

ELEMENT 3 - TRANSPORTATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The transportation network is the backbone upon which a community bases its economy, access to resources and connection to other communities forming a critical link to continued development and growth. Maintenance and repair, in addition to periodic additions and enhancements to this system, are essential for preserving connectivity for county residents, visitors, and businesses. Keeping pace with changes in transportation trends and network use is also essential to anticipate needed improvements and potential additions to the transportation network.

The Town of Sherman’s transportation system consists of minor arterials, major collectors, and local roads. Certain areas of the town can also accommodate bicycle and pedestrian travel. However, private vehicles are the primary means of transportation in, through, and around the Town of Sherman.

Transportation Vision – 20 Year Outlook

The Town of Sherman supports a well-maintained and safe system of state, county, and local roads. Residents should continue to have easy access to nearby communities via state highways and other connecting roads throughout Iron County. As part of our long-range vision, our intent is to have a transportation system that is consistent with the rural/Northwoods character of the Town.

3.2 INVENTORY OF EXISTING TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

Transportation facilities in the Town of Sherman are basic facilities ranging from rural town roads to state highways. Residents enjoy easy access to highways and town roads. Opportunities for safe pedestrian travel are limited given a lack of sidewalks and few trail facilities to connect developed areas. Residents of the town rely on their personal vehicle to meet most of their transportation needs. Other modes of transportation including bus mass transit and air transportation are not available in the town; nor are they likely to be developed prior to 2025 given that the population and local businesses do not demand, nor can they support, these types of transportation services.

3.3 FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The Town of Sherman’s roadway network is comprised of approximately 65 miles of highways and town roads. Roads within the community are classified according to their primary function and by the amount of traffic they sustain. In the Town of Sherman, STH 182 serves as the central road corridor providing residents and visitors access to the community. Local roads provide routes to homes and recreational destinations both within and beyond the town.

Principal Arterials. There are no principal arterials in the Town of Sherman.

Minor Arterials. All of STH 182 and the shared road called STH 47 & 182 are the minor arterial roads in town.

Major Collectors. STH 47 from the junction with STH 182 east to the county line is the major collector in town.

Minor Collectors. Flowage Road is the road classified as a minor collector.

Local Roads. The remaining 44.69 miles of roads in the town are local. They provide access to residential, commercial, and recreational uses within the Town of Sherman.

All the roads described in this section are illustrated on Map 3.1, Town of Sherman Road Classification.

Classification	Miles
Principle arterials	0.00
Minor arterials	16.71
Major collectors	3.50
Minor collectors	4.85
Local roads	39.84
Total	64.90

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, District 7

Streets and highway are classified according to their primary function, either to more vehicles or to serve adjacent land.

- ✓ **Principal Arterials** – serve interstate and interregional trips. These routes generally serve urban areas greater than 5,000 population.
- ✓ **Minor Arterials** – accommodate interregional and inter-area traffic movements, often in conjunction with principal arterials.
- ✓ **Major Collectors** – provide service to moderate sized communities and other intra- area traffic generators. Many county truck highways fall into this classification.
- ✓ **Minor Collectors** – these roads collect traffic from local roads and provide links to all remaining portions of smaller communities and other higher function roads.
- ✓ **Local Roads** – provide direct access to residential, commercial and industrial development.

3.4 TRAFFIC VOLUME

Table 2 depicts change in Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) at recording sites on roads passing through the Town of Sherman. As is indicated in the table, Site 2 along STH 182 and Site 4 on STH 47 are the only sites in town to have shown any traffic increase of all roadways in town measured since 1978. Traffic volume along all other recorded roads have decreased over the 20-year period.

The increase in traffic in and around the Town of Sherman and throughout Iron County can be attributed to two main factors. First, since 1978, residents of the town and surrounding towns are making more frequent vehicular trips for shopping, commuting to work, and to recreational sites. Secondly, some areas of Iron County have seen increases in population density and the development of second homes owned by seasonal residents of the town.

