

General Overview

Town residents have the need and the expectation to have transportation facilities that efficiently and safely connect them with other areas of the township, surrounding communities and the state. The type, quality and location of these transportation facilities are an important aspect of residents' quality of life. A diversified transportation system is also a key factor in the economic vitality of the Township. The ability to move people, goods and services through and within the community is a critical factor in the economic growth and development of the Town.

Purpose of the Transportation Element

The purpose of the Transportation Element is to provide basic information about the existing transportation system in the Town and surrounding area. Statewide planning efforts are reviewed to assess how these efforts may or may not affect transportation facilities within and around the Town.

Basic Objectives of the Transportation Element

Transportation Characteristics

1. Pedestrian Facilities: None. Because the Town is a rural community, pedestrian travel is not common. Walking in the Town is generally for recreation/exercise. Walking on Town roads can be difficult because of traffic volume, speed, lack of sidewalks, lack of lighting and weather conditions. It is important to provide safe pedestrian environments in areas that are developed. A regional multi-use trail can be used for walking as referenced in the Rock County Park, Outdoor and Recreation and Open Space Plan.
2. Bicycling Opportunities:
Presently there are two existing bike routes through the Town – CTH C and CTH M. Presently, Rock County identifies CTH C and CTH M as moderate conditions for biking. (See Map #3: Rock County Bicycle and Pedestrian routes and Trails Plan) CTH C has narrow, unpaved shoulders and is unsafe for bicycling. CTH M, north of USH 14 is also narrow with unpaved shoulders. Generally, rural town roads with low traffic volumes are considered safe for bicyclists. The Town has several township roads that are suitable for bicycling, although increased amount of traffic and speed of traffic on Town roads is a growing concern according to residents who responded to the Smart Growth survey. (See Map #4: Rock County Biking Conditions)
Ice Age National Scenic Trail is being considered to run south of the Town through the Town of Magnolia. The Town of Union should consider working with the City of Evansville to provide local trail connections to the Ice Age Trail south of Evansville through the Town. A trail would be a valuable recreational and tourist amenity. According to Evansville's *Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan*, the potential exists to

develop a regional trail extending south on the abandoned railroad corridor toward Beloit. This trail could eventually connect with the Ice Age Trail. (See Map #5: Rock County Ice Age Trail Corridor Plan)

The City of Evansville's *Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan* calls for a combination of trails, sidewalks and bicycle routes around and throughout the City. Evansville is participating in discussions with Rock County about regional trails. The Town should also participate in these discussions. Based on comments from the listening sessions, there is interest in the Town for bicycle routes and trails. (See Map #6: City of Evansville Transportation Plan Map)

Trail routes could also be coordinated with utility easements and recreational amenities identified in the Community & Utility facilities plan.

3. Snowmobile Trails: A Rock County snowmobile trail exists in the southeast corner of the Town and connects to the Dane County Trail and the Sugar River State Trail. (See Map #7: Snowmobile Trail Plan, Rock County Comprehensive Development Plan)

4. Railroad Corridors:

The Union Pacific Railroad line extends through the Town of Union. The line north of the City of Evansville was purchased in 1999 by the City of Fitchburg and the Village of Oregon. Fitchburg and Oregon plan to re-open the rail corridor north of Evansville to provide rail service to a 283-acre business park to be developed in Fitchburg. The industrial and railroad industrial areas of the project are planned to begin as early as 2005 and continue through 2020. The tracks in the Town will be restored in Phase II of the project. (See: <http://www.city.fitchburg.wi.us/341765.htm>)

To the southeast of Evansville, the rail corridor is owned by Union Pacific is an active freight line that is vital to local businesses such as the Landmark Co-op, Nelson Young Lumber and General Motors.

According to the City of Evansville's *Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan*, the abandoned rail corridor south of the City that is in the Town and on DNR land could be used as a bicycle trail. The DNR, Rock County and the City all indicate they are interested in pursuing this portion of the rail bed for a bike trail. (Sources: City of Evansville 2005 Smart Growth Plan; Rock County Parks and Recreation Plan)

5. Streets & Highways:

USH 14 is a principal arterial. Traffic flow is at capacity with approximately 8,200 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) north of Evansville and 2,100 AADT east of Evansville. (Source: Rock County 2003 Annual Average Daily Traffic)

STH 59/213 south of Evansville is a minor arterial with 2,200 AADT in 2003.

