Transportation

Introduction

Prairie du Chien residents depend on the transportation facilities in their community and the region to connect them to other areas of the state and to the rest of the nation and the world. The type, quality and location of transportation facilities are an important component in residents' quality of life and in developing and maintaining a sustainable economy.

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. On the other hand, the creation of new, or improvements to existing, transportation corridors may have a significant distribution affect on the type and timing of development within a community and/or a region. Thus, the Transportation and Land Use Elements should support and compliment one another.

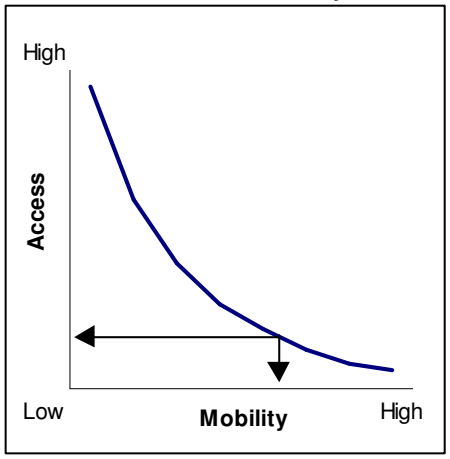
For the foreseeable future, the private automobile will continue to dominate all modes of transportation. However, it is important to recognize that people have different needs and capabilities and that a good transportation system should include a variety of transportation choices. This plan element will provide an inventory of the City's existing transportation system, including not only roadways, but also rail, pedestrian, bicycle, transit, air, water systems, and associated inter-modal connections.

Existing Conditions

Road Network

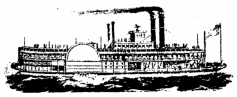
Roadways serve two competing functions: access to individual properties and traffic mobility. These needs compete in that as the number of property accesses increases along a route, traffic mobility decreases and vice versa (Exhibit F-1).

Exhibit F-1. General Relationship Between Access and Mobility



The primary purpose of the road network is to provide access to properties and mobility. These functions often compete. As the number of access points rise traffic mobility decreases. This concept is often referred to in the industry as access management.

Driveway design and spacing has a substantial impact on the existing road system and preserving the flow of traffic on the surrounding road system in terms of safety, capacity, and speed. State highways and major arterial streets are typically targets of access management efforts. Access management is also of concern on main county roads when there is a transition from a rural environment to a city. Cooperation between land use and transportation interests is vital to a well-functioning transportation network and street and driveway patterns are important determinants of community character.
Although the City does not have jurisdictional authority over state and county highways, development around these highways impacts the amount and type of traffic using the facility. In addition, the extent to which the City's road system



accommodates local travel directly impacts the amount of traffic that is diverted onto state and county roads.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) has developed a road classification system that is based on traffic volumes and the location and primary function within the transportation system. Each road in the state is classified using this system. In general, arterials accommodate the efficient movement of vehicles, while local streets provide the land access function. Collectors serve both local and through traffic by providing a connection between arterials and local roads.

Below is a listing of the roads in the City and how they are classified (Map F-1).

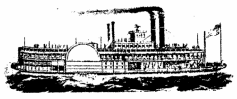
- **Principal Arterials:** U.S. Highway 18, State Highway 35, State Highway 60
- **Minor Arterials:** State Highway 27, Washington Street, Main Street, Beaumont Road, Parrish Street
- **Major Collectors:** County Highway K, Limery Road, Bouska Road, Vineyard Coulee Road
- **Collectors:** Villa Louis Road, Blackhawk Avenue, Brisbois Street, Main Street, Paquette Street, Beaumont Road, Wacouta Street, Dousman Street, Webster Street, Wells Street, Fremont Street
- **Local Streets:** All other public streets in the City that are not classified are considered to be local streets.

There are three federal and state highways that travel through the Prairie du Chien area and each is described in more detail below.

- **USH 18** is classified as a principal arterial and enters Crawford County over the Mississippi River on the Marquette-Jolliet Bridge eastward into Prairie du Chien. The highway then spits into a one-way paired system using Wisconsin Street for westbound traffic and Iowa Street for eastbound traffic. Iowa Street is a 32-feet wide urban roadway as is Wisconsin Street, which carries the traffic to Iowa. Both commercial and residential land uses front Wisconsin Street and Iowa Street. The streets join Marquette Road and STH 35 as it travels south. At this point the road becomes a four-lane urban roadway as it travels through the center of Prairie du Chien south. A railroad runs along the west side of Marquette Road, therefore there is only commercial properties on the east side of the roadway. The remainder of Marquette Road consists of older residential and commercial properties, which leads to a high frequency of driveways.

