

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of governments in Door County, including the Door County Board of Supervisors, county departments and agencies, and county taxes; local government structure; land use management (planning and zoning) interactions by the county with other government entities; and other types of intergovernmental cooperative relationships. Note this chapter primarily deals with land use topics, focusing on the Door County Land Use Services Department and Resource Planning Committee, since that department and committee are statutorily responsible for adopting and implementing the county comprehensive plan.

## GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

Local governments in Door County consist of the county, one city, four villages, and fourteen towns.

### COUNTY

Wisconsin consists of 72 counties, the primary political subdivision of the state. Within counties there can be cities, villages, and towns. The Board of Supervisors is the main legislative body of the county, consisting of supervisors elected in nonpartisan elections for two-year terms. Programs and services counties must or may provide are specifically authorized in Wisconsin statutes.

The type of executive official in Wisconsin counties can vary. Counties may have a County Executive elected in a nonpartisan election for a four-year term, an appointed County Administrator, or an appointed Administrative Coordinator. Door County has an appointed County Administrator. Elected officials in Door County include the Sheriff, District Attorney, County Clerk, County Treasurer, Register of Deeds, and Clerk of Court. All of these offices have four-year terms.

Door County contains and interacts with the local municipalities listed below. Descriptions of each type of local municipality are provided in the sections following.

- City of Sturgeon Bay
- Villages of Egg Harbor, Ephraim, Forestville, and Sister Bay
- Towns of Baileys Harbor, Brussels, Clay Banks, Egg Harbor, Forestville, Gardner, Gibraltar, Jacksonport, Liberty Grove, Nasewaupsee, Sevastopol, Sturgeon Bay, Union, and Washington

### CITY

In Wisconsin, a city is an autonomous incorporated area within one or more counties. As of 2020, Wisconsin had 190 cities. Cities in Wisconsin provide almost all services to their residents, differing from counties and towns in that they have more power to govern themselves in local matters without state interference; they have the highest degree of home rule and taxing jurisdiction of all governments. This “home rule” authority allows them to make their own decisions about their affairs, administration, and much of their public policy, subject to state law.

In order to incorporate as a city, a community must have at least 1,000 citizens if it is a rural area or 5,000 if it is in an urban area. Cities in Wisconsin are divided into four classes:

- First class: Cities with 150,000 or more people

- Second class: Cities 39,000 to 149,999 people
- Third class: Cities with 10,000 to 38,999 people
- Fourth class: Cities 9,999 people or less

The City of Sturgeon Bay, officially incorporated on April 7, 1883, is a fourth-class city with 9,646 residents as of 2020. The city, which is the county seat, covers approximately 4,000 acres and has 80 miles of streets and 11 parks. It includes portions of three different school districts: Sturgeon Bay, Sevastopol, and Southern Door.

Cities can choose to hire a city administrator or city manager, instead of electing a mayor, or have both. The City of Sturgeon Bay has both an appointed city administrator and an elected mayor. The city is governed by a Common Council consisting of the mayor and elected alderpersons. The mayor is elected at-large by residents of the City of Sturgeon Bay, and each of the seven districts in the city elect one alderperson. The mayoral term is three years, while the alderpersons serve for two years.

The City employs approximately 70 full-time employees and more than 60 part-time employees during seasonal periods. The city's organization consists of five departments: Police, Fire, Public Works, Community Development, and Administration. The City of Sturgeon Bay has the following boards, commissions, and committees:

- Board of Electrical Examiners
- Board of Public Works
- Board of Review
- Cable Communication System Advisory Council
- Finance/Purchasing & Building Committee
- Fire & Police Commission
- Historic Preservation Commission
- Industrial Park Development Review Team
- Loan Review Committee/Revolving Loan Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Parks & Recreation Board
- Parks & Recreation Committee
- Parking & Traffic Committee
- Plan Commission
- Sturgeon Bay Harbor Commission
- Sturgeon Bay Waterfront Redevelopment Authority
- Zoning Board of Appeals

## **VILLAGE**

In Wisconsin, a village is an autonomous incorporated area within one or more counties; currently there are 410 villages in the state. Villages provide various services to residents and have a degree of home rule and taxing jurisdiction over them. The home rule authority granted to villages allows them to make their own decisions about their affairs, administration, and much of their public policy, subject to state law.

