



Chapter 3  
**Transportation**



INTRODUCTION

Transportation networks are the basis upon which a community builds its foundation for the economy and gains access to resources and connections to other communities, thereby forming a critical link to continued development and growth. Maintenance and repair, along with periodic additions and enhancements, are essential for preserving its usefulness to residents, visitors and businesses. This element will profile the existing transportation system within and around the Village of Solon Springs.

TRANSPORTATION PROFILE

Roadways

Functional Classification

Streets within the village are classified by their functional use and by the amount of traffic they sustain. The Village of Solon Springs's roadway system is comprised of 14.03 municipal (village) miles or local streets and 4.98 miles of arterials and collectors which includes U.S. Highway 53, which is considered the main ingress/egress route through the community, linking it to the Cities of Solon Springs and Duluth, MN to the north. Table 3.1 lists the functional class mileage and Map 3.1 visually displays the functional classification in the Village of Solon Springs.

Table 3.1: Functional Classification System Miles

	Principal Arterials	Minor Arterials	Collectors	Local Roads	Total
<b>V Solon Springs</b>	1.01	0.0	3.92	14.03	18.96

Source: 2008 WisDOT

Pavement Analysis

The village utilizes the Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER) system and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) Internet-accessible system that helps local governments manage local road data to improve decision-making, and to meet state statute requirements.

General Transportation Aids

The General Transportation Aids (GTA) program is the second largest line item in WisDOT's budget and returns to local governments roughly 30% of all state-collected transportation revenues. Under this program, local governments receive payments based on local road

Table 3.2: Village of Solon Springs General Transportation Aids 2003-2008

2003	\$27,667.63
2004	\$26,259.68
2005	\$27,355.43
2006	\$30,744.82
2007	\$32,285.63
2008	\$34,909.24



mileage and aidable local costs. **Table 3.2** lists GTA for the Village of Solon Springs. GTA increased by 26 percent from 2003 to 2008.

**Street Maintenance**

The mission of street maintenance is to preserve and maintain the community's investment in municipal roads, sidewalks, drainage systems, bridges and related rights-of-way. The Village of Solon Springs maintains village streets by using a 5-year schedule for road improvements. Because of the possibility of unforeseen situations (disasters, emergencies), this schedule is subject to change at any time. **Table 3.3** outlines the 5-year road plan for the Village.

**Table 3.3:** Road Improvement Schedule

Year	Street	Location	Type of Maintenance
2008	No plan		
2009	Railroad Street	Marian Ave. to Lenroot Ave.	Blacktop 2", 18' wide x 853' long, & 2 shoulders
2009	Main Street	CTH A to E. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street	Resurface 2", 16' wide x 1,757' long, & 2 shldr
2010	Gauge Drive	South of W. Baldwin Ave.	Blacktop 2", 16' wide x 250' long, & 2 shoulders
2010	W. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Baldwin to Lake Avenue	Blacktop 2", 18' wide x 600' long, & 2 shoulders
2011	Hughes Ave.	--	Connect two sections of Hughes Ave., blacktop 2" thick, 16' wide x 510' long, 2 shoulders
2011	Wright Blvd.	--	Blacktop 2", 20' wide x 1,081' & 2 shoulders
2012	E. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street	Beach Ave. to end	Blacktop 2", 16' wide x 410' long & 2 shoulders

Source: Village of Solon Springs, March 2008

**Traffic Volumes**

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation records Annual Average Daily Traffic Counts (AADT) on a 3-year cycle. Six sites within the village limits were used to look at changing traffic volumes. Most roads within the village have decreased in traffic volume since 1990. Traffic increases in and through the Village of Solon Springs over the years can be contributed to one main factor, residents and visitors who are making more vehicular trips for shopping, commuting to work, and for recreation purposes. As expected, US Highway 53 commands the most vehicular activity through the Village, with over 5,000 vehicles each day (sites 5 & 6). **Table 3.4** details AADT in the Village of Solon Springs.

**Table 3.4:** Annual Average Daily Traffic 1990-2005

	1990	1993	1996	1999	2002	2005	Change
Site 1	4780	4780*	5000	830	2300	2300	-2480
Site 2	5550	5550*	6200	1800	1100	1100	-4450
Site 3	740	910	2000	1000	960	960	220
Site 4	940	830	700	1700	910	910	-30
Site 5	--	--	--	--	--	5300	--
Site 6	--	--	--	--	--	5600	--





\*1990 counts

- Site 1: Business 53 north of CTH A (George Ave)
- Site 2: Business 53 south of CTH A (George Ave)
- Site 3: CTH A east of S 3<sup>rd</sup> St. E

- Site 4: CTH A (George Ave) east of USH 53
- Site 5: USH 53 north of CTH A (George Ave)
- Site 6: USH 53 south of CTH A (George Ave)

### Commuting & Traffic Safety

Commuting is the process of traveling between a place of residence and a place of work. **Table 3.5** illustrates commuting choices for Village of Solon Springs employed workers 16 years and over.

