

## 5.0 TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT



### Introduction

The Town of Oshkosh's transportation system consists of local roads, major and minor collector streets, a minor arterial and two principal arterials. Certain areas of the town also accommodate bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

Private automobiles are the primary means of transportation in, through, and around the Town of Oshkosh. Of interest to the town is the partial relocation of STH 110 and its redesignation as USH 45. Also of interest to the town is the planned expansion of the USH 41 corridor from four to six lanes and the potential realignment of the Butte des Morts Bridge.

#### Highway Changes

During the time this plan was being developed, several significant highway changes were occurring in the town. Specifically, the following activities were underway:

- ? STH 110 was realigned and redesignated as USH 45.
- ? STH 110 was renamed County Road S starting at the realigned intersection of CTH T/Ryf Road to STH 116.
- ? The former USH 45 was renamed STH 76

To help ensure the usefulness of this plan over a 20-year period, this chapter is written to reflect these changes

### Transportation Vision

*In 2020, a network of well-maintained streets and highways serves the Town of Oshkosh. The USH 41 corridor is the primary link between the Town of Oshkosh and the greater region. Trails and paths are an integral part of the transportation network in the Town of Oshkosh - providing connections to natural areas and between neighborhoods in the town.*

### Inventory of Existing Transportation Facilities

Transportation facilities in the Town of Oshkosh provide a varied mix of facilities ranging from rural town roads to state highways. Residents enjoy easy access to USH 45, and USH 41. For the most part, residents of the Town of Oshkosh rely on their **personal automobiles to meet most of their transportation needs**. Other modes of transit, including light rail and air transportation are not necessary in the town, nor are they likely to be developed prior to 2020 given that the population and local businesses do not demand, nor can they support, these types of transportation services. Wittman Regional Airport located within the City of Oshkosh is the nearest airport facility. Canadian National, through two corridors within the town, provides freight service.

#### PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Most local roads in the Town of Oshkosh have shoulder areas and the posted speed limits are 45 miles per hour or less. Given the relatively low-density development pattern it is simply much easier to drive. This situation is not anticipated to change over the planning period. As a result, people without access to vehicles face transportation challenges.



The primary pedestrian transportation facility in the town is this WIOWASH Trail. This county-operated trail, named for Winnebago, Outagamie, Waupaca, and Shawano counties, extends northerly from the Butte des Morts Bridge in the City of Oshkosh, 22 miles to Hortonville and from Tigerton 16 miles to Birnamwood. The WIOWASH Trail is used on a year-round basis. A base of crushed limestone enables summer use by bicyclists, hikers, horseback riders and joggers, and winter use by cross country skiers and snowmobiles. The trail weaves through woods, marshes, farm fields and prairies, providing trail users with a never-ending variety of scenery. The location of this trail in the Town of Oshkosh is illustrated on the *Transportation Network Map*.

## CYCLING OPPORTUNITIES

As part of the *State Highway Plan 2020*, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) completed a bicycling conditions assessment in conjunction with planned state highway priority corridors, to identify key linkages in Winnebago County.

### COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

40% of survey respondents felt developing bike trails was very important or important in the Town of Oshkosh. 36% of respondents did not feel it should be considered too important and 19% of respondents didn't consider bike trail development was important at all.

The WisDOT Map provided on the next page only suggests possible bicycle routes along state, county, and local roads. Although the plan does not establish bicycle routes in these areas, routes along state highways will be included in WisDOT's State Highway 2020 Plan and WisDOT will control their development.

In the Town of Oshkosh, WisDOT only suggests CTH A as a potential bicycle trail route. This route was selected because bicyclists have a natural tendency to want to travel along waterways. In addition, local bicycle traffic is found in locations where there is a concentration of residents. Most importantly, a path in this area would serve as a passage to the Appleton, Neenah, and Menasha area.

The WisDOT Plan Map also ranked several roads in the Town of Oshkosh based on their appropriateness for bicycle traffic. The road ratings are primarily based on the road width (i.e. ability to accommodate a shoulder path) and traffic volume. Secondary considerations include the percent of truck traffic and site distance restrictions. CTH T was given a "blue" rating, which indicates moderate conditions for bicycling. CTH Y was given a "red" rating indicating that this route either prohibits bicycling or it is not recommended. **The WIOUWASH trail is also illustrated on the map as an existing bicycling touring trail in the town.**

The WisDOT suggestions for bicycle paths along county and town roads are simply suggestions. Additional proposed trail routes indicated in the Transportation Element of the Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan are provided on the *Transportation Network Map*. The Winnebago County Plan proposes an off-road trail west of USH 41, on-road trails along CTH T and Ryf Roads (toward Lake Butte des Morts) and along Brooks Road (east of USH 45), and multi-use trails along CTH A and between the existing WIOWAUSH Trail and USH 45.

**WISDOT BICYCLE SCAN**

**TRANSPORTATION NETWORK MAP WILL BE PROVIDED HERE IN THE FINAL PLAN. THIS MAP ILLUSTRATES TOWN ROADS BY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION, TRAIL ROUTES, AND MAJOR ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (i.e. EXPANDED USH 41 CORRIDOR)**

## STREETS AND HIGHWAYS

Streets and highways are classified according to their primary function, either to move vehicles or to serve adjacent land. Arterials accommodate the movement of vehicles, while local roads are designed to provide direct access to individual parcels of land. Collectors serve both local and through traffic by providing a connection between arterials and local roads. Facilities classified under the Federal Aids Secondary System (county trunks and state highways) qualify for federal aid for capital projects involving construction, reconstruction or repair. The Town of Oshkosh currently receives state transportation aids on a quarterly basis. The information provided below on the functional classification of different roadways in the Town of Oshkosh was provided by the Winnebago County Highway Department.