CTH C and CTH M, north of USH 14, are major collectors. In 2003, CTH C had an AADT of 1,226 from 5th St. in Evansville to Hwy.104. In 2003, CTH M had an AADT of 2,088 from Hill Dr. to Territorial Road and 1,144 AADT from Marsh Road to USH 14. (Source: WisDOT WISLER Inventory)

Minor Collectors are roads that collect traffic from local roads and provide links to all remaining portions of smaller communities, locally important traffic generators and

higher function roads. CTH M, south of USH 14, is classified as a minor collector. (See *Rural Functional Systems Rock County Map, Dec. 2001*)

The remaining Town roads are local roads providing access to residential, commercial and agricultural uses.

A goal of the Town's 1993 *Comprehensive Plan* was to maintain the "rural quality of life." According to the listening sessions conducted in 2005, this is still a major interest among residents. To achieve this goal, the 1993 *Comprehensive Plan* recommended the Town designate certain roads as part of the Rustic Roads Program and designate them with the program's unique brown and yellow signs. Officially designated Rustic Roads continue to be under local control and are eligible for state aids just as other public highways. To qualify as a Rustic Road, the road must have outstanding natural features, be a lightly traveled local access road, not be scheduled for major improvements which would change the rustic characteristics and be a minimum of two miles in length and where feasible provide a completed closure or loop or connect to major highways at both ends of the route.

(See *Appendix A*)

According to the Town survey, 67% of residents are concerned with the amount of traffic on Town roads. 74% of residents are concerned with the amount of speed on Town roads. Roads of concern include:

Evansville/Brooklyn Road
USH 14
Bullard Road
Holt Road
Territorial Road
Butts Corners Road
East and North Union Road
Porter Road
Pleasant Prairie Road
CTH C
CTH M
STH 104
Old 92

(See *Table T-1: Annual Average Daily Traffic, 2003*)

Traffic counts for local town roads on WisDOT WISLR database have not been updated and are only estimates.

Each household generates 9.5 trips per day. Any development generating more than 500 cars per day must have a traffic impact study. (Source: *WisDOT*)

6. Mass Transit: State vanpool in City of Evansville to Madison.
7. Trucks: USH 14 is a designated truck route.
8. Airports: Nearest commercial airports/airstrips are in Madison, Janesville, Rockford, Albany and Brodhead. These airports meet the travel needs of Town residents.
9. Scenic Drives: *Rock County Scenic Drives and Views Plan* identifies the area of CTH C between Pleasant Prairie Road and STH 104 as a view shed. (Source: *Rock County Scenic*)

Table T-1: Annual Average Daily Traffic, 2003

Roadway	2003 AADT
USH-14 North of the City of Evansville	8,200
USH-14 North of STH- 59	6,800
USH-14 East of City of Evansville	6,100
STH-59 East of USH-14	1,100
STH-59/213 South	2,900
STH-104 North of City of Evansville	2,800
STH-104 South of City of Evansville	2,300
CTH-C West of the City of Evansville	1,200
CTH-M North of USH-14	2,100
CTH-M South of USH-14	1,100
Territorial Road	
Bullard Road	
Evansville-Brooklyn Road	

Source: WisDOT

Summary of Existing Transportation Plans

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Has no planned expansion of STH 59 or STH 213.

Has no plan for a USH 14 by-pass at this time. WisDOT funding is committed until 2014 and WisDOT currently does not have funding to consider a USH 14 by-pass.

Plans to create four lanes from CTH MM in Oregon to STH 138 in 2007. When that is completed, WisDOT will reconstruct USH 14 from STH 138 to STH 92 as a two-lane, straighter highway but enough right of way is available for an eventual four-lane highway.

Town of Porter

Requests that WisDOT convert North Tolles Road that runs from Cooksville to USH 14 into an extension of STH 138. This might become part of a by-pass around Evansville.

Requests that WisDOT convert N. Tolles Road from Cooksville to USH 14 as a state highway. This could be a possible bypass around the City, and the City supports Town of Porter on this issue. The Town of Union supports this request.

Rock County

Rock County Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes and Trails Plan: create regional bicycle routes, on road and off road throughout the County. See attached map. Proposed off-road trail and designated bike routes to run through the Town.

City of Evansville

The City of Evansville's *2005 Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan*:

States that multi-use trail development is a priority.

Considers opportunities to connect to Ice Age Trail being considered for south of Evansville. The completed trail will be a valuable recreational and tourist amenity.

