

# TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

## Introduction

An apparent trend among each element of a comprehensive plan is that they are all intertwined. The transportation element is one that greatly affects all other elements. For example, the direct impact between land use and transportation should be clearly understood to ensure the provided transportation system will support the planned land use. Placing a commercial development on a local road will require upgrades to the road to support additional traffic and weight requirement. Therefore, where land is developed and how it is used is critical to a municipality's transportation element. Understanding the existing transportation system, identifying needed improvements, and coordinating additions to the system with planned future land use patterns and overall Plan goals and objectives will help to ensure that the Town's future transportation needs are met.

Demographics also play a role in the transportation element. Wisconsin is currently experiencing an increase in population, increase in commuting distance, and increase in vehicles per household. These are all putting more pressure on the state's transportation system. In addition, the cost of building and maintaining roads and highways has greatly increased due to increase in petroleum and other raw materials. The choice is not whether to fix the transportation system, but how to fix it efficiently and cost effectively.

This plan element will provide an inventory of the Town's existing transportation system, including roadways, rail, pedestrian, bicycle, transit, air and water systems and associated inter-modal connections. From this inventory and direction from the community regarding specific transportation needs and desires, specific policy recommendations will be developed to help guide Town's decisions over the next 20 years.

### *Transportation Element*

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

*§ 66.1001(2)(c), Wis. Stat.*

### *Transportation System*

- *Transportation options used to move people and products*
- *Levels of jurisdictional authority*
- *Facilities that a user might access to begin, change or switch, and end a trip*
- *Includes:*
  - *Roads*
  - *Transit services*
  - *Rail services*
  - *Bike lanes, paths, and trails*
  - *Air travel*
  - *Pedestrian accommodations*
  - *Water travel*

## Town Road Summary

The Town of Garfield has over 60 miles of town roads within its boundaries (see Base Map). These roads are sufficient to provide for the needs of the current population. However, the population is expected to increase steadily over the next twenty years, putting greater pressure on the transportation system. Also, there are safety concerns with the current transportation system, including narrow roads and un-maintained road signs. The following statements were selected from the Town of Garfield Community Survey with regard to the Transportation Element:

When asked how they would rate the general condition of local roads in the Town of Garfield, 10.6% said fine, 70.5% said good, 18.3% said poor, and .6% had no opinion.

When asked how they would rate the ongoing maintenance of local roads in the Town of Garfield, 4.6% said excellent, 48.4% said good, 30.3% said fair, 15% said poor, while 1.7% had no opinion.

The residents of the Town were also asked to rate the snow removal of local roads. About 10.3% said with excellent, exactly 40% said good, 17.7% said fair, 18% said with poor, while 14% of residents had no opinion. There were a handful of additional comments that generally described dissatisfaction with the rate of snow removal.

