

TRANSPORTATION

LYON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Lyon County Transportation Plan is the transportation component of the Lyon County Comprehensive Plan. This plan provides a guideline for helping Lyon County provide a transportation system that will continue to serve its residents and businesses while also serving others that pass through the County.

Transportation is a key responsibility of Lyon County. The County provides a roadway infrastructure system to support traffic movements across and within the County. The system is very important in the provision of farm to market travel purposes. Other transportation modes such as transit, air service, rail service and trails are an important component of the plan and need to be a part of the overall transportation system that serves the County.

This Transportation Plan functions as a guide to identify the existing and proposed transportation network and to support the County's land use plan. The Transportation Plan does support the land use plan objectives.

The Plan was prepared with substantial advice and guidance from County residents and a Comprehensive Plan Task Force through its many meetings and public input forums.

The Transportation Plan of the Comprehensive Plan includes information and discussion of the following systems and is preceded by a series of goals and policies for the systems.

- Roadways
- Trails
- Transit
- Air
- Rail

ISSUES

As part of the Comprehensive Planning process, the County hosted a project kick-off meeting on April 12, 2001. Meeting participants were led through a number of exercises to elicit Task Force and resident views on the issues, opportunities and threats facing the county as well as its strengths and weaknesses. Participants listed and then ranked their ideas in order of importance.

Participants in the workshop identified a number of positive aspects of the county's transportation system:

- Railroad (6)
- Good Road System (5)
- Airport (1)
- Highway

However, participants also identified a number of issues related to transportation:

- Insufficient Funding to Preserve and Expand Present Transportation (9)
- Major Transportation Corridors (2)
- Lack of Air/Bus/Train Passenger Service (2)
- Aging Infrastructure (1)
- Deteriorating Township Roads
- State Highway System - Minimal
- Distance to Barges

POLICY PLAN

There are certain goals and policies that have been developed to serve as the guideline for the transportation systems plan development. These goals and policies address the various practices that should be adhered to in order that safe and efficient transportation can be provided and maintained for citizens of, and visitors to, Lyon County. The five general goals and their attendant policies are listed below.

GENERAL GOAL #1: PROVISION OF A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT SERVES THE ACCESS AND MOBILITY NEEDS OF LYON COUNTY.

Policies:

1. Review the Transportation Plan periodically and amend as necessary to maximize access and mobility needs of the traveling public.
2. Coordinate planning efforts with the State of Minnesota, municipalities and townships within Lyon County and with adjacent counties.
3. Use the Functional Classification Plan and Access Spacing Guidelines to help ensure a safe roadway system.
4. Continue to pursue public transit as an alternative method of moving people within Lyon County.
5. Work with cities and townships to identify and preserve corridors for transportation needs including roadways and trails.

GENERAL GOAL #2: MAINTAIN A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT SERVES COUNTY DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

Policies:

1. Support land use goals by providing a safe and efficient transportation system.
2. Provide a safe transportation system through effective maintenance and reconstruction of facilities, within annual budgetary constraints.
3. Provide necessary support to improve air, transit and trail systems within the county.

GENERAL GOAL #3: MAINTAIN A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT IS SAFE, EFFICIENT AND COST EFFECTIVE.

Policies:

1. Apply accepted and innovative maintenance and reconstruction practices to ensure safe and efficient roadways.
2. Prepare and update each year, a five-year roadway capital improvement program.
3. Address unsafe roadway segments and intersections to help reduce accident potentials.
4. Work with rail companies and the State of Minnesota to ensure safe rail/roadway crossings.

GENERAL GOAL #4: PROVIDE AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Policies:

1. Provide a transportation system that meets State standards for noise levels and air quality.
2. Avoid, whenever possible, environmentally sensitive areas with new facilities construction.
3. When environmental areas are to be disturbed, provide mitigation that meets State and Federal guidelines.

GENERAL GOAL #5: PROMOTE ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION SUCH AS BICYCLING, WALKING, TRANSIT AND RAIL.

Policies:

1. Work with the State, Cities, Counties and the Southwest Regional Development Commission to provide a non-motorized regional trail system.
2. Develop a standard for provision of trails/sidewalks along roadways under county jurisdiction.
3. Work with cities and townships to develop a local trail/sidewalk system that augments a regional system.
4. Continue to support the expansion of transit system availability and usage.
5. Work with rail providers and the State to close unneeded rail crossings by public streets and to provide adequate crossing protection at all crossings.

