

Chapter 4

Utilities & Community Facilities

Utilities and community facilities play an important role in the livability of a community. This is because utilities and community facilities, provided by either public or private entities, are critical for community development. Utilities include things such as electrical service, natural gas, telephone, and cable communications. Community facilities include local government buildings, libraries, educational facilities, and maintenance and storage facilities, as well as services like police, fire protection, and emergency medical services.

Previous Plans and Studies

Vilas County All Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2024

This document is required for local governments to be eligible for certain disaster mitigation programs. The report looks at general conditions in Vilas County, including population, transportation, land use, and economics. An inventory of utilities, community facilities and emergency services form the background for understanding how the County might respond to a disaster. Risk assessment is at the heart of the All-Hazards Mitigation program. To mitigate the risks, it's necessary to assess their relative importance. Examples of hazards include floods, tornadoes, winter storms, drought, fire, and hazardous materials accidents. The likelihood of any given hazard occurring is estimated based on historical data, and the impact of these hazards is evaluated. The plan seeks to recommend how County government should respond to such occurrences and suggests mitigation measures to reduce the risk caused by identified hazards.

Inventory

Utilities and community facilities provided by the Town of Lincoln or by other public or private entities are inventoried and evaluated as to their present condition and adequacy to meet the current and future needs of the Town. Many of the major facilities are identified on the **Utilities and Community Facilities Map**.

Water and Wastewater Facilities

The Town does not operate nor does a sanitary district operate within the Town. Water is provided via private water wells throughout the Town for residents. Groundwater is the source of all of these water systems. Wastewater is also handled by private on-site septic systems that discharge to underground drainage fields and may include: conventional (underground), mound, pressure distribution, holding tank, or sand filter systems. These on-site wastewater treatment technologies are regulated by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce. It should be noted that the Town Hall is serviced by city sewer.

Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Facilities

The Town of Lincoln **does not have any municipal garbage or recycling collection services**, but residents have the ability to contract with private haulers for garbage and recycling purposes, or utilize either the Town of Lincoln Recycling Center (located at 208 Jack Frost Street) or the Vilas County Landfill (located on County Highway G within the Town of Cloverland).

Power and Telecommunication Facilities

Electric and natural gas service are provided through Wisconsin Public Service to households and businesses in the Town.

Landline telephone service within the Town is provided by Frontier and Spectrum, cable television service is available through Spectrum, and various companies provide access to cellular service.

Internet service continues to expand as an economic development necessity, and access to internet service is continuing to improve throughout Vilas County. The Vilas County Economic Development Corporation estimates that over 86 percent of the County has access to some form of broadband. Fiber and cable internet service providers in the area include Spectrum, Norvado, and Frontier. Satellite providers serving the area include Starlink, Bug Tussel Wireless, Hughes Net, and ViaSat.

Parks, Recreation, and Other Youth Facilities

The Town of Lincoln contains a wide offering of public access for on water recreation to fish and swim on the various lakes and rivers that are located within the Town. Other off water recreational opportunities also exist and include hunting, ATV and UTV trail riding, snowmobile trail riding, and other motorized and non-motorized trails within the Vilas County Forest.

Dr Oldfield Park is the only park within the Town of Lincoln and is located at the intersection of Adams Road and County Highway G. Dr Oldfield Park is maintained by the Vilas County Parks & Recreation Department, and contains picnic tables, a cooking grill, a bathroom, and a boat launch with access to the Wisconsin River. There are several other park facilities located nearby, mostly in the City of Eagle River.

Education

The Town of Lincoln is in the Northland Pines School District, but the Wisconsin Open Enrollment program allows children to attend other nearby school districts, provided that the district has the necessary space to accept the student. The Northland Pines School district has satellite elementary schools located in Eagle River and St Germain that serve students in the Town, and the Northland Pines High School is located in Eagle River. In addition to public schools there are several private K-8 schools for the surrounding area.

Libraries

The City of Eagle River is home to Olson Memorial Library where visitors and residents can borrow books and other media as well as checkout other books and reference materials from other libraries through the interlibrary loan program. The library also has many local, regional, and national newspapers and magazines that visitors to the library can read or just browse through too. The library can also be used by residents and visitors who need access to the library's conference rooms.

Cemeteries

There are no cemeteries located within the Town. Minimum acreage requirements exist for cemeteries established on or after November 1, 1991, unless the cemetery is owned by a religious association, or the Town enacts an ordinance allowing new cemeteries of less than 20 acres to be constructed.

Emergency Services

Police protection in the Town of Lincoln is provided by the Vilas County Sheriff's Department. They patrol all county roads and respond to 911 calls. In addition, the Wisconsin State Patrol has statewide jurisdiction on all public roads.

Fire protection service within the Town of Lincoln is provided by the Eagle River Area Fire Department. The Eagle River Area Fire Department is operated by a joint municipal fire commission which is comprised of the City of Eagle River and the Towns of Cloverland, Washington and Lincoln. There is one representative from each municipality and one representative from the fire department who serves as the chairperson. The Town pays a proportionate fair share based upon the equalized assessed value of the Town.

Ambulance service is primarily provided by Aspirus MedEvac in Eagle River, with Conover, St. Germain and Plum Lake also providing service. The nearest medical facility is Aspirus Eagle River Hospital located in Eagle River. The nearest full service medical facilities are Howard Young Medical Center in Woodruff, Marshfield Medical Center in Minocqua, and Aspirus Rhinelander Hospital in Rhinelander.

Other Government Facilities

The local road system is the most significant public facility maintained by the Town and is covered in the **Transportation Chapter**. The Lincoln Town Hall is located at 1205 Sundstein Road. The Town Hall is used for town business and monthly town meetings. The Town Hall can be rented for private parties and other events.

Utilities and Public Facilities Programs

Providing public infrastructure – roads, sewer and water service, schools, police and fire protection – is one of the major functions of local government. In addition to these public services, both public and private entities provide electricity and telephone service as well as such specialized services as child-care, health-care and solid-waste disposal. Taken together these constitute the utilities and community facilities that represent much of the backbone of modern life. Beyond what these facilities do for us, they also represent a huge investment of public and private resources.

The efficient utilization of these resources is one of the basic principles of comprehensive planning. Already in-place infrastructure is a public asset that must be safeguarded for the future, both to conserve and protect environmental values and to maximize the benefits of economic growth. Development that bypasses or ignores existing infrastructure resources is wasteful of the public investment that they represent.

Both the state and federal governments offer programs that assist communities with the development of critical infrastructure and facilities. These programs are listed in more detail in the **Economic Development Chapter** of this plan.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal: Guide the future development of utilities and community facilities.

Objectives:

1. Determine the use, location, and capacity of existing public utilities within the Town of Lincoln to serve the existing and planned service area(s).
2. Assess future utility and communication needs and service capabilities.
3. Assess the planned growth and population impacts to the service capabilities of local schools, emergency services, parks, libraries, solid waste disposal, health care facilities, and governmental services.

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