**Principal Arterials.** USH 41 and USH 45 are classified as principal arterials in the Town of Oshkosh. They are designed to carry large volumes of traffic and provide efficient vehicular movement between cities in the region and beyond. The 2000 annual average daily traffic volume along USH 41 in the Town of Oshkosh ranged between 48,600 and 53,800 vehicles. The 2000 annual average daily traffic volumes along STH 110 (new USH 45) in the Town of Oshkosh was 12,600 vehicles (WisDOT, 2000).

**Minor Arterials.** STH 76 is classified as a minor arterial in the Town of Oshkosh. Like USH 41 and USH 45, it is designed to carry large volumes of traffic. However, unlike USH 41 and USH 45, it directly connects the Town of Oshkosh with the City of Oshkosh and includes controlled traffic signs and signals to regulate traffic flow.

**Major Collectors.** There are three major collectors in the Town of Oshkosh. CTH A, which runs parallel to Lake Winnebago to the City of Oshkosh, CTH T, north of USH 45, and CTH S (former portion of STH 110) is also classified as a major collector.

**Minor Collectors.** CTH Y, between USH 45 and CTH A, is the only road classified as a minor collector in the town. It serves as the predominant east-west route through the Town of Oshkosh.

**Local Roads.** The remaining roads in the town are local. They provide access to residential, commercial and industrial uses within the Town of Oshkosh.

*Streets and highways are classified according to their primary function, either to move vehicles or to serve adjacent land.*

- ✓ **Principal Arterials** – serve interstate and interregional trips. These routes are in areas with populations greater than 50,000.
- ✓ **Minor Arterials** – accommodate inter-regional 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 trunk 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.

All the roads described in this section are illustrated on the *Transportation Network Map*.

The town does not own any road maintenance equipment, nor does the town have any plans to acquire any. **All town road construction, reconstruction and improvement projects are completed by Winnebago County** through contract agreements with the Town of Oshkosh. Other maintenance (snow removal, etc.) is handled through contracts with Winnebago County and Radtke Contractors (Winneconne, WI). The town plans to utilize contract services indefinitely in the future because these arrangements provide quality, timely, cost effective services for the town.

## **RAILROAD CORRIDORS**

**Two railroad lines** extend into portions of the Town of Oshkosh. One of the corridors extends from the City of Oshkosh, north, through the Town of Oshkosh onward to Menasha. This corridor runs somewhat parallel to Lake Winnebago and CTH A. It is owned and operated by Canadian National. Currently, this rail corridor is in active use as a shipping link between Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula. There are no plans to abandon this railroad corridor. In fact, it is possible that if a high-speed railway is constructed between Green Bay and Chicago, this line may be used as a connection passenger route. This route crosses Snell Road, CTH Y and Sherman Road in the Town of Oshkosh. At each of these at-grade crossings a traffic signal is provided to prevent vehicle and train conflicts.



The second railroad corridor in the town is actually a spur off the Canadian National line that travels west toward Lake Butte des Morts along the southern boundary of town sections 1, 2, and 3. In the Town of Oshkosh this line crosses STH 76, USH 45 and Vinland Road. At each of these at-grade crossings a traffic signal is provided to prevent vehicle and train conflicts.

In 2001, the U.S. Surface Transportation Board approved a merger of Wisconsin Central and Canadian National Railroad companies. The \$1.2 billion acquisition of Wisconsin Central by Canadian National is expected to improve rail freight service in Wisconsin, due to Canadian National's faster connections through the Chicago terminals.

## **MASS TRANSIT**

Public bus service is not available within the Town of Oshkosh due to the low density of development within the town, thus limiting ridership. The Town of Oshkosh has no plans to establish its own transit service. Transit dependent residents of the town must rely on the assistance of friends or family, hire private transportation providers, or utilize the programs outlined in this section to meet their transportation needs. There is a park and ride lot in the Town of Oshkosh at the intersection of USH 45 and the WIOWASH trail.

**Qualified elderly and disabled residents may participate in the Dial A Ride program**, which is coordinated through local private cab providers. Participants can call cab companies directly for reduced fee rides. In addition, subsidized taxi and van service is provided to senior residents (over age 60) and disabled residents, 24 hours a day, seven

days a week through a program sponsored by Winnebago County. This program is specifically targeted to rural county residents living in townships. The costs is \$4.00 per one-way trip. Qualified participants are eligible for up to ten (10) one-way trips each month.

There are no high-speed trains or other means of mass transit to serve residents north of Milwaukee.

#### **TRUCK TRANSPORTATION**

**Dayton Freight Lines** is located in the Town of Oshkosh at the intersection of USH 41 and USH 45. The terminal provides an excellent site to distribute freight and services to the Oshkosh Area and the Fox Cities and Green Bay areas to the north. The facility does not plan to expand in the near future.

**Primary truck routes through the Town of Oshkosh include USH 45, USH 41, CTH Y (between USH 45 and USH 41), and STH 76.**

#### **WATER TRANSPORTATION**

Many residents and visitors to the Town of Oshkosh utilize waterways for recreational travel to neighboring communities located along the “Pool Lakes” (Butte des Morts, Winneconne and Poygan) and around Lake Winnebago. Therefore, continued access to the Lake Winnebago Pool System is an important local priority for the future. No additional facilities are planned at this time. The town believes that the available lake access is adequate to meet local demand for the next 20 years.

