

3. Transportation

The land use pattern of Burnett County, its municipalities, and the region are tied together by the transportation system, including roadways and trails. The residents, business people, agricultural producers, and manufacturers all rely upon a dependable transportation system to function and provide linkages to areas beyond their borders. Burnett County’s transportation network plays a major role in the efficiency, safety, and overall desirability of the area as a place to live and work.

3.1 Existing Road System

The existing transportation system for Burnett County is represented on Map 3-1 (local maps can be found within Appendix UCF – Community Facilities and Services Maps). The county’s road configuration is characterized by both a rural grid roadway pattern and a pattern influenced by the many natural features and man-made features of the land. These include forests, rivers, lakes, wetlands, other natural features, and community locations.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT), the county maintains 219.81 miles of county trunk highway. This compares to 1,204.34 miles of municipal or township roads. Burnett County also contains 106 miles of state and connecting highway. Table 3-1 displays the mileage of local streets by their location in a town or village in Burnett County.

Table 3-1
Existing Roadway Mileage, Burnett County, 2008

	County Forest Roads	County Trunk Highways	Other County Roads	Municipal Roads	Total Miles
Total for Towns	32.67	218.09	0.39	1,167.54	1,418.69
Total for Villages	0.00	1.72	0.00	36.80	38.52
Burnett County Total	32.67	219.81	0.39	1,204.34	1,457.21

Source: State of Wisconsin DOT, Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads.

The general traffic circulation pattern in the county is as follows:

- State Highway 35 serves as the primary north/south corridor for the county. State Highway 35 has the largest traffic volume in the county, with a peak AADT count of ranging from 5,700 to 7,800 between the Villages of Webster and Siren. State Highway 35 splits Burnett County roughly in half and provides a primary route to the Superior, Wisconsin and Duluth, Minnesota region.
- State Highway 70 provides the primary east/west corridor in the southern portion of the county. State Highway 70 experiences the second highest traffic volumes in the county, with peak traffic counts lower on the eastern edge of the county (2,900) and higher near the villages (4,500 to 4,600). Most of this traffic is transient in nature. This route serves as a primary link, not only for inter-county trips, but also inter-region, and interstate trips. State Highway 70 links the Villages of Siren with the Village of Grantsburg in the

county. It is a main means for people who live in the southern part of the county to travel east and west.

- ◆ State Highway 77 provides the primary east/west corridor in the northern portion of the county. Peak travel numbers are significantly lower along this route than the corridors in the southern part of the county because of the smaller population concentration. State Highway 77 leads into the Danbury area.
- ◆ State Highway 87 provides for north/south travel in the southwestern portion of the county. It is a primary link between Polk County and the Village of Grantsburg, where STH 87 intersects and terminates at STH 70.
- ◆ State Highway 48 is only found in Burnett County of a short stretch in the southwestern portion of the County. It connects Frederic in Polk County and leads into Burnett County where it joins with State Highway 87 before entering the Village of Grantsburg.

3.2 Highways

Highways Defined

Highways, or more generally roads, are public rights-of-way set aside for the movement of people and goods from one place to another, principally by the use of motor vehicles. Roads have evolved over time from walking paths, to horse trails, to improved gravel roads, to the present day paved surface streets in the urban areas and highways in the rural areas. While the early paths were commonly accepted routes to follow, as development took place, there was always a need to bring order and sanction to the travel routes by the common exercise of governance. And it evolved that government became the universally successful mechanism for making the improvements to roadways as usage increased and as the nature of vehicles changed over time.

Highway Users

Streets and highways are used in a variety of ways: by cars carrying people, by trucks carrying goods, by bicycles, and by the oldest form of transportation, walking. There are also snowmobiles, ATV's, horses carrying people for recreation, and horses pulling buggies and wagons, farm tractors pulling equipment from field to field as well as equipment for the construction and maintenance of roads populate the streets and highways

Rules of the Road

The wide variety of road users brings with it a need to minimize conflicts between users and requires the establishment of rules and regulations to protect the overall health, safety and well being of the community. Government establishes “rules of the road” which is significant for highway functionality, design and for the overall development pattern.

Highway Design

The user is the primary determinant of highway design. Cars and trucks are the overwhelming majority of highway users, and it is primarily for their needs that the design standards are set determining precisely how they are built. However, other vehicles, such as farm equipment, are also considered, due to their abnormal size and weight. Within densely populated urban areas where trip origins and destination are more proximate, walking and bicycling are more prevalent. Therefore sidewalks, bike lanes or trails may be warranted, but in rural areas this is seldom the case. In urban areas parking is usually accommodated on the street while in rural areas parking is almost never accommodated on the road. Based on how the road is to be used, design standards are set specifying how the street or highway is to be built.

Highway Functions

There are two primary functions of streets and roads. One is to provide *access* to land: that is to homes, work places, shopping areas, schools, churches, recreational areas, etc. The other is to provide *ease of movement* from one location (point of origin) to another location (point of destination).

While these functions are not diametrically opposed to one another, they do compete. Numerous points of access along a road, closely spaced, provide occasion for conflict with vehicles making turning movements that reduces the ease with which other vehicles can freely travel along the route. More access points along a route results in slower travel speeds which results in lower traffic carrying capacity and longer travel times. Higher speed makes turning movements more difficult resulting in reduced safety. More of one results in less of the other.

Roads cannot be all things to all people. Roads are now built to differing design standards based on how they are intended to be used. Simply stated, there are different roads for different purposes. A spectrum of road and street types have been established from principally providing access on one end to exclusively providing ease of movement (maximizing traffic carrying capacity and safety) on the other end. This spectrum of design and purpose types is referred to as functional classification.

3.3 Functional Classification of Highways

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has set statewide standards in its Facilities Development Manual for the functional classification of streets and highways. The state uses different classification systems for urban and rural areas. The classifications and descriptions follow:

Urban Area Functional Classifications

For the purpose of transportation planning, urban areas are classified as places with populations of 5,000 or more. Within Burnett County there are no areas classified as urban areas and the entire County falls under the rural area classification.

