

## Chapter 4 - Transportation

### Introduction

State of Wisconsin Statute, Comprehensive Planning, 66.1001 (2) (c), states the Transportation Element of a community's comprehensive plan is intended to be "*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, electric personal assistive mobility devices, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation.*" In addition, the statute stresses the importance of comparing the community'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 community.*" This document adheres to these guidelines while utilizing a 30-year planning horizon.

### Goals and Objectives

#### Transportation Goal #1

*To provide a safe, efficient and equitable transportation system that meets the needs of diverse users while minimizing impacts on farmland and the environment.*

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <i>Objective</i> | Provide safe roadway conditions, while cooperating with local, county and state entities.  |
| <i>Objective</i> | Coordinate transportation and land use planning, to minimize sprawl and traffic congestion.  |
| <i>Objective</i> | Ensure safety at railway crossings.  |
| <i>Objective</i> | Maintain the scenic value and rural character of the Town's roadways.  |
| <i>Objective</i> | Maintain the efficiency, accessibility and safety of the Beloit Airport.   |
| <i>Objective</i> | Ensure that the Town of Turtle be a safe and enjoyable location for recreational transportation, such as snowmobiling, boating, bicycling and walking. |
| <i>Objective</i> | Keep abreast of new transportation trends and advancements, and regulate them as appropriate.  |
| <i>Objective</i> | Continue to ensure that each new buildable lot has safe sight distance and driveway access.  |
| <i>Objective</i> | Ensure that facilities and services for biking, walking, and other non-auto modes of transportation are maintained, expanded and/or created.           |

- Objective* Promote and improve awareness and utilization of existing transit services, especially those that serve the elderly and disabled.

## **Transportation Goal #2**

*To support regionalism and fiscal responsibility regarding transportation-related improvements in the Town of Turtle.*

- Objective* Continue use of the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) to manage and inventory road attributes, administration, condition and maintenance requirements.
- Objective* Continue involving Town of Turtle representatives in transportation-related committees and planning efforts throughout Rock County and the region.

## **Purpose of Planning for Transportation**

Transportation networks both predicate and accommodate the growth and development of a community. Just as importantly, transportation systems significantly influence the overall character of a community. National, regional, and local road networks, bike and pedestrian routes, and other recreational transportation (including water sports), airport service, public transit and freight rail serve the Town of Turtle and its citizens and industries.

Town residents are largely automobile dependent. Accordingly, most trips are made by single-occupancy, personal automobiles. In the recent past, low demand for alternative transportation modes has influenced a transportation system that is primarily designed for automobiles. However, this plan encourages a diverse, affordable, and reliable transportation network within the Town and region to accommodate various transportation options. Benefits of a well-planned transportation system can impact fiscal resources, land use and conservation, air quality, health and safety of the citizenry, and overall quality of life.

Transportation is one aspect of planning that has the potential to negatively affect the quality of life of some sectors of the population more than others. The principles of Environmental Justice (Executive Order 12898, issued by the President in 1994) work to minimize disproportionately harmful affects on low-income and minority populations, Transportation planning in Turtle, including this transportation element, works to ensure equity, and incorporate Environmental Justice.

## **Existing Plans and Projects**

This section identifies various State and regional transportation plans and programs that impact the Town.

## **State Transportation Plans and Programs**

### **Translink 21: A Multi-Modal Transportation Plan for Wisconsin's 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

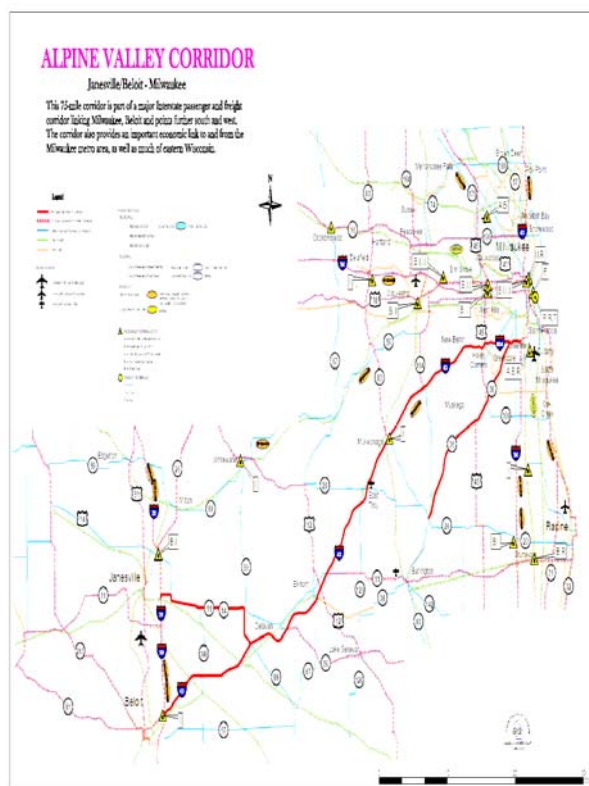
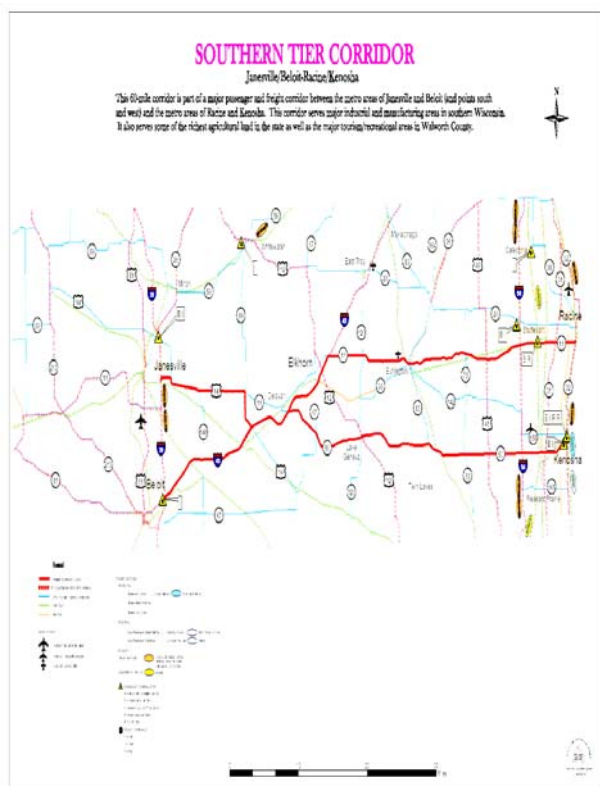
This WDOT plan, completed in 1994, provides a vision, goals and recommendations for State transportation planning, including roads, rail, air, water, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian,

through 2020. This plan creates policies to evaluate transportation programs and projects. This plan calls for the creation of a State grant program to aid local government transportation plan development, the provision of state funds to small communities to assist in providing transportation services to elderly and disabled persons, and development of a methodology to assess local/regional road needs.

