

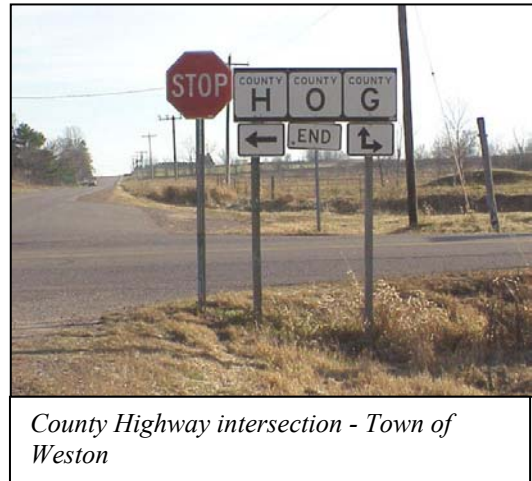
### 3. Transportation

The land use pattern of Clark County, its municipalities, and the region are tied together by the transportation system, including roadways, railroads, trails, etc. The residents, businesses, agricultural producers, and manufacturers all rely upon a dependable transportation system to function and provide linkages to areas beyond their borders. Clark 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 road system for Clark County is represented on Map 3-1. The county's road configuration is characterized by both a rural grid roadway pattern and a pattern influenced by the natural features and man made features of the land. These include: forest, rivers, other natural features, and community locations.

One of the more unique features of the road system within Clark County is the high percentage of local roads which maintain a gravel surface. This is due to Clark County's low population density and farming heritage. In fact, approximately 1,457 miles of local roads have gravel surface compared to only 148 miles of paved local road. Another important feature of the existing Clark County road system is its significant dependency on the county trunk highway system. Clark County maintains over 300 miles of county trunk highway. This compares to 33 miles of federal highway (USH 10), 161 miles of state highways (STHs 29, 73, 13, 98, and 95) and eight (8) miles of federal-state highway (STH 27/USH 12).



*County Highway intersection - Town of Weston*

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

- ♦ STH 29 provides the primary east/west transportation route in the northern portion of the county. STH 29 experiences the highest traffic volumes in Clark County, and most of this traffic is transient in nature. This route serves as a principal arterial, not only for inter-county trips, but also inter-region, and interstate trips. STH 29 connects the major metropolitan areas of Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Chippewa Falls, Wausau, and Green Bay. The STH 29 corridor passes near the Cities of Abbotsford, Owen, Colby, and Thorp and the Villages of Curtiss and Withee. Additionally, the corridor links Clark County to population and employment centers in the Cities of Wausau, Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls. The expansion of STH 29 to four lanes was completed in the 1990s in Clark County.
- ♦ U.S. 10 provides a major route through the southern portion of the county through the Village of Granton and the City of Neillsville. The route provides for local, inter-county, and interregional trips.

- ◆ STH 73 provides for north/south travel through Clark County and is a primary link from STH 29 to USH 10. The highway is also a primary link to many of the county trunk highways in the central portion of the county.
- ◆ STH 98 provides for east/west travel to and from STH 73. It is a primary route to the city of Loyal.
- ◆ The extensive network of CTHs throughout the county offers major routes to the more rural portions of the county and offers links to the major highways stated above.
- ◆ Local town roads provide access to abutting lands and to minor and major collectors (as identified on Map 3-1) and provide both east/west and north/south directional travel.

As depicted on Map 3-1, the road system is composed of four levels of government jurisdiction. These include the local road system encompassing the town, city, and village roads, the county system of trunk highways, the state highway system, and the federal system of U.S. highways. There are currently no interstate highways in Clark County. Map 3-1 also indicates the total mileage of each functional class of roadway in Clark County.

### 3.2 Road Functional/Jurisdictional Classification

The four levels of jurisdictional roadway (local, county, state, and federal) are often considered to represent the functional classification of roads used for planning and design purposes. The division of the roadway into functional classes, such as arterials and collectors, represents a classification relative to the principal service the roadway is intended to provide. The functional classification is generally the basis for funding, construction, and maintenance.

The functional classification for rural areas often depicts the use of the state and federal roads as arterials, while county and town roads serve as collectors within the roadway system. These terms are explained below based on definitions provided by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Although the definitions are somewhat formal, they attempt to explain the principal role of each type of roadway.