Rural Area Functional Classifications

Principal Arterials serve interstate and interregional trips. These routes generally serve all urban areas greater than 5,000 in population. The rural principal arterials are further subdivided into:

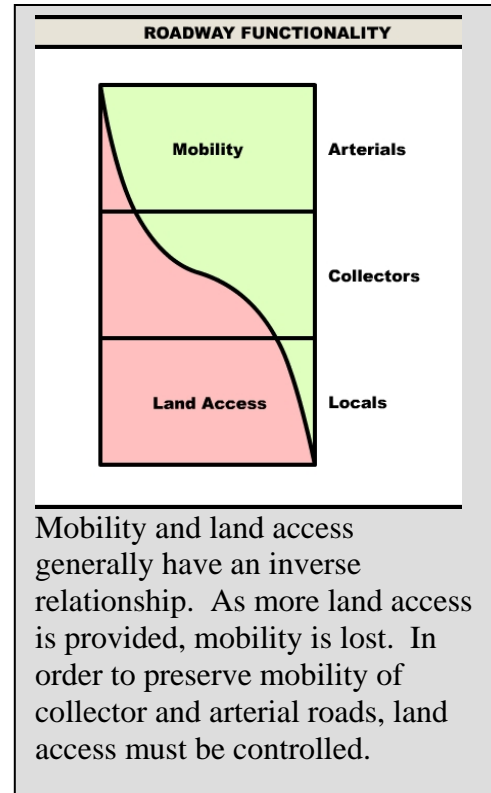
1. Interstate highways.
2. Other principal arterials.

Minor Arterials, in conjunction with principal arterials, serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intra-regional and inter-area traffic movements.

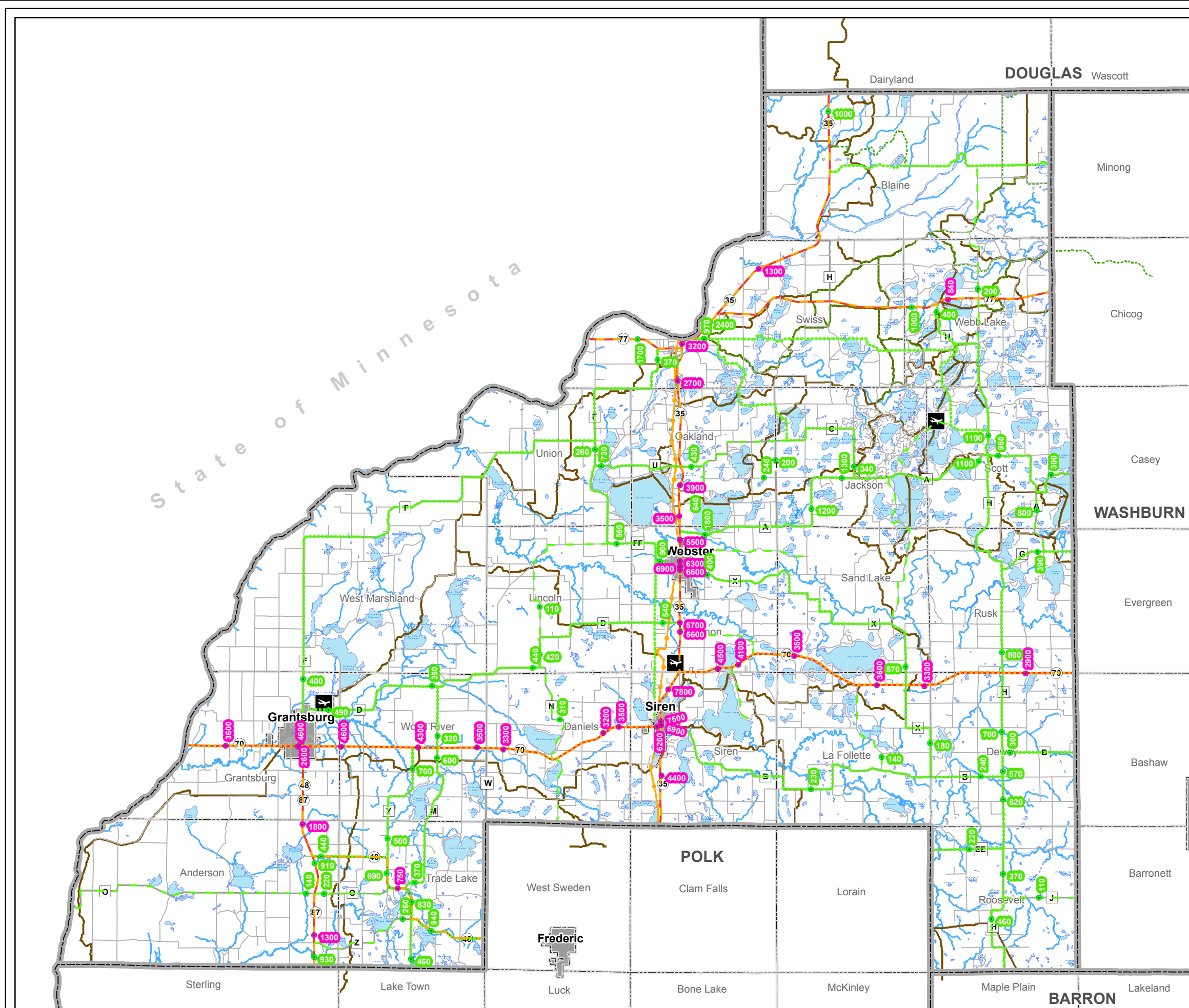
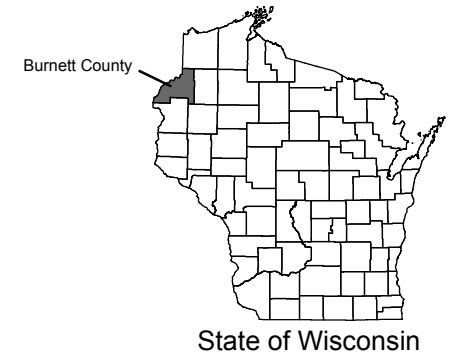
Major Collectors provide service to moderate sized communities and other intra-area traffic generators, and link those generators to nearby larger population centers or higher function routes.

Minor Collectors collect traffic from local roads, and provide links to all remaining smaller communities, locally important traffic generators, and higher function roads. All developed areas should be within a reasonable distance of a collector road.

Local Roads provide access to adjacent land and provide travel over relatively short distances. All roads not classified as arterials or collectors are local function roads.



