Coulee Vision

A Long-Term Plan for Growth & Transportation in the La Crosse – La Crescent Region
2015-2040

September 16, 2015

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Prepared by the Staff of the

La Crosse Area Planning Committee

Metropolitan Planning Organization for the La Crosse, WI and La Crescent, MN Urbanized Area

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www.lapc.org

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VISION & GOALS FOR *COULEE VISION*

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the La Crosse, WI-MN urbanized area, the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) is required to develop a transportation plan with a 20-year-or-more planning horizon that includes "both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods."

At a minimum, the transportation planning process must consider projects and strategies that will:

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and freight.
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
- Promote efficient system management and operation.
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

These federal goals, which are codified in the federal transportation bill, provide a framework from which to develop more focused and detailed goals and objectives at the local level.

As a result of the planning process for *Coulee Vision*, the LAPC has adopted a comprehensive vision as well as additional land use and transportation goals to help the policy-makers in the region guide development and transportation investment.

The Vision for *Coulee Vision* states that:

"The region's towns, villages, and cities each recognize the vital link between land use decisions and transportation outcomes, and will collaborate with each other over the coming decades to encourage infill development, limit urban sprawl, and increase mobility options for all users across the region."

The land use and transportation goals and "guiding principles" recommended to be incorporated into local plans and policies are presented in **Table 1-1**.

TABLE 1-1: LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Land Use
Housing and neighborhoods in the City of La Crosse will attract new investment and more residents, especially through renovation and enhancement of existing housing stock.
Senior housing options will continue to expand, and new housing intended for residents who remain mobile and active should be located within a 10-minute walk of retail and services.
New housing will continue to include a range of housing types and lot sizes, including a priority on single family lots smaller than 1/2-acre.
The region places a high priority on infill development to enhance the utilization of existing urban infrastructure and enhance the concentration of uses so that more residents are within a 10-minute walk of their daily retail needs.
New buildings and development areas will often include a mix of uses.
Towns, villages and cities will pursue and approve boundary agreements that allow some growth in unincorporated areas.
Transportation
New roads for the primary purpose of facilitating regional commuter traffic will generally be avoided – community preference is for expansion of existing roads and transit enhancements instead.
Road projects will be designed to improve the safety and mobility of all users, with emphasis placed on maintaining neighborhood connections and cohesiveness.
The region will have a flexible and fully interconnected grid of streets and highways.
A Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) will be created to fund and maintain transportation systems.
Transit use will increase among all age groups.
Fixed-route regional transit, such as Bus Rapid Transit, should be actively studied and pursued. Routes should be identified and necessary right-of-way protected (or gradually acquired) until implementation becomes feasible.
Intelligent transportation systems and mass data gathering technologies will be utilized to the extent practicable to improve the safety and mobility of our transportation networks.

TABLE 1-1: LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES (CONT.)

***Transportation* (continued)**
Growth will be accommodated without a significant increase in congestion through the use of many strategies, including road and highway improvements, traffic signal timing improvements, new/enhanced transit services, enhanced and expanded bike and pedestrian facilities, scheduling adjustments by major employers, and other approaches.
Truck routes in the region will be efficient and clearly identified, especially including those through the City of La Crosse.
Mississippi River locks and dams will be upgraded to accommodate modern shipping requirements.
Interstate passenger rail service to Minneapolis and Milwaukee/Chicago will increase in frequency and reliability.
Public and private landowners will reduce their subsidy of automobile use through a mix of strategies.
Bike and pedestrian facilities will be present everywhere.

Full explanations of the goals and guiding principles can be found in the LAPC document, *Coulee Vision 2050: A Vision for the La Crosse - La Crescent Area*.

Additional objectives or *performance measures* that have been adopted by the LAPC through its coordination with the Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Transportation are discussed where appropriate in the *Coulee Vision* document. The LAPC currently produces a *Performance Measures Annual Progress Report Summary* that tracks performance measures for economic vitality, safety and security, accessibility and mobility, system preservation, integration and connectivity, management and operations, and environment and quality of life. Beginning in 2016, the LAPC will prepare and annually update a Performance Measures Report that serves as a supplement to the MTP and includes measures adopted by our Departments of Transportation (DOTs).

PLAN ORGANIZATION

The *Coulee Vision* plan document is organized into seven chapters:

Chapter 1: *Coulee Vision* Goals and Organization discusses the goals for the metropolitan transportation plan (MTP) and the overall organization of the document.

Chapter 2: Public Process summarizes the public process for *Coulee Vision*—the MTP for the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC), the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the La Crosse and La Crescent area.

Chapter 3: State of the Region provides an overview and analysis of common demographic characteristics for the LAPC planning area, including population, households, employment, and building construction characteristics.

Chapter 4: Existing Conditions provides an inventory of existing transportation networks in the planning area, including highway, bicycle and shared-use, pedestrian, passenger, freight, and transit.

Chapter 5: Environmental Review provides a comprehensive inventory of natural, cultural, and agricultural resources in the planning area and potential mitigation activities.