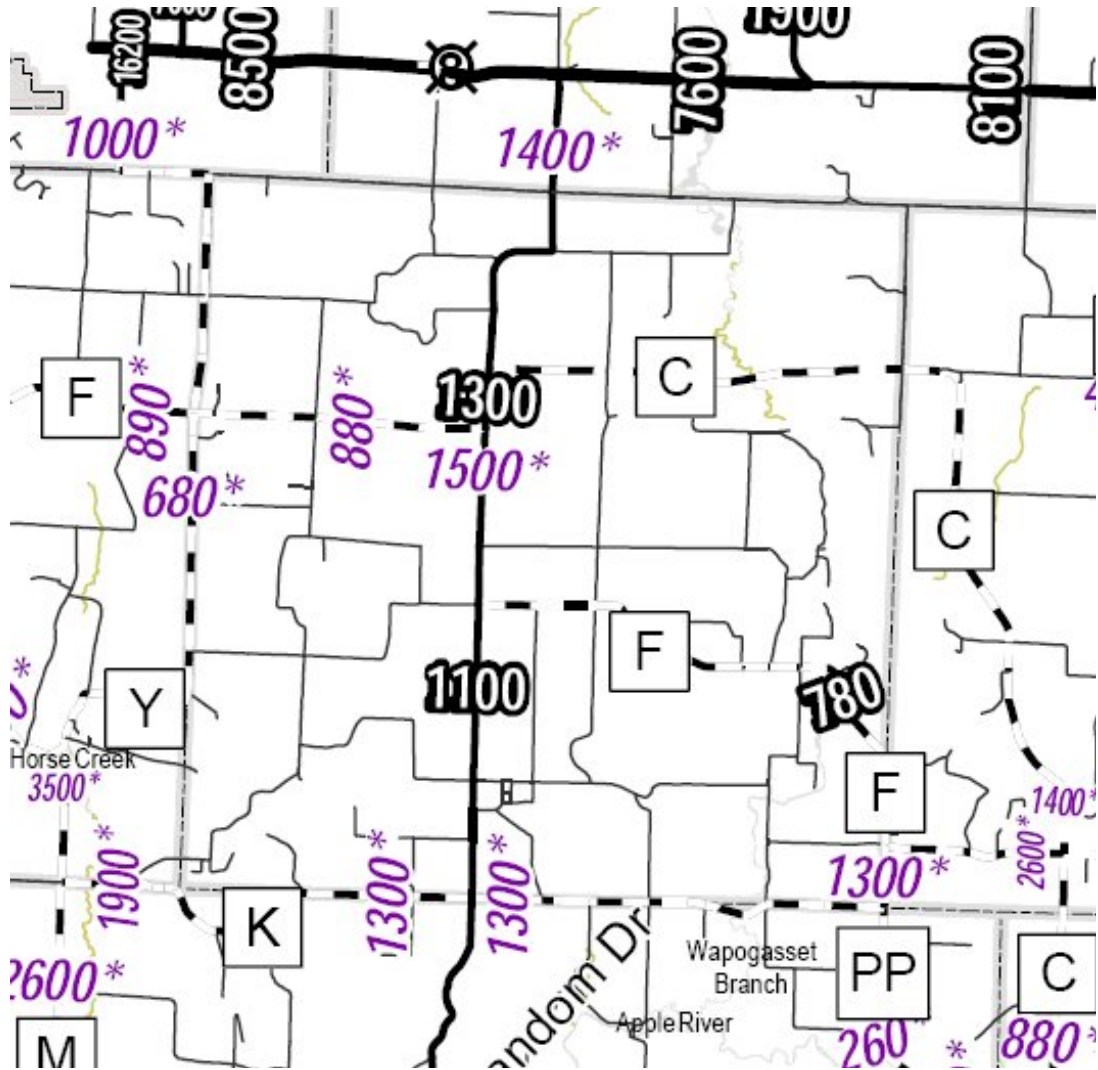
In mid-2007, representatives from Stevens Engineers, Inc. observed the road conditions in the Town of Garfield. Most of the paved roads were in fair to good condition. South Bear Lake Lane and North Bear Lake Lane, which are gravel roads, were noted to be in poor shape, despite the fact that numerous new houses have been built or are being built in the area. These roads are labeled as high priorities within the town.

It was also noted during this observation that the Town's existing transportation network has numerous safety concerns. There is an overall lack of road signs within the town, and the signs that do exist have not been maintained including sign posts that are leaning or angled incorrectly. Some signs were inconsistent in design from others, causing confusion for drivers. Also, many of the roads are narrow and insufficient to handle emergency and service vehicles, especially areas within lake developments. Many of these roads connected numerous driveways and lack any turn around at the end. This restricts the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency vehicle response, school bus safety or other services such as garbage refuse collection. The Town's goals, policies and objectives identify their commitment to improve these areas of concern.

## Existing Traffic Volumes

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) studies and reports Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) counts for several roadways within the Town. The AADT counts assist a community in classifying the streets within its roadway system. In 2006, WisDOT documented AADT counts on area State and County roads. These counts and their location are shown on the following figure.