ROADWAY SYSTEM

The analysis and plan of the roadway system of Lyon County contains a series of elements. These elements are listed below:

- Roadway Jurisdiction
- Roadway Traffic Volumes
- Roadway Lanes
- Roadway Weight Restrictions
- Roadway Right-of-Way
- Roadway Functional Classification
- 5-Year Roadway Plan
- Access Guidelines

JURISDICTION

Responsibility for maintaining certain roadway segments needs to be continuously evaluated to ensure that the appropriate level of government is managing the appropriate network of roadways. Three levels of government are responsible for roads in Lyon County:

- State of Minnesota
- Lyon County
- Individual Cities and Townships

The roadway system and roadway jurisdiction for Lyon County is shown on Figure 6-1. The following provides the approximate mileage of roadways, excluding municipal local streets, in Lyon County. Data provided by the Mn/DOT State Aid division indicates that the ratio of CSAH to County Roads is on target when considering other counties in the State.

- Minnesota Trunk Highways – 90.47 miles
- U.S. Trunk Highways – 54.89 miles
- County Roads – 172.55 miles
- County State Aid Highways – 319.83 miles
- Township Roads – 703.41 miles
- State Park Roads – 1.5 miles

This section discusses the potential for jurisdictional negotiated changes of roadways between the county and local levels of government. Three types of jurisdictional negotiated changes are considered: 1) Transfer of a roadway segment from a lower to a higher level of government, 2) Turn back of a roadway segment from a higher to a lower level of government as a result of the construction of a replacement roadway, or 3) Turn back of a roadway segment from a higher to a lower level of government for other reasons.

The determination of which roads should be under county jurisdiction can be based on several factors. Primarily, the roads should serve a county function. They should be long enough to provide connections between different areas in the county. They also would typically be fairly heavily traveled. If more than one closely spaced, parallel route serves basically the same mobility function, only one should be under county

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jurisdiction. If a county road is turned back to a township (or city) it will be in an appropriate condition, as required by law at the time the turn back is made.

A graphic indicating potential negotiated jurisdictional changes is included as Figure 6-2. A listing of the potential changes follows:

County To Township

▪ County Road 53 – From U.S. 14 to County Road 51	▪ County Road 75 – From CSAH 10 to County Line
▪ County Road 58 – From CSAH 13 to Termination (Burchard)	▪ County Road 57 – From CSAH 10 to County Line
▪ County Road 63 – From CSAH 2 to U.S. 14	▪ County Road 55 – From CSAH 8 to Terminus (North)
▪ County Road 67 – From CSAH 2 to U.S. 14	▪ County Road 55 – From CSAH 1 to TH 68
▪ County Road 62 – From U.S. 59 to CSAH 9	▪ County Road 57 – From CSAH 8 to Terminus (South)
▪ County Road 71 – From U.S. 14 to County Road 54	▪ County Road 54 – From CSAH 14 to U.S. 59
▪ County Road 73 – From CSAH 2 to U.S. 14	▪ County Road (Dudley) – From CSAH 9 to Dudley
▪ County Road 79 – From CSAH 11 to County Line	▪ County Road 75 – From TH 23 to one mile east
▪ County Road 64 – From CSAH 11 to County Line	▪ County Road 73 – From TH 19 to CSAH 22
▪ County Road 70 – From CSAH 11 to County Line	▪ County Road 81 – From U.S. 59 to the East Terminus
▪ County Road 73 – From TH 19/68 to CSAH 20	▪ County Road 67 – From CSAH 2 to CSAH 20
▪ County Road 78 – From CSAH 9 to CSAH 11	▪ County Road 67 – From TH 23 to CSAH 8
	▪ County Road 85 – From CSAH 4 to 1.5 Miles North

Township to County

▪ Extension of County Road 57 – From CSAH 24 to TH 68
▪ Extension of County Road 74 – From TH 23 to CR 67

County to State

▪ CSAH 25 – From TH 23 to Camden Park Boundary
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The total turn back mileage suggested above is approximately 67.0 miles. Of that total, approximately 2.5 miles are paved and 64.5 miles are gravel-surfaced roadways. According to the daily traffic volumes (discussed later), each of these roadways carry less than 100 vehicles per day and do not have any apparent county function.