MAP 3 - 1 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM Burnett County, Wisconsin



Legend

Base Layers	Functional Class
State Highway	Principal Arterial
County Highway	Major Collector
Town Road	Minor Arterial
Rivers	Minor Collector
Lakes	
Village Boundary	Transportation Features
Town Boundary	Annual Average Daily Traffic 2002
County Boundary	Annual Average Daily Traffic 2007
	Airports
	Snowmobile Trails
	ATV Trails
	Gandy Dancer Trail

This drawing is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only.

Source: Wisconsin DOT and Burnett Co Land Information Office



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3.4 Traffic Volume Trends

Vehicle Miles of Travel

Most traffic counts are reported in terms of annual average daily traffic and represent an estimate of the number of vehicles that travel along a specific point of roadway on an average day. Vehicle miles of travel estimates are based on annual average daily traffic estimates, but also include the distance traveled to provide a measure of vehicle travel usage over a specific geographic area, such as a county. The amount of vehicle miles traveled in Burnett County for specific years from 1999 to 2007 are found in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2
Daily Vehicle Miles of Travel, Burnett County

Year	1999	2002	2005	2007	# change 1999 - 2007	% change 1999 - 2007
Daily Vehicle Miles of Travel	439,300	448,000	468,859	466,600	27,300	6.21%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Vehicle Miles of Travel, 1999 - 2007.

In 2007, the amount of miles traveled daily had increased by over 27,000 miles when compared to 1999. The data also shows a stabilization and slight decrease in miles traveled by vehicle daily in 2007 when compared to 2005.

Annual average daily traffic (AADT) counts for 2002 and 2007 are presented for selected roadways in Burnett County. Average Annual Daily Traffic counts are calculated by multiplying raw hourly traffic counts by seasonal, day-of-week, and axle adjustment factors. The daily hourly values are then averaged by hour of the day and the values are summed to create the AADT count. Refer to Map 3-1 for selected AADT counts from 2002 and 2007.

State Highway Traffic Volume Trends

Table 3-3 displays the AADT counts for several state and US highway segments throughout Burnett County.

Table 3-3
State Highway AADT Counts, Burnett County

State Highway System	2002	2007	# Difference	% Difference
STH 70, near Lower Clam Lake	4,100	4,100	0	0.00%
STH 70, between Siren and Grantsburg	4,500	4,600	100	2.22%
STH 70, west of Grantsburg	3,500	3,600	100	2.86%
STH 35, south of Siren	3,700	3,700	0	0.00%
STH 35, north of Webster	3,600	3,900	300	8.33%
STH 35, north of Danbury	1,300	1,300	0	0.00%
STH 77, east of intersection with County Road H	880	840	-40	-4.55%
STH 87, south of intersection with County Road Z	930	1,300	370	39.78%
STH 87/ 48, south of Grantsburg	1,800	1,800	0	0.00%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts, 2002 and 2007.

Based on the traffic counts completed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation in 2002 and 2007, State Highways 70 and 35 have the greatest traffic volumes when compared to other highways in the county. However, the greatest traffic flow increases were noticed on the southern portion of State Highway 87 and on State Highway 35 north of the Village of Webster.

County Trunk Highway Traffic Volumes

Table 3-4 displays traffic counts for selected county trunk highways in Burnett County. Many of the county trunk highways are the only route available between unincorporated and incorporated areas within the county.

Table 3-4
County Highway AADT Counts, Burnett County

County Trunk Highway System	2002
CTH H, north of STH 70	800
CTH H, south of STH 77	400
CTH X, east of Webster	400
CTH D, west of STH 35	540
CTH F, north of Grantsburg	400
CTH B, east of Siren	780
CTH FF, west of Webster	960

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts, 2002.

The county truck highway system in Burnett County extends to the rural and natural areas. Therefore the traffic counts are expected to be relatively low when compared to the State Highway traffic counts. The traffic counts for the county highway system have not been updated by the Wisconsin DOT since 2002.

3.5 Accidents in Burnett County

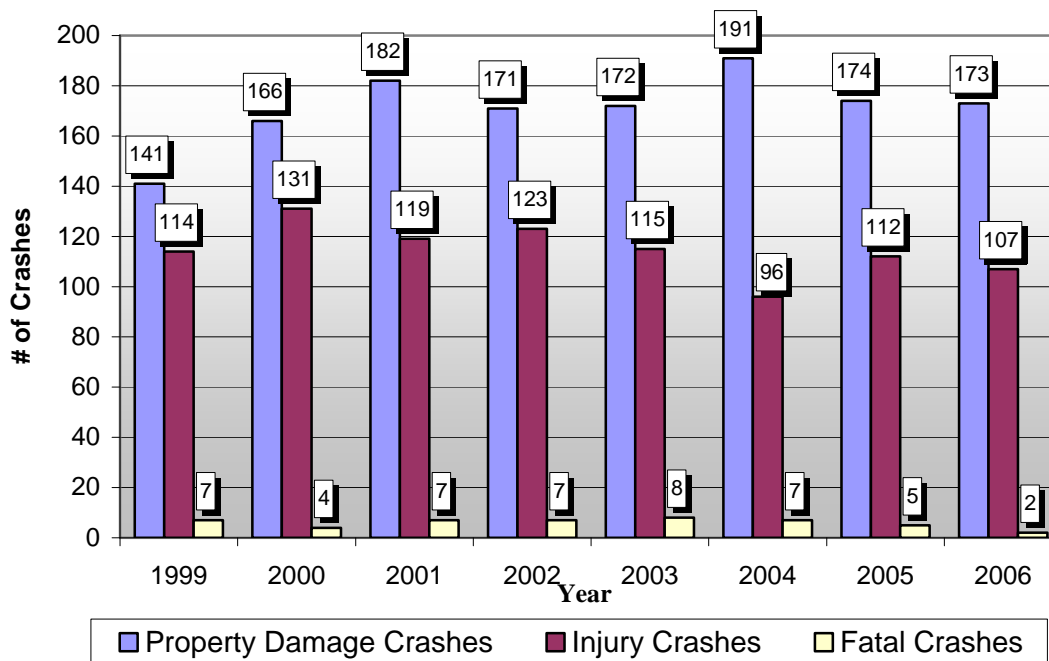
To further analyze Burnett County's road system, motor vehicle accidents are studied to identify problem areas. The frequency of motor vehicle accidents tends to correlate directly with traffic volumes. Table 3-5 and Figure 3-1 shows the different types of crashes in Burnett County from 1999 to 2006.