### Connections 2030 Plan

This WDOT plan, currently being developed as a successor to the *Translink 21* plan, is a multi-modal policy plan addressing long-range transportation issues, including highways, local roads, and air, water, rail, bicycle/pedestrian, and transit options. This plan's policy recommendations pertain to specific transportation corridors throughout the state, two of which incorporate portions of the Town. The corridors are:

- Alpine Valley Corridor - Janesville/Beloit to Milwaukee
- Southern Tier Corridor - Janesville/Beloit to Kenosha/Racine



### Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020

This WDOT plan, completed in 1999, focuses on the 11,800 miles of state-managed highways and 4,600 bridges in Wisconsin. This plan develops policies and strategies to improve the state highway system over the next 20 years, examining issues such as congestion, pavement and bridge preservation, traffic movement, and safety concerns. This plan identifies Interstate 90/39, which runs through the western portion of the Town, as a "Corridors 2020

Backbone route," classifying it as a connector of major population and economic centers, providing economic links to national and international markets.

*Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report*

This WDOT plan, completed in 2004, identifies rail transportation issues. This plan is intended to direct the rail element of the *Connections 2030 Plan*. Rail network, intercity passenger rail, safety, and legislative issues are all plan components. This plan also identifies commuter rail, locomotive horns at roadway/railway crossings, and reducing mercury emissions as emerging issues.

*Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020*

This WDOT plan, completed in 2000, inventories state airport facilities, including upgrade recommendations, along with funding information and environmental impacts.

*Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020*

This WDOT plan, completed in 1998, aims to "establish bicycling as a viable, convenient, and safe transportation choice throughout Wisconsin." This plan establishes a framework for improving bicycling conditions, clarifies WDOT's role in bicycle transportation planning, and promotes recommendations and policies for better integration of bicycling into the existing transportation system. While the plan describes seven different intercity trail segments that are considered key, and the recommendations set forth to improve those segments, none of them are located within Rock County. The Rock County Parks, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan outlines specific plans for future bicycle routes, and is a more useful and detailed reference.

*Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020*

This WDOT plan, completed in 2002, provides a vision and policies outlining state and local measures to increase walking as a viable transportation mode, and to promote pedestrian safety. Facility options for elderly, young, and disabled pedestrians are discussed, as is the need for education efforts among law enforcement, motorists and pedestrians in promoting pedestrian use and infrastructure development.

*Wisconsin State Trails Network Plan*

This State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) plan, completed in 2001, provides a long-term, big-picture vision for establishing a comprehensive state trail network. This plan identifies existing and proposed trails and connections that would serve as the main corridors for a statewide system. This plan focuses on abandoned rail corridors, utility corridors, critical road connections and natural feature corridors such as the Ice Age National and State Scenic Trail. There are no trails proposed within the Town of Turtle.

## Regional Transportation Plans and Programs

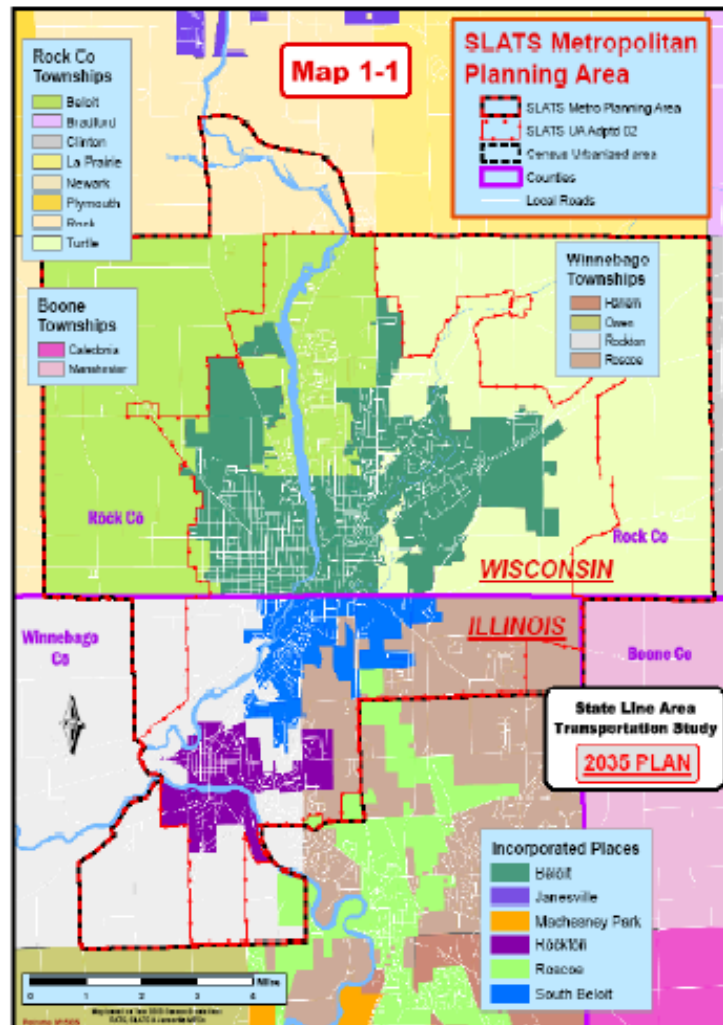
*Stateline Area Transportation Study 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan*

This plan is federally mandated in order for the Metropolitan Planning Area surrounding the City of Beloit to qualify for federal and state transportation funding assistance. The MPO is known as the Stateline Area Transportation Study (SLATS). The SLATS urbanized area covers 55 square miles, and includes a population of 58,732 people. The area is shown in Map 4-1.

The six main goals set forth in this plan are:

- 1) Tie into the regional economy and promote efficiency and accessibility.
- 2) Enhance regional multimodal connectivity.
- 3) Encourage community development.
- 4) Improve safety for all uses and all modes.
- 5) Maintain and maximize the use of the existing infrastructure.
- 6) Minimize negative impacts to the environment.

MAP 4-1 - SLATS METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA



Source: SLATS Long-Range Transportation Plan

The demographic characteristics of residents within the SLATS planning area are evaluated, as are their means of travel. The needs and services provided by mass transit are examined, as well as roadway functionality, level of service (LOS) and future road layouts.

The plan also explains the SLATS Project Evaluation Criteria, which will continue to be used to prioritize projects for inclusion in the annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) put together by the MPO.

A current study, included in the TIP and funded by the State, is for Inman Parkway. This study includes the potential for extending Inman eastward, into what is now an unincorporated area of the Town of Turtle.

A *Bike and Pedestrian System Plan (BPSP)* was completed by SLATS in 2004, and the Long-Range Transportation Plan summarizes and reiterates that plan. The plan calls for citizens to be aware of bike and pedestrian users, safe bike and pedestrian facilities, and the development of an overall bike and pedestrian friendly community.

