

CHAPTER 7

Utilities and Community Facilities

Introduction

The provision of adequate public utilities and facilities is essential for the development of any community. It is important that public utilities and public facilities be available to meet the needs of citizens, businesses, industry, and government entities.

This section discusses existing systems and planned projects in the areas of water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, solid waste, recycling, recreation, and public facilities and services. Each utility will be discussed separately.

Survey Results

Residents of the City of Cornell were asked how they felt about park amenities and possible future recommendation facilities. The tables below illustrate their responses:

The City could use or improve the following park amenities. (please check all that apply)	
	Count
Playground equipment	24
Benches and	50
Soccer fields	6
Baseball/softball fields	15
Football fields	7
Shelters	22
Tennis courts	10
Basketball courts	17
Volleyball courts	14
Horseshoe pits	20
Parking	20
Ice skating rink	35
Skate park	20
Trails	25
Total	285

When asked which park amenities could be used or improved in the City, the top two responses were benches (50) and an ice skating rink (35). During the winter

of 2007-2008 the City did have ice skating rink at Mill Yard Park and are planning on doing so in the future.

Would you support the implementation of future recreational facilities (i.e. community pool/aquatic center, multipurpose/community center) in the City of Cornell? (please check one)		
	Count	Percent
Yes	52	40.0%
No	43	33.1%
Maybe	25	19.2%
Not sure	10	7.7%
Total	130	100.0%

When asked if they would support future recreational facilities such as a community pool or multipurpose community center, nearly 60% of the responses were yes or maybe.

SWOT Exercise Results

Strengths

- Low cost utilities
- Emergency services in the City
- Medical clinic
- New rehab facility
- New fire hall
- Great park system
- Excellent capacity of wells/water tower/WWTP
- New grade school
- Quick response times
- New ambulance facility

Weaknesses

- Aging WWTP
- Wells only in one aquifer
- Lack of competition for telecommunication services
- No satellite internet available
- High school is old
- Sub standard police station
- Need indoor/improved animal control facility
- Infiltration and inflow problems with sanitary sewer
- Lack of media competition
- Lack of licensed childcare facilities
- Lack of assisted living facilities
- Age of substation

- Heavily rely on volunteers for emergency services

Opportunities

- New police station
- New childcare facilities
- New assisted living and elderly housing
- Find a new well
- More events held at Mill Yard Park
- Satellite internet
- School consolidation
- Upgrade substation
- First responders for EMS

Threats

- Contamination of wells/Chippewa River
- New regulations on WWTP
- New regulations for stormwater
- Natural disaster
- Mass casualty incident
- Energy crisis
- Loss of funding for infrastructure/equipment/facilities

Community Facilities and Services

The City of Cornell has a wide variety of community facilities and services. The following services are available within the City or can be found in the vicinity. It is likely that Cornell and its surrounding area will continue to provide these services in the future. Map 7-1 identifies the locations of many of the community facilities discussed below.

Library

Library services are found in the City. The Cornell Public Library is part of the Indianhead Federated Library System. The library is open to City and surrounding area residents and has a total service population of over 3,000. The Cornell Public Library is part of the WISCAT system that is an online catalog of Wisconsin library holdings. The library is located at 117 North 3rd Street near downtown Cornell and is housed in the original village hall that was built in 1928.

There have been some recent upgrades to the library such as replacement of the front steps, sidewalk. They also added parking space. The Cornell Public Library still needs new windows.

Health Care Facilities

The Marshfield Clinic provides medical services and the Cornell Area Care Center provides adult care for the City of Cornell and surrounding area.

Additional nearby health care facilities in Chippewa County are the Bloomer Community Hospital in Bloomer, St. Joseph Hospital in Chippewa Falls, and Victory Memorial Hospital in Stanley. All these facilities are within 20 minutes from Cornell. It is likely that these facilities and the many others throughout Chippewa County and the City of Eau Claire will continue to provide health care for residents.

Cornell residents also have access to a local dental and chiropractic care services.

Veterinary Service

The City is also fortunate to have a local veterinary clinic located at to treat and provide health services to area pets and animals.

Childcare Facilities

The City of Cornell has a Head Start Program, but does not have any large daycare facilities. The local daycares are private and run out of homes. There seems to be a potential need for a larger daycare facility. There also is a need for a before and after school program.

