

TRANSPORTATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A multi-modal transportation system serving Washburn County has a significant influence on the growth and development of the Town of Long Lake. A review of the town’s transportation system not only confirms these linkages but also identifies the growth impacts on the transportation system and the improvements programmed in response to these impacts. An analysis of transportation system trends provides further insight into the future transportation needs of the Town of Long Lake and Washburn County.

Vehicular transportation is the predominant form of transportation in Long Lake due to the limited forms of transportation available. Recreational transportation also plays an important role as part of the overall system. Recreational transportation is further described in the Utilities and Community Facilities element. The following section describes the existing conditions of transportation facilities in the Town of Long Lake.

3.2 TRANSPORTATION VISION AND VALUES

The Town of Long Lake envisions managing demand for local transportation needs by providing an appropriate level of service to sustain residents and businesses, while preserving the rural character of the town. This can be achieved by providing for efficient and effective delivery of commercial, public, and emergency services and through encouraging the use of multi-modal means of transportation. The Town of Long Lake values a safe, efficient, multi-modal transportation network that is planned, well maintained, and which meets the current and future needs of residents, visitors, and community businesses.

3.3 FACILITIES INVENTORY AND CHARACTERISTICS

Road Network

The Town of Long Lake’s roadway network is comprised of 53.97 miles of highways and town roads. Roads within the town are classified by their functional use and by the amount of traffic they sustain. Table 3.1 indicates the functional use of Long Lake’s roadway network, while the map on page 2.4 visually depicts the functional classification in the Town of Long Lake.

**Table 3.1:
Functional Classification of
Roadways**

Classification	Miles of Roadway
Principal arterials	0.45
Minor arterials	0.00
Major collectors	15.69
Minor collectors	0.79
Local roads	37.04
Total	53.97

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, District 8

Functional road classifications for rural areas include principal arterials, minor arterials, major collectors, minor collectors, and local roads.

Principal arterials- serves interstate and interregional trips. These roads generally serve urban areas greater than 5,000 in population.

Minor arterials- serves cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intra-regional and inter-regional traffic movements.

Major collectors- provides service to moderate sized communities and links intra-area traffic to nearby larger population centers.

Minor collectors- these roads collect traffic from local roads and links them to all remaining smaller communities. All developed areas should be within a reasonable distance of a collector road.

Local roads- provides access for travel over relatively short distances. All roads not classified as arterials or collectors are local function roads.

In the Town of Long Lake, US Highway 53 is classified as a principal arterial highway on a statewide level. CTH “D” and “M” serve as the central road corridors providing residents and visitors access to the community, while other local roads provide routes to homes and recreational destinations both within and beyond the town.

