

CHAPTER 5: *Transportation and Infrastructure*

The **Growth and Economic Vitality** Vision theme recognizes the importance of public infrastructure to economic activity and the need to be efficient as a matter of fiscal responsibility.

The **Community** Vision theme emphasizes that strong connections between people and places are essential to a healthy and satisfying quality of life in the County.

The **Unique Character** Vision theme sees connections between the river and the remainder of the County as important to fully capitalize on the benefits of the County’s natural resources.

The transportation and infrastructure goals and policies below serve these elements of the Vision for Renville County.

GOALS AND POLICIES

ROADS, RAIL, AND TRANSIT

Goal 1: *Provide for a high level of personal and commercial mobility through and within the County, good access for land uses, and safety for all road users.*

Policies

1. Ensure that roadways are classified appropriately according to function and are appropriately spaced to provide Countywide connectivity. Implement the functional classification plan illustrated in Appendix B of this plan.
2. Design road improvements, control access, and manage traffic to emphasize mobility on higher functioning corridors and access on lower functioning roadways. Use the access spacing guidelines presented in Appendix B of this plan.
3. Minimize areas of potential traffic conflict by providing for engineering, maintenance, and/or system management solutions.
4. Continue to forward County objectives in the TH 212 Interregional Corridor Management (IRC) planning process by:
 - a. Supporting a four-lane or super-two highway system through the County.
 - b. Ensuring that safety and capacity improvements support the community development objectives of the County and its municipalities.

- c. Improvement plans to businesses and residents.
 - d. Ensuring that safety is not compromised. An example of safety concern is where schools are adjacent to TH 212.
5. Institute improvements to ensure that County corridors are safe, well-drained, and adequately surfaced for the type and amount of traffic they carry.
- a. Improve roads to a standard road bed width of 40 feet.
 - b. Monitor accident data to identify sites that can be improved through geometric improvements, traffic controls, signage, targeted enforcement, or public education.
 - c. Acquire right-of-way for sight distance at every township road/County road intersection.
 - d. Over the long term, eliminate jogs and complete paved connections along corridors.
6. Utilize transportation funds to address system needs in the most effective and efficient manner.
- a. As a first priority, preserve and maintain a backbone system of farm-to-market County highways (principal arterial, minor arterial, and major collector routes).
 - b. Within the constraints of available financial resources, stage improvements on other County transportation facilities based on preservation, safety, and capacity needs.

Goal 2: *Assure that roads are under the jurisdiction and system designation appropriate to the types of trips they serve, volume of traffic, functional classification, and maintenance ability.*

Policies

1. Investigate opportunities for jurisdictional reassignment based on system designation guidelines, described in Appendix B of this plan. Routes to consider (either in part or whole) include County Roads 55, 57, 58, 60, 63, 65, 66, 69, 71, and 72.

Goal 3: *Manage the road system to maximize road life, be cost-effective, and provide consistent direction over time.*

Policies

1. Manage current weight restrictions on County and township roads and enforce spring load restrictions as required by the state.
2. Develop a manual of road management policies reflecting best practices and covering topics including, but not limited to, parking control, traffic control, special interest signs, traffic markings, lighting, road closings and detours, snow removal, and dust control.
3. Pursue adoption of a public right-of-way management ordinance to control the impact of utilities, telecommunications companies, and contractors on County-owned property.
4. Promote the use of structural snow fences and the planting of living snow fences as low-cost solutions to snow drifting on County roads.
5. Budget to keep current with new technology for efficient road system planning and management.

Goal 4: *Coordinate road planning and improvement efforts with the state, region, and local municipalities.*

Policies

1. Work with local jurisdictions to ensure that the County is given early notification of any development proposals involving County highways.
2. Establish a system to formally or informally bring the County into municipal road improvement planning to encourage efficiency in design, scheduling, and funding.
3. Establish communication with municipalities as part of the County capital improvement planning.
4. Investigate the potential for partnership with municipalities and townships to share maintenance facilities.
5. Work with the Minnesota Scenic Byway Alliance to implement the road-related policies in Chapter 9 for the development and promotion of the scenic byway, including:
 - a. Paving the byway.
 - b. Opportunities for pullouts, parking, safety improvements, and roadside amenities.

- c. Safety education.
 - d. Signage.
6. Coordinate trail development with improvements to the road system.
 7. Work with townships to help in planning of the future maintenance, improvement, and upgrade of township roads.

Goal 5: *Ensure good rail service to support agriculture and economic development.*

Policies

1. Support the maintenance of the rail lines parallel to TH 212 and the upgrade of the Minnesota Valley Regional Rail Authority (MVRRA)/Minnesota Prairie Line Railroad line.
2. Consider the potential to support excursion rail along the MVRRA/Minnesota Prairie southern line.
3. Monitor commuter rail planning for the TH 212/rail corridor for future potential for Renville County.
4. Work with the railroad companies, local jurisdictions, and Mn/DOT to ensure safety of all railroad track crossings.

Goal 6: *Increase the overall effectiveness of the transit system in Renville County.*

Policies

1. Continue commitment to affordable transit service for County residents.
2. Work towards expansion of the system to better serve residents and increase ridership with the objective of complete coverage of the County.
3. Continue to support the volunteer driver service to augment the regular route bus service.
4. Seek opportunities to increase general awareness of the transit system and tailor information about the service to specific user groups.
5. Support federal and state legislation to increase funding for transit.

6. Coordinate transit planning with other service and development planning to help ensure good connections between people and destinations.
7. Periodically survey riders and potential riders for feedback on service.

UTILITIES

Goal 1: *Ensure adequate and cost-effective water, sewer, and power service for users in Renville County.*

Policies

1. Institute relevant policies from the Comprehensive Local Water Plan that ensure an adequate supply of safe drinking water.
2. Coordinate utility planning with land use and transportation planning. Provide for communication with private utilities during capital improvement program development.
3. Require that private utility easements are included on the final plat of each development proposal. Encourage joint trenching of lines.
4. Work with the appropriate Watershed Districts to implement Best Management Practices and current watershed requirements for storm water management that promotes infiltration and reduces runoff.

Goal 2: *Achieve the level of telecommunications and information technology infrastructure that will support existing education, service, and business environments to a contemporary level of service and that will support business attraction and retention.*

Policies

1. Be assertive in working with service providers, legislators, and regulators to assure that adequate high-speed Internet and other information technology infrastructure is in place to support the education, service, and business interests in the County.
2. Work to forward County interests in the regional planning efforts to improve the information technology infrastructure and pursue ways in which this technology can be a community development tool for attracting, retaining, and expanding business and industry.