*South Central Wisconsin Commuter Study*

This corridor-planning project aims to improve transit links from the Janesville/Beloit area to points in the Chicago metropolitan area, and to Dane County, WI. SLATS staff is facilitating the study. The Chicago-area connections were of initial concern. However, to respond to public input and demand, commuter alternatives to the Madison, WI area has since gained focus. While the feasibility of extending Metra commuter rail to Rock County is widely regarded as the heart of this study, it also assesses the idea of bus rapid transit (BRT) to connect the communities along the I-90/39 corridor, between Rockford, IL and Madison, WI.

A stakeholder survey as been completed as part of this study, and a market analysis has begun. The market analysis has revealed that travel flows to and from South Central Wisconsin were highest to and from the Cities of Madison, WI and Rockford, IL. And there is a lot of travel between the Cities of Janesville and Beloit.

As of early April 2007, the final draft of the *Initial Transportation Inventory Report* was complete. This portion of the study inventories rail and bus service, and highways in the region. Also, regional transit initiatives proposed by others in the region are examined.

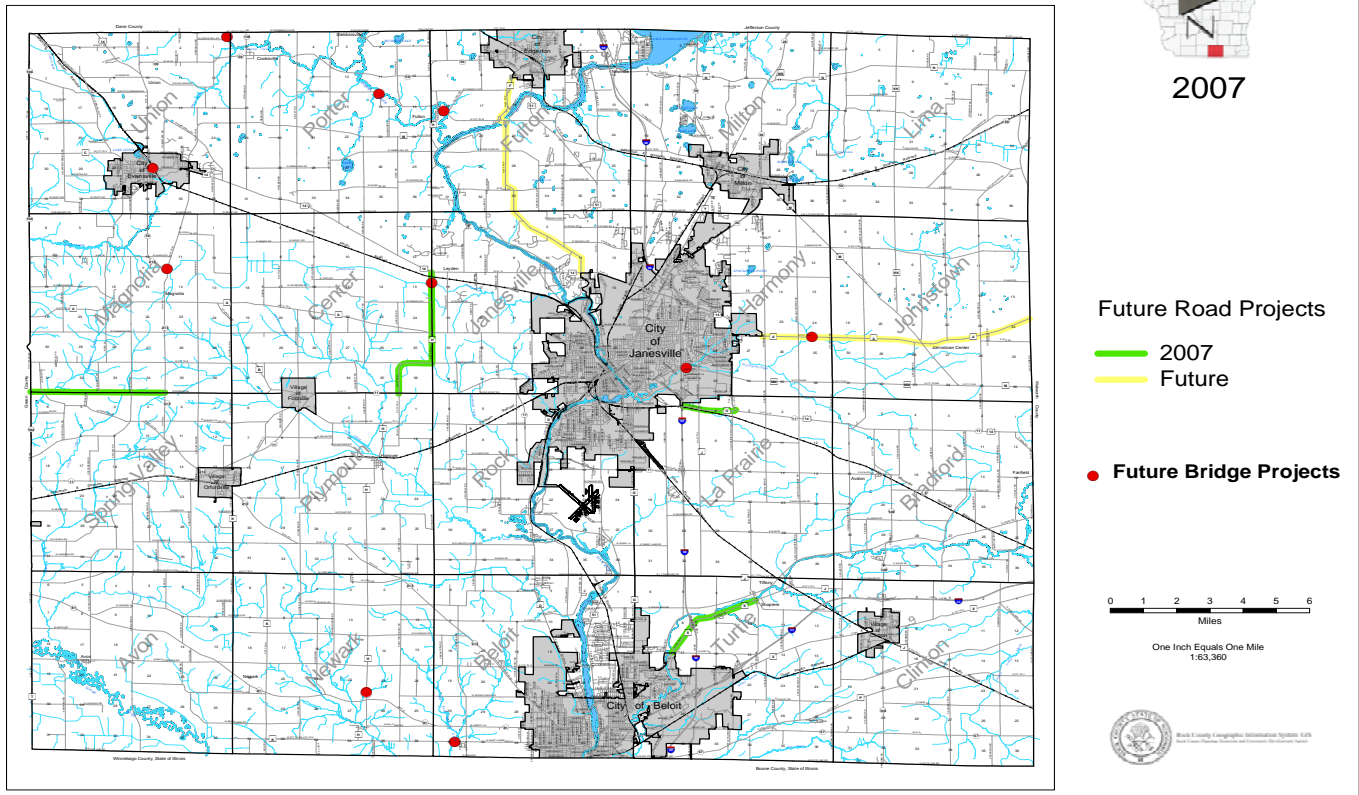
The next steps in the Commuter Study process are to continue the market analysis, and a Purpose and Needs Report. This report will set the framework for goals and objectives of the study, and help determine which transportation alternatives are most reasonable.

*Rock County Department of Public Works Plan*

The County's Department of Public Works annually lists current and future County road and bridge projects. This plan identifies no future projects in the Town (*Map 4-2*).

MAP 4-2

## Rock County Public Works Projects 2007 and Future



### **Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport Land Use Plan**

The firm Mead and Hunt is currently completing a Land Use Plan, and related Zoning Amendments for the 3-mile jurisdictional area surrounding the Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport. This 3-mile radius does slightly extend into the northwest corner of the Town of Turtle. This plan will manage growth encircling the airport, and provide tools for enforcing height regulations and other aspects of development that consider compatibility with aviation.

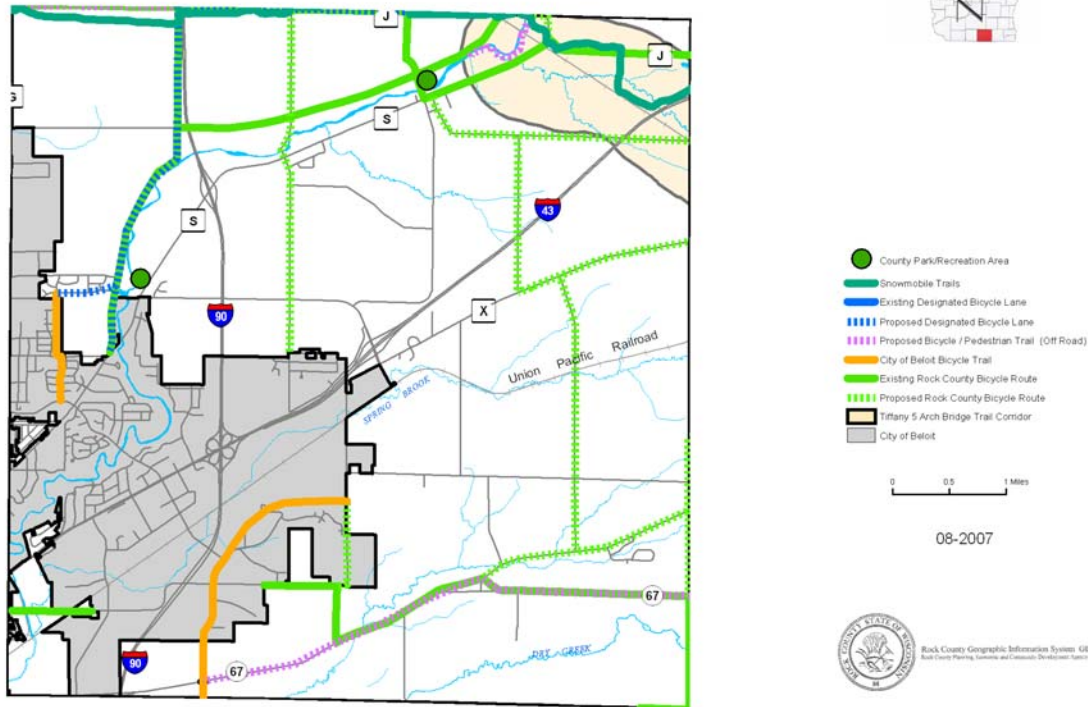
### **Rock County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**

