and photo imagery. The Framing Concepts will serve as the base for the development of additional strategies and recommendations for this plan element. Potential Framing Concepts for Community Facilities include:

- Public vs. Private Costs for Infrastructure & Services
- Capital Improvements Planning (Town Improvement Program)
- Concurrency Provisions / Development Phasing