Figure 3.1 - 2006 Traffic Count



Source: WI Department of Transportation (DOT)

### Functional Classification

A functionally classified road system is one in which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they provide, ranging from a high degree of travel mobility to land access functions. At the upper limit of the system (principal arterials, for example), are those facilities that emphasize traffic mobility (long, uninterrupted travel), whereas at the lower limit are those local roads and streets that emphasize access. Such classification aids in determining appropriate roadway widths, speed limits, intersection control, design features, accessibility and maintenance priorities (see Functional Classification Map).

Rural Classifications

Principal Arterials: Principal arterials serve corridor movements having trip length and travel density characteristics of an interstate or interregional nature. Along these facilities, access needs to be limited in order to preserve the ability of the roadway to accommodate the volumes and to maximize safety.

Principal Arterials that exist in Town of Garfield: None

Minor Arterials: Minor arterials, in conjunction with the principal arterials, connect cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intraregional and Inter-area traffic movements. Minor arterials generally serve medium to short trips and may provide an alternate route for congested Principal Arterial roadways.

Minor Arterials that exist in Town of Garfield: State Highway 65

Major Collectors: Major collectors provide service to moderate sized communities and serve shorter trips within the County.

Major Collectors that exist in Town of Garfield:

- County Trunk Highway F = 7.07 miles
- County Trunk Highway K = 2.20 miles
- County Trunk Highway PP = .26 miles

Minor Collectors: Minor collectors provide connection between neighborhoods and commercial/industrial areas, and the major collector and minor arterial system.

Minor Collectors that exist in Town of Garfield:

- County Highway Trunk Y = 2.19 miles
- County Highway Trunk C = 3.51 miles

Local Roads: Local roads provide access to adjacent land and provide for travel over relatively short distances on an inter-township or intra-township basis. All roads not classified as arterials or collectors are local function roads.

Local Roads that exist in Town of Garfield:

- 65<sup>th</sup> Avenue = 1.99 miles
- 68<sup>th</sup> Avenue = 0.24 miles
- 70<sup>th</sup> Avenue = 3.07 miles
- 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue = 1.64 miles (Duck Lake Rd)
- 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue = 0.74 miles
- 90<sup>th</sup> Avenue = 3.33 miles
- 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue = 1.07 miles
- 94<sup>th</sup> Avenue = 0.20 miles
- 98<sup>th</sup> Avenue = 0.27 miles
- 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue = 0.83 miles
- 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue = 0.09 miles
- 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue = 1.88 miles
- 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue = 0.52 miles
- 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue = 2.88 miles

130 <sup>th</sup> Street =	0.94 miles
138 <sup>th</sup> Street =	1.97 miles
140 <sup>th</sup> Street =	2.62 miles
143 <sup>rd</sup> Street =	1.28 miles
148 <sup>th</sup> Street =	0.43 miles
150 <sup>th</sup> Street =	1.73 miles
155 <sup>th</sup> Street =	4.67 miles
160 <sup>th</sup> Street =	1.72 miles
170 <sup>th</sup> Street =	2.08 miles
172 <sup>nd</sup> Street =	0.48 miles
175 <sup>th</sup> Street =	0.25 miles
179 <sup>th</sup> Avenue =	0.19 miles
180 <sup>th</sup> Street =	4.47 miles
185 <sup>th</sup> Street =	0.17 miles
187 <sup>th</sup> Street =	0.27 miles
188 <sup>th</sup> Street =	0.25 miles
Bance Road =	1.09 miles (75 <sup>th</sup> Avenue)
North Bear Lake Drive =	1.37 miles
South Bear Lake Drive =	1.00 miles
Big Lake Court =	0.13 miles
Big Lake Drive =	1.47 miles
Lenz Road =	0.57 miles
Minneapolis Street =	0.26 miles
Kennedy Mill Avenue =	1.96 miles
First Street East =	0.18 miles
Wonderoos Road =	1.16 miles
Nokomis Drive =	0.65 miles
Pepper Street =	0.07 miles
Home Court =	0.38 miles
Sunrise Beach Drive =	1.64 miles
Lone Pine Lane =	0.57 miles
Lone Pine Court =	0.25 miles
Walleye Court =	0.33 miles
Wapogasset Lake Lane =	0.51 miles

