

CHAPTER 5 TRANSPORTATION

Approximately 43 miles of county and local roads serve the township. Two major traffic routes or primary roads, three secondary, and many lesser traveled roads connect Hayes Township to the cities of Charlevoix, Boyne City and Petoskey. U.S. 31 N from Bay Shore to Charlevoix, running approximately east-west, follows the shoreline of Lake Michigan. US 31 N. is a major daily commuting route for people employed in the township and other communities. The highway is also a major carrier for long distance automobile and truck traffic serving cities further north and south. In summer, it becomes a major tourist route. Available traffic count data provided by the Charlevoix County Road Commission indicates a 24-hour average daily traffic count (ADT) of 6,700 vehicles on U.S. 31 near Big Rock Road, and 9,700 vehicles on U.S. 31 at Townline Road.

Boyne City Road, C-56, parallels the Lake Charlevoix shore between Charlevoix and Boyne City. Year-round the Boyne City Road is a major commuter route between Boyne City and Charlevoix. It has a high truck usage and serves as a linking road connecting Charlevoix with highways leading to Interstate 75 at Gaylord. In summer, this road also becomes a major tourist route. Pincherry Road from Church Road north to Upper Bay Shore and through to US 31 N. serves as a secondary road. Upper Bay Shore Road links Pincherry Road and Old US 31 N which is also a well traveled secondary road. Old U.S. 31 N from the Boyne City Road north to US 31 N. links the Boyne City Road with the highway to and from Petoskey.

Public transportation through Hayes Township is limited to the Charlevoix County Transit Authority Bus System, which operates by reservation only. School buses provide transportation for children to Charlevoix, Petoskey, and Boyne City schools. All township roads are under the jurisdiction of the Charlevoix County Road Commission. The Hayes Township Board decides which road projects need improving and is responsible for funding these improvements from the township level.

Given the predominantly residential character of the township, major improvements to existing roadways are not likely to be needed other than routine maintenance of existing road surfaces (resurfacing, shoulder work, drainage improvements, etc.). If the low development patterns follow the existing and planned low density and intensity mix of land uses along most major roadways (U.S. 31 and Boyne City Road), major arterial roadways will not likely need to be widened to four or five lanes. Major intersections may require upgrading as traffic increases, though needed improvements will likely be relatively minor.