

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 Alban. Decisions made regarding transportation can have a direct impact on the community's growth and quality of life. These decisions include choices that will most efficiently serve the community as a whole, maximize investment in transportation infrastructure, and 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 Alban, 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 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 2007, the local road system within Town of Alban consists of a total of 66.6 miles of public roadway. State Highway (STH) 66 accounts for 3.8 miles and State Highway (STH) 49 6.8 miles of the total. County Roads (Cty Rds) A and I account for 15.2 miles, with the remaining 40.8 miles being local Town roads. The average daily traffic volume (ADT), as reported by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, is shown on Map 3.1.

1. Principal Arterials: There are no principal arterial roadways located in Alban.
2. Minor Arterials

STH 49, running from the northern Town line to STH 66, and STH 66 running diagonally east to west across the Town of Alban, are currently designated as minor arterials. The ADT in both 2002 and 2005 for this section of Highway 49 was 2,100 vehicles per day. STH 66 had ADT counts of 2,800 west of STH 49 and 1,800 east of STH 49 for both 2002 and 2005.

3. Major Collectors

County Road A (south of STH 66) and County Road I north of STH 66 are designated as major collectors. The ADT for the portion of Cty Rd A south of STH 66 was 1000 vehicles per day for both 2002 and 2005, while the ADT for Cty Rd I was 690 vehicles per day for both years. 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

County Road A, north of STH 66, is considered a minor collector. The ADT count for this portion of roadway for both 2002 and 2005 was 500 vehicles per day.

5. Local Streets

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

B. Transit and Transportation Facilities for the Disabled and Elderly

The Portage County Aging and Disability Resource Center provides transportation services for transit-dependent adults and people with disabilities to the Alban 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 for pick up and return to their home. There is no set fee for this service, however, passengers are asked to make a donation for this service.

C. Bicycle/Walking Routes and Trails

The Ice Age Trail is one of only eight national scenic trails in the United States. When complete, it will be a thousand-mile walking/hiking trail located in and unique to Wisconsin. About 600 miles of the Trail are now available for use. The Ice Age Trail, which roughly follows the terminal moraine of the Wisconsin glaciation, will be an all-season, off-road footpath for the use by hikers, backpackers, cross-county skiers, and students of nature. The Ice Age Park & Trail Foundation (IAPTF) staff and volunteers work cooperatively with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the National Park Service, and many local governments, businesses and private landowners to protect, promote, build and maintain the many segments of the Ice Age Trail. The Trail is for non-motorized traffic only, however, some sections of the bike route are included on existing roadways.

The Ice Age Bike Trail winds through the Town of Alban along Cty Rd I, then along Cty Rd A, into the Town of New Hope. Town roads designated for the Trail include Locust Road and Cty Rd T, located in the southern portion of the Town, off Cty Rd A (Map 3.1).

D. Railroads

There is no rail service within the Town of Alban.

E. Air Transportation

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

The Central Wisconsin Airport, located approximately 15 miles northwest of Alban in Mosinee, 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.

Map 3.1 Alban Transportation Network

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 is available for private aircraft (100 octane low lead), but there are no repair services.

F. Trucking

There are no designated truck routes within the Town; however, all of Cty Rd A and Cty Rd I are open all year to truck traffic. These roads are listed by the Portage County Highway Department as “County Roads not posted”. 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 of Alban monitors the roads continuously and closely follows Portage County recommendations for weight limits on its roads.

Agricultural traffic, specifically during harvest and planting seasons, is especially heavy within the Town. The equipment used in the vegetable industry is very large and presents unique hazards on roadways when present. In many cases, traffic must use the shoulder of the road to get around field equipment that is using the roadway. This equipment is also damaging to road surfaces due to the extreme weight.

Section 3.3 Inventory of Applicable Transportation Plans and Programs

A. Six-Year Highway Improvement Plan (2008-2014)

The Town of Alban maintains its roads in a yearly cycle and administers repairs on a scheduled basis. The Town has a project awaiting budget appropriation and scheduling proposed for 2011. This project would maintain County Road I from State Highway 66 south to Collins Park. While County Road I is partially located in the Town of Alban, Portage County takes care of it.

The following road construction projects are slated for the future. In 2008, parts of St. Adalbert, Evergreen and Sunset Roads will be reconstructed. Hemlock Road and West Saumur Road will be brushed.

Part of Nerdahl Road will receive blacktop in 2009. Lake View Road will be brushed and Oak Road will be receiving a gravel surface. Additional road maintenance will include checking culverts, shaping road shoulders, and improving Town ditches.

In 2010, parts of Wigwam Road will be reconstructed. Saumur Road will receive a gravel surface. White Pine Road will be brushed, and ditches will be re-established on Hamilton Road.

Road construction and repair is an ongoing project. The highway improvement plan reflects constant revisions on a regular basis. The highway improvement plan is tentative and may be subject to change based upon budget, weather, and other priorities that may arise.

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

The Wisconsin State Rail Plan 2020 does not apply in Alban due to a lack of rail facilities.

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.

E. PASER Program

The Town of Alban 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 3.4 Transportation Issues

A. The Town understands the need to keep the roads in good condition

- Follow the regularly scheduled and updated Town of Alban Road Maintenance Plan.

B. Transportation options for the elderly and disabled are needed

- Community Industries of Stevens Point offers a pick-up service for employees needed to get to work, otherwise, no disabled transportation services are available in the community.

C. Bicycles and walking trails/routes

- The Town has several miles of roadway conducive to walking, hiking, and bicycle riding. There are safety concerns related to increased bicycle traffic on Town roads in summer. Town residents and other visitors should remember to wear proper safety equipment while using Town roads.

D. Trucking

- Seasonal truck traffic for the vegetable harvest is very heavy from mid-June to November and heavy loads may damage Town roads at these times. Alban needs to address safety and road maintenance concerns associated with the presence of heavy trucks and agricultural equipment throughout the Town. Seasonal weight limits on truck traffic have been put in place to reduce the amount of wear and tear that may damage the roads.

Section 3.5 Transportation Goals, Objectives and Policies

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

Objective 1.1: Priority is given to maintaining and enhancing existing infrastructure before adding new.

Policy 1.1 (a): The Town will consider paving of road segments based on necessity.

Policy 1.1 (b): Avoid locating land uses that generate heavy traffic on roads that have not been constructed or upgraded for such uses.

Objective 1.2: Update local transportation plans.

Policy 1.2 (a): Consider future road locations, extensions, or connections when reviewing local development plans.

Policy 1.2 (b): New roads must have a separate entrance and exit, and meet State and County requirements.

Policy 1.2 (c): The Town will not accept new roads unless they meet road specifications as stated in the Town's Road Ordinance.

Objective 1.3: Work with Portage County to provide transit service to the elderly and others in need of such services.

Policy 1.3 (a): Support the continuation of the Portage County Aging and Disabilities Resource Center transportation program.

Objective 1.4: Coordinate with other governmental units on matters concerning transportation.

Goal 2: Allow for human powered transportation options.

Objective 2.1: Identify routes used by the public for bicycling/walking.