	1978	1981	1984	1987	1990	1993	1996	1999	+/- Change
Site 1	550	420	380	450	450	470	460	-	-90
Site 2	420	400	420	480	410	500	580	640	+220
Site 3	420	350	390	-	-	-	-	-	-30
Site 4	330	-	-	240	380	410	660	820	+490
Site 5				220	130	130	110	180	-40

Source: Wisconsin Highway Traffic, Department of Transportation District 7

- Site 1: STH 182, two miles north of the Price County line
- Site 2: STH 182, one mile northeast of Ferry Lake road
- Site 3: STH 182, one mile west of STH 47
- Site 4: STH 47, two miles east of STH 182
- Site 5: Flowage road, two miles north of STH 182
- : No Data for this year
- (blank space): Site was not established yet.

3.5 PASER RATING SYSTEM

In 2001, the Town of Sherman Road Superintendent completed the Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER) for all town roads in accordance with WisDOT requirements. PASER is a visual inspection system to develop a condition rating for community roads that must be done once every two years. PASER is an important tool for small government planning because it gives a picture of road conditions on all roads and can identify candidates for maintenance and rehabilitation. Surface defects, cracking, potholes, and drainage are all examined during a typical PASER evaluation.

Roads are rated 1 – 10 based on their condition.

- Rating 9 & 10 – no maintenance
- Rating 7 & 8 – routine maintenance, crack-sealing and minor patching
- Rating 5 & 6 – preservative treatments (seal-coating)
- Rating 3 & 4 – structural improvements and leveling (overlay or recycling)
- Rating 1 & 2 – reconstruction

Paved roads were rated from 1 to 10 (10 being the best), and gravel roads were rated from 1 to 5 (5 being the best). Currently, there are approximately 45 miles of local roads that the Town of Sherman is responsible for repairing and/or maintaining throughout the year. This mileage may fluctuate from year to year due to additions or subtractions of roadway miles to the overall town system. For information on how to rate local roads, you can reference one of six manuals produced by the Transportation Information Center, Madison WI. These include manuals on Concrete, Asphalt, Gravel, Unimproved, Seal-coated Roads, and Rural & Urban Drainage.

3.6 TOWN ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Improvements to local roads are critical for maintaining an adequate and safe roadway system. Future road improvements are generally based on current road conditions, with the intent to keep all roadways intact and useable on a daily basis. Future roadway improvements need to be flexible because of the possibility of unforeseen emergencies or disasters that may arise from year-to-year or even day-to-day. The Town of Sherman has developed a schedule of future road improvements. There are currently seven scheduled town roadway surface improvements through 2014 as shown in Table 3.

Iron County Road Improvement Plan

The Iron County Highway department 2004-2008 road construction schedule does not have any projects in the Town. Since there are no county highways in the Town, there are no conflicts between County and Town Comprehensive Plans.

State of Wisconsin Six Year Highway Improvement Program

There are no state highway projects slated in the Town of Sherman through 2007.

Table 3.3 Town, County, & State Selected Roadway Improvements, 2002-2014					
Year	Sponsor	Road/Street	Location	Mileage	Type of Improvement
2002 - 2004	Sherman	Boot Lake Road		2.25	Double coat chip seal
2004 - 2006	Sherman	Puls Road		0.35	Double coat chip seal
2004 - 2006	Sherman	Charnely Lake Road		0.6	Double coat chip seal
2005	Sherman	McDermott Road		0.52	Double coat chip seal
2005	Sherman	Pripps Road		0.49	Double coat chip seal
2007 - 2010	Sherman	Springstead Road	Hwy 182 to Price Co.	3.19	Double coat chip seal
2010 – 2014	Sherman	Flowage Road	Hwy 182 to end	4.45	

Source: Town of Sherman, Iron County, & WisDOT

3.7 ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION

Pedestrian Facilities

Most local town roads in the Town of Sherman have limited shoulder areas and the speed limits are usually more than 45 miles per hour unless posted otherwise. A motor vehicle creates a dust hazard for pedestrians on gravel roads. These conditions hamper safe pedestrian travel opportunities. Moreover, given the low-density development pattern of the town and the fact that nearly all goods and services are located several miles away in nearby cities, walking to places of work, shopping, or entertainment is not realistic for most residents. This situation is not anticipated to change over the 20-year planning period. As a result, people without access to motor vehicles must arrange for other transportation. There are no public transportation services available in the town and no sidewalks exist.