The village has a variety of reduced speed areas within its boundaries to maintain consistent traffic speeds and insure safety for pedestrians and other roadway traffic. Despite all the precautions and safety measures, accidents are an unavoidable part of any community in which automobile use is the primary means of transportation. The WisTransPortal crash database contains information on all reported crashes in Wisconsin from 1994 through the current year. From 1994 to 2007, there were 145 traffic accidents reported within the Village of Solon Springs. Of these accidents, there were four fatalities and 64 injuries sustained.

**Table 3.5:** Commuting to Work

Means of Commuting	Number
Workers 16 years and over	247
Car, truck, or van—drove alone	156
Car, truck, or van—carpooled	51
Public Transportation (including taxi cab)	-
Walked	20
Other means	9
Worked at home	11
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	27.7

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

### Air Travel

The Solon Springs Municipal Airport is located three miles south of the Village of Solon Springs adjacent to U.S. Highway 53. The airport is open to the public and is owned by the Town of Solon Springs.

The nearest airports providing scheduled passenger flights to domestic and international flights are located in Duluth, MN at the Duluth International Airport (42.5 miles) or Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (160 miles).



### Commercial Trucking



Commercial trucking in and through the Village of Solon Springs is served by US Highway 53 and Business 53, which both travel north-south through the village. These highways support the majority, if not all of the trucking traffic within the village.

### **Rail Transport**

There are no rail lines running through the Village. The closest passenger rail services are available in Minneapolis-St. Paul through Amtrak.

### **Ports/Harbors**

There are no ports or harbors located in the Village of Solon Springs. The combined Port of Duluth-Superior is one of the largest ports on the Great Lakes in total cargo volume, shipping primarily coal, ore, grain and other materials.

### **Pedestrian & Bicycle Transportation**

There is no formal sidewalk policy for pedestrians in the Village of Solon Springs. Sidewalks in the village are located on both side of Main Street for one block and on CTH A from Business 53 to West 1<sup>st</sup> Street in the village. Currently, there are no designated bicycle routes in the Village of Solon Springs. Biking and pedestrian travel in the village, are supported by local streets.

### **Trails**

The Wild Rivers Trail, following a former railroad corridor, begins just south of Superior, near the intersection of County Highway C and County Highway A, and passes through Solon Springs, Gordon, Minong, Trego, Spooner and Haugen, ending in Rice Lake. Walking, jogging, bird watching, bicycling, horseback riding, all-terrain vehicle use, snowmobiling, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing are all recreation opportunities offered on the Wild Rivers trail. Other trails in the village include hiking trails inside Lucius Woods County Park.

### **Other Transportation Services**

Public transportation in the Village of Solon Springs is limited. The Aging Resource Center for Douglas County maintains a satellite office for transportation services at the Solon Springs Community Center meal site. One van and two voluntary drives are available to take residents who live in the southern half of Douglas County to doctor appointments in Duluth and Superior.



## **Existing County, State, Regional Transportation Plans**

There are a number of state, regional and county agencies that have developed and adopted various transportation plans or programs for roadways and infrastructure under their responsibility. In an effort to be consistent and cooperative with other overlapping jurisdictions, the following state, regional, and county plans and/or planning organizations applicable to this element for the Village of Solon Springs are listed and summarized.

- **TRANSLINKS 21**  
A comprehensive 25 year intermodal vision and plan for 21st century transportation in Wisconsin.
- **Connections 2030**  
A long-range transportation plan for the state that will address all forms of transportation over a 25-year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian and transit. The overall goal of the planning process is to identify a series of policies to aid transportation decision-makers when evaluating programs and projects.
- **Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report**  
The report summarizes critical rail transportation issues, suggests opportunities for public sector involvement, and points out areas where additional research is needed.
- **Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020**  
A 21-year strategic plan which considers the highway system's current condition, analyzes future uses, assesses financial constraints and outlines strategies to address Wisconsin's preservation, traffic movement, and safety needs.
- **Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020**  
This planning document is intended to help both communities and individuals in developing bicycle-friendly facilities throughout Wisconsin.
- **Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020**  
The Pedestrian Plan provides a basic description of existing and emerging pedestrian needs over the next 20 years, with a set of recommendations to meet those needs. WisDOT's efforts ensure that this plan complements both existing and future long-range transportation plans.
- **Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020**



Airports, aviation and aviation-related industries play a significant role in the economic success of Wisconsin communities. The Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020 provides a framework for the preservation and enhancement of a system of public-use airports adequate to meet current and future aviation needs of the State of Wisconsin.