

## **4. Utilities and Community Facilities**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This element contains information about existing utilities and community facilities in the Town of Burnett. Facilities discussed in this element include administrative facilities, public buildings, police, fire, and emergency medical services, schools, quasi public facilities, parks, solid waste and recycling, communication and power facilities, sanitary sewer, water, stormwater management, and health and day care facilities. There are several maps that correspond to this element in Appendix A. Maps 4-1 through 4-8 display specific issues, where as Map 4-9, Utilities and Community Facilities, displays several data sets.

### **4.2 Administrative Facilities and Services**

The Town of Burnett Town Hall and administrative facilities are located at W 6246 Main St. Town employees include one part-time position for lawn mowing at Stone cemetery, three part-time snow plowing and road side mowing employees, one part-time employee at the recycling drop-off site, and one part-time position for general cleaning of the town hall. The Town maintains a web-site with information on the local government and services at: [www.townofburnett.com](http://www.townofburnett.com).

#### **Committees, Commissions, and Boards**

- Plan Commission
- Board of Appeals
- Sanitary Commission

#### **Public Buildings**

Town buildings include the town hall, fire department building and garages, a storage shed, concession stands in park, and the recycling center, and the sanitary sewer plant.

The town hall is available for rental by residents for various social events and activities.

### **4.3 Protective Services**

#### **Police Services**

#### **Dodge County Sheriff**

The Dodge County Sheriff's Department serves as the primary law enforcement agency to many communities in the county and also operates the County Jail in Juneau. There are several major divisions of the department including the administration division, criminal investigation division, jail division, radio communications division, snowmobile patrol, and traffic division.

The Sheriff's Department provides 24-hour service to all communities in the county that do not have their own police department. The Sheriff also provides service to communities that do have their own department when requested. The radio communications division dispatches all squads and police personnel within the county with the exception of the City of Waupun, City of Watertown, and the City of Beaver Dam, who have their own full-time personnel. In the absence of a dispatcher in the remaining communities, this division would provide the police dispatching services. In addition to the police dispatching, this division also dispatches emergency medical services and fire departments.

### **Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services**

The Burnett Volunteer Fire Department was organized January 9, 1915. The fire station is part of the town hall. The Department has 22 active members and the following equipment: a GMC tanker-pumper with 1,500 gallon tank and 500 gpm from mount pump equipped with aluminum ladders, hose, and other equipment; a 1983 C-70 Chevrolet with 427 cubic inch V-8 with 750 gpm PTO midship pump, 1,200 gallon tank with 10" quick dump, aluminum ladders, hose, etc.; a  $\frac{3}{4}$  ton 4WD Chevrolet pickup used for grass fires with a 250 gallon tank, 150 foot  $\frac{1}{4}$ " hose with fog nozzle on hose reel, 150 gpm Myers pump with a 14 hp Kohler electric start engine, four 500 watt lights, and an 8000 No. electric winch with 150' cable; and a 1975 Mack 2,900 gallon tanker. 1973 Chevrolet step van equipment vehicle and 1989 4wd Chevrolet Suburban serves as a first responder vehicle.

The Fire Department has first responders, but the Town contracts with the City of Horicon for ambulance service. The City of Juneau provides back-up service. Map 4-1, Fire Emergency Services, Appendix A, displays fire protection boundaries in Dodge County, and Map 4-2, Emergency Medical Service Areas, displays emergency medical service boundaries in Dodge County.

The fire protection and emergency medical services in the Town are facing enormous challenges finding sufficient volunteer staff. Even the full-time professional fire services are facing difficulties with hiring qualified personnel. The Town needs to pursue all available means to increase the pool of available first responders. Alternatively, the Town will need to evaluate looking for alternative ways to assure fire protection and EMS are available.

## **4.4 School Facilities**

The Town of Burnett is served by three school districts; the Beaver Dam School District, the Horicon School District, and the Waupun School District. Map 4-3, School District Boundaries, Appendix A, shows the school district boundaries in Dodge County.