#### Principal (Major) Arterials

Serve interstate and inter-regional 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 and 2) other principal arterials. Principal arterials in Clark County include STHs 29 and 13 and USH 10. Principal (major) arterials account for 79 miles of roadway within Clark County.



*STH 29 is a principal arterial in northern Clark County*

## Minor Arterials

In conjunction with the principal arterials, minor arterials serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intra-regional and inter-area traffic movements. Minor arterials in Clark County include STHs 73, 98 and 95. Minor arterials account for 87 miles of roadway within Clark County.

## Major Collectors

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. Major collectors in Clark County include nearly all county trunk highways or portions of them. There are 256 miles of roadway in Clark County classified as major collectors.

## Minor Collectors

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. Minor collectors include less significant CTHs in Clark County as well as several local roads. There are 125 miles of roadway classified as minor collectors in Clark County.

## Local Roads

Local roads provide access to adjacent land and provide for travel over relatively short distances. All roads not classified as arterials or collectors are local function roads. There are 1,606 miles of local roads in Clark County of which only 148 miles are paved.

As previously noted, the functional road classifications are generally equated with the jurisdictional divisions. In the more developed larger urban communities, this relationship may not be as rigid, whereas the local community constructs and maintains all classes of the roadway system. However, in the typical rural transportation system the jurisdictional and the functional classifications maintain a closer relationship. The greatest emphasis of traffic in rural areas is generally on non-local efficient movement, whereas local access is secondary due to relatively low population densities.



*Local gravel roads-Town of Loyal*

## County Forest Roads

Roadways found within county forests are not officially another jurisdictional roadway type, however they are unique from the other four levels of jurisdiction that have been discussed. There are 46 miles of roadway classified as County Forest Road in the Clark County Forest. These roads are maintained to town standards and they are primarily used to provide service for the logging industry or for recreational use. County Forest Road Aids are available from the

Wisconsin Department of Transportation to help defray county costs for the improvement and maintenance of these roads. To qualify, roads must meet minimum design standards of a 16-foot surface width and a 20-foot roadway width, be located within county forests, be open and used for travel, and cannot be town roads or county or state trunk highways.

**Map 3-1 Clark County Functional and Jurisdictional Road System**

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### 3.3 Traffic Volume Trends

Annual average daily traffic (AADT) counts for 2002, 1999, 1996, 1992, 1989, and 1986 are presented for selected roadways in Clark 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.

#### State and U.S. Highway Traffic Volume Trends

Table 3-1 displays the AADT counts for several state highway segments throughout Clark County.

**Table 3-1: State Highway AADT Counts, Clark County, 1986-2002**

Location	1986	1989	1992	1996	1999	2002	# Change 1986-2002	% Change 1986-2002
STH 29, between Abbotsford and Curtiss	5,610	5,300	6,500	8,700	8,800	10,100	4,490	80.0
STH 29, between Curtiss and Owen	6,200	4,750	5,810	7,700	9,600	10,300	4,100	66.1
STH 29, between Owen and Thorp	4,120	6,050	5,710	3,500	7,800	9,700	5,580	135.4
US 10, west of Neillsville	2,520	2,620	3,050	4,100	3,600	4,400	1,880	74.6
US 10, east of Neillsville	2,390	3,110	3,830	1,700	3,200	3,000	610	25.5
STH 73, just north of Greenwood	1,480	1,480	1,600	2,400	2,200	2,100	620	41.9
STH 73, equally between Greenwood and Neillsville	1,400	1,500	1,810	2,600	2,400	2,400	1,000	71.4
STH 73, south of Neillsville, just west of Shortville	1,170	1,070	1,380	1,250	1,200	1,100	-70	-6.0
STH 98, just east of Loyal	2,450	2,490	2,570	2,700	2,900	2,900	450	18.4
STH 95, in the town of Dewhurst	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,400	1,300	1,100	0	0.0
STH 13, between Abbotsford and Dorchester	NA	NA	6,590	7,200	7,800	7,200	NA	NA

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts, 1986, 1989, 1992, 1996, 1999, and 2002.

Based on the traffic counts completed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, STH 29 and STH 13 have the greatest traffic volumes when compared to other highways in the county. The greatest increase in traffic counts from 1986 to 2002 were found on STH 29 with an overall increase of over 135.0% on some portions of the highway.



