

CHAPTER 8

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Cooperation between neighboring and overlapping units of government is one of the primary goals of the Wisconsin Smart Growth Law and is a very important aspect of the Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan. As Rockland develops over the next 20 years, it is important for the Town to work with the school districts, surrounding communities, Brown County, the state, and other units of government. Working cooperatively is especially important since many issues, such as transportation improvements and stormwater runoff do not recognize municipal boundaries.

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The purpose of the Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter is to analyze the existing relationships the Town has with other units of government and identify means of working cooperatively toward the goal and objectives identified in the Issues and Opportunities chapter of the plan.

Analysis of Governmental Relationships

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Unified School District of De Pere and Wrightstown Community School District

The Town of Rockland is primarily located within the Unified School District of De Pere with a portion of the southwestern part of the Town located within the Wrightstown Community School District. ~~Both school districts are growing and are looking for ways to service their districts as efficiently as possible.~~

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The ~~limited~~ amount of residential development projected to occur in the Town of Rockland over the next 20 years should not have a significant impact on either school district. However, Rockland should continue to maintain open lines of communication with the two school districts in order to address any anticipated major changes in land uses or transportation improvements/construction that could impact the districts plans or bus routes. Figure 8-1 identifies the school districts in Rockland.

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Adjacent Communities

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City of De Pere

The City of De Pere is generally located at the northern boundary of the Town of ~~Rockland~~ and includes a 32-acre island of City-owned land on Ryan Road, south of Old Martin Road. The City of De Pere currently limits land divisions in the Town of Rockland to those that are ~~ten~~ acres or larger through the City's extraterritorial plat review authority. The City's extraterritorial review area extends for three miles from its boundaries, and therefore includes all of the Town of Rockland, except for the far southwestern corner of the Town which is within the Village of Wrightstown's review area and the far southeastern part of the Town, which is outside any review ~~authority~~. Through the use of its extraterritorial plat review authority, the City of De Pere has effectively precluded residential subdivision development in the Town of Rockland. This action has exacerbated the hard feelings between the two communities.

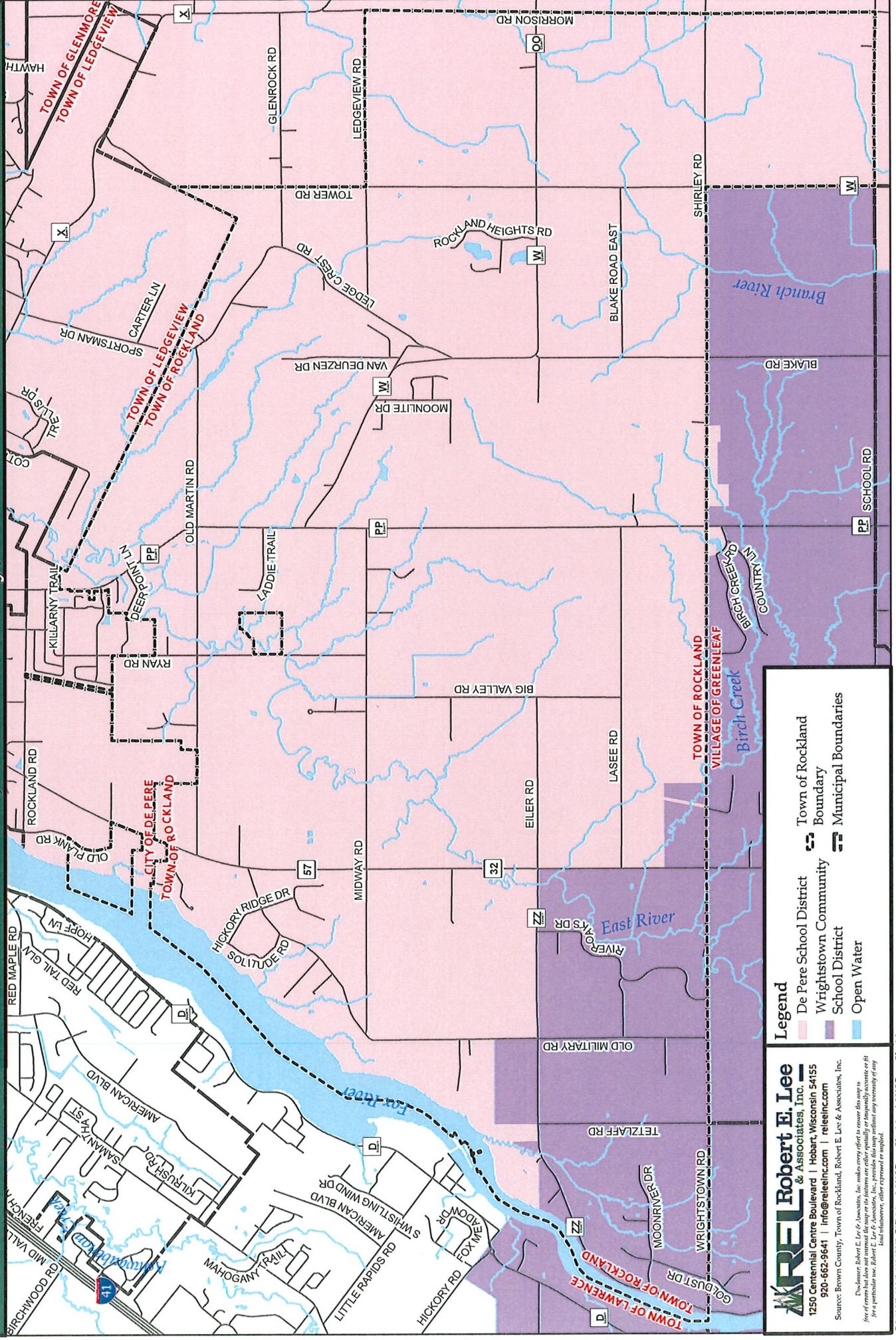
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# Figure 8-1 School Districts

## Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



**Legend**

- De Pere School District
- Wrightstown Community School District
- School District
- Open Water
- Town of Rockland Boundary
- Municipal Boundaries

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For both communities to be able to reach their development goals, De Pere and Rockland should restart discussions regarding a comprehensive boundary agreement that encourages efficient, logical growth for De Pere and long-term stability for Rockland. Even if a boundary agreement cannot be reached, the two communities should meet at least once a year to discuss other opportunities for cooperation or issues that could be resolved. Opportunities for cooperation in the near future should focus on appropriate development and access points along the South Bridge Connector in coordination with the Brown County Public Works Department and Brown County Planning Commission.

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Even if the two communities are not able to reach a boundary agreement in the near future, it is critical that they continue to meet in order to keep the lines of communication between them open. Development in Rockland will continue to impact the City of De Pere, and future annexations and development in De Pere will continue to impact the Town of Rockland. Therefore, both communities must work together in order to minimize the negative impacts and accentuate the positive impacts that development could have on each other.

#### Town of Ledgeview

The Town of Ledgeview and Town of Rockland share a border along the northeastern part of the Town of Rockland. The Ledgeview Administrator indicated that there are no pressing intergovernmental issues between the two communities that need to be worked out. However, Ledgeview is interested in continued coordination with Rockland on the South Bridge Connector, joint road/sign maintenance, and joint service provisions that could benefit both communities.

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#### Town of Glenmore

Rockland and the Town of Glenmore have not had to address issues in the past that affect both communities, and representatives from both towns do not believe that many issues of mutual concern will arise during the 20-year planning period. However, the communities should still periodically meet to discuss various issues and consider developing joint service agreements if the arrangements will provide an equivalent or higher level of service at a reasonable cost.

#### Town of Wrightstown

The Town of Rockland shares a portion of its southern border with the Town of Wrightstown. The Town of Rockland and the Town of Wrightstown should continue to contact each other to discuss existing and potential land use impacts near their border and other issues that could arise during the planning period. Currently, a flooding issue along the East River at Wrightstown Road is being studied for flood mitigation or other opportunities to protect the road and bridge,

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#### Village of Greenleaf

With newly acquired Village status, a border agreement should be developed. A mutual understanding and rezoning process should also be put in place to ensure like-minded ideals. Annexation is a possibility over the next 20 years. This is particularly important

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when discussing potential development along STH 32/57 because that highway will continue to serve as the primary north/south route through both communities.

Both municipalities have an opportunity to capitalize on the popularity of the Fox River Trail that runs roughly parallel to STH 32/57. There has been discussion from Rockland regarding the need for additional trailheads for off-street parking for trail users. One of the potential areas discussed is near the intersection of the trail with Wrightstown Road, which forms the border between both communities. Should Rockland and the Village of Greenleaf decide that this is a priority, they should jointly work with the WDNR and Brown County Parks Management to develop a trailhead with parking in this location.

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Other Entities

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Volunteer Fire Departments

The Town of Rockland is served by the Greenleaf and Morrison Volunteer Fire Departments. The Town should continue to maintain an open line of communication with both departments to ensure adequate response times and equipment. Figure 8-2 depicts the fire department service areas in the Town of Rockland.

