

TRANSPORTATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A multi-modal transportation system serving the Town of Madge and Washburn County has a significant influence on growth and development, as well as contributing to the quality of life of area residents. A review of the town and county’s multi-modal 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 Madge and Washburn County.

Vehicular transportation is the predominant form of transportation in Madge 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 section. The following section describes the existing conditions of transportation facilities in the Town of Madge.

3.2 66.1001 REQUIREMENTS

This element includes a compilation of background information, goals, objectives, actions, policies, and recommended programs to guide the future development and maintenance of various modes of transportation in the Town of Madge. Given the town’s rural setting, the primary focus is on highways and local roads. The element also compares the town’s transportation policies and programs to other local, state, and regional transportation plans as required under Wisconsin State Statutes 66.1001.

3.3 TRANSPORTATION VISION AND VALUES

Transportation Vision

The Town of Madge envisions managing demand for local transportation while providing an appropriate level of service to sustain community businesses and local residents. 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 transportation alternatives.

Transportation Value

The Town of Madge values a safe, efficient, multi-modal transportation network that is planned, well maintained, and meets the current and future needs of residents, visitors, and community businesses.

3.4 ROADWAY INVENTORY, CHARACTERISTICS, AND PLANS

Functional Classification System

The Town of Madge’s roadway network is comprised of 49.77 miles of highways and town roads. Roads within the community are classified by their functional use and by the amount of traffic they sustain. Table 3.1 below indicates the functional use of Madge’s roadway network, while Map 3.1 visually depicts the functional classification in the Town of Madge.

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

Table 3.1: Functional Classification of Roadways

Classification	Miles of Roadway
Principal arterials	0.00
Minor arterials	2.14
Major collectors	12.88
Minor collectors	1.77
Local roads	32.98
Total	49.77

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, District 8

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.

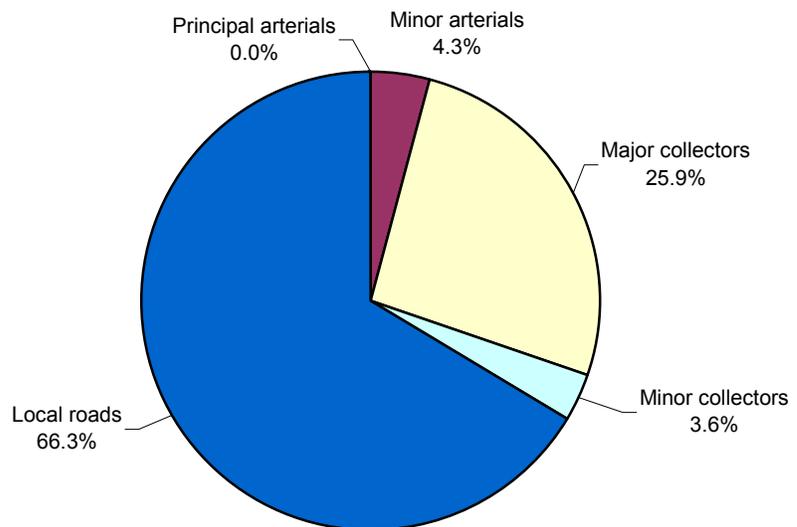
Major collectors- provides service to moderate sized communities and links intra-area traffic to nearby larger population centers.

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 Madge, State Trunk Highway (STH) 70 is classified as a minor arterial highway on a statewide level. This highway serves as the central road corridor providing residents and visitors access to the community, while CTH’s “B” and “M” and other local roads provide routes to homes and recreational destinations both within and beyond the town.

Figure 3.1: Percent of Town Roadway System



Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, District 8

Traffic Volume

Figure 3.2 depicts change in traffic volume at recording sites on roads passing through the Town of Madge. As is indicated in the graph, sites two and three along CTH B have shown the highest amount of traffic increase of all roadways in the town measured since 1969. Traffic volume along CTH M has stayed relatively the same over the 30-year period.

The increase in traffic in the Town of Madge 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, work, and recreation. Secondly, many areas of Washburn County have seen a significant increase in population density and the development of seasonal homes.