*STH 29 carries the highest volume of traffic in Clark County*

## County Trunk Highway Traffic Volume Trends

Given Clark County's large geographic area and relatively low density, there is a heavy dependency upon the county trunk highway system. Table 3-2 displays traffic counts for selected county trunk highways in Clark County. Several of the county trunk highways, such as CTHs H, K, and Y, have AADT counts similar to state highways in the county. These high traffic volumes reflect the vital connection that the county road system provides between the far reaches of rural Clark County and the state highway system. Many of the highways are the only route available between unincorporated and incorporated areas within the county.

**Table 3-2: County Trunk Highway AADT Counts, Clark County, 1986-2002**

Location	1986	1989	1992	1996	1999	2002	# Change	% Change
							1986-2002	1986-2002
CTH M, one mile south of intersection with MM	420	490	570	590	550	730	310	73.8
CTH O, one mile north of intersection with MM	460	620	480	520	540	540	80	17.4
CTH K, two miles north of Loyal	1,120	1,730	1,070	1,500	1,600	1,600	480	42.9
CTH Y, one mile north of Chili	1,060	1,080	1,220	1,100	1,200	1,500	440	41.5
CTH N, two miles west of Colby	920	1,010	950	1,000	1,100	790	-130	-14.1
CTH J, .5 miles south of STH 95	560	580	580	980	1,300	1,100	540	96.4
CTH H, two miles east of CTH K	1,510	1,400	1,960	1,900	2,400	2,600	1,090	72.2

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts, 1986, 1989, 1992, 1996, 1999 and 2002.

Several highways were examined for traffic count increases or decreases and those listed above showed some of the most significant changes. Notably, CTH H continues to experience significant increases in traffic volume due to its direct connection to the City of Marshfield in Wood County – a major employment destination for county residents. Also, the increase experienced for CTH J between 1996 and 2002 might be attributed to the rerouting necessary for work completed on STH 95. County trunk highways that offer a major route between cities and villages or are located closely to other major highways have the highest traffic counts. Overall, traffic volumes continue to increase and will accelerate the need for road maintenance and repair.

## Local Roadway Traffic Volume Trends

Local roadway traffic counts are only available for a limited number of cities and villages and major intersections within Clark County. Local roadways with significantly high traffic counts are identified in Table 3-3. These roadways in the communities identified have more safety and design issues that are affected by greater traffic volumes. Traffic volume information for the areas listed was not available for 2002 by the printing of this report.

**Table 3-3: Local Roadway AADT Counts, Selected Communities of Clark County, 1986-1999**

Location	1986	1989	1992	1996	1999	# Change % Change	
						1986-1999	1986-1999
<b>City of Abbotsford</b>							
South Birch Street	1,950	1,950	1,600	1,500	1,100	-850	-43.6
Fourth Avenue	820	640	840	1,500	1,400	580	70.7
<b>Village of Withee</b>							
Division Street, north of CTH X	2,550	2,600	2,730	4,000	4,100	1,550	60.8
<b>City of Owen</b>							
Paul Avenue, north of Third St.	1,120	1,540	1,380	1,700	1,400	280	25.0
<b>City of Greenwood</b>							
Main Street, between Begley and Miller	3,520	1,880	3,620	4,300	4,000	480	13.6
<b>City of Loyal</b>							
Main Street, between Mill and Central	3,720	3,390	4,300	4,600	4,200	480	12.9

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts, 1986, 1989, 1992, 1996 and 1999.

