



PLANNING STAFF REPORT

MEMO DATE: June 4, 2020

MTG. DATE: JUNE 10, 2020

TO: Village of Cottage Grove Plan Commission

CC: Village of Cottage Grove Board of Trustees
Matt Giese – Village Administrator
Lisa Kalata – Village Clerk
Larry Konopacki – Village Attorney
Kevin Lord – Village Engineer

FROM: [Erin Ruth, AICP – Village Planning Director](#)

RE: Request from Town of Sun Prairie to Engage in Boundary Agreement Discussions

BACKGROUND

The Village of Cottage Grove is pursuing an amendment to its Urban Service Area to add territory north of I-94. Some of the proposed amendment area is adjacent to the Town of Sun Prairie and as a result the Town and Village have met and corresponded regarding issues of mutual interest related to the proposed amendment area.

OVERVIEW

Stemming from these discussions, Village President John Williams received a letter dated May 27, 2020 from Town Chairman Lyle Updike formally requesting that the Village reengage on discussions of mutual interest (see attached letter).

Village President Williams and staff are seeking feedback from the Plan Commission regarding this request including terms of engagement and prioritization of this request relative to other tasks. While some initial discussions can be conducted by Village staff, eventually legal and engineering consultants will need to work on the project and their fees should be considered.

Benefits of a Boundary Agreement

Chairman Updike discusses many benefits of boundary agreements in his letter to President Williams. Staff agrees that many benefits can be achieved. Village growth inherently causes tension with adjacent Towns as the Village cannot grow without the Town losing territory. Village development will have a higher intensity of use and higher standard for infrastructure improvements and there is often friction regarding transition points at boundaries. This friction



must be dealt with at some point, either advance in an agreement or as growth occurs. Dealing with them ahead of time establishes expectations for the municipalities and property owners and can avoid costly and time-consuming challenges later that can disrupt the development process.

An agreement can also explore options for shared services or other mutually beneficial collaborations.

Other Considerations

The Village is currently engaged with the City of Madison and Town of Cottage Grove on a similar boundary agreement. The Village has a more extensive boundary with the Town of Cottage Grove than the Town of Sun Prairie, has more intergovernmental agreements and shared services with the Town of Cottage Grove than with the Town of Sun Prairie, and is geographically closer to the City of Madison to the west through the Town of Cottage Grove than to the northwest through the Town of Sun Prairie. For those reasons, and because discussions are already underway, staff recommends prioritizing that agreement. There may also be efficiencies gained by completing one agreement for use as a template for the next one.

It should be noted that the City of Madison continues to grow into the Town of Sun Prairie toward the Village. While conflicts between Madison and the Village are not likely to occur in the short term, it would appear to make sense to explore a three-party agreement similar to the one involving the Town of Cottage Grove. This would provide the opportunity to establish a long-term continuous boundary between Madison and the Village.

Staff also recommends that the Village and Town establish a mechanism for sharing the costs related to preparation of the agreement prior to expending significant consultant fees.

CONCLUSION

Staff is seeking feedback from the Plan Commission regarding if or when to engage in boundary agreement discussions involving the Town of Sun Prairie.