Table 3-5
Vehicle Crashes in Burnett County, 1999 - 2006

Year	Property Damage Crashes	Injury Crashes	Fatal Crashes	Total Crashes
1999	141	114	7	262
2000	166	131	4	301
2001	182	119	7	308
2002	171	123	7	301
2003	172	115	8	295
2004	191	96	7	294
2005	174	112	5	291
2006	173	107	2	282

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Figure 3-1
Accidents by Year in Burnett County, 1999 - 2006



Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

3.6 Additional Modes of Transportation

Trucking

Trucking is an integral part of the Burnett County economy and depends on a safe and efficient highway system as well as adequate local roads and streets. Heavy truck operators do business in the county hauling milk and other agricultural products, forest products, manufactured goods, and other industrial and commercial applications.

Local roads are generally not designed to accommodate heavy truck operation and are limited to direct delivery. Roadways of higher functional classification are designed with increasing load bearing characteristics. Some county highways and nearly all local roads may have weight restrictions during periods of spring thaw.

Infrastructure to support trucking exists within Burnett County and throughout the surrounding region. State highways 35, 48, 70 and 87 are designated as official truck routes by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. According to WDOT truck operator data, there are no official rest areas within the county. There are State Patrol safety and weight enforcement facilities within Burnett County.

Motorized Recreational Vehicles

All terrain vehicles (ATVs), snowmobiles, and dirt-bikes experience significant use in Burnett County. They are primarily used for recreational purposes, but may also be used for agricultural and commercial applications. Burnett County contains more than 300 miles of groomed, signed snowmobile and ATV trails. In addition, some towns have adopted local ordinances which allow the use of ATVs on local roads.

Air Service

There are seven airports in Burnett County. Two of them are publicly owned, while the other five are privately owned. No scheduled passenger flights are available in Burnett County. The nearest airports providing regular scheduled passenger flights to domestic and international destinations are in Duluth, Minnesota and Minneapolis – St. Paul, Minnesota.

Of the two public airports located in Burnett County, one is municipally owned and the other is the county airport. Table 3-6 displays the name, location, owner, and status of the airports/airfields in Burnett County.

Table 3-6
Public and Private Airports/Airfields in Burnett County

Burnett County Airports/ Airfields			
Airport	Location	Owner/ Operator	Status
Grantsburg Municipal Airport	Village of Grantsburg	Village of Grantsburg	Public
Burnett County Airport	Town of Meenon	Burnett County	Public
Voyager Village Airport	Town of Jackson	Voyager Village Property Owners Assoc.	Private
Carlson Field Airport	Town of Blaine	Len Carlson	Private
Burnett Medical Heliport	Village of Grantsburg	Burnett Medical Center	Private
Alpha Hotel Airport	Village of Webster	David Littfin	Private
Circle T Airport	Town of Grantsburg	Danny Tagg	Private

Source: Northwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Federal Aviation Administration.

Burnett County Airport

The Burnett County Airport is located in the Town of Meenon and is owned by Burnett County. This airport is part of the state airport system and is classified as a General Utility (GU) in the *Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020*. This means the airport is intended to serve virtually all small general aviation single and twin-engine aircraft, both piston and turboprop, with a maximum takeoff weight of 12,500 pounds. These aircrafts generally have approach speeds below 121 knots and wingspans of less than 79 feet. These aircrafts are typically used for business and charter flying and for personal reasons.

The Burnett County Airport has two runways, both have pilot controlled lighting:

Runway 04/22 is a 75' x 3,900' asphalt surface

Runway 13/31 is 75' x 5,000 asphalt surface

The airport has 24 – hour self fuel service that includes 100LL, JET A, and Autogas. There are 24 aircraft based on the field, 23 of which are single engine planes.

Grantsburg Municipal Airport

The Grantsburg Municipal Airport is located in the Town of Grantsburg, but owned by the Village of Grantsburg. This airport is part of the state airport system and is classified as a Basic Utility A (GU-A) in the *Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020*. This indicates that the airport is designed to accommodate aircrafts of less than 6,000 pounds of gross weight, with approach speeds below 91 knots and wingspans of less than 49 feet. Such aircraft are typically single-engine piston.

The airport has two runways:

Runway 12/30, 3,000 x 60'

Runway 5/23, 3,315 x 120'

This airport has no fuel services. The airport has 19 aircraft based on the field, 17 of which are a single engine and the other two are ultralights.

The source for the figures presented above regarding the number of aircrafts at each of the public airports is the AirNav.com website.

Water Transportation

Commercial water transport does not currently take place in Burnett County on any significant level. However, between 1860 and 1910, the lumber industry in the county was thriving. During this time, the Yellow River, St. Croix River, and many other smaller streams, were used for logging transport, though they no longer serve this function today.

Recreational uses represent the vast majority of water-based transportation in Burnett County. For example, the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway offers more than 150 miles of wild and scenic, river canoeing and kayaking.

Freight Rail Service and Ports

There are no rail or port services within Burnett County. Rail and ports services are available in Superior, Wisconsin.

Pedestrian Transportation Corridors

Pedestrian travel is an integral part of the total transportation picture. Many people rely on walking for exercise as well as for travel from their homes to work, school, or shopping. For the elderly, children, and those who are disabled, having safe and convenient pedestrian facilities is essential to daily activities. The most extensive pedestrian sidewalk systems are located within the three villages.

There are also many walking paths through out the county. The most prominent is the Gandy Dancer State Trail, which occupies an old railroad corridor, converted for recreational use. Refer to the Utilities and Community Facilities element for more information on trails.

Rustic Roads

The Rustic Road System of Wisconsin was created to help citizens and local units of government preserve what remains of Wisconsin's scenic, lightly traveled country roads for the leisurely enjoyment of bikers, hikers, and motorists. Unique brown and yellow signs mark the routes of all officially designated Rustic Roads. An officially designated Rustic Road shall continue to be under local control. The county, village, or town shall have the same authority over the Rustic Road as it possesses over other highways under its jurisdiction. The maximum speed limit on a Rustic Road has been established by law at 45 mph. A speed limit as low as 25 mph may be established by the local governing authority. To date, Wisconsin has 107 marked Rustic Roads in 56 counties, covering over 600 miles. Four of the designated Rustic Roads are within Burnett County; Rustic Road 15, Rustic Road 79, Rustic Road 80, and Rustic Road 98.