For navigational purposes, the Winnebago County Parks Department contracts with Radtke Excavating Inc. to install buoys in the spring and remove them in the fall. In total, 77 buoys are provided in Lake Winnebago, Lake Butte des Morts, Lake Winneconne and the Wolf River Channel that lies in Lake Poygan. These buoys are important navigational aids that mark shallow areas or river channels and keep boaters from becoming stranded in shallow depths. The agreement between Radtke Excavating and the Winnebago County Parks Department is expected to continue indefinitely into the future.

#### **AIRPORTS**

**Wittman Regional Airport**, located in the City of Oshkosh, is the nearest airport facility to the Town of Oshkosh. It is owned and operated by Winnebago County. The airport includes approximately 1,500 acres of land with over 87 hangars. There are 4 runways at the airport, a 24-hour manned fire station and a tower that is open from 6:00 am until 10:00 pm. Specifications of the runways are provided in Table 14.

<b>TABLE 14</b>			
<b>WITTMAN REGIONAL AIRPORT RUNWAY SPECIFICATIONS</b>			
<b>Runway Name</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Width</b>	<b>Surface Material</b>
RWY 18-36	8,002 feet	150 feet	Grooved Concrete
RWY 09-27	6,178 feet	150 feet	Grooved Asphalt
RWY 04-22	3,424 feet	75 feet	Asphalt
RWY 13-31	3,000 feet	75 feet	Asphalt

SOURCE: AirNav.com for Wittman Regional Airport

Wittman Regional Airport does not provide passenger service, but does offer a variety of other services. Basler Turbo Conversions converts DC-3 planes and operates the local fixed-base operation on the airport. Fox Valley Technical College, Aviation Services, and Valley Aviation operate flight schools at the airport. Wittman Regional Airport is also more widely known as the home for the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) headquarters, the annual AirVenture Convention (EAA Fly-In), and museum, which attracts close to one million visitors to the airport through out the year.

Although provided, freight service based on the number of pounds handled at the airport is rather limited. Growth potential for airfreight at Wittman Airport is also limited given its proximity to the Outagamie County Regional Airport in the Fox Cities and Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee.

Classified as an Air Carrier/Cargo (AC/C) Airport designed to accommodate virtually all aircraft up to, and in some cases including, wide body jets and large military transports. According to the Wisconsin State Airport System Plan for 2020 (WisDOT), Wittman Regional Airport will retain its current classification for the next 20 years. It is one of nine (9) Wisconsin airports that have commercial air passenger service on a year round basis. The plan forecasts that Wittman Regional Airport will grow annually between 2000 and 2020. In 2000, the airport forecast was for 24,000 enplanements. In 2020, this figure was anticipated to increase to 44,000 enplanements. It should be understood that these projections differ greatly from current trends. Actual annual passenger enplanements have been steadily decreasing. In 1996, there were 8,608 enplanements. By 2000 this figure had dropped below 4,000 (WisDOT). In 2003, passenger flight service provided by Great Lakes Aviation ended at the airport. It should also be noted that Wittman Regional Airport provides the lowest number of enplanements of the nine airports that offer commercial air passenger services in Wisconsin.

## **Summary of Existing Transportation Plans**

### **WisDOT STATE HIGHWAY PLAN 2020**

Wisconsin's State Trunk Highway system, consisting of approximately 11,800 miles of roads, is aging and deteriorating at the same time traffic is increasing. In response to this critical issue, WisDOT, in partnership with its stakeholders, has developed the State Highway Plan 2020, a 21-year strategic plan which considers the highway system's

current condition, analyzes future uses, assesses financial constraints and outlines strategies to address Wisconsin's preservation, traffic movement, and safety needs. The plan is updated every six years to reflect changing transportation technologies, travel demand and economic conditions in Wisconsin.

The plan classifies the USH 41 corridor between Oshkosh and Green Bay as a corridor that will experience extreme congestion if no capacity expansion is made. Furthermore, the plan indicates that the project would be considered a major capacity expansion subject to established environmental and legislative processes. Currently, the plan proposes to widen USH 41 from four to six lanes between the interchanges at USH 41/STH 26 and USH 41/Breezewood/Bell. In addition the following improvements are anticipated:

- ✓ STH 26 Interchange – Minimal improvements.
- ✓ STH 44 Interchange – Minimal improvements plus the replacement of the CTH K/West 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue structure over USH 41 and provision of bike /pedestrian accommodations.
- ✓ 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interchange – Moderate improvements including a tight diamond design to pull the ramps closer to USH 41, expanding the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue structure to 6 lanes wide, replacement of the CTH E/Witzel Avenue structure over USH 41 and provision of pike/pedestrian accommodations.
- ✓ STH 21 Interchange – Substantial improvements including: (1) a tight diamond, a shift of USH 41 to the west to minimize golf course impacts, Little Lake Butte des Morts impacts, and to avoid an existing utility line on the east side of the causeway, (3) a shift of USH 21 to the south, (4) no direct access points between traffic signals at Brooks Lane and Oshkosh Avenue, and (5) construction of a bike/pedestrian overpass between USH 21 and Lake Butte des Morts to connect with a proposed trail across the lake.
- ✓ Lake Butte des Morts Crossing – Widen existing causeway to the west, provide three through lanes and 1 auxiliary lane in each direction, and preserve northbound lanes and bridges for future bike/pedestrian facility.
- ✓ USH 45 – Substantial improvements including: (1) a free flow route for northbound USH 41 to northbound USH 45, southbound free flow route from southbound USH 45 to southbound USH 41, (3) shift of USH 41 to the west (to avoid electric substation), (4) new structures to accommodate the WIOUWASH trail crossing, (5) new structure across USH 41 at Fountain Avenue, and (6) proposed improvements to match planned 2002-2003 construction on USH 45.
- ✓ USH 45 Interchange – Minimal improvements including widening of the USH 45 structure over USH 41 to three lanes, and reconstruction of USH 45 between frontage roads to accommodate the new lane configurations.
- ✓ Breezewood/Bell Interchange - Moderate improvements including a tight diamond interchange and an increased number of turn lanes to handle traffic volumes in the 2025 design year. If all proceeds smoothly, it is anticipated that construction will begin in 2008.

