

Chapter III

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Transportation is a key component of any planning process. Transportation has been a key economic element of growth and development in a region. A transportation system provides for the movement of goods, services, and people to and from a community.

Locally, the Town of Byron spends a significant portion of the annual budget on road improvements and maintenance. As traffic increases, more and more pressure is put on road maintenance and traffic safety. New development will create future challenges to maintain the growing network of roads in the town.

The Town of Byron has an excellent network of roads that include town roads, portions of five county trunk highways and one state highway. Byron is also well connected to a regional transportation system that includes U.S. Highway 41 connecting it to growing urban and rural areas in Wisconsin and Northeastern Illinois. Over 14 million people live in a region that stretches along Lake Michigan from Chicago and its suburbs northward to Green Bay. If this area were a state it would have one of the largest populations in the country. This element will inventory the current transportation resources that exist in Byron and address the issues that the Town will need to address in order to maintain and enhance its quality of life.

INVENTORY AND CLASSIFICATION OF HIGHWAYS BY FUNCTION

Road Inventory

Over 50 percent of road miles in the Town of Byron are town roads. Approximately 28 percent are highways and 12 percent are state and federal highways (Table III-1). The Town of Byron utilizes PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating) to evaluate and schedule road maintenance on town roads. Roads are rated on a scale of one to 10.

As mentioned previously, one of the concerns with roads will be increased traffic and safety. Between 1994 and 2000, traffic on Highway 175 and U.S. 41 in the Town of Byron has increased by approximately 18 percent (See Table III-2). Within the Town of Byron, roads provide access to residential, business, and recreational property. Roads in the town are classified as local access roads, subcollector roads, collector roads, and arterial highways.

Table III-1

TOWN OF BYRON: ROAD INVENTORY

| Type of Road | Linear Miles | Percent of Total |
|-----------------|--------------|------------------|
| Town Roads | 46.04 | 49.69% |
| County Highways | 28.37 | 30.62% |
| Private Roads | 6.35 | 6.85% |
| State Highways | 5.95 | 6.42% |
| U.S. Highways | 5.95 | 6.42% |
| Total | 92.66 | 100% |

Source: Fond du Lac County Planning Department

Local Access Roads

Local access roads main purpose is to provide access to adjacent land uses and serve as a secondary outlet for traffic movement. These roads have low volume traffic and through traffic is discouraged. Local roads in the Town of Byron include Briar Court, East Byron Road, Wood Lane, Barton Road, Abel Drive, Bonzelet Lane, Cearns Lane, Lost Arrow Court, Thonson Road, Timber Trail, Towne Lane, Hunter Lane, Wildlife Lane, Neitzel Lane, Oakridge Lane, Pinnow Lane, and Warbers Lane.

Subcollector Roads

Subcollector roads carry higher traffic volumes and convey traffic from local access roads to arterial roads. The primary function of a subcollector street is to provide frontage and access to properties and carry through traffic to local access roads. Subcollector roads are further divided into major and minor subcollector roads based upon the amount of traffic volume. Minor subcollector roads include Brookside Road, Maple Lane, Martin Road, Hamilton Road, and West Byron Road. Major subcollector roads in the town are Kelly Road, Church Road, Hickory Road, Oaklane Road, Millpond Road, River Road, Kenyon Road, and Lost Arrow Road.

Collector Roads

Collector roads are principal traffic arteries that carry high volumes of traffic from local access and subcollector roads to arterial highways. Collector roads in the town of Byron include the County Trunk Highway System roads (CTH) including CTH B, CTH D, CTH F, CTH K, CTH V, and CTH Y. CTH AY is a minor collector road for Byron since only a small portion of this highway is within the town.

Arterial Highways

Arterial highways main purpose it to conduct traffic between communities by moving heavy volumes of traffic. U.S. Highway 41 and State Highway 175 are arterial highways that serve the Town of Byron.

Traffic Volume Counts

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation maintains traffic count data for State Highway 175 and U.S Highway 41 within the Town of Byron. Between 1994 and 2000, traffic volume counts steadily increased at major intersections with State Highway 175 and with traffic volume on U.S. Highway 41 through the town (Table III-2 and Appendix A, Map 8). These traffic count figures declined slightly at the intersection of State Highway 175 and CTH B and CTH F in 2003. This may have been due to construction on U.S. Highway 151 to the north and people seeking an alternate route to avoid detours.

