CHAPTER 3: Transportation

66.1001(2)(c) Wis. Stat.:

> **Transportation element**. A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps 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. The element shall compare the local governmental unit's objectives, policies, goals and programs to state and regional transportation plans. The element shall also identify highways within the local governmental unit by function and incorporate state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in the local governmental unit.

Section 3.1 Transportation Facility Inventory

A. Roads & Highways

Current road classifications for the County transportation network are officially designated in the document entitled "The Functional Classification of Highways, Roads, and Streets in Portage County, Wisconsin"; adopted in 1989. The existing functional class system (Map 3.1) categorizes streets and highways according to their two primary purposes: 1) to move vehicles (traffic mobility), and 2) to serve adjacent land (land access). "Arterials" accommodate the movement of vehicles, while "local streets" provide a land access function (neighborhood streets that lead to homes, etc.). Collectors serve both local and through traffic by providing a connection between arterials and local roads.

As of 2002, the local road system consists of a total of 6.31 miles of public roadway within the Village. U.S. Highway 10 and State Highway 161 make up 1.12 miles; County Road Q equals 0.8 miles; and Village streets equal 4.39 miles.

1. Principal Arterials

The only principal arterial in the Village is USH 10, which currently runs along the north side of downtown Amherst Junction. According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the average daily traffic volume (ADT) reported in 1999 for USH 10, east of County Rd Q, is 9,300 vehicles. Traffic mobility is the major function of this road.

2. Minor Arterials

State Highway 161, running north from USH 10, is considered a minor arterial. The ADT in 1999 for State Highway 161 was 2,000 vehicles per day.

3. Minor Collectors

County Road Q, which runs south of USH 10 is considered a minor collector. In 1999, the ADT on Cty Rd Q just south of USH 10 was 1,200 vehicles. The ADT decreases to 750 vehicles per day for Cty Rd Q as it heads south of Main Street towards Cty Rd B.

4. Local Streets

The remaining roads are classified as local streets. Their primary function is land access.

B. Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities

The Tomorrow River State Trail runs through the Village of Amherst Junction along an abandoned railroad grade (Map 3.1). It currently extends for 14 miles starting in the Village of Plover and ending at the Waupaca County Line. There is a small break in the trail in Amherst Junction, as it stops at Cty Rd Q and starts again at the eastern Amherst Junction boundary. Future plans call for a bridge across existing USH 10 to allow for an uninterrupted trail. The trail is surfaced with crushed limestone and is open to bicyclists, hikers, and joggers during the summer. The horse trail is a separate 9-mile trail, alongside the limestone trail, from the Village of Plover to the Village of Amherst Junction. A parking lot for the trail is also located in the Village of Amherst Junction. Sidewalks in the Village are located on Cty Rd Q between Main Street and USH 10.

C. Transit

The Portage County Department on Aging provides transportation services for transit-dependent adults and people with disabilities to the Amherst area through a busing and volunteer escort service. Bus rides are provided to meal sites, grocery shopping, senior center services, essential personal business, and adult day care. Buses will bring residents into Stevens Point or to the Jensen Center on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Volunteer drivers may also be requested for those persons going to medical appointments or those otherwise not able to use the busing service. Persons requiring such services must call to make a reservation and are picked up and dropped off at their home. There is no set fee for this service, however, passengers are asked to make a donation.

D. Rail

The Canadian National Railroad operates a rail line running through the Village of Amherst Junction (Map 3.1). Approximately, 25 to 30 trains travel through the Village each day. The only road crossing effected by the rail line is at Lake Drive, south of USH 10. This crossing currently has crossing lights but no crossing arms. The rail line crosses underneath County Road Q, south of USH 10 in the Village.

A rail spur, off the Canadian National line, runs over USH 10 and is used to serve the fertilizer plant on Crop Care Court.

E. Trucking

Semi traffic in the Village generally consists of through traffic on USH 10 and Cty Rd Q and normal delivery services for area businesses. A moderate amount of semi-trailer traffic comes from the fertilizer plant on the north side of existing USH 10. Semi traffic patterns should be monitored and evaluated especially along Cty Rd Q through the downtown area as the new USH 10 alignment is completed. Designated truck routes may become necessary if semi traffic through the Village becomes problematic.