The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 set forth policies and procedures for implementing the functional realignment of the Federal-Aid Highway System on the basis of the functional usage anticipated during the 1980-1985 period. The Wisconsin DOT, in cooperation with appropriate local officials, has the primary responsibility for establishing and periodically updating a statewide highway functional system based on anticipated functional usage for the specified period. The functional system became effective July 1, 1976, and it is based upon anticipated functional usage for 1980. Functional usage is determined in accordance with the functional concepts, criteria, and procedures established in Volume 20, Appendix 12, of the Federal Highway Administration's "Highway Planning and Program Manual." Beyond the federal requirements for functional classification and subsequent realignment of the respective Federal-Aid Systems, Chapter 29, Wisconsin Laws of 1977, created Section 86.30, mandating that distribution of state transportation-related financial aids to local units of government be based upon current functional usage and classification. These statutes provide that uniform criteria be applied to assure

compatibility between state and federal functional systems, and are briefly enumerated as follows:

1. Population centers within and without the state, stratified and ranked according to size.
2. Important traffic-generating activities, including, but not limited to, recreational, agricultural, governmental, business, and industrial activity centers.
3. Directness of travel and distance between points of economic importance.
4. Lengths of trips.

## Public Transit

The closest city that offers public transportation is New Richmond, which has a shared-ride taxi service. It is funded by WisDOT and is run by Pape Taxi Service, Inc. out of New Richmond. This taxi service only operates within the city limits of New Richmond.

## Transportation Facilities for Disabled

Transportation services for the elderly and handicapped are coordinated through the Polk County Transportation for Disabled and Elderly, Inc. This organization provides about 18,000 rides a year with a fleet of six wheelchair-accessible vehicles. This organization also provides contracted transportation services to the Department of Aging in Polk County, which utilizes about 40 volunteers.

The Department of Aging in Polk County offers rides to citizens 55 years and older who cannot find a ride. Any individual, regardless of any handicap, can call this free service for a ride to an appointment, grocery store, or any other reasonable destination. This program relies on local volunteers to drive.

When asked on the survey if the Town needs to build or expand on disabled transportation within the next 20 years, 11% of respondents strongly agreed, 39% agreed, 20 % disagreed, 5% strongly disagreed, while 26% had no opinion.

## Bicycles and Pedestrian

The results from the survey showed that almost 68% of respondents agreed that the Town of Garfield should develop biking trails while almost 71% agreed that the Town of Garfield should develop hiking/walking trails. When asked if the Town should develop cross county ski trails, 63% were in favor while 23% were opposed. When asked about developing horseback riding trails, 57% were in favor while 25% were opposed (see Recreational Resources Map).

### *Bicycle*

*Bicycle means every vehicle propelled by the feet acting upon pedals and having wheels any 2 of which are not less than 14 inches in diameter.” This includes adult three-wheel bicycles, and two, three, and four wheel recumbent bicycles. However, it may not include some foldable bicycles whose wheels are less than 14 inches in diameter.*

*Wis. Stat. 340.01 (5)*

## Gandy Dancer Trail

According to WisDOT, 39% of all Americans use bicycles. One of the most popular bike trails in the western side of Wisconsin is the Gandy Dancer Trail, which runs through the western side of Polk County. This 98 mile trail follows the old Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Sault Ste. Marie railroad from St. Croix Falls to Superior. After it was abandoned, part of it was purchased by Burnett County and the State of Wisconsin for use as a recreational trail. "Gandy Dancers" were coined from the workers who used to build and maintain the railroad tracks. In Polk County, the trail starts in St. Croix Falls and passes through Centuria, Milltown, Luck, Frederic, and Lewis. While ATV use is permitted on most of the trail, it is not in the Polk County section. Snowmobile use, however, is permitted on this trail. The trail contains numerous rest stops and facilities throughout its corridor.