Through 2020, USH 45 is designated by WisDOT as an important corridor route that will continue to connect key communities and regional economic centers to primary corridors like STH 29, USH 41, and USH 51/I-39.

## **WISDOT 2002-2007 HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

In addition to the major projects WisDOT has outlined in its 2020 Highway Plan, WisDOT's 2002-2007 Highway Improvement Program indicates that the intersection of In 2002, USH 45 and CTH Y was to be improved to construct a 0.1 mile median barrier at the intersection to improve safety. No additional projects are identified on the WisDOT 2002-2007 Plan in the Town of Oshkosh.



### **WINNEBAGO COUNTY**

In 2000, Winnebago County hired a private consultant to develop the *Transportation Plan Element of the Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan*. This element was completed in January 2002 and is currently being reviewed by communities throughout Winnebago County. The document indicates that the overall county goal is to achieve a safe, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation system that provides personal mobility for all segments of the population and supports the economy of the county. To achieve this goal, the plan outlines a series of objectives and supporting policies. The majority of the plan is dedicated to an inventory of existing transportation facilities and services in the county. This plan was reviewed in detail during the development of the *Town of Oshkosh Comprehensive Plan* and elements of the inventory have been included in this chapter.

Most of the policies outlined in the *Transportation Plan Element of the Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan* will be implemented directly by the county. Moreover, since the Town of Oshkosh is under county zoning, several of the recommendations will be carried out through changes to the county zoning ordinance. The *Transportation Plan Element of the Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan* includes several policies that directly impact the Town of Oshkosh:

- Local units of government should adopt regulations concerning the use of highways, including those that prevent the deterioration of structures and the highway surface.
- Access control standards should be adopted by County and Town governments to provide the level of access control appropriate to the function of the highway.
- Annually, local government should review accident-producing facility deficiencies, if any, and assign priorities for correction
- County, city, and town street design standards should be adequate for the legal speeds, sizes and weights of vehicles.
- Local comprehensive plans should prevent the location of roadways through environmentally sensitive lands.

- Local transportation planning should protect historic or visually pleasing buildings and scenic, historic, scientific and cultural sites when constructing new or improving existing transportation facilities.
- Local transportation plans should minimize air pollution through efficient traffic control measures and encourage transit, bicycle and pedestrian travel.
- Local units of government, through adopted ordinances, should design transportation facilities to be aesthetically pleasing and sensitive to the natural landscape...minimizing unsightly views such as junkyards, billboards, and strip commercial development in more rural areas.
- Transportation planning by local units of government should include using native vegetation along roadsides in areas of the County where it is appropriate to protect wildlife, reduce the use of herbicides, and cut maintenance costs.
- Future land use plans should plan for bicycle and pedestrian-related activities.
- Each development must consider the integration of bicycle and pedestrian modes of transportation and policies and ordinances should be adopted to require this as needed.

The town is amenable to these policies and will work under the guise of this plan to ensure that these activities are carried out to the fullest extent possible in the Town of Oshkosh. Specific actions of the town are outlined in the Goals and Objectives portion of this chapter.

#### **WITTMAN REGIONAL AIRPORT MASTER PLAN**

The Wittman Regional Airport has an Airport Master Plan that was adopted by Winnebago County in 1992. Given changes in federal subsidies, an overall decreased use due to easy access to the nearby Outagamie County Regional Airport and Mitchell International Airport, the future of Wittman Regional Airport is uncertain. Much of the information included in the plan is outdated. According to the Airport Manager, the Airport Master Plan will be updated in 2004.

#### **MIDWEST REGIONAL RAIL SYSTEMS**

Since 1996, the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI) advanced from a series of service concepts, including increased operating speeds, train frequencies, system connectivity and high service reliability, into a well-defined vision to create a 21<sup>st</sup> century regional passenger rail system. This vision has been transformed into a transportation plan known as the Midwest Regional Rail Systems (MWRRS). The primary purpose of the MWRRS is to meet future regional travel needs through significant improvements to the level and quality of regional passenger rail service. The major MWRRS elements will improve Midwest travel. The major plan elements include:

- ✓ Use of 3,000 miles of existing rail rights-of-way to connect rural, small urban and major metropolitan areas throughout Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin.
- ✓ Operation of “hub-and-spoke” passenger rail system through Chicago to locations throughout the Midwest.
- ✓ Introduction of modern train equipment operating at speeds up to 110 mph
- ✓ Provision of multi-modal connections to improve system access
- ✓ Improvements in reliability and on-time performance



The cost to provide the improvements needed to facilitate a Chicago-Milwaukee-Minneapolis/Green Bay Route would be \$978 million, including rolling stock (i.e. passenger cars) and infrastructure improvements (i.e. track improvements). Under the plan, the City of Oshkosh would be a connection point for feeder busses serving Rhinelander and Wausau to transfer to a train to connect in Milwaukee to a high speed rail line. The current schedule provided in the MWRRS plan calls for the entire project to be completely on-line by 2012. The first phase of the MWRRS plan in Wisconsin calls for 110 mph rail service between Madison and Milwaukee, and continuing to Chicago by 2003.

**EAST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC) has adopted a transportation goal and supporting objectives, which it uses to evaluate transportation plans developed in the area. As part of the comprehensive planning process, these goals were reviewed to ensure consistency with the *Town of Oshkosh Comprehensive Plan*. Many of the ECWRPC goals relate to services and facilities that are not available in the Town of Oshkosh (i.e. airports, etc.).