Intersection Accidents

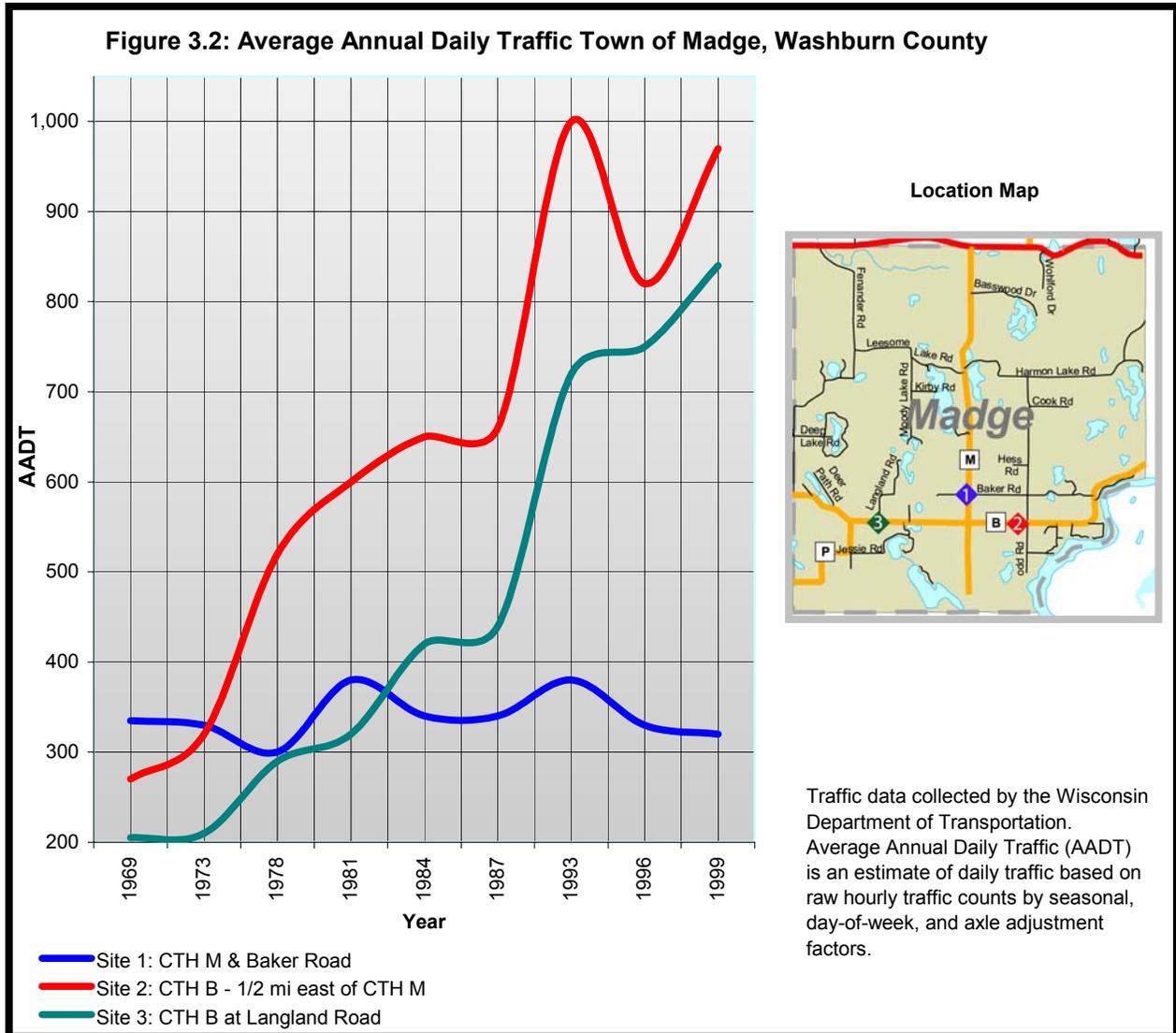
An inventory of traffic accidents at intersections was completed on a countywide level using a Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) database. The database was queried to retrieve multiple accidents at intersections in the county from January 1995 through December 2001. In the Town of Madge, no multiple intersection accidents were derived.

PASER Roadway Evaluation

In the summer 2003, the town conducted an evaluation of their local roads using a pavement surface evaluation rating system (PASER). The rating system is intended to assist the town in planning in roadway improvements by identifying roads in need of improvement. There are approximately 33 miles of roadways that the Town of Madge is responsible for repairing and/or maintaining throughout the year. This mileage can fluctuate from year to year due to additions or subtractions of roadway miles to the overall system. During the PASER 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). See appendix for results of road evaluation.

Road Weight Restrictions and Limitations

In the spring, the town board imposes weight restrictions (Frost Laws) to lower the allowable weight on all roads in recognition of the instability caused by winter frost activity. Although these restrictions occur on a year-to-year basis, the Town of Madge discourages all county logging in the spring on county forestlands in the town.



3.5 ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

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. The Town of Madge has developed a capitol improvements plan for road improvements. Table 3.2 lists both town and county improvements in the next four years.