All three school districts are experiencing significant enrollment decline. Table 4.4 compares the enrollment in the three districts in 2021-2 to 2002-03, the year reported in the previous Comprehensive Plan

TABLE 4-4 CHANGE IN SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

School Enrollment , 2002-03 Compared to 2021-22				
DISTRICT	Level	2002-03	2021-22	
HORICON	Elementary	408	326	
	Middle	233	165	
	High School	404	269	
Totals		1045	760	
Change			-285	-27.27%
WAUPUN	Elementary	1005	1083	
	Middle	523	283	
	High School	792	566	
Totals		2320	1932	
Change			-388	-16.72%
BEAVER DAM	Elementary	1439	1279	
	Middle	741	697	
	High School	1130	1146	
Totals		3310	3122	
Change			-188	-5.68%

#### Beaver Dam School District

The Beaver Dam Unified School District contains Jefferson Elementary, Lincoln Elementary, Prairie View Elementary, Washington Elementary, Wilson Elementary, the Beaver Dam Middle School, the Beaver Dam Charter School, and the Beaver Dam High School. Since the original Comprehensive Plan was adopted, the District closed two elementary schools (South Beaver Dam and Trenton). Beaver Dam has experienced the smallest decline in enrollment of the three districts. It may rebound as the result of strong economic growth in the area.

#### Horicon School District

The Horicon School District contains Horicon Elementary, Horicon Middle/Junior High, and Horicon High School. The District has experienced a significant decline in enrollment, more than 27 percent. Elementary school enrollment has declined less, perhaps auguring the possibility of stabilizing the District's pupil count.

#### Waupun School District

The Waupun Dam School District contains Meadowview Primary, Rock River Intermediate and SAGES primary schools, having consolidated to three schools from the five which existed in 2002-02. The District also operates Waupun Senior/Senior High School. Waupun's enrollment has declined by more than 16 percent.

Falling enrollment is a serious concern for the future viability of the Town. Parents and prospective parents make decisions about where they will live based on quality and availability of schools. School consolidation is not new in Wisconsin. In the 1950s, there was a major movement to close one-room schools in favor of elementary schools. The result was improved education opportunity. However, many small communities which lost their schools stopped growing and have lost population.

Lower enrollment means less state funding to maintain school programs. It makes it harder for schools to offer a broad range of classes and extracurricular opportunities. Declining enrollment at area schools is a major concern which local governments need to address.

## **4.5 Quasi Public Facilities**

### **Libraries**

There are no libraries located in the Town. Residents utilize the libraries of neighboring communities, primarily Horicon, Beaver Dam, Juneau, and Waupun.

### **Churches and Cemeteries**

Cemeteries include Burnett Union, Burnett Central, and Stone Cemetery, which is maintained by the Town. There are two Lutheran churches in the Town including Zion Evangelical Lutheran and Emmanuel Evangelical Lutheran.

### **Post Offices**

A post office is located on 2nd street in the Town.

### **Civic Organizations and Other Clubs**

Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary 4-H  
Club  
T.T. Riders Snowmobile Club

## **4.6 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space**

Over the years, the Dodge County Planning and Development Department as well as private consulting firms have prepared Comprehensive Parks, Outdoor Recreation, and Open Space Plans for many of the municipalities within Dodge County. The County has a plan for County facilities which was updated

in 2023. The Town of Burnett participated with Dodge County in 1990 to develop a local plan for Town park and recreation facilities. The plan has not been updated since then. All plans need to be updated on a five-year basis in order to maintain eligibility for State recreation grant funding.

The following represents park and recreation facilities located in the Town of Burnett.

### **Pieper Waterfowl Production Area**

The Pieper Waterfowl Production Area consists of 81 acres located in the Town of Burnett along STH 26 just south of Red Cedar Road. The site is about 500 feet west of the Wild Goose State Trail. The site is managed to provide wetland and grassland habitat for waterfowl production and resident wildlife. Hunting, trapping, hiking, and nature observation and photography are opportunities provided for.