ROADWAY TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Traffic volumes on roadways in Lyon County have been obtained from traffic flow maps periodically issued by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) and from data provided by the Lyon County Public Works Department. The volumes for the State Highway System are year 2000 average daily traffic and the county roads reflect 1997 average daily traffic. The volumes are depicted on Figure 6-3.

In order that an idea of potential future volumes along the roadway systems can be developed, the 20-year projection factor of 1.6 can be used. This factor has been developed by the Minnesota Department of Transportation to provide 20-year projections for state-aid roadways in Lyon County. For purposes of long range planning, the 1.6 factor has been applied to County roadways in Lyon County. Historic data has been used for the State controlled highways. The 20-year projections are shown on Figure 6-4.

The highest traffic volumes in the county occur on Highway 23 in the Marshall area. The year 2000 daily volumes range from 5,300 to 6,700 in that corridor. Given that Highway 23 contains four traffic lanes (two in each direction) along Highway 23, the capacity of the roadway is more than adequate to accommodate the existing and future volumes. This is also true with all other state roadways in the county.

There are only four county roadway segments that presently experience over 1,000 vehicles per day. These are:

- CSAH 11, south of Tracy – 1,300 vehicles per day
- CSAH 5, north of Balaton – 1,100 vehicles per day
- County Road 67, south of Marshall – 1,100 vehicles per day
- CSAH 6, each of Highway 59 – 1,100 vehicles per day

There is also the distinct possibility that CSAH 33, between TH 23 and U.S. 59 now experiences over 1,000 vehicles per day but counts were not available for that segment.

Given that a two-lane roadway can adequately accommodate 10,000 to 12,000 vehicles per day, there aren't any county roadways that experience a roadway capacity problem either now or when considering the 20-year projections.

ROADWAY LANES

Roadways under the jurisdiction of Lyon County are all two-lane roadways. Some of these roadways are paved and some have gravel surfaces. The paved/gravel surface comparison is provided below:

<u>Roadways</u>	<u>Miles Paved</u>	<u>Miles Gravel</u>
County State Aid Highway		
Regular	261.46	36.4
Municipal	21.17	-
County Roads	42.95	126.26

ROADWAY WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

Roadway weight restrictions are an important part of a transportation system as the movement of commodities is a critical element of an area's economy. The roadway system must be capable of accommodating the heavy loads placed upon them by goods movement vehicles.

Roadway weight restrictions in Lyon County range from 5-ton to 10-ton. All of the State Highways in Lyon County are classified as 10-ton roadways. The only county roadways that are 10-ton include CSAH 33 from Highway 23 to Highway 68 and CSAH 2 from Highway 59 to CSAH 9. The road restrictions are shown on Figure 6-5.

ROADWAY RIGHT-OF-WAY

The roadway right-of-way data for county roadways was obtained from the Lyon County Public Works Department. The majority of the rights-of-way are in the 50 to 60 foot category. The right-of-way becomes important not only to provide for roadways, but also to allow for proper roadway drainage. The right-of-way is mapped on Figure 6-6. When new development occurs adjacent to County facilities, the County should require, when necessary, the donation of sufficient right-of-way to serve any future roadway needs.

ROADWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

Functional classification of a roadway system involves the determination of the function that each roadway is, or should be, performing with regard to travel within and through the county. The intent of a functional classification system is the creation of a roadway hierarchy that collects and distributes traffic from local roadways and collectors to arterials. Such classification aids in determining roadway widths, intersection control, design features, accessibility and maintenance priorities. Functional classification helps to ensure that non-transportation factors, such as land use and development, are taken into account in planning and design of the roadway system.

A balanced system is desired, yet not always attainable due to existing conditions and characteristics. Some roadways, such as arterials, are intended to serve through traffic and longer trips. Along these facilities, access needs to be limited in order to preserve the ability of the roadway to accommodate the volumes and to maximize safety. Other roadways, such as collectors, serve a dual function of accommodating traffic and provision of more access to adjacent properties. The lowest classification of roadways is the local roadway where access is provided with much less concern for control but land service is paramount. In a city, local facilities have low speed limits, but this is usually not the case when county facilities are considered.

A complete functional design system provides a series of distinct travel movements. Most trips exhibit six recognizable stages. These stages are as follows:

- Main Movement
- Transition
- Distribution
- Collection
- Access
- Termination

As an example, Figure 6-7 depicts this hierarchy of movement by illustrating a hypothetical trip using a freeway, which comprises the main movement. When the vehicle leaves the freeway, the transition is the use of the freeway ramp at a reduced speed. The vehicle then enters the moderate speed arterial, the distribution function, to travel toward a neighborhood. From the arterial the vehicle enters a collection road, then a local access road that provides direct approach to the residence or termination point. Each of the six stages of the trip is handled by a facility designed specifically for that function. Speeds and volumes normally decrease as one travels through the six stages of movement. It must be recognized that all intermediate facilities are not always needed for various trip types.