Considers the potential to develop a regional trail along the abandoned railroad tracks north

of the City. A better option for a regional trail is along Allen Creek so the railroad can be used for freight and commuter rail.

Supports a regional trail along the old rail bed south of Evansville between Evansville and Beloit.

Railroads: Supports the use of railroad bed north of the City which is currently inactive and used for storage of rail cars. Opening the railroad would cost approximately \$1 million.

By-Passes & Transportation Concerns:

Recommends an access to USH 14 to alleviate congestion during rush hour. The Evansville 2005 *Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan* recommends a new road to extend from 6th Street north around Lake Leota. The Evansville Transportation Map places this road closer to Lake Leota and would connect to USH 14.

Proposes a new street around the north end of Lake Leota connecting USH 14 near the City's northern limit with CTH C near the City's northwestern limit would alleviate traffic congestion at the intersections of Main and Madison streets and Madison and Union streets.

Proposes a street connection from Cemetery Road to USH 14 when Cemetery Road is developed.

Suggests petitioning state legislators to work to have a bypass of USH 14 and STH 59/213 around the City and have the proposed bypass added to a list of bypasses to be studied by WisDOT.

Traffic Safety:

Feels the State should improve USH 14 from STH 92 to Evansville

Feels the State should construct bypass lanes to allow vehicles to safely go around vehicles waiting to turn left from USH 14 onto intersecting roads such as Holt Road, Union Road, Butts Corners Road, Green Bay Road and Elmer Road

Recommends coordinating with the Town of Union, Rock County and WisDOT to plan orderly connections of public streets to the highway corridor, including possible bypass routes.

Classification of Roads

Map #8: Rock County Rural Function Systems illustrates the functional and jurisdictional classification of the roads within the township. Functional classification is the process by which highways are grouped into classes according to the service they provide. The road network has a dual role – it provides access to property and also serves as a means of travel. The predominant purpose a road serves determines its functional classification.

Functional classification leads to a logical division of roadways for government responsibility for maintenance and installation. Arterials are a statewide and regional importance and are therefore under state jurisdiction. Collectors are generally significant to counties and are typically under county jurisdiction. Similarly, local roads are of local significance and are usually under local jurisdiction.

USH 14 and STH 59, 104 and 213 are all classified as minor arterial highways. They are characterized by high speed travel of an intra-state or intra-regional nature having a good level of service under varying operating conditions. CTH C and M are classified as major collectors.

These are designed for moderate speeds and serve for mobility and land access. Town roads are generally local roads serving a land access function.

Towns have the authority to request that the County post certain local roads as class “B” roads. This designation is a restriction that limits truck traffic to 60% of their licensed maximum. Many of the County roads are also classified as “B” roads by the County Transportation Committee. Some roads in the County have a temporary limit of 12 tons during the spring thaw when roads are especially susceptible to destruction from heavy truck traffic. These weight limits impact the type of uses that can develop along a road.

Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goal: To maintain a safe, balanced and economically sound transportation system that meets the needs of Town residents, farmers and businesses.

Objective: Ensure that a safe transportation system exists as the Town grows and improve it as necessary.

Actions:

Consider implementing Town road impact fees for new development projects that place a burden on or require the upgrading of Town roads.

Require an independent traffic impact study for new developments.

Encourage a Park-n-Ride lot along USH 14 north of the City of Evansville and south of the City to encourage car pooling to Madison and Janesville.

Request WisDOT to study the feasibility of a bypass of USH 14 around the City of Evansville.

Work with surrounding municipalities to establish public commuter transportation services such as bus, commuter rail, etc.

Objective: Maintain roads and address any safety problems, dangerous intersections and existing or potentially hazardous areas.

Actions:

Work to provide at least a 3’ shoulder on town roads with average daily traffic (ADT) greater than 1250. Increased road width is safer.

Encourage the use of extra width paved shoulders in subdivisions.

Request that WisDOT conduct a study of USH 14 south of STH 92 to Evansville to assess the impact of traffic volume, safety issues, the need for a bypass, and speed in order to comply with 2010 provisions.

Control the speed of traffic on town roads by working with the Rock County Sheriff’s Department on programs for increased traffic enforcement.

Minimize new access points onto public roads by requiring shared driveways or shared access where possible.

