

3. Transportation

3.1 Transportation Plan

The land use patterns of the Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County, and the surrounding region are tied together by the transportation system, including roadways and trails. Households, businesses, farms, industries, schools, government, and many others all rely on a dependable transportation system to function and to provide linkages to areas beyond their immediate locations. The Town of Sand Lake's transportation network plays a major role in the efficiency, safety, and overall desirability of the area as a place to live and work. For further detail on transportation in the Town of Sand Lake and Burnett County, please refer to Chapter 3 of the *Inventory and Trends Report*.

With the amount of population and housing growth that is expected over the next 20 years, the Town of Sand Lake should also anticipate change to its transportation system. The town's plan for transportation is to be prepared for potential development proposals, to ensure that future expansion of the town's road system is cost-effective, to preserve the mobility and connectivity of local roads, to improve opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle routes, and to ensure that developed properties have safe emergency vehicle access. The Town of Sand Lake has a driveway ordinance and desires to coordinate with the county on review of land divisions and plans for road improvements. The Town of Sand Lake will also continue to maintain a set of town road construction specifications. The policies and recommendations of this plan provide guidance on how these tools should be used.

As the town implements its plan, a key dilemma will be balancing the rural character and mobility of existing roads with the maximum use of existing road infrastructure. On one hand, existing roads are already present, new roads are costly, and new development can be more cost effective if it utilizes existing roads. On the other hand, extensive placement of new development in highly visible locations along existing roads will forever change the character and appearance of the town. This may lead to a loss of rural character. Adding access points to serve new development also reduces the mobility of a road. This plan includes a policy that directs new development to utilize the existing road network to the maximum extent possible (policy LU2). However, this plan also encourages new subdivisions to utilize conservation design (refer to Appendix A) which will usually require the construction of new roads, but does a better job of preserving rural character.

In order to balance these competing interests, the town will require the coordinated planning of adjacent development sites by limiting the use of cul-de-sacs and by reviewing Area Development Plans. Over the long term, the town may also develop an official map to preserve planned rights-of-way and connections between developed areas. The town should require that potential traffic and road damage impacts are assessed by developers as part of the development application. When new roads are necessary, the town will require that developers bear the cost of constructing new roads to town standards before they are accepted by the town.

3.2 Planned Transportation Improvements

It is a recommendation of this plan that a five-year road improvement plan be annually updated. Future road improvement plans should attempt to provide integration with the plan for preferred land use. Areas planned for higher density residential growth should receive priority for improvements in order to support such growth. Road improvements that are necessary in areas where agriculture, forestry, and outdoor recreational are planned as primary uses should be accompanied by zoning regulations, access controls, and other growth management tools.

3.3 Comparison with County, State, and Regional Transportation Plans

State, regional, and county transportation plans have been reviewed for their applicability to the Town of Sand Lake. According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the agency intends to mill and repave STH 70 from Siren to Spooner. There may also be improvements planned for the county road system.

Currently, the Town of Sand Lake has no recommendations with regard to the current functional classification of highways in the town. However, town roads currently classified as local roads should be considered as potential collectors if increased traffic, growth and development require it.

3.4 Transportation Goals and Objectives

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community. Objectives are more specific than goals and are more measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

Goal 1: Support a safe, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation system which, through its location, capacity, and design, will effectively serve the existing land use development pattern and meet anticipated transportation demand generated by existing and planned land uses.

Objectives:

- A. Protect historic, scenic, scientific, and cultural sites when constructing new or improving existing transportation facilities.
- B. Minimize the disruption of environmentally sensitive areas when constructing new or improving existing transportation facilities.
- C. Manage right-of-way vegetation to protect wildlife, , reduce maintenance costs, and improve safety.
- D. Consider accident exposure by improving deficient roadways.
- E. Manage driveway access location and design to ensure traffic safety, provide adequate emergency vehicle access, and prevent damage to roadways and ditches.

- F. Require developers to bear the costs for the improvement or construction of roads needed to serve new development.
- G. Guide new growth to existing road systems so that new development does not financially burden the town or make inefficient use of tax dollars.
- H. Monitor the effectiveness of existing, and opportunities for new, shared service agreements for providing town and local road maintenance.

Goal 2: Support safe and efficient multi-modal transportation systems where appropriate.

Objectives:

- A. Maintain and implement roadway improvement plans.
- B. Support alternative non-motorized transportation such as bicycling and walking as viable, convenient, and safe transportation choices in the town through a greater number of routes and connections to other transportation systems and destinations.
- C. Encourage the monitoring of transit needs, particularly for senior residents.

Goal 3: Promote cooperation and coordination between state, county, villages, and towns in developing the Town transportation system.

Objectives:

- A. Encourage communication between communities regarding transportation projects that cross municipal boundaries.
- B. Participate in transportation planning at the regional level with Northwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and Burnett County Highway Department when appropriate.
- C. Communicate with community groups on transportation systems to assist communities in prioritization and funding of projects.
- D. Encourage future residential, commercial, and industrial development to roadways capable of accommodating resulting traffic.
- E. Direct truck traffic to appropriate routes and plan cooperatively with neighboring communities.