### **Horicon State Wildlife Area**

The Horicon State Wildlife Area makes up the southern one-third of the Horicon Marsh, totaling about 10,928 acres. This State owned and Department of Natural Resources operated and managed wildlife area provides a variety of recreational opportunities while still protecting nesting habitats and critical resource areas. Canoeing, fishing, hunting, wildlife watching, and hiking are the primary recreational activities available in the area. Four DNR boat landings provide water access to the area; City of Horicon-Chestnut Street, City of Horicon-Nebraska Street, Town of Burnett-Burnett Ditch Road and Town of Williamstown-Greenhead Road.

The "Conservation Hill" area around the old Department of Natural Resources field station on Palmaroty Drive, in the southeast portion of the property contains hiking/cross-country skiing trails, and scenic overlooks of the marsh. Hiking areas are also available, for example, the Idermuehle Island to the west of Conservation Hill and One Mile Island to the east of Conservation Hill.

The DNR office building is located off of HWY 28 and provides marsh viewing opportunities and an information resource area. Future plans call for the development of the Horicon Marsh International Education Center to serve the hundreds of thousands of annual visitors to the area. The center will provide the mostly unmet educational and interpretational needs of these visitors and residents of the area.

### **Nitschke Mounds Park**

Acquired by the County in 2003, Nitschke Mounds Park is a 54 acre property located adjacent to Highway 26 and CTH E in the Town of Burnett. The park is home to one of the most famous and best surviving effigy mound groups in the world. Approximately 40 effigies, both linear and conical mounds, remain on the site. The property also borders the Wild Goose State Trail and future developments will accommodate trail users. The potential facilities for this property include parking areas, picnic areas, camp sites, horse riding area, hiking trails with interpretive signs, and a possible wetland restoration area.

The following recommendations were included in the 2003 Dodge County Park, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan. The recommendations are included in this report as the

improvements will affect the facility in the Town of Burnett.

1. Develop a master plan to guide the development of the park.
2. Perform an analysis and inventory of the archeological sites on the property.
3. Rent out the use of the agricultural land, until the site is ready for development.
4. Construct parking access for the mound trails and WGST users
5. Develop picnic areas with a shelter
6. Develop camping areas
7. Install benches, informational kiosks and interpretive signage where appropriate
8. Establish native prairie plantings in the northeast field
9. Identify or restore the destroyed mounds
10. Construct replicas of Native American structures for educational purposes
11. Improve pond shoreline
12. Repair eroded shoreline of pond
13. Construct system of trails throughout the park
14. Develop parking and other facilities to accommodate school buses for school groups

### **Wild Goose State Trail**

The Wild Goose State Trail is a 34-mile multi-use recreation trail which runs north from STH 60 to the City of Fond du Lac on an abandoned railroad bed along the western edge of the Horicon Marsh. There is parking for trail access in Burnett at the Fireman's Park, about a ¼ mile west of trail. Approximately twenty miles of the trail are within Dodge County, with a separate segment of trail for horses. The trail is state-owned; however it is maintained and operated by Dodge and Fond du Lac Counties. The trail is primarily used to accommodate hiking and biking, however during winter months the trail is used by ATV's and snowmobiles. Trail spurs connecting the trail with the Cities of Waupun, Beaver Dam and Horicon should be explored. Moreover, a southern extension to the City of Watertown and eventually to the Glacial Drumlin Trail should also be considered to provide a regional trail connection.

The following recommendations were included in the 2003 Dodge County Park, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan. The recommendations are included in this report as the improvements will affect the facility in the Town of Burnett

1. Develop parking lots in Burnett and East Waupun area and other locations as opportunities arise.
2. Expand the HWY 60 trailhead parking lot.
3. Develop and implement a plan to extend the trail south to eventually connect with the Glacial Drumlin Trail in Jefferson County.
4. Promote trail spurs from the Wild Goose Trail to the Cities of Beaver Dam, Horicon, and Waupun.
5. Complete the acquisition and development of the trail corridor within the City of Juneau.
6. Establish a written agreement with the City of Juneau regarding the rights and responsibilities of both the County and the City in regards to the portions of the trail that are owned by the City of Juneau.
7. Develop permanent vault toilet buildings at various trail locations
8. Pave portions of the trail where more urbanized trail use occurs

9. Establish an annual resurfacing schedule and rotation to reduce maintenance costs and keep trail surface safe
10. Update the Trail Master Plan

### **Horicon Marsh Parkway**

The Horicon Marsh Parkway formerly known as the Wild Goose Parkway is a 36 mile auto tour route encircling the Horicon Marsh. The parkway route follows State and County Highways as it passes through or near the communities around the Horicon Marsh and provides access to numerous recreational facilities around the marsh. Brown and white signage with the parkway symbol help keep travelers on track and to signify changes in direction.