This County plan, completed in 2003, "will connect centers of activity and communities in a direct and safe manner." This plan identifies existing and proposed off-road bicycle/pedestrian routes, lanes, and trails, and associated infrastructure. This plan proposes six bicycle routes, two bicycle lanes, and one off-road bicycle/pedestrian trail in the Town (Map 4-3).



MAP 4-3

### Turtle Township Bicycle, Pedestrian and Snowmobile Routes and Trails



### Existing Conditions

This section inventories the Town's existing transportation system, utilizing roads, rail, air, water, and trails as inventory categories.

### Roadways

#### Classification and Type

The State of Wisconsin's Department of Transportation (WDOT) uses a hierarchical *functional classification* system to identify roads according to the service they are intended to provide. A road's functional classification reflects its capacity to provide access and/or mobility to its users. The Town has roads with the following functional classifications:

- **Principal arterials** - These roads serve corridor movements having trip length and travel density characteristics of an interstate or an interregional nature. These roads generally serve all urban areas with a population greater than 50,000 inhabitants.



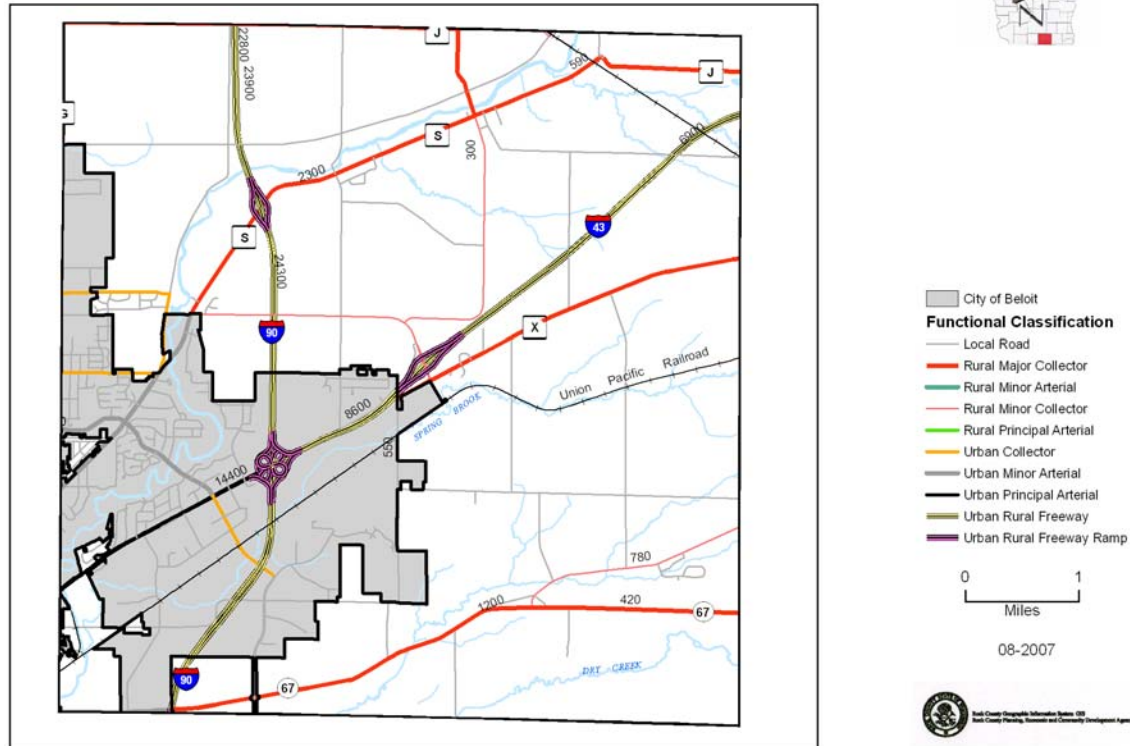
- **Minor arterials** - These roads, in conjunction with other principal arterials, serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing interregional and inter-area traffic movements.
- **Major collectors** - These roads provide service to moderate sized communities, and other inter-area traffic generators, and link those generators to nearby larger population centers or higher functionally classified roads.
- **Minor collectors** - These roads provide service to all remaining smaller communities, link the locally important traffic generators with their rural hinterland, and are spaced consistent with population density so as to collect traffic from lower functionally classified roads and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance to a collector road.
- **Local roads** - These 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 designated local road.

*Source: State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Facilities Development Manual  
Procedure 4-1-15*

The Town's road network contains roads with the aforementioned functional classifications and the following jurisdictional types, Federal, State, County, Town, and Private (*Map 4-4*).

Interstate 90/39, passing through the western edge of the Town, is a Federal principal arterial and exerts a major influence on the Town's development pattern and pace. The Interstate connects the Town to major urban markets to the north (Madison and Janesville, Wisconsin and Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota) and south (Rockford and Chicago, Illinois). Interstate 43, passing diagonally through the town, from the southwest to the northeast, is also a Federal principal arterial. It connects Beloit, WI to Milwaukee, WI and points northward.

