

SUBCHAPTER 5: TRANSPORTATION

SUBCHAPTER 5: TRANSPORTATION**21.500 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Subchapter is to comply with §66.1001(2)(c), Wis. Stats., which requires this Plan to contain a compilation of objectives and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, electric personal assistive mobility devices, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation. This Section should compare the Town's objectives to state and regional transportation plans. It should also identify highways within the Town by function, and incorporate other transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, rural area transportation plans, airport master plans, and rail plans that apply to the Town.

21.501 INVENTORY OF TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

- (1) **ROADS:** Map No. 7 shows the "Transportation" system in the Town.
 - (a) **Federal Highways:** The Town enjoys two federal highways. Interstate Highways 90 & 94 dissect the Town, including an interchange in the southeast quadrant of the Town in Section 32. In addition, Federal Highway 12 runs parallel to the I-90/94 and provides numerous access points and intersections with county highways, town roads, and private drives
 - (b) **State Highways:** State Highway 16 shares the transportation corridor of Federal Highway 12.
 - (c) **County Highways:** The Town is serviced by County Highways J, N, and HH, which serve as major collectors throughout the Town.
 - (d) **Town Roads:** The town road network consists of roughly 40 miles of town roads, 38.5 miles of which are paved and 1.5 miles are gravel.
- (2) **AIR:** The nearest commercial air service is located in Madison at the Dane County Airport, approximately 60 miles away via I-90/94. The Baraboo/Wisconsin Dells Airport is located approximately 10 miles away, and provides air cargo service and some charter passenger service. There is no air service within the Town, nor there likely to be in the next 20 years.
- (3) **RAIL:** The Canadian-Pacific Railway dissects the Town commencing at the Southeast corner and traveling in a Northwest direction. The railway provides commercial rail service and Amtrak passenger rail service, with the nearest Amtrak railway station located about 2 miles south of the Town in the City of Wisconsin Dells.
- (4) **TRUCKING:** I-90/94 is a major trucking route, carrying a heavy load of semi truck traffic. Because Juneau County is located halfway between Chicago and Minneapolis, the trucking industry has a significant presence in Juneau County, with major trucking firms located in Mauston, and with a small trucking firm located in the Southwest quadrant of the interchange in the Town.
- (5) **WATER:** There are no water transportation facilities in the Town. The Wisconsin River is the primary water feature, running along the eastern boundary of the Town. There are no ferries or bridge crossings of the Wisconsin River located in the Town. The closest bridge across the Wisconsin River is located in the heart of Wisconsin Dells approximately two (2) miles south of the Town. The Wisconsin River is not used for commercial transportation, nor is it likely to be used for such because of the dams located at Wisconsin Dells (south) and at Castle Rock Lake (north). However, the river is used extensively for recreational transportation, including fishing, water skiing, pleasure boating, and large sightseeing cruises

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from Wisconsin Dells.

- (6) **BUS:** There is no bus service within the Town. The closest bus service is located in Wisconsin Dells and is provided by Greyhound.
- (7) **TAXI:** There is taxi service in Wisconsin Dells, which provides service to the Town, for a fee, when the demand for service in Wisconsin Dells allows the taxi to travel into the Town.
- (8) **TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES FOR DISABLED:** Handicapped persons and residents age 60 and over are eligible for free transportation, provided by volunteer drivers with their own vehicles on a demand/response basis. Drivers are generally available Monday through Friday, and by special arrangement on weekends and evenings through the "Aging and Senior Nutrition Program" administered by Juneau County. Trip priority is given to (1) medical needs, (2) nutrition needs, and (3) other. In addition, the Juneau County Aging Unit has a small bus utilized for wheelchair accessible transportation needs. The Aging Unit also has a van which is used on a weekly basis for food delivery, and some passenger transportation.
- (9) **BICYCLING:** All roads, except I-90/94, are available for bicycle travel, but none provide dedicated bicycle lanes. The Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin, along with the DOT, identifies which roads are suitable for bicycling (See, *Department of Transportation website: www.dot.wisconsin.gov*).
- (10) **PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES:** All roads, except I-90/94, are available for pedestrian travel, but none provide dedicated pedestrian walkways. Most town roads have limited shoulder areas, and gravel roads create a dust hazard for pedestrians. These conditions hamper safe pedestrian travel in some areas. Given the low-density development pattern of the Town, and the fact that nearly all goods and services are located several miles away in nearby municipalities, walking to places of work, shopping, or entertainment is not realistic for most residents. Hence, most walking is for fitness and recreation.
- (11) **SNOWMOBILE TRAILS AND ROUTES:** Wisconsin snowmobilers are proud of the statewide trail system that ranks among the best in the nation. This trail system would not be possible without the generosity of the thousands of landowners around the state as 70% of all trails are on private land. Trails are established through annual agreements and/or easements granted by these private property owners to the various snowmobile clubs and county alliances throughout the state. Snowmobile club members work closely with landowners in the placement of the trails. They also assist by performing pre-season preparation, brushing, grading, signing the trails, trail grooming, safety inspections of the trails and fund raising to support the trail projects. This cooperation results in the promotion of safe, responsible snowmobiling that benefits everyone. There are a number of snowmobile clubs in the area. Under Wis. Stats., §350.19 and §895.52, landowners are not liable for injury on their property when they have granted permission for snowmobiling. Registration fees and the gas tax on 50 gallons per registered snowmobile help fund nearly 16,000 miles of snowmobile trails. Specifically, registration fees fund a combination of trail aids, law enforcement, safety education, registration systems and administration. Gas tax revenues are dedicated solely to the trails program. There are no public recreational trails or routes within the Town, but there are some trails maintained by clubs. The use of road right-of-way is permitted in certain circumstances to provide snowmobilers with access from their residence to the closest established trail.
- (12) **ATV TRAIL AND ROUTES:** There are no public ATV trails or routes in the Town. The Town does not allow ATV's to use Town Roads.