The overall goal for the regional transportation program is “to provide a safe, efficient and environmentally sound transportation system that provides personal mobility for all segments of the population and supports the economy of the region.” This statement is consistent with the vision and goals set forth by the Town of Oshkosh. To support this goal, the ECWRPC has outlined a series of objectives pertaining to: integrated planning, maximum street effectiveness, an efficient street and highway system, safety, minimum environmental disruption, compatibility with land use patterns, conservation of energy, and multi-modal interaction. Each of these objectives is addressed to the fullest extent practical in this chapter of the *Town of Oshkosh Comprehensive Plan*.

## CITY OF OSHKOSH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, 1993

The City of Oshkosh Comprehensive Plan is the primary planning document for the City. This plan is not a Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan and therefore, does not address the nine required elements as outlined in 1999 Wisconsin Act 9. The City of Oshkosh is just beginning to develop a Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan. This plan is not expected to be completed until after the *Town of Oshkosh Comprehensive Plan* is adopted.

In developing the Town of Oshkosh Comprehensive Plan, efforts were made to review the recommendations included in the City's plan. In the City's plan, transportation improvements are closely tied to land use patterns and economic development objectives. Therefore, these issues are addressed in other chapters of this plan.

## COMPARISON TO STATE AND REGIONAL PLANS

Generally, there is a division in jurisdiction related to transportation facilities and services (i.e. County Roads, State Highways, and Town Roads). The transportation network in the Town of Oshkosh requires coordination between these jurisdictions to work efficiently. Therefore, in developing this plan, the town invested a significant amount of time researching and coordinating with county, regional and state transportation plans, policies and programs. As a result, the town's transportation goals, policies, objectives and programs compliment state and regional transportation goals, objectives, policies and programs by providing local transportation facilities and services that connect to county/regional and state facilities. Specific areas of concern related to existing state and county transportation plans are discussed in the next section.

## Transportation Issues and Concerns

The primary transportation issue facing the Town of Oshkosh is the scheduled expansion of USH 41 and realignment of USH 45 by WisDOT.

**COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS**

84% of respondents felt controlling traffic congestion in the Town of Oshkosh should be a very important or important priority.

### USH 41<sup>1</sup>

USH 41 is a multi-lane backbone roadway under WisDOT's Corridors 2020 Plan, designed to enhance economic development and meet future mobility needs. USH 41 carries substantial traffic, including trucks and recreational vehicles. In Winnebago County, USH 41 is also a major regional and local facility serving economic development in the Oshkosh and Neenah urbanized areas and surrounding towns. Current traffic ranges from 41,000 vehicles per day to 68,700 per day. Additional improvements are needed to address increasing traffic, emerging safety and traffic flow problems.

<sup>1</sup> Much of the information used to create this subsection was compiled from the *Transportation Plan Element of the Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan*, January 9, 2002.

In response to this issue USH 41, from one-half mile south of the STH 26 intersection in the Town of Nekimi to one-half mile north of the Breezewood Lane/Bell Street interchange in the City of Neenah, is currently being evaluated to develop a concept plan for upgrading USH 41. Improvements to existing interchanges may include widening/extending the freeway on and off ramps, widening cross roads and relocating portions of frontage roads. The study will also evaluate the need for additional driving and auxiliary lanes on USH 41, including the Lake Butte des Morts bridge crossing. The two-year study will conclude in the spring of 2002.

The recommendations from the study will be presented to WisDOT for budget consideration. Those involved are hopeful that the project will receive budget approval for construction in 2007. Representatives from the Town of Oshkosh continue to participate in these discussions, particularly with respect to intersection locations and alignments.

The upgraded USH 41 corridor allow for much needed additional capacity to serve existing and projected traffic volumes. It will make the roadway safer and provide efficient transportation for all types of traffic. When completed, the USH 41 corridor will reduce travel time for commuters and commercial trucks, while also making travel safer by removing the cross traffic and access points. The development will bring many direct and indirect economic benefits to the Town of Oshkosh, including business development near the highway.

## **USH 45<sup>2</sup>**

The planned conversion of STH 110 to a limited access four-lane roadway with a grade-separated interchange at STH 116 will substantially improve access from the City of Oshkosh and USH 41 to the Village of Winneconne and surrounding areas. The USH 45 designation will be moved to the present STH 110 corridor and rebuilt to freeway status from CTH T to CTH G in 2002 and 2003. CTH T will be an at-grade intersection. The new USH 45 will be a 4-lane state road with no access until STH 116, which will have a diamond-shaped freeway interchange. Another access will not be allowed until CTH G, which will have an at-grade intersection. This 7.8-mile widening project is estimated to cost \$39 million dollars. The remaining portion of STH 110, starting at the realigned intersection of CTH T/Ryf Road will become CTH S.

The completion of the USH 45 project will add 32 State Road miles for Winnebago County to maintain. This is due to an all-new alignment of the State Road from CTH T to CTH G, leaving the present STH 110 corridor as a separate roadway that must be maintained. Frontage roads along the new USH 45 (in the Town of Vinland) will add another 14 roadway miles for the county to maintain, along with interchange lanes at State Road 116.

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<sup>2</sup> Much of the information contained in this subsection was based on the *Transportation Plan Element of the Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan*, January 9, 2002.

Current WisDOT plans for STH 76 (former USH 45) show a four-lane divided from the City of Oshkosh to CTH G. The remaining portion of this roadway is to remain as a two-lane road extending north to USH 10. These changes will impact the Town of Oshkosh in several ways. Specifically, the limited access status of USH 45, will restrict development potential along this corridor and may create a divide between residents living between the lake and the highway and others living on the northeast side of the bridge.