Senior Center

Located on 106 N. Third Street, the City of Cornell has a Senior Center open Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. The Camaraderie Club also offers activities, community services, field trips, and social activities.

Visitors' Center

The City of Cornell Visitors' Center is located at 51 Bridge Street and is open May through October. There is a desire to do more to promote the Visitors' Center throughout the area.

Fire/Rescue

The Cornell Area Fire Department provides protection for the City and protects approximately 6,500 people in an area of over 267 square miles. The coverage area consists of the City of Cornell and all or parts of the following Townships within Chippewa County: Arthur, Birch Creek, Cleveland, Colburn, Eagle Point, Estella, Lake Holcombe, and Ruby. It is a public department whose members are all volunteer firefighters and are paid on a per call basis. The services provided include firefighting, hazardous material response, vehicular rescue, and search and rescue. The Cornell Area Fire Department includes 30 firefighters and averages 80-100 calls per year. Vehicular equipment for the fire department includes:

- 2 engines
- 2 tankers
- 1 equipment van
- 1 pick up/brush rig
- 30' Trailer with rescue equipment.

The fire hall was located at 222 Thomas Street in Cornell but has since moved to a new location at 100 Osborne Street in October of 2008. The facility includes 4 bays, meeting room, bathrooms, and an office.

The Cornell Area Fire Department could use a new pumper truck to replace the current back up pumper truck from 1971.

Emergency Medical Services

Cornell Area Ambulance Inc., which consists of the City of Cornell and all or parts of the following Townships within Chippewa County: Arthur, Birch Creek, Cleveland, Colburn, Eagle Point, Estella, Lake Holcombe, and Ruby. The EMS service consists of 21 paid volunteer EMTs. They receive an average of 400 calls per year and have three ambulances. They have up to date equipment and facility and are purchasing a new cardiac monitor that can transmit information to the hospital. The Cornell Area Ambulance Inc. takes patients to the following hospitals: Luther Midelfort and Sacred Heart in Eau Claire; St. Joseph's in Chippewa Falls; the Bloomer Medical Center; Rusk County Memorial Hospital; and, occasionally to Our Lady of Victory Hospital in Stanley. The ambulance station is located at 412 South 3rd Street in Cornell.

The Cornell Area Ambulance Inc., is connected to the Med-Flight service – Mayo Clinic out of Eau Claire and Rochester and Life Link 3 out of Rice Lake – are available for trauma cases.

Future needs of the Cornell Area Ambulance Inc. include incorporating First Responders as part of the Cornell Area Ambulance service, looking for ways to improving evacuation plans, and conducting a full tri-county regional mass casualty exercise. Coordination among the neighboring entities is important and critical to handling catastrophic situations.

Police Department

The City of Cornell Police Department is located at 204 North 3rd Street. The Cornell Police Department consists of three full-time officers and two part-time officers. Currently, they have one fully functioning squad car and another older squad car that is unmarked and used by City Staff. The City recently purchased a building (December, 2008) on Main Street to relocate the existing police department. This building will need to be renovated to fit the needs of the Police Department, but the new location will be ideal and the facility will be considerably better than the existing building.

Future needs include a taser, indoor dog kennel, and a laptop with printer to write citations from the squad car and be part of the Badger Tracks Computer Network.

One of the main concerns for the Cornell Police Department is animal control.

Post Office

City of Cornell residents use the Cornell Post Office which provides all postal services for City residents. The Post Office is located downtown at 301 Main Street.

Cemeteries

The Cornell City Cemetery is located in the southwest part of the City just west of State Highway 178.

Radio

The City of Cornell is within listening distance of a wide variety of radio stations.

Website

The City of Cornell has a website that can be accessed at the following address: www.cityofcornell.com. This website provides valuable information regarding City Information, a list of local businesses, points of interest, and upcoming events.

Newspaper

The Cornell Courier serves much of Chippewa County and is the official newspaper for the City where legal notices are posted.

Solid Waste Disposal

Current solid waste disposal needs are handled by Waste Management out of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. They offer weekly curbside pickup on Thursdays.

Recycling Facilities

Waste Management provides recycling curbside pickup for City residents on Thursdays.