Vehicle Trips Per Day

The Institute of Transportation Engineers conducted research on trip generation. The Institute found that single family residences average nine vehicle trips per day. Apartment, town house, and condominium dwellers averaged from 5 to 6 vehicle trips per day.

Table III-2

TOWN OF BYRON TRAFFIC COUNTS, 1994-2000

| Road | Traffic Count Year 1994 | Traffic Count Year 1997 | Traffic Count Year 2000 | Traffic Count Year 2003 |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Highway 175 North of Town Line | 3560 | 3900 | 4400 | NA |
| Highway 175 and County Trunk B | 2900 | 3100 | 3400 | 3000 |
| Highway 175 and County Trunk F | 2540 | 2500 | 3100 | 2500 |
| Highway 175 and County Trunk Y | 2400 | 2700 | 3100 | NA |
| Highway 41 Traffic through Town of Byron | 12390 | NA | 14900 | NA |

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The transportation system is important for commerce, economic development, and quality of life for Byron residents. Roads are the primary element for transportation within the city. Modes of transportation include air, ship, railroad, automobile, truck public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian.

Airports

The Fond du Lac County Airport is located just north of Byron in the Town of Fond du Lac. It is a general aviation airport for airplane enthusiasts and corporate flights. Outagamie Regional Airport in Appleton and General Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee provide both commercial and passenger flight services. The Outagamie Regional Airport is approximately 40 miles north of Byron and General Mitchell International Airport is 65 miles to the south.

Railroad Freight Service

Byron is served by Canadian National Railroad that connects Byron with Superior, Green Bay and Chicago. Chicago serves as a railroad hub. Nearly 33 percent of all rail traffic including much of Wisconsin's rail freight traffic originates, terminates, or passes through Chicago. The Wisconsin and Southern Railroad headquartered in Milwaukee operates 147 miles of former Milwaukee Road branch lines from Horicon to Cambria and Mayville.

Railroad Passenger Service

At the present time, passenger train service is not available in the immediate Byron area. Amtrak provides daily commuter passenger service from Milwaukee to Chicago. Studies are underway to expand Chicago's Metra commuter rail system to Milwaukee.

The Midwest Regional Rail System Plan proposes the development of a high speed passenger rail system that would be located within close proximity to the U.S Highway 41 corridor and link Chicago, Milwaukee, and Green Bay. Environmental assessment studies are currently underway but no definite funding is in place for this project.

Seaports

The Town of Byron does not have a waterway that provides suitable transportation. The nearest international harbor port is in Milwaukee.

Trucking

This method of transportation is primarily used for freight. Several trucking companies operate in the area and the U.S 41 corridor provides an excellent transportation system for trucking companies in need of a direct link to Green Bay, Appleton, Milwaukee, or Chicago. The U.S 151 corridor provides easy trucking access to Madison.

Public Transit

The nearest bus services are provided by Greyhound in Fond du Lac and Milwaukee. The nearest Taxi services are also in Fond du Lac.

Bicycling

The Wild Goose State Trail connects the Town of Byron with Fond du Lac and central Dodge County (Appendix A, Map 7). This trail is primarily for bicycling touring and recreation. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is currently planning to connect the Wild Goose Trail with the Glacial River and Glacial Drumlin Trails in Jefferson County. Narrow shoulders on town roads and higher traffic volumes on county roads make it difficult for bicycle travel within Byron. The future rebuilding of State Highway 175 and redesignation as a county highway will provide an opportunity to implement the two-tiered approach of highway design and bikeway planning as spelled out in the Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan, 2020 and the Fond du Lac Metropolitan Planning Organizations Long Range Transportation plan. A bikeway would provide town residents with access to Fond du Lac and Lomira.

Pedestrian Transportation

The Town of Byron does not have a pedestrian system. The rural nature of the town creates some severe impediments to creating a walkable community. However, responses from the citizen survey indicated that residents desired more opportunities within the town for walking, hiking, and biking.

Transportation for the Disabled

The Fond du Lac County Social Services Department, Aging and Disability Resource Center provides transportation as well as other services to the disabled. County owned handicap accessible vans are available to help people with disabilities. In addition, private taxi companies operate from Fond du Lac, however, this service is expensive outside the city limits.

ROAD STANDARDS

Town of Byron

The Town of Byron does not have minimum street design standards in their zoning ordinance. However, in order to promote and enhance public safety the Town of Byron does require minimum road setbacks. The minimum setback distance from the nearest boundary of the right-of-way is 67 feet. The exception is in subdivisions or on lots abutting private roads. The setback distance for subdivisions is 30 feet and for private roads it is 50 feet.