21.502 SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION PLANS

- (1) **FEDERAL PLANS:** Although the Federal Government provides significant funding for transportation, most planning is left to the states. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 makes unprecedented investments in Wisconsin's transportation infrastructure. At this time, a small portion has been earmarked for Juneau County and the City of Mauston.

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Applications continue to be accepted for worthy projects. It is unclear how long the Act will supply funding, but it is expected to last for several years.

The U.S. Congress is currently considering the High Speed Rail Investment Act (HSRIA), an initiative that would expand high speed rail services throughout the country and fund the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI). As part of the Midwest Rail Initiative, plans are being prepared for the improvement of existing rail lines to provide high-speed passenger service between Chicago, Milwaukee and Minneapolis/St. Paul and to points beyond. Regional bus service is intended to bring travelers to the rail stations along the route. Full implementation of this plan will certainly benefit all of Wisconsin, even those areas not situated near a rail station. Wisconsin Dells is located on the proposed high-speed rail line. Since 1996, WisDOT has been working with eight other states (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, and Ohio) and Amtrak to investigate and develop a high-speed Midwest Regional Rail System. The proposed 3,000-mile system would be hubbed in Chicago and offer time savings of 20-30% over existing passenger rail service. It would also offer additional routes and increased service frequency.

(2) STATE PLANS:

- (a) Trans Links 21:** Trans Links 21 is a 25-year statewide multi-modal transportation plan that the DOT completed in 1994. Within this needs-base plan are the following modal plans:

State Highway Plan 20/20

Airport System Plan 20/20

Bicycle Transportation Plan 20/20

Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 20/20

Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report

None of the above modal plans have projects that conflict with this Comprehensive Plan.

- (b) Connections 20/30:** Connections 20/30 is a long-range, statewide, multi-modal, transportation plan. The plan addresses all forms of transportation over a 20-year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian and transit. (see: www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/state/docs/2030-exec-summ).

- (c) Corridors 20/20:** Corridors 20/20 is a part of the DOT's long-range highway improvement plan, designed to provide essential links to key employment and population centers throughout the state. Through the planning process, highways were classified based on operational and economic factors. Gaps in the system were identified and improvements scheduled. Since the Plan was created in the late 1980's, about 900 miles of new highways have been built to accommodate the network's needs. The Plan's goal is to complete all backbone improvements, which will connect all communities with a population of 5000 or more, to the state highway system by the year 2005. To date, the majority of improvements have been completed on schedule. The DOT is in the process of updating the Plan to project the State's needs through 2030.

Corridors 20/20 supports economic development as the highway system assists the state in meeting its intercity mobility needs. These connections are important for the movement of goods and services within the State, and to market areas outside the State. Corridors 20/20 helps create a positive, safe traveling environment allowing business, industry, agriculture, and tourism to expand in the State.

In the Town, the I-90/94 Corridor is considered a "backbone" route.