- ◆ Rustic Road 15 includes River Road and Skog Road between Fish Lake Road and Hickerson Road to the southwest of the Village of Grantsburg. Adjacent to the St. Croix River Forest and the Fish Lake Wildlife Area, this Rustic Road contains views of coniferous and hardwood trees. Rustic Road 15 is within a quarter mile of the St. Croix River, which is part of the United States Wild and Scenic River System. There are several hiking trails that branch off of this 5.4 mile scenic road.
- ◆ Rustic Road 79 starts on Glendenning Road beginning at Highway 35 and extends west ending on County F. This 1.2 mile scenic road is covered by a canopy of oaks and crosses the Gandy Dancer State Trail which is used for hiking, biking, and snowmobiling. Rustic Road 79 crosses the Yellow Bridge which connects Yellow Lake with the St. Croix River near the historic Fort Folle Avoine.
- ◆ Rustic Road 80 is County Highway E beginning at the intersection of County Highway A winding parallel with McKenzie Lake until its intersection with Tokash Road near the Washburn County border. This 2.1 mile Rustic Road is used by pedestrians and bicyclists for recreational purposes. It is winding with gentle hills and borders McKenzie

Lake. Tall oaks canopy the road during the summer months and wildlife such as ducks, bear, deer, and eagles are often seen throughout the year.

- ♦ Rustic Road 98 is a paved eight mile loop that travels to the east of the Gandy Dancer State Trail and Rustic Road 79. This scenic route begins at the junction of Highway 35 and old 35 near Danbury. The route produces easterly along CCC Road to Hayden Lake Road, looping back to Highway 35. Rustic Road 98 is contained in the Towns of Oakland and Swiss and passes several lakes, prairie lands and canopied trees. The route along includes an abundance of wildlife including waterfowl, deer, bear, and eagles.

Bicycle Corridors

Bicycling plays an important role in moving people, many of whom rely on or choose the bicycle for their main or only mode of transportation. Bicycles can move considerable numbers of people, especially in urban areas. The benefits of bicycling can be generalized into the following categories: health, transportation, safety, environmental, transportation choice, efficiency, economic, and quality of life. Therefore, bicycling is an important element of the overall transportation system in Burnett County and is an accepted and promoted alternative form of transportation.

Transit Services in Burnett County

Transit Defined

Transit is a motor-vehicle service provided to individuals, usually for hire, to make a trip from one location to another. For the purpose of this report, it does not include arrangements made by individuals with relatives or neighbors to make a specific trip. Trips must be arranged with entities that have identified themselves as trip service providers to be considered transit. Excluded from this inventory of transit are charter bus operations, school transportation services provided through school districts, and vehicles that may be available to community based residential facilities (CBRFs) and emerging Adult Family Homes for resident transit.

Types of Transit Providers

General categories of transit providers include: services available to the general public; services available to the general public, but only if they are elderly or disabled; services available only to the clients of an entity; services available to residents of group homes; and specialized medical vehicles licensed by the state medical assistance program.

Current Transit Options

Currently, no bus service exists within Burnett County. Closest access to commercial bus transportation is available by Greyhound Bus Lines in Duluth, Minnesota, or Eau Claire, Wisconsin Northwestern Taxi provides taxi service that covers an area between Swiss and Danbury.

Burnett County is served by Burnett County Health and Human Services, Unit on Aging Program. The Unit on Aging provides volunteer services to meet the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities. As the population continues to age and as retirees move to Burnett County, demand for these services is likely to increase.

See Section 3.7: Regional Plans: Locally Developed Transportation Coordination Plan for more information on transit services.

3.7 Existing Transportation Plans

State Plans

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation maintains several plans with statewide policies and recommendations regarding various aspects of transportation. These plans should be taken into consideration when making transportation decisions.

Translinks 21

Released in 1994, Translinks 21 is a comprehensive 25 year vision and plan for Wisconsin's transportation in the 21st century. Essentially, it takes a multi-modal approach to transportation planning, includes environmental evaluation steps, and aims to assist metropolitan planning organizations in their transit planning efforts. This plan creates the framework for other WisDOT plans and programs, and acts as an 'umbrella plan' and framework for future WisDOT documents.

Corridors 2020 and Connections 2030: Wisconsin's Long Range Transportation Plans

Currently WisDOT is operating under Corridors 2020. Corridors 2020 is a part of WisDOT's long-range highway improvement plan designed to provide essential links to key employment and population centers throughout the state. As part of the planning process, Wisconsin's highways were classified based on operational and economic factors. Gaps in the system were identified and improvements scheduled. Since the plan was created in the late 1980's, about 950 miles of new highways have been built to accommodate the network's needs.

The plan's goal was to complete all backbone improvements, which will connect all communities with a population of 5,000 or more to the state highway system by the year 2005. WisDOT is in the process of updating the plan to project the state's needs through 2030.

Corridors 2020 supports economic development as the highway system assists the state in meeting its intercity mobility needs. These connections are important for the movement of goods and services within the state and other market areas outside the state of Wisconsin. Corridors 2020 helps create a positive safe and traveling environment allowing business, industry, agriculture, and tourism to expand in the state.

WisDOT conducted a study that evaluated new and expanded manufacturing plant locations in the state from 1990 to 2001. The results revealed that these new or expanding industrial firms created over 80,000 jobs in Wisconsin; 90% of these jobs are located within four miles of a Corridors 2020 highway, which illustrates the importance of the highway system.

WisDOT is currently developing a long-range transportation plan for the state, called Connections 2030. In August 2009, WisDOT held six public hearings on the final draft version of the plan. At the time this document was prepared, WisDOT officials were in the process of revising the document based on comments received from the public.

Connections 2030 differs from WisDOT's previous planning efforts. Beginning with the release of Translinks 21 in the mid 1990s, the department has prepared a series of needs-based plans for various transportation modes. The Connections 2030 planning approach uses an integrated model around seven multi-modal themes.