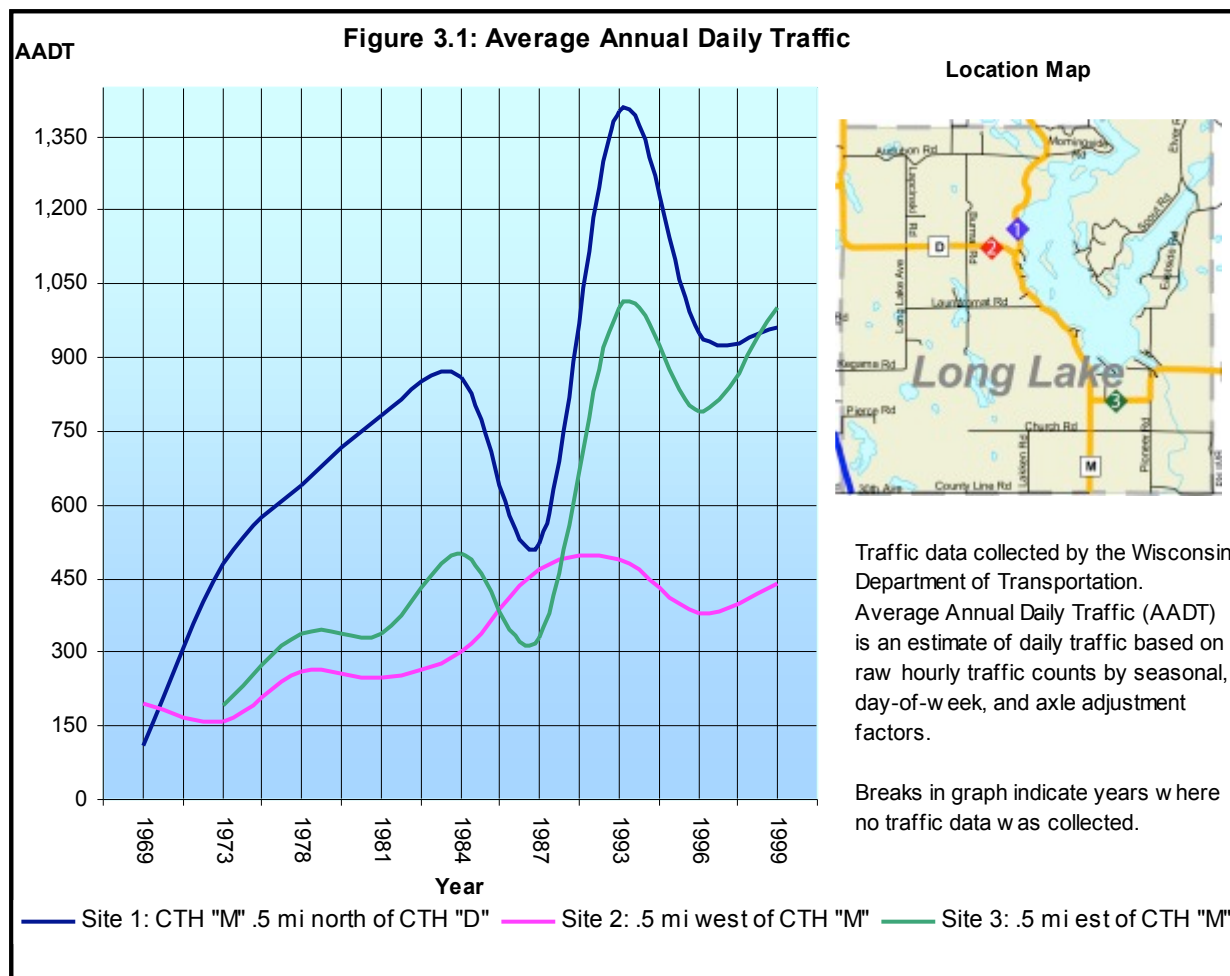
Traffic Volume

Figure 3.1 on the following page depicts change in traffic volume at recording sites on roads passing through the Town of Long Lake. As is indicated in the graph, sites along CTH D and M have shown the highest amount of traffic increase of all roadways in the town measured since 1969. Additionally, traffic volume along CTH D (west of CTH M) into and out of the Town of Long Lake has shown a slight increase over the 30-year period.

The increase in traffic in and around the Town of Long Lake and throughout Washburn County can be attributed to two main factors. First, since 1969, residents of the town and surrounding towns are making more frequent vehicular trips for shopping, commuting to work, and to recreational sites. Secondly, many areas of Washburn County have seen a significant increase in population density and the development of second homes owned by seasonal residents of the town.

Intersection Accidents

An inventory of traffic accidents at intersections was completed on a countywide level using a Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) database. The database was queried to retrieve multiple accidents at intersections in the county from January 1995 through December 2001. In the Town of Long Lake, three accidents were identified at the intersection of CTH M and CTH D East, on the south end of Long Lake. Map 3.2, depicting multiple intersection accidents, can be found at the end of this element.



