

Transportation

Introduction

A community’s transportation network is the backbone upon which its economy, access to resources, and connectivity for inhabitants and enterprises to the region are based upon. Maintenance and repair, in addition to periodic upgrades and enhancements, are essential for retaining its function to residents, visitors, and local businesses. Understanding transportation trends is important for planning future transportation improvements.

Vehicular travel is the primary form of transportation within the Town of Hunter as few other forms of transportation are available. Mass transit options are substantially limited due to the rural nature of the Town. However strides are being made to make transit more available to residents.

Functional Classification System

The Town of Hunter’s roadway network is comprised of approximately 61 miles of highways and town roads (**Table 3.1**). Roads within the town are classified according to their primary function and traffic levels. In the Town of Hunter, County Highways B, CC and H serve as the primary corridors providing residents and visitors access to and through the town. Local roads provide routes to homes and recreational destinations both within and beyond the town. All the roads described in this section are illustrated on **Map 3.1**, Town of Hunter Functional Road Classification.

Functional road classifications for rural areas include principal arterials, minor arterials, major collectors, minor collectors, and local roads.

- **Principal arterials-** Serve interstate and interregional trips. These roads generally serve urban areas greater than 5,000 in population.
- **Minor arterials-** Serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intra-regional and inter-regional traffic movements.
- **Major collectors-** Provide service to moderate sized communities and links traffic to nearby larger population centers.
- **Minor collectors-** Collect traffic from local roads and links them to all remaining smaller communities. All developed areas should be within a reasonable distance of collector roads.
- **Local roads-** Provide access for travel over relatively short distances. All roads not classified as arterials or collectors are classified as local roads.

Classification	Miles
Principle arterials	0.00
Minor arterials	0.00
Major/Minor collectors	24.29
Local roads	37.15
Total	61.44

Source: WisDOT District 8 (Jan. 08)

Traffic Volume and Trends

Table 3.2 depicts change in Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) at recording sites on roads passing through the Town of Hunter from 1991 to 2005. As is indicated in the table, sites 1 and 4 both on CTH B have seen the highest traffic increases since 1991.

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

	1991	1995	1998	2001	2005	Change 1991-2005
Site 1	1250	1400	1400	1900	2200	+950
Site 2	820	790	990	1200	1000	+180
Site 3	n/a	n/a	n/a	160	110	-50
Site 4	590	n/a	830	910	1100	+510

Source: Wisconsin Highway Traffic

Site 1: CTH B west of CTH CC

Site 2: CTH CC north of Twin Bay Road

Site 3: CTH S before T. of Round Lake

Site 4: CTH B in National Forest

Commuting To Work

Commuting is the process of travelling between one's place of residence and regular place of work. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 332 of the town's residents were 16 years or older and working (**Table 3.3**). Nearly 60 percent of these residents traveled to work in a car, truck, or van and drove alone and nearly 18 percent carpooled. It takes an average of 20 minutes for residents to get to work.

Workers 16 years and over	332
Car, truck, or van - - drove alone	190
Car, truck, or van - - carpooled	59
Public transportation (including taxicab)	5
Walked	47
Other means	6
Worked at home	25
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	18.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

PASER Road Evaluation

In 2007, the Town of Hunter completed a Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER) for all town roads in accordance with Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) requirements. PASER is an important tool for government planning because it provides an analysis of a roads condition and can identify roads in the most need of maintenance and rehabilitation. Surface defects, cracking, potholes, and drainage are all examined during a typical PASER evaluation. The Town of Hunter is required to evaluate and report town road conditions to WisDOT in every odd calendar year.

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. Future roadway improvements need to be flexible because of the possibility of unforeseen emergencies or disasters that may arise from year-to-year (**Table 3.4**).

Year	Sponsor	Road/Street	Location	Length	Type of Improvement
2009	Town	*Twin Bay Rd.	Twin Bay Rd from R&R Bay View to end	3,326 ft.	Removal of trees, ditching & shouldering. Pulverizing 2 ½ inch mat.
2009-10	County	CTH CC	Bridge on CTH CC at the Landing	--	Bridge Replacement
2011	County	CTH CC	From Flowage Rd. to Woodland Dr.	2.47 miles	Reconstruction
2010-11	Town	*Warner Rd.	CTH B to end	2,534 ft.	Removal of trees, ditching & shouldering. Pulverizing 2 ½ inch mat.
2011-12	Town	John St., Lampe & Fletcher Rd.	CTH CC to end of each Rd.	4,700 ft.	Possible 2" overlay & shouldering.
2012-13-14	Town	Worlds End Rd.	From Town of Hayward line to the end of road	2.9 miles	Possible 2" overlay & shouldering.