## MAP 4-4

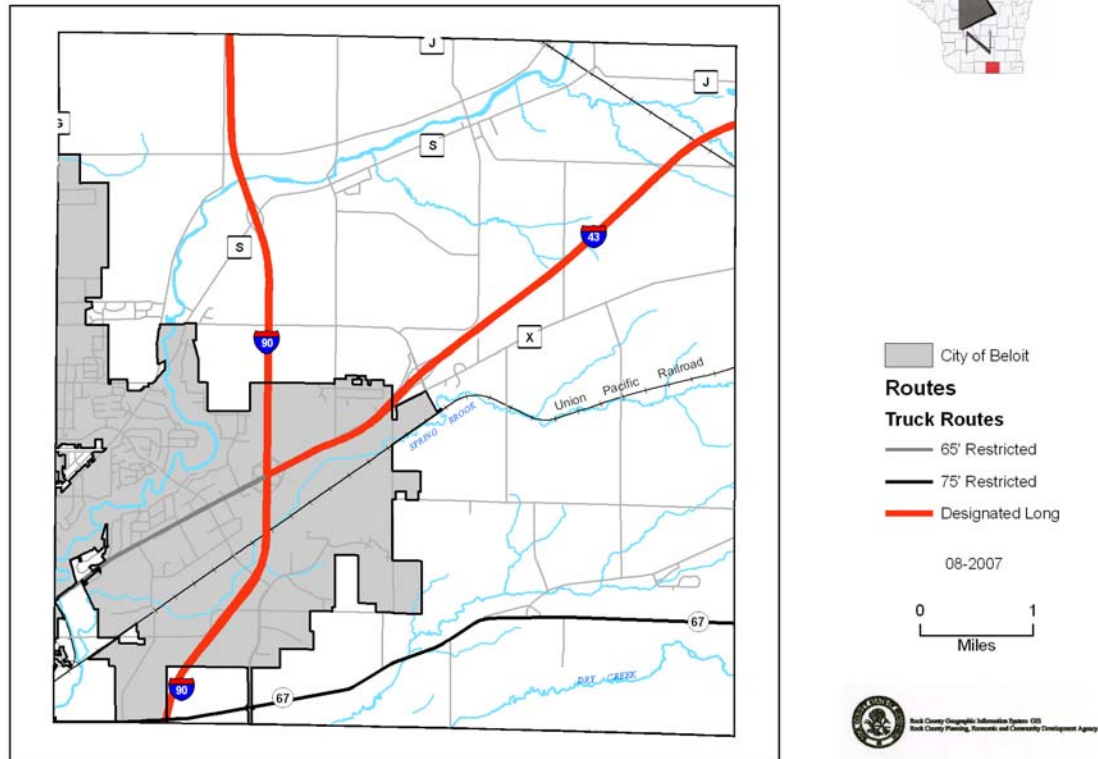
Turtle Township Roads  
Functional ClassificationsUsers

Roads in the Town accommodate agricultural, automobile, and bicycle/pedestrian traffic, and provide local and non-local users, and their products and services, access to local, regional, state, and national locations.

The Town's Federal, State, and County highways accommodate truck traffic. WDOT's designates official truck routes and multiple routes are located in the Town (*Map 4-5*). The Town's County highways are not officially designated truck routes, although truck traffic is permitted.

MAP 4-5

### Turtle Township Truck Routes



Specialized transportation/transit services also utilize Town roads. The Rock County Council on Aging provides door-to-door service to all areas in the County for elderly or disabled persons. The Volunteer Driver Escort Program (RIDES) coordinates volunteer drivers, providing transportation outside of the County to Madison, Milwaukee, and Monroe, Wisconsin and Rockford, Illinois. State Vanpool Rideshare program is based in Madison and provides a transportation option for residents who commute to Madison. Coach USA (formerly known as Van Galder), an interstate bus line, travels between Madison and Chicago, Illinois, making a stop in the City of Janesville and in South Beloit, IL, just south of the stateline. The Greyhound bus line has a terminal in the City of Beloit, Wisconsin. Buses depart north to Madison and south to Chicago, linking to nation-wide routes. Coach USA and Greyhound offer charter services, for group travel, tour packages, or other special events. The nearest public transit system is the Beloit Transit System located in the City of Beloit.

Bicycle/pedestrian options are limited on roads in the Town. The Town has no dedicated bicycling lanes, although County bicycling routes do exist. Pedestrian options are restricted to lightly trafficked Town roads and within subdivisions.

#### Safety

Automobile crash incidents are an indicator of overall road safety. WDOT utilizes a *Possible Contributing Circumstances* (PCC) system when determining crash causes. Three types of

PCC's are identified; vehicle, driver, and highway. Highway PCC is the most relevant indicator when analyzing the safety of roads in the Town as it conveys information regarding existing road conditions that contribute to crashes. *Figure 4-1* displays automobile crashes and highway PCC's.

**Figure 4-1:  
Automobile Crashes, Location, and Highway Possible Contributing Circumstances (PCC):  
2005: State of Wisconsin**

Highway PCCs	Crash Severity									Total Highway PCCs		
	Fatal Crashes			Injury Crashes			Property Damage Crashes					
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
Snow/ice/wet	123	28	151	4,754	4,205	8,959	12,131	10,778	22,909	17,008	15,011	32,019
Visibility obscured	11	3	14	366	739	1,105	582	1,021	1,603	959	1,763	2,722
Construction zone	6	8	14	183	312	495	346	600	946	535	920	1,455
Loose gravel	3	0	3	277	56	333	250	63	313	530	119	649
Other debris	0	0	0	85	54	139	237	126	363	322	180	502
Narrow shoulder	2	0	2	104	9	113	173	18	191	279	27	306
Low shoulder	1	0	1	81	2	83	89	4	93	171	6	177
Soft shoulder	0	1	1	55	8	63	85	9	94	140	18	158
Debris from prior crash	3	1	4	33	10	43	39	29	68	75	40	115
Rough pavement	0	0	0	25	18	43	26	14	40	51	32	83
Sign obscured or missing	0	0	0	13	23	36	11	21	32	24	44	68
Narrow bridge	2	0	2	5	0	5	12	4	16	19	4	23
Other	7	4	11	189	166	355	299	371	670	495	541	1,036
TOTAL	158	45	203	6,170	5,602	11,772	14,280	13,058	27,338	20,608	18,705	39,313

The numbers in this table represent the number of times a given highway PCC was cited as a possible contributing circumstance for a vehicle in a crash. These numbers do not represent numbers of crashes.

*Source: State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation - 2005 Crash Facts*

*Figure 4-1* indicates that weather (i.e. snow/wet/ice) was the most common cause of rural automobile crashes in which road conditions were the contributing factor and obscured visibility the second leading cause.

Crash data was obtained from the Rock County Sheriff's Department. This data is indicative of only vehicle accidents that Sheriff's personnel responded to. While most occurred in the unincorporated areas of Rock County, it is possible that they responded to accidents in cities and villages, or there may have been some accidents outside of cities and villages that they did not respond to, depending on the availability of emergency responders from all jurisdictions.

Traffic accidents in the Town of Turtle accounted for 4% of all accidents that the Rock County Sheriff responded to in 2006. *Figure 4-2* exhibits data for accidents in the Town in the years 2000, 2003 and 2006.

