

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 Lanark. 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 Lanark, and compare local transportation goals to existing county, regional, and state transportation plans.

Section 3.2 Transportation Facility Inventory (local/region/state)

A. Roads and 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 for the Town of Lanark consisted of a total of 75.86 miles of public roadway. US Highway 10 accounted for 1.53 miles of 4-lane roadway through Lanark, State Highway 54, 6.28 miles of 2-lane roadway, County Roads (Cty Rds) 34.62 miles, and Town roads 33.43 miles.

1. Rural Interstate: No rural interstate highways are located in Lanark.
2. Principal Arterials: US Highway 10, located in the far northeast corner of Lanark, is considered a principal arterial roadway. Traffic mobility and servicing major economic centers are major functions of roads classified as arterials. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation conducts Average Daily Traffic Volume (ADT) counts every three years on varying sections of roads throughout the county. The 2002 ADT count for USH 10 just east of the Village of Amherst was 8,900, while data from the 1999 count indicated 8,700 vehicles traveled on USH 10 at the Portage/Waupaca County line.
3. Minor Arterials: State Highway 54 is considered a major collector roadway. ADT data available from 2002 for Highway 54 shows the number of vehicles increasing from 3,800 in the western portion of the Town to 4,600 vehicles in the eastern portion. These numbers account for traffic traveling in both directions.
4. Major Collectors: County Road A is considered a major collector. ADT data available from 2002 shows 950 vehicles per day, south of STH 54, and 530 vehicles north of STH 54. Providing access to attractions such as schools, parks and airports is one set of criteria used in assigning major and minor collectors.

5. Minor Collectors: County Road D, south of the Tomorrow River, and County Road DD are considered minor collectors. ADT data available from 2002 shows 220 vehicles per day on Cty Rd DD, while the ADT for Cty Rd D is 530 vehicles.
6. Rural Local Roads: The remaining roadways are classified as rural local roads, even though some are County Roads that are maintained by Portage County. Their primary function is land access.

B. Transit and Transportation Facilities for the Disabled and Elderly

The Portage County Department on Aging provides transportation services for transit-dependent adults and people with disabilities to the Lanark 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 specific days during the week. 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.

C. Bicycle/Walking Routes and Trails

The Ice Age Trail is an all-season recreational trail, running throughout the entire state of Wisconsin, made to accommodate hikers, cross-country skiers, backpackers and all other people who enjoy the outdoors. When completed, it will total approximately 1,000 miles in length. The trail, some of which passes through private lands, is for non-motorized traffic only.

The designated bike route of the Ice Age Trail that passes through Lanark is located along Cty Rd GG at the southwest boundary of the Town.

In addition, there are a number of other routes suggest by the Portage County chapter of the Ice Age Trail. (Map 3.2).

D. Railroads

There is no passenger rail service within the Town of Lanark. There is, however, freight rail service parallel to USH 10, primarily for the movement of goods related to the paper industry. The nearest stop/spur is located to the north, in the Village of Amherst.

E. Air Transportation

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

The Central Wisconsin Airport, located approximately 35 miles north of Lanark in Mosinee, WI, 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 at the intersection of I-39 and STH 66 in Stevens Point 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.

Map 3.1 Transportation Networks and Functional Class

Map 3.2 Trails, Trails, Trails!

F. Trucking

Semi traffic in the Town generally consists of through traffic on U.S. Highway 10 and State Highway 54, along with normal delivery services for area businesses. There are no designated truck routes, however, the Portage County Highway Department and the Town post weight limits on county and local roads in spring to mitigate potential damage from the thawing frost layer in the soil.

Section 3.3 Inventory and Analysis of Applicable Transportation Plans and Programs

A. Six-Year Highway Improvement Plan

The only road listed for construction or maintenance in the WI Department of Transportation Six Year Plan (2003-2008) is Cty Rd Q, north of Cty Rd D. This segment of road was scheduled for reconstruction beginning in 2004 as a Portage County project.

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. Wisconsin State Rail Plan 2020

The final SRP 2020, which is currently pending, will be used to communicate the condition of Wisconsin's rail system, the rationale for proposing certain improvements, and the financial needs and system-wide implications of proposed funding levels.

The State Rail Plan will include six major components: Intercity passenger rail, Freight rail, Highway-rail crossings, Funding, Economic benefits, Environmental evaluation.

Work to be done under the passenger rail component will be coordinated with the efforts of the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative, the Wisconsin-Minnesota High Speed Rail Corridor Study, and the Milwaukee-Madison Corridor Study. In addition, the findings of the Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Passenger Rail Service will be incorporated in the State Rail Plan.