Villages are governed by a Village President and a Board of Trustees. Village officers include a president, clerk, treasurer, and assessor. Villages may also elect to hire a village manager instead of an elected village president. In order to incorporate as a village, a community must have at least 150 citizens if it is in a rural area (isolated) or 2,500 if it is in an urban area (existing metropolitan area, more densely settled).

Door County has four villages: Egg Harbor, Ephraim, Forestville, and Sister Bay.

## **TOWN**

In Wisconsin, a town is a municipality within a county. According to the University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension, the state has 1,250 towns. All areas in the state that have not been incorporated as cities or villages are parts of towns.

The terms “town” and “township” are sometimes used interchangeably, but in Wisconsin the terms are not identical. The word “town” denotes a unit of government while “township” is a surveyor’s term describing the basic grid framework for legal descriptions of all land in the state (including land in cities and villages). Originally, most townships were six mile by six mile squares (36 square miles), but natural and human-made boundaries (rivers and county lines, for example) caused some variation.

Towns are similar to cities and villages in that they provide many of the same services, but they are organized and governed in a different manner. The major distinguishing feature of towns is the fact that they continue to operate as a “direct democracy.” State law requires towns to hold “town meetings” where all qualified electors who are age 18 or older and have lived in the town for at least 10 days can discuss and vote on town matters, including the town’s property tax levy. This means that the electors of the town have more direct control over most local government issues than those living in cities and villages where major decisions are made by elected representatives. Towns also tend to integrate their services with counties to a greater extent than cities and villages.

Towns are governed by an elected town board, which is headed by a board chair. The town board consists of three or five members elected for two-year terms. Towns are also served by a clerk, treasurer, assessor, and can have an appointed or elected town administrator.

Towns, except for those that have adopted village powers, have less authority than villages and cities because they lack the home rule granted to villages and cities by the state. At the minimum, towns maintain their local roads. Towns may choose to provide more services, however, overlapping with those provided by the county. In most cases, towns provide limited services and thus town residents often pay lower taxes than their city or village counterparts.

Town boards can obtain greater planning and regulatory authority when they are granted village powers. Without village powers, when a town wishes to adopt an ordinance to address a local concern, the town must decide whether they have specific or implied authority granted to them through state statutes. If authorized by the town electors at a town meeting, the town board may exercise powers relating to villages and conferred on village boards under Ch. 61, Wis. Stats., except those powers which conflict with statutes relating to towns and town boards.

With village powers, the town board may exercise the specific and general powers of a village under s. 61.34, Wis. Stats. Under this authority, the town board's authority includes police power to regulate for the town's health, safety, and welfare. An example of specific village powers that a town board may exercise is comprehensive planning authority.

A town with village powers has some, but not all, of the powers exercised by a village because of different statutory procedures applicable to towns. For example, the statutes provide that a town in a county with comprehensive zoning must first obtain the approval of the electors to engage in town-level zoning and then must obtain approval of the county board before the town zoning ordinance or any amendment to it may take effect. This is in contrast to cities and villages, which may enact local-level zoning without seeking the approval of the county.

In Door County, most of the towns have chosen to exercise village powers. The appropriate municipality should be contacted for further information.

## **COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS, COMMITTEES, AND DEPARTMENTS**

### **DOOR COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

The County of Door and its accompanying government were established in 1851. Door County is governed by an elected Board of Supervisors, currently representing 21 Supervisory Districts. Each supervisory district contains an approximately equal number of residents. Elections are held for all supervisors in April of even-numbered years; all supervisors serve two-year terms. A chair and vice-chair are elected each term by the supervisors themselves.

The Door County Board of Supervisors oversees services provided by Door County, many of which are mandated by the state and/or federal government. Supervisors serve primarily a legislative function, largely limited to policy making, law-making, budgetary approval, and cooperative decision-making. No operational control resides with individual supervisors. Basic county board functions include the following:

- Involve, represent, and be accountable to the public
- Create budgets and levy taxes
- Set policies and regulate
- Provide the framework for county services
- Oversee county operations
- Cooperate with other governments

The county board sets policy through adoption of plans, budgets, ordinances, and resolutions, as described below:

- **Plans.** A plan involves setting desired future conditions and steps to get there. With regard to land use management, Wisconsin’s “Smart Growth” legislation requires county adoption of a comprehensive plan (this plan). Other common plans at the county level are strategic plans, which the Door County Board of Supervisors undertook in 2009; capital improvement plans (how money will be spent on infrastructure projects), which the County Board adopts on an annual basis; parks, which the County Board adopts every five years; and transportation.
- **Budgets.** The budget is the document through which the board determines what services will be provided, how they will be funded, and to what level they will be funded.
- **Ordinances.** An ordinance is a local law prescribing rules of conduct related to the corporate powers of the governmental body. It is a law that can be enforced by the officials of the governmental body. It is intended to be a permanent part of the governmental code.
- **Resolutions.** Resolutions deal with matters that are less permanent than ordinances and are more temporary in character. They are more often used to grant special privileges, express opinions, or to communicate with other governmental bodies.

Much of the work described above is conducted through committees comprised entirely of or including at least some supervisors, supported by county staff. Door County committees, as of 2022, are listed in the following sections.

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

Standing committees consist almost entirely of county board supervisors and have a continuing existence. Standing committees are policy-making bodies, determining broad outlines and principles governing administration of the departments that they oversee. Door County’s standing committees and the departments they oversee (if applicable) are listed in Table 11.1. Agendas and minutes for these committee meetings, as well as committee members, may be found at the Door County website listed in the Resources and Further Information section at the end of this chapter.

**Table 11.1: County of Door Standing Committees**

Standing Committees	Department(s)
Administrative	Child Support, Corporation Counsel, County Administrator, County Clerk, Human Resources, Technology Services, Transportation, Veterans Services
Finance	Finance, Treasurer, Register of Deeds
Highway & Facilities	Highway
Judiciary & Public Safety	Clerk of Courts, Circuit Court, Family Court/Register in Probate, District Attorney, Emergency Services, Emergency Management & Communications, and Sheriff’s Office
Resource Planning*	Land Use Services

Source: Door County Administrator.

\*The Resource Planning Committee is the oversight committee for the adoption and implementation of this comprehensive and farmland preservation plan. It consists of five county board supervisors,

typically meeting the first and third Thursdays of every month. Notices of public hearings conducted by the Resource Planning Committee are published in the *Peninsula Pulse*. Meeting agendas are posted in the Land Use Services Department and next to the County Clerk’s office on the first floor of the Government Center, at the library, and at the Justice Center.

**STATUTORY COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS, AND BOARDS**

Statutory committees, commissions, and boards are standing committees comprised of county board members and members-at-large from the community. Members are appointed by the county board chair and confirmed by the county board. Door County’s statutory committees, commissions, and boards and the departments they oversee (if applicable) are listed in Table 11.2. Agendas and minutes for these committee meetings may be found at the Door County website listed in the Resources and Further Information section at the end of this chapter.

**Table 11.2: Door County Statutory Committees, Commissions, and Boards**

Statutory Committees, Commissions, and Boards	Department(s)
Health & Human Services Board	Health & Human Services
Land Conservation Committee	Soil and Water Conservation

Source: Door County Government.

**OTHER COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS/BOARDS**

There are other temporary and permanent committees, commissions, or boards serving under the county board. These are comprised of County Board Members and members from the community at large; all members are appointed by the Chairperson and confirmed by the County Board.

- ARDC Advisory Board
- Broadband Committee
- Comprehensive Community Services/Coordinated Services Coordinating Committee
- Children’s Community Options Program Advisory Committee
- Communications Advisory Technical Subcommittee
- Community Development Block Grant Team
- Door County Historian
- Door County Housing Authority
- Door County Poet Laureate
- Economic Development
- Fair Board Liaison
- Highway Safety Commission
- Land Information Council
- Library Board
- Local Emergency Planning Committee
- Nicolet Federated Library Board
- Nutrition Advisory Council
- Security & Facilities Committee Representative
- Senior Services Nutrition Advisory Council

- Sister City Informal Advisory Group
- Sturgeon Bay-Door County Economic Development – Loan Review Committee
- Veterans Service Commission
- Zoning Board of Adjustment. In accordance with state statutes, the BOA helps administer the county zoning ordinance through holding public hearings and making decisions regarding petitions for variance and appeals of zoning administrator or Resource Planning Committee decisions.

### **DOOR COUNTY DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES**

The County of Door employs over 300 people across twenty-eight departments. Departments and their descriptions and contact information may be found on the Door County website, listed in the Resources and Further Information section at the end of this chapter.