- **STH 35** travels on USH 18 and therefore it has many of the same characteristics as USH 18. The highway is classified as a principal arterial, but is not classified as a collector in the state highway plan as is USH 18. STH 35 north of Wisconsin Street, travels on Marquette Road as a four-lane urban roadway with 10- to 11-foot lanes and a 2-foot curb and gutter on each side. STH 35 and Marquette Road transition to a two-lane urban roadway with parking on both sides after it intersects with STH 27. STH 35 then returns to a two-lane rural roadway with 6-foot shoulders as it heads north toward La Crosse. It is part of the Great River Road and the National Scenic Byway.

- **STH 27** begins at STH 35 and travels northeast towards Eastman. STH 27 is classified as a minor arterial. STH 27 turns into Blackhawk Avenue once inside the City, where it then meanders towards the downtown business district. From Marquette Road to Randee Avenue, STH 27 is a 44-foot wide, two-lane urban roadway. The highway transitions back into a rural roadway as it travels east.



As a part of the statewide system, WDOT monitors traffic flow at selected locations on a three-year cycle. These traffic volumes are reported as average annual daily traffic (AADT) counts (Map F-1). The highest volumes occur along the length of Marquette Road and on Wisconsin Street and Iowa Street.

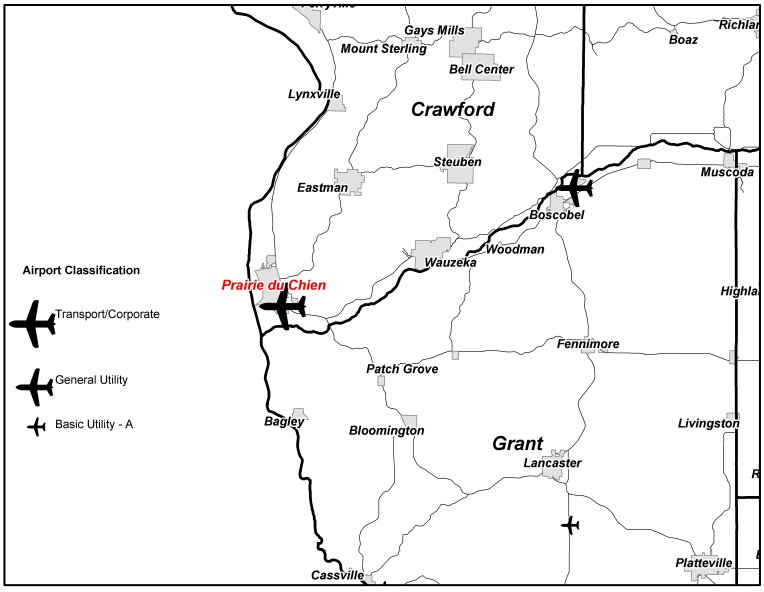
Air Transportation

In Wisconsin, the state airport system consists of 100 public-use airports. Of these, 93 are owned by a public body and 7 are privately owned. Each of the airports serves different needs and is classified according to a classification system as described below.

- **Air Carrier/Air Cargo** airports are designed to accommodate all types of aircraft. Airports in this category are usually referenced by the types of air carrier service being provided (e.g., short-haul, medium-haul, long haul).
- **Transport/Corporate** airports are intended to serve corporate jets, small passenger and cargo jet aircraft used in regional service, and small airplanes used in commuter air service.
- **General Utility** airports are intended to serve virtually all small general aviation single and twin-engine piston aircraft with a gross takeoff weight of 12,500 pounds or less.
- **Basic Utility** airports are intended to serve all small single-engine piston aircraft and many of the smaller twin-engine piston aircraft with a gross takeoff weight of 12,500 pounds or less. This category is further divided into 2 categories; Basic Utility and Basic Utility B. Basic Utility airports are designed to accommodate aircraft of less than 6,000 pounds gross weight, with approach speeds below 91 knots and wingspans of less than 49 feet. Basic Utility B airports are designed to accommodate aircraft of less than 12,500 pounds gross weight, with approach speeds below 121 knots and wingspans of less than 49 feet.

The City of Prairie du Chien operates and maintains the Prairie du Chien Municipal Airport, which is located on the south side of the City. It is classified as a transport/corporate airport and has two runways, one 5,000 feet by 75 feet and the other 4,000 feet by 75 feet. Fuel, including jet fuel, a terminal building, and hangars are available at the airport. About 17 aircraft are stationed at the airport. USH 18 provides the main access into the airport.

Exhibit F-2. Airports In and Near Prairie du Chien: 2003



Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Map 1 existing

There is an average of 34 operations a day at the facility of which, about 58 percent is local aviation traffic, 36 percent is transient general aviation, and 6 percent is air taxi traffic.

Other airports in the area are located in Boscobel and Lancaster (Exhibit F-2). The closest airports with commercial passenger service are La Crosse Municipal and Dane County Regional.

