

Transportation

State Comprehensive Planning Requirements for this Chapter

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, 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 function and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in the local governmental unit.

Overview

Residents of Nepeuskun depend on the transportation facilities in their community to connect them to other areas of the region and state. The type, quality, and location of transportation facilities are an important component in residents' quality of life.

There is a significant relationship between transportation and land use. New development or changes in existing land uses, whether incremental or sudden, directly affects the safety and functionality of roadways and the demand for additional transportation facilities. Thus, this element and the Land Use Element support and complement one another.

The intent of this element is to provide basic information on the existing transportation network in the Town of Nepeuskun and in the region. Statewide planning efforts are reviewed to assess how these efforts may or may not affect transportation facilities within and around Nepeuskun. State programmatic budgets are reviewed to determine what transportation projects, if any, are anticipated. The final section presents a future transportation network plan for the Town. Taken together this review will help to better define the issues, problems, and opportunities this plan should address to accommodate residents' needs. As an end-product, the future transportation plan will guide development of the road network over the planning period.

Existing Transportation Network

Nepeuskun is situated among a number of low-traffic-volume rural roads. The county road system connects the community to Berlin and Ripon, as well as to the larger Fox River Valley. The Town is within 2 hours of Madison and within 5 hours of Chicago and Minneapolis. Opportunities for air travel are found at the Outagamie Airport (Appleton) and the Madison and Milwaukee regional airports. Freight service is located within 15 miles of Nepeuskun.

Road Classification

To help plan for current and future traffic conditions, it is useful to categorize roads based on their primary function. Arterials accommodate the rapid movement of vehicles, while local streets provide the land access function. Collectors serve both local- and through-traffic by providing a connection between arterial and local roads. A description of DOT's classification system is provided as Table 3.1.

Primary Arterials: None are located in Nepeuskun. The closest primary arterials are US Highway 41 and State Route 26, located east of town, and State Route 21 located north of town. In Green Lake County to the west, Highway 49 runs north/south and Highway 23 runs east-west. Hwy 23 to the south provides access to Madison to the south and Wausau to the north.

Minor Arterials: State Road 91 runs east/west in the northern portion of the town, and acts as a direct route to the Wittman Airport and Oshkosh. Although, it ends in Berlin.

Major Collectors: County Highways E runs north connecting to the major arterials State Road 91, and 21 farther north, and south connecting to downtown Ripon. County Highway M running through the northeast corner of Town can be accessed by State Rd 91, and connects north to Waukau and south to Highway 23 and 44.

Minor Collectors: County Road V, which runs east and west through the central portion of Town, connect Rush Lake to State Road 49. County Highway F, which runs east and west in the southern portion of town, connects up with State Road 73.

Town/Local Roads: The remaining public roads in Nepeuskun are considered local roads.

Private Roads: Island Aire Road is a private road that commences at the north end of Island Rd and serves all of the lots in the Island Aire Subdivision.

Rustic Roads

The Wisconsin Legislature established the Rustic Roads program in 1973 to help citizens and local units of government preserve what remains of Wisconsin's scenic, lightly traveled country roads. An officially designated Rustic Road shall continue to be under local control and is eligible for state aids just as any other public highway.

Mountain Road, beginning at its intersection with County M and proceeding in a southerly then easterly direction until its intersection again with County M (3.1 miles), has been officially designated as a Rustic Road. Mountain Road offers great wildlife and wildflower viewing in a serene setting. It passes through the middle of 270 acres owned by the Nature Conservancy. It is home to many birds including sandhill cranes, short-eared owls, northern bobwhite quail, and pheasants. The traveler will encounter an abundance of

Table 3.1 Functional Classification System

| Classification | Description |
|-------------------|--|
| Primary arterials | Serve interstate and interregional trips. These routes generally serve all urban areas greater than 5,000 population. The rural principal arterials are further subdivided into (1) Interstate highways and (2) other principal arterials. |
| Minor arterials | In conjunction with the principal arterials, they serve cities, large communities and other major traffic generators providing intra-regional and inter-area traffic movement. |
| Major collectors | Provide service to moderate size communities and other intra-area traffic generators and link those generators to nearby larger population centers or higher function routes. |
| Minor collectors | Collect traffic from local roads, and provide links to all remaining smaller communities, locally important traffic generators and higher function roads. All developed areas should be within a reasonable distance of a collector road. |
| Local roads | Provide access to adjacent land and provide travel over relatively short distances. All roads not classified as arterials or collectors are local function roads. |

Source: "Facilities Development Manual" Wisconsin Department of Transportation

wildflowers bordering the roadway including may apple, trillium, Canada anemone, wild geraniums, Solomon's seal, wild roses, and goldenrods. (Wisconsin DOT)

Bridges

There is one County Highway bridge on M over Waukau Creek in the northeastern corner of Nepeuskun. It is maintained and inspected by the County.