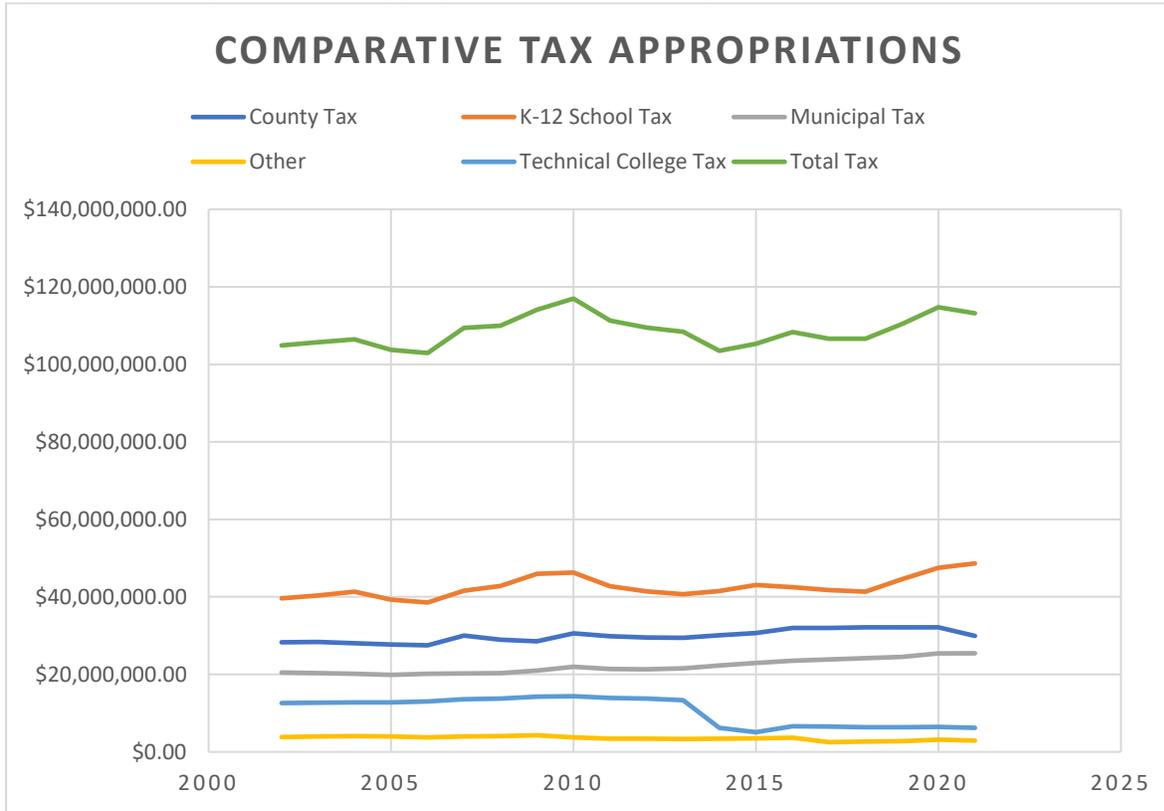
### **COUNTY TAXES**

Door County’s programs and services primarily are funded by property taxes. Figure 11.1 illustrates a history of the taxes levied and collected in Door County between 2002 and 2021, with all values inflation-adjusted to 2021. Note that property taxes fund the local school districts, the technical school (Northeast Wisconsin Technical College), the county, the local municipality within which the property is located, and other taxing jurisdictions, such as sanitary districts.

Between 2002 and 2021, the county’s total property tax collected increased by over \$8.2 million (7.9%). Broken down by taxing jurisdiction, taxes collected by school districts increased between 2002 and 2021 by over 22%. NWTC taxes decreased by 50% and “other” taxes decreased by over 24%. Meanwhile, county and municipal taxes increased by 5.8% and 24%, respectively.

Note that the County of Door has adopted, per statutory guidelines, a sales tax of 0.5% in addition to the state sales tax of 5%, the revenues from which provide a slight offset to property taxes.

**Figure 11.1: Comparative Tax Appropriations, Door County**



Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, City, Village, and Town Taxes.

\*Inflation-adjusted to 2021.

## LAND USE (PLANNING AND ZONING) PROGRAM INTERACTIONS

With regard to land use issues, the primary types of county and municipal interactions in Door County are relationships required by or established with state and regional agencies and those involving comprehensive and farmland preservation planning, land use education and discussion forums, plat review, and extra-territorial regulation.