## Amery to Dresser Trail

This trail is not opened at this time. The 13.48 mile railroad corridor runs from the Village of Dresser down through the Town of Garfield, through Wanderoos, and up to the City of Amery. This trail is currently un-developed. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) had plans to provide a multi-use trail that would have a dual surface to provide two-way traffic for ATV, bicycling, hiking, and winter snowmobile use. However, a lawsuit led by the trail conservation and recreation group named Friends of L.O.G. Greenway, Inc. and an individual property owner named Richard Roos, were able to prohibit the use of all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles on the new Amery to Dresser State Trail.

The development of the Amery to Dresser Trail directly affects the Town of Garfield. As a reoccurring characteristic, the Town of Garfield and its neighboring communities have a variety of outdoor recreation options available to residents and non-residents. While these resources have a beneficial impact on the community, the financial benefit for the Town is low.

## ATV and Snowmobile Trails

When asked if the Town of Garfield should allow ATV's and snowmobiles on Town roads, residents were strongly split. 12.7% strongly agreed, 23.5% agreed, 31.2% disagreed, 25% strongly disagreed, while 7.6% had no opinion on the subject.

Over 60% of residents did agree that the Town should develop snowmobile trails while over 30% were opposed. When asked whether or not the Town of Garfield should develop ATV trails, 22% strongly agreed, 31% agreed, 22% disagreed, and 16% strongly disagreed, while 8% had no opinion.

The Polk County snowmobile trails are open from December 11 to March 31 as long as there is a 6 inch snow base. Polk County has over 360 miles of groomed trails that run through numerous communities promoting friendly hospitality to snowmobilers. Out of state snowmobile passes are \$18 and are good from July 1 to June 31 of each year. These passes can be purchased at the Polk County Clerk Office or from any DNR licensing station.

## Cattail Trail

The Cattail State Trail consists of 17.8 miles of old railroad tracks that is now owned by Polk County. The Cattail State Trail is the closest operational state trail to the Town of Garfield. This trail is available for a wide variety of use; including horse back riding, snowmobiling, mountain biking, and walking. All terrain vehicles are allowed on the trail year round. Off road motorcycles are allowed on the trail year round in Polk County only. Once the Amery to Dresser state trail is developed, it will tie into the Cattail State Trail with similar, if not the same, allowed user types.

## Railroads

There are no existing railroads in the Town of Garfield. The Canadian National (CN) Railroad comes through Polk County; connecting Osceola and Dresser with Minneapolis-St. Paul. Canadian National also has a track that runs through St. Croix County; running through numerous municipalities. Union Pacific (UP) has a railroad that runs through Roberts, Hammond, Baldwin, Woodville, and Wilson in St. Croix County.

The West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition is a voluntary group that has been working towards the development of a passenger rail service across west central Wisconsin in an effort to provide balanced and more sustainable forms of transportation. The creation of a passenger rail service would have little effect on the Town of Garfield, since the proposed route would be along the I-94 corridor or along the Mississippi River.

## Air Transportation

Polk County has two publicly-owned airports located in the communities of Osceola and Amery. The Amery Airport is classified as a general utility airport and has a 4,000 foot primary runway, while the L.O. Simenstad Airport in Osceola is a transport/corporate airport and is scheduled to extend its primary runway to 5,005 feet in 2006. Because of Polk County's proximity to the major air facilities in Minneapolis-St. Paul, many communities rely on these facilities for scheduled air service (Polk County Economic Profile).

