

CHAPTER 3 Transportation Element

Section 3.1 Introduction

Movement of people, goods, and services within and through the Town is an integral part of everyday life for the citizens of Eau Pleine. Decisions made regarding transportation can have a direct impact on the community's growth and quality of life. These decisions should be made to include choices that will most efficiently serve the community as a whole, maximize investment in transportation infrastructure, as well as minimize conflicts between modes of transportation as well as jurisdictions.

This chapter will: assess the current inventory of transportation options; list goals, objectives, and policies that guide future development of various modes of transportation in the Town of Eau Pleine; and, compare local transportation goals to existing County, regional, and State transportation plans.

Section 3.2 Transportation Facility Inventory

A. Roads and Highways

Current road classifications for the County transportation network is 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 roads 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 roads" provide a land access function (neighborhood roads 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 80.02 miles of public roadway within the Town (excluding Federal and State roadways). U.S. Highway 10 makes up 1.89 miles; State Highway 34 makes up 6.0 miles; County Roads (Cty Rds), H, E, G, N, and O equal 26.95 miles; and Town roads equal 53.07 miles. See below and map 3.1 for the Average Daily Traffic volume (ADT) information for individual roadways.

1. Principal Arterials

The only principal arterial in the town is USH 10, which enters the Town from the East at the STH 34 south intersection and exits in the southwest corner at the Village of Milladore. According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), the Average Daily Traffic volume (ADT) reported in 2002 for Highway 10 in southwest Eau Pleine is 5,400 vehicles. Traffic mobility and servicing major economic centers are major functions of this road.

2. Minor Arterials

State Highway 34 is the only road currently designated as a minor arterial. The ADT in 2002 for route north of Highway 10 was 3,000 vehicles.

3. Major Collectors

County Roads E and G, are designated as major collectors. No current ADT data is available for these roadways in Eau Pleine. These roads provide local access to facilities such as schools, parks and airports.

4. Minor Collectors

Cty Rd H from Cty Rd O to Cty Rd N is designated a minor collector. The 2002 ADT for this road segment was 450 vehicles per day. This road is used primarily for direct access to Marshfield.

5. Local Roads

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

B. Transit and Transportation Options for the Elderly and Disabled

The Portage County Department on Aging provides transportation services for transit-dependent adults and people with disabilities to the Eau Pleine 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. 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.

Additional transit services are provided by the Disabled American Veterans, as well as the Stevens Point School District bus services for children.

C. Bicycle/Walking Routes and Trails

There are no designated pedestrian or bike routes and paths in the Town of Eau Pleine. Roadways are available for walking throughout the town. No organized trail program is to be considered in the immediate future.

D. Railroads

Two major rail lines are located in the Town of Eau Pleine. One line is oriented north to south and divides the Town in half. The other line has a northwest to southeast orientation and runs parallel to Highway 10 (Map 3.1). Approximately 25 to 30 trains travel through the Town each day carrying materials such as: coal, potash, wood and pulp products. The track facilities are currently owned by Canadian National Railway.

E. Air Transportation

The two main airports that serve the Town of Eau Pleine are: the Central Wisconsin Airport, and the Stevens Point Municipal Airport.

The Central Wisconsin Airport, located approximately 10 miles northeast of the Town of Eau Pleine in Mosinee is the closest facility to the Town. This 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. These airlines offer overnight delivery and connections throughout the world.

The Stevens Point Municipal Airport is located in the City of Stevens Point on STH 66. The airport 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.

Map 3.1 Transportation Networks and Functional Class

F. Trucking

Semi traffic in the Town generally consists of through traffic on USH 10, STH 34, Cty Rd H and normal delivery services for area businesses. There are no designated truck routes, however, the Portage County Highway Department posts weight limits on county roads in spring to mitigate potential damage from the thawing frost layer in the soil. The Town also posts weight limits of 7½ tons on blacktopped Town roads. These Town weight limits are generally posted for a longer time period than the County weight limits.

