

CHAPTER 9 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Introduction

Community facilities and services provide the basic needs for communities to function. Population growth can put a strain on facility capacity and can require expansion or new buildings and additional staff which can be expensive. The aesthetics of these facilities can also create an identity for the Village. The Community Facilities chapter inventories and assesses existing community facilities and services within the Village of North Hudson and identifies future needs.

The Village is in a unique situation where most of the community's services are provided through contracted services with the City of Hudson. This arrangement is likely to continue in the foreseeable future. These arrangements are discussed in more detail in Chapter 12. With a majority of services provided by the City of Hudson and surrounding area, the issue of consolidating with the City of Hudson will also be discussed.

Survey Results

The Village of North Hudson 2006 Community Survey asked residents how community facilities and their services should be provided to Village residents. Generally, residents felt the Village should continue to provide existing facilities and services. Approximately 57% indicated the Village should maintain its own Village Hall and Police Department while about 33% indicated that these should be shared with the City of Hudson and the surrounding area. Almost 49% of residents said the Village should own its Public Works building while almost 42% responded that the Village should share this with the City of Hudson and the surrounding area.

Over 86% of respondents indicated that library services should continue to be shared with the City of Hudson and surrounding Hudson area. Over 50% of respondents stated that a new recreation center or swimming pool, if needed, should be shared with the City of Hudson and the surrounding area although almost 24% indicated there was no need for a swimming pool and 13.5% indicated there was no need for a recreation center.

Residents were asked to evaluate the services provided by the Village of North Hudson Police Department, Public Works Department, and Administrative staff. The survey stated, in general, the Police Department.....provides a feeling of safety (81.8% Agreed, 6.0% Disagreed), provides adequate protection (79.0% agreed, 7.7% Disagreed), and responds in a timely manner (66.0% Agreed, 4.4% Disagreed). Respondents also indicated that most feel the Village should retain its own Police Department (57.6% Agreed, 25.9% Disagreed).

Asked about the Public Works Department, respondents stated that, in general, the Public Works Department.....adequately maintains infrastructure (73.0% Agreed, 14.5% Disagreed), responds in a timely manner (55.3% Agreed, 14.5% Disagreed), and addresses concerns with respect and fairness (51.7% Agreed, 8.9% Disagreed).

In regards to the Village Administrative staff, respondents stated that, in general, the Administrative staff.....responds in a timely manner (64.4% Agreed, 4.0% Disagreed), is courteous and polite (72.0% Agreed, 6.1% Disagreed), and is knowledgeable and helpful (70.1% Agreed, 4.9% Disagreed).

The Village of North Hudson already shares many facilities and their related services with the City of Hudson and facilities and services provided by the Village to its residents are duplicated by the City. Because of this and the rising costs of providing these services, the survey asked residents if the Village of North Hudson should consolidate with the City of Hudson. Approximately 30% of respondents agreed while almost 42% disagreed.

Community Facilities and Services

The Village of North Hudson has limited community facilities and services. Many services can be accessed in the City of Hudson and surrounding area. The following services are contracted with the City of Hudson or can be found in the vicinity. It is likely the City of Hudson and surrounding area will continue to provide these services in the future.

Library: Library services are found in the City of Hudson. The Hudson Area Joint Library is in partnership with the City of Hudson, Village of North Hudson, and the Towns of Hudson and St. Joseph. The Village of North Hudson helps fund the library through fees base on residents equalized property value.

Cemeteries: There are no cemeteries in the Village of North Hudson. Nearby cemeteries include, but are not limited to, Houlton Cemetery – north of the Village, St. Patrick Cemetery – south of I-94 on County Hwy F, and Willow River Cemetery in Hudson.

Health Care Facilities: Residents of the Village of North Hudson have access to some of the best health care facilities available. These include hospitals and clinics in the western Wisconsin and Twin Cities area.

Fire/Rescue: The Hudson Fire Department is a paid-on-call department that serves the City of Hudson, the Village of North Hudson, the Town of Hudson, and a portion of the Town of Troy. There are approximately thirty-eight members serving this department. Call volume is approximately three hundred responses annually. The Hudson Fire Department has one fire

station covering approximately forty square miles, and a second station is planned for the future. Services are paid for by fees based on population and the runs. The Village of North Hudson has one member on the Joint Fire Advisory Board which provides input on hiring and purchases.