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Brown County

The four Brown County departments that currently have the most significant presence in the Town are the Brown County Public Works Department, the Brown County Sheriff's Department, Brown County Parks Management, and the Brown County Planning and Land Services Department.

Public Works

The Brown County Public Works Department has responsibility for the four county highways in the Town of Rockland (CTH W, CTH OO, CTH PP, and CTH ZZ. As county highways are reconstructed, Rockland should coordinate with the Public Works Department to ensure bike lanes are included, consistent with the Transportation Chapter and the Brown County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

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Deleted: ), and provides winter snowplowing service on Town roads. CTH ZZ on the southwestern end of the Town was recently closed due to structural deficiencies with the road. CTH ZZ is built very close to the Fox River and erosion from the Fox River has washed away parts of the road base. The Brown County Public Works Department is planning on shifting CTH ZZ to the east, further away from the river to alleviate this issue in the future. It is important that the Public Works Department convey to Town residents, school districts and the Town of Wrightstown when CTH ZZ will be closed for reconstruction.

Except for a small area in the far northern part of Rockland, the Town's preferred South Bridge Connector location, where Rockland Road extends west across the Fox River to Red Maple Road, will not directly impact much of the Town. However, indirect impacts associated with increased traffic on connecting roads to the South Bridge Connector could impact the Town through increased demand for commercial and/or industrial development, particularly along STH 32/57 and CTH PP. The Town will need to coordinate with the Brown County Public Works Department to review driveway access permits to new developments that may result from the South Bridge Connector and subsequent street connections.

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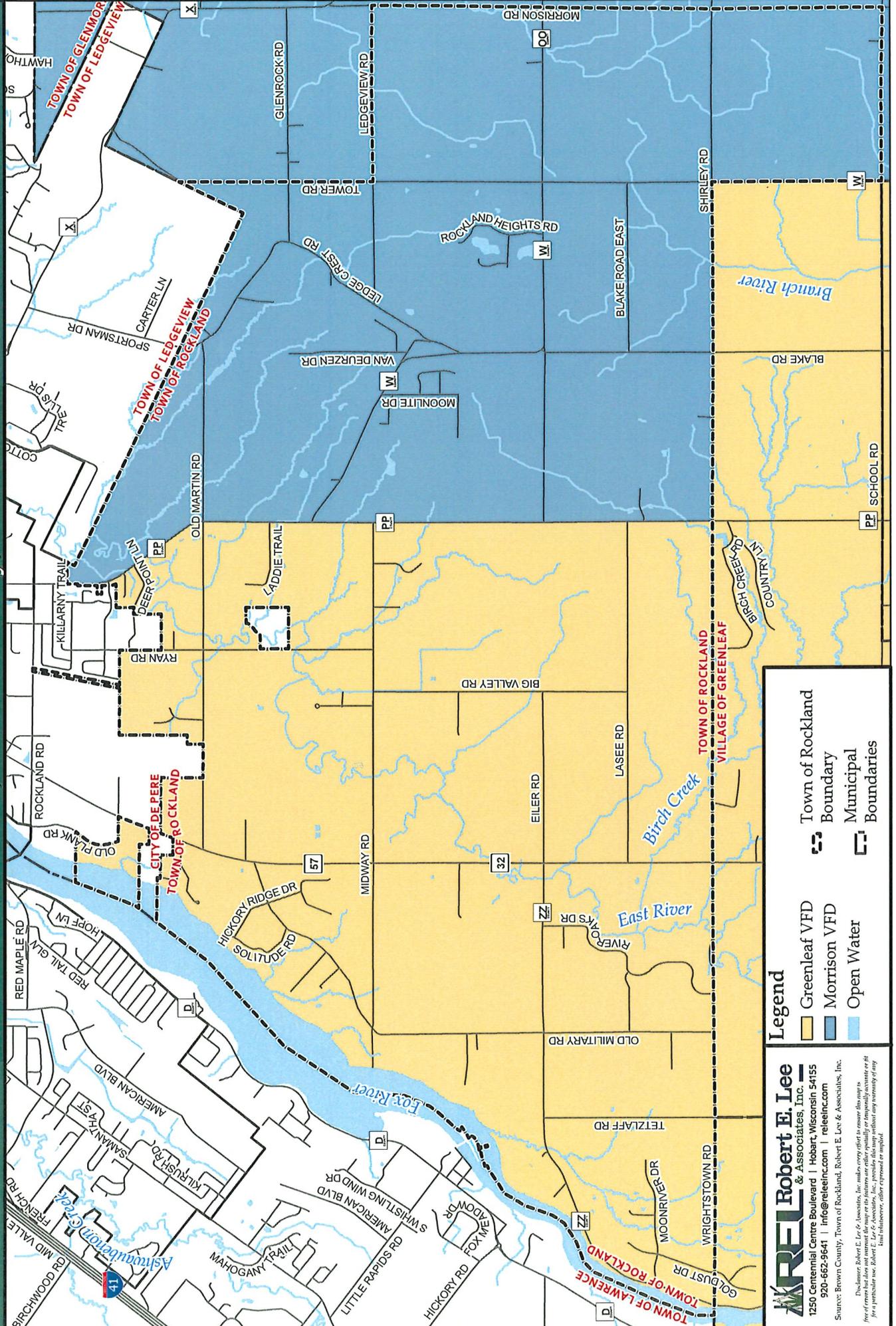
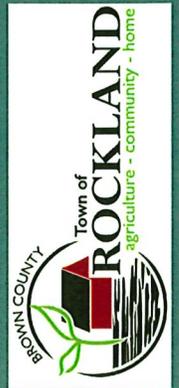
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Figure 8-2 Fire Department Service Areas