The New Richmond Regional Airport was officially established in 1964 and is considered one of the fastest growing airports in the Midwest. Over 180 aircraft reside in privately owned hangers. It is about 17 miles (20 minutes) away from the Town of Garfield.

The Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport is the main airport used by people in the region and is about 65 miles (75 minutes) away from the town. This airport has about 500,000 landings and takes-offs in a given year and will continue to be available to residents of the Town of Garfield.

There are many other privately owned airports located across the county.



## Trucking

There are no trucking terminals in the Town of Garfield.

## Water Transportation

There are no forms of water transportation in the Town of Garfield. The St. Croix River is the closest location of water transportation.

## State and Regional Transportation Plans

- Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020

This plan determines the number and type of airport facilities around Wisconsin that are needed to meet aviation needs through the year 2020. The plan defines the State Airport System and forecasts the level of public investment required to:

1. Upgrade substandard features of the system such as widening of existing runways to meet federal and state standards.
2. Preserve the airport system in the future such as the replacement of existing pavements and lighting systems to meet federal and state standards.
3. Enhance the system in the future such as the construction of runway extensions and new runways in order to meet forecast increases in aviation demand.

- West Central Regional Freeway System (2005)

This is a comprehensive study made by WI Department of Transportation (WisDOT) of the west central freeway system consisting of St. Croix, Pierce, Dunn, Polk, Chippewa, and Eau Claire counties. Of the corridors listed below, State Trunk Highway 65 would affect the Town of Garfield the most.

- I-94 within St. Croix, Dunn, and Eau Claire County
- STH 65 within St. Croix, Polk, and Pierce County
- STH 63 in St. Croix County
- STH 35 Between River Falls and Hudson in St. Croix County

The studies conducted by the DOT indicate the following consequences on State Trunk Highway 65:

### No Action consequences

"Traffic volume on WIS 65 will meet warrants for a 4-lane facility within 10 years which will create substantial peak hour delays. While addition of traffic signals may enhance some operational aspects, it will result in long delays for through traffic WIS 65."

### Improvements Needed

"Realignment of WIS 65 between I-94 and USH 12 on the east side of the

Village of Roberts and expanding to 4-lanes between USH 12 and the City of New Richmond. The estimate for this treatment is \$33 million.”

- WisDOT six year highway improvement program

One of the subprograms under this is the State Highway rehabilitation subprogram which consists of three parts; existing highways, state bridges, backbone rehabilitation.

WisDOT has a few projects planned for the future in Polk County that may affect the Town of Garfield. Between May 1, 2007 and June 1, 2008, the DOT plans on replacing a bridge over the Apple River in the City of Amery and resurfacing nine miles County Highway M just south of the Village of Osceola.

- Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report

This report gives an overview of the status of the rail system in Wisconsin and addresses issues that will be faced in the future. This is the beginning report on what will become the DOT State Rail Plan. In general, rail will continue to be extremely important form of transportation in the future; mainly for shipping purposes. This report will have little effect on the Town of Garfield.

- Midwest Regional Rail System

This is a massive proposal of creating passenger rail connections across the Midwest; connecting all the major cities. The proposal aims at increasing efficiency and safety as well as offering more transportation options in the Midwest. The system would also boost Wisconsin’s economy and numerous industries from the construction of the project. Massive federal funding would be necessary for such a project. Either way, this project will have little effect on the Town of Garfield.

- Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020 (December 1998)

This plan was created because of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 and its replacement the Transportation Equality Act (TEA-21) of 1998 as well as Wisconsin’s Translinks 21 plan. Under part of Translinks 21, WisDOT committed to creating a comprehensive bicycle plan. This plan has two main goals:

1. Increase levels of bicycling throughout Wisconsin, doubling the number of trips made by bicycles by 2010 (with additional increases achieved by 2020).
2. Reduce crashes involving bicyclists and motor vehicles by 10% by 2010 (with additional increases achieved by 2020).

