

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 Hull. 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, as well as specific land uses.

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 Hull; 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 networks are officially designated in the document entitled "The Functional Classification of Highways, Roads, and Streets in Portage County, Wisconsin"; adopted by the Portage County Board of Supervisors 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" primarily accommodate the movement of vehicles between destination points, while "local streets" primarily 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 within the Town of Hull consists of a total of 81.45 miles of public roadway. Interstate 39 (4-lane roadway) accounts for 4.9 miles of the network; US Highway 10, 0.5 miles; State Highway 66, 2.5 miles; and County Roads (Cty Rds) X and Y, 2.35 miles. Local Town roads account for the final 79.1 miles.

1. Principal Arterials (Rural Interstate)

The three principal arterials in the Town are: Interstate 39/51, located in the western part of the Town and having a northwest orientation, USH 10, located in the southeast corner of Hull, and State Highway 66, located in the east central part of the Town and has a southwest to northeast orientation before turning east into the Town of Sharon. Traffic mobility and servicing major economic centers are major functions of these roads. According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), the *average daily traffic volume* (ADT) reported in 2002 for Highway 10, east of Brilowski Road was 13,900 vehicles. See Map 3.1 for other ADT information

2. Minor Arterials

State Highway 66, east of Cty Rd Y, is the only road currently designated as a minor arterial. The ADT in 2002 for this section of Highway 66 was 4,200 vehicles per day.

3. Major Collectors

County Roads X and Y, along with the entire length of North Second Drive, are designated as major collectors. The ADT in 2002 for Cty Rd X was 1,500 vehicles per day, while the ADT for North Second Drive in 2002 south of Casimir was 1,600 vehicles per day and 630 vehicles per day south of Cty Rd X. The count for Cty Rd Y was 1,600 vehicles per day. Providing access to attractions such as schools, parks and airports is one set of criteria used in assigning major and minor collectors.

4. Minor Collectors

Jordan Road, Saw Mill Road, Casimir Road, and Old Highway 18 east of Brilowski Road are considered minor collectors. Traffic counts from 2002 included Jordan Road, at 440 vehicles per day, and Saw Mill Road west of Interstate 39, at 460 vehicles per day.

5. Local Roads

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

B. Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The Green Circle Trail is a collection of 13 continuous segments that wind through forests, river and lake shores, other natural areas, and parts of the Stevens Point urban area to make up a unique trail that is over 24 miles in length. The completion of this trail was made possible through a cooperative effort of private, public and business interests that include donated easements on 25 private parcels of land. The trail is for non-motorized traffic only, however, some sections of the bike route are included on existing roadways.

The Green Circle Trail winds through Hull along Wilshire Blvd, and the Town's southern border with the City of Stevens Point. Town roads designated for the trail include Old Wausau Road and DuBay Avenue located in the southwest portion of the Town (Map 3.1).

Roads with shoulders to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian traffic are Brilowski Road, Old Highway 18 and portions of Highway 10.

Sidewalks or other walking trails are located along the south side of Hwy 10, from Brilowski Road in Stevens Point, and portions of Brilowski Road and Old Highway 18.

C. 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 Hull area through a busing and volunteer escort service. Bus rides are provided to mealsites, grocery shopping, senior center services, essential personal business, and adult day care. Buses will bring residents into Stevens Point to the Lincoln Center or other destinations on Tuesdays and Thursdays. 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.

Map 3.1 Transportation Networks and Functional Class

D. Rail

The Canadian National Railroad operates a rail line running through the southeast part of the Town of Hull (Map 3.1). Approximately 25 to 30 trains travel through the Town each day. The only road crossing affected by the rail line is on Country Club Drive, near the Stevens Point Country Club. This crossing currently has crossing lights and crossing arms. The rail line maintains approximately one mile of track in the Town and crosses underneath Interstate 39 and Brilowski Road, both in the southeast part of the Town.

E. Air Transportation Facilities

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

The Central Wisconsin Airport, located approximately 20 miles north of Hull, in Mosinee, is a full service, all-weather airport offering around-the-clock service. Several 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 near the southeast part of Hull on STH 66 in Stevens Point and has two runways, one of which is 6,000 feet long. There are 37 private hangars at the airport. These accommodate corporate jets (i.e. Noel Group and Sentry Insurance) and private aircraft. No passenger service is available. Jet fuel is available for private aircraft (100 octane low-lead), and limited repair services are available.

F. Trucking

Semi traffic in the Town generally consists of through traffic on Interstate 39, USH 10, and STH 66, and normal delivery services for area businesses. There are no designated truck routes within Hull, 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.

Weight limitations on class “B” roadways are 60% of class “A” roadways weight limitations. Class “B” roadways includes those county roads, town roads and city and village streets or portions thereof, which have been designated as class “B” roadways by the local authorities.

Weight Limits

Class ‘B’ roadways require a permit from the town which must be in the truck before traveling on the following road(s): North Second Drive, Casimir Road (from North Second Dr to Granite Ridge Rd N), Granite Ridge Road N, Saw Mill Road, Old Wausau Road.