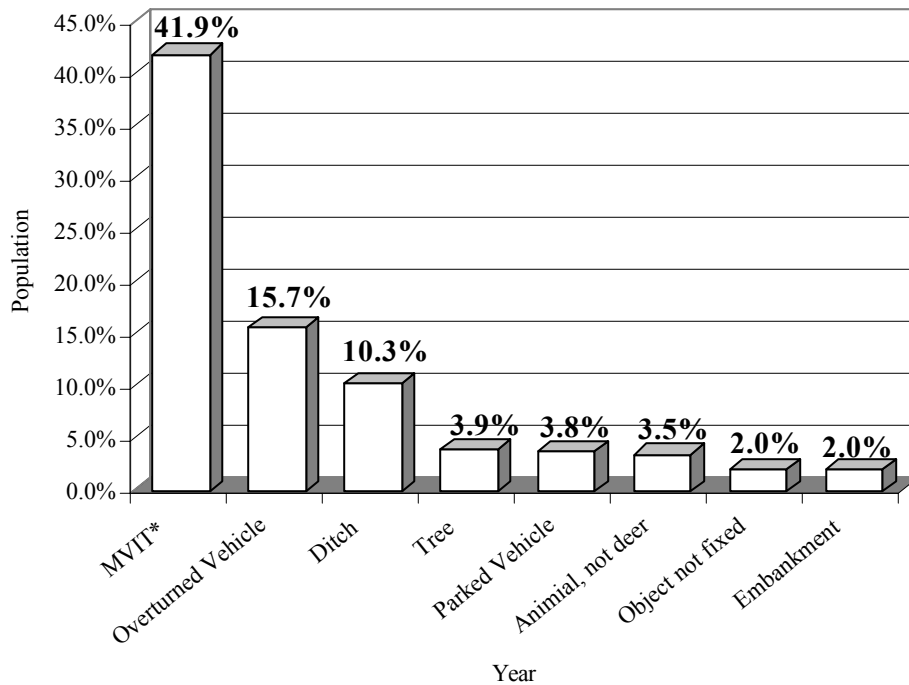
### 3.4 Accident Types and Locations

To further analyze Clark County's road system, the frequency and causes of motor vehicle accidents are studied to identify problem areas. The frequency of motor vehicle accidents tends to correlate directly with traffic volumes.

#### Accident Types

Motor vehicle accidents by crash type provide even greater detail into the cause of motor vehicle accidents. Figure 3-1, Total Accidents by Crash Type, displays the percentage of population in crashes from 1998 to 2000 by type of crashes. Only types which had a number greater than or equal to two percent of total crashes in Clark County are shown. Information does not include deer-car accidents due to the large number of such accidents and instances do not occur due to a problem area on a roadway, but simply are due to deer movement patterns.

**Figure 3-1: Total Accidents by Crash Type, Clark County, 1998-2000**



Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation. \*MVIT, Motor Vehicles In Transport.

### Accident Locations

The design and condition of the road may have an impact on the accident rate and the types of accidents that occur. From 1998 to 2000 the number of accidents in Clark County has been relatively stable. Table 3-4 displays the highways in the county which have had 10 or more total accidents from 1998 to 2000. Table 3-5 displays highway with 15 or more total accidents from 1998-2000. The table also denotes if the accidents occurred at intersections.

**Table 3-4: Highways with 10 or More Total Accidents,  
Clark County, 1998-2000**

Highway	1998	1999	2000	Total
10	41	34	41	116
13	36	30	34	100
29	64	52	71	187
73	57	44	39	140
95	4	8	6	18
98	12	8	6	26
A	4	4	5	13
E	7	3	5	15
G	3	4	4	11
H	12	9	16	37
J	10	3	2	15
K	13	17	12	42
M	3	5	3	11
N	12	8	6	26
O	3	7	1	11
X	12	6	5	23
Y	4	8	6	18

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

**Table 3-5: Highway Intersection Accidents, Clark County, 1998-2000**

Highway	Intersection Accidents	Non-intersection Accidents	Total Accidents 1998-2000
10	40	76	116
13	60	40	100
29	48	139	187
73	54	86	140
95	5	13	18
98	15	11	26
E	2	13	15
H	12	25	37
J	2	13	15
K	11	31	42
N	9	17	26
X	8	15	23
Y	6	12	18

Only includes highways with 15 or more total accidents from 1998-2000. Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

From 1998 to 2000, the majority of highway accidents within the county occurred on STH 29. The most notable trend that occurred was that there were no extremely significant highway accident increases, and several highways had considerable decreases in accidents during the three-year period. For example, STHs 73, 95, and 98 all decreased in total number of accidents. In December of 2001 the Regional Program Manager for the Bureau of Transportation told the Clark County Highway Safety Committee there had been a 75% reduction in the number of Clark County highway fatalities compared to 2000.



*Local road intersection visibility should be maintained.*

Accidents that occur at intersections may be an indicator of a roadway design problem or greater traffic flow issue. On STHs 13 and 98 there were a greater number of accidents at intersections than at non-intersections.

### **3.5 Additional Modes of Transport**

#### **Horse-Drawn Vehicles**

Clark County is home to substantial and growing communities of Amish and Mennonites whose use of the horse and buggy as a mode of transport is essential to their way of life. The use of horses and buggies on the Clark County road system poses potential conflicts with the use of autos, including traffic safety and horseshoe damage to pavement. Manure accumulation on roads is also raised as an issue in Amish and Mennonite communities.