Map 3.1: Transportation Facilities

F. Air Transportation Facilities

The three main airports that serve the Village are: the Central Wisconsin Airport, the Waupaca Municipal Airport, and the Stevens Point Municipal Airport.

The Central Wisconsin Airport is located 31 miles northwest of Amherst Junction in Mosinee and is a full service, all weather airport offering around-the-clock service. Four airlines offer regular commuter and passenger service with connections anywhere in the world. Air cargo service is also available, offering overnight delivery and connections throughout the world.

The Waupaca Municipal Airport is located 15 miles east of Amherst Junction on USH 10 and has two runways. The airport is open to the public, however, no passenger service is available.

The Stevens Point Municipal Airport is located 12 miles west of Amherst Junction on State Highway 66 and has two runways, one of which is 6,000 feet long. There are 37 private hangers at the airport. No passenger or freight service is available. Jet fuel and repair services are available for private aircraft.

Section 3.2 Inventory/Analysis of Applicable Transportation Plans & Programs

A. US Highway 10 Relocation

With the reconstruction of USH 10 to a 4-lane divided highway and its subsequent relocation (Map 3.1), numerous jurisdictional transfers will occur, resulting in changes to the functional classification of certain segments and traffic flow through the Village of Amherst Junction.

Traveling from west to east, USH 10 deviates from its previous alignment in the northwest corner of Amherst Junction. The new USH 10 is elevated over Lake Drive, eliminating direct access to the 4-lane highway. Heading south, the new highway bridges over the Canadian National Rail Line and then cross Old Highway 18 Road at-grade, resulting in it being cul-de-saced on both sides. A bridge also crosses the Tomorrow River State Trail and Lake Emily Road. An interchange at County Road B provides access to the 4-lane highway for the Villages of Amherst and Amherst Junction. Continuing south, another bridge crosses County Road Q heading towards County Road A where there will be another on/off ramp. New USH 10 realigns with the Old Highway 10 just east of County Road A.

Two jurisdictional transfers will directly affect the Village of Amherst Junction. The previous alignment of USH 10 from Lake Drive south to County Road A will be transferred from the State to Portage County and renamed County Road KK. The functional classification for this segment will most likely be downgraded from its current classification as a primary arterial. Traffic counts will have to be done once the realignment project is complete to determine the new functional classification. State Highway 161 out of Amherst Junction up to County Road ZZ will also be transferred from the State to Portage County and will be renamed as a continuation of County Road Q. The functional class of this segment will also most likely be downgraded from a minor arterial classification. State Highway 161 will be rerouted west of the Village of Amherst Junction down Loberg Road towards County Road K and eventually joining with the reconstructed Highway 10.

Traffic conditions on County Road Q may be altered as a result of the new Highway 10 alignment. Semi traffic from the fertilizer plant in the Village may increase through downtown Amherst Junction along County Road Q as trucks head towards the new Highway 10 interchange at County Road B. Village officials may wish to pursue actions involving an alternative truck route with Portage County along County Road KK, bypassing the Village, so as to alleviate

safety concerns in downtown Amherst Junction if semi traffic does increase. Traffic on County Road Q, Main Street and Lake Emily Road may also increase through the Village as a result of additional vehicles heading towards Lake Emily Park. County officials expect that County Road Q will be the preferred route as park-goers exit off of the new Highway 10 and County Road B interchange.

Traffic conditions where the Canadian National rail line crosses with Lake Drive should also be monitored. If traffic increases, crossing arms may be needed in addition to crossing lights currently located at the rail line.

B. Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020

The plan determines the number, location and type of aviation facilities required to adequately serve the state's aviation needs through 2020. The plan also forecasts the level of public investment required to: upgrade substandard features such as widening of existing runways, replace existing systems to meet federal and state standards, and enhance the airport system through runway extension and new construction. The classifications for Central Wisconsin Airport (Air Carrier/Air Cargo) and Stevens Point Municipal Airport (Transport/Corporate) are not projected to change through 2020.