Parks

The City of Cornell has over 25 acres of parks and athletic facilities within the City. The parks include Mill Yard Park on the Chippewa River, the Brunet City Park across from elementary school, and the ball fields and track across from the high school. Park equipment includes the following:

- Shelters
- Chalet
- 3 Ball Fields
- Track
- Football Field
- 4 Tennis Courts
- Basketball Court
- Ice Rink
- Stacker
- Museum
- Visitor Center
- Trails
- Playground Equipment
- Skate Park
- Picnic Area

Future development of the park may include a redevelopment of Mill Yard Park including additional trails.

City Hall

The current City Hall is located at 222 Main Street. The City Hall was recently remodeled and has ample space for existing needs. The Board and Plan Commission meetings are held in a board room.

Public Works and Utility Department

The Cornell Public Works Department works on the local utilities in the City. They have office space and the Public Works Shop/Garage at 300 Park Road, the primary storage facility. There is also office space located at the waste water treatment plan. The compost pile is also located here.

Schools

The City of Cornell is located in the Cornell School District. There are two schools in the District: Cornell Elementary School and Cornell High School.

The Cornell Elementary School is located at 111 South 4th Street. And teaches grades K – 6th grade. The Cornell High School is located at 708 Bridge Street and teaches grades 7th -12th grades. Table 7-1 shows the historic and projected future enrollment for the Cornell School District.

Table 7 - 1 - Historical and Projected Enrollment

Grade	Historical Enrollment				Enrollment Projections			
	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11
K4	28	30	35	30	26	24	24	24
Kindergarten	36	31	30	37	33	28	26	26
1st	37	34	29	29	32	33	28	26
2nd	31	31	35	28	29	32	33	28
3rd	26	31	33	34	31	29	32	33
4th	42	26	33	33	32	31	29	33
5th	42	39	25	34	39	32	31	29
6th	54	43	33	24	30	39	32	31
7th	46	53	47	34	25	30	39	32
8th	45	46	50	43	36	25	30	39
9th	46	41	44	50	36	36	25	30
10th	36	46	42	41	51	36	36	25
11th	49	38	48	41	43	51	36	36
12th	50	44	34	37	40	43	51	36
Total	570	536	522	499	483	469	452	427

Source: Cornell School District

The Cornell School District does have an interest in consolidating with a nearby school district in order to keep some of the existing programs. At this time, nothing has been worked out to consolidate.

Food Pantry

Food and other donated items from Cornell Area Food Pantry located on the 400 block of South Second Street in the City of Cornell, is available to area residents. The Food Pantry provides food to local families and residents in need. The facility is open on Thursday mornings.

Wastewater Treatment Plant / Sanitary System

The sanitary system in the City of Cornell consists of sanitary sewer mains, lift stations, forcemains, and a wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). The sanitary sewer system collects wastewater from homes, businesses, and industries and uses gravity mains and lift stations to convey it to the WWTP where it is treated. Sanitary sewer mains within the City are maintained by the City.

There are three lift stations in the City of Cornell. Lift stations are used when the topography does not allow for gravity mains. The wastewater is pumped to a chamber so it can then either use gravity mains or be pumped to the WWTP.

Rebuilt in 1981, the current capacity of the WWTP is 1,300,000 gallons per day. Currently, the City is using on average 395,400 gallons per day of that capacity. At this time, the City does not have a need to expand the WWTP. Weekly monitoring and testing shows that the WWTP is functioning properly as the test results meet the requirements and are below the state limits.

There are also some Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) in the City of Cornell. These are primarily located in the western portion of the City across the Chippewa River. POWTS are commonly referred to as septic systems and are permitted and monitored by Chippewa County.

Current concerns relate to a significant infiltration and inflow problem from the stormwater. At this time, the public works department is unable to track where the problem is coming from. If the problem is unable to be located, at some point a complete study of the sanitary sewer system may have to be conducted. The City may want to expand across the Chippewa River to the west in order to hook up existing City residents to the sanitary system; a project that would be rather expensive and require running sewer lines along the existing State Highway 64 Bridge.

Sanitary Sewer Service Area

In order to gauge where development can occur within the existing sanitary and water infrastructure, it is important to identify the existing and future extent of the sanitary sewer service area. Map 7-2 shows the areas that could be developed without addition of lift stations or significant upgrades to the infrastructure.