Truck Routes

State Road 91 is the only truck route located in Nepeuskun. It is designated as a 75-foot restricted truck route. This route primarily accommodates commercial truck traffic and is often considered a nuisance to the nearby residents.

Air Transportation

Within Wisconsin, there are 100 public-use airports of various sizes and capabilities that are part of the State Airport System. Airports included in this system are primarily owned by a municipality or a county. However, certain privately-owned, public-use airports are also part of the system either because they provide general aviation relief to a major airport or because they have strong municipal ties.

The Outagamie Airport, located in Appleton, is classified as a transport/corporate airport. The airport is owned by Winnebago County and is intended to serve corporate jets, small passenger and regional cargo jet aircraft, and small commuter planes. Other airports that serve residents of Nepeuskun include the Dane County Regional Airport in Madison, General Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee, and Austin Straubel International Airport in Green Bay.

Railroad Facilities

The Wisconsin and Southern Railroad runs just south of Town and is a short line rail operation that serves the Oshkosh area and the southern portion of Winnebago County. Based in Horicon, Wisconsin, the railroad company provides freight service between Oshkosh and Ripon. (See Map 6)

Bicycle / Walking Paths

The Mascoutin Valley State Trail (formerly known as the Rush Lake Trail) follows an abandoned rail corridor for about 5 miles through the southwestern portion of the town. This portion of the trail is owned and maintained by Winnebago County. The total length of this multi-use trail (horses, bicycles, hiking, and snowmobiles) is 31.1 miles including 11.1 miles available for horseback riding. It eventually will connect Berlin and Fond du Lac in Green Lake County; there are sections that are not complete.

Residents enjoy the Mascoutin Valley Trail, but do not necessarily see enhancing this recreation amenity as a top priority for the Town. Fifty-seven percent of

community survey respondents indicated that they would not like to see the Town purchase land for a park along the recreation trail. The survey respondents were somewhat split over the issue of providing a parking lot along/near the recreation trail. Forty-eight percent said they would not like to see one and thirty-three percent said they would. (see Appendix X)

There is also a winter recreation trail that runs north from the Mascoutin Valley State Trail and extends to connect with a larger trail system.

Special Transit Facilities

The Town of Nepeuskun has limited public transportation options. A subsidized taxi and van service provides transportation in rural Winnebago County for those over 60 and disabled residents. Residents can call 24 hours per day, seven days a week for service and are eligible for ten one-way trips each month. Both Ripon and Berlin also have a taxi service as well as a senior citizen van transportation mode.

Water Transit

There is no waterborne freight movement in Nepeuskun. Water freight moves in and out of the region through the ports of Milwaukee, Green Bay, and Chicago. Local navigable waters are used only for recreational purposes.

Transportation Patterns and Traffic Conditions

As part of a statewide system, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) monitors traffic flow at selected locations on three-year cycles. Map 6 shows the locations of these counts taken in and around the Town of Nepeuskun during 2004. The area with the highest traffic levels was State Road 91, running east and west through the Town. Traffic volume has generally decreased since 2000. County Road E experienced a lower traffic count in 2007 than in 2000 (1,000 cars daily compared to 1,500). State road 91 also experienced a lower traffic count in 2007 compared to 2000 (4,200 compared to 4,800).

A number of transportation concerns were pointed out during the public input process. People felt that the local town roads tend to be in poor condition and lack appropriate speed limit signage.

Also expressed was concern about the increase in bicyclists and pedestrians along County Road E, which is generally too narrow and has too high of traffic volume to safely accommodate both vehicular and pedestrian/bike traffic. Wider shoulders for walking and/or biking would help address these issues. It was also stated that the 45 mph speed limit is not enforced enough along this road.

There is also some concern that the speed and heavy truck traffic through Rush Lake Crossroads conflicts with the residential living in this area. The corner of Rush Lake Loop Road, County Road V, and County Road E has been identified as a problem intersection.

Road Conditions and Maintenance

Road Conditions

Periodically Winnebago County inspects all of the public roads that the Town maintains and assigns a rating for the physical appearance of each road by segment. The system is referred to as PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating). Data from the most recent survey is shown in Table 3.2. More than half the roads in the Town need preservative treatments, structural improvements, or reconstruction.