Emergency Medical Services: St. Croix EMS and Rescue provide emergency services to the Village of North Hudson. St. Croix EMS and Rescue is partially funded through City of North Hudson and St. Croix County taxpayers. Some costs are passed on to patients through user fees. The Village pays a per capita fee for the service. The fee is renegotiated yearly. The Village of North Hudson has one representative on the St. Croix EMS and Rescue Commission. Board members oversee the day to day operations of the Department.

Post Office: Village of North Hudson residents use the City of Hudson Post Office which provides all postal services for Village residents.

There are a limited number of facilities and services that are provided within the Village of North Hudson (see Map 9-1). These include the following.

Village Hall: The current Village Hall was built in 1966 and is located at 400 7th Street North. Village staff includes the Administrator/Clerk, Deputy Clerk, and Deputy Treasurer. The Village Hall is in need of more storage and personnel space. The need for expansion was originally noted in the Village's 1987 Comprehensive Plan. There are current plans for an addition which will have to go to referendum for approval.

Police Department: The North Hudson Police Department is located at 400 7th Street North and is in the basement of the current Village Hall. The North Hudson Police Department has five sworn officers on staff, one full-time and one part-time office staff. The Police Department is in need of more storage and personnel space and anticipates the need for two additional officers in the next ten years. The Police Department also needs a mobile data computer, squad car replacement, and wireless computers within the department. Expanding the Police Department and relocating it to the main floor is part of the proposed Village Hall addition. State statutes require an interview room with video and audio. The State is also moving towards hand held units for writing citations which allows officers to download the information therefore reducing paperwork.

Public Works: The Public Works garage is located on 6th Street North/State Highway 35 while an office is maintained in the Village Hall. The Village of North Hudson Public Works Department is currently leasing a new building and has a five year lease that will expire in the year 2010. The Village will have to decide whether to continue leasing the building or to construct a new one that would be Village owned.

Adopted 12.05.2006

Reserved for Map 9-1

Child Care Facilities: There are four state licensed family child care programs in the Village of North Hudson. Local residents also offer child care in their homes on a smaller scale. The demand for child care is related to the needs of single parents and families in which both parents work.

Schools: The Village of North Hudson is located in the Hudson School District (see Map 9-2). There are seven schools in the District: Hudson High School (grades 9-12), Hudson Middle School (grades 6-8), E.P. Rock, Hudson Prairie, Willow River, Houlton, and North Hudson Elementary Schools (all grades K-5).

The North Hudson Elementary School is located at 510 Lemon Street North and is the only school in the Village. Enrollment is approximately 475 students. The school offers a School-Age Care Program beginning at 6:15 am. Activities are provided for participating students, in addition to a nutritious breakfast. Summer classes are also available.

The school is at capacity and the School Board is currently looking at options for the school including a future addition if needed to provide an additional classroom per grade.

Consolidation

The Village of North Hudson has limited opportunities for future physical growth and development. Because of this, increases in the costs associated with maintaining communities and infrastructure will have to be distributed among the same number of residents, increasing their share of improvement costs. Because of this, the Village asked residents if it should consolidate with the City of Hudson. As mentioned earlier, approximately 30% of respondents agreed while almost 42% disagreed with consolidation.

Several factors will have to be addressed if consolidation is ever considered. These include costs associated with consolidation, employment status of Village employees, zoning and other local regulations, and community identity.

A Feasibility Study of Municipal Consolidation was prepared in 1972 by the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance. The study's conclusion was that the consolidation of the Village of North Hudson with the City of Hudson was feasible at that time. The two municipalities may want to request an independent entity conduct another study if consolidation is considered in the future.

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Reserved for Map 9-2

Community Facilities Goals, Objectives and Implementation Options

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

Objectives

1. Minimize the tax burden to taxpayers.
2. Create facilities that complement the small town look and atmosphere of the Village of North Hudson.
3. Maintain the safe, secure atmosphere of the Village.

Potential Options for Achieving Goal 1

1. Design new community buildings that can accommodate future growth needs.
2. Continue to explore opportunities to share services with the City of Hudson and surrounding communities.
3. Develop recommendations or standards for community facility design and aesthetics.
4. Review past consolidation study and be mindful of the potential impacts and related costs.