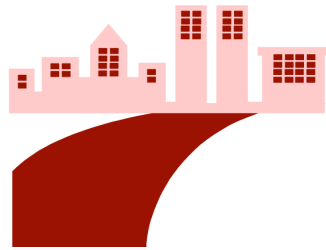


Town of

River Falls

*Utilities and Community
Facilities Element*



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Contents

Utilities and Community Facilities Element Town of River Falls



Contents

s. 66.1001(d) Wis Stats	ii
Introduction	1
Inventory	2
S.W.O.T. Analysis	9
Goals, Objectives and Objectives	10



s. 66.1001(d) Wis Stats
Utilities and Community Facilities Element
Town of River Falls

s. 66.1001(d) Wis Stats

A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in the local governmental unit such as sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, on-site wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunications facilities, power-generating plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities and other public facilities, such as police, fire and rescue, libraries, schools and other governmental facilities. The Element shall describe the location, use and capacity of existing public utilities and community facilities and include an approximate timetable that forecasts the need to expand or rehabilitate existing utilities and facilities or create new utilities and facilities. Future needs for government services in the local governmental unit that are related to utilities and facilities shall also be assessed.

Introduction

Utilities and Community Facilities Element Town of River Falls



Introduction

Community facilities are buildings, lands, services and programs that serve the public. Examples of community facilities are parks, schools and fire and police protection. Public works such as water resources, sewer systems, storm water facilities and power generation and distribution make up the physical components of the community. Together, community utilities and facilities allow the Town to function and add to the community's quality of life.

The Town of River Falls oversees a number of community facilities and utilities to support a high quality environment and level of service to its residents.

Important to any Comprehensive Plan are goals, policies, and objectives aimed at providing adequate facilities and services for current and future residents and industry. This plan

Element will take inventory of existing community facilities and services, identify current needs and desires of the community and evaluate the need for improvements or additional facilities over the next 20-year planning period. To assist the Town in meeting its projected needs identified during the planning process, recommendations and implementation strategies will be provided. These recommendations and strategies will need to be reviewed together with the Town's annual budget, which sets forth proposed expenditures for systematically constructing, maintaining, and upgrading community utilities and facilities.

■ “The Town of River Falls oversees a number of community facilities and utilities to support a high quality environment and level of service to its residents.”

Inventory

Utilities and Community Facilities Element Town of River Falls

Inventory

The inventory divides community facilities and utilities into two categories.

- Community Facilities - public buildings and grounds that provide space, services or programs, or from which services or programs are coordinated, that are aimed at improving the quality of life, safety, and general welfare of community residents, and;
- Utilities/Infrastructure – the physical systems, networks and/or equipment necessary to provide for and support the basic needs of urban land uses, including systems, networks and equipment, but excluding transportation infrastructure, which is described within the Transportation Element of this Comprehensive Plan.

Information on the current status, condition and, where available, capacities of these resources will also be provided.

Public Schools

The Town is located mostly in the River Falls School District, with a small portion in the Ellsworth School District. The River Falls School District contains seven schools, all located within the City of River Falls. Information about school aged children and the district schools they attend can be found in the following tables. Information in the following table regarding 2000 enrollment pertains only to public schools.

School Enrollment 2000		
River Falls School District	Number	Percent
Nursery school, preschool	38	5.3%
Kindergarten	47	6.5%
Elementary school	358	49.7%
High school	143	19.9%
College or graduate school	134	18.6%
TOTAL	720	100%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Data, Data Set SF-3

Schools in the River Falls District	
Public Schools	Location
Greenwood Elementary	418 N. 8 th Street, City of River Falls
Rocky Branch Elementary	1415 Bartosh Lane, City of River Falls
Westside Elementary	1007 West Pine Street, City of River Falls
Meyer Middle School	230 North Ninth Street, City of River Falls
River Falls High School	818 Cemetery Road, City of River Falls
Renaissance Charter Alternative Academy	211 North Freemont, City of River Falls
Montessori Charter Academy	211 North Freemont, City of River Falls
Private Schools	Location
Heartland Community Montessori School	N8226 945 th St., Town of River Falls
St. Bridget's School	211E. Division, City of River Falls

