

Chapter 7: Intergovernmental Cooperation

7.1 Introduction

The Village of Whitefish Bay currently demonstrates many different types of intergovernmental cooperation across all levels of the organization. These are the relationships that help the Village continue delivering a high quality level of service while maintaining efficiency and cost savings. Many of the current examples of intergovernmental cooperation by the Village evolved over time and have developed into the day-to-day operations of the Village. As the current intergovernmental cooperation's continue to function, the Village has to continue to be vigilant to determine new areas of intergovernmental cooperation to improve on its service delivery. Currently the Village has intergovernmental cooperation with the State of Wisconsin, Milwaukee County, many surrounding and adjacent regional communities, and many other agencies.

The State of Wisconsin defines intergovernmental cooperation as “any arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions communicate visions and coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve issues of mutual interest.” (State Guide on IC) The Village uses these arrangements to provide services, share information, share facilities, and increase communication. Intergovernmental cooperation helps for multiple municipalities and groups to combine their efforts to work on problems and issues that go beyond the individual boundaries.

7.2 Intergovernmental Cooperation Objectives

The goal for the Village of Whitefish Bay is to continue to develop intergovernmental cooperation policies and agreements that help benefit municipalities and groups across multiple jurisdictions. The objective of this element is to define current relationships and explore new ways to continue to branch out those agreements to further benefit the municipality and its residents. The Whitefish Bay intergovernmental cooperation objectives include the following:

- Cost Savings – Cooperation can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication.
- Address Regional Issues – By communicating and coordinating their actions, and working with regional and state jurisdictions, local communities are able to address and resolve issues, which are regional in nature.
- Early Identification of Issues – Cooperation enables jurisdictions to identify and resolve potential conflicts at an early stage, before affected interests have been established rigid positions, before the political stakes have been raised, and before issues have become conflicts or crises.

- **Reduced Litigation** – Communities cooperate are able to resolve issues before they become mired in litigation. Reducing the possibility of costly litigation can save a community money, as well as the disappointment and frustration of unwanted outcomes.
- **Consistency** – Cooperation can lead to consistency of the goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of neighboring communities and other jurisdictions.
- **Predictability** – Jurisdictions that cooperate provide greater predictability to resident, developers, businesses, and others. Lack of predictability can result in lost time, money, and opportunity.
- **Understanding** – As jurisdictions communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become more aware of one another's needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to avoid them.
- **Trust** – Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust between jurisdictions.
- **History of Success** – When jurisdictions cooperate successfully in one area, the success creates positive feelings and an expectation that other intergovernmental issues can be resolved as well.
- **Service to Citizens** – The biggest beneficiaries of intergovernmental cooperation are citizens for whom government was created in the first place. They may not understand, or even care about, the intricacies of a particular intergovernmental issue, but all Wisconsin residents can appreciate the benefits, such as cost savings, provision of needed services, a healthy environment and a strong economy.

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration: A Guide to Preparing the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element of a Local Comprehensive Plan.

7.3 Existing Relationships and Opportunities for Intergovernmental Cooperation

7.3.1 Police Department Mutual Aide – The Village works with surrounding municipalities to provide additional police protection when needed in times of high calls for service, special events, joint investigation, resource sharing, and other opportunities when beneficial to departments.

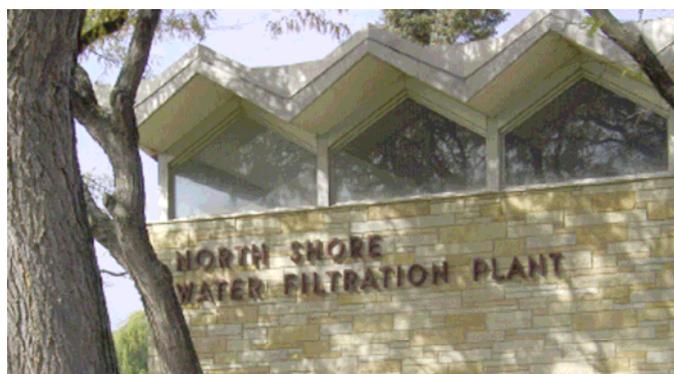
7.3.2 Storm Sewer Management – Due to its proximity to the Milwaukee River and being adjacent to Lake Michigan, the Village works closely with the Department of Natural Resources to maintain safe storm water drainage. There are discharge points on the Milwaukee River at Fairmount Avenue and Courtland Place as well as at Big Bay

Park along Lake Michigan. Annually, the Village completes NR 215 discharge permit from the DNR to monitor this drainage.