The character of movement, or service, that is provided has a function and these functions do not act independently. Thus, the travel categories, or movements, become consistent with function and the classification of that function.

There are two major considerations in the classification of roadway networks. These are access and mobility. As can be surmised, mobility is of primary importance on arterials thus limitation of access is a necessity. The primary function of a local roadway, however, is the provision of access, which in turn limits mobility. The extent and degree of access control is a most important factor in the function of a roadway facility. The relationship of functional classification with regard to traffic mobility and land access is shown on Figure 6-8.

The functional classification types (principal arterial, minor arterial, collector, local) utilized are dependent upon one another in order to provide a complete system of streets and highways. The *principal arterial* system serves major activity centers, higher traffic volumes, longest trips and carries a higher proportion of total urbanized travel on a minimum of mileage. The Minnesota Statewide Transportation Plan reports that Minnesota Trunk Highways, all of which can be considered to be principal or minor arterials, comprise nine (9) percent of the roadway mileage in the State, yet handle fifty-nine (59) percent of the annual vehicle miles of travel.

Collector roadways provide more land access than arterials and connections to arterials, although not in all cases. As is the case with any roadway system, there will always be exceptions to the planning guidelines that are used to classify a roadway system. It can and does occur that different roadways have very similar design characteristics but have different functional classifications. Some roadways, for a short segment, may carry higher volumes than a roadway with a higher classification. Spacing guidelines may not follow recommendations or desires for a variety of reasons. There are many variables involved in the classification of roadways.

The Lyon County functional classification plan proposes the use of the following classifications:

- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local

Figure 6-9 provides a proposed functional classification system of roadways for Lyon County. The proposed system involves some additions of local roads to minor collector and some major collector proposals. The arterial system remains the same with the exception of TH 23 through the county. This principal arterial continues as a principal arterial with the added emphasis of interregional corridor. This is as indicated on the State plan.

Roadways shown as “dashed” on the plan indicate a proposed change from the previous plan. The proposed changes are believed to reflect the best current conditions and a system able to accommodate future needs and fulfill good planning principles. There are two proposed changes that will require coordination and discussion with adjacent counties. CSAH 10, emanating west from Minneota, is presently a minor collector but proposed to be a major collector. The daily volumes and spacing seem to support this change. The extension of this roadway, into Lincoln County, is a minor collector. This will need to be coordinated with Lincoln County. Additionally, County Road 79, extending from CSAH 11 then proceeding east into Redwood County is presently a minor collector, but proposed as a local roadway. The roadway is a minor collector in Redwood County so coordination will be required. The existing daily volumes of 40 per day help support this change. This one-mile segment is also shown as a potential turn back to the township.

5-YEAR ROADWAY PLAN

Lyon County has a five-year roadway construction plan that is updated annually. The plan for 2002 through 2006 is shown as Figure 6-10. The annual update of this plan is very important and needs to be continued. A tabular version of the plan is included as Appendix B.

ACCESS MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Access management is an effort to maintain the effective flow of traffic and the safety of all roads while accommodating the access needs of adjacent land development. Successful access management requires cooperation between land use and transportation interests in order to protect the public's investment in a roadway system.

Access management is one way we can manage our existing road system in order to reduce congestion and accidents. Effective access management begins with thoughtful community development and roadway design. Access management roadway design includes:

- Driveway design and spacing
- Median treatments
- Turn lanes and traffic signals
- Service road design

There are certain local community development practices that foster good access management. These are:

- Avoiding strip commercial development
- Providing an adequate local road network
- Ensuring appropriate site development

The goal of access management is to balance the needs of the motorist for safe, predictable travel with the access needs of local land uses. Access management can help improve the safety and efficiency of the roadways so they function as they were designed. It can also help preserve community character, promote economic development and protect the public investment in our road system. Some of the benefits of good access management are as follows:

- Reduces congestion and accidents
- Preserves road capacity and postpones the need for roadway widening
- Reduces travel time for the delivery of goods and services
- Provides easy movement to destinations
- Promotes sustainable community development