3.5 Transportation Policies and Recommendations

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the town is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become primary tools the town can use in making land use decisions. Many of the policies and recommendations cross element boundaries and work together toward overall implementation strategies. Refer to Section 9.5 for an explanation of the strategies cited as sources for many of the policies and recommendations.

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the word “shall” are advised to be mandatory and regulatory aspects of the implementation of the comprehensive plan. In contrast, those policies that direct action using the words “will” or “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a

guide. “Will” statements are considered to be strong guidelines, while “should” statements are considered loose guidelines.

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the town should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the town’s policies, and therefore will help the town fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

Policies and Recommendations

- T 1. The Town will maintain and annually update a five-year road improvement plan to identify and prioritize road improvement projects as well as identify potential funding sources.
- T 2. The Town shall utilize the PASER (Pavement Service and Evaluation Rating System) or the most current rating system to annually update the five-year road improvement plan.
- T 3. The Town shall utilize road construction specifications to include modern requirements for road base, surfacing and drainage construction. Construction specifications should be adjustable based on the planned functional classification or expected traffic flow of a roadway.
- T 4. The Town shall enforce the Town Road Access Control (Driveway) Ordinance to assist the Town with implementing access control, emergency vehicle access standard.
- T 5. The Town shall require new development to utilize the existing road network and public facilities and services to the maximum extent possible.
- T 6. The Town shall require roads providing access to multiple improved properties be built to town standards as a condition of approval for new development.
- T 7. The Town shall require substantial and major development proposals provide an analysis of the potential transportation impacts including, but not necessarily limited to, potential road damage and potential traffic impacts. The depth of analysis required by the Town will be appropriate for the intensity of the proposed development.
- T 8. The Town shall require residential subdivisions and non-residential development proposals be designed to include:
 - a. A safe and efficient system of internal circulation for vehicles and pedestrians.
 - b. Safe and efficient external collector roads where appropriate.
 - c. Safe and efficient connections to arterial road and highways where applicable.
 - d. Cul-de-sacs or dead-ends only where connections to other roads are not possible, or temporarily, where right-of-way has been developed to the edge of the property for a future connection to adjacent property.

- T 9. The Town shall support the modification of the County subdivision ordinance to include local requirements for the execution of a development agreement whenever public roads or other infrastructure are included in a development.
- T 10. The Town shall protect historic, scenic, scientific and cultural sites when constructing new or improving existing transportation facilities.
- T 11. The Town shall support the modification of the County subdivision ordinance to include local requirements for the execution of a development agreement whenever public roads or other infrastructure are included in a development.
- T 12. The Town shall protect historic, scenic, scientific and cultural sites when constructing new or improving existing transportation facilities.
- T 13. The Town shall consider opportunities to create or improve bicycle and pedestrian transportation options in concert with the review of proposed developments and planning for road improvements or public facilities.
- T 14. The Town shall participate in development of inter-county bus system as appropriate.
- T 15. The Town shall support efforts to pursue available funding options for needed transportation facilities. Funding for multi-modal facilities should be emphasized where appropriate.
- T 16. The Town shall work with the County to develop a consistent approach for the posting of seasonal and permanent weight limits, especially with respect to the conduct of agricultural and forestry operations.
- T 17. The Town should jointly discuss and evaluate with surrounding towns, the County and Wisconsin Department of Transportation, if necessary, transportation related issues which affect neighboring areas.

3.6 Transportation Programs

For descriptions of transportation programs potentially available to the community, refer to the *Transportation* element of the *Burnett County Inventory and Trends Report*. The additional programs shown here are of high importance to the Town of Sand Lake and should be monitored for their applicability to local transportation issues and opportunities.

Additional Programs

Local Roads Improvement Program

Established in 1991, the Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP) assists local governments in improving seriously deteriorating county highways, town roads, and Village and village streets. A reimbursement program, LRIP pays up to 50% of total eligible costs with local governments providing the balance. In order to be eligible for LRIP funds, a unit of government must have a current road improvement plan.

Local Bridge Improvement Assistance Program

The Local Bridge Improvement Assistance program helps rehabilitate and replace, on a cost-shared basis, the most seriously deficient existing local bridges on Wisconsin's local highway systems. Counties, villages, villages, and towns are eligible for rehabilitation funding on bridges with sufficiency ratings less than 80, and replacement funding on bridges with sufficiency ratings less than 50.

Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER)

PASER is a simple method of rating asphalt and concrete roads on a scale of 1 to 10 and gravel roads on a scale of 1 to 5, based on visual inspection. PASER manuals and a video explain how and why roads deteriorate, and describe proper repair and replacement techniques. PASER rating can be put into PASERWARE, an easy to use pavement management software package. PASERWARE helps to inventory roads and keep track of their PASER ratings and maintenance histories. It also helps to prioritize road maintenance and improvement needs, calculate project costs, evaluate the consequences of alternative budgets and project selection strategies, and communicate those consequences to the public and local officials. Both PASER and PASERWARE are available from the University of Wisconsin's Transportation Information Center at no charge. The Center also offers free training courses. Call (800) 442-4615 for more information.