Inventory

Utilities and Community Facilities Element Town of River Falls

Good Shepherd Christian Academy
Source: River Falls School District

896 Hwy 65 N, City of River Falls

Inventory

Utilities and Community Facilities Element Town of River Falls

The River Falls School District's enrollment has fluctuated somewhat since 1999-2000. In that year, the district enrolled 2893 students. The 2007-08 school year saw 2976 students enrolled in district schools. Current economic conditions indicate little chance of a dramatic increase in enrollment happening soon. It is more likely, according to district officials, that enrollment will drop slightly, remain static, or rise slightly. River Falls High School was built in 2001 to accommodate 1,200 students. There were 987 students enrolled there in the 2007-08 school year.

Child Care Facilities

Within Pierce County there are a total of 88 regulated childcare facilities that can serve a total capacity of over 900 children. This includes 6 group centers, 60 licensed family day cares, 20 certified family day cares, and 2 licensed pre-schools. A regulated program has either been licensed through the state or certified by Pierce County. A program's capacity does not necessarily reflect the number of children that are currently enrolled in programs. The capacity reflects the amount of children that the program could possibly serve at any one time. Data generally shows that childcare demand outstrips supply locally, statewide, and nationally. The cost of care plays a big part in household decisions about childcare arrangements.

Town Hall

The building that is now the Town Hall was originally constructed in 1901. For many years the building was used as a school, until the Randall School District and the River Falls School District consolidated in 1960. At that point, Town residents voted to purchase the building and the two acres of land that it sits on. It is located at W9015 770 Avenue.

The Town has made numerous improvements to the building, including wheel chair access, steel siding, a new roof, a second exit, insulated windows, and a gas furnace. One original building feature that still remains is the outdoor restroom facility.

The Town garage and recycling center is located at N7750 State Road 65.

Library Services

Inventory

Utilities and Community Facilities Element Town of River Falls

There are seven public libraries in Pierce County, all part of the Indianhead Federated Library System. Two of these libraries are in close proximity to the Town. One is located in the City of River Falls, and one in the Village of Ellsworth.

As of 2007, the River Falls Library had 16,270 registered borrowers, and a circulation of 347,600 items. There were 31 computer terminals available for public use; 26 of these have Internet access. The library now provides wireless access for persons bringing their own computers. Approximately nine percent (1424) of the patrons were residents from the Town of River Falls, who circulated more than 28,881 items. The Town is the second-largest borrower from the library after the City of River Falls. /

The Ellsworth Library has 2,667 registered borrowers and a circulation of 62,275 items. There are five computer terminals with Internet access available for public use.

In addition, the River Falls School District provides library resources through its school-based library facilities.

Electric and Natural Gas

According to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, electricity in the Town of River Falls is provided by electric cooperatives. Natural gas is provided by Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services based in Ellsworth, and by St. Croix Valley Natural Gas Company, based in the City of River Falls. A number of electric transmission lines run through the Town and an electric transmission substation is located at the corner of 770th Avenue and 850th Street.

Electric transmission lines and transmission substations are shown on the Existing Utilities & Community Facilities Map.

Water System

Private wells serve homes and businesses in the Town. Unlike public water systems, protection and maintenance of private wells is largely the responsibility of homeowners. The Town encourages homeowners to use Pierce County Extension water specialist services to aid in ensuring that water quality is tested regularly. The entire community needs to work together to develop a protections plan that safeguards everyone's water supply. Good construction and proper location are critical in ensuring a safe drinking water supply. Care needs to be taken to locate the well far from potential pollution sources. NR 812, Wisconsin Adm. Code requires new wells to be located:

- 25 feet from septic tanks
- 25 feet from the highwater mark of a lake, pond or stream
- 50 feet from livestock yards, silos, and septic drainfields
- 100 feet from petroleum tanks

Inventory

Utilities and Community Facilities Element

Town of River Falls

- 250 feet from a sludge disposal area or an absorption, storage, retention or treatment pond
- 1,200 feet from any existing, proposed, or abandoned landfill site.