C. State Railroad Plans (SRP)

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has decided to include the State Rail Plan as a component of the State's Connections 2030 Plan, a long range, all-mode transportation plan. At the time the Amherst Junction Comprehensive Plan was written, the State has only completed the Issues and Opportunities Report of the rail plan. The primary issues in the report were broken into four major areas: rail network issues, intercity passenger rail issues, safety issues, and legislative issues. Emerging issues identified in the report included commuter rail, locomotive horns at rail/road crossings, and proposals to reduce mercury emissions. Specific goals and policies have not yet been identified in the State's Rail Plan however; Amherst Junction officials should maintain awareness of the status of the Rail Plan as there is a rail corridor through the central portion of the Village.

D. Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

Overall plan goals are: to increase the level of bicycling in Wisconsin and to reduce the number of crashes involving bicycle and motor vehicles. Current plans exist for a bridge across USH 10 to allow for the unencumbered continuation of the Tomorrow River State Trail. Even though USH 10 will become a County Road, plans still call for the trail bridge over the road.

Section 3.3 Transportation Issues Identified by the Plan Commission

Current transportation issues center around the future reconstruction of USH 10 from two lanes to a four-lane divided highway and its relocation west of downtown Amherst Junction dividing the Village (Map 3.1). With the division of the Amherst Junction by a four-lane divided highway, increased costs of servicing the western portions of the Village may arise if the Village decides to introduce sewer and water in the future. Also with the bypass, the Village of Amherst Junction will no longer have direct access to USH 10 within Village boundaries; the closest on/off ramp located at County Road B, south of the Village. However, this may create opportunities for commercial and industrial development near the County Road B intersection in the future. Traffic patterns will be altered in the Village, but the full effect won't be known until the realignment project is complete.

- The only new roads constructed within the Village would be in new subdivisions.
- At KK and Q: keep stop signs where they are to stop the traffic before entering the Village. This would help to restrict speed and flow of traffic on Q in the downtown area.
- Traffic safety at the Lake Drive rail road crossing should be monitored after the new USH 10 bypass is complete.

Section 3.4 Conclusions of the Traffic Analysis

A. There are few major transportation problems in the Village. Most significant concern centers around the safety and speed of vehicles on Village streets.

B. The Village's transportation system centers around the auto and truck modes of transport. Even though the Village historically developed as a rail center, current rail activity has been reduced to a very limited number of freight cars delivering agricultural chemicals and related materials. There is no rail passenger service on these rail lines and the movement of freight into or out of the Village by rail continues at a modest level. Should the opportunity arise for increased passenger service, Amherst Junction would consider working with the railroad to accommodate a depot.

C. The Village maintains local streets in an adequate fashion given the limited amount of road funds available. It will be in the Village's interest to protect themselves from undue financial costs in the development of new streets that will accompany continuing Village development. Such protection can take the form of subdivision and street construction ordinances.

D. Development trends would indicate that future streets should be planned at logical locations and such areas protected from other development by way of an official street map and ordinance.

Section 3.5 Transportation Goals, Objectives and Policies

A. Goal: Provide and maintain a safe, convenient, and economical Village street system.

B. Objectives

1. Existing and future public roads to be built and maintained according to adequate design standards so as to minimize unnecessary Village costs and user inconvenience.
2. Coordinate with State, County, and Town governments on all matters concerning transportation facilities and programs.

C. Policies

1. Work with the County in providing transit service to the elderly and others in need of such service.
2. Develop, utilize and update needed transportation related plans.
3. Encourage use of the Tomorrow River State Trail.
4. Decisions regarding transportation should be consistent with other elements of the Comprehensive Plan.
5. Work with the Portage County Highway Commission on the possibility of an alternative truck route around Amherst Junction once the USH 10 by-pass is completed and a need is identified.
6. Work with the Portage County Planning and Zoning Department on the review of street proposals in planned subdivisions or lot splits within the extraterritorial area.