



CHAPTER 5

TRANSPORTATION

CHAPTER 5: TRANSPORTATION

INTRODUCTION

A safe, effective, and efficient transportation system is an important element and catalyst for sustainable growth in the Town of Algoma. Evaluating the Town's transportation system requires the assessment of the roads, pedestrian and cyclist amenities (non-motorized), public transit, rail, and air designed for transporting goods and people.

Wisconsin's Smart Growth Legislation requires that the transportation element consist of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs that guide the development of various transportation modes. These modes include: highways, transit, transportation for those with disabilities, bicycles, pedestrian, railroads, air transportation, trucking, and water. This element serves to assess the current situation of these transportation modes, determine what the Town envision the system to encompass in the future, and establish a plan to accomplish those goals. This chapter, along with Appendix C-5 addresses these requirements.

GOAL

To provide a safe, efficient and environmentally sound transportation system that offers personal mobility to all segments of the population, and supports the economy of the Town of Algoma and the region.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS AND NARRATIVE

Below are a summary of the key transportation points and a brief narrative of what this means:

LOCAL ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

THE FACTS:

- Traffic volumes have generally increased between 2016 and 2019, along WIS 21, however; volumes near the WIS 21/I-41 interchange have decreased from approximately 6,800 in 2016 to 4,500 in 2019 (Map 5-1 Transportation Facilities).
- Traffic volumes have generally increased between 2016 and 2019 on many minor arterials including Oakwood Road and 9th Avenue, however; CTH E (Witzel Ave.) and CTH K (20th St.) have decreased by about 9% (Map 5-1 Transportation Facilities).
- As of 2019, the STH 21 Planning Study has concluded and stopped short of officially mapping future highway needs and designating STH 21 as an expressway. STH 21 could be designated as an expressway when it is expanded to 4 lanes from Algoma to Omro.
- Plans to develop a "West Side Arterial", connecting WIS 21 to WIS 44 have been discussed for years and would be the extension of Clairville/Leonard Point Road to STH 21.

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- The Town is also involved with developing reconstruction plans for Omro Road scheduled for 2021. The Honey Creek Road bridge improvement will be included with the Omro Road reconstruction.
- The Town is in the early stages of improvement discussions for Leonard Point Road, Oakwood Road, and the Clairville/Leonard Point Road extension. A roundabout at STH 21 and Leonard Point Road should be considered when looking at this project to ensure safety for all users, as well as bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.
- When Oakwood Road is up for reconstruction consideration, traffic calming mechanisms and bicycle and pedestrian facilities should be incorporated into the plan.

WHAT IT MEANS:

As new development occurs during the planning period, it is likely that congestion will increase. Much of that new traffic will be generated by new residents moving to Algoma, however; the Town is located in a place whereby it also serves as a “through route” (WIS 21) for commuters coming from Omro, Winneconne and communities to the west who work in various locations throughout the Oshkosh and Fox Cities urbanized areas. Future land use may be impacted along the expanded WIS 21 corridor due to development pressures. Plans for WIS 21 include the future conversion to an expressway facility, and the finalization of the West Side Arterial plan are important to the Town’s future land use and development patterns.

ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS AND CONDITIONS

THE FACTS:

- In total, there are approximately 53.3 miles of urban functionally classified roads in the Town as follows (Map 5-1):
 - 5 miles of urban principal arterial roads on three separate segments;
 - 4.5 miles of urban minor arterials on six segments;
 - 7.8 miles of urban collector road; and
 - 36 miles of urban local roads.
- Of the 36 miles of urban local roads, approximately 9% (4.65 miles) of will require structural improvements (rating fail to fair) that could involve pavement recycling, overlay and patching.
- There are no rustic roads designated in the Town of Algoma.
- All bridges but the one on WIS 21 are rated sufficient.

WHAT IT MEANS:

Roads support all types of land uses and can be expensive to build and maintain. The Town’s Capital Improvement Plans are usually prepared in a 3-year rolling planning timeframe that outline proposed projects, projected costs, year to be implemented, and potential funding mechanisms. Transportation related projects (public works) consume a majority of the total CIP

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budget for any given year. With limited revenues, the Town is focused on in-fill development and ensuring any new developments are built with multi-modal infrastructure that is easier and more cost-effective to maintain.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

THE FACTS:

- Very limited transit service by GO Transit exists within the extreme eastern portion of the Town along its border with the City of Oshkosh.
- GO Transit recently updated its Transit Development Plan which calls for encouraging more Transit Supportive Development.
- Disabled and senior citizens (60 years and older) can utilize services provided by Winnebago County's ADA and Senior Transportation Programs.