Although portions of the Town are located within the City of River Falls Sewer Service Planning Area, currently the city sewer system does not extend beyond city boundaries. The Sewer Service Area Plan is discussed in more detail in the Land Use Element.

Inventory

Utilities and Community Facilities Element Town of River Falls

Wastewater Facilities

There are currently no public wastewater facilities in the Town of River Falls. Residences and businesses rely on private or shared septic systems. Septic systems are wastewater treatment systems that use septic tanks and drainfields to treat wastewater and dispose of it in the soil. Septic systems are generally used in rural or in areas that have large lot areas where sanitary sewer services are not available. Pierce County reviews and permits the wastewater treatment systems.

The state requirements for septic system siting are specified in Chapter ILHR 83 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. This code relies heavily on the ability of the soil to efficiently absorb the effluent discharged from the system.

The soil suitability for on-site septic systems is very limited in River Falls. Only 11% of the land area of the township has soils that are suitable for the installation of private septic systems as determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Seventy-six percent (76%) of the township soils are classified as having severe or very severe limitations for septic systems. The remaining 13% of the soils have a moderate limitation, which means that septic systems can be installed with sufficient design modifications.

The Town is has developed a land-division ordinance that will require a developer to, in certain designated areas, install a shared septic system that is compatible with the city municipal sewer-water system. This will allow for smooth hook-up to city services if the area is annexed. In addition, the Town is also seeking to cooperate with the City of River Falls to require that new and repaired septic systems in the ETZ conform to city water/sewer connections.

Solid Waste and Recycling

The Town of River Falls is dedicated to reducing the amount of solid waste going to landfills as much as possible and supporting any and all recycling efforts that support that goal.

The Town of River Falls has been directly involved in recycling efforts since 1976. The Town, with the support of its citizens, regards the merits of recycling as being both environmentally and economically valid. The Town operates a recycling drop-off center located at the Town garage. It is one of only two responsible units in Pierce County. Residents may also obtain a permit to burn brush .

The recycling center is constantly trying to improve facilities and services while keeping costs as low as possible for residents. Future plans include the proposal for a compost center. Also, currently the Recycling Center is using a Two Stream method for paper, plastics, glass and cans. It would be advisable to move towards a single stream process, which is the new collection trend. As the Town continues to grow, there will be more

Inventory

Utilities and Community Facilities Element Town of River Falls

solid waste and recycling coming through the center. In the future, the current site will most likely need to be redesigned. Additional land may need to be purchased.

There are no active landfills in Pierce County; waste is hauled out of the county by private haulers.

Telecommunications

Telecommunication facilities are an important consideration for personal convenience and economic development in today's world of electronic media.

These facilities include cellular telephone service and broadband Internet access. High speed broadband Internet access is increasingly regarded as an essential service by most homeowners and businesses. Children experience broadband Internet as a normal part of their teaching experience at school, and parents regard lack of home based broadband as a severe disadvantage for their children's home studies. Similarly, rural community businesses find themselves at a competitive disadvantage if broadband Internet is not available. Home buyers are increasingly regarding availability of broadband service as a key factor in deciding where to live. Some Wisconsin rural communities such as Oakdale, Wisconsin are now working with their local independent phone companies and rural electric coops to provide broadband Internet services.

However, facilities that provide cellular service have become controversial issues in some local communities. Legal battles over the location of wireless service facilities, and concerns about their impact on property value and health have led some municipalities to develop restrictions on the location, placement, and appearance of wireless service facilities. The Town has tried to prevent conflicts through its detailed ordinance regulating the siting of towers.