Mark's Transport on Hwy 34 is the only major trucking firm in the community as of the writing of this plan.

The majority of truck traffic in rural Portage County (County Highways and local roads) comes from agricultural, non-metallic mining, and some logging operations.

G. Water Transportation

The Wisconsin River is not used as a mode of transportation, even though it can be navigated from the DuBay Dam in northern Portage County to the Clark Street Bridge in Stevens Point. The Wisconsin River and Lake DuBay, which bound the Town of Eau Pleine on its eastern border, are used for recreational purposes only.

Section 3.3 Inventory of Applicable Transportation Plans and Programs

A. Six-Year Highway Improvement Plan (2003-2008)

WisDOT's Corridors 2020 Plan identifies USH 10, from Appleton to Marshfield, as a planned, multilane, "backbone and connector" highway. The construction schedule would complete the multilane corridor between Appleton and Stevens Point by the year 2005. However, the specific route the highway will take west of the Village of Amherst Junction remains undetermined. As of this writing, the WisDOT has recommended the Cty Rd X crossing of the Wisconsin River and a facility alignment west to STH 34 south that generally follows Oak Hill Road. Improvements between Stevens Point and Marshfield are slated for completion by 2020.

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 Eau Pleine 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; Town officials should

maintain awareness of the status of the Rail Plan as there is a rail corridor through the central portion of the Town.

D. State, Regional and Local Bicycle and Trail Plans

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.

Section 3.4 Transportation Related Programs

The Town of Eau Pleine uses the PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating) road condition rating system to assess the physical condition of local roads. The PASER software can help prioritize road maintenance, calculate project costs, evaluate consequences of alternative budgets and project selection strategies. As of this writing, the Town still has yet to receive an updated version of the State DOT PASER program (software).

Section 3.5 Transportation Issues

1. Highways

- Driveway control is needed for safety considerations on roadways. How will the Town address the need to improve safety regarding driveway placement and construction?
- How can the Town work with the County Highway Department to better maintain County Roads and manage jurisdictional transfers?
- How can road safety be improved on State Hwy34?

2. To what extent should the Town provide bike and/or pedestrian paths and trails?

3. How can the Town work with the railroad to decrease the likelihood of fire along the rail corridors?

4. WisDOT is using the best farmland in the Town to put in new U.S. Highway 10 – how is that farmland preservation?

5. How can the Town address damage to local roads from substandard entrance and exit points to agricultural fields?

Section 3.6 Transportation Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Priority is given to maintaining and enhancing existing roads before adding new.

Policy: Blacktopping of Town roads will be considered when the cost of maintaining unpaved roads becomes prohibitive.

Goal 2: Maintain transportation related plans for roadway development and maintenance.

Objectives:

1. Update roadway management plan for development and maintenance of Eau Pleine's Town roads.
2. Take an active role in planning for the development of the new USH 10 alignment.

3. Develop a program for upkeep and replacement of road maintenance equipment.
4. Work with elected Town officials to improve distribution of Town Road Improvement Program (TRIP) funds.
5. Develop a driveway ordinance.

Policies:

1. Leave options open for land development along proposed USH 10 route.
2. Continue using PASER program for evaluating road quality.
3. The Town roadway management plan should include a budget to take advantage of the maximum amount of transportation aids.
4. Budget moneys every year for a road equipment fund.
5. Review the need for public transportation when the Town reviews its Comprehensive Plan.
6. Recommend that new daily vehicle counts be taken for Cty Rd. O north of Hwy 10 and all of Cty Rd. H west of Cty Rd. E (due to increased residential traffic)

Goal 3: Encourage WisDOT to provide more access to the proposed USH 10.

Objective: Allow access to USH 10 at Cty Rd E.

Policy: Continue to communicate with the DOT to allow for more access to Hwy 10 to maintain health and safety for Town residents.

Goal 4: Transportation options are available for persons with disabilities.

Objective: Encourage the County to maintain or enhance transportation options for the elderly and those with disabilities.

Policy: Provide information regarding transportation options for persons with disabilities.