# Figure 8-2 Volunteer Fire Department Service Areas Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



**Legend**

- Greenleaf VFD
- Morrison VFD
- Open Water
- Town of Rockland Boundary
- Municipal Boundaries

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### Sheriff's Department

The Brown County Sheriff's Department provides police and patrol service to Rockland, and this service is expected to be adequate in the future. However, if the Town believes that additional service is necessary, it should consider contracting with the Brown County Sheriff's Department for additional coverage. Citations issued by this contracted officer will result in funds being collected to help offset the investment of the additional patrol service though only a portion of the citations come back to the town as the remainder supports the existence of the municipal court.

### Brown County Planning and Land Services Department

The Town of Rockland has historically worked with the Brown County Planning and Land Services Department for various land use related issues. Additionally, the Planning and Land Services Department enforces the Brown County Land Division and Subdivision Ordinance, Floodplains Ordinance, and Shorelands and Wetlands Ordinance within the Town to ensure adequate protection for environmentally sensitive areas. It is critical to maintain open lines of communication and coordination between the department, the Town of Rockland, and property owners in the Town.

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### Brown County Parks Management

As discussed in the comprehensive plan's Utilities and Community Facilities chapter and the Brown County Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan, a need exists for a new park along the Fox River in the Town of Rockland, due to the lack of public access along this stretch of the river. The Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter suggests the park be located in between Wrightstown Road and the Little Rapids Lock and Dam. The proposed park can only become a reality through the cooperation of the current property owner(s), Town of Rockland, Brown County, and other state/federal agencies. The Town and County should work jointly with applicable state/federal agencies to apply for grants to help offset the potential purchase price of the land and maintenance expenses for a park in this location.

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In addition, Brown County Parks Management should be contacted regarding the potential for a Fox River Trail parking lot trailhead on Lasee Road and on Wrightstown Road. This should be done in coordination with the Village of Greenleaf and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

**Deleted:** Town of Wrightstown

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**Deleted:** is in process of preparing a preservation access and management study for the highway from De Pere to Greenleaf, which includes the portion through Rockland. The study purpose is to analyze existing and future access along the STH 32/57 corridor by reviewing future land use plans and expected increased traffic on the highway, including the impacts from the proposed southern bridge. The study will emphasize an analysis of existing/proposed access points, intersection improvements, and multi-modal transportation accommodations. The

**Deleted:** be closely involved with the study as it progresses to ensure the proposed improvements match with Town plans

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### State of Wisconsin

#### Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)

The only highway in the Town of Rockland that falls under the jurisdiction of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is STH 32/57, which runs north to south through the western part of the Town. STH 32/57 is scheduled for resurfacing in 2027. The WisDOT has prepared a culvert maintenance plan and intends that work to begin in 2026. A roundabout will be built just north of the Town on Rockland Road. The Town of Rockland should monitor the plan to include community communication regarding the work.

## Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) purchased the railroad right-of-way through the center of Rockland that became the Fox River State Trail. The WDNR also provides grants and information that could be used to protect some of the fragile natural features located along the Niagara Escarpment, development of a new park along the Fox River, or a new Fox River Trail parking lot trailhead at Wrightstown Road. The WDNR should be contacted early in the process if Rockland determines it wishes to pursue grant funds, particularly when a project is proposed for the escarpment, Fox River, or Fox River Trail.