According to Federal Communication Commission data, there are two cellular towers located in the central portion of the Town. One is owned by ACC Wisconsin License, the other is owned by Midwest Wireless Wisconsin. Cellular tower locations are shown on the Existing Utilities & Community Facilities Map.

■ “The Town of River Falls has tried to prevent conflicts through its detailed ordinance regulating the siting of towers.”

Health Care

The River Falls Area Hospital located at 1629 East Division Street, in the City of River Falls, is an important local health care resource. Hospital programs include cardiac rehabilitation, diagnostics, a birth center, a sports rehabilitation and wellness center, emergency room, and in and outpatient surgeries. The hospital employs 156 physicians, and 244 total employees.

Additional health care resources include the River Falls Medical Clinic and the Kinnic Long Term Care Facility, also located on East Division Street. The Kinnic Long Term Care Facility is a nursing home with a capacity of 68 beds. Another nursing home

Inventory

Utilities and Community Facilities Element Town of River Falls

located in the City of River Falls is the Lutheran Home, which can accommodate up to 120 residents. A recent addition is the South Pointe assisted living center located on the south edge of the City.

Public Safety

Law Enforcement

Town law enforcement is provided by the Pierce County Sheriff's Department.

In the 2003 survey, 77% of residents indicated that police service provided by the Pierce County Sheriff's Department was good to excellent. Only 4% felt the services of the local police were poor. As new households and residents are added to the Town of River Falls, concerns about adequate police protection may change. The Town will work through its County Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff to discuss any additional services that may be needed in the future.

The Town Board has noted that residents have frequently called about speeding on Town roads, trash dumping, trespassing, and loitering.

Inventory

Utilities and Community Facilities Element Town of River Falls

Fire Services

Fire services to the Town of River Falls is provided by the City of River Falls Fire Department, and the River Falls Rural Fire Association. The Fire Association includes the Towns of River Falls, Clifton, Kinnickinnic, Troy, and Pleasant Valley.

Overall level of service for fire protection is adequate. Fire services from River Falls includes community charges to the Town of River Falls and charges for individual fire calls. Therefore, the Town will continue to seek ways to maintain and increase its influence on the policies and operations of the providing agencies.

Emergency Medical Service

Ambulance service is good throughout the Town of River Falls. The Town needs to continue working with the City of River Falls and surrounding towns to continue quality service and to maintain equality of cost of operation.

Recreation Facilities

Park and Conservancy

One of the principle assets of a community is its recreational opportunities. The Town has a strong program of park development and currently has 13 public parks.

Conservancy areas include two parcels of WDNR owned land, and a former gravel pit. More than 250 acres adjacent to the Kinnickinnic River, just east of the City of River Falls, is protected under the Stream Bank Protection Program for fish management. Another 65 acres in the eastern portion of the Town, along the Trimble River, is managed for wildlife. In addition, some private lands have been placed into conservation easements.

These parks and recreation areas are shown on the Existing Utilities and Community Facilities Map.

Bicycle Routes/Trails

A number of bike routes have been proposed in the River Falls Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Bicycle facilities are discussed in more detail in the Transportation Element.

Other Facilities

Cemeteries

The Town currently has two cemeteries: Greenwood and St. Matthews.

Inventory

Utilities and Community Facilities Element Town of River Falls

Public Facilities Plan

Considering this inventory of the Town’s existing utilities and community facilities, this section is intended to assess the adequacy of these utilities and facilities to meet the existing and future needs of the Town’s growing population. Although some of the facilities identified are not traditionally provided by the Town, they are included in this assessment.

The Utility and Community Facility Assessment lists each of the utilities and community facilities in the inventory and considers whether it will be adequate throughout the planning period, based on ten-year increments. The table makes recommendations about whether existing or future needs should be met by expanding or improving existing facilities, or creating new facilities.