The County, State and Cities regularly receive requests for additional access (e.g., new public streets, commercial driveways, residential and field accesses) and these requests may be evaluated by different agencies, planning commissions and engineering staff. Because of the number of individuals and agencies involved, it is easy to have inconsistent application of access controls and different viewpoints on the need for access restrictions. This often results in confusion, frustration and disagreements between agencies, developers and property owners and can lead to inconsistent and undesirable access spacing, as well as strained relationships. Therefore, a key element to developing a successful access plan is to have published guidelines. Standard access guidelines can be used to improve communication between agencies, landowners and developers. This will also establish initial expectations for access spacing on higher-level routes and promote consistent access practices between agencies. Some access spacing guidelines follow.

**Table 6-1
Lyon County Access Spacing Guidelines**

Type of Access	Functional Classification of County Highway				
	Principal Arterial	Minor Arterial		Collector	Local
		> 5,000 ADT	< 5,000 ADT		
A. Private Residential driveways	No direct access	No direct access	(2)	(2)	(2)
B. Commercial driveways or non-continuous commercial streets	No direct access	No direct access	1/8 mile	1/8 mile	(2)
C. Non-continuous residential streets	No direct access	1/8 mile with no median opening	1/8 mile	1/8 mile	(2)
D. Continuous Local streets and collector streets	½ mile	¼ mile	¼ mile	1/8 mile	1/8 mile
E. Minor arterials	½ mile	½ mile	½ mile	½ mile	½ mile

1. Traffic volumes refer to 20-year forecasts.
2. Determination based on other criteria (sight distance, speed, traffic volume, etc.)
3. Distances shown are minimums.
4. "Non-Continuous" streets refer to cul de sacs or short length streets (less than ½ mile), which do not cross the County highway in question.
5. The type of traffic control, turn lanes and bypass lanes required will be determined based upon the projected traffic volumes on the type of access requested.
6. County reserves the right to increase the minimums based on other criteria (sight distance, speed, traffic volume, etc.)

A key factor in controlling access is to understand how some control over access locations is lost early in the process. This begins during the formation of the individual parcels. Parcels are most often created by either dividing an existing parcel (known as a parcel split) or by undergoing a formal platting process. While the platting process has provisions for plat reviews, planning commission reviews and county board approval, many local ordinances and subdivision regulations are structured to allow parcel splits (creation of new parcels) without formal review or comments. This can result in significant access impacts to various transportation corridors in terms of maintaining mobility and safety. To understand the ramifications of this, it is important to know what legal responsibilities government agencies have to provide access. For example:

Government agencies must provide reasonable access to each parcel. Reasonable access has been shown by courts to include a right-in/right-out access, or a single-access point. Access changes can be encouraged through comments to local government units on plats. In addition, the location of the access on the parcel can be controlled through a driveway access permitting process. Cities and counties may control access through zoning and land subdivision regulations as well as other review procedures and processes. Methods for controlling access include access points per land parcel and distance between access points. However, counties are required to provide reasonable access to each parcel unless an alternative, indirect access is available. Alternate access locations normally require advanced planning and normally are not included in any parcel splits.

The ramifications of creating additional parcels through administrative procedures may result in obligating the County, or Mn/DOT, to provide access to the parcel. As a result, subdivision regulations need to consider parcel location, roadway function and related safety issues prior to creating parcels. If additional parcels are created that do not have any alternative access, then agencies may have little choice than to provide access at the expense of user mobility and safety.

TRAILS

According to data provided in the Southwest Minnesota Regional Trails Plan, prepared by the Southwest Regional Development Commission, there are some existing trails within Lyon County. The majority of the hike/bike trails are located within the City of Marshall. The following provides a tabular listing of existing trails as taken from the regional trails plan document.

**Table 6-2
Existing Trails**

Trail Name	Total Miles	Hike	Ski	Horse	Bike	Snowmobile
Camden State Park	18.80	9.60	5.00	9.80	4.20	7.50
Garvin Park	8.00	2.50	2.50	5.50		5.50
Marshall Bike Trail	10.60	10.60			10.60	
Marshall to Camden Trail	7.18				7.18	
Lyon Co Trail	25.86					25.86

Additionally, Mn/DOT has placed bike route signs on TH 23 between CSAH 7 in Marshall to the Camden State Park entrance southwest of Lynd. Cyclists can use the paved shoulder on both sides of TH 23 as a bike route in this area. The regional trails plan document addresses trails usable for bicyclists and/or pedestrians.