The plan goes on to list roles associated with the plan:

#### Counties

- Consider the needs of bicyclists in all road projects and build facilities accordingly.
- Develop, revise, and update long-range bicycle plans and maps.
- Consider adopting a shoulder paving policy.
- Promote land use policies that are bicyclists-friendly

- Educate county sheriffs on share-the-road safety techniques and enforcement strategies for specific high-risk bicyclist and motorists infractions of the law.

#### Communities

- Develop, revise, and update long-range bicycle plans and maps.
  - Consider the needs of bicyclists in all street projects (especially arterial and collector streets), and build bicycle facilities accordingly.
  - Promote and offer bicycle safety programs.
  - Promote bicyclists-friendly development through plans, zoning, and subdivision ordinances.
  - Provide bicycle racks at public and commercial areas,
  - Consider providing locker room facilities for employees.
  - Consider bicycle racks on buses.
  - Encourage business involvement as a means to increase bicycle commuting and other functional trips.
  - Help promote bike to work/school days.
- Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 (March 2002)

The purpose of this plan was to outline statewide and local measure to increase walking and promote pedestrian safety. It was meant to identify local and state roles concerning pedestrian transportation. State goals include the following:

1. Increase the number and improve the quality of walking trips in Wisconsin.
2. Reduce the number of pedestrian crashes and fatalities.
3. Increase the availability of pedestrian planning and design guidance and other general information for state, local officials and citizens.

The first objective refers to State Trunk Highways. It acknowledges that WisDOT must work with local governments to assist with pedestrian needs along State Trunk Highways. The Town of Garfield has State Trunk Highway 65 running through it. If there were ever pedestrian related issues or any construction related to this highway, WisDOT should work with the town to agree and resolve pedestrian needs and make necessary accommodations.

The second objective refers to engineering and planning. This objective calls for local governments to utilize federal funding programs to meet local pedestrian needs. As stated in the executive summary, "Local officials should identify and propose high priority pedestrian projects that qualify for grants under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) programs, the local Transportation Enhancement programs, and the Surface Transportation Project Discretionary (STP-D) programs." WisDOT will provide information on financial assistance and financial techniques for assessing sidewalk improvement.

A third objective of this plan is education. The plan calls for ... "local governments to commit to provide for the training needs of their project planning and design staff." The WisDOT will provide the training opportunities in all levels of government. It also calls for locals to continue to provide

pedestrian education through a variety of education and promotional activities, such as team walking or special needs pedestrian escorts.

A fourth objective concerns enforcement. The plan calls for locals to increase enforcement efforts. All governments and agencies should commit to enforcing the pedestrian and motorist laws to improve pedestrian safety and comfort.

The final objective of this plan refers to encouragement of pedestrian travel. In this objective, WisDOT vows to share its expertise with local governments.

To better implement this plan, WisDOT planned on developing a Pedestrian Best Practices Resource Guide (BPRG) for release in summer of 2002. This guide was unable to be found.

- Translinks 21

This plan was created after the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) was created in 1991. This required all states to have a statewide multimodal transportation plan. Translinks 21 was created in 1994 to satisfy this requirement. The goals of this plan include the following:

Mobility – moving people and goods from place to place

Choice – making more transportation options available to citizens

Safety – improve transportation safety

Connectivity – a seamless transportation system that is convenient, reliable, and cost-effective

Efficiency – save time and money

- Connections 2030 (WisDOT)

WisDOT is currently working on this plan that will cover all forms of transportation; including highways, local roads, railroad, air, water, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian, through the year 2030.

- Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020

This is a 21-year strategic plan which addresses current conditions of state highways, future plans, financial tools, and other strategies to use to maintain the State's 11,800 miles of highway. This plan is updated every six years.

Highway 65 is the only state highway to run through the Town of Garfield. This transportation plan needs to be consistent with the DOT plan for Highway 65.

