

# Chapter 9

## Exploring Partnerships

### Introduction

The Exploring Partnerships chapter examines existing relationships the City has with adjacent communities, government agencies, and organizations and how these relationships can be used to implement recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan and participate in regional initiatives as well.

Partnerships can be formal and informal agreements between entities to share services, provide mutual aid, participate in joint planning, or participate in joint purchases. These relationships can be developed over time. This chapter also identifies existing and potential conflicts and provides a process to resolve conflicts and build cooperative relationships.

### Benefits of Intergovernmental Cooperation

The benefits of exploring partnerships are numerous. The most common are:

- **Cost Savings:** Areas in which services can be shared can be identified and acted upon.
- **Consistency:** Plans and goals may be developed that are consistent with neighboring visions and reduce land use conflicts.
- **Understanding:** Understanding the goals of other governmental agencies lets you anticipate and address potential problems before they happen.
- **Trust and Respect:** Positive experiences lead to trust and respect between jurisdictions and make disagreements easier to work through.

Currently, several City of Prescott Departments are involved in formal and informal cooperative arrangements with surrounding communities and governmental agencies.

### City Hall

The City of Prescott is bordered by the Towns of Clifton and Oak Grove. These Towns have also experienced population growth similar to Prescott's over the last 15 years. The City of Prescott, Town of Clifton, Town of Oak Grove and Prescott School District hold quarterly joint meetings. Recent discussions have centered on a future north south arterial transportation corridor. Typical meetings involve updates on what is happening in each municipality or at the schools in the School District.

The Prescott City Administrator recently served on a committee to explore different site locations for the new Prescott High School. The Prescott City Council worked with the Prescott School District regarding special use permits, rezoning of property, and are continuing discussions on the proposed use of green space.

The City of Prescott has developed a Municipal Emergency Operations Plan that provides procedures for City departments to respond to various types of emergencies or disasters that affect the community. This Plan is used in conjunction with the Pierce County Emergency Operation Plan. In an emergency, the City Emergency Management Team will be activated. If needed, the Emergency Operations Center will be opened and staffed throughout the emergency. As part of the City's emergency operations, there are two (2) outdoor warning sirens located in Prescott. One is located on Dexter Street and the other on Flora Street. The primary purpose of the sirens is to warn community members that are outside about severe weather conditions.

### **Public Works Department**

The Prescott Public Works Department works with Pierce County to provide snow plowing services on Hollister Avenue. Sections of the road are under both City and Town jurisdiction. The agreement allows the City and County to efficiently plow the road. The Department also participates in the bulk purchase of sand and salt with Pierce County.

Although there are no formal agreements in place, municipalities typically help each other when a piece of equipment breaks down and there is a need to do related work that cannot be met.

### **Prescott Fire Department**

The Prescott Fire Department provides fire protection services for the City of Prescott, Town of Oak Grove and Town of Clifton.

The Fire Department has mutual aid agreements with all communities in Pierce County and is currently working towards becoming a full member of the Pierce County Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) Division. MABAS is a mutual aid measure that is used for deploying fire, rescue and emergency medical services personnel in a multi-jurisdictional and/or multi-agency response.

The Prescott Fire Department has a mutual aid agreement with the Wakota Community Awareness and Emergency Response (CAER) Organization which provides emergency planning in Washington and Dakota Counties, Minnesota.

The Prescott Fire Department participates in joint training exercises in Wisconsin and Minnesota. The City of Prescott is within the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone. Emergency service providers coordinate to identify resources and responsibilities for various agencies when responding to accidents involving radioactive materials.

The Fire Department also trains at the Flint Hills Pine Bend Oil Refinery in Rosemount, Minnesota.

### **Prescott Emergency Medical Services (EMS)**

The Prescott Emergency Medical Services became part of River Falls Emergency Medical Services on January 1, 2015. The River Falls EMS provides services to the Cities of River Falls and Prescott and the Towns of Clifton, Oak Grove, and River Falls in Pierce County. They also provide service to the Towns of Pleasant Valley, Kinnickinnic, Troy and Warren in St. Croix County.

The River Falls EMS is part of the Tri County EMS Association which includes St. Croix, Pierce, and Polk Counties. Municipalities near the Tri County border area are also part of the Association including communities in Minnesota. The Association consists of eighteen (18) ambulance services both private and municipal as well as four (4) first responder units. Prescott EMS serves the Prescott area.

### **Prescott Police Department**

The Prescott Police Department participates in a number of mutual aid agreements with Wisconsin and Minnesota agencies to provide law enforcement. Prescott residents can dial 911 to report emergencies. The Pierce County Sheriff's Office Dispatch Center then notifies the Prescott Police Department. In addition, outside law enforcement agencies from surrounding municipalities can call and request mutual aid.

The Prescott Police Department has mutual aid agreements with the following law enforcement agencies:

- Wisconsin State Patrol
- Pierce County Sheriff's Department
- Minnesota State Patrol
- Dakota County
- Washington County
- City of Hastings
- City of Cottage Grove

### **Cooperative Boundary Agreements**

The City of Prescott does not have any cooperative boundary agreements with the Town of Oak Grove or the Town of Clifton. The City initiated talks and had discussions about creating Extraterritorial Zoning, but this has not progressed at this time.

### **Existing and/or Potential Conflicts**

The City of Prescott is located in one of the fastest growing areas in the State of Wisconsin. Notable growth has occurred in urban and rural areas alike. As Cities and Villages attract residents, businesses, and industries, the need to grow can sometimes not be avoided. The growth of any community often results in land being annexed from surrounding towns.

Because all area communities are growing, especially those nearest the Minnesota border, it is important to engage with neighboring communities to plan for land use, transportation, economic development, agriculture, and other needs so that they can develop in a coordinated and efficient manner. Joint planning can lead to early identification of potential conflicts.

### **Potential Intergovernmental Cooperation Opportunities**

The City of Prescott's Comprehensive Plan identifies many recommendations the City and its residents may take to implement the Comprehensive Plan and attain the vision contained within. Below is a list of several areas where the City may benefit from forming partnerships with surrounding communities, government agencies, and organizations.

- Protecting and promoting natural resources
- Attracting desired business and industry
- Improving energy efficiencies of homes and public buildings
- Increasing the use and development of renewable energy resources
- Developing transportation options
- Attracting elderly housing and assisted living facilities
- Preserving farmland for small market farms and local food production
- Land use planning

### **Dispute Resolution**

Any potential future land use conflicts should be initially presented at the quarterly joint meetings. From there, the identified conflicts will be presented to the City Plan Commission and Council to determine the appropriate action to be taken.

### **Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations**

**Goal 1:** The City of Prescott will continue to explore partnerships that are mutually beneficial for the City and neighboring communities, government agencies, and organizations to provide services and create communities that meet the needs of residents.

Objectives:

1. Maintain or reduce costs of providing services to Prescott and area residents.
2. Increase the number of collaborative efforts used in addressing local and regional planning and catastrophic event issues.

Recommendations:

1. Support continued mutual aid and other types of agreements that are used to provide emergency services to the area.

2. Explore equipment sharing agreements with surrounding Public Works Departments in order to perform maintenance and other services without having to purchase equipment.
3. Collaborate with the surrounding communities and governmental agencies to establish multi-modal transportation infrastructure, natural resource protection, increased use of renewable energy sources and other long range planning initiatives.
4. Continue joint meetings with the Town of Oak Grove, Town of Clifton and Prescott School District.
5. Explore ways to enhance communication between the City and Pierce County.