There are a number of homes on the west side of the Chippewa River without sanitary sewer service that the City may want to expand to in the future. On the west side there are also large tracts of vacant land that could be ideal for future growth.

Water System

The water system of the community is made up of wells, water towers, hydrants, and water mains that help draw, store, maintain pressure, and distribute water to homes, businesses, and industries in the City.

The City of Cornell is served by one well and one back up well. The current well was drilled in 1962. Both wells are located just south of Brunet Island State Park and are using the same aquifer. The water is high in Manganese and Iron and is treated for both. Only typical maintenance is planned at this time.

The City has one water tower built in 1982. The water tower is located north of State Highways 27/64 and east of the high school ball fields and has a capacity of 350,000 gallons. The tower is used for water storage and to pressurize the water system. The tower adequately meets the needs of the City. The tower is considered to be in good condition.

There are also a number of private wells in the rural area of the City. Private wells must comply with all statutes, ordinances, regulations, and rules of the State and Chippewa County.

The City's water supply has to meet all specifications set by the Safe Drinking Water Act established by the Environmental Protection Agency in 1974. Copies of the City's testing results are mailed to City residents each year.

Overall, the water system is in good condition, but will likely need a new well.

Water pressure plays a role in future development. In areas of high pressure (100 psi or greater) a pressure reducing valve may be needed on water mains or laterals to lower the water pressure in areas of low elevation. Map 7-3 shows the high pressure areas in the City occur along the Chippewa River due to its low elevation. The rest of the City falls between 35 psi and 100 psi which is adequate pressure for residential and commercial needs.

Stormwater

The City's stormwater system is made up of outfalls, inlets, and storm sewer pipes. The stormwater system is designed to collect stormwater and snowmelt runoff and move it away from existing development. Today, an emphasis is put on stormwater quantity, quality, and infiltration in an effort to protect the natural resources within watersheds and basins.

There are several challenges to stormwater management in the City of Cornell. First, the topography makes some areas susceptible to erosion due to steep slopes and unstable ground cover. Second, sand washing off the streets can clog outfalls. Holding ponds are commonly used to catch sediment and allow it to settle before the water passes through or infiltrates. At this time, the City does not have any holding ponds, but will have to consider maintenance issues if and when ponds are constructed.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are techniques and devices used to control stormwater runoff and reduce pollutants that reach surface waters. One BMP currently in place is that the City has sumps in nearly half of their inlets. Sumps are areas of clearance in the storm sewer inlet that allows water to collect and drop out its suspended sediments. The sumps are cleaned out annually. Other methods the City can use to reduce sediment and related contaminants are to reduce the amount of sand used on streets in the winter and to encourage rain gardens to capture runoff in resident's yards.

During significant storm events, the area under the bridge for the Old Abe trail on State Highway 64 does flood. This could eventually lead to washout problems if not addressed in the future. The stormwater outfall along the Chippewa River is also beginning to silt in near the City Shop. Continued siltation and sedimentation of the Chippewa River can cause a degradation of water quality.

Telecommunications Facilities

Communication facilities become an important factor when people are considering moving to a smaller city. Nowadays, people are becoming more dependent upon the need to communicate for both business and personal matters.

Cellular Service and Towers

New technologies are rapidly advancing, and cellular phone service is a vital component to communication in today's society. While cell towers are a necessary component to this form of communication, they can become an eyesore on the landscape and the environment. Methods are used to incorporate these towers into the environment. Included in these methods are innovative ideas such as placing antennas on already existing structures like silos, water towers, street lights, and buildings. Using the existing structures minimizes the impact of towers. However, these alternative antenna placements are not ideal for every situation. Currently, Alltel and AT & T have antennas in the City.

Internet

The availability of high-speed internet service is an important factor for attracting new business and residents. Many businesses count on reliable services such as high-speed internet in order to be competitive and operate efficiently.

Residents, especially those moving from an urban area, are used to amenities such as high-speed internet service. Currently, in the City of Cornell, there is access to the internet including dial-up and DSL through Century Tel. One comment on the business survey is that there is a lack of competition in the telecommunication field and therefore residents and businesses have limited choices when it comes to their internet service.

