

## **CHAPTER 3      Transportation Element**

66.1001(2)(c) Wis. Stat.:

**Transportation element.** A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, electric personal assistive mobility devices, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation. The element shall compare the local governmental unit's objectives, policies, goals and programs to state and regional transportation plans. The element shall also identify highways within the local governmental unit by function and incorporate state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in the local governmental unit.

### **Section 3.1      Transportation Facility Inventory**

#### **A.    Roads & Highways**

Current road classifications for the Village of Whiting transportation network are officially designated by the Department of Transportation. The existing functional class system (Figure 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. The Functional classification below coincide with the Functional classification of Highways, Roads, and Streets in Portage County Wisconsin document prepared in 1989 by the Portage County Planning and Zoning Department with the help of the Portage County Highway Jurisdictional Transfer Study Committee.

As of 2002, the local road system consists of a total of 18.18 miles of public roadway within the Village. Business Highway 51 accounts for 1.24 miles; County Road HH occupies 1.66 miles; and Village streets equal 15.28 miles.

##### **1.    Principal Arterials**

The only principal arterial in the Village is Business Highway 51, locally named Post Road. According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the average daily traffic volume (ADT) reported in 1999 for Business Highway 51 ranged from 19,600 to 20,400 vehicles within the Village of Whiting. In 2002 ADT levels ranged from 15,300 to 18,900, respectively, for the same stretch of roadway. Traffic mobility is the major function of this road although land access is important for the businesses and residences along Business 51.

##### **2.    Minor Arterials**

County Road HH, Tommy’s Turnpike, Whiting Avenue and Whiting Road are all considered minor arterials in the Village. The ADT in 1999 for Cty Rd HH, west of the Business 51 intersection was 7,600 vehicles; this decreased to 7,000 vehicles in 2002. The ADT for Tommy’s Turnpike was 2,400 vehicles in 1999, decreasing to 2,200 vehicles in 2002.

### 3. Minor Collectors

Sherman Avenue, from Whiting Road to Cty Rd HH, and those portions of Minnesota Avenue and Elm Street that are within the Village of Whiting are considered minor collectors. In 1999, the ADT on Sherman Avenue was 950 vehicles. This increased to 970 vehicles in 2002.

### 4. Local Streets

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

## B. Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities

The Green Circle Trail is a collection of 14 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 30 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. Portions of the Green Circle Trail travel through the Village of Whiting. The location of the Green Circle in Whiting, along with existing sidewalks in the Village, are shown in Map 3.2.

## C. Transit

The City of Stevens Point provides public transportation to the Village of Whiting through two services, fixed route transportation and Point Plus, a specialized door-to-door service for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) qualified riders. Point Transit provides service to the communities of Stevens Point, Whiting, and Park Ridge and is operated by a staff of eleven Bus Operators (six full-time and five part-time), an Operations Supervisor, and a Transit Manager.

Fixed Route Service consists of four, handicap accessible buses which travel five different routes throughout the Stevens Point area. Each bus travels a designated route and returns to the downtown transfer hub located at CenterPoint Market Place, where passengers can transfer to a different route. The routes have been planned to provide opportunities for individuals to commute to all parts of the service area. See Map 3.3 for Village of Whiting routes.

Point Plus is a door-to-door service available to individuals who qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. Passengers are picked up at their home and are transported wherever they need to go within the city, whether it be work, shopping, appointments, or to simply visit a friend. Point Plus service requires reservations 24 hours in advance to guarantee a ride.

## D. Rail

The Canadian National Railroad operates a rail line running through the Village of Whiting (Map 3.1). Approximately, 5 to 6 trains travel through the Village each day. The main rail line crosses Tommy's Turnpike, Strange Street, Sherman Avenue, Cty Rd HH, and Business 51 in the Village. Several rail spurs are also located within the Village which service Stora Enso, Kimberly Clark and businesses in Stevens Point. These rail spurs effect road crossings at Sherman Avenue, Jacobson Street, and Whiting Avenue.

### Map 3.1: Urban Functional Road Classification

Map 3.2: Pedestrian Routes

Map 3.3 City of Stevens Point Transit Route for Village of Whiting



Source: Stevens Point Transit Department

## E. Trucking

Semi-trailer truck traffic in the Village generally consists of through-traffic on Business 51 and Cty Rd HH. Designated truck routes in the Village exist on Tommy's Turnpike, Sherman Avenue, Whiting Ave, and Whiting Road.

## F. Air Transportation Facilities

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

The Central Wisconsin Airport is located 26 miles north of Whiting in Mosinee and is a full service, all weather airport offering around-the-clock service. In 2003, 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 Stevens Point on State Highway 66 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.

## G. Bridges

There are three bridges in the Village; one on Business 51, one on Cty Rd HH, and one on Whiting Avenue, all of which cross the Plover River. The Village of Whiting is only responsible for the Whiting Avenue bridge. This bridge is a concrete, haunched slab structure built in 1999. According to the most recent bridge inspection report, October of 2002, the structure is in good condition with a sufficiency rating of 95.6 out of a possible 100. If the sufficiency rating drops below 50 then the bridge is eligible for federal funding which will pay up to 80% of the replacement cost. Replacement of the structure is not anticipated over the next 20 year planning period.

## **Section 3.2 Inventory/Analysis of Applicable Transportation Plans & Programs**

### A. Business 51 Study

In 2003, HNTB Corporation prepared a "Business 51 Transportation Corridor Study" for the 3.44 mile stretch of Business 51 running from its intersection with Cty Rd B in Plover, north to the Whiting/Stevens Point border. The study was undertaken for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to determine roadway reconstruction improvement options, as a part of a plan for a possible jurisdictional transfer of the roadway from WisDOT to the Villages of Plover and Whiting.