According to the Town survey, large vehicles and truck traffic on Town roads is a concern among residents. As discussed in the Town’s 1993 *Comprehensive Plan*, work with Rock County to classify town roads as Class B roads to limit through truck traffic to 60% of weight.

Objective: Ensure rural roads are safe for everyone, including cyclists, motorists, pedestrians and farm machinery.

Actions:

Encourage efforts to educate Town residents and visitors about how farm equipment, motorists and bicyclists can safely share the road and consider providing signage notifying motorists that the Town is a farming community and to beware of farm vehicles on the road.

Control the speed of traffic on town roads by working with the Rock County Sheriff's Department on programs for increased traffic enforcement.

Consider posting signs to indicate farm usage, bicycles, speed limits and other cautions.

Objective: Accommodate and encourage safe, non-motorized transportation choices (i.e., bicycles, pedestrians, etc.)

Actions:

Work with the City of Evansville and Rock County to create multi-use regional trail system.

Designate local roads as bicycle routes. (*See WisDOT Planning for Rural Bicycle Routes, 1993*)

For a new subdivision, any part of which is within the distance from a public school for which school bus transportation is not provided, the subdivision plan submitted to the Town must include provision for the school students (grades K-12) to travel between the subdivision and the school without the students having to walk in the streets, other than to cross the streets at established locations.

If the Town decided to pursue Planned Unit Development (PUD) areas, then require sidewalks and/or paths as part of the "walkable" neighborhood design.

If building within an area likely to be annexed by the City of Evansville or Village of Brooklyn, encourage sidewalks to promote walkable, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods.

Objective: Design the Town's transportation plan to protect the rural character of the Town and minimize impacts on the natural environment to the greatest extent possible.

Actions:

Create Rustic Roads as recommended in the Town's 1993 *Comprehensive Plan*. (*See Addendum*)

Consider the preservation of Scenic Drive Views.

Continue to discourage development that would require new Town roads and oppose any new highways through the Town as recommended in the Town's 1993 *Comprehensive Plan*. (*This does not include roads within subdivisions.*)

Ensure that new or upgraded transportation facilities consider the activities of farmers and the rural character of the Town.

Require transportation systems be designed and maintained to enhance the Town's rural character.

Avoid the use of dead-end roads and cul-de-sacs, except when these road designs would protect agricultural or environmental resources or discourage traffic in desired areas

Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Elements

Transportation impacts all of the other elements addressed in this *Comprehensive Plan* and is impacted by them. Transportation directly affects Housing; Utilities and Community Facilities; Economic Development; Agriculture, Natural and Cultural Resources; Intergovernmental Cooperation; and Land Use. For example, the location of residential housing can alter transportation patterns in the Town, increases in population in Evansville will add traffic to Union Township roads since travel to and from Evansville must pass through Union, the agricultural economy requires the use of Town roads by large and slowly moving equipment, and any plans for economic development will be limited by and will affect needs for transportation facilities. Because of such interactions, it is important that these elements are consistent in their approach and support one another. The Union Smart Growth Committee considered such interactions as it developed the goals and objectives related to the Transportation element.

Related Maps

Map #2: Transportation

Map #3: Rock County Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes and Trails Plan

Map #4: Rock County Bicycling Conditions

Map #5: Rock County Ice Age Trail Corridor Plan

Map #6: City of Evansville Transportation Plan

Map #7: Rock County Snowmobile Trail Plan

Map #8: Rock County Rural Functional Systems

PAGE

Town of Union Comprehensive Plan

Adopted: October 5, 2006

Transportation PAGE 9 of NUMPAGES 9

Town of Union Comprehensive Plan

Transportation Element

Town of Union Comprehensive Plan

Adopted: October 5, 2006

Transportation 1 of 9

SURVEY RESULT

Of the households responding to the survey,
67% are concerned with the amount of traffic on Town roads
74% are concerned with the speed of vehicles on Town roads
59% are concerned about the size of vehicles using Town roads

To assess existing transportation facilities.

To review statewide planning efforts.

To gain an understanding of state funding and budgets related to Town and area transportation facilities.

To develop a long-term plan for transportation facilities in the Township.

To develop goals and objectives that will accommodate the needs of current and future residents.

LISTENING SESSION

Top concerns of residents attending the Listening Sessions include:

- Protecting the rights of individual land owners while managing the growth of the Town
- Preserving the rural character of the Town
- Protecting the natural resources and environmental corridors
- Helping new residents understand the culture and economics of the Town