**Figure 4-2:  
Traffic Accident Data: 2000, 2003 and 2006:  
Town of Turtle**

	2000	2003	2006
Number of Accidents	93	102	36
Number of Vehicles Involved	114	133	41
Number of Injuries	32	47	6
Number of Fatalities	1	1	0

Figure 4-3 displays Town roads with the highest crash incidents in the years 2000, 2003 and 2006, as a percentage of all crashes in the Town. County P / Highway 67 is unfailingly the most accident-ridden roadway in the Town, possibly due to the narrowness of the road. Widening and resurfacing is could potentially alleviate the dangers along this roadway.

**Figure 4-3:  
Automobile Crash "Hotspots": 2000, 2003 and 2006:  
Town of Turtle**

**2000**

<b>"Hotspot"</b>	<b>Crash Incidents</b>
County P / Hwy. 67	11%
County X	11%
Creek Rd.	11%

**2003**

<b>"Hotspot"</b>	<b>Crash Incidents</b>
County P / Hwy. 67	24%
County J	13%
County S	11%

**2006**

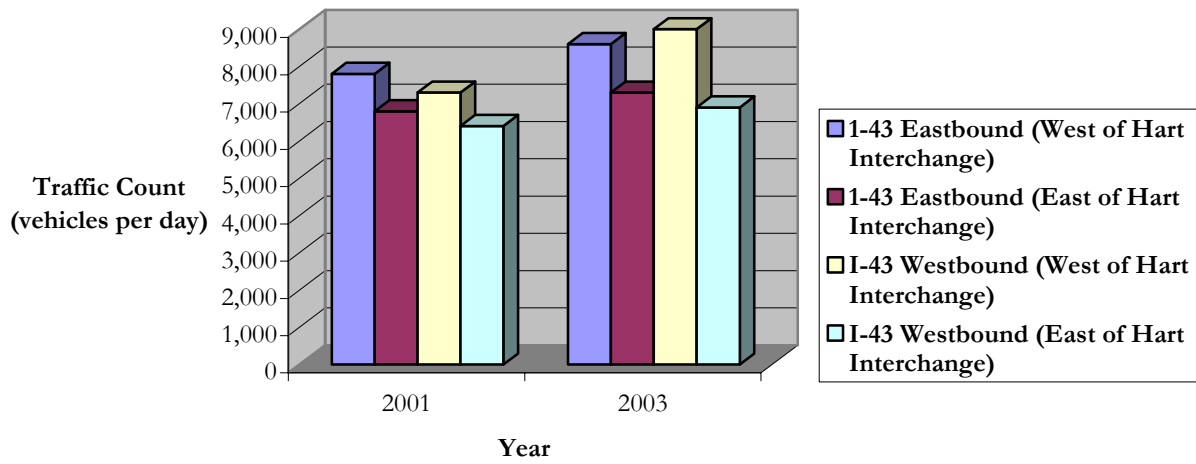
<b>"Hotspot"</b>	<b>Crash Incidents</b>
County P / Hwy. 67	19%
Hart Rd.	11%

*Source: Rock County Sheriff's Office*

**Traffic Volume**

Figure 4-4 and Figure 4-5 displays average daily traffic count (ADT) for Interstates 43 and 90, respectively, at various locations, for the years 2001 and 2003. In that time, traffic volume has consistently increased along I-43. On I-90, traffic volume decreased north of Shopiere Road, but significantly increased elsewhere.

**Figure 4-4:**  
**ADT Count: Interstate 43 in the Town of Turtle - 2001 & 2003**



**Figure 4-5:**  
**ADT Count: Interstate 90 in the Town of Turtle - 2001 & 2003**

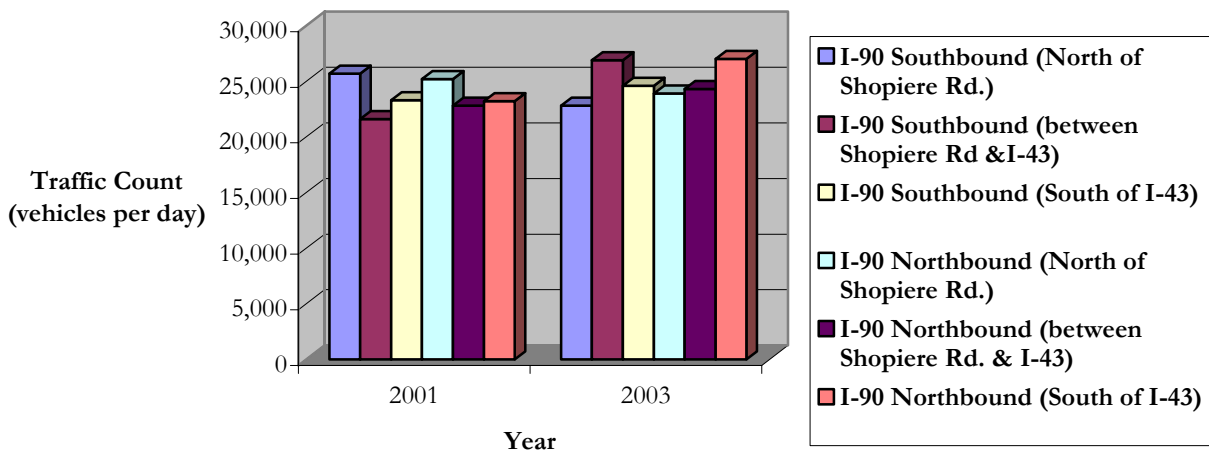
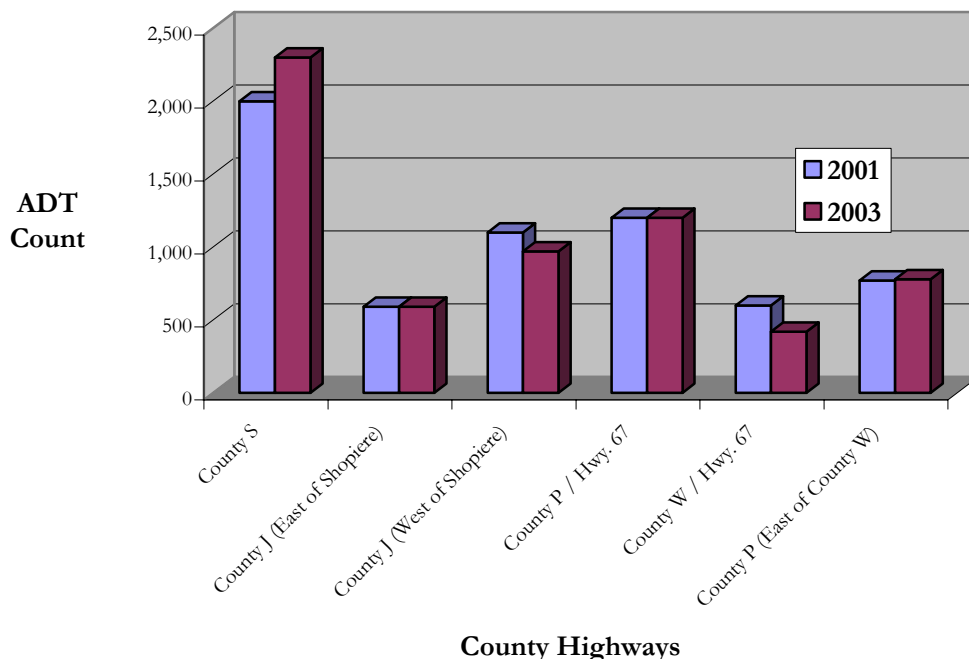


Figure 4-6 looks at ADT counts for county highways through the Town of Turtle, in the years 2001 and 2003. While County S experienced increased traffic, other highways had counts that remained consistent, or decreased.