Bicycling Opportunities

The WisDOT, along with the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin, has compiled a Wisconsin State Bike Map that highlights bicycling conditions on select roadways in northern Wisconsin. In the Town of Sherman, all of STH 182 is rated as having the best conditions for bicycling. STH 47 from the junction with STH 182 east to the county line is rated as having moderate conditions for bicycling.

Most of the rural State Trunk Highway system now has a three-foot or wider paved shoulder. While shoulders were generally paved for maintenance and safety purposes, they also provide suitable accommodations for bicycle travel.

Railroad Corridors

No railroad lines exist in the Town of Sherman.

Air Transportation

Gogebic/Iron County Airport is a commercial airport located north of Ironwood, Michigan. Skyway Airlines, the Midwest Connect provides three flights a day to Milwaukee with an intermediate stop in Rhineland. The Rhineland/Oneida County Airport is located north of Rhineland. Mesaba Airlines, d.b.a. Northwest Airlinck, provides seven daily flights to Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport. Federal Express has a sorting facility at the Rhineland/Oneida County Airport and operates four Cessna flights a day to Milwaukee. Daily pickup and delivery service for air cargo is available.

At present, there are four private airport/airfields within Iron County that are registered with the WisDOT Bureau of Aeronautics. Their county location and present status is outlined in Table 4.

Table 3.4: Iron County Airports/Airfields		
Airport/Airfield	Location	Status
Spud-River Airport	T.46N-R1W Section 20 - Gurney	Private
Saxon (PVT Lindblom)	T.47N-R2E Section 35 - Saxon	Private
Springstead	T.41N-R3E Section 31 - Sherman	Private
Blair Lake Airport	T.42N-R3E Section 19 -Mercer	Private

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aeronautics, 12/2002

Mass Transit

Mass transit service is not available in the Town of Sherman given its low density of development. The density of development in the town cannot provide the ridership necessary to support a bus route. There is no local demand for this service and no plan exists to establish service in the next 20 years.

Transportation Facilities for Disabled

Iron County is served by two elderly and disabled transportation organizations. Care-a-van Convalescent Transport Service, located in Ironwood, MI, provides transportation to all of Iron County for the elderly and disabled. The Iron County Unit On Aging also provides transportation services to all of Iron County and is located in Hurley. Free transportation is offered to elderly if they get a human services supplement and there is a minimal charge if not. Both organizations provide vans with wheel chair accessibility. It may be necessary to call and schedule these transportation services ahead of time.

Trucking and Water Transportation

Trucking through the town is accommodated through the highway network and typically is subject to road weight restrictions, while water transportation is primarily utilized for recreational purposes.

Multi-Use Trails

Throughout Iron County, there are several hundred miles of multi-use trails. This network is used most intensely during the winter months for snowmobiling and in the summer months for ATV use, which in addition to its recreational use provides an alternate means of commuting for some Iron County residents. Most town roads are open to ATVs and snowmobiles so property owners can access designated trails. Motorized and non-motorized trail systems are further described in the Utilities and Community Facilities element of the Town of Sherman Comprehensive Plan. See pages 4-6 and 4-7 for more information on trails.

3.8 SUMMARY OF EXISTING TRANSPORTATION PLANS

TRANSLINKS 21

TransLinks 21 is a multi-modal transportation plan for Wisconsin’s 21st century. WisDOT completed the development of the 25-year plan in 1994 as a Statewide Transportation Plan to facilitate the efficient and economic movement of people and goods. Separate transportation modes are more precisely defined in the following transportation mode plans ending in “2020” below.