PASER Roadway Evaluation

In summer 2003, the Town of Long Lake conducted a state mandated roadway evaluation known as PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating) for the Town of Long Lake. The rating system is intended to assist the town in planning for roadway improvements and to better allocate its financial resources for these improvements. Currently, there are approximately 37 miles of roadways that the Town of Long Lake is responsible for repairing and/or maintaining throughout the year. This mileage may fluctuate from year to year due to additions or subtractions of roadway miles to the overall town system. During the inventory, roadways in the town were evaluated and rated in terms of their surface condition, drainage, and road crown. Paved roads were rated from 1 to 10 (10 being the best), and gravel roads were rated from 1 to 5 (5 being the best). For information on how to rate local roads, you can reference one of six manuals produced by the Transportation Information Center. These include manuals on Concrete, Asphalt, Gravel, Unimproved, Sealcoated Roads, and a Rural & Urban Drainage Manual.

Road Weight Restrictions & Limitations

In the spring, the town board imposes weight restrictions (Frost Laws) to lower the allowable weight on most roads in recognition of the instability caused by winter frost activity. Some roads, however, have been designated as all-season roads and are exempt from springtime weight restrictions.

3.4 ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS (TOWN, COUNTY, AND STATE)

Improvements to local roads are critical for maintaining an adequate and safe roadway system. Future road improvements are generally based on current road conditions, with the intent to keep all roadways intact and useable on a daily basis. Future roadway improvements need to be flexible because of the possibility of unforeseen emergencies or disasters that may arise from year-to-year or even day-to-day. The Town of Long Lake has developed a schedule of road improvements. There are currently 11-scheduled roadway improvements in the next five years (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Selected Roadway Improvements, 2004-2008

Year	Sponsor	Road/Street	Location	Mileage	Type of Improvement
2004	Long Lake	Long Lake Ave	--	1 mile	Hot Mix
2004	Long Lake	Lapcinski Rd	--	N/A	Gravel
2004	County	CTH M	30 th Ave to CTH D	4.8 miles	Resurface
2005	Long Lake	County Line Road	--	1 mile	Hot Mix
2005	Long Lake	Audubon Rd	--	N/A	Gravel
2006	Long Lake	County Line Road	--	1 mile	Hot Mix
2006	Long Lake	Elver Road	--	N/A	Gravel
2007	Long Lake	County Line Road	--	1 mile	Hot Mix
2007	Long Lake	East Side Road	--	1 mile	Resurface
2008	Long Lake	County Line Road	--	1 mile	Hot Mix
2008	Long Lake	Audubon Road	--	N/A	Prepare for Hot Mix

Source: Town of Long Lake & Washburn County

3.5 AIRPORTS AND AVIATION

No scheduled passenger flights are available in the Town of Long Lake. The nearest airports providing regular scheduled passenger flights to domestic and international destinations are located in Eau Claire, WI; Duluth, MN; or Minneapolis-St. Paul. Charter air service is also available at the Rice Lake Air Center-Regional Airport. At present, there are two public and nine private airport/airfields within Washburn County. Their county location and present status is outlined in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Washburn County Airports/Airfields

Airport/Airfield	Location	Owner/Operator	Status
Will-B-Gon Airport	Birchwood	William Cyr	Private
Lilac Time Airport	Birchwood	Robert Gillette	Private
Ben Sutherland Airport	Minong	Byron Bright	Private
Four Seasons Airport	Sarona	William Plumeri	Private
Long Lake Seaplane Base	Sarona	Henry Didlier	Private
Shell Lake Municipal Airport	City of Shell Lake	City of Shell Lake	Public
Nest of Eagles Airport	Spooner	K. Johnson	Public
Spooner Hospital Heliport	Spooner	Spooner Hospital	Private
Springbrook Airport	Springbrook	Clifford Ingbretson	Private
Lakewood Lodge Airport	Stone Lake	Robert Gillette	Private
Warbirds North Airport	Trego	Arland Fox	Private

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aeronautics, 2001

3.6 MULTI-USE TRAILS

Throughout Washburn County, there are several hundred miles of multi-use trails. This network is used most intensely during the winter months for snowmobiling and in the summer months for ATV use, which in addition to its recreational use provides an alternate means of commuting (other than car travel) for some Washburn County residents. There are two designated snowmobile trails in the town, Trail #28 and #34. Long Lake’s motorized and non-motorized trail systems are further described in the Utilities and Community Facilities Element of the comprehensive plan.