7.3.3 North Shore Fire Department (NSFD) – In 1994, the communities of Bayside, Brown Deer, Fox Point, Glendale, River Hills, Shorewood, and Whitefish Bay created a regional fire department to collectively serve its residents. The effects of consolidation on the NSFD have been unified command, training, operational philosophy, equipment procedures, rules and regulations, legal services, commission recruitment, vehicle maintenance, and fire codes for all seven communities. The NSFD operates separately from each of the communities in 5 different fire stations spread throughout the coverage area. They are governed by the NSFD Board of Directors which is comprised of the top elected officials from each municipality, and a Fire Commission.



7.3.4 North Shore Water Commission (NSWC) – The NSWC was founded on November 26, 1957 to provide water purification and distribution services for the communities of Fox Point, Glendale, and Whitefish Bay. The current water purification plant first went online in 1963. Three appointed Commissioners govern the NSWC with three appointed Alternates with equal representation from its members. Communities maintain their lines locally while the NSWC focuses on pumping water from Lake Michigan, making it safe for drinking, and distributing it to the residents in these communities.



7.3.5 Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewage District (MMSD) – MMSD is a regional government agency that provides water reclamation and flood management services for about 1.1 million customers in 28 different communities in the Greater Milwaukee Area of which Whitefish Bay is a part. It serves 411 square miles that cover all, or segments of six watersheds. The MMSD is also involved in water quality research, household hazardous waste collection, pharmaceutical collection, industrial waste monitoring, laboratory services, planning and engineering services, and milorganite fertilizer.



Additionally, the Village works with MMSD to promote the use of rain barrels and rain gardens.

7.3.6 *Milwaukee County* – The county serves as a means to share and provide for a number of different services as listed below:

- Milwaukee County Federated Library System (MCFLS) – MCFLS is an umbrella agency which is primarily funded by the State of Wisconsin, overseen by the Department of Public Instruction, and administered by a seven member board of trustees. It functions as a membership organization, with its membership made up of the 15 administratively autonomous and fiscally independent public libraries in Milwaukee County. The purpose of the organization is to encourage cooperation and resource sharing among members, thereby making public libraries easier for Milwaukee County residents to use. MCFLS member libraries agree to share library cards, to allow citizens of one community to use the library of another community, to “request” items from any other member library, and to pickup and return materials to any member location.
- Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) – The MCTS provides two routes through the Village that both travel through the main business district. More information is discussed in Chapter 3 under existing public transit.
- Parks Department – Milwaukee County owns and maintains Big Bay Park immediately adjacent to Buckley Park on Lake Michigan. Their ownership in the park helps provide for publicly owned lake frontage for residents to enjoy.
- Regional GIS System – The regional GIS system helps provide interactive mapping and information for the Village.
- Emergency Management – The Milwaukee County Sheriffs Department assists in times of disaster through its Emergency Management Office. Their works helps to coordinate the efforts of the State Emergency Management and Federal Emergency Management Agency to help provide funding and resources in times of need. Most notably in February of 2008 for a large snowstorm, and June of 2008 for a large rain and wind storm.



7.3.8 *Shared Services* – The Village shares different Public Works services with surrounding communities, including:

- Shorewood Transfer Station – The Village of Whitefish Bay and the Village of Shorewood negotiated an agreement to allow Whitefish Bay residents to dispose of refuse and yard waste items at the Shorewood Transfer Station just a few miles south of the Village. For a nominal fee, residents can take their refuse and yard waste items to the transfer center when it exceeds their normal collection. This is also the location where Department of Public Works Garbage Collectors drop off all refuse collected to be then be taken to the landfill by a private hauler.

- Shared Street Sweeper – The Village shares a street sweeper with the Village of Shorewood. Either community does not need the sweeper constantly, and its use gets rotated back and forth between the neighboring communities to maximize its use. The total cost of the sweeper including general maintenance is also split equally between the two communities.
- Mutual Aid – Surrounding communities provide services and equipment when there is a need for it, and the Village would do the same. Shorewood provided a tree cutting/trimming crew in the Summer of 2008 when the Village experienced excessive tree damage due to storms. This work was provided at no cost. Equipment and vehicles are routinely shared between neighboring communities when one community loses the use of its own.