*Horse-drawn vehicle on CTH Y-Town of Fremont*

Traffic safety issues primarily stem from the drastic difference between speeds of travel. Normal speeds for horse-drawn buggies range between five and eight miles per hour. Horse-drawn vehicles may be even slower when pulling large farm equipment or when crossing intersections. Visibility can also be a challenge, as buggies are typically dark in color and may be difficult to see unless marked with bright, reflective warning signs. Traffic safety issues can also arise due to the unpredictability of horses. Horses may back up slightly when stopped or become spooked by loud noises or when passed too closely by a vehicle. According to Wisconsin Department of Transportation archived accident reports, 15 accidents involving horse-drawn vehicles took place in Clark County between 1998 and June of 2002.

Roadways within Clark County sustain some damage as a result of horse-drawn buggies. Paved surfaces are designed to withstand heavy loads from rubber tires. Horseshoes and carriage wheels stress pavement differently, and often more severely, than rubber tires. On the other

hand, load weights on carriages are often far less than loads carried by traditional rubber tired trailers, trucks, and tractors. According to a research project, *Mitigation of Horseshoe Damage to Pavements (1995)*, conducted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, horseshoes, rather than carriage wheels, are the primary cause of roadway damage. Surface scarring, which is less than ¼ inch deep horseshoe penetration, is common throughout the county. More severe damage, such as rutting and pothole formation, have not been attributed to horse-drawn vehicles in Clark County to date.

Manure accumulation commonly occurs at intersections and tie stalls or other parking areas. This is most often raised as an issue in urban areas where manure on roadways is not otherwise a common occurrence. Concerns regarding the smell and the mess are expressed not only by motorists, but also by pedestrians and bicyclists.

The use of horse and buggy was the number one most significant transportation issue raised in the focus group portion of the public participation process. Both perceived conflicts and suggested solutions were identified in the focus group exercise. Strategies to address these issues (including equitable funding mechanisms) will be presented in the recommendations of this Plan. For more detailed information on these and other related issues, see the supplement to this report, the *Amish and Mennonite Transportation Report*.

## Trucking

Trucking is an integral part of the Clark 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 Clark County hauling milk and other agricultural products, septage, forest products, manufactured goods, and other industrial and commercial applications.

Infrastructure to support trucking is abundant within Clark County and the surrounding region. All state highways within Clark County are designated official truck routes by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT). According to the WDOT truck operators data, only the City of Abbotsford in Clark County is listed as having a private truck parking area along a major highway with 24-hour diesel fuel and at least 12 truck parking stalls. However, the recent development of a 24-hour truck stop in the Village of Curtiss at the CTH E/STH 29 interchange is providing this service as well. In addition, several such facilities are listed in nearby communities including: Marshfield, Pittsville, Black River Falls, Osseo, and Cadott. There are no State operated rest areas within Clark County.



*Truckers and other motorists place a high dependence on the Clark County highway system*

## Motorized Recreational Vehicles

All terrain vehicles (ATVs), snowmobiles, and motorcycles experience significant use in Clark County. They are primarily used for recreational purposes, but may also be used for agricultural

and commercial applications. For more detailed information on motorized recreational vehicle trails and use, see the *Utilities and Community Facilities* chapter of this Report.

## **Air Service**

There is only one airport located within Clark County. The Neillsville Municipal Airport is a Basic Utility-B airport which is designed to accommodate aircraft of less than 12,500 pounds gross-weight, with approach speeds below 121 knots and wingspans of less than 49 feet. The airport does not provide commercial passenger service or commercial air cargo service. According to the *Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020*, this airport is forecasted to become a General Utility (GU) airport by the year 2020. GU airports are intended to serve virtually all small general aviation aircraft. Typically, these aircraft are used for business and charter flying and for personal reasons. The nearest airport with scheduled commercial air passenger service is the Chippewa Valley Regional Airport, which is also a commercial air cargo feeder airport. The nearest primary commercial air cargo service airport is the Central Wisconsin Airport in Mosinee.



*Neillsville Municipal Airport*

## **Water Transport**

Commercial water transport does not currently take place in Clark County to any significant level. The Black River, along with many other smaller streams, such as O'Neill Creek, have historically been used for logging transport but no longer serve that function today.