3.7 ELDERLY AND DISABLED TRANSPORTATION

Section 5310, Wisconsin State Statute-**Elderly and Disabled Transportation Program** provides for capital assistance to be used in serving the special transportation needs of elderly persons and persons with disabilities for whom public transportation services are unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate. The grants available through this program cover up to 80 percent of the cost of purchasing vehicles that will be used in specialized transportation service for elderly and/or disabled persons as well as for anyone for whom room is available in the vehicle. At present, there are no designated pick-up or drop-off sites located in the Town of Long Lake relating to this program.

Non-emergency medical transportation is available through three private providers outside Washburn County and by local providers including Caring Medical, Indianhead Medical Center, Spooner Health Systems, Washburn County Veterans, and Washburn County Unit on Aging. Ventures Unlimited provides specialized transportation service to its clients, with limited seating available to the general public. Ventures Unlimited operates throughout Washburn County four days a week.

3.8 PUBLIC TRANSIT

Currently, no bus service exists within the Town of Long Lake. Closest access to commercial bus transportation is available by Greyhound Bus Lines in Eau Claire, WI. NWT Express operating from the City of Hayward also provides ground passenger transportation. NWT Express provides transit service between Hayward and Minneapolis/St. Paul seven days a week with scheduled stops at several other communities between Hayward and Minneapolis/St. Paul.

3.9 TRUCKING AND WATER TRANSPORTATION

Trucking through the town is accommodated through the highway network and typically is subject to road weight restrictions, while water transportation is primarily utilized for recreational purposes.

The closest port available for the delivery or shipment of water borne commerce is approximately two hours north of the town. Domestic and international shipping is handled out of the Duluth/Superior Port.

3.10 RAIL SYSTEM

There are currently no railways in the Town of Long Lake and there are no plans for future expansion of railways into the town.

3.11 NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGNS AND MOBILITY

Due to the Town of Long Lake being primarily rural in nature, the ability to functionally provide a full range of transportation choices to its residents has limitations. However, it is the desire of the town that when possible and financially feasible alternative transportation modes be investigated and developed into new neighborhood designs. A number of the objectives and action statements made by the town support the overall development of a multi-modal transportation system. Due to the rural nature of the town, full implementation of a townwide pedestrian/trail system may be difficult. However, in areas more densely populated like that around Long Lake itself, designs targeted to better pedestrian movement may be adapted.

Transportation costs to a developer in meeting the town requirements for minimum road standards can have an impact to total project development costs. It is recommended that developers consider a more compact cluster design of building lots with community green space (residential, commercial, and industrial) to minimize the total mileage of road construction. The total cost saving can be significant to the developer and, in turn, can reduce for the town the total mileage required to maintain when designated as a town road. In the future, as commercial development occurs, the placement of frontage roads with limited access to local, county, and state roadways will minimize traffic congestion and have the potential to increase safety.

3.12 SUMMARY OF EXISTING TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Washburn County Road Improvement Plan

The Washburn County Highway department has a road construction schedule in place for scheduled county road improvements for the next seven years. There is one scheduled improvement on CTH M in 2004.

Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020

The *Wisconsin State Highway Plan* focuses on the 11,800 miles of State Trunk Highway routes in Wisconsin. The plan does not identify any projects in the Town of Long Lake in the next 20 years. No conflicts with the Town of Long Lake Comprehensive Plan have been identified.