7.3.9 Whitefish Bay School District – The School District and the Village share the same border, and in assist each other in a number of ways:

- Recreation and Community Education Department – The Recreation Department provides for a number of programs and activities aimed at youths and adults to help promote education, fitness, and other social development. Please see Chapter 5 under cultural amenities.
- Vehicle Maintenance – Due to the School Districts limited need for vehicles, the Village provides basis maintenance to help save on the cost of hiring or contracting out for a private mechanic.
- Building Maintenance – Due to the Village's limited amount of building space, the School District provides consultation and expertise on various building needs from time to time.
- Facility Sharing – The High School is located across the street from Cahill Park offering a parking lot, additional tennis courts, playground equipment, soccer, softball, and baseball fields. Many of these amenities are used and maintained by the School District however owned by the Village. The Village and School District share in the turf maintenance of the athletic fields at Cahill and Armory Park to provide more space for school athletic programs.

7.3.10 Shorewood/Whitefish Bay Health Department – The Health Department serves residents in both Shorewood and Whitefish Bay to protect and promote the health of the community, prevent disease and preserve the environment from health hazards by utilizing public health core functions of assessment, policy development, and assurance. The Health Department offers a number of different clinics, permits, inspections, and services to the general public at a reasonable cost. The Health Department also provides screenings and health information to the Whitefish Bay School District.

7.3.11 Milwaukee Area Domestic Animal Control Commission (MADACC) – MADACC rescues and assures safe, temporary shelter, veterinary and humane care for nearly 13,000 stray, unwanted, abandoned, mistreated and injured animals each year. This amounts to more than any other animal control shelter in Wisconsin. MADACC was created by the Milwaukee County Intergovernmental Cooperation Council to plan for animal control services opening on August 1, 1999 housing 13,559 animals in its first year of operation.

7.3.12 Regional Telecommunications Commission (RTC) and North Shore Cable Commission – The RTC is a collection of communities in Milwaukee and Waukesha County that were organized to provide a response to cable and other telecommunications companies that operate within their right of way. The North Shore Cable Commission is a subsidiary of the main group comprised of solely North Shore communities offering public access programming in their communities.

7.3.13 North Shore Public Safety Commission (NSPSC) – The NSPSC operates out of the Whitefish Bay Village Hall providing 911 emergency call center staffing for surrounding communities including Police and Fire communications. The center is staffed 24 hours per day, and 7 days per week year round. The cost is split between the participating communities and eliminates the need for each community and the regional fire department to have an individual dispatch center.

7.3.14 Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) – SEWRPC was established in 1960 as the official area wide planning agency for the highly urbanized southeastern region of Wisconsin. The commission serves the seven counties of Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha. The Commission was created to provide the basic information and planning services necessary to solve problems, which transcend the corporate boundaries and fiscal capabilities of the local units of government comprising the Southeastern Wisconsin region. The Commission consists of 21 members, three from each of the seven member counties. A majority of the Commission is funded through Federal and State Grants as well as service agreements while the rest is taxed back to the County's that it represents.

7.3.15 Intergovernmental Cooperation Council (ICC) – The ICC is a group comprised of every top elected official of every municipality in Milwaukee County. The group meets monthly to review and discuss the regional issues concerning the different communities.

7.4 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals and Strategies for Implementation

- Continue to work with surrounding communities on the overall financial health of the North Shore Fire Department including the development of their operating and capital budgets.

- Continued study is needed to look into merging the Shorewood/Whitefish Bay Health Department with the North Shore Health Department to provide the same and expanded services to our residents at a lower cost.
- Continue to foster relationships that work with our neighbors to improve service at a lower cost and provide mutual aid in times of need.
- Working more with the Bayshore Town Center in partnership with the City of Glendale to maximize the resources of the Business Improvement District and the Bayshore Town Center due to their close proximity.
- Sanitary sewer and storm water management will require further analysis and discussion with surrounding communities and the MMSD to prevent further private property damage, and blended sanitary sewer overflows.
- The School District and the Village have a strong relationship that should continue to look at new ways to combine services to lower costs where possible.
- Work with Milwaukee County and City of Milwaukee to complete the Oak Leaf Trail.
- Milwaukee County can be a good asset to provide services that the Village is unable to do on its own, and its important to continue to foster relationships that offers our residents new opportunities through transit, the library, information technology, and our parks.
- Review and evaluate a potential expansion with the Northshore Library system.
- Work with neighboring communities to expand economic development efforts.