Of the three airports in the area, only the Prairie du Chien Municipal Airport is expected to experience increased traffic levels over the next 20 years. (Table F-1).

Table F-1. Forecasted Airport Operations; Prairie du Chien Municipal Airport and Other Selected Airports in Region: 2000-2020

				Percent Change
Airport	2000	2010	2020	2000 to 2020
Prairie du Chien Municipal	7,300	7,900	7,900	8.2
Boscobel	15,700	15,700	15,700	0
Lancaster Municipal	4,600	4,600	4,600	0

Source: Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020

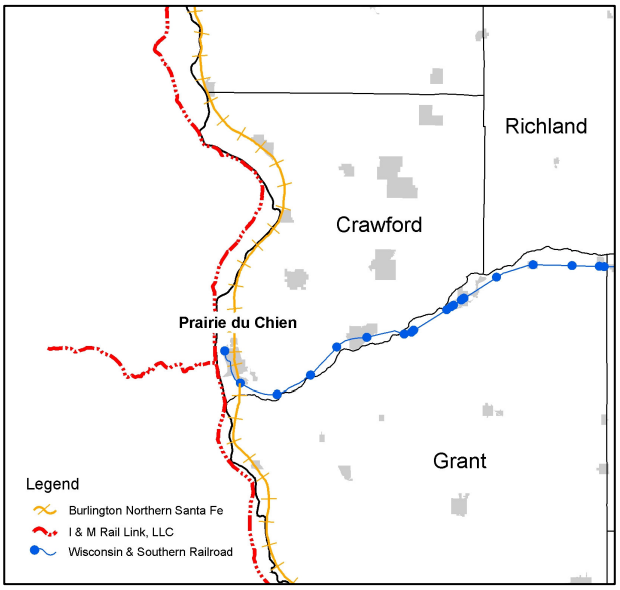
The Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, and City of Prairie du Chien are jointly funding a reconstruction project at the Prairie du Chien Municipal Airport. Along with reconstructing hangar taxiway and apron pavement, the goal is to improve surface drainage. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2003.

Railroad Facilities

With an increase in rail efficiency and truck-rail intermodal trends, traffic on Wisconsin railroads has increased in recent years. According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, it is forecasted to see continued growth in the future.

Railroad facilities in Prairie du Chien include Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and Wisconsin & Southern Railroad (WSOR) lines (Exhibit F-3). The main BNSF line runs directly through the center of the City, and in some places the right-of-way is shared with Illinois Street. There are both north and southbound tracks that run the entire length of the City, with additional spurs and sidings. WSOR runs primarily adjacent to the Wisconsin and Mississippi Rivers and on St. Feriole Island.

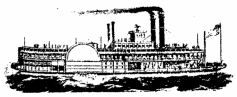
Exhibit F-3. Railroads In and Near Prairie du Chien: 2000



Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Typically there are 40 BNSF and 6 WSOR trains that travel through the City daily. The trains travel at speeds of 45 to 50 mph through the City and 60 mph outside the City to the north. South of the City, speeds are more moderate due to a railway switch in the vicinity of the airport.

Both railroads are valuable since some businesses in the area are located directly on a spur, or truck products locally to and from the spurs.



Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities play an important role in moving people within a community for purposes of necessity and/or pleasure. These types of mobility are often overlooked yet many individuals choose these modes for transportation purposes. Improvements to bicycle/pedestrian facilities typically occur in conjunction with road projects, and road improvement schedules are tied to local, county, and state capital improvement budgets.

Prairie du Chien has a number of sidewalks and multi-use trails (Map F-1). Sidewalks are present along most streets in the central part of the City, west of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad. Sidewalks are intermittent east of Marquette Road and nearly non-existent in the south and southeast portions of the City. The multi-use trails are constructed of asphalt pavement and are typically about 6 to 7 feet wide. The major recreation trail runs along the west side of Marquette Road from Webster Street to South Town Lane. Other trails are located along Wells Street south of the high school and on St. Feriole Island.

In addition to local and county plans, the State has also adopted several pedestrian and bicycle transportation plans:

- Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020
- Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020
- Translinks 21: A Multimodal Transportation Plan for Wisconsin's 21st Century
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources State Trails Network Plan

Snowmobile Trails

Wisconsin snowmobilers are proud of the statewide trail system that ranks among the best in the nation. This trail system would not be possible without the generosity of the thousands of landowners around the state, as 70 percent of all trails are on private land. Trails are established through annual agreements and/or easements granted by these private property owners to the various snowmobile clubs and county alliances throughout the state.

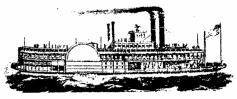
Trucking

Trucks handle almost 90 percent of all freight tonnage shipped from Wisconsin, serving businesses and industries of all sizes and in all parts of the state. The state has a 112,000-mile network of state highways and local roads, including the 3,650-mile Corridors 2020 network of four-lane backbone and key connector routes.