At this time, the Town does not foresee taking action to expand, improve, or replace these facilities within the 20-year planning period. However, as the need arises, the Town will cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to analyze the need, and plan for future changes.

Utility and Community Facility Assessment; Town of River Falls: 2004 - 2023								
Town Facility	2004-2013				2014-2023			
	Ade-quate	Ex-pand	Im-prove	New/Replac-e	Ade-quate	Ex-pand	Im-prove	New/Replace
Schools	X				X			
Child Care	X				X			
Town Hall	X				X			
Library	X				X			
Electric and Natural Gas	X				X			
Water System	X				X			
Wastewater System	X				X			
Solid Waste and Recycling	X				X			
Telecommunications	X				X			
Health Care	X				X			
Police Services		X			X			
Fire Protection	X				X			
EMS	X				X			
Recreation Facilities		X			X			

S.W.O. T. Analysis

Utilities and Community Facilities Element
Town of River Falls

S.W.O.T. Analysis

On July 24, 2003, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis was conducted with the Town’s Smart Growth Advisory Committee. Strengths identified with respect to utilities and community facilities included:

- 1) Roads
- 2) Good schools

No weaknesses were identified with respect to utilities and community facilities.

Community Survey

A community survey was completed on June 4, 2003. Seventeen hundred surveys were mailed out to Town residents, and 35 percent (601 surveys) were returned. Questions pertaining to utilities and community facilities found the following:

Listed below are several community services offered in the Town. After each, please mark your level of satisfaction with that service:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not sure	No response
Police service	22%	50%	11%	4%	9%	4%
Fire protection	31%	48%	5%	0%	12%	4%
Ambulance service	31%	47%	5%	1%	11%	5%
Recycling & garbage removal	30%	46%	11%	4%	6%	3%
City library	42%	39%	6%	2%	7%	4%
Road maintenance	12%	54%	22%	6%	2%	4%
Natural gas	15%	32%	9%	7%	31%	6%
Animal control	7%	38%	19%	10%	22%	4%
Construction or building inspection	7%	41%	17%	7%	23%	5%
Public schools	31%	44%	11%	3%	7%	4%

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Utilities and Community Facilities Element

Town of River Falls

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal: Provide for adequate community facilities and services.

Objective:

- Maximize recycling in the disposal of solid waste in order to minimize the need for landfills and reduce the occurrence of illegal dumping.

Policies:

- Work with the community in preparation of a solid waste management plan.
- Comply with state and federal solid waste and recycling standards and laws, and make every effort to increase the efficiency and reduce the costs of such programs.
- Educate residents to ensure all are able to take advantage of recycling and solid waste programs.
- Develop a program for disposal of yard waste that is economically and environmentally sound.
- Maintain records and evaluate the yard waste disposal program to reflect increasing participation and identify any and all needed improvements in the program.
- Monitor solid waste programs in other similar communities, and use their successes and failures to improve solid waste handling in the Town.
- Plan to move toward a single stream collection process for all recyclables.

Objective:

- Continue to provide adequate safety services (police, fire and EMS) protection to protect the safety and welfare of the citizens of the Town of River Falls.

Policies:

- Review calls for service to ensure adequate levels of protection are maintained.
- Review facility space needs on a regular basis.
- Explore opportunities to coordinate response efforts with Pierce County, the City of River Falls, and other area responders.
- Animal control is a Town concern and cost, which should be addressed.

Objective:

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Utilities and Community Facilities Element

Town of River Falls

- Continue expanding the Town's park, trails and open space systems to continue to provide safe, affordable recreational opportunities.

Policies:

- Review subdivision regulations, open space dedication and fee requirements to ensure that adequate levels of park and open space facilities are maintained as growth occurs.
- Explore grant resources and public-private partnerships to bring adequate environmental protection while, at the same time, provide recreation and leisure-time opportunities.