The focus on highways was altered in 1991 with the passage of the Federal Inter-modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), which mandated that states

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take a multi-modal approach to transportation planning. Now, bicycle, transit, rail, air, and other modes of travel make up the multi-modal plan. The DOT's response

to ISTEA was the two-year planning process in 1994 that created Trans Links 21 (see, www.dot.wisconsin.gov/business/econdev/corridors).

- (d) **State Highway Plan 20/20:** In 2000, the DOT adopted State Highway Plan 20/20. SHP 20/20 divides the state trunk highway system into five sub-systems, based on their importance in supporting statewide mobility and economic activity. Two critical sub-systems are those that make up the Corridors 20/20 network of backbone and connector routes. The other sub-systems are principal arterials, minor arterials, and local function roads. SHP 20/20 is used as a framework for developing near-term budget proposals, and six-year improvement programs. SHP 20/20 is to be updated every six years to correspond with federal program funding legislation (see: www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/state/docs/hwy2020-plan).
 - (e) **Six-year Highway Improvement Program:** The current six-year highway improvement program does not identify any projects in the Town.
 - (f) **State Trails Network Plan:** The DNR adopted the Wisconsin State Trails Strategic Plan in 1993, which clarified the DNR's role and mission of providing all types of trails. In 2001, the DNR created the State Trails Network Plan, to identify a statewide network of trails that would link existing trails, public land, natural features and communities. It is a statewide network of interconnected trails into which smaller county, municipal and private trails feed. At this time, the Town does not have any state, county or local trails (maps available at: dnr.wi.gov/land/parks/reports/trails).
 - (g) **Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR);** The DOT has developed an internet system that helps local governments and the DOT manage local road data to improve decision-making and to meet state statute requirements. WISLR users can produce maps that show the location of road related data and see trends that might otherwise go unnoticed. WISLR is a receptacle for local road information, such as width, surface type, shoulder, curb, road category, functional classification, and pavement condition ratings.
- (3) **COUNTY PLANS:**
- (a) **Roads:** The Juneau County Highway Department maintains a road improvement program using WISLER.
 - (b) **Snowmobile Trails:** Juneau County maintains a network of snowmobile trails, including trails in the Town. See the Juneau County website for updated trail maps. In addition, there are some private club trails in the Town as well.
- (4) **TOWN PLANS:** The Town does not engage in long-range transportation planning because it lacks the financial, administrative resources and expertise to do so. The Town utilizes its limited resources to maintain town roads. New roads, when necessary, are usually constructed by private development, pursuant to Town standards, and then dedicated to the Town.

21.503 GATEWAYS

A "gateway" is an important entry point into a community. The Town has a gateway at the I-90/94 interchange. This interchange has also been identified as a gateway by the City of Wisconsin Dells. Because of past and expected annexation of this area by the City, the Town does not intend to address this Gateway at this time.

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21.504 PUBLIC INPUT

According to the participation survey, transportation is important to most people because only 5% work at home and 3% work within 3 miles of home. Over 62% work more than 10 miles away. However, no one identified transportation as being a problem or an item of concern.

21.505 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

The Town hereby adopts the following goals, objectives and policies based upon the foregoing data, and the in-pu of the residents of the Town regarding their wishes for housing:

- (1) **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION:** The Town should cooperate with the DOT and the County on transportation projects that affect the Town.
- (2) **WISLR/PASER SYSTEM:** The Town should utilize the WISCL/PASER Internet Database to inventory and rate local roads, and to evaluate maintenance needs on local roads.
- (3) **TRIP PROGRAM:** The Town should establish and maintain a Town Road Improvement Program (TRIP), which establishes a six-year capital improvement program to address road maintenance and reconstruction priorities for the Town's road system.
- (4) **DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS:** All proposed development in the Town should be evaluated to determine the impact of such development on road usage and traffic volumes. Land uses, which generate heavy traffic volumes or which employ heavy vehicles, will be discouraged on local roads that have not been constructed or upgraded for such use. The placement of road access (i.e. driveways) should be spaced and constructed to maintain safety and preserve capacity.
- (5) **TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES:** The Town should maintain, widen, and improve existing roads where possible before constructing new roads. All town roads should have an improved hard surface, and should accommodate access requirements for emergency services, as well as school bus and snow removal equipment.
- (8) **NEW ROADS:** The Town should establish clear standards for the design and construction of new roads, both public and private. Road locations, extensions, and connections should be carefully evaluated when reviewing plans and proposals for new development.

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