In 2001, ECWRPC published a summary report of the *U.S. Highway 45 Relocation and Corridor Study*. This report included some additional recommendations, including that a freeway type interchange be constructed at CTH T and Ryf Road as soon as possible. At this time, there are no plans to take action on this recommendation. However, if it is pursued, it has the potential to impact the Town of Oshkosh by bringing more residential and commercial development to the town near this intersection. If constructed, this plan should be reviewed immediately to ensure that the land uses illustrated on the *Future Land Use Maps* are still practical and desirable to the town. Future development near this intersection should be in harmony with the visions presented in the plan.

## **CTH A**

The *Transportation Plan Element of the Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan* recommends that the CTH A corridor continue to be maintained as a 2-lane roadway over the next 20 years. This recommendation was encouraged by the Town of Oshkosh, Town of Vinland and Town of Neenah as a means of maintaining the “rural” town character of the roadway. Today, there is a great deal of traffic along CTH A. Currently, the Winnebago County Highway Department is working to acquire additional right of way along CTH A. The county plans to resurface the roadway, somewhat straighten the curve south of Indian Point Road and add a bicycle lane.

The town is adamant that CTH A should continue to exist as a two-lane road. The town fears that if the road were expanded to four-lanes, this improvement would create additional pressure for more development along CTH A. Additionally, the Town of Oshkosh supports the WisDOT bicycle conditions assessment that indicates that CTH A could support a bicycle path. The Town of Oshkosh believes that if CTH A is expanded to four-lanes, additional traffic and development would preclude the establishment of a trail along the roadway. Furthermore, the Town of Oshkosh, Town of Vinland and Town of Neenah believe an additional exit should be developed along the USH 41 corridor at CTH G as part of the USH 41 expansion project. The towns believe this exit will encourage people who currently travel along CTH A to utilize USH 41 instead, thereby helping to maximize the capacity of USH 41 and reduce traffic on CTH A.

## **PASER RATING SYSTEM REPORT**

In the fall of 2001, the Town of Oshkosh had the Winnebago County Highway Department complete its Pavement Surface Evaluation and Ratings (PASER) for all town

roads in accordance with WisDOT requirements. PASER is a visual inspection system to develop a condition rating for community roads. PASER is an important tool for smaller government unit planning because it gives a picture of road conditions on all roads and can identify candidates for maintenance and rehabilitation. Surface defects, cracking and potholes are all examined during a typical PASER evaluation. Roads are rated 1 – 10 based on their condition.

- Rating 9 & 10 no maintenance required
- Rating 7 & 8 routine maintenance, cracksealing and minor patching
- Rating 5 & 6 preservative treatments (sealcoating)
- Rating 3 & 4 structural improvement and leveling (overlay or recycling)
- Rating 1 & 2 reconstruction

Table 16 provides the total number of miles of roadway in the town by each PASER ranking. In total there are 26.92 miles of roads in the Town of Oshkosh that were evaluated. The majority of town roads ranked as 5 or 6 in the PASER results.

<b>TABLE 15 MILES OF ROADWAY BY PASER RANKINGS</b>	
<b>PASER RANK</b>	<b>TOTAL MILES OF ROAD</b>
1	0
2	0.46
3	0.18
4	2.56
5	6.88
6	8.64
7	3.36
8	4.42
9	0.42
10	0

Source: 2001 PASER Rating System Report, Town of Oshkosh

It is important to understand that the town roads were rated in segments. As a result, a portion of a particular road may rank as 9, whereas a different segment may only rank as 6. These fluctuations can greatly impact the overall need for construction improvements. In order to gain a general understanding of the condition of local roads in the Town of Oshkosh, the table below identifies the average rank for each town road. For example, if a town road were ranked in three segments of varying length as 2, 4, and 6, respectively, then the overall rating for the road in the table below would be 4.

<b>TABLE 16 AVERAGE PASER RESULT BY ROADWAY</b>	
<b>ROAD NAME</b>	<b>AVERAGE RATING</b>
Luebke Road	6
Shangrila Point	8
Sunset Point Lane	5
Bellair Lane	5

Vinland Street	5.143
Butler Avenue	5
Sherman Road	4.6
Shorewood Drive	
Island View Drive	8
Hickory Lane	4.333
Channel View Drive	8
Brooks Road	5.5
Nickels Drive	5
Plummers Point Road	5
Leach Road	6
West Wind Road	5.333
Nicolet Avenue	8
Sunnyview Road	8
Edgewood Lane	7
Zion Street	7
Clover Street	2
Skyranch Avenue	2
Harbor Bay Road	3
Anderson Street	7
Cozy Lane	2
Norton Avenue	6
Nielsen Drive	6
Pickett Avenue	5
Indian Point Road	6
I-AH-MAY-TAH Road	8
British Lane	6
Ivy Lane	5
Clover Lane	2
Glendale Ave	6
Primrose Lane	7
Courtland Avenue	7
Western Drive	6
Tumble Brook Drive	5
Juniper Lane	6
Tamarack Trail	5
Violet Lane	5
Bittersweet Lane	6
Richards Avenue	6
Kristine Street	6
Roberts Ave	6
Green Valley Road	5.667
Snell Road	4.467
Marine Drive	4.5
Nolte Avenue	5
Andrew Street	7
Ulman Street	5
Schneider Avenue	4
Killdeer Lane	8
Old Oak Road	4
Ryf Road	5
Chesapeake Court	8
Indian Bend Road	9

Source: 2001 PASER Rating System Report, Town of Oshkosh

According to the PASER manual, it is recommended that communities strive to attain a rating of 7 for all roads. Likewise, the Town of Oshkosh places a strong priority on maintaining local roads. To achieve this goal, members of the Town Board, along with a representative of the Winnebago County Highway Department, conduct an annual review of all town roads. Given that the town has relatively few miles of roadway, this review is usually completed in a single day. The result of the process is an accurate assessment of conditions and an identification of improvement priorities. This system has worked well for the town for many years. The fact that the county highway department representative and the Town Board members have much experience with this practice is a strong asset to the town in this process.