Recreational uses represent the vast majority of water based transportation in Clark County. *The Agriculture, Natural, and Cultural Resources* and *Utilities and Community Facilities* chapters of this report contain more detailed information on the county's waterways and recreational resources.

## **Freight Rail Service**

Canadian National's (CN) Wisconsin Central Division (WCD) operates the majority of rail lines found in Clark County. WCD lines can be found primarily in the northern portion of the county and the Superior to Fond du Lac line is CN's primary freight rail link between the twin ports of Duluth/Superior and Chicago. This line has gone through capacity increases over the last few years including major roadbed and track improvements that will allow for increases in the number of movements per day as well as speed of movements on the line. The number of movements is expected to rise to between 28 – 30 per day, with a possibility of adding another 10 movements per day, bringing the total to around 40 per day. Train speed along this corridor is expected to increase to 60 mph. There are also approximately 38 public and private at-grade road crossings along this corridor and with the increase in movements and speed the safety of

many, if not all, of the crossings may become an issue. From 1998 to 2000, there have been six accidents involving trains reported in Clark County.

The Canadian National's WCD also operates a freight line between Owen and St. Paul. The line has approximately 31 public and private at-grade rail crossings. There are approximately six to eight movements per day on this line with a train speed of approximately 40 - 45 mph.



*Canadian National Railroad-Town of Colby*

The Union Pacific corridor, which operates in the extreme southwest corner of the county, provides freight service from St. Paul to Chicago. This corridor has approximately 10 public and private at-grade rail crossings. There are approximately two to four movements per day along this corridor, with a train speed of approximately 40 – 45 mph. It is important to note that this corridor also has been identified as a possible future additional route to the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI). This route would provide high speed (75 to 110 mph) passenger rail service between Minneapolis/St. Paul, Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago with up to six passenger rail movements per day when passenger service is initiated. No service is anticipated for the next 10 to 15 years, however this could change depending upon the availability of federal and state funding.

Each of the rail corridors mentioned above presents issues with existing at-grade crossings. Immediate concerns are with the CN Superior to Chicago corridor and the number of rail crossings along the corridor. With the increase in both the speed and number of movements, possible rail crossing closings and consolidations should be seriously investigated. For high speed passenger rail service, the amount of rail grade crossings allowed will depend upon the designated speed for the passenger service. A designated speed of 79 mph would mean that, at a minimum, all at-grade crossings would need to be fully protected with safety devices. Should a designated speed of 110 mph be selected, then all current at-grade crossings would be closed and only a grade separated crossing(s) would be allowed. Due to resulting costs, consolidations would most likely occur.

### **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.



*City of Greenwood sidewalk*

Towns within the county have little or no designated pedestrian facilities. Incorporated communities generally have sidewalks located on main streets, especially where commercial,

retail, and residential mixed uses are present. Pedestrian safety is an important issue in Amish and Mennonite communities where children often walk rural roads to reach their local school. For more detailed information on pedestrian safety at Amish and Mennonite schools, see the supplement to this report, the *Amish and Mennonite Transportation Report*.

## Transit

There are currently no transit/bus services available in Clark County. Population density must typically be higher than that of Clark County before such services become necessary or feasible. The need for such services should be monitored as population characteristics and settlement patterns change over time. A taxi service is available in the City of Neillsville.

## 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 Clark County and is an accepted and promoted alternative form of transportation.



*Multi-use Trail between Owen and Withee*

From 1998 to 2000, there were 11 bicycle – vehicle accidents in the county. The primary issue regarding bicycling in Clark County is providing safe routes for those who choose to use bicycles. This involves providing appropriate facilities and educating the public about bicycle safety.

## 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, city, 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. There are two designated Rustic Roads within Clark County, including Rustic Road 73 and Rustic Road 76.

Rustic Road 73, located in the Town of Green Grove, is a gravel surface route beginning at the intersection of CTH N and Robin Road and proceeding south to Cloverdale Avenue. The route

continues westerly on Cloverdale until its intersection with CTH P, creating a total route length of 2.5 miles. This route is nestled between quiet woodlands and dairy farms and includes an old one lane wooden bridge. A pasture of buffalo can be found at the intersection of Cloverdale and Sparrow Road.