The Southwest Minnesota Regional Trails Plan identifies corridors that have excellent potential for trails. These potential corridors connect points of interest, activity and population that could attract potential users for recreational, exercise or learning trips. Using these trail corridors as a guide, more specific routings have been identified for some of these corridors while others remain as general corridors. The potential trail corridors and routes are shown on Figure 6-11.

The trails can be either on-road or off-road trails. Trails along rivers and through parks and natural areas are always highly desirable routes if and when they can be attained. Trails can be paved or unpaved, on or off-roads.

Various types of trails, as described in the Southwest Minnesota Regional Trails Plan, are discussed below:

1. *Bicycle lanes*
 - One-way facilities carrying bikes in the same direction as adjacent motor vehicle traffic.
 - Two-way bike lanes located on the same side of the roadway tend to promote bike travel against the flow of motor vehicle traffic. These should only be used for short connections under specific conditions.
2. *Combination Bus/Bicycle Lanes.* The mixing of bikes and buses may be acceptable if the average speed and volumes are low.
3. *Shared Lanes.* Shared lanes are streets and highways with no special provisions for bicyclists. Shared lanes require cars to pass by crossing the center lane. In residential areas with low volume vehicle traffic and average speeds of less than 30-mph they are normally adequate. Shared lanes are not typically signed.
4. *Wide curb or wide outside lanes.* Located at the rightmost through traffic lane, favored by Group A (experienced) bicyclists who are not intimidated by high traffic volumes and speeds.
5. *Shoulders.* The use of roadway shoulders is acceptable for experienced cyclists and some average cyclists depending upon the speed and mix of traffic on the roadway. These facilities may or may not be signed as a bike route.
6. *Traffic calmed roadways.* Typical urban local or collectors that are used as routes for bicycles and pedestrian networks. Traffic calming reduces the dominance and speed of motor vehicles.

A path is often described as an off-road facility, but may physically be located either within or outside the roadway right-of-way. Paths may also be referred to as “multi-use trails” or “shared-use” paths and “greenways”. Paths serve both a transportation and recreation function, and are a significant generator of bicycle use. Paths can provide continuous routes for commuting or recreation trips, access to destinations not otherwise available.

Further, and more elaborate, detail regarding the trails' benefits and design should be sought from the Southwest Minnesota Regional Trails Plan and the Minnesota Bicycle Transportation Planning and Design Guidelines prepared by the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

TRANSIT SERVICE

Public transportation (transit) services are provided in Lyon County by Western Community Action, Inc. (W.C.A.). This private non-profit agency also provides transit services for four other counties in Southwestern Minnesota including Lincoln, Redwood, Cottonwood and Jackson.

Greyhound bus service is provided in Lyon County. The Minneapolis to Sioux Falls route stops once per day (each direction) in Cottonwood and in Marshall.

Public transportation administered by W.C.A. started as a demonstration project in 1990 to complement an existing volunteer driver program that served the elderly of the area through funding from the Area Agency on Aging. As a result of funding from Mn/DOT, many coordinated trips scheduled through central dispatch offices in Marshall and Jackson have linked people and services by utilizing computer technology.

Transit services are uniquely developed for the various counties being served. W.C.A. administers bus operations in Lyon, Redwood and Jackson counties and utilizes volunteer drivers for trips out of the area or when buses are not available. A goal is to have a minimum of three transit buses in each of the counties – two buses available for operating with one dependable back-up bus. In addition to the county buses, a total of five buses operate in the City of Marshall with two back-up buses available. A total of 150 volunteer drivers are registered to provide rides using their own vehicles.

In the year 2000, a total of 105,145 trips were provided for residents throughout the five-county project areas. Volunteer drivers drove over 1 million miles. Ride projections for the year 2001 indicate an increase of over 10,000 rides when compared to the year 2000.

- Transit services in Lyon County include operations in the City of Marshall and for residents throughout the county.
- One to two (Lyon County Heartland Express) buses operate Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with one of the buses providing a route to Redwood Falls and back to Marshall each day. This route was established to help clients get to Service Enterprises for work, adult day care and other services in Redwood Falls. In addition to the route, the Lyon County Heartland Express bus is scheduled for various communities within Lyon County to help resident's access local or nearby communities for medical, shopping, school, work and other needed services. Fares range from \$1.50 in-town to \$10 depending on the distance.