Road Maintenance

The Town of Nepeuskun contracts with Winnebago County for all town road maintenance. The County also has the responsibility of snow plowing, weeding and cutting along all roads, and does all of the road repairs and rebuilding.

Repaving of approximately 0.7 miles of Koro Rd from Cty Rd V south is planned for 2009. Repaving Koro Rd

north of County Rd V is being considered for 2010 – 2013 in segments of .5 – 1 mile per year.

The County typically double seal coats approx. 1-2 miles of road per year depending on road wear conditions. The amount of paving and seal-coating done in a given year depends a lot on the snowplowing expenditures for the year. Surplus or deficient funds in the road snowplowing budget are balanced with the road maintenance budget.

Table 3.2. Condition of Roads Located in the Town

| PASER Rating | Warranted Maintenance | Percent of Total |
|--------------|---|------------------|
| 1 or 2 | Reconstruction | 4% |
| 3 or 4 | Structural Improvements and leveling – overlay | 17% |
| 5 or 6 | Preservative Treatments | 30% |
| 7 or 8 | Routine Maintenance – cracksealing and minor patching | 45% |
| 9 or 10 | None required | 4% |

Source: Town of Nepeuskun PASER 2007

New Roads

Given the slow population increase and minimal housing demand over the next 20 years in Nepeuskun, construction of new collector and local roads will be limited. There are no anticipated locations where new roads need to be added.

State and Regional Transportation Plans

State Plans

A number of statewide transportation planning efforts will affect the transportation facilities and services in the region. The following sections provide a brief

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overview of the plans that have been completed or that are in a draft phase.

Connections 2030

Connections 2030 is Wisconsin's statewide long-range, multimodal transportation plan that is currently under development. The plan identifies a series of multimodal corridors for each part of the state. Nepeuskun is part of the Cranberry Country Corridor which runs from Tomah to Oshkosh. When completed, the multimodal corridor plans will prioritize investments and assist Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) in identifying future segments for more detailed corridor plans. It is anticipated that the plan will be adopted in Fall 2009. One major feature that affects the Town is the recommended construction of a passing lane on State Road 91.

Wisconsin State Highway Plan - 2020

The State Highway Plan 2020 outlines investment needs and priorities for the state's 11,800 miles of state trunk highways through the year 2020. The plan does not identify specific projects, but broad strategies and policies to improve the state highway system. Top priority is given to pavement and bridge preservation, safety improvements, completion of backbone routes, and bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. Second priority is given to capacity expansion, new interchanges, and new bypasses.

Nepeuskun is not specifically identified in the Plan but could be affected regionally by it. Just north of Town, State Road 21 is identified as a potential major project (subject to environmental analysis and legislative approval). Further north, State Road 10, which connects Appleton to Interstate 39 north to Wausau, is a legislatively approved major backbone future project.

State Six-Year Highway Improvement Plan

The Highway Improvement Plan covers the 11,773 miles of state highways maintained by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). The six-year program details projects that are scheduled for

improvement over the next years. There are no projects within the current program associated with the Town of Nepeuskun.

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan - 2020

The Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan – 2020 presents a blueprint for developing and integrating bicycling into the overall transportation system. In an effort to promote bicycling between communities, the plan analyzed the condition of all county trunk and state trunk highways in the state and produced maps showing the suitability of these roads for bicycle traffic. Suitability criteria were based primarily on road width and traffic volumes with secondary consideration given to pavement condition, passing opportunities, and percent and volume of truck traffic.

This Plan identifies the Mascoutin Valley State Trail as a major bicycling tour trail. It also identifies County Road V as being a "best conditions for bicycling" route. CTY RD V connects to HWY 49 in Green Lake County. County Road E, on the other hand, has been labeled too high traffic volume and having undesirable conditions for bicycling.

State Recreational Trails Network Plan

In 2001, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources adopted the State Trails Network Plan as an amendment to the Wisconsin State Trail Strategic Plan. This plan identifies a network of trail corridors throughout the state referred to as the "trail interstate system" that potentially could consist of more than 4,000 miles of trails. These potential trails may follow one or more of the following: highway corridors, utility corridors, rail corridors and linear natural features (e.g. rivers and other topographic features).

Even though a proposed trail corridor may not run through a community, the plan encourages communities and counties throughout the state to develop additional trails that would link to the statewide trail system. The Mascoutin Valley State Trail provides one such opportunity for linkage. The DNR is

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currently considering extending the trail from Ripon to Oxford along the abandoned rail line.