Source: Town of Hunter & Sawyer County Highway Department

*Projects depend upon funding availability.

Methods of Transportation

Air Transportation

No scheduled passenger flights are available to residents of Hunter from within Sawyer County. The nearest airports providing regular scheduled passenger flights to domestic and international destinations are the Duluth International Airport (96 miles), Eau Claire Regional Airport (110 miles), and the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport (148 miles). The Rice Lake Regional Airport-Carl's Field (51 miles), provides regional airport services including charter air services through Rice Lake Air Center. The charter service operates a King Air C-90 providing passenger service for up to 6 passengers.

The Sawyer County Airport, located in Hayward, is classified as a general aviation airport. It has an asphalt runway length of 5,003 feet by 100 feet and a runway capacity of 60,000 lbs. At present, there is one public and five private airport/airfields registered with the Bureau of Aeronautics within Sawyer County. The county location and present status of area airports is outlined in **Table 3.5**. The Town of Hunter also has numerous privately owned float planes that use the waters of the Chippewa Flowage and other waters of the Town.

Airport/Airfield	Location	Owner/Operator	Status
Sawyer County Airport	T41N, R9W Section 24	Sawyer County	Public
Rainbow Airport (Ojibwa)	T38N, R6W Section 3	N/A	Private
Lake Chippewa Field	T40 N, R6W Section 8	N/A	Private
Round Lake Seaplane Base	T41N, R7W Section 30	John Frisbie	Private
Florida North Airport	T37N, R9W Section 29	Ronald Masek	Private
Kitty-Wompus Airport	T37N, R8W Section 12	Jordan Arvold	Private

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aeronautics, 2004 and NWRPC

Pedestrian Facilities

Designated pedestrian facilities are limited in the Town of Hunter. Most roadways have minimal shoulder areas, speed limits greater than 45 miles per hour unless posted otherwise, and some are gravel roads, which at times can cause dusty conditions. These conditions hamper safe pedestrian travel opportunities. Moreover, given the low-density development pattern and the fact that many goods and services are located in the City of Hayward and Village of Winter, walking to places of work, shopping, or entertainment is not realistic for most residents.

The Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 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 locally. 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 Hunter exist.

Throughout the community, residents and visitors walk either for exercise or to shopping locations. In particular, a large number of people walk along CTH CC from CTH B to the Village

of New Post. There is heavy seasonal traffic within the town. In the future, as roadway improvements are made, it is strongly recommended county and state transportation officials meet with local officials to discuss the inclusion of pedestrian facilities along the transportation corridors.

Bicycling Facilities

Bicycling is limited to undesignated bicycle routes on the state, county, and town roads. The Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020, presents a blueprint for improving and expanding bicycle transportation routes in the state. There are no plans to expand state bicycle routes into or through the Town of Hunter.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has compiled a Wisconsin State Bike Map that highlights bicycling conditions on select roadways in Wisconsin. County Trunk Highway (CTH) CC, B and H are all considered to have the highest demand for biking, but are currently not suited for safe bicycling.

Trucking and Water Transportation

The local roadway system and its connection to the County and State trunk highway system provide adequate trucking access for receipt and delivery of goods and products. The posting of weight restrictions during spring breakup is necessary and will remain so into the future to prevent significant damage to local roads.

No waterborne commerce or routes are available. The nearest access to waterborne commerce is the Port of Duluth/Superior.

Transit

The Sawyer County Aging Unit operates a 15-passenger bus that accommodates two wheelchair passengers. The Sawyer County Aging Unit operates within a seven-mile radius of the City of Hayward. Other providers of disabled transportation are available from private companies operating outside Sawyer County. Non-handicapped accessible transit services available to residents of the Town of Hunter include Cindy's Taxi Service located near the City of Hayward, Sawyer County Veteran's Service and Namekagon Transit. The Senior Resource Center and Sawyer County Aging Unit also coordinate volunteer drivers who will provide transit service to persons needing transportation assistance.

NWT Express operating out of the City of Hayward and Rice Lake Shuttle Service operating out of the City of Rice Lake provide ground passenger transportation services. Both companies provide van services between their respective communities and the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport.

The Sawyer County and New Post Senior Center provides local medical transportation services and operates a "meals on wheels" program to eligible residents of the town.

Rail Systems

There are no rail lines within the Town of Hunter. The nearest rail line, owned by Canadian National (CN) Railroad, bisects the far northeastern corner of the Town of Meteor (south of the

Town of Hunter). The rail line links Chicago to the south and Duluth/Superior to the north. There are no future plans to expand rail lines into the town.