No weight limit: Country Club Drive is in the Town of Hull, however, due to access to the Stevens Point Industrial Park the road was constructed for heavy traffic.

Year round 7.5 ton weight limit: North Reserve Drive and North Second Drive – call the office for travel information/documentation.

Temporary 7 ton weight limit on roads not aforementioned: The temporary weight limits are imposed in late winter/early spring until frost is out of the ground. The Town follows the weight postings from the Portage County Highway Department.

The majority of truck traffic in rural Portage County (County Roads 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 river, which serves as the western boundary for the Town of Hull, is used for recreational purposes.

The Plover River, located in the eastern portion of Hull, is also used for recreational purposes. The river runs through the Town beginning at the Northeast corner and meandering south-southwest to Iverson Park, just west of the Village of Park Ridge, in the City of Stevens Point. The river's total length is 16.98 miles long, with an average width of 53 feet.

Section 3.3 Inventory of Applicable Transportation Plans and Programs

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

There is one section of I-39 within the Town that is scheduled for maintenance or repair during this period. Approximately 3.3 miles of the interstate between North Second St. and Cty Rd X are slated for pavement replacement after 2007.

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) 2020

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 Hull Comprehensive Plan was written, the state had 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 that Plan as there is a rail corridor that parallels USH 10 through a 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 Hull uses the PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating) road condition rating system to assess the physical condition of local roads. The Town began using this system in the fall of 2002 and is being administered by the Town of Hull Road Foreman. A database of local road conditions is projected to be completed in 2004. The PASER software can help prioritize road maintenance, calculate project costs, evaluate consequences of alternative budgets and project selection strategies.

The Town of Hull classifies local roads by traffic volume into the following categories: major, minor, local, or low use.

Section 3.5 Transportation Conclusions

A. Summary of Findings

1. The Town of Hull has 79 miles of local roads.
2. Some non-motorized lanes have been developed along town roads.
3. Rail transportation and noise has increased in Hull within the last five years.
4. Road maintenance and construction are the largest single expense in Hull's annual budget.
5. Transportation services for the elderly and handicapped are available from community agencies.
6. Hull officials have protected Hull subdivisions and residents from through traffic and other disruptive activities affecting their residents.
7. U.S. highway 10 East business district is a heavily traveled road and is becoming increasingly congested with little prospect of reducing traffic congestion in the foreseeable future.
8. By design the Town of Hull has limited sidewalks with a possible future need to encourage Stevens Point to develop more sidewalks in the Highway 10 business area.
9. Heavy truck traffic sometime passing through Hull creates road damage.
10. Stevens Point Municipal Airport is adjacent to Hull and should in the future be monitored for fuel spills, aircraft noise, and potential problems affecting Hull residents.
11. North Second Drive and other roads linked to I-39 and/or Highway 10 by-pass of Stevens Point may need expensive upgrades within the next 10 years.

B. Issues Outstanding

1. How can road damage, especially from truck traffic, be minimized throughout the Town?
2. How will the placement of the Wisconsin River crossing of the Highway 10 upgrade at Cty Rd X impact the Town of Hull and Wisconsin River corridor?
3. What can the Town of Hull do to make sure that transportation development in adjacent government units such as Stockton and Stevens Point do not interfere with the integrity and protection of Hull neighborhoods and residents?
4. What roadways in the Town need to be upgraded in terms of functional classification designation to reflect changing traffic patterns?

C. Long Term Goals

1. Strive to provide a safe, economical, and convenient transportation network within and through the Town.

D. Short Term Goals (Objectives)

1. Examine truck traffic patterns and explore the creation of designated truck routes through the Town of Hull to minimize road damage.
2. Examine speed limits on Town roads and enforcement options to ensure safe travel.
3. Review traffic patterns along North Reserve and Old Wausau Road to examine potential conflicts between pedestrians and vehicle traffic between students and automobiles.
4. Limit street connectivity to protect the integrity of neighborhoods.
5. Continue to monitor and respond to Highway 10 by-pass issues including but not limited to North Second Drive possibly County X bridge and Casimir Road intersection and impact on Hull residents.
6. Review the Town's functional class designation for upgrade to reflect changing traffic patterns.
7. Continue to monitor transportation development by other government units including Stockton and Stevens Point to coordinate road development and to ensure that the integrity of Hull neighborhoods and residents are protected.

E. Action Plan (Policies)

1. The Hull Plan Commission should have evaluated the need for truck routes in the Town of Hull and submit a report to the Town of Hull Board for their action.
2. The Hull Town Board should have examined speed limits on all Hull roads and adopted a consistent plan.
3. The Hull Town Board should have observed traffic patterns on North Reserve Drive, Old Wausau Road, and other roads in the area to determine the conflict between pedestrian traffic (bikers, runners, Green Circle users) and vehicle traffic and propose a feasible plan to promote safety for all parties.
4. The Town of Hull Board should continue to develop lanes for non-motorized traffic wherever feasible and affordable.