



Map Source: Iowa Department of Natural Resources, "Natural Resources Geographic Information Systems Library," <http://www.igsb.uiowa.edu/nrgislib/>.

Transportation Inventory and Analysis

Knowledge of the transportation systems in and around a community is critical for sustainable transportation enhancement planning. Transportation systems include paved and unpaved roadways, pedestrian and bike trails, waterways, airports, and railroad lines or railbeds from abandoned railroad lines.

The St. Ansgar steering committee met with Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) personnel and local officials to identify existing, past, and future transportation systems in the area and to discuss possible transportation-related constraints and opportunities that could potentially affect project areas.

A major transportation issue in St. Ansgar revealed in this meeting was the lack of safe pedestrian routes to the school and its aquatic center, the children's garden, and the trailhead for a popular walking trail. Lack of crosswalks within the community, especially along Highway 105 and 4th Street, coupled with discontinuous sidewalks and railroad crossings in poor condition, create hazardous conditions for children.

Future transportation-related projects include repairing the railroad crossing on 4th Street and resurfacing Old Mill Road. Old Mill Road is a popular walking and biking route for residents, however the road is narrow and lacks shoulders. A suggestion was made at both the transportation meeting and the assets and barriers public input session to install "share the road" signage along this route.

"St. Ansgar has complicated and challenging surface water drainage issues that are strongly impacting the community," expressed Meredith Borchardt, Trees Forever Facilitator, during the transportation meeting. The committee expanded on the ways water issues have affected the community. The city has a smorgasbord of drainage ditches, culverts, storm sewers, and a recent installation of a 10-foot buffer strip of native grasses along the southeast edge of town. Unfortunately, attempts at controlling the volume of storm water have not been effective.

The primary source of runoff is a field to the east of the new housing development on the southeast side of the city. Because this is private land, the landowner might be able to enroll the field into the Conservation Reserve Program, which would provide a comparable revenue for this land use as compared to traditional row crops.

Participants expressed a desire for trails connecting the community with popular destinations surrounding St. Ansgar such as Halvorson Park, Hamlin Garland County Conservation area, and the golf course. Past attempts to find a trail route to Halvorson Park through private land were unsuccessful, and the steering committee would like to study some alternative routes.

St. Ansgar Transportation Inventory and Analysis

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