Trails

Throughout the county, there are several hundred miles of multi-use trails maintained by Sawyer County and local trail user groups. This network is used most intensely during the winter months for snowmobiling and the in the summer months it is used primarily by motorized and recreational vehicles. The Tuscobia Trail runs parallel 6 miles south of the Town Hunter.

State, Regional, and Other Transportation Plans

State, regional, and county agencies have developed guidance and improvement schedules for roadways or infrastructure under their responsibility. It is important the Town of Hunter and these agencies communicate on proposed implementation schedules and coordinate local and regional activities. State, regional, and county plans applicable to this element have been reviewed and are summarized to reflect their overlapping jurisdictional control or recommendations. A regional transportation plan has not been developed.

Sawyer County Road Improvement Plan

The Sawyer County Highway Department has a road construction schedule in place for county road improvements covering the next several years. The improvement plan contains 2 projects slated for construction in the Town over the next 7-year period.

Wisconsin State Highway Plan

The *Wisconsin State Highway Plan* focuses on the 11,800 miles of State Trunk Highway routes in Wisconsin. No conflicts with the Town of Hunter Comprehensive Plan have been identified in association with this planning effort as no state highway is located within the Town.

Corridors 2020

Corridors 2020 sets criteria for selected routes that go beyond traditional highway planning with the intent to enhance and improve all two- and four-lane highways connecting cities of 5,000 inhabitants or more. The Town of Hunter has no corridor 2020 primary or secondary routes passing through the town. No conflicts with the Town of Hunter Comprehensive Plan have been identified in association with Corridors 2020.

Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020 and Five-Year Airport Improvement Program

The *Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020* assists in determining the number, location, and type of aviation facilities required to adequately serve the state's aviation needs. The *Five-Year Airport Improvement Program* of the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics is published annually. The Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics works with local governments on planning for new and proposed upgrades to local airports. This document provides a snapshot of scheduled airport improvement projects for the next five years. There are no public airports and one private airfield in the Town of Hunter. As a result, no conflicts were identified in association with the two documents.

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

The *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* presents a blueprint for improving and expanding bicycle transportation routes throughout the state. No identified bicycle route expansion or development is detailed in the plan for the Town of Hunter. However, when town, county, and state transportation roadways are reconstructed, consideration of bicycle lanes should be discussed.

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 exist in the plan for the Town of Hunter. However, when town, county, and state transportation roadways are reconstructed, consideration of pedestrian access could be discussed.

2008 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The *2008 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)* provides an analysis of local conditions; identifies problems, needs, and opportunities of the ten-county region; and defines the vision, goals, and objectives of the region. Within the document, specific transportation objectives and activities have been identified on a regional basis. Based on a review of the 2008 CEDS and that of the transportation goals and objectives of the Town of Hunter, the transportation goals and objectives are complementary and no conflicts exist.

Transportation Goals, Objectives, Actions, Policies, and Programs

A set of recommended goals, objectives, and actions steps has been developed to assist the Town of Hunter in the area of transportation. Implementation of the identified actions will assist in achieving the overall goal for a safe and efficient multi-use transportation system, which accommodates the interests of people while preserving the aesthetic qualities of the town.

GOAL: An efficient and safe multi-use transportation system which accommodates the interests of people while preserving the aesthetic qualities of the town.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop and maintain road and trails to meet the Town's future needs and safety requirements.

Resource Action: Widen roadway on County Highway "CC"

Regulation Action: Maintain a Five Year Road Plan with criteria for decision-making.

Regulation Action: Require that private developers construct driveways and roads that meet Town standards

Resource Improvement Action: Improve County Road CC from CTH B to the Village of New Post and CTH B from CC to River Road, so that walkers, joggers, and bicyclists have a safe lane.

Resource Improvement Action: Review that the signing of traffic controls is adequate and updated.

Monitoring Action: Evaluate Town roads on an annual basis according to PASER evaluation methods.

Monitoring Action: Annually request traffic accident information from Sawyer County Sheriff's department.

Monitoring Action: Review and update town road ordinances.

2. Support interconnected recreational trails.

Regulation Action: Notify affected property owners prior to new trail development in the Town.

Education Action: Sponsor a trails meeting inviting clubs, landowners, government entities and organizations with an interest in Town trails.

3. Develop means by which transportation for the disabled or elderly is available.

Resource Improvement Action: Encourage a volunteer transportation group for the needs of the elderly or disabled.

Education Action: Publish and communicate information on available transportation options.

Due to the rural character of the community and its low-density development pattern, the ability of persons to travel by foot, bicycle, or other mode of transportation, other than by automobile, is very limited. The result of this creates difficulties in implementing significant design standards for low-density developments. However, in development proposals where higher-density developments are proposed, a compact roadway network would assist in reducing road development costs and in turn costs related to maintenance and future reconstruction by the town.