**Figure 4-6:  
ADT Count: County Highways: 2001 & 2003**



*Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation: Highway Traffic Volume Data, 1993 - 2003*

## Bridges

There are four bridges in the Town, maintained by the Town of Turtle.

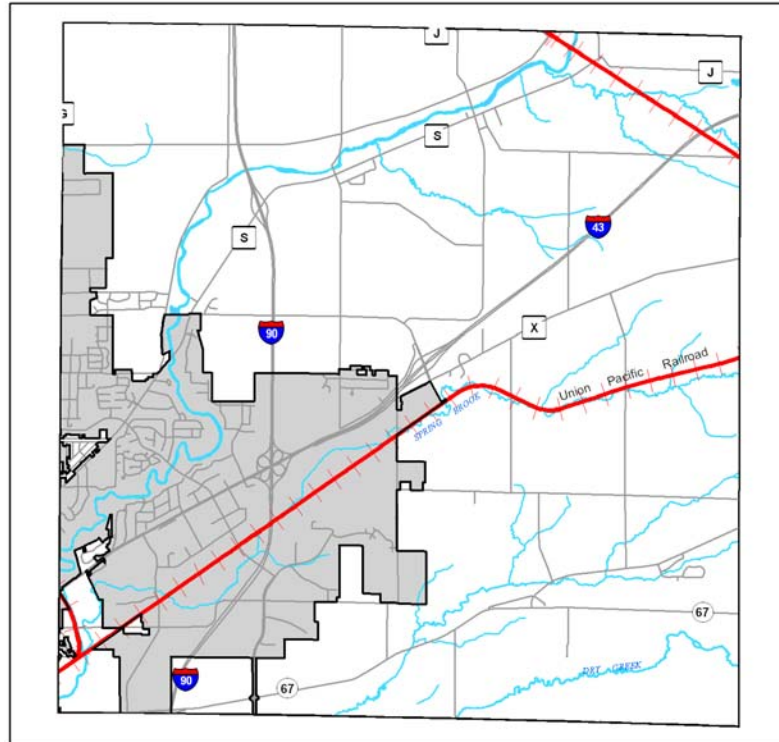
## Rail

Passenger rail does not service the Town, or the County as a whole. However, there is freight rail in the Town. The Union Pacific Railroad (UP) does transport freight (*Map 4-6*) through the Town. The UP is a Class I provider that operates on tracks that extend from Evansville, through Janesville and then southeast into Clinton before crossing over the WI / IL border. Aside from their trackage, the UP operates a large rail yard located within the City of Janesville's southern corporate limits. Its yard traffic is predominately dedicated towards serving the automotive, food processing and other non-farm bulk commodity industries. In between the daily scheduled trains to and from Chicago, train build-out and switching movements are common yard activities. In addition to UP's local presence, the provider has also invested heavily in the region via their Global III (Rochelle, IL) intermodal facility.



MAP 4-6

### Turtle Township Rail System



08-2007

City of Beloit  
Railroad

0 1  
Miles



Rock County Geographic Information System (GIS)  
Rock County Planning, Economic and Community Development Agency

### Air

The only airport facility in the Town is the Beloit Airport, located at 4046 E. State Rd. 67, at the southern edge of the Town, just outside of the City of Beloit. It is a private airport, mostly catering to gliders and single-engine airplanes for local, private use. It features one asphalt runway, measuring 3300 feet x 50 feet. Fuel is sold at the airport, and tie-downs and hangers are available for storage.

The Town is interested in possibly enacting a Land Use Plan specific to the area surrounding the airport, to ensure safe clearances and continued growth in airport use.

### Water

Turtle Creek, which passes through the Town, is only navigable by canoes, kayaks and man-powered small boats of the sort. However, west of County J, the creek is primarily privately owned, with properties adjacent to the water extending to the centerline of the creek.

## **Trails (Bicycle/Pedestrian and Snowmobile)**

There are designated bicycle lanes and routes in Turtle. But, there are currently no bicycle/pedestrian trails within the Town. The Town does have snowmobile trails, lying predominately within easements granted through private land, providing access to various Town locations and neighboring communities. The trails are linked to the broader 225-mile countywide snowmobile trail system.

## **Current and Future Needs**

### **Conditions**

According to the 2004 Turtle Public Opinion Survey, respondents are “somewhat satisfied” with road maintenance in the Town. A national push has been occurring to focus on preventative maintenance, due to how it saves money in the long run. The key is to get to a point where there are no pressing road repair needs, in order to be proactive, which is easier said than done. In addition, the focus should be on maintenance, rather than expansion, of the Town’s transportation networks, in most places. Town officials feel they are doing a good job with preventative maintenance, and aim to continue to do so.

One of the best means to organize road repair needs is by maintaining an up-to-date inventory. WisDOT offers an online database for local jurisdictions to utilize, called WISLR (Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads). The Town of Turtle is conscientious about entering and updating the data regarding Town-maintained transportation facilities, and plans to continue doing a good job.

When it comes to financing transportation improvements and repairs, a plethora of state and national aid is available. The Town must actively seek funding assistance when available and appropriate.

### **Congestion**

It is commonly believed that you cannot build your way out of congestion. If new routes are constructed to ease capacity, oftentimes development then is generated along the new route, only adding to the congestion. While the question use to be “Which comes first, transportation or land use?” it is now understood that the two must come together. Transportation and Land Use planning must be integrated to context-sensitive transportation investments, and to ease congestion. Turn lanes are encouraged for entrances into large subdivisions, off of county roads. This Smart Growth Plan will attempt to address this issue more in the Land Use Element.

Another way to ease congestion is by reducing the number of SOV (Single-Occupancy Vehicle) trips in the area. Over 94% of random survey respondents in Rock County drive alone to work and/or school each day. Carpooling is only slightly utilized, and busing, walking and biking are even less popular. Particularly in the unincorporated Town of Turtle, transportation alternatives are non-existent. Reducing SOV trips is more applicable and realistic in urbanized areas. However, there are changes that could be made. Existing facilities and routes for bicycling and walking should be promoted, new bicycling and walking facilities and routes could be made available and transit could be more convenient.

