



# RACINE COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUMMARY SHEET

## Utilities and Community Facilities Element (Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Preliminary Draft Chapter XIII)

One of the State’s required nine elements of the comprehensive plan, the utilities and community facilities element is intended to guide the development of public services and facilities to maintain and enhance the quality of life for current and future Racine County residents. The element contains an inventory of existing utilities and community facilities; an approximate timetable that forecasts the need to expand, rehabilitate, or replace existing utilities and facilities or to construct new utilities and facilities; and an assessment of future needs for government services related to utilities and community facilities. Goals, objectives, policies and programs were developed to address a range of services, including:



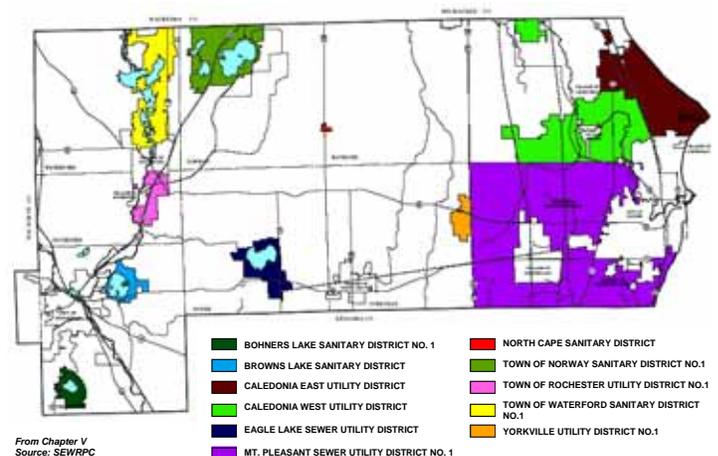
- Sanitary sewer service
- Water supply
- Stormwater management
- On-site wastewater treatment technology
- Solid waste disposal
- Recycling facilities
- Government facilities
- Parks
- Trails/bikeways
- Libraries
- Schools
- Electric and natural gas
- Alternative energy
- Telecommunications facilities
- Fire and rescue
- Police
- Emergency management
- Healthcare facilities
- Community assisted living facilities
- Child care facilities
- Cemeteries

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A detailed description of the existing utilities and community facilities in Racine County is presented in Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Chapter V, “Inventory of Utilities and Community Facilities.” All services and facilities addressed in this element are affected, regulated or directly provided by a Federal or State government agency, school district, utility (e.g. We Energies), or private service provider (e.g., hospital). It is essential that Racine County and its local communities work with these entities to implement regulations and programs and to ensure adequate land is available for facilities and services. A few inventory findings from this chapter include:

- In 2000, areas served public sanitary sewer service encompassed about 15% of Racine County (about 52 sq. miles), with an estimated resident population of 169,900 persons, or 90% of the County population. The remaining 10% of the population was served by private onsite wastewater treatment systems.
- In 2005, 12 municipal water supply systems provided water to about 38 sq. miles of the County, and an estimated 147,000 persons (76% of the population). Eight systems relied on Lake Michigan as the source of supply; the other four on groundwater. About 24% of the population relied on private domestic wells.
- In 2007, there were 10 municipal police department facilities and two Racine County Sheriff’s Department facilities. Fire protection was provided by 14 different fire departments, 11 of which also offered emergency medical services (EMS).
- In 2007, there were 273 park and open space sites encompassing about 9,000 acres that were owned by public entities (e.g., State, County, cities, schools districts), and another 105 sites encompassing about 2,560 acres that were privately owned.

**SANITARY AND UTILITY DISTRICTS IN THE RACINE COUNTY PLANNING AREA: 2007**



From Chapter V  
Source: SEWRPC

## PUBLIC INPUT

Based on the countywide public opinion survey, and the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analyses conducted in 2007, some of the utilities and community facilities issues identified by the community included:

- The plan should strive to protect surface water and groundwater quality and quantity.
- The plan should strive to study the costs and impacts of new growth and development have on utilities and community facilities.
- The plan should seek to balance the need to expand water and sewer services, while more compact development design and infill development should be considered to utilize land in existing urban service areas.
- The plan should seek to address the development and implementation of countywide land use patterns and water control plans to minimize the adverse effects of flooding.
- The plan should seek additional resources (public-private partnerships) for both utilities and community facilities planning.
- The plan should strive to support the development of alternative energy sources, such as wind and solar power. The potential demand for bio-fuel and bio-fuel technology could also provide economic opportunities.
- The plan should seek to find ways to share municipal services such as libraries, recycling, and police services with neighboring communities.