### **Local Parks**

Burnett Fireman's Park and Karstedt Memorial Park are both located in the unincorporated village. Park amenities include picnic tables, playgrounds, softball diamond, basketball hoops, toilets (indoor with plumbing), and an enclosed building for rental of kitchen facilities.

Map 4-4, County, State, & Federal Recreation Areas, shows the Town, County, State and Federal Recreational Facilities in Dodge County.

## **4.7 Solid Waste Management and Recycling**

The Burnett Dump & Recycling Center is located at N9167 Hwy 26, Burnett. Services are provided to Burnett residents only; the Town is responsible for recycling management.

Facility hours are as follows:

Hours: Saturday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Additional Summer Hours: Thursdays 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Memorial Day through Labor Day

There is no curb-side pick up of solid waste. Residents can privately contract for curb-side service if they choose.

The Town charges 50 cents per 30-gallon bag to dispose of solid waste. There is no charge for yard waste and clean recyclables. A compost site is also available to residents.

## **4.8 Communication and Power Facilities**

SBC is the local provider for telephone service. Alliant Energy provides natural gas to the Town as well as electricity. There is one cellular tower in the Town. Map 4-5, Telephone Service Providers, Map 4-6, Electric Utilities and Cooperatives, and Map 4-7, Natural Gas Service facilities display the related information.

## 4.9 Sanitary Sewer Service

There is public sewer service in the hamlet of Burnett located on Highway 26 between County Highways B and BI. Sewer service has been provided for 50 years by the Burnett Sanitary District. The District owns a wastewater treatment plant located on Burnett Ditch Road. However, sewer service will undergo dramatic change in the next few years.

### Service Area

The District provides sewer service to residents in the unincorporated Village of Burnett. Map 4-8, Public Sewer and Water Facilities displays the general location of public sewer and water facilities in Dodge County. The Town of Burnett Sanitary District is shown on Map 4-9, Burnett Utilities and Community Facilities. Those in the Town that are not served by public sewer must rely on private onsite wastewater treatment systems. In recent years, alternative systems such as mound systems have improved the effectiveness of private onsite systems. However, areas with high groundwater such the Hamlet cannot be served with onsite systems.

For that reason, District was formed in the 1970s to serve approximately 100 acres of land located adjacent to STH 26. The District was formed in response to eroding water quality due to the density of development in the unincorporated Village of Burnett. The Burnett Treatment Plant was constructed in 1977. The Plant was designed with a 37,000 gallon per day (GPO) treatment capacity. Sewage treatment is provided through three aeration lagoons, with treatment being provided through a 20-30 day detention treatment process. At that time, the aeration process was “state of the art.” It treated effluent sufficiently to allow the wastewater to be discharged into the Creek.

However, wastewater discharges to the waters of the State of Wisconsin (such as Spring Brook Creek) require a Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permit. The most recent WPDES permit expired December 31, 2019. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources declined to renew that permit on the same terms. Federal and state rules have significantly reduced the amount of allowable pollutants which may be discharged by public sanitary sewers, notably with regard to phosphorous and nitrogen.