Designated truck routes in the City include US Highway 18, State Highway 35, and State Highway 27. Main Street is designated as an alternate truck route, while several other streets are designated as local truck access only (Map F-1).

Water Transportation

Today, water transportation continues to serve as the most efficient method for moving bulk commodities. Wisconsin's commercial ports are major economic hubs that generate thousands of jobs. Water transportation also provides communities recreational opportunities such as canoeing and fishing. Wisconsin's unique location, bordered on three sides by commercially navigable waterways, allows it to benefit from water transportation. Wisconsin's ports serve as multi-modal distribution centers, linking cargo-carrying vessels with the state's rail and highway networks.



The Port of Prairie du Chien is located on the Upper Mississippi River system linking Wisconsin to the Gulf of Mexico. The Prairie du Chien Municipal Riverfront Harbor accommodates large paddlewheel cruise boats and small excursion boats. Privately owned docks and storage facilities handle bulk cargo. Approximately 600,000 metric tons of cargo are handled annually by the Port of Prairie du Chien. Common types of cargo include coal, salt, sand, cement, grain, and fertilizer.

Highway Projects

WDOTs six-year highway improvement program has a number of highway improvement projects planned in the Prairie du Chien area between 2002 and 2007. Highway 18 south of Prairie du Chien was reconstructed and expanded in 2003-2004. State Highway 35 north of the City is scheduled to be resurfaced. Several bridge improvements are also expected during the six-year period.

Review of Existing Transportation Plans

There are a number of statewide transportation planning efforts that will have a bearing on the presence or absence of transportation facilities and services in the region. Most of these efforts developed umbrella policy documents that provide general goals and policies covering the state. The following section provides a brief overview of the plans that have been completed or that are in a draft phase and how they might affect area residents and the preparation of this plan.

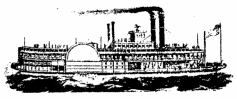
- **Translink 21** – Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Prompted by the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), *Translink 21* is a broad plan intended to guide transportation investments through the year 2020. From this plan, individual plans for highways, airports, railroads, bikeways, pedestrian, and transit continue to be shaped.

- **Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020** – Wisconsin Department of Transportation. This plan provides a blueprint for integrating bicycle transportation into the overall transportation system. The plan analyzes the condition of all county and state trunk highways and shows the suitability of roadways for bicycle travel. Guidelines are available for accommodating bicycle travel when roadways are constructed or reconstructed.

- **Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020** – Wisconsin Department of Transportation. The State Highway Plan 2020 outlines investment needs and priorities for the state's investment needs and priorities for the state's 1,800 miles of State Trunk Highway through 2020. Given the financial realities of maintaining this extensive road network, the plan established priorities for funding. Most of the funding is allocated to Corridors 2020 backbone and collector routes.

- **Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020** – Wisconsin Department of Transportation. This plan provides for the preservation and enhancement of public use airports that are part of the State Airport System over a 21-year period. Overall, the plan recommends no new airports and no elimination of existing facilities.

- **State Recreational Trails Network Plan** – Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The 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 follow highway corridors, utility corridors, rail corridors, and linear natural features.

- **Wisconsin State Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020** – Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Funding

WDOT administers a number of programs to defray the cost of enhancements to local transportation systems. Eligibility options may increase through coordination due to population thresholds associated with some programs. In addition, cost savings and a more seamless transportation network between and around communities may be realized as a result of joint efforts. A complete list of programs is available at www.dot.state.wi.us and should be consulted to understand the full array of programming.

- **Local Transportation Enhancements Program:** The program requires a local match of 20 percent and allows for bicycle and pedestrian facility system enhancements such as the development of a bicycle commuting route, landscaping, and other scenic beautification.

- **Elderly and Disabled Transportation Capital Assistance Program:** This annual grant program provides capital funding for specialized transit vehicles used to serve the elderly and persons with disabilities. The program covers 80 percent of the total cost of equipment.

- **State Urban/Rural/Small Urban Mass Transit Operating Assistance Program:** This program provides funds for eligible project costs to public bus and shared-ride taxi programs. Eligible public transportation services include transport by bus, shared-ride taxicab, rail or other conveyance, either publicly or privately-owned, that provide general or special service on a regular and continuing basis. Local units of government are eligible to apply.

- **State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation Six-Year Highway Improvement Program:** The state highway system consists of 744 miles of Interstate freeways and 11,147 miles of state and U.S.-marked highways. While the 11,794 miles of state highways represent only 11 percent of the 110,594 miles of public roads, they carry over 29 billion vehicle miles of travel a year, or about 58 percent of the total annual statewide travel. The remaining 99,160 miles are maintained and approved by local units of government.