Connections 2030 identifies a few corridor plans in counties that are adjacent to Burnett, but do not directly cross into the county. One of these is the north-south orientated Peace Memorial Corridor, which is a 150 mile segment that stretches from the Chippewa Falls/Eau Claire area to the Duluth/Superior area. The primary highway in this corridor is US 53. A second corridor in the Burnett County area is the North County Corridor, a 300-mile long segment, east-west orientated corridor that connects the Twin Cities, Minnesota with northern Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. This corridor is important to linking the northern Wisconsin tourism industry with the Twin Cities market. This corridor is also an important transportation route for the forest products industry.

Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020

The focus of this plan is the 11,800 miles of State Trunk Highway Routes. According to WisDOT, much of the state's current highway network is aging and deteriorating. While the State Trunk Highway System accounts for only 11% of Wisconsin's total roadway mileage, it carries 60% of all traffic. The plan identifies that travel has increased 60% since 1982, and will continue to increase, although at a more moderate pace. Moreover, the plan projects that the amount of travel under congested conditions will dramatically increase during the present-time and 2020.

On the state level, the plan recommends Wisconsin:

- ◆ Continue its commitment to safety
- ◆ Increase its rate of investment in highway rehabilitation

Connections 2030

WisDOT is currently developing a long-range transportation plan for the state, called Connections 2030. This new plan will address all forms of transportation over a 25-year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit and ways to make the individual modes work better as an integrated transportation system. Although Connections 2030 addresses all modes of transportation, it is not organized by the individual modes. Rather, Connections 2030 is organized around the seven themes that are interrelated to promote an integrated multimodal transportation system. The themes include:

- Preserve Wisconsin's Transportation System
- Promote Transportation Safety
- Foster Wisconsin's Economic Growth
- Provide Mobility and Transportation Choice
- Promote Transportation Efficiencies
- Preserve and Enhance Wisconsin's Quality of Life
- Promote Transportation Security

- ◆ Make alternative transportation modes more viable
- ◆ Protect the system from the effects of unplanned and uncontrolled land development
- ◆ Use new technologies to manage the flow of traffic
- ◆ Add capacity to avoid system failure.

In acknowledgement of the importance of local land use plans, WisDOT encourages stronger partnerships between local and state governments, because well-planned local development can reduce demands on the State Trunk Highway System and the natural environment.

State highways 35, 48, 70 and 87 run through Burnett County.

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

The purpose of this plan is to establish bicycling as a viable, convenient, and safe transportation option for people throughout the state of Wisconsin. WisDOT recognizes that bicycling benefits Wisconsin communities by improving health and fitness, allowing people to move and park inexpensively, reducing congestion and air pollution, and providing a primary means of transportation for children and households with no car or driver.

During the public participation phase for creating this plan, people stated that they would be more inclined to bike if cycling were made safer and more convenient. The plan intends to address these challenges in order to meet its goals of increasing the levels of bicycling throughout Wisconsin and reducing crashes involving bicyclists and motor vehicles.

The plan acknowledges that local governments will be essential in implementing this plan. WisDOT recommends that local communities analyze and prioritize bicycle safety problems, focus education and enforcement actions on the most common types of crashes, and conduct education efforts targeted at the user groups most in need.

With specific regards to rural strategies, the plan calls for the development of a usable network of roadways and bikeways to link communities. On roadways with motor vehicle volumes exceeding 1,000 per day, the plan recommends paved shoulders to help accommodate bicyclists.

Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020

As a means of addressing the intermodal aspect of Translinks 21, WisDOT developed the Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020, which provides the framework for the state's system of public-use airports to meet the needs of the state. The plan defines the State Airport System to include 100 of the 143 public-use airports; 2 airports in Burnett County, the Grantsburg Municipal Airport and the Burnett County Airport, are considered part of the State Airport System. The Grantsburg Municipal Airport is classified as Basic Utility-A (BU-A). BU-A airports are designed to accommodate aircraft of less than 6,000 pounds gross weight, with approach speeds below 91 knots and wingspans of less than 49-feet. Typically, such aircraft are single-engine planes. The Burnett County Airport is classified as General Utility (GU), and is intended to serve nearly all small general aircraft, with a maximum take-off weight of 12,500 pounds. Both airports are projected to retain their current capacities and maintain their current status through 2020.

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

This 1998 state plan outlines a vision for transportation planning in Wisconsin that considers bicycle traffic in its projects and plans. The purpose of the plan is to assess current bicycling conditions, explore the benefits of bicycling as a mode of transportation, to establish design guidelines for bicycle facilities, promote bicycle safety, and develop implementation methods for WisDOT and local municipalities. The plan provides strategies for developing bike routes to accommodate bicyclists travelling within city and towns and also between population centers.

Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020

This state plan is intended to guide policies and programs on pedestrian transportation through 2020. The purpose of the plan is to increase walking and promote pedestrian safety statewide, with the recognition that many pedestrian policies will need to be created and implemented at the local level.

The Pedestrian Policy Plan encourages local governments to consider pedestrian transportation in their land use plans. Specifically, this plan recommends that local land use decisions, particularly subdivision approvals, consider and provide for the needs of pedestrian transportation. Suggested implementation strategies as detailed in this plan include:

Encouraging compact and mixed-use development that facilitates walking.
Promoting school and residential siting so as to accommodate walking as the primary mode.
Providing for continuous sidewalk connectivity.

In order to execute new pedestrian projects, WisDOT advocates identifying and seeking grants that may be available under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program, local Transportation Enhancement programs, and the Surface Transportation Project Discretionary programs (STP-D).

WisDOT anticipates that a convenient and safe travel network will promote improved health and fitness, decreased local vehicular traffic, and established community awareness and interaction.

Regional Plans

Locally Developed Transportation Coordination Plan

Burnett County, in coordination with Polk County, prepared a Locally Developed Transportation Coordination Plan in September 2008. The Plan is intended to meet requirements for projects selected for funding under the Elderly Individuals with Disabilities, Job Access and Reverse Commute/Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance, and New Freedom programs. The Plan is also intended to provide guidance to the county and region in providing specialized services.

Key findings included:

- ◆ Continued actions must be sought to further dialog and coordinated efforts of wheelchair accessible transport services to more fully maximize ridership and travel positioning.
- ◆ Impediments to a more coordinated transit system include limitations in providing rides to non-eligible participants due to funding restrictions.