The freight rail component of the plan will have a policy focus, reflecting the recognition that the majority of Wisconsin's railroad system is owned and maintained by the private sector. The highway-rail crossing element will refine and/or build upon the statewide assessment of highway-rail crossing needs initially developed by the State Highway Plan. The State Rail Plan will become the rail component of the State's Connections 2030 Plan. (Wisconsin DOT).

D. State, Regional and Local Bicycle and Trail Plans

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

The 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 Lanark 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.

Section 3.5 Transportation Issues

A. Highways

- How can road maintenance and improvements be addressed?
- How can the Town be involved in decisions at the local, county and state level regarding future road locations and connections?
- How can the Town acquire funding for road projects?
- How can the quality of new roads be consistent throughout the town?
- Speed control for Town/County roads an issue.
- How can surface water quality be protected from negative impacts from roads and road projects?
- How can the town reduce the amount of litter along local roads?

B. Transit

- How can public transit be developed to serve the public?

C. Transportation facilities for disabled

- How can the town create transportation services for disabled residents?

D. Bicycles

- How can safe road crossings be developed for bikers, trail users, snowmobilers, etc.?
- How can safe routes be provided to access Hartman Creek State Park & Tomorrow River Trails?

E. Walking

- How should the town promote pedestrian activity?

F. Railroads

- How can safety standards be maintained at rail crossings?

G. Trucking

How can road damage from trucks be minimized?

- Road damage from trucks involved in home construction.
- Hauling of liquid manure while weight limits are on.
- Storage of (semi) trucks illegally on agricultural lands.

H. Water transportation

- How can river access be better identified and, rated for size of boat?
- How can boat landing at Spring Lake be maintained to a safe and usable condition?

I. Snowmobiles/ATV

- How can snowmobiles be made to stay on designated trails, away from residences, and avoid conflict with landowners?
- How can non-farm related ATV's be kept off roadways?

Section 3.6 Transportation Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Support and maintain a safe and efficient road system.

Objective 1.1: Drainage needs to be carefully considered on any road project to avoid direct contamination of surface waters.

Objective 1.2: Plans, such as a Transportation Improvement Plan, should be developed for road improvements and maintenance.

Policy 1: The Town should be involved in the decision making of the town future road locations and connections.

Policy 2: New roads need to be built to Town Road Ordinance standards.

Policy 3: The Town must actively seek grants for road building.

Policy 4: Weight limits should be set specific to the design structure of each Town road.

Objective 1.3: Keep the roadside cleanup program active in the Town.

Policy: County roads within the Town and all 6 miles of Hwy 54 are enrolled in the Adopt-a-highway program by the Town of Lanark.

Objective 1.4: Periodically assess speed limits along Town roads.

Policy 1: Work with County to enforce speed limits.

Policy 2: Encourage more enforcement by county to keep ATV's off roads.

Policy 3: Signage for speed limits in residential areas should be installed.

Objective 1.5: Road signs comply with Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

Policy: Periodically assess and replace road signs as needed. Road signs may be needed to warn motorists of child care areas and school bus stops in the Town.

Goal 2: Priority is given to maintaining and enhancing existing infrastructure before adding new.

Objective 2.1: Utilize and update existing transportation related plans.

Policy 1: Trucking firms wanting to locate in the Town should be located on Hwys 10 and 54.

Policy 2: Access to gravel operations should not be located on town roads.

Goal 3: Support viable public transportation options.

Objective 3.1: Encourage transit development sites at neighboring communities such as Amherst or Waupaca.

Objective 3.2: Support programs offered by the Commission on Aging, such as providing meals on wheels pick up, and medical transport for the elderly and disabled.

Objective 3.3: Transportation options are available for persons with disabilities.

Policy 1: Support transportation opportunities for the disabled (sheltered workshop of Stevens Point transportation program).

Goal 4: Encourage a range of transportation options.

Objective 4.1: Avoid conflicts between recreational motorized transportation and residents.

Policy 1: Work with residents to keep ATV's off snowmobile trails.

Policy 2: Work with local chapters to keep snowmobile routes away from residences and farm houses, and off Spring Creek Road.

Objective 4.2: Identify put-in/take-out points along rivers and streams to avoid interference with land owners.

Policy 1: Signage for a scenic canoe route should be encouraged.

Objective 4.3: Hike/bike trails should accentuate scenic points in the community.

Policy: Coordinate/promote Ice Age Trail use with the assistance of the local Ice Age Trail Chapter.

Objective 4.4: Underpass tunnels or marked crossing should be available for snowmobiles, bicycles, and ice age trail users when road construction is planned.

Objective 4.5: Consider construction of bike lanes along or on town roads designated as bike routes.

Objective 4.6: Bicycle routes could be designated for access to Hartman Creek State Park and the Tomorrow River State Trail.

Objective 4.7: Consider establishing hike/cross-country ski trails on Town land at the Town garage.