### STATE AND REGIONAL LAND USE AGENCIES

#### **WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION – DIVISION OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

The Division of Intergovernmental Relations (DIR) administers a broad array of services to the public and state, local, and tribal governments. It works with counties, municipalities, citizens, and business by providing support services in land use planning, land information and records modernization, municipal boundary review, plat review, demography, and coastal management programs. (Note: The plat review process is described in more detail in a subsequent section.)

The DIR also includes the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program (WCMP) which is dedicated to preserving and improving access to the natural and historic resources of Wisconsin's Great Lakes coasts. The WCMP works cooperatively with state, local, and tribal government agencies and non-profit organizations to manage the ecological, economic, and aesthetic assets of the Great Lakes coastal areas. Door County has benefited from a variety of WCMP grants, most of which have been awarded to the SWCD.

### **WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

The Land Use Services Department regularly works with the DNR on land use issues, such as shoreland zoning, ordinary high-water mark determinations, wetland management, and floodplain management. The wetland, shoreland, and floodplain regulation processes in Door County are described in Chapter 6, Natural Resources. Other land use plans developed by the DNR that incorporate Door County are also described in Chapter 6, including the Wildlife Action Plan and the Land Legacy Report.

### **BAY-LAKE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

The Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission was created in 1972 by Governor Lucey under s. 66.945 (re-titled 66.0309), Wis. Stats., as the official area-wide planning agency for northeastern Wisconsin. The function of Bay-Lake is solely advisory. Bay-Lake has undertaken regional studies focusing on the region's transportation network, population and economic structure, housing characteristics, natural resources, land and water related issues, and those issues that transcend local governmental boundaries.

Bay-Lake operates under the following five principles:

- To assist and advise local government;
- To influence state, regional, and federal plans and programs that reflect the best interest of the Bay-Lake Region;
- To prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan under s. 66.0295, Wis. Stats., for the development of the region;
- To provide technical information about the region for use by public and private agencies; and
- To encourage citizen participation in the planning process.

Bay-Lake provides planning assistance to member municipalities. Door County has maintained sporadic membership in Bay-Lake since its establishment. The county is currently not a member.

## **COMPREHENSIVE AND FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLANNING**

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

The Door County Land Use Services Department is responsible for the overall development of the county's comprehensive plan in compliance with the requirements of s. 66.1001(4)(a), Wis. Stats., which requires municipalities with a zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, or an official mapping program to have a comprehensive plan and to update that plan at least every 10 years. As of January 1, 2010, most land use management decisions based on those zoning or subdivision ordinances or official maps must be consistent with that municipality's comprehensive plan.

The municipalities in Door County required to have a comprehensive plan are:

- County of Door
- City of Sturgeon Bay
- Villages of Egg Harbor, Ephraim, Forestville, and Sister Bay
- Town of Egg Harbor (due to town subdivision ordinance)
- Towns of Union and Brussels (due to town-level zoning)

For detailed information on Wisconsin’s planning legislation, the process followed in preparation of the Door County Comprehensive Plan, and the county plan vision statements and goals, see Volume I of the plan.

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

As has been true historically, the *Door County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance* will presumably continue to be the primary tool the county uses to implement the comprehensive plan. Administration and enforcement of the zoning ordinance are carried out in accordance with state statutes, which outline procedures counties must follow involving towns in potential zoning ordinance text and map amendments. Note that the Land Use Services Department also provides means for additional coordination with the towns that have adopted county comprehensive zoning, such as seeking input on and allowing extra time for town review of applications going to public hearing (conditional use permits, variances, zoning text amendments, zoning map amendments).

### **FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

The state’s farmland preservation planning requirements are incorporated into this comprehensive plan. This plan must be certified by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection in order to enable certification of the farmland preservation zoning ordinance, which is incorporated into the *Door County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance*. Certification of the farmland preservation ordinance (the Exclusive Agriculture zoning district) should take place by the end of 2025. Both the farmland preservation plan and zoning ordinance enables the Town of Clay Banks, the only town in the county with the Exclusive Agriculture zoning district, to receive tax credits. More information about this program can be found in Chapter 7, Agricultural Resources.