State of Wisconsin

The minimum road design standards are found in Wisconsin State Statute 86.26 (1). They are as follows in Table III-3.

Table III-3

Minimum Road Design Standards: State of Wisconsin

| Road Type | Right-of-Way Minimum Width | Minimum Payment Width |
|--------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Arterial | 66 Feet | 24 feet, two 5-foot outside shoulders |
| Collector | 66 Feet | 22 feet, two 4-foot outside shoulders |
| Local Access | 49.5 Feet | 16 feet, two 4-foot outside shoulders |

REGIONAL AND STATE TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Regional Transportation Plan

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC) as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Fond du Lac Urbanized Area, the City of Fond du Lac, in cooperation with Fond du Lac County, the Village of North Fond du Lac and the towns Fond du Lac, Byron, Empire, Taycheedah and Friendship completed the Long Range Transportation Plan for the Fond du Lac Urbanized Area. Under federal law each metropolitan area in the nation, with a population greater than 50,000 must have a long range plan that considers at least a 20 year time frame to be eligible for federal transportation funds. The plan has a time horizon to the year 2035 so that the required 20 year planning horizon can be maintained while the prescribed update is being completed every 5 years. The Long Range Transportation Plan for the Fond du Lac Urbanized Area is available at <http://www.eastcentralrpc.org/FondduLacMPO/index.htm>

State Transportation Improvement Plans

The State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation is embarking on some major transportation projects in the region over the next 5 to 15 years. Some of the projects include:

- Expansion of State Highway 23 to a four lane from Fond du Lac to Plymouth.

- Upgrading U.S. Highway 41 in Winnebago County from four to six lanes.
- Expansion of State Highway 67 to a four lane from Lomira to Sheboygan.
- Continued improvements to the U.S. Highway 41 corridor between Fond du Lac and Milwaukee.

The following plans developed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation were reviewed as part of the development of this transportation element. This plan is consistent with existing transportation plans and are incorporated into this plan. The state plans can be viewed at <http://www.dot.state.wi.us/projects/state.htm>

- Airport System Plan 2020
- Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020
- Connections 2030
- Six-Year Highway Improvement Program
- State Highway Plan 2020
- Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020
- Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1

Provide additional opportunities for pedestrian walking and biking trails when new roads are constructed or when existing roads are upgraded.

Objectives

1. Work with the State of Wisconsin, Fond du Lac County, and the Town of Fond du Lac, to study the feasibility of implementing a bike lane or trail along Highway 175 linking with the trail along the Highway 151 bypass.
2. Include a voluntary conservation subdivision provision the Town's subdivision ordinance (See Goal 1, Objective 2, Page 17) to create additional open space and opportunities for hiking and walking.
3. Encourage opportunities for pedestrian use in new subdivisions.
4. Keep informed about state and federal programs that provide funding for pedestrian and bicycle transportation.

Goal 2

Build and maintain local roads that complement new and existing development and rural character.

Objectives

1. Consider development of residential streets with open drainage systems that encourage infiltration of storm water into the soil and the conveyance of water into grass lined open channels and adjacent lawns.
2. Encourage street connectivity in new proposed subdivisions whenever possible.
3. During review of development proposals, consider setbacks, access points, and other traffic impacts that may effect existing transportation.
4. Maintain and enhance town roadside signage and make certain that highway billboards do not detract from town image and character.
5. Increase the use of the PASER evaluation rating system for road maintenance and capital project budgeting.

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Policies

1. Collaborate with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to review existing billboard sign ordinances along the Highway 41 corridor and maintain and update current Byron billboard ordinance.
2. To preserve and enhance street connectivity, dead end roads and cul-de-sacs shall be avoided in subdivisions whenever possible.
3. Work with the Wisconsin Towns Association, citizens, and state assembly and senate officials to keep state local road aids.
4. New road developments should not adversely impact existing operating farms.

Recommendations

1. The town will place signage in rural hamlets and place signs on town entrance roads that indicate to residents and visitors that they are entering the Town of Byron.
2. Work with Fond du Lac County and the State of Wisconsin to plan for road, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements with regard to the State Highway 175 redesign.
3. Developers will pay for all costs associated with road improvements and extensions to the road and pedestrian transportation network.