WHAT IT MEANS:

During the planning period, it is possible that public transit demands could increase. An aging population, mobility preferences of younger generations, as well as changes in the housing market, will drive this demand. Existing programs may currently serve the Town's needs, however; proper funding, support, and coordination will be necessary to continue meeting service needs and perhaps expanding services throughout the planning period. The GO Transit's TDP - Transit Development Plan, calls for development densities of at least four households per acre or four jobs per acre which is somewhat higher than many of the existing densities found in the Town of Algoma.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

THE FACTS:

- The Town has limited bicycle accommodations that only include paved shoulders or recreation area trails. Additionally no substantial pedestrian oriented facilities are provided along existing roadways.
- Algoma has a strong culture of outdoor living where bicycling and walking/exercising is a way of life.
- Future improvements to main Town roads, such as N. Oakwood Road and Leonard Point Road will be evaluated for the need for pedestrian friendly amenities like bike lanes and sidewalks.
- Omro Road will be reconstructed in 2021 and 2022 with bicycle and pedestrian facilities added.
- Sheldon Nature Area and Jones Park offer walking and biking amenities for community residents and visitors.

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WHAT IT MEANS:

Over the past 10 or so years, the demands for more and safer bicycle and pedestrian accommodations have increased greatly within the Town of Algoma, as well as the Oshkosh area as a whole. Residents are looking at these modes of transportation for recreation and exercise purposes, but also as an alternative method of commuting to work. The Town of Algoma has not invested significant local dollars on improving bike/ped infrastructure over this time period and more work needs to be done in order to locate the right facilities in the right places, as well as to improve safety. Planned facilities, at this point, generally reflect regional trail network extensions and no localized trail plans have been developed.

FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION

THE FACTS:

- Appleton International Airport (ATW) provides regional air transportation. In general, the total passengers served by Appleton International Airport have increased. In 2016-2017, passenger activity increased 7 percent; the largest percent increase of the four largest commercial airports (Milwaukee, Madison and Green Bay).
- Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh is classified as a Large General Aviation (GA) airport and does not provide commercial air service. It is, however, a vital tourism / economic development entity for Winnebago County.
- There is currently one active railroad line running through the Town of Algoma with a 286,000 pound railcar limit. The line is operated and maintained by Wisconsin and Southern Railroad (WSOR). No direct passenger rail service is offered near the Town of Algoma.
- At the regional level, I-41 and STH 21 are fully functioning truck routes with no limits on semi-trailer lengths. STH 91 is a designated truck route, limiting trailer lengths to 75 feet.
- The only designated trucking terminal within the Town of Algoma is at the current Fox Graphics property located on STH 21.
- There are no commercial ports in the Town of Algoma.

WHAT IT MEANS:

Given the location of the Town of Algoma along STH 21, truck freight transportation is a key part of its transportation system, but not necessarily a huge part of the Town's economy. The continued growth of ATW offers increased opportunities for regional growth as it improves services in a competitive manner.

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FRAMING CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

5a: COMPLETE STREETS

Land use and transportation are inextricably linked. People travel from residential areas to their place of work. Others drive to shop or obtain services from commercial districts. Industry relies on transportation to move goods and commodities. How people and businesses choose to move throughout a community and the reasons for doing so vary greatly. Motor vehicles are still the top choice of transportation; however, more and more people are choosing to walk, bike or take public transit to reach their destinations. Hence, the Town of Algoma should make a shift in its traditional street design policies in order to foster increased mobility and better connectivity. One method of doing so is to develop a Complete Streets Policy. Complete streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders for all ages and abilities.

Strategy 5a-1: Communicate the Complete Streets policy concept and development strategies to community members and developers, noting that the policy is not a “one size fits all” approach.

Strategy 5a-2: Review information and resources on the Complete Streets topic to gain a better understanding of its application and value. Resources that can be viewed immediately can be found here:

- <http://www.ecwrpc.org/complete-streets-presentations/>
- <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/program/national-complete-streets-coalition/>

5b: TRANSPORTATION ACCOMMODATIONS AND AFFORDABILITY

Local roads and streets are key components of the Town of Algoma’s transportation network. They provide direct access to homes and businesses, as well as critical for the movement of goods and services. The financial resources to maintain local roads are becoming increasingly scarce due to the cost and the inability of the Town to raise taxes because of the levy limits imposed on local municipalities by the state.

Due to these factors, many communities have begun to identify and institute new sources of transportation funding, such as wheel taxes, transportation utilities, or through modified property assessment policies. Regardless of the funding constraints, the construction and maintenance of new roadways within the Town of Algoma will be critical to its future in terms of land use, growth and economic development.

There has been significant research on the benefits of multimodal transportation facilities. Specifically, providing opportunities for physical activity improves public health, increases safety for all roadway users, enhances economic vitality, promotes equity, and reduces congestion and

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pollution. Providing multimodal opportunities ensures people are able to travel to places regardless of whether they have access to a vehicle or the ability to drive.

Strategy 5b-1: Review existing and new potential funding sources for local road maintenance.

Strategy 5b-2: Look for gaps in the current multimodal network, especially between residential and pedestrian infrastructure, then evaluate the potential need for these facilities.

Strategy 5b-3: When roadways are reconstructed or developed, coordinate with the community to implement bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

Strategy 5b-4: Work with the Appleton (Fox Cities) Transportation Management Area and Oshkosh Metropolitan Planning Organization to be included in the upcoming Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan update.

Strategy 5b-5: Secure funding for the expansion of the Westside Arterial in the Town.