Regional Plans

Winnebago County is a member of the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The 2030 Regional Comprehensive Plan was completed in June 2003 and serves Calumet, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Menominee, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara along with Winnebago Counties.

The transportation element to this Plan encourages intergovernmental cooperation in order to address the increase in traffic volumes and the need for capacity expansions on the region's roadways. The Plan recommends an expansion of State Highway 21, north of Nepeuskun, into a four lane road to ensure efficient traffic circulation to I90/I94.

Midwest Regional Rail System

One large-scale regional transportation initiative that Nepeuskun may benefit from is the development of the Midwest Regional Rail System. Since 1996, transportation officials from nine Midwest states, Amtrak, and the Federal Railroad Administration have been developing a proposal to bring more efficient high-speed passenger rail to Midwest residents. The recently adopted Midwest Regional Rail Initiative, lays out a general framework for developing and improving the

3,000-mile rail network, known as the Midwest Regional Rail System (MWRSS).

Rail service would not run through Nepeuskun; however, with service from Minneapolis-St Paul through Madison to Milwaukee and also from Green Bay to Milwaukee, the Town would be located between the two rail line options.

The overall project would cost more than \$4 billion and would be implemented over 10 years. As of this date, the state has not authorized any specific projects. Implementation of all or part of the MWRSS in Wisconsin will likely be addressed in the state's Rail Plan currently under development.

County Plans

Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan

The County's Comprehensive Plan's transportation element acts to guide improvements for all modes of transportation and to advise local communities in respect to the larger county transportation framework. It does not identify any major changes occurring in Nepeuskun. It does, however, identify the Mascoutin Valley State Trail expansion from Ripon to Oxford. The Plan emphasizes the importance of a multi-modal transportation network throughout the county.

Transportation 20-Year Vision

In 2030, we envision Nepeuskun as a place with a well-maintained transportation system that offers a variety of options for all residents. Roads and corridors are safely shared by motorists, bicycles, and pedestrians alike. County Road V has been designated as a county bicycle route, and the Mascoutin Valley State Trail continues to provide visitors and residents with a safe and scenic hiking, biking, horseback riding, and snowmobiling route through town. Widened shoulders along County Road E have improved pedestrian and bicycle safety along this key corridor.

Speed limit signs have been installed throughout town and additional traffic enforcement, particularly along County Road E, has improved road safety. The speed limit of County Road E through the Crossroads of Rush Lake has been reduced to 35 mph, and the intersection of County Road V, E, and Rush Lake Loop Road has been improved to address safety and visibility issues.

The following goals, objectives, and policies are intended to provide a comprehensive approach for achieving this vision. The order in which these goals, objectives, and policies are listed does not necessarily denote their priority.

Goals

Goals are broad, advisory statements that express general public priorities about how the Town should approach preservation and development issues.

- G3.1** Maintain the design, function, and safety of the existing road network
- G3.2** Coordinate land use and transportation planning to meet the needs of drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and local residents.
- G3.3** Enhance and promote the use of bicycles and walking as viable forms of transportation by providing multi-use trails, bicycle routes, and wide shoulders on key roads.
- G3.4** Reduce the impact of traffic on residential life.

Objectives

Objectives suggest future directions in a way that is more specific than goals. The accomplishments of an objective contribute to the fulfillment of a goal.

- O3.1** Reduce the speed of traffic traveling through Rush Lake Crossroads.
- O3.2** Work to improve safety and visibility at the intersection of County Road V, E, and Rush Lake Loop Road.
- O3.3** Reduce the number of local roads requiring reconstruction or structural improvements.
- O3.4** Maintain and improve the safety of roads for bicycles and pedestrians.
- O3.5** Improve access to, and increase use of, the Mascoutin Valley State Trail.
- O3.6** Discourage truck traffic along County Road E.

Policies

Policies are rules, courses of action, or programs used to ensure Plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives.

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- P3.1** Continue to double-seal coat one to two miles of local roads in the town each year.
- P3.2** Continue to work with Winnebago County provide paratransit in Nepeuskun through the subsidized taxi and van service
- P3.3** Work with the County to evaluate options to address traffic speed and safety in the Crossroads of Rush Lake and consider options for improving the safety at intersection of E and V.
- P3.4** Work with the County to evaluate options for increasing traffic enforcement in the town, especially near the Crossroads of Rush Lake.
- P3.5** Work to improve the condition of roads in the town that have been identified as needing reconstruction or structural improvements.
- P3.6** Work with the County to designate County Road V as a bicycle Route.
- P3.7** Work with the County to evaluate the feasibility of increasing the shoulder width along County Road E to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.