An important component of the Corridor Study was the creation of a number of different land use scenarios for the properties adjacent to and surrounding Hwy 51, in order to determine future traffic and traffic operation impacts on the roadway. After receiving feedback from an advisory committee made up of citizens, business owners and elected officials from the Villages of Plover and Whiting, a single scenario was selected for use in the study:

## **Scenario 5: Combination of Existing Land Use Patterns and Commercial Nodes.**

The scenario maintains existing commercial land use patterns and concentrates large-scale commercial and office developments at nodal points along the corridor. Residential uses adjacent to Business 51 would be eliminated over time. See the full Corridor Study document for a complete description of the different scenarios.

The following summarizes the key points of the recommended scenario, as they pertain to the Village of Whiting:

- Plan a commercial development node at the intersection of Business 51 and McDill Avenue (Cty Rd HH). Commercial activity in this area should be complimented with a “gate-way” feature announcing the entrance to the commercial corridor.
- Plan for mixed-use office/commercial land uses adjacent to Bus. 51 between McDill Avenue (Cty Rd HH) and Tommy’s Turnpike.
- Plan a commercial development node at the intersection of Business 51 and Cedar Street. By organizing land uses and creating a centrally located commercial center around this specific intersection the Village can create a large redevelopment site.
- Plan a commercial development node at the intersection of Business 51 and Tommy’s Turnpike. This segment of Business 51 contains many large vacant parcels that could be assembled for re-development. Two development concepts were created to show the placement of future development west of Business 51. The first development concept is the “Main Street Concept” and the second is the “Courtyard Concept”.

### B. Stevens Point Urban Area Transportation Plan

The purpose of the Stevens Point Urban Area Transportation Plan (currently in progress) is to identify portions of the roadway network within the Urban Area that are likely to need upgrading over the next 20 years. Preliminary computer traffic modeling associated with the project has estimated ADT levels in 2020 for major roadways in the Urban Area. According to a preliminary model “2020 TT and E+C Net w/ US 10 ext to Cty Rd HH w/ Access” dated 8-22-01; the following roadways and 2020 potential ADT levels were identified:

- Business 51: 22,568 to 31,831 vehicles
- Cty Rd HH: 12,049 to 15,108 vehicles
- Tommy’s Turnpike (east of Okray Ave): 3,555 vehicles
- Sherman Avenue: 1,397 vehicles

### C. Bicycle / Pedestrian Plan

The 1997 Plover and Stevens Point Bicycle / Pedestrian Plan outlines recommendations to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the Urban Area. The plan recommends that sidewalks be placed on both sides of the street in commercial areas, along arterial roadways, and within a five block radius of any school. Bicycle facility improvements such as “Bike Lanes”, “Paved Shoulders”, and “Route Signs” were also identified for specific roadways throughout the Urban Area to improve mobility and connectivity. Improvements identified within the Village of Whiting include:

1. *Bike Lanes:*
  - ☉ Cty Rd HH
  - Elm Street
  - Minnesota Avenue
  - Sherman Avenue
  - Tommy's Turnpike
  
2. *Paved Shoulders:*
  - ☉ Airline Drive
  - Whiting Avenue
  - Whiting Road
  
3. *Route Signs:*
  - ☉ Birch Street
  - Cedar Street West
  - School Street
  - Spring Street
  - Strange Street

D. 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. 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.

F. State Railroad Plans

The final State Railroad Plan (SRP) 2020 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 contain six major components:

- |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Intercity passenger rail | 4. Funding                  |
| 2. Freight rail             | 5. Economic benefits        |
| 3. Highway-rail crossings   | 6. 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 is scheduled for completion in 2005 (Wisconsin DOT).

### **Section 3.3 Transportation Issues**

- Long-term pedestrian and bicycle access east to Hoover Avenue, along Cty Rd HH
  - One side, maybe two sides (trail, not sidewalk)
  - Maintenance issue; would need to decide whether or not to plow in the winter.
- Post Road upgrade (2010-15)
  - The structures located at 2600, 2616, 2804, 2824, and 2906 Post Road are possibly scheduled to be razed.
  - Mainly east (west side spared)
  - Official map to be amended once design is set
- Space should be provided for bicycle and pedestrian traffic on Willard Street in the form of a paved shoulder or bike path.
- Sidewalk should be considered on School Street from Cedar Street East to Cty Rd HH.
- Coordinate with the City of Stevens Point to maintain current transit routes which service the Fireside Apartments and River Pines Center on Sherman Avenue

### **Section 3.4 Transportation Goals, Objectives and Policies**

#### A. Goal

Develop an area-wide transportation planning and funding approach that maximizes efficiency and minimizes conflicts between modes as well as jurisdictions.

#### B. Objectives

1. Coordinate with adjacent municipalities to provide a viable public transportation network for all Village residents.
2. Provide for safe and efficient movement of all modes of transportation (vehicles, pedestrians and bicycle traffic, etc.).
3. Plan for the timely and efficient maintenance of Village transportation facilities.

#### C. Policies

1. Coordinate with the City of Stevens Point to maintain current transit routes which service the Fireside Apartments and River Pines Center on Sherman Avenue.
2. Consider recommendations within the 1997 Plover and Stevens Point Bicycle / Pedestrian Plan when making decisions regarding the pedestrian and bicycle network.
3. Pedestrian / bicycle access should be provided along Cty Rd HH to Hoover Avenue.
4. Space should be provided for bicycle and pedestrian traffic on Willard Street in the form of a paved shoulder or bike path.
5. Sidewalk should be considered on School Street from Cedar Street East to Cty Rd HH.
6. Develop, implement, and periodically update a Capital Improvements Program outlining transportation facilities improvements.