## UTILITIES

Under the multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan, the population of Racine County is projected to increase by about 35,500 persons between 2000 and 2035. (Projections of population, household and employment levels in the year 2035 can be found in Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Chapter VII.) Each community will have to ensure that its own facilities and services can adequately meet the needs of its current and future residents. County and local units of government should take into account these projections when planning for future utilities and community facilities, but plans also need to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate population levels that are somewhat higher or lower than forecasted.

### *Sanitary Sewer Service*

Owners and operators of public sewerage systems within the Southeastern Wisconsin Region periodically prepare long-range plans to evaluate the adequacy of their facilities and systems. Of the seven public sewage treatment plants in Racine County, only two are expected to reach 80% of their design capacity. (80% is the threshold at which facilities planning should be initiated to ensure adequate service.) By 2035, the City of Burlington plant is expected to have reached its existing plant capacity; the City prepared a facilities plan in 2005 which would upgrade plant capacity to accommodate anticipated growth. Sewage flows to the Eagle Lake Sewer Utility District wastewater treatment plant are currently close to the 80% threshold, and it is projected that by 2035, the threshold would be exceeded. The comprehensive plan recommends that the district prepare a facilities plan in the near future.

### *Stormwater Management*

In Racine County, stormwater drainage is managed primarily through curb and gutter systems for cities and villages, while towns rely mostly on roadside ditches and natural swales and culverts. Ideally, stormwater management facilities should be planned as an integrated system of stormwater and floodland management facilities for an entire watershed, for an entire community with consideration given to the watersheds in which the community is located.



### *Water Supply*

Future demand for water supply is determined primarily by the size and spatial distribution of the future population, land use, and economic activities. Since 2005, SEWRPC has been developing a regional water supply plan, intended to provide a sound, workable plan for the provision and protection of long-term, sustainable sources of water for Southeastern Wisconsin. This plan as completed in the fall of 2008 and includes recommendations specific to Racine County and its local communities. More information can be found online at: <http://www.sewrpc.org/watersupplystudy/>

## Alternative Energy and Conservation

Racine County recognizes the value of “green” alternative energy in their land use plans and zoning—the County has adopted ordinances to allow for the development of alternative energy sites (e.g., wind and solar), and some local communities have developed energy goals for their land use plans. In the past few years, the State of Wisconsin has adopted laws and developed plans to establish greater energy independence by promoting affordable, renewable energy supply and technologies, targeting investments in clean energy to rebuild the economy and create new jobs, encouraging the public and private sectors and residents to audit energy use, and working collectively with public and private groups and residents to address environmental issues.



*Other utilities addressed in this element include: sewer service areas, electric power and natural gas service, telecommunications facilities, solid waste management, recycling facilities, and lake districts.*

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities are a core component of community identity, representing long-standing civic institutions, public health and safety, and places of education, recreation and social gathering.

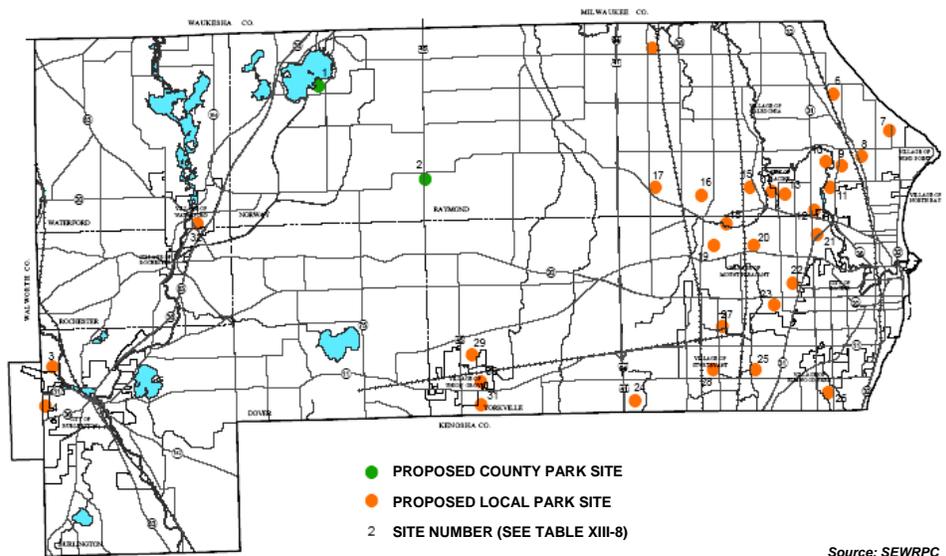
### *Police, Fire and Rescue, and Emergency Management Services*

As the population grows and new development occurs, local units of government will need to work with police departments, fire departments and other agencies to evaluate the adequacy of services provided. Communities should also assess operating costs and potential shared-service agreements, as well as the locations of facilities to ensure appropriate emergency response rates for all residents in the County.