- ◆ Polk and Burnett Counties have very low population densities that are a disadvantage in promoting a cost effective transit system between communities/counties.
- ◆ Funding limitations due to eligibility requirements limit needed social and shopping trips throughout the counties.
- ◆ Limited funds available to low- to moderate income households limit their ability to make necessary repairs to vehicles, which often in turn limits their ability to seek or continue gainful employment.
- ◆ As many of the existing transportation services destinations are medically related, a greater level of coordination by physicians in scheduling appointments would allow coordination to maximize multiple payer trips versus one payer trips.
- ◆ Most transportation services are limited to weekday (8am to 5pm). An expansion of these hours to include nights and weekends could provide additional employment opportunities and medical and social trip functions.
- ◆ The need for an intra- or inter-county transit system is needed due to eligibility restrictions on current programs.
- ◆ In order to make transit trips more financially viable, capturing other transit ridership is necessary through multiple stops per trip.
- ◆ A “transit coordinator” is needed to expand the knowledge base of all existing providers as to who is providing services and what type of rides.
- ◆ The vast array of human resources (drivers, administrators, schedulers, etc.) must continue to dialog between providers to develop a more coordinated transportation system.

3.8 Planned Transportation Improvements

Local Roads Improvement Program

According to WisDOT’s Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP), there are 10 open projects for Burnett County. The LRIP provides reimbursement to local governments for up to 50% of eligible costs associated with fixing seriously deteriorating county, village, and town roads.

The following projects are open in Burnett County:

- ◆ Burnett County
- ◆ CTH C, from Tower Road. to CTH T
- ◆ Town of Dewey
- ◆ Lake View Church Road, from CTH H to Town Hall Road
- ◆ Town of Jackson
- ◆ Morning Star Drive, from Fox Ridge Trace to Three Mile Road
- ◆ Town of Lincoln
- ◆ Black Brook Road, from Wickholm Road to Ice House Bridge Road
- ◆ Town of Roosevelt
- ◆ Crosby Road, from Hilltop Road to CTH EE
- ◆ Town of Swiss
- ◆ Minerva Dam Road, from Lake 26 Road to W. Minerva Dam Road
- ◆ Town of Webb Lake
- ◆ Prinel Lake Road, from STH 77 to Frog Lake Road
- ◆ Town of West Marshland

- ◆ Lundquist Road, from East Refuge Road to Rylander Road
- ◆ Village of Siren
- ◆ Clear Lake Street, from STH 35 to Termini
- ◆ Village of Webster
- ◆ Sturgeon Avenue, Hickory Street to Kola Street

State Highway Projects

From 2008 to 2013, WisDOT has the following improvements scheduled for state highways in Burnett County:

- ◆ STH 35: 2010-2013: Reconstruction of a roundabout on STH 35 at the STH 70 northbound intersection at Siren.
- ◆ STH 48: 2009: Mill and resurface 4.55 mile section of roadway, pave three feet of the six foot shoulder, as well as replace existing beam guard and culvert pipes on portions from Grantsburg to Frederic
- ◆ STH 48: 2010-2013: Maintain 6.21 mile section of overlay of STH 48 from Grantsburg to Frederic
- ◆ STH 48: 2010-2013: Maintain 6.39 mile section of overlay of STH 48 from Grantsburg to Frederic
- ◆ STH 70: 2010-2013: Mill existing 12.05 mile section of pavement and repave with new asphaltic surface from Siren to Spooner.
- ◆ STH 70: 2009: Preventative maintenance on 10.24 mile section; mill 2 inches to remove rutting and resurface with 2 inches asphaltic pavement from the St. Croix River to Siren Road.
- ◆ STH 70: 2009: Preventative maintenance on 9.52 mile section; mill 2 inches to remove rutting and resurface with 2 inches asphaltic pavement from the St. Croix River to Siren Road.
- ◆ STH 77: 2010-2013: Reconstruction of 5.61 mile section of roadway between Danbury and Minong to meet current design standards and correct geometrical deficiencies.
- ◆ STH 77: 2010-2013: Recondition 9.31 mile section of roadway between Danbury and Minong Road; pulverize to a relayed depth of 6 inches and overlay with four inches of asphaltic pavement.
- ◆ STH 87: 2009: Mill and resurfaces 7.59 mile section of roadway, pave three foot section of six foot shoulder, replace beam guard, and replace culvert pipes between Cushing and Grantsburg.

County Highway Projects

The following county roads are scheduled for improvements:

2009

- ◆ CTH B (3.52 Miles) Lind Road to Soderberg Road +1320 feet.
- ◆ CTH C (1.7 Miles) Tower Road to CTH T

2010

- ◆ CTH H (2 Miles) Delano Road to South County Line

- ◆ CTH Z (4.8 Miles) STH 48 to STH 87

2011

- ◆ CTH B (3.52 Miles) Soderberg Road +1320' to Herrick Road
- ◆ CTH C (2 Miles) CTH U to Tower Road

2012

- ◆ CTH D (1.5 Miles) Fossum Road to CTH M
- ◆ CTH E (2.1 Miles) CTH A to East County Line
- ◆ CTH H (2 Miles) CTH J to Delano Road

3.9 Transportation Trends and Outlook

Future transportation issues and opportunities can be anticipated by extending current and historic patterns forward and by assessing the interaction between land use and transportation. Transportation trends are important to consider when drafting local plans and policies. Transportation and future land use are directly related, and transportation trends have a tremendous impact on how local governments budget their resources. This also holds true for county and state governments. The information presented in this Report, as well as information gathered from local Burnett County residents, supports the following trends with regard to transportation:

An increasing volume of highway traffic will continue into the future. Related traffic control and safety issues are likely to follow.

- ◆ The use of STH 35 for local traffic and as a major regional north-south connection will continue to lead to higher traffic volumes.
- ◆ The use to STH 70 as a major regional and interstate east-west connection will also continue to lead to higher traffic volumes. STH 70 has enough design capacity based on average daily traffic projections through 2020.
- ◆ Accident-prone intersections will need improvement.
- ◆ Routes between villages are likely to continue to grow in traffic volume.
- ◆ Traffic speeds and intersection safety are likely to be concerns raised by local residents.
- ◆ Major highway intersections and corridors will continue to be target locations for new commercial and industrial development, especially within and near villages.

Increasing demands on local roads will continue into the future. Road improvement issues and use conflicts are likely to be the focus.