### **LAND USE EDUCATION FORUMS**

Since 2006, the Door County Land Use Services Department has held periodic educational/discussion meetings with local elected and appointed officials. The purpose of the meetings is to provide educational and discussion forums regarding planning and zoning issues, and to help coordinate comprehensive planning and related regulatory activities between the Land Use Services Department and local municipalities. Meetings cover topics and include speakers requested by municipal officials.

Land Use Services Department Zoning Administrators are also actively involved with the Wisconsin County Code Administrators and the Eastern Wisconsin County Code Administrators, attending and organizing educational sessions and serving on various committees.

## **PLAT REVIEW**

The state requires a subdivision plat any time a landowner or landowner's agent divides a lot, parcel, or tract of land for the purpose of sale or building development, where:

1. The division creates five or more parcels or building sites (i.e., lots or outlots) of 1 ½ acres each or less; or
2. Successive divisions within a five-year period create five or more parcels or building sites (i.e., lots or outlots) of 1 ½ acres each or less.

Final plats that meet the state requirements listed above are subject to three objecting authorities, as defined by state statutes. The Wisconsin Department of Administration has a Plat Review Program that reviews all subdivision plats as defined by s. 236.02 (12), Wis. Stats. (described above), or as required by local ordinance, for compliance with ss. 236.15, 236.16, 236.20, and 236.21, Wis. Stats. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation reviews subdivision plats for compliance with Trans 233, Wis. Admin. Code when lands being platted about a state trunk or interstate highway, or when the sub-divider has an interest in land between the subdivision and a state truck or interstate highway. Door County is also an objecting authority for those subdivision plats located within the city and villages; the Land Use Services Department reviews city and village plats to determine any conflicts with parks, parkways, expressways, major highways, airports, drainage channels, schools, or other planned public improvements.

In addition to the objecting authorities listed above, approval authorities for state plat land divisions located within towns include the town board and the county (Resource Planning Committee). Approval is based on compliance with any town and county subdivision ordinances or comprehensive plans. Town boards may require installation of public improvements, alterations to utilities, or creation of easements for public benefit.

Door County's Land Division Ordinance, applicable in all 14 towns, is more restrictive than the state and requires a subdivision plat when creating five or more parcels or building sites that are less than 10 acres in area or successive divisions within a five-year period that create a total of five or more parcels. The Towns of Egg Harbor and Nasewaupée also have town-level subdivision ordinances. The more restrictive ordinance (county or town) will supersede.

## **EXTRA-TERRITORIAL REGULATION AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS**

Extra-territorial regulation may be applied by cities and villages, giving them some control regarding zoning and subdivisions within a limited area outside their incorporated boundaries. Cooperative boundary agreements are also permitted by state statutes in order to help municipalities coordinate development of the territory covered within plans.

## **EXTRA-TERRITORIAL SUBDIVISION REGULATION**

Sections 236.10 and s. 62.23, Wis. Stats., grant incorporated villages and cities the authority to review plats within surrounding unincorporated areas. The extraterritorial subdivision jurisdiction for 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> class cities extends 3 miles beyond corporate limits. The limit for 4<sup>th</sup> class cities (such as Sturgeon Bay) and villages is 1 ½ miles beyond corporate limits. They can review plats for compliance with municipal ordinances, local master or comprehensive plans, and official maps. They cannot require

public improvements within the subdivision. This helps cities or villages protect land uses near their boundaries from potentially conflicting uses and plan for potential extension of municipal services.

Extra-territorial plat review applies automatically if a city or village adopts a subdivision ordinance or an official map. Towns do not have approval authority over these ordinances. Cities and villages may waive their right to approve plats within any portion of extra-territorial plat approval jurisdiction. This is done by filing a resolution with the Register of Deeds incorporating a map or metes and bounds description of the area outside its corporate boundaries within which it has authority to approve plats. The municipality may rescind this waiver at any time by resolution filed with the Register of Deeds. Neither the city nor the villages in Door County have waived extra-territorial subdivision authority.

### **EXTRA-TERRITORIAL ZONING**

Section 62.23(7a), Wis. Stats., allows an incorporated village or city to extend limited zoning authority 1 ½ to 3 miles beyond its borders into surrounding unincorporated areas (towns). The extra-territorial zoning jurisdiction for 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> class cities extends 3 miles beyond corporate limits. The limit for 4<sup>th</sup> class cities and villages is 1 ½ miles. In order to exercise their extra-territorial zoning powers, a city or village must have created a plan commission and adopted a zoning ordinance for the land within its corporate limits.