Rustic Road 76 includes portions of Columbia Avenue, Middle Road, Fisher Avenue, Sand Road, and Bruce Mound Avenue between USH 10 and CTH B in the Town of Hewett. Total route length is nine miles. This gravel surfaced route meanders through county forest land where travelers have the opportunity to witness a variety of wildlife. There is an abandoned trestle bridge and at the south end of the township on Fisher Road is the Lone Grave Marker. This is the last remaining evidence of the community of Columbia, which dates back to the 1880s.



*Rustic Road 73 - Town of Green Grove*

### **Transportation for Persons with Disabilities**

Specialized public transportation service for the elderly, disabled, and other persons with similar needs for more accessible vehicles is referred to as paratransit. Public transit, including paratransit, is not currently available in Clark County. In rural areas like Clark County, these needs are more commonly met by privately owned businesses, nursing homes, and senior activity centers. Typical services include specially designed buses, vans, and taxis that offer door-to-door transport on a flexible schedule. As previously mentioned, the City of Neillsville does have a taxi service available.

As the Clark County population ages, the need for additional specialized transportation should be monitored. If any Clark County municipality or other publicly funded agency establishes transit services in the future, the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that paratransit is offered as well.

## **3.6 Existing Transportation Plans**

### **State Plans**

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

- ◆ Translink 21: A Multi-modal Transportation Plan for Wisconsin's 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- ◆ Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020
- ◆ Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020
- ◆ Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020
- ◆ Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020
- ◆ Wisconsin Department of Transportation Access Management System Plan

- ◆ Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan
- ◆ Six-Year Highway Improvement Program

### **Regional Plans**

There are currently no existing regional transportation plans that impact Clark County.

### **Local Plans**

Local transportation plans have been produced by the Clark County Highway Department. Existing plans include:

- ◆ Five Year County Paving Plan
- ◆ Local Road Improvement Program Plans

Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) plans must be completed by towns, villages, and cities in order to receive LRIP funding.

## **3.7 Planned Transportation Improvements**

### **State Highway Projects**

Recently completed projects include the resurfacing of USH 10 from Neillsville east to the Clark County. The project, originally scheduled for 2006, improved nearly 16 miles of the road. Rutting and failure of the pavement were the major deficiencies improved on this stretch of roadway.

Other planned projects include improvements to the intersection of STH 73 and USH 10 in 2004, improvements to STH 73 from Withee to Greenwood in 2005, and STH 98 from Loyal to the county line in 2006.

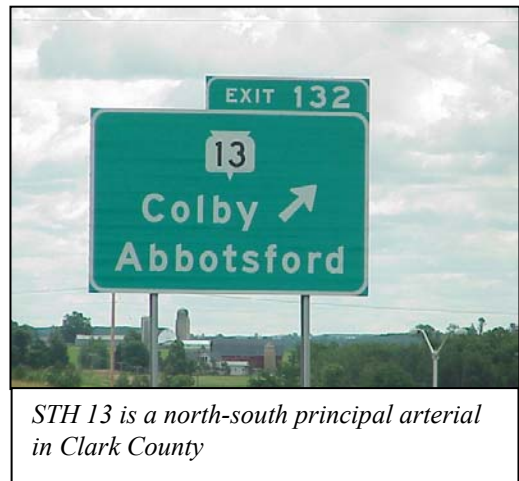
A study of safety and operational deficiencies of USH 10 from Osseo to Marshfield was published by the Wisconsin DOT in April of 2001. Alleviating safety and operational deficiencies can include improved intersection design, turning lane construction, curve changes, grade changes, and the like. This study found many highway segments and intersections that did not meet current design standards but that continued to function without serious problems. However, several intersections were identified as presenting hazards in need of attention. These may become improvement projects during the time period of this plan. Those intersections include: CTH W at Lynn Dairy, CTH K south of Granton, Starr Road east of Neillsville, and the intersection of USH 10 and STH 73. Improvements and/or rerouting options for the intersection of USH 10 and STH 73 are currently being explored by the City of Neillsville.

The Wisconsin DOT will also begin the process of designating STH 29 from STH 27 (Cadott) in Chippewa County to STH 13 in Clark County as a freeway. Currently, STH 29 in Clark County is a limited access four-lane divided highway facility with a mixture of grade separated interchanges along with local road and private driveway at-grade intersections. The designation of STH 29 as a freeway would not result in immediate physical changes to the highway.

Construction of grade separations or changes to public highway access would not occur until well after the freeway designation was made, in most cases, 10, 15, or 20 years. Additionally, physical changes would not occur without public and local government input.

