

---

## CHAPTER EIGHT: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

---

In a state with over 2,500 units of government and in an era of diminished local government resources, it is increasingly important to coordinate decisions that affect neighboring communities. This chapter of the *Plan* contains a compilation of background information on neighboring and overlapping jurisdictions relevant to the City's planning effort. *Volume 2* will outline strategies for cooperation, collaboration, and minimizing potential and existing conflicts.

### EXISTING REGIONAL FRAMEWORK

---

Map 1, presented earlier in *Volume 1*, shows the boundaries of the Janesville area's neighboring and overlapping jurisdictions. All play an important part in the area's future. Relationships among those jurisdictions are analyzed to identify future opportunities and potential planning conflicts below, and in *Volume 2*. The following is a summary of existing relationships and planning context:

#### Town of Harmony

The Town of Harmony is located northeast of Janesville. The Town's population was 2,569 in 2020, exactly the same population as was registered in the 2010 Census. The Town has experienced a fair amount of exurban residential development, which has occasionally placed it at odds with the City. In the past 20 years, the City has annexed more land from Harmony than any of the other neighboring Towns. The Town worked with Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development Agency to complete its comprehensive plan in 2009. The Town operates under Town zoning, which includes an Exclusive Agricultural District (A1) that is mapped throughout most of the Town's land area.

#### Town of Janesville

The Town of Janesville is located northwest of the City. The Town's population was 3,665 in 2020, a 6.7 percent increase (or, 231 persons) since 2010. Most of the Town's residential development is located near the Rock River. Most of the remainder of the Town is rolling agricultural land. The Town worked with Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development Agency to complete its comprehensive plan in 2009. The Town operates under Town zoning. The Town has an Exclusive Agricultural zoning district (A1) that is widely mapped, in addition to other districts that allow more intensive development.

#### Town of Rock

The Town of Rock is located southwest of Janesville. The Town's population was 2,981 in 2020, a 6.7 percent drop since 2010 (or, less 215 persons). Most of the Town's residential development is located in the unincorporated village of Afton and in newer subdivisions south of the Airport. Lands west of the Rock River and Afton are largely agricultural.

The City and the Town of Rock prepared a cooperative boundary plan in 1995, which was updated in 2016. The cooperative boundary plan pertains to approximately 4.17 square miles encompassing the Rock County Airport, and developable lands lying near the STH 11 bypass corridor. The plan includes procedures for City service extensions and annexations. The cooperative boundary plan was a result of the Town of La Prairie, Town of Rock, and City of Janesville Agreement on the STH 11 bypass developed in 1992. The 1992 agreement secured the joint City and Town support of the proposed STH 11 bypass, the provision of municipal services to Town properties, and addresses the direction and pace of annexation of lands. The plan calls for the phased annexation of all property within the boundary to the city by 2046. The Town of Rock operates under Town zoning. The

Town has an exclusive agricultural zoning district (A-1) that is mapped throughout much of the Town.

## **Town of La Prairie**

The Town of La Prairie is located southeast of Janesville. The Town's population was 784 in 2020, a 6.0 percent decrease (or, 50 persons) since 2010. La Prairie has historically had a very strong commitment towards agricultural preservation, and has therefore limited non-farm development. The Town worked with Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development Agency to complete its comprehensive plan in 2009. The Town operates under its own Town zoning. The Town's zoning districts include an Exclusive Agricultural District (A1) that is mapped throughout most of the Town's land area.

## **City of Beloit**

The City of Beloit's northern boundary is located approximately three miles south of Janesville at the Wisconsin-Illinois border. While the City experienced a small population increase from 2000 to 2010 (35,775 to 36,966), population dipped slightly during the following ten years based on the 2020 U.S. Census population figure of 36,657. Beloit and Janesville have many historic and transportation connections, and collaborate on certain economic development initiatives. The extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJ) of Beloit and Janesville overlap.

## **City of Milton**

The City of Milton is located just northeast of Janesville. The City's population was 5,716 in 2020, indicating that the City of Milton has grown at roughly the same rate as the City of Janesville. In addition to attracting suburban residential development, Milton has been successful in attracting industrial development. Milton and Janesville have an intergovernmental agreement in place that set the extent of the ETJs of both communities.