If, in the future, the town decides that additional tools are necessary to achieve the same level of assessment of its roads to determine the best course of action with respect to annual road improvements and to maximize its available funds, it is recommended that the town further analyze its PASER results using PASERWARE. This software program is designed to help communities consider different scenarios for extending their money with respect to road maintenance and improvements. Using PASERWARE, a community can determine what sequence of improvements is recommended to meet a certain goal (i.e. get all roads to a 7 rating). PASERWARE also will provide cost estimates for maintenance and construction projects. If desired, the town can provide the PASERWARE with the total funds available for roads in a given year, and the program will recommend ways to best spend the money to obtain the greatest return.

At some point in the future, the town may also consider developing a capital improvements program and budget to effectively plan for road improvements in relation to other town spending needs. A capital improvements program and budget may use the recommendations of PASERWARE, or the recommendations determined by the Town Board and Winnebago County Highway Department Representative, as part of the annual road assessment to plan for road improvements in a 5 – 6 year cycle. This capital improvements program may also be used to plan for improvements to town facilities (i.e. town hall, garage, etc.), purchase computer equipment, or replace fire equipment.

## **LAND USE IMPLICATIONS**

Transportation improvements to USH 41 and USH 45 have the potential to impact sensitive lands in the Town of Oshkosh. Specifically, improvements to increase capacity of these highways may result in the loss of additional agricultural land and habitat fragmentation. Water features may also be impacted by highway improvements. For example, the filling of wetland and construction related erosion and runoff are a concern. Moreover, post-construction storm water runoff resulting from impervious highway surfaces is a threat to Lake Butte des Morts and Lake Winnebago. To combat these trends, WisDOT has created a wetlands “bank.” These banked wetlands are located outside of the Town of Oshkosh (with the exception of the banked wetland north of CTH Y) and are used to offset wetlands that are lost due to highway projects. To spite good intentions, there is much debate about the value of a man-made banked wetland versus a natural wetland area. Moreover, there is local debate over the loss or impact to any local

wetland. WisDOT understands that the finalized plans for USH 41 must address these concerns and consider local mitigation techniques in order to gain local support.

## **GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

The upgraded USH 41 corridor will create development opportunities and pressure. The town would like to capitalize on this opportunity for increased development, but not at the expense of the town's rural character. Any development at or near interchanges must be well-planned and adequately served by utilities and community facilities. To support the safe and efficient movement of traffic, the town also supports the utilization of frontage roads to ensure that the development will not interfere with traffic flow along USH 41.

Travel time will be decreased between the Town of Oshkosh, the Fox Cities, Green Bay and Fond du Lac. Already, some residents of the Town of Oshkosh commute as far as Green Bay and even Milwaukee to work each day. These residents enjoy the rural atmosphere provided in the town and the economic activities available elsewhere. Decreased commuting times and reduced congestion may bring additional residents to the Town of Oshkosh. This may create additional demand for housing, roads, utilities, schools and other community facilities. If carefully planned, additional growth will not have a negative impact the town's rural character.

## **TRANSPORTATION BUDGETING**

Another transportation issue in the Town of Oshkosh, beyond the scope of the highway improvements, is the road maintenance and improvements costs. These types of municipal activities are a major expense and can consume a large share of the town budget. This plan recommends long-term strategies, including a capital improvements program and budget, to help the town to effectively budget for these costs over time.

A capital improvements program in the Town of Oshkosh would serve as the town's present and near-future financial plan to match future capital improvement costs, such as roads, to anticipated revenues. If the town decides to develop a CIP/B, the Town of Oshkosh Planning Commission should be given the authority to develop and review the CIP/B, thereby linking planning to the annual budgetary process. CIP/B are usually prepared for five or six years into the future and updated annually. The CIP/B process would first identify and then prioritize capital expenditures. An estimated cost and means of financing each capital expenditure would be included as part of the process. The desired expenditures would be compared to the budget to determine annual spending priorities. The process helps to ensure that improvements are made in a logical order and do not "surprise" town officials or taxpayers.

## **Coordination with Other Required Plan Elements**

### **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

How do transportation facilities affect the aesthetics of the Town of Oshkosh? Aesthetics refer to the “appearance and character” of an area. Generally speaking, a transportation project should reflect the aesthetics of a community. For the Town of Oshkosh the aesthetic character varies significantly from one area to the next. The lakefront subdivisions in the sanitary districts have a much different character than the areas along USH 45 and USH 41.

The Issues and Opportunities Element establishes the framework for planning – the overall future vision – the ideal from which this plan has been developed. That vision will impact the way the town considers and approves changes to the transportation network. It will also guide their participation in activities sponsored by WisDOT. To realize the vision, and support the transportation vision presented in this chapter, the town will seek to preserve scenic areas using easements, designing road projects to fit into the natural landscape and landscaping areas where necessary to retain the rural character after road construction is completed.

### **AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

How will changes to the transportation system impact the preservation /protection of environmental resources such as water quality? Given that the town only has jurisdiction over town roads, the answer to this question will likely be dictated by the actions of Winnebago County and WisDOT. Both agencies have policies in place designed to protect the natural environment. It will be incumbent upon town residents and leaders to continue to participate in public hearings and other opportunities for input, to ensure that local interests are realized in these projects as they relate to the natural environment. The town will seek to ensure that the location of town roadways through environmentally sensitive areas is minimized.