### *Parks and Open Space Sites*

As of 2007, there were about 380 park and open space sites owned by various public and private agencies and organizations in Racine County. The comprehensive plan anticipates that these sites will continue to provide a wide range of recreational opportunities to current and future residents. County and local park and open space plans further recommend that some existing sites be expanded or recreational facilities be developed, and additional sites be acquired and developed as the County grows. By 2035, about 750 acres of land are proposed to be added as recreation land in Racine County.

**PROPOSED NEW PARK SITES IN RACINE COUNTY PLANNING AREA  
AS IDENTIFIED IN COUNTY AND LOCAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLANS**



Source: SEWRPC

### *Public and Private Schools*

In 2008, there were 14 public school districts (consisting of 56 schools), 31 private school facilities, and three technical college facilities in Racine County. Under SEWRPC’s population projections, the County’s school-age population (ages 5-19) would increase about 5% between 2000 and 2035. To ensure that services are maintained and enhanced, public school districts and private schools should regularly evaluate the capacity and condition of existing schools and undergo periodic planning for the construction or expansion of future school facilities. Some issues to be addressed include enrollment and capacity, adaptive re-use of closed schools, transportation services, energy efficiency, student health and well being, and safe routes to school. Districts should consider a school-oriented development approach—i.e., siting new schools as the center of a neighborhood—in an effort to create a safe bike and pedestrian-friendly environment around the school.

### *Health Care and Community Living Facilities*

Under SEWRPC projections, the population of residents age 65 or older would increase about 86% between 2000 and 2035; a correlating increase in demand for health care and community living facilities and services may be expected. Overall, Racine County and its local communities have accommodated a substantial increase in health care facilities, community-based residential facilities, and adult family homes, residential care apartment complexes, and senior housing apartment complexes. Consideration has also been given to access and transportation options for these services and facilities. About 50% of health care facilities and over 60% of assisted living facilities are located in areas zoned for residential uses, usually accommodated as conditional uses; it is expected that this pattern will continue.

### *Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities and Trails*

Regional, County, and locally adopted bicycle, pedestrian, park and open space plans constitute a guide for providing and enhancing bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the County, such as: improving connectivity and safety; improving identification/signage of routes; and providing an understanding of the laws, rights, and responsibilities of cyclists, pedestrians, and motorists (“sharing the road” rules). Future bicycle facilities should be developed as a means to encourage healthy recreational opportunities, improve air quality, protect natural resources, protect residents from vehicular traffic, and serve residents’ needs to move safely and efficiently throughout the County.

*Other facilities addressed in this element include: government facilities, libraries, equestrian and waterway facilities and trails, child care facilities, and cemeteries.*



## **GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES & PROGRAMS**

- Goal X-1: Encourage development patterns that promote efficient and sustainable use of land, that can be readily linked by transportation systems, and utilize existing public utilities and services.
- Goal X-2: Preserve open space to enhance the total quality of the environment, maximize essential natural resource availability, give form and structure to urban development, and provide opportunities for a full range of outdoor recreation activities.
- Goal X-3: Provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses.
- Goal X-4: Promote redevelopment and infill in areas with existing infrastructure and services, enhancing existing residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses.
- Goal X-5: Guide future growth in a manner that preserves and enhances the quality of life and character of urban and rural communities.
- Goal X-6: Encourage intercommunity planning efforts to make effective use of resources and to resolve conflicts.

A few of the objectives and policies put forth in this element include:

### ***Objectives***

- Ensure that sanitary sewer and water systems are planned with adequate capacity and minimal disruption to the natural environment.
- Encourage reinvestment in existing developed areas, including the promotion of green building and green infrastructure components.
- Provide a comprehensive system of parks and outdoor recreation sites and facilities to allow County residents adequate opportunities to participate in outdoor recreation activities, including water-based activities.
- Provide an integrated and accessible system of trails that will provide County residents with a transportation alternative to motor vehicles.

### ***Policies***

- Establish a cooperative process with WDNR, SEWRPC and local governments to develop a framework for coordinated planning of land use, sewage treatment and disposal, stormwater management, and water supply.
- Develop educational programs that promote alternatives to greenfield development, such as infill, modern sustainable infrastructure, and brownfield and greyfield development.
- Consider developing an alternative and renewable energy action plan to accelerate short-term progress towards long-term energy-related objectives and policies.
- Encourage the County to coordinate multi-jurisdictional meetings to discuss relevant issues or services to improve efficiencies in providing public services.
- Monitor community needs with regards to health care, senior care, and child care facilities and encourage the construction of new or expanded facilities near public facilities such as libraries and post offices, and in locations that are accessible by multiple transportation modes.

The element concludes with a brief summary of utilities and community facilities-related programs that provide communities, organizations, and residents with technical and/or financial assistance.