- ◆ Traffic is likely to increase on many county and town roads near the State Trunk Highways.

- ◆ The need for seasonal road closures and weight limits will continue unless significant structural improvements are made to local roads.
- ◆ Placement of new driveways onto town and county roads will continue.

The growth of agriculture, industry, and motorized recreation may lead to increasing demand to accommodate special uses of roadways.

- ◆ Issues regarding agricultural transport, such as milk and manure hauling, may increase.
- ◆ Conflicts between automobiles and slower moving farm equipment are likely to increase.
- ◆ Interest in designating local roads for ATV and snowmobile use is likely to increase.

3.10 Transportation Programs Currently In Use

The following transportation related programs are utilized or have been utilized in the past by Burnett County.

Federal Programs

Surface Transportation Rural Program (STP – Rural, STP – R)

The objective of the STP – Rural Program is to improve federal aid eligible highways outside of urban areas. The program provides funding to improve roads in rural areas that are functionally classified as principal arterial, minor arterial or major collector streets (primarily county highways). The program is funded through SAFETEA – LU. The 2009 – 2012 STP – R Program is currently in effect and the DOT Regional Offices will be soliciting projects for the 2011 – 2014 program in Spring of 2009. Burnett County has the following construction project on the 2009 – 2012 approved STP – R Program list:

County Highway B from Lind Road to Soderberg Road

State Programs

Rustic Roads Program

The Rustic Roads System in Wisconsin is an effort to help citizens and local units of government preserve what remains of Wisconsin’s scenic, lightly traveled country roads for the leisurely enjoyment of bikers, hikers, and motorists. An officially designated Rustic Road shall continue to be under local control. The county, city, village, or town shall have the same authority over the Rustic Road as it possesses over other highways under its jurisdiction. A Rustic Road is eligible for state aids just as any other public highway. For further information visit the WisDOT’s website or contact the Rustic Roads coordinator at (608) 266-0649.

Adopt-A-Highway Program

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation initiated the Adopt-A-Highway program to allow groups to volunteer and support the state's anti-litter program in a more direct way. Each qualified group takes responsibility for litter control on a segment of state highway. The group picks up litter on this segment at least three times per year between April 1 and November 1. Groups do not work in dangerous areas like medians, bridges, or steep slopes. The main goals of the program are to reduce litter along Wisconsin's highways, build statewide support for the anti-litter and highway beautification programs, educate the traveling public to properly dispose of litter, and to enhance the environment and beautify Wisconsin's roadsides.

Transportation Economic Assistance Program

The Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) Program is a rapid response grant program designed to create new employment, to retain existing employment, and to encourage private investment in Wisconsin. Communities can apply for TEA funds to encourage new businesses or business expansions in their regions by building such transportation improvements as access roads, highway improvements, or rail spurs. The program covers up to 50% of the total cost of eligible projects.

Local Roads Improvement Program

Established in 1991, the Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP) assists local governments in improving seriously deteriorating county highways, town roads, and city and village streets. A reimbursement program, LRIP pays up to 50% of total eligible costs with local governments providing the balance.

Statewide Multi-modal Improvement Program (SMIP)

As part of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 as reauthorized in 1998 under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) receives federal funds to provide a variety of improvement programs, including the Local Transportation Enhancements (TE) program. The program is designed to fund projects that increase multi-modal transportation alternatives and enhance communities and the environment.

Local Bridge Improvement Assistance Program

The Local Bridge Improvement Assistance program helps rehabilitate and replace, on a cost-shared basis, the most seriously deficient existing local bridges on Wisconsin's local highway systems.

Counties, cities, villages, and towns are eligible for rehabilitation funding on bridges with sufficiency ratings less than 80, and replacement funding on bridges with sufficiency ratings less than 50.

Safe Routes to School Program

The 2005 revised federal transportation act (SAFETEA-LU) provides funding to state departments of transportation to create and administer Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs. SRTS programs encourage children ages K-8 to walk and bike to school by creating safer walking and biking routes. SRTS programs improve walking and biking travel options, promote healthier lifestyles in children at an early age, and decrease auto-related emissions near schools.

Funds will be awarded through a competitive state-wide grant process. Projects eligible for SRTS funding must be within two miles of an elementary or middle school (kindergarten through eighth grade) and may include sidewalks, trails, bike paths, and land use planning. Initial indications from WDOT are that the grant program will be funded at \$2 million per year.

County Forest Road Aids

Burnett County and 23 other counties in the State of Wisconsin currently receive County Forest Road Aids (CFRA). This program is meant to assist in defraying county costs for the improvement and maintenance of public roads within county forests. An aid of \$336 per mile of qualified road is paid each year to eligible counties. For Fiscal Year 2008, Burnett County claimed 32.67 miles of county forest roads, all of which were eligible for aid. This equates to \$10,977.12 in aid for 2008. In order to qualify for aid, the county forest road must be:

- ◆ Located within a County forest,
- ◆ At least 20 feet wide with a surface width of at least 16 feet,
- ◆ Open and used for travel, and
- ◆ Part of a comprehensive county forest land use plan approved by the county board and the Department of Natural Resources.

Regional Programs

There are currently no regional transportation programs in use in Burnett County.

Local Programs

Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER)

PASER is a simple method of rating asphalt and concrete roads on a scale of 1 to 10 and gravel roads on a scale of 1 to 5, based on visual inspection. PASER manuals and a video explain how and why roads deteriorate, and describe proper repair and replacement techniques. PASER rating can be put into PASERWARE, an easy to use pavement management software package. PASERWARE helps to inventory roads and keep track of their PASER ratings and maintenance histories. It also helps to prioritize road maintenance and improvement needs, calculate project costs, evaluate the consequences of alternative budgets and project selection strategies, and communicate those consequences to the public and local officials. Both PASER and PASERWARE are available from the University of Wisconsin's Transportation Information Center at no charge. The Center also offers free training courses. Call (800) 442-4615 for more information.

Safety Evaluation for Roadways (SAFER)

SAFER is a practical, systematic approach to reviewing safety issues on and along roads. Potential hazards are grouped into categories such as roadsides, intersections, railroad crossings, warning signs, pavement markings, road maintenance, and special conditions. The SAFER manual recommends a rating system and using this system the County can choose which conditions need to be addressed immediately and which to include in future plans or improvements.