## **City of Rockford**

The City of Rockford is located approximately 35 miles south of Janesville in northern Illinois. The City's population was 148,655 in 2020, a 2.8% decrease since 2010.

## **Rock County**

Rock County's 2020 population was 163,687 – up 2.1 percent from 2010. Between 2010 and 2020, Janesville accounted for 60.8% of Rock County's growth (2,040 of 3,356 new residents).

Rock County has a number of facilities located in the City of Janesville. These include the Governmental Offices and County Courthouse, located on Main Street in downtown Janesville; the Dr. Daniel Hale Williams Resource Center at 1717 Center Avenue in the southern part of the City; and the Rock County Jail at USH 14 and 51. The Rock County Land Conservation Department is located in the USDA Service Center on USH 14, east of Janesville, between County Highways A and MM.

There is an established history of cooperation between Rock County and the City of Janesville. Examples of cooperation include economic development projects (Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport expansion, location of the County Job Center in Janesville, and expansion of the County courthouse, UW Rock County operations and expansion) and collaboration on operations (in the areas of public safety, emergency management, housing, public transit, telecommunications, information technology).

Areas where the City and County planning interests overlap include:

- Determining the future of the 560 acres County Grounds area around USH 14 and 51;

- Discussing opportunities for the future of the County Fairgrounds;
- Continuing to work together on airport planning, expansion, and promotion;
- Regional planning and economic development efforts for areas in Rock County; and
- The Rock County Complex as a potential future public transportation transfer center.

Rock County completed its 2035 comprehensive plan meeting the State's comprehensive planning legislation. The primary purposes of the plan are to generate goals for attaining a desirable development pattern and to devise strategies and recommendations the County can follow to achieve its desired development pattern. County staff is also assisted in preparing nine Town comprehensive plans, including those for the Towns of La Prairie, Janesville, and Harmony.

## Janesville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

The MPO is a regional transportation planning organization. It carries out federally-mandated planning and programming requirements in order for the City to remain eligible for federal highway, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit funds. The MPO serves the Cities of Janesville and Milton, and the Towns of La Prairie, Harmony, Milton, Janesville, and Rock. The Janesville Department of Public Works coordinates the functions of the Janesville Area MPO.

Annual administrative activities conducted by the MPO to maintain eligibility for federal funding include the transportation work program and budget, the six-year *Transportation Improvement Program*, and quarterly financial/progress reports. Other planning activities include trail user surveys, parking studies, technical assistance, and other transportation-related studies.

In 2021, the Department of Public Works completed the *Janesville Area 2020-2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan* for the MPO. The long-range plan serves as an action plan for the construction of efficient highway and bicycle and pedestrian facilities and development of effective transit service throughout the Janesville metropolitan planning area. A fundamental component of the plan is the bicycle and pedestrian network, which incorporates a system of off-street trails and on-street routes designed for recreational and commuter use.

The work of the MPO is directed by a Policy Board which is advised by a Technical Advisory Committee. The Policy Board members are comprised of chief elected officials who include the Janesville City Council, Janesville City Manager, City of Milton Mayor, Chairpersons from the towns of Janesville, Harmony, La Prairie, Milton, and Rock (or his/her designee), a member of Rock County Board of Supervisors, and a representative from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation District 1 office. The Technical Advisory Committee consists of City of Janesville planning, transit and engineering staff, Rock County planning, town representatives, state DOT, City of Milton, federal transportation representative, and other transportation stakeholders.

## School Districts

Residents of the City of Janesville are served by both the Janesville School District and the Milton School District. Both Districts are described in detail in the [Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter of Volume 1](#).

## Important State Agency Jurisdictions

The WisDOT Southwest Region office in Madison serves Janesville and all of Rock County. The WDNR provides service to the Janesville area out of its branch office on Morse Street in the City.

---

## **SUMMARY OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION ISSUES**

---

- Boundary and extraterritorial jurisdiction discussions with neighboring communities, including Beloit, Milton and the neighboring towns, will be important to planning the long-term growth and development of the City.
- The City's interests overlap with those of the Janesville and Milton School districts serving City residents on issues of facility siting, workforce development, and other issues of mutual concern.
- Cooperation with Rock County on several issues involves ensuring the City continues to accommodate County government facilities downtown, addressing the future of the County fairgrounds, and addressing the future of the County grounds on the north side of the City.