## Safety

The inventorying of detailed accident data can be helpful in identifying problem intersections or roadways, and alleviating accident occurrences. Although the technology exists to record exact longitude and latitude points of an accident, as soon as emergency personnel arrive at the scene, a system to do so has yet to be established in Rock County. This process is referred to as "geocoding", and it can be used along with the existing Geographic Information System in the County to create a uniform crash data analysis system, across jurisdictions.

Many of the traffic accident issues in the Town of Turtle would be alleviated with roadway improvements and widening, and the installation (and proper use) of traffic calming devices where appropriate. Another crucial element for driver safety in the unincorporated County is access management and vision clearance measures. Currently, the County tries to require easements for vision triangles at intersections when a land division takes place, but landowner cooperation varies.

Also, all too often landowners wish to create new buildable lots in locations that are not conducive for safe driveway access. Locating driveways in unsafe locations that do not provide adequate sight clearance can prove dangerous for the property owner, and for innocent drivers and passengers alike. Currently, Rock County and the Town of Turtle have policies in place to regulate driveway placement. The Town's driveway ordinance regulates width, surface and slope of driveways, in addition to driveway placement, to assure ingress and egress for emergency vehicles and ensure that properties are accessible, even in foul weather conditions.

Some safety concerns apply to transportation innovations in the unforeseeable future. Technology is paving the way for means to maximize mobility, and with these advancements come new safety risks, and Turtle should be proactive enough to regulate these types of advancements before they potentially become dangerous.

An innovation gaining popularity, which is being regulated by some jurisdictions nationwide, is the Neighborhood Electric Vehicle (NEV). These vehicles run on batteries, can only drive short distances at a time and are lightweight. For these reasons, they are being prohibited on some roadways, and restricted to roads with posted speed limits of 35 mph or lower. The State of Wisconsin has State Statute 349.26, which states that NEVs can be operated on roadways that are posted at 35 mph or lower, but only if the governing body first adopts an ordinance allowing the use. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has recognized NEVs as a form of transportation since 1998. Turtle should develop and enforce rules for the use of NEVs here, before they become more commonplace.

Similarly, there is an issue in Turtle with golf-carts being driven on public roadways, often by underage drivers. This poses a safety concern that requires vigilant enforcement.

Safety is also an issue for other modes, including railroads, air, and recreational transportation. State programs are offered to help fund appropriate safety improvements.

## Accessibility

While Rock County does offer adequate opportunities for para-transit service, there should be improvements in marketing, to spread awareness of such programs. Aside from transit for the

elderly and disabled, even city bus systems in the County could improve public outreach, in hopes to make mass transit a viable transportation option for all sectors of the population. Perhaps additional fixed routes are needed to better serve the citizens of Rock County.

Providing transportation alternatives to those who commute out of Rock County is another aspect of accessibility that warrants exploration. The South Central Wisconsin Commuter Study is sure to provide some answers, particularly addressing those who commute south to the Rockford area, and to the Chicago area.

### **Connectivity Standards**

Oftentimes the way land is developed and divided in the unincorporated county does not lend itself well to future development surrounding the area. For instance, flag lots prohibit the installation of through streets at suitable intervals, and an abundance of cul-de-sacs impede accessibility from one neighborhood to another. Though most homeowners enjoy this type of isolation, it could prove dangerous in an emergency. Traditional neighborhood design layouts, that often incorporate grid networks and through-streets, should be encouraged for future development, to promote walkability/bikability and increase safety and a sense of community, and allow future connectivity, if development does occur.

### **Enhancements and Beautification**

Recreational trails and routes, such as those for bicycles and pedestrians, are the most abundant type of transportation enhancement in the Town. But to truly make the area bike and pedestrian friendly, more needs to be done. Existing routes and trails should be promoted and utilized to the utmost. Many new developments provide no accommodations for bikes and/or pedestrians. These issues could be remedied if additional facilities and services for biking, walking, and other non-auto modes of transportation are maintained, expanded and/or created. At the least, additional right-of-way should be preserved, to allow the installation of bike/pedestrian facilities and routes in the future. Shoulder improvements should be considered when resurfacing takes place on County roads, to accommodate bicycles along mapped future bicycle routes, as appropriate.

Boating is another recreational opportunity that could be expanded in the area. Portions of Turtle Creek are ideal for canoeing and kayaking; yet no official canoe or kayak launch exists.

Roadside beautification is another form of transportation enhancements, and the Town supports the possible use of native plantings, particularly where the slope in the right-of-way may be dangerously steep for mowing. Currently, when right-of-way areas are reseeded during construction and improvements, non-native materials are used, which require constant maintenance and are difficult to remove once established.

### **Transportation Policies**

- 1) State and federal funding programs shall be applied for and utilized whenever possible, to help finance highway and bridge, transit, rail, enhancements and other transportation improvements in the Town of Turtle.

- 2) A uniform crash data analysis system shall be established and implemented, that involves emergency and/or police and sheriff personnel using GPS (Global Positioning System) units to record the exact location of accident occurrences so data can be geocoded using a GIS (Geographic Information System).
- 3) Rezonings and land divisions in the Town shall be approved in appropriate locations adjacent to municipalities and existing developed areas, in efficient development patterns (such as Traditional Neighborhood Design) so as to best utilize existing transportation networks without contributing to sprawl or traffic congestion, while ensuring that new road networks do not interfere with environmentally significant areas.
- 4) The feasibility and opportunity to regulate roadside plantings in Rock County, both for beautification and during construction, shall be explored, to promote the use of native plant materials.
- 5) The need for a land use plan for the Beloit Airport shall be examined, and a plan shall be conducted if feasible, to ensure safe clearances and convenience for a growing number of airport users.
- 6) Snowmobile routes shall continue to be properly designated and maintained.
- 7) The feasibility of the installation of canoe and/or kayak launch(es) in the Town of Turtle shall be explored, particularly at the Town-owned access easement on Creek Rd., and if appropriate, shall be supported.
- 8) New bicycle facilities shall be current AASHTO standards as set forth in their "Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities", as required when state or federal funds are utilized.
- 9) Signage for bicycle facilities shall utilize guidelines set forth in the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- 10) The Town shall require that large group bicycle rides, for charity and likewise, obtain a permit from the Town before utilizing Town roads for their routes.
- 11) The use of Neighborhood Electric Vehicles (NEVs) in the Town shall be regulated as appropriate to ensure safety of all citizens, while recognizing the benefit of low-emission, low-fuel consumption vehicles.
- 12) Bicycle and pedestrian routes shall be incorporated into new development areas, with encouraged use of wide sidewalks to accommodate both bicycle and pedestrian traffic.
- 13) Shoulder improvements shall be made to County roads during resurfacing projects, to accommodate bicycles along mapped bicycle routes, where appropriate.

- 14) Advertising and outreach shall be utilized to generate increased awareness of the transit services offered by the Rock County Council on Aging.
- 15) The Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads database shall continue to be updated and utilized by the Town.