Phone

Century Tel provides the City area with local phone, and long distance services are provided by a choice of most major long distance carriers and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

Television

Cornell residents have access to cable and satellite television service. The cable infrastructure exists throughout the central commercial and residential areas of the City. Charter Communications is the major cable service while the two major satellite service providers are Dish Network and DirecTV.

Energy Sources

Energy is quickly becoming one of the more important topics in today's society. As energy prices rise, it is important that communities find ways to provide low cost, high quality energy sources for residents and businesses in the community.

Transmission / Distribution Lines

The City of Cornell has both distribution lines and transmission lines running throughout the City. Currently, most power lines in the City are overhead lines.

Electricity

The electricity providers for the City are Cornell Municipal Electric, Chippewa Valley Electric Coop, and Xcel Energy. Cornell Municipal Electric is owned by the City and allows them to charge low rates to residential and commercial customers. Chippewa Valley Electric Coop formed to provide electricity to the rural areas and serving much of Chippewa county and also small parts of Rusk, Taylor, Dunn, and Barron counties in Wisconsin. Xcel Energy serves areas in 11 states throughout the U.S. and covers most of Northwestern Wisconsin. Residential, business, commercial, and industrial are all sectors that are serviced by Xcel Energy. Xcel Energy generates electric power from a mix of fuel sources, and distributes natural gas and electricity over transmission and distribution lines throughout our service area.

Windmills

With the cost of energy rising, interest in windmills to supplement electricity is becoming more common. A windmill (small wind energy system) is used to generate electricity. Chippewa County set forth a process for permitting wind energy facilities with the Windpower Management Ordinance. The ordinance

includes setback requirements, noise standards, signage, aesthetics, and other additional regulations required to construct a windmill. Currently, there are no windmills in the City.

Utility Gas

Utility gas is available to some residents in the City of Cornell from We Energies.

Future Utility Projects

The City of Cornell maintains a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to identify future utility and facility projects and provide projected costs over the next five years.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal 1: Provide quality community services and facilities at a reasonable cost to taxpayers.

Objectives

1. Make sure the demand doesn't exceed capacity.
2. Minimize the cost of repairing and replacing existing utilities and infrastructure.
3. Reduce the negative impacts of stormwater runoff to infrastructure and water quality of surface waters.

Policies

1. Consider designing new community buildings that can accommodate future growth needs when new community buildings are needed.
2. Continue to explore opportunities to share services with the surrounding communities.
3. Consider developing recommendations or standards for community facility design and aesthetics.
4. Explore grants such as Community Development Block Grants or DOT Transportation Economic Assistance, DNR Stewardship or create a TIF District to help offset utility improvements and emergency service needs.
5. Investigate grant opportunities for funding of emergency management equipment needs.
6. Analyze and assess existing utility infrastructure system and capacities to determine potential "smart growth" areas.

Goal 2: Maintain historical aspects of public buildings.

Objectives

1. Preserve the City's past.
2. Give the City its own unique identity.
3. Draw people to the area/make Cornell a destination.
4. Increase economic activity.

Policies

1. Require additions or remodeling to match the existing structure and materials of historic building.

Goal 3: Support and improve the quality of schools, health care, parks, museums and library, etc.

Objectives

1. Maintain and improve the quality of life for Village and surrounding residents.
2. Make the City more attractive to business and industry.

Policies

1. Investigate ways of improving communication between the City, emergency services, school district, and businesses.
2. Support a variety of community enhancing activities in community parks.
3. Repair existing fencing, picnic shelters, and restrooms at park facilities when necessary.
4. Consider consolidating school districts with a neighboring school district.

Goal 4: Support long-range planning that addresses the existing populations and future growth of local and regional populations.

Objectives

1. Meet the long-term needs of residents.
2. Reduce long-term costs associated with area growth.
3. Analyze facilities to determine expansion as needed.

Policies

1. Design buildings for future expansion that fits the original design.
2. Analyze trends for facility development and capacity.
3. Ensure adequate land for anticipated growth.
4. Update equipment and emergency plans for safety and cost-effectiveness as appropriate.
5. Consider developing parks and recreation plan and updating current outdoor recreation plan.
6. Consider acquiring land that is necessary for expansion and redevelopment.