- Rustic Roads

The Wisconsin legislature created the rustic road system in 1973 to, "preserve what remains of Wisconsin's scenic, lightly traveled country roads for the leisurely enjoyment of bikers, hikers and motorists."

According to WisDOT, a Rustic Road needs to possess the following qualities:

- Should have outstanding natural features along its borders such as rugged terrain, native vegetation, native wildlife, or include open areas with agricultural vistas which singly or in combination set this road apart from other roads.
- Should be a lightly traveled local access road, one which serves the adjacent property owners and those wishing to travel by auto, bicycle, or hiking for purposes of recreational enjoyment of its rustic features.
- Should be one not scheduled nor anticipated for major improvements which would change its rustic characteristics.
- Should have, preferably, a minimum length of 2 miles and, where feasible, should provide a closure or loop, or connect to major highways at both ends of the route.

No State rustic roads exist in the Town of Garfield. There are five in Polk County; Mains Crossing located just north of Amery, Clara Lake Road right next to Big Round Lake, West County Line Road located just north of Turtle Lake, Chippewa Trail in Luck, and County Road S between Osceola and Dresser. There has been some debate within the Town of Garfield regarding potential rustic roads. Critics of state rustic roads worry about safety. One option is to designate a road as a town rustic road. This allows more flexibility on how to maintain them than the state guidelines.

- St. Croix River Crossing Project

The St. Croix River Crossing project includes the construction of a bridge from the Town of St. Joseph, Wisconsin to Stillwater, Minnesota to replace the severely deteriorated Stillwater Lift Bridge. Currently, the project completion date is anticipated in the year 2024. The project continues to be debated.

For the purpose of this plan, the impacts of a new bridge would drastically increase access to and from the Town of Garfield with desirable and undesirable effects.

### SWOT Analysis ~ Transportation

On June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007, the Town of Garfield Plan Commission met with representatives from Stevens Engineers, Inc. and conducted a SWOT analysis on the transportation element. The following lists are the exact results from that discussion.

**Table 3.1**

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available land</li> <li>• Local road access</li> <li>• Proximity to airports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No public transportation (senior citizens)</li> <li>• Bike/pedestrian transportation</li> </ul>

<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land</li> <li>• Railroad</li> <li>• Bike, ATV, pedestrian, snowmobile</li> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Rustic roads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ATV trails</li> <li>• Ag/vehicle conflicts</li> <li>• Eroded shoulders</li> <li>• Road sign problems</li> <li>• Emergency/public service problems</li> <li>• Speed/safety issues</li> </ul>

**Goals, Objectives, Policies, Programs**

Goal: Provide a safe, efficient, and cost effective local transportation system

**Objectives**

- Create a more walkable community.
- Create trails of all kinds that allow for the enjoyment of the abundant natural resources.
- Promote tourism.
- Allow for efficient and safe interaction between vehicles and agricultural machinery.
- Maintain road shoulders/ditches.
- Keep all properties accessible by emergency service vehicles, buses and other service vehicles.
- Minimize traffic accidents.
- Minimize transportation costs.
- Cooperate with the development of the Amery to Dresser trail.
- Continue relying on neighboring municipalities for air and water transportation.

**Policies**

- Look into public opinions regarding motorized trails within the town.
- Find out what neighboring municipalities are doing regarding public motorized trails.
- Designate certain local roads for town bicycle trails.
- Look into public transportation options; especially for senior citizens.
- Fix road signs.
- Keep road signs consistent.
- Place appropriate road signs where agricultural use of roads is high.
- Make lake front tracts more accessible to emergency service vehicles, buses, etc.
- Continue relying on Polk County Transportation for Disabled and Elderly, Inc.
- Communicate with WI DNR to support the development of the Amery to Dresser Trail in a way that benefits the residents of the Town of Garfield.

**Programs**

- Develop a road sign maintenance program.
- Create a Town Rustic Road Plan.