

Bicycle and Pedestrian

Bike and pedestrian trails provide an alternative mode of transportation as well as serving recreational needs in Region 7W. The Central Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Plan has been developed for the counties of Benton, Sherburne, and Stearns. Wright County also has a separate plan for future trails. **Figures 24, 25, and 26** show existing and proposed regional trails.

Park and Ride / Park and Pool

Mn/DOT has developed park and ride lots to help ease traffic congestion. These parking facilities allow individuals to meet and utilize car and van pools, thereby reducing the number of single occupancy vehicles on the highway system. There are seven official lots and three unofficial lots in Region 7W. The majority of the park and ride lot serve the I-94 and Highway 10 corridors. **Table 11** shows the park and ride lots that are located in Region 7W.

Development of additional facilities is based on commuting and employment patterns in the region. The addition of transit service may be considered in the future in order to increase daily usage of the lots. The implementation of Northstar Commuter Rail will most likely increase the use of lots at the stations. The use of park and ride lots is one option for reducing congestion and the number of single occupancy vehicles on the roadways in the region.

Freight

Freight moves by truck, rail, water, and air. **Figure 27** shows the 2001 inbound and outbound freight flows by county. The majority of freight is shipped by truck (60%) followed by rail (40%), with a total 26 million tons of freight shipped from and into the 7W counties. This does not include freight that passes through the region. As the amount of freight continues to increase in the region, there will be increased truck and rail traffic, which will impact the transportation system.

Airports

Airports within Region 7W are shown in **Figure 28**. St. Cloud Regional Airport has scheduled service that serves the St. Cloud and surrounding area. In addition, there is the possibility that it could be the site of a new cargo airport. The four paved and lighted airports are Buffalo, Brooten, Maple Lake and Sauk Centre. St. Cloud is the only airport eligible for federal funding since it is included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). Generally, an airport must be 30 miles or more from another NPIAS airport and have at least 10 based aircraft. Brooten meets the distance criteria and is projected to meet the aircraft criteria in the future. Buffalo does not meet the distance criteria, but according to the 1999 Minnesota State Aviation Plan, it will provide a second tier of capacity beyond the primary metro area airports. As the activity at an airport grows the transportation system serving it will be impacted.