Corridors 2020

Corridors 2020 sets criteria for selected routes that go beyond traditional highway planning with the intent to enhance and improve all two-lane and four-lane highways connecting cities of 5,000 inhabitants or more. This does not pertain to the Town of Long Lake, as no corridor 2020 primary or secondary route passes through the town. No conflicts with the Town of Long Lake Comprehensive Plan exist at this time.

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

The *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* (1998) presents a blueprint for improving and expanding bicycle transportation routes in the state. There are no plans to expand state bicycle routes into the Town of Long Lake at this time.

Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020

This plan provides a statewide framework to increase walking and to promote pedestrian safety. The plan establishes goals, objectives, and actions regarding the provision of pedestrian accommodations that could be implemented locally. The plan also serves to help communities identify actions they can take to establish pedestrian travel as a viable, convenient, and safe transportation choice throughout Wisconsin. No specific recommendations to the Town of Long Lake exist.

Wisconsin Airport System Plan 2020

The Five-Year Airport Improvement Program, which is produced by WisDOT's Bureau of Aeronautics, is published annually and includes an overview of the process through which it was developed. This document provides a snapshot of the scheduled airport improvement projects to date for the next five years. There are no airports or airfields in the Town of Long Lake; therefore, there are no scheduled improvements.

2003 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The *2003 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy* (CEDS) provides an analysis of local conditions; identifies problems, needs, and opportunities of the ten-county region; and defines the vision, goals, and objectives of the region. Within the document, specific transportation objectives and activities have been identified on a regional basis. Based on a review of the 2003 CEDS and that of the transportation goals and objectives of the Town of Long Lake, the transportation goals and objectives are complementary and no conflicts exist.

3.13 TRANSPORTATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS

A set of recommended transportation goals, objectives, and action steps has been developed to assist the Town of Long Lake in achieving the identified objectives and overall goal of a safe and efficient transportation system while preserving the aesthetic qualities of the town.

Goal: A safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system, which accommodates the movement of people and goods.

Objective 1: Continue to maintain and upgrade town roadways while preserving the town's rural character.

Regulation Action 1: Inventory town roads with respect to state standards for local roads pertaining to road widths and geometric standards.

Education Action 2: Discuss PASER road evaluation results at a town board meeting and make available per request thereafter.

Resource Improvement Action 1: Contact DNR before replacing or installing culverts.

Resource Improvement Action 2: Make improvements to any areas identified as high accident areas.

Resource Improvement Action 3: Implement Best Management Practices for erosion control during road projects.

Objective 2: Work closely with Washburn County on transportation problems and projects that affect the Town of Long Lake.

Regulation Action 1: Work with the county to ensure that county roads M, D, and P are upgraded and maintained to appropriate standards.

Regulation Action 3: Cooperate with DNR and DOT to ensure that they use proper erosion control and BMP's when working on county roads in the town.

Education Action 1: Request that the county give appropriate notices to the town on any known upcoming meetings when county road improvements are to be discussed.

Education Action 2: Review the County's road improvement plan at the annual meeting along with the town's five-year road plan.

Resource Improvement Action: Consider bike trails, paved shoulders, utility relocations, and safety improvements when upgrading town or county roads.

Monitoring Action: Town of Long Lake representatives should continue to coordinate with Washburn County by continuing to attend meetings and provide input on future projects.

Objective 3: Promote safe driveways.

Regulation Action 1: Develop an ordinance and permitting process for new driveways.

Regulation Action 2: Require future land use change requests to address adequate town road access as part of the checklist process.

Regulation Action 3: Develop standards for access control, spacing, and frequency.

Education Action: Develop a handout or brochure delineating town driveway standards.

Monitoring Action: Maintain a record of driveway permits granted.

Objective 4: Explore the possibility of non-automotive road use and trail development.

Regulation Action: Recognize regulations already in place for non-automotive road use and trail use.

Resource Improvement Action: Identify areas where ATV trails connect to the Town of Long Lake and work with local clubs in the area to identify needs.