Three major steps are involved in the adopted of an extra-territorial zoning ordinance. First, the governing body of the city or village adopts and publicizes a resolution which establishes its intent to exercise its zoning authority within all or part of its extra-territorial jurisdiction. Second, the governing body directs its plan commission to formulate tentative recommendations for the extra-territorial district plan and regulations. Actual hearings, recommendations, and decisions regarding the final zoning plan are made and conducted by a joint extra-territorial zoning committee. The joint extra-territorial zoning committee is composed of three city or village representatives and three members from each of the towns included within the area proposed to be zoned. Finally, once it has received the extra-territorial zoning plan as approved by the joint committee, the governing body of the city or village may adopt the final plan.

### **COOPERATIVE BOUNDARY AGREEMENTS**

Sections 66.0301 and 66.0307, Wis. Stats., allow municipalities to enter into agreements regarding changing or maintaining municipal boundaries for a period of 10 years or more. The Cooperative Boundary Plan is established by any combination of cities, villages, and towns and determines the boundary lines between their municipalities, with the plan then approved by the Wisconsin Department of Administration. The plan should have the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the territory covered by the plan. The cooperative plan must include provisions for the physical development of the territory covered by the plan; identify existing boundaries that will not change and conditions for any boundary changes; evaluate any significant adverse environmental consequences; and address the need for safe and affordable housing to meet the needs of diverse social and income groups in each community. The plan and agreement should strive to provide long-term certainty for all participating local governments, developers, and landowners. If boundaries are going to change, they will do so only according to the

criteria specified in the agreement. Currently, there are no cooperative boundary agreements in Door County.

## OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

A variety of other cooperative relationships exist between Door County, local municipalities and other governments, and non-governmental agencies. The alphabetical listing below provides an idea as to programs and services encompassed by many of these relationships. Note that state and federal agencies with which Door County interacts are listed under “state” and “federal.”

- City of Sturgeon Bay
  - City-owned fiber optic system services county buildings
  - City-owned main library building houses the main County of Door library
  - Sturgeon Bay Utilities provides services to almost every municipality
- Door County Emergency Services Department (see also Chapter 9, Community Facilities and Utilities)
  - County leases land from Village of Sister Bay for Northern Door Emergency Center
  - Critical communication coordination (i.e., 911 dispatch, fire departments, etc.)
- Door Highway and Airport Department (see also Chapter 8, Transportation and Chapter 9, Community Facilities and Utilities)
  - Contracts with both state and towns to do road repair, maintenance, and plowing on state highways and town roads
  - Pursues federal and state funding for solid waste management efforts (i.e., municipal recycling programs and county-wide electronics and prescription clean sweeps)
  - Washington Island Ferry (Door County owns a portion of the Washington Island Ferry dock, an extension of STH 42)
- Door County Technology Services Department. Shares telecommunication towers with the state and other private providers.
- Door County Facilities and Parks Department (see also Chapter 6, Natural Resources and Chapter 9, Community Facilities and Utilities)
  - Partners with DNR and non-profits to acquire land using DNR stewardship funds
  - Park maintenance agreements with the state (i.e., Ahnapee Trail) and the towns
  - Snowmobile coordinator for the State of Wisconsin Snowmobile Program
- Door County Sheriff’s Department (see also Chapter 9, Community Facilities and Utilities)
  - Law enforcement sharing with city state; assists with coordinating law enforcement activities across the county
  - Eligible city residents in jail go to Southern Door School
  - DARE – Drug Abuse Resistance Education
  - Door County juveniles are jailed at Brown County
  - Kewaunee County has a contract with Door County jail to house adult male and female Kewaunee County inmates
  - Door/Kewaunee Drug Task Force
- Door County Health and Human Services Department
  - Annual funding for non-profit HELP line

- Consultation to local schools regarding suicide prevention
- Collaboration for Crisis Training with the Sheriff's and Sturgeon Bay Police Departments
- Jointly planning family care in multi-county arrangement
- Juvenile Restitution and Community Service Program
- Independent Livings Skills Program – provides education and training in necessary life skills to youth who have been in the Door County Department of Social Services Foster Care Program