### **UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

How will the Town of Oshkosh ensure that the decisions made for the transportation system preserve the existing facilities and potentially reduce the need for expansion or realignment? The answer to this question is realized in the Land Use Element whereby the location of future development, and associated transportation improvements, is correlated to the location of adequate utilities and community facilities.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Providing a quality transportation system is important to the success of any business. Just as businesses need good access, employees also want to be able to efficiently access their places of employment. Lack of access to employment opportunities may affect individual decisions to seek employment or live in a community. In the Town of Oshkosh these issues were carefully considered, particularly with respect to the location

of new commercial and industrial development. The local solutions to these issues are reflected on the *Future Land Use Maps*.

## **LAND USE**

While transportation improvements generally respond to changes in land use, they also have the potential to directly and indirectly affect land development either by inducing new development or altering the pattern of existing development.

In the Town of Oshkosh, it is widely anticipated that by adding capacity to the highways to reduce congestion, business development along these routes will become more desirable. New development may occur along frontage roads and at intersections.

What steps will be taken to ensure that transportation decisions and land use decisions are compatible? Although transportation is not the only influence on land use, it is important to be aware that decisions regarding the transportation system may impact land use both directly and indirectly. Direct impacts that are directly caused by the construction of a new transportation facility, changes to an existing facility, and/or decision to change traffic patterns along a facility. These may result in positive or negative impacts. For example, expansion of the USH 41 corridor will improve traffic flow, minimize the potential for traffic back-ups at the Butte des Morts Bridge and improve traffic safety. However, the construction will result in the loss of some wetlands and developable land along the existing corridor. Likewise, by expanding the USH 41 corridor, adjacent lands are likely to experience a change in value as they become more attractive for development. Efforts were made to plan accordingly for land uses along USH 45 and USH 41 and are reflected on the *Future Land Use Maps*.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Through the development of a capital improvements plan and budget the associated costs of the transportation element can be addressed. The town's capital improvements plan and budget will seek to not only plan for town expenditures but also to locate grant and low interest loan opportunities that may exist to fund needed improvements.

## **Goals and Objectives**

It is the goal of the Town of Oshkosh that residents will enjoy safe streets and highways with minimal traffic congestion and safe bike/pedestrian routes and trails. Because the Town of Oshkosh has a minimal amount of control over county roads and state highways, the goals in this section are related to actions that the town can control. The Town of Oshkosh will work, in accordance with the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element of the Wisconsin "Smart Growth" Law, with Winnebago County and WisDOT to ensure that adequate community transportation facilities are available to serve the area.

## GOALS

1. Seek to preserve town rural character and avoid destruction of environmentally sensitive areas.
2. To maintain and improve town roads in a timely and well planned manner.
3. Ensure that the reconstructed USH 41 and realigned STH 110/USH 45 corridors meet the needs of the Town.
4. Seek to expand opportunities for alternative transportation in the Town of Oshkosh.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Develop a Capital Improvements Program and Budget (CIP/B) to coordinate and plan for annual roadway improvements and maintenance as well as other capital improvements.
2. Provide the WisDOT with copies of all planning materials prepared by the town.
3. Seek to become an active partner in the expansion of USH 41 by:
  - A. Working with the WisDOT at any opportunity presented.
  - B. Educating residents about the planned expansion.
  - C. Reviewing the *2020 Future Land Use Map* in 2010 to ensure that the planned land use pattern within 1 mile of the improved USH 41 corridor is still desirable based on impact of the highway improvements and demand for new development. If changes are desired, amend the plan following all requirements outlined in 1999 Wisconsin Act 9.
4. Continue to monitor discussions between the ECWRPC and WisDOT related to a potential freeway type interchange at CTH T and Ryf Road. Participate at any opportunity presented to ensure town interests are represented in the discussions. If approved, review the land use plan in this area to ensure that the planned land use pattern is still practical. If necessary, amend the plan following the requirements outlined in 1999 WI Act 9.
5. Coordinate with Winnebago County to ensure that proposed trail routes outlined in the Winnebago County Transportation Element are completed in the Town of Oshkosh in a coordinated fashion with road improvement schedules.
6. As stipulated in the Transportation Plan Element of the Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Oshkosh will address the following activities.
  - A. Coordinate with Winnebago County to develop town road standards which seek to maintain the quality of road surface and structures.
  - B. Develop a local policy to support access control standards which limit ingress and egress from county roads in order to protect the function of these corridors.
  - C. Annually review accident reports for the town to identify priorities for transportation improvements to protect public safety.
  - D. Review town street standards, particularly with respect to development in conservation and cluster subdivisions, to ensure that the design standards are adequate for legal speeds, sizes and weights of vehicles.
  - E. Using the *Future Land Use Maps* as a guide, seek to prevent the location of roadways through environmentally sensitive lands in the Town of Oshkosh.
  - F. Seek to protect scenic areas when constructing new or improving existing transportation facilities.
  - G. Encourage the development of bicycle and pedestrian trails, in accordance with WisDOT recommendations and the *Transportation Plan Element of the Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan*.
  - H. Review standards for town road development to ensure that roads will be sensitive to the natural landscape by minimizing unsightly views such as junkyards, billboards, and strip commercial development in more rural areas and the use of native vegetation along roadsides is encouraged to protect wildlife, reduce the use of herbicides, and cut maintenance costs.
7. Using the Transportation and Existing Land Use Maps in this Plan, adopt and maintain an official map at the Town Hall. [NOTE: This action may only be taken if existing legislation is changed to allow towns under county zoning to take this action.]