### Intergovernmental Cooperation Tools

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A guide produced by the Wisconsin Department of Administration, "Intergovernmental Cooperation, A Guide to Preparing the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element of a Local Comprehensive Plan"<sup>16</sup>, identifies a number of tools that the Town of Rockland has at its disposal to improve intergovernmental cooperation. The document groups the many cooperation tools into four general categories. The categories are:

1. Cooperating with Services.
2. Cooperating with Regulations.
3. Cooperating by Shared Revenue.
4. Cooperating with Boundaries.

Although not all of the tools identified in the sections are applicable to the Town of Rockland, the guide describes a number of options that the Town could utilize to promote intergovernmental cooperation with neighboring communities and potentially generate cost savings for each participant. Cooperation and efficiencies gained with neighboring communities and overlapping jurisdictions has become increasingly important as municipalities continue to deal with very constrained budgets.

### Summary of Recommendations

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#### School Districts

If at some point in the future, additional school facilities are needed by either the Unified School District of De Pere or Wrightstown Community School District, they should be placed in a location that allows for students to easily walk or bicycle to school as a means to encourage a healthy lifestyle. Additionally, Rockland should continue to maintain open lines of communication with the two school districts in order to address any

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<sup>16</sup> A Guide to Preparing the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element of a Local Comprehensive Plan, Wisconsin Department of Administration, June, 2002.  
<http://www.doa.state.wi.us/documents/DIR/Comprehensive%20Planning/Element-Guides/Intergovernmental-Cooperation.pdf>

anticipated major changes in land uses or transportation facilities that could impact either district.

#### City of De Pere

The City of De Pere and Town of Rockland should continue to attempt to develop a boundary agreement that encourages efficient growth for De Pere and long-term stability for Rockland. If a boundary agreement cannot be reached, the two communities should continue to meet at least once a year to discuss other opportunities for cooperation or issues that could be resolved. Opportunities for cooperation in the near future should focus on appropriate development and access points along the South Bridge Connector in coordination with the Brown County Public Works Department and Brown County Planning Commission.

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#### Town of Ledgeview

Both Towns should continue to maintain open lines of communication through yearly meetings regarding potential development along the South Bridge Connector, development on or near each other's borders, opportunities regarding joint road/sign maintenance, and the provision of municipal services.

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#### Town of Glenmore

Glenmore and Rockland should periodically meet to discuss various issues and consider developing joint service agreements if the arrangements will provide an equivalent or higher level of service at a reasonable cost.

#### Town of Wrightstown

Rockland and Wrightstown should meet as necessary to discuss existing and potential land use impacts near their border and other issues that could arise during the planning period.

#### Village of Greenleaf

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The Village of Greenleaf and Town of Rockland should develop a boundary agreement that encourages efficient growth for the Village of Greenleaf and long-term stability for Rockland. If a boundary agreement cannot be reached, the two communities should continue to meet at least once a year to discuss other opportunities for cooperation or issues that could be resolved.

The communities should also discuss working with Brown County and the WDNR to develop a trailhead with off-street parking on Wrightstown Road and consider developing service agreements in the future if the arrangements will provide an equivalent or higher level of service at a reasonable cost.

**Greenleaf and Morrison Volunteer Fire Departments**

The Town should maintain open lines of communication with both departments to ensure Rockland continues to be adequately served.

**Brown County**

**Public Works Department**

The Brown County Public Works Department will be involved in the resurfacing of STH 32/57. As concerns occur the Town should work with Brown County to address those needs. As county highways are reconstructed, Rockland should coordinate with the Public Works Department to ensure bike lanes are included, consistent with the Transportation Chapter and the Brown County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

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With regard to the South Bridge Connector at the Rockland Road/ Red Maple Road location, the Town should coordinate with the Brown County Public Works Department to ensure appropriate driveway access point locations from STH 32/57 and CTH PP to developments that may result from the South Bridge Connector and its' connections.

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**Brown County Sheriff's Department**

Rockland should contract with the Brown County Sheriff's Department to provide supplemental police coverage.

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**Brown County Parks Management**

The Town and County should work jointly with applicable state/federal agencies to apply for grants to help offset the potential purchase price of the land and maintenance expenses for a park along the Fox River in the vicinity of the Little Rapids Lock and Dam.

**State of Wisconsin**

**Wisconsin Department of Transportation**

The Town of Rockland should be closely involved with the STH 32/57 corridor study as it progresses to ensure proposed highway improvements and future access points reflect Town plans, including the provision of bicycle facilities.

**Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources**

The Town should utilize the WDNR as a resource when considering grant applications for a possible conservancy area along the Niagara Escarpment or a new park along the Fox River. The WDNR should also be consulted when considering appropriate locations for developing off-street parking and trailhead locations along the Fox River Trail.

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