### State Trunk Highway 13 (WDOT 2003 Environmental Scan)

Clark County's northern portion is bounded on the east by State Trunk Highway (STH) 13. This highway is a principal arterial in the county and is a major transportation route through the cities of Abbotsford and Colby, the Village of Dorchester, and the towns of Mayville and Colby. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation, District 6, completed an Environmental Scan for STH 13 from STH 29 to STH 102 in February 2003. The DOT projected the average annual daily traffic for this portion of STH 13 to be 11,700 by 2020. Based on this projection, the DOT is evaluating different mechanisms to address the increase in traffic and several alternatives are being considered. These include: no changes to the existing layout, maintaining the existing layout and adding capacity (additional lanes), and maintaining a portion of the existing layout and creating additional expansion corridors (by-passes to east or west). The impacts for no changes would be minimal to the County. Additional lanes may impact adjacent businesses and residences through changes to access points and driveways, land acquisition, and business or residence relocation. The third option of new corridors to the east or west will have additional impacts to communities within Clark County and its adjoining counties, towns, villages, and cities. To better understand the feasibility of new corridors a future study will be done. This study will examine the impact on land use, zoning, recreation, institutional and public services, utilities, Amish and Mennonite populations, surface water, floodplains, ground water and water supply, wildlife, threatened and endangered species, agricultural resources, hazardous materials, noise, and air quality.



### **County Highway Projects**

Clark County has developed a Five Year County Paving Plan identifying paving projects to be completed from 2002-2007. In 2003, eight sections are planned for a total of 23.75 miles. In the following years, 19.5 miles (seven segments) are planned for 2004, 19.75 miles are planned for 2005, 16 miles in 2006, and 18.25 miles are planned for re-paving in 2007. In 2002, a County Trunk P project received a \$100,000 grant through the Wisconsin DOT County Highway Improvement Discretionary Program (CHIP-D).

Clark County highways are not currently developed to DOT standards for all season use. Roads that are not built to sustain the impact of heavy truck traffic either suffer damage, or are posted with weight limits during the spring thaw when the subgrade and pavement are the most vulnerable. Early in the process of developing the Clark County Comprehensive Plan, a transportation focus group identified the need for better roads as being an issue of concern. As a result, the cost implications of upgrading county highways to all season status was investigated

and found to be severely cost prohibitive. For the full results of this investigation, see the supplement to this report, *All Season Road Construction Cost Analysis*.

### **3.8 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 Clark County residents, supports the following trends with regard to transportation:



*Curtiss interchange - STH 29*

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 29 and USH 10 for local traffic and as major statewide east-west connectors will continue to lead to higher traffic volumes.
- ◆ The growth of commercial development along STH 29 may lead to increased traffic congestion at interchanges and at-grade intersections.
- ◆ STH 29 is typical of a highway that the Wisconsin DOT will pursue for freeway/expressway designation which includes increased access control.
- ◆ Accident prone intersections will need improvement.
- ◆ Routes between cities and villages are likely to continue to grow in traffic volume.
- ◆ Concerns raised by local residents are likely to center around controlling traffic speeds and intersection safety.
- ◆ Major highway intersections will continue to be target locations for new commercial and industrial development.

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 in the northern portion of County in conjunction with trends on STH 29.
- ◆ The need for road closures and weight limits will continue unless significant structural improvements are made to local roads.
- ◆ Local town roads will get increased pressure for paving, but paving width must meet local road standards.
- ◆ Placement of new driveways onto town and county roads will continue.

The growth of agriculture, industry, motorized recreation, and Amish and Mennonite communities 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 farm equipment are likely to increase.
- ◆ The use of horse-drawn vehicles will continue, and the related issues may become conflicts if not addressed.
- ◆ Interest in designating local roads for ATV and snowmobile use is likely to increase.



*Local road agricultural use - Town of York*

### **3.9 Transportation Programs Currently In Use**

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

#### **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 web-site or contact the Rustic Roads coordinator at (608) 266-0649.

## Regional Programs

### West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC)

The Regional Planning Commission offers highway, rail and airport planning services as well as access control planning, pavement management plans, thoroughfare plans, traffic and parking studies, and pedestrian/bicycle trail planning guidance. Contact the Commission for further information.

## 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 ratings can be put into PASERWARE, an easy to use pavement management software. 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 1-(800)-442-4615 for more information.



*Local road maintenance issues, rural  
Clark County*