Public Health Division

- School health programs for hearing and vision screening
- Preschool and kindergarten health screenings at schools
- Professional nursing services to school districts
- Beach Contamination Reduction Project – testing and monitoring of 33 public beaches (collaboratively with UW-Oshkosh, DNR, and SWCD)
- Door County Soil and Water Conservation Department (see also Chapter 6, Natural Resources)
  - Provides assistance to the Village of Ephraim with their Stormwater/Construction Site Erosion Control Ordinance
  - Beach Contamination Reduction Project – testing and monitoring of 33 public beaches (collaboratively with UW-Oshkosh, DNR, and Public Health)
  - Wellhead protection – SWCD helped the Village of Sister Bay and City of Sturgeon Bay map area “zones of contribution”
- Door County Transportation Department.
  - Partners with outside organizations to connect people to transportation services that are affordable, available, and accessible
- Door County Economic Development Corporation (see also Chapter 6, Economic Development)
  - Administers loan funds for new businesses and business expansions that create jobs.
  - Coordinates the Technology Council
  - Helps coordinate Door County Legislative days in partnership with UW-Extension
  - Door-Kewaunee County Business Education Partnership
- Destination Door County (see also Chapter 5, Economic Development)
  - Oversees implementation and distribution of room tax funds
- Door-Tran (see Chapter 8, Transportation).
  - Over 43 members, including non-profit providers, for-profit providers, other non-profits, businesses, and government agencies
- Federal Agencies
  - Environmental Protection Agency
  - Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA)
  - United States Coast Guard
  - Federal Aviation Administration
  - United States Department of Agriculture/Farm Services Agency
  - Civil Air Patrol (military organization operating out of Cherryland Airport; coordinates with Door County Emergency Services)
  - Veteran's Office
- State of Wisconsin Departments

- Administration – energy assistance programs
- Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection – farmland preservation agreements
- Children and Families – Safe & Stable Families, Independent Living, Kinship Care, foster care, other child placements, W-2, child care
- Commerce
- Corrections
- Health Services – Medicaid, Long Term Care, Aging Programs, Income Maintenance, Integrated Services Project, Elder Abuse
- Justice
- Nicolet Federated Library System
- Public Service commission of Wisconsin – wind energy
- Transportation
- Workforce Development
- University of Wisconsin – Extension
- Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA), Door County Chapter
  - Representatives from the 14 towns meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of interest or concern amongst themselves, with local and state-level elected officials, and WTA staff

### **ADJACENT COUNTIES**

The only county unit of government adjacent to Door County is Kewaunee County, located immediately south of Door County. Kewaunee County has 14 municipalities: two cities, two villages, and ten towns. Brown County, separated from Door County by only a small corner of Kewaunee County, is located less than three miles south of Door County. Brown County contains 24 municipalities: two cities, nine villages, and thirteen towns.

Brown County adopted its last comprehensive plan in 2023. Kewaunee County adopted its plan in 2007. Intergovernmental cooperation and coordination between Door and the other two counties is not deemed to be a major concern: the Brown County comprehensive plan does not mention Door County at all with regard to intergovernmental cooperation, and the Kewaunee County plan mentions Door County only in relation to jailing their inmates in the Door County jail.

## RESOURCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

### **Door County** ([Door County, WI | Official Website](#))

Door County Government, established in 1851, provides services to the county's year-round residents as well as a seasonal population. The county seat is the City of Sturgeon Bay. The county consists of the city, 14 towns, and 4 villages. See the website listed above for county department contact information.

**Door County Municipality Contact Information.** See the Door County website listed above for a list of Door County municipalities and their website addresses, if applicable. The County Clerk's office can be contacted for telephone and mailing address information for those municipalities without websites.

### **Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission** ([Home :: Bay-Lake Region Planning Commission \(baylakerpc.org\)](#))

The Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission was created in 1972 by Governor Lucey under s. 66.945, Wis. Stats. as the official area-wide planning agency for northeastern Wisconsin. It currently encompasses eight counties: Brown, Door, Florence, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Oconto, and Sheboygan. Bay-Lake provides planning services on area-wide issues, represents local interests on state and federal planning program activities, and provides local planning assistance to communities in the Bay-Lake Region.

### **State of Wisconsin** ([Wisconsin.Gov Home](#))

See website for further information regarding the Department of Administration-Division of Intergovernmental Relations and the Department of Natural Resources, as well as other state agencies referred in this chapter.