The District retained Cedar Corporation, an engineering firm which advises public sewer operators. In 2018, Cedar began evaluating alternatives to bring the District into compliance with the WPDES standards. In May 2021, Cedar presented a “Facility Plan: Final Phosphorous Compliance Plan.” The Plan considered eight alternatives, ranging from using chemical additives to constructing a new sewer plant. Building a new plant would cost, in the 2021 Report, an estimated \$6,350,000. Some of the alternatives simply are not feasible. Of the alternatives, Cedar recommended connecting the existing sewer lines to the City of Beaver Dam’s treatment works. While the cost of running more than five miles of sewer main is substantial, it is the best scenario for the long term. The initial cost was estimated to be \$3,524,000. But, the alternative offered the District the benefit of consolidating the system with a nearby system which has full-time operating staff and the capacity to meet future requirements.



However, the District's collection system serves only 300 residents, mostly on the east side of STH 26. Average daily flows range between 32,000 and 40,000 GPO, with the higher flows typically coinciding with storm events or wet season conditions. There are 122 residences served by the District.

The cost of any of the alternatives is a substantial burden on the 122 households. Some of them are elderly living on fixed incomes. For that reason, the Town began considering the need to promote residential growth. Table 4.9 illustrates the impact of paying for the required sewer improvements without any growth, and with various levels of growth.

COST OF SANITARY SEWER IMPROVEMENTS								
CAPITAL COSTS		Monthly Debt service only cost per user						
	Project Cost	Annual Debt Service*	122 Users	200 Users	250 Users	400 Users	500 Users	600 Users
Beaver Dam Connection	\$3,524,000	257,699.52	176.0243	107.3748	71.5832	53.6874	42.94992	35.7916
*Assumes 20-year bond at 5 percent interest. These figures are HYPOTHETICAL								

#### 4.10 Private On-site Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS)

Private on-site wastewater treatment systems, or POWTS, are systems that receive domestic quality wastewater and either retain it in a holding tank, or treat it and discharge it into the soil, beneath the ground surface. The Wisconsin Department of Commerce has administrative rules, Comm 83, for building plumbing and nonmunicipal sewer lines, and for private onsite wastewater treatment systems. Any system with a final discharge exposing treated wastewater upon the ground surface, or discharging directly into surface waters of the state, is subject to DNR regulation. Additionally, certain POWTS are subject to both Department of Commerce and Department of Natural Resources review and regulation.

Wisconsin Administrative Code Comm 83 was revised during the 1990s to add provisions for new system technologies and land suitability criteria and, came into effect on July 1, 2000. Unlike the code it replaced, the new rules prescribe end results - the purity of groundwater discharged from the system - instead of the specific characteristics of the installation.

#### **4.11 Public Water Supply**

There are no publicly operated water supply facilities located in the Town. Residents must rely upon private wells for water.

#### **4.12 Stormwater Management**

There are no storm sewers located in the Town. The primary method of stormwater management is through culverts and open ditches.

#### **4.13 Health Care Facilities**

There are no health care facilities located in the Town. A full range of medical services are available in the City of Beaver Dam. Regional medical services are available in the City of Madison and Milwaukee.

#### **4.14 Day Care Facilities**

There are no commercial day care facilities located in the Town.

#### **4.15 Utilities and Community Facilities Trends and Outlook**

The following trends need to be anticipated with regard to planning for future utilities and community facilities in the Town of Burnett:

- The Town needs to expand the revenue base to pay for necessary improvements to sanitary sewer service.
- Staffing of all local government functions is a critical challenge as the supply of volunteers seems to be diminishing.
- Local government budget constraints will drive the need for intergovernmental cooperation for services and programs;
- There will be an increased need for communities and other jurisdictions to coordinate the development of trails and other recreational facilities;
- Increased development in rural areas may create the need for more police and

other governmental services;

- Increasing residential development in rural areas may cause the need for more school transportation resources, such as more buses and bus drivers. Again, a critical shortage of workers is hampering the ability of bus providers to find drivers.
- Schools and school districts will continue to seek new ways to share services and reduce expenses in order to efficiently manage enrollment. School district consolidation is not beyond the realm of possibilities within the 20-year planning period.
- Infrastructure planning and growth coordination will be primary in development considerations as "cost effectiveness determinations" will drive planned growth infrastructure improvements and the corresponding location of development.
- County POWTS programs will expand due to additional state requirements to inventory and monitor the maintenance of all POWTS within their jurisdiction.