- On October 1, 1997, transit services for the City of Marshall merged with Western Community Action, Inc. This service is known as M.A.T. (Marshall Area Transit) and has continued to steadily grow each year. Currently a deviated route is operating on a trial basis with set pickup times at four locations to determine if routes will reduce costs. The M.A.T. buses operate Monday – Friday from 5:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Fare is \$2.00 per one-way trip.
- Rides are set up on a dial-a-ride or contract basis. The volunteer drivers and county buses provide door-to-door services and M.A.T. provides curb-to-curb services.
- Volunteer drivers provide a significant service for people that must access services out of the project area. Trips out of the area are primarily for medical services to Sioux Falls, the Twin Cities, Mankato, Rochester or Willmar.
- Title IIIb funding for the Older Americans Act has helped to defray costs for seniors over the age of 60. This funding will not be available in the year 2002 so many elderly people are concerned about not having affordable transportation options.
- Primary funding to operate public transit services comes from a contract with Mn/DOT. Local support from the City of Marshall, Lyon County and fare revenues from passengers cover over 35% of the costs not covered by Mn/DOT. Many volunteer driver trip costs are fully recovered through coordination of trips where two to four passengers share a ride.
- Every effort is made to refer trip requests to private providers when services exist that could meet the transportation needs of people living in the area. Currently referrals are made to the Greyhound Bus line that leaves Marshall for Sioux Falls or the Twin Cities.
- A total of 65,153 passenger trips were provided for residents in Lyon County in the year 2000.

The transportation service provided by W.C.A. is very important to many citizens in the County. Lyon County must continue to work with W.C.A. and with Mn/DOT to continue this service and when necessary and possible, to expand the service.

AIR SERVICE

There are two airports located in Lyon County. One is in Marshall and one is in Tracy, both owned by the respective communities in which they are located. According to the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics, Marshall is classified as a key system airport and Tracy is an intermediate system airport. A key system airport contains a paved and lighted runway of at least 5,000 feet in length while the intermediate classification has a paved and lighted runway less than 5,000 feet in length. There is no scheduled commercial service at either airport. The Marshall airport does have measurable air cargo activity that goes to/from the Minneapolis/St. Paul airport.

The Marshall Municipal Airport (Ryan Field), according to data contained in the 1999 Minnesota State Aviation Plan, had a total of 35 aircraft based in the year 1996 and 9 based in Tracy that same year. The 2020 forecast assumes the same number of based aircraft for each airport. The number of operations that occurred in 1996 was 21,500 in Marshall and 12,150 in Tracy. Projections for the year 2020 are 22,200 for Marshall and 12,050 for Tracy. Operations are defined as a take off or a landing.

The Mn/DOT Office of Aeronautics creates a suggested five-year CIP (Capital Improvement Program) for each airport. Since these projects can be a combination of Federal, State and local funding, the CIP is constantly being evaluated and revised based on available funding. For instance, a new hangar was built at Marshall this year using private funding for a private corporation use and another hangar is under construction during the Summer of 2002. The largest project being proposed, a new arrival/departure building at the Marshall airport, will be completed in 2002.

Lyon County needs to continue to support the operation of these airports through the provision of good roadway accessibility and proper zoning in the airport environs.

RAIL SERVICE

There are two rail corridors that pass through Lyon County. The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) and the Dakota Minnesota Eastern (DME) are the two facilities. The BNSF line parallels TH 23 through the County while the DME travels east/west through the County partially north of U.S. Highway 14 and partially south of U.S. Highway 14.

The BNSF averages approximately 15 trains per day along this mostly single-track line. The DME averages 5 trains per day on this mostly single-track line. There are five tracks located in Tracy along the DME line. The train speed for the BNSF is 49 miles per hour while the DME train speed is 30 miles per hour. The DME is presently in the process of requesting approval to upgrade their rail trackage throughout Minnesota.

The Mn/DOT Office of Rail and Waterways has established a listing of railroad crossings for each county in the state. This listing locates each crossing and the road designation of each crossing. The listing also identifies the type of crossing protection (stop signs, gates, bells, crossbucks, flashers) at each location. The tabular listing is included as Appendix C. It is important to note that there were only 4 accidents recorded along each rail line in the past 5 years.

Lyon County needs to continue support of rail safety evaluation provided by Mn/DOT and to take necessary steps to help improve grade crossing safety when safety improvements are deemed necessary.

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