Connections 2030

Connections 2030 is the second generation Statewide Transportation Plan after Translinks 21, and is now in progress. The planning process will update Wisconsin’s comprehensive, long-range multi-modal transportation plan. It will provide a broad planning framework for the next 25 years, guiding transportation policies, programs and investments through 2030.

Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020

The *Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020* focuses on the 11, 800 miles of State Trunk Highway routes in Wisconsin. The plan identifies no traffic congestion in the next 20 years on highways within the Town of Sherman. No conflicts with the Town of Sherman Comprehensive Plan have been identified.

Corridors 2020

Corridors 2020 sets criteria for selected routes that go beyond traditional highway planning with the intent to enhance and improve all two-lane and four-lane highways connecting cities of 5,000 inhabitants or more. No conflicts with the Town of Sherman Comprehensive Plan exist at this time.

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

The *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* (1998) encourages increased bicycle use by describing how to fund and design bicycling improvements on the state highway system and on local roads.

Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020

This plan provides a statewide framework to increase walking and to promote pedestrian safety. The plan establishes goals, objectives, and actions regarding the provision of pedestrian accommodations that could be implemented. The plan also serves to help communities identify actions they can take to establish pedestrian travel as a viable, convenient, and safe transportation choice throughout Wisconsin. No specific recommendations to the Town of Sherman exist.

Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020

The Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020 provides a framework for the preservation and enhancement of a system of public-use airports adequate to meet current and future aviation needs of the State of Wisconsin. There are no public airports or airfields in the Town of Sherman, and none are planned in the next 20 years; therefore, this plan does not apply to the Town.

Wisconsin State Rail Plan 2020 (Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities)

This plan provides the policy framework for the preservation and enhancement of the Wisconsin State Rail System. The plan also defines the rail system's role in the movement of people and goods within the context of Wisconsin's multi-modal transportation system. The plan assesses the rail system's current condition and determines courses of action for future improvements and alternatives to fund them.

3.9 TRANSPORTATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS

A set of recommended goals, objectives, and actions steps has been developed to assist the Town of Sherman in the area of transportation. Implementation of the identified actions will assist in achieving the overall goal.

GOAL: MAINTAIN THE AESTHETIC CHARACTER, SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY OF THE TOWN'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

Objective 1: Encourage a safe system of roads.

Action: Continue road maintenance and development of wide shoulders. Establish appropriate speed limits with proper signage.

Objective 2: Maintain aesthetic character of town roads.

Action: Implement building setbacks, vegetative screening, and protect the environment by limited and specific use of salt and other chemicals on roads and right-of-ways.

Objective 3: Work toward safer routes for recreational trails of all types.

Action: Ensure proper signage on all Town roads used by ATV's and/or Snowmobiles.
Action: Work with local clubs to ensure proper signage on recreational trails in the Town.
Action: Support efforts to move recreational trails off Town roads whenever feasible.

Due to the town being rural in nature, the ability for the Town of Sherman to provide a full range of transportation choices to its residents has limitations. However, it is the desire of the town that when possible and financially feasible, alternative transportation modes be investigated and developed into new neighborhood designs. A number of the objectives and action statements made by the town support the overall development of a multi-modal transportation system. Due to the rural nature of the town, full implementation of a town-wide pedestrian/trail system may be difficult. However, in areas more densely populated, designs targeted to better pedestrian movement may be adapted in the future.

Transportation costs to a developer in meeting the town requirements for minimum road standards can have an impact to total project development costs. It is recommended, where

possible, developers consider a more compact design of building lots (residential, commercial, and industrial) to minimize the total mileage of road construction. The cost saving can be significant to the developer and, in turn, can reduce for the town the total mileage required to maintain when designated as a town road.