Table 3.2: Selected Roadway Improvements, 2004-2006

Year	Sponsor	Road/Street	Location	Mileage	Type of Improvement
2004	Madge	Deep Lake Rd	(South Side)	1 mile	Reconstruct
2004	Madge	Lake View Rd	--	0.6 miles	Chip Seal
2004	Madge	Todd Rd	--	N/A	Gravel
2004	Madge	Cook Rd	--	N/A	Gravel
2005	Madge	Deep Lake Rd	(South Side)	1 mile	Hot Mix
2005	Madge	Solholt Rd	--	0.4 miles	Chip Seal
2005	County	CTH M	CTH B to STH 70	4.48 miles	Reconstruct
2006	Madge	Rockford Rd	--	1 mile	Hot Mix

Source: Town of Madge & Washburn County

3.6. Public Transit

No bus service exists within the Town of Madge. The closest access to commercial bus transportation is available by Greyhound Bus Lines in Duluth, MN; Ironwood, MI; or Eau Claire, WI. NWT Express operating from the City of Hayward provides ground passenger transportation between Hayward and Minneapolis/St. Paul seven days a week with scheduled stops in area communities.

3.7. Elderly and Disabled Transportation

Section 5310, Wisconsin’s 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 Madge 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. Airports and Aviation

No scheduled passenger flights are available in the Town of Madge. The nearest airports providing regular scheduled passenger flights to domestic and international destinations are located in Eau Claire, WI; Duluth, Minnesota; 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
Madge 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

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 by 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 Madge; therefore, there are no scheduled improvements.

3.9 TRUCKING

Trucking through the town is accommodated through the local roadway network.

3.10 PORTS

The closest port available for the delivery or shipment of domestic and international water commerce is the Duluth/Superior Port.

3.11 RAIL TRANSPORTATION

There are no railways in the Town of Madge and there are no known plans for the development of rail transportation.

3.12 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 three designated snowmobile trails in the town, Trail #28, #140, and the Harmon Lake Loop. According to the Washburn County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan 1996-2005, the plan does not recognize a need for ATV funded trails or additional snowmobile trails on the county forest. All town roads are open to ATV's and snowmobiles. Madge's motorized and non-motorized trail systems are further described in the "Utilities and Community Facilities" section of the comprehensive plan.

3.13 OTHER TRANSPORTATION PLANS AND PROGRAMS

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 Madge. The WisDOT, along with the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin, has compiled a Wisconsin State Bike Map that highlights the most favorable bicycling conditions in northern Wisconsin. In the Town of Madge, CTH's M, B, and P are considered the best conditions for biking.

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. 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 Madge exist.

Wisconsin State Highway Plan

The *Wisconsin State Highway Plan* focuses on the 11, 800 miles of State Trunk Highway routes in Wisconsin. The plan does not identify projects within the Town of Madge. No conflicts between the Town of Madge Comprehensive Plan and the State Highway Plan have been identified.

Corridors 2020

Corridors 2020 plan 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 plan does not directly pertain to the Town of Madge, as no corridor 2020 primary or secondary route passes through the town.

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 county

improvement slated for the Town of Madge in 2005. No conflicts between the Town of Madge Comprehensive Plan and Washburn County’s Highway Improvement Plan have been identified.

3.14 TRANSPORTATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES, ACTIONS, AND POLICIES

A set of recommended transportation goals, objectives, and actions has been developed for the Town of Madge. Implementation of the identified actions will allow the town to achieve the identified objectives and overall goal of a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system, which accommodates the movement of people and goods, while preserving the rural and recreational character of the town.

GOAL: A safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system, which accommodates the movement of people and goods, while preserving the rural and recreational character of the town.

Objective 1: Construction and reconstruction of roadways through environmentally sensitive areas should be minimized.
a. Utilize construction standards set by the Corps of Engineers and DNR on road projects.

Objective 2: Develop safe off-road corridors for all types of recreational activities.
a. Work with the DNR and county forestry department to develop trails off local roads.
b. Coordinate with local or county clubs to develop trail networks.

Objective 3: Maintain a town roadway improvement program.
a. Conduct an annual road tour to review road conditions.
b. Utilize PASER to assist in road improvement projects.
c. Conduct an inventory and evaluation of local culverts.

Objective 4: Encourage public transit, ridesharing, carpooling, and disability transportation services in the town.
a. Research funding organizations such as the Washburn County Health and Human Services Department, Washburn County Unit on Aging, and WisDOT.

Objective 5: Improve the local county trunk highway system.
a. Work with Washburn County on transportation problems and projects that affect the Town of Madge.

Objective 6: Ensure safe and accessible private roads and driveways.
a. Require all new and encourage existing driveway accesses to follow town, county, or state guidelines for development.
b. Support the local fire department in their review of driveway accesses.

Due to the town's small population base and rural location, its ability to provide or support a full range of transportation choices is difficult. However, it is the desire of the town that when possible and financially feasible, collaboration with adjoining units of governments and organizations providing transportation related services be developed to investigate the potential for transit services.

The town's rural low-density development pattern does not contribute to reducing the potential cost savings in most residential and commercial applications. However, in certain areas of the community future higher-density residential development is anticipated. 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, where possible, developers consider effective design of building lots (residential, commercial, and industrial) minimizing the total mileage of road construction subject to zoning requirements. 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 reduce crashes.