Chapter 6: Challenges, Strategies, and Action Steps presents the safety, mobility, and policy-based challenges of our transportation system; discusses the strategies used and recommended to address the challenges; and establishes a timeline for three key action steps.

Chapter 7: Financial Analysis compares reasonably expected state, federal and local transportation funding with the anticipated expenses needed to maintain the expansion, operations and maintenance of our area roadways and transit systems. The Financial Analysis helps the area prioritize future projects and expenditures in order to maintain a safe and efficient transportation network.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of the public input processes for the more significant planning activities that informed *Coulee Vision*—the metropolitan transportation plan (MTP) for the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the La Crosse and La Crescent Metropolitan Planning Area. Activities include those that were directly related to the update of the LAPC Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), *Coulee Vision*, and those in which LAPC staff participated that contributed significantly to the recommendations presented in the MTP.

- *Coulee Vision*
  - The *Coulee Vision 2050* plan—adopted by the LAPC in May of 2013.
  - The *Coulee Vision 2050 Implementation Plan*—adopted by the LAPC in September of 2015 as a component of the MTP.
  - Environmental Consultation—conducted during June of 2015.
  - The MTP 30-day public comment period—occurred beginning Tuesday, August 4, 2015 and ending Wednesday, September 2, 2015.
- Supportive Planning Activities
  - The *Grand River Transit Service Enhancement & Policy Plan*—anticipated to be adopted by the La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility (MTU) Board in August 2015.
  - The *Coulee Region Transportation Study*—an ongoing Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) planning study anticipated to be completed in early 2016.
  - La Crosse Transportation Vision workshop—a multi-day public input workshop conducted for the City of La Crosse the week of February 23, 2015.

COULEE VISION

The public process for *Coulee Vision* (also called the "MTP") began in 2012 with the kickoff of the *Coulee Vision 2050* planning process. The final *Coulee Vision 2050* report was adopted by the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) in May of 2013 and

followed up by the *Coulee Vision 2050 Implementation Plan*. These two plans developed the majority of the information provided in chapters 6 and 7 of this MTP.

COULEE VISION 2050

The purpose of *Coulee Vision 2050* was to create a long-range vision for transportation and land use in the La Crosse and La Crescent region.

The public process included a broad range of public outreach to the general public, local communities, and the LAPC. These activities included:

- Online community surveys;
- Public visioning sessions;
- Stakeholder focus group meetings (Emergency Services; Business and Education; Freight; Transit, Pedestrian, and Bicycling; and Government Agencies);
- Community plan commission meetings; and,
- LAPC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Policy Board meetings.

COULEE VISION 2050 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The planning process for the *Implementation Plan* continued on from where the *Coulee Vision 2050* process left off. It focused on four main tasks: 1) to facilitate discussion concerning intermunicipal boundary agreements among local communities; 2) to complete the recommendations and financial plan portions of the *Coulee Vision* metropolitan transportation plan (MTP); 3) to develop a range of projects through public input that would address some of our transportation needs; and, 4) to establish action steps and milestones needed to achieve the *Vision*. The consultants regularly informed the LAPC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Policy Board on the overall planning process and the progress of the intermunicipal boundary agreement discussions.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTATION

As required by federal law, the LAPC must engage in environmental consultation with appropriate Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies in order to mitigate the potential impacts of transportation plans and programs.

The environmental review and consultation process involved:

1. Conducting an inventory of relevant resource plans;
2. Conducting an inventory of the agricultural, natural, cultural, and recreational resources in the region; and,
3. Consulting with the appropriate resource agencies regarding the potential impact of planned and programmed expansion projects on local resources; and,
4. Documenting a process for preservation and mitigation as developed through consultation with the appropriate agencies.

The environmental review is documented in Chapter 5.

The consultation process was initiated by e-mail on Monday, June 22, 2015, with a letter of invitation to review content from Chapter 5 and maps illustrating the planned and programmed expansion projects (Appendix B). The agency representatives were asked to comment on the accuracy of the inventory and to assess the potential impacts of the expansion projects on local resources.

The following Federal and State agencies were asked to participate in the review process:

- Ho-Chunk Nation
- Minnesota and Wisconsin Historical Societies
- Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources
- Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service

The correspondence and list of participants are documented in Appendix B.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Low-income and minority persons are continually considered in the metropolitan planning process through not only the public process for *Coulee Vision* but also

during the annual update of our transportation improvement program (TIP) and the roughly 10-year update of the City of La Crosse transit plan (currently, *Grand River Transit Service Enhancement & Policy Plan 2015-2025*).

The TIP document summarizes the analysis and potential impacts of transportation projects on minority and low-income populations. The transit plan ensures that disadvantaged persons (elderly, disabled, minority, low-income) are adequately served by transit. Appendix C of this document, *Coulee Vision*, outlines the methodology developed to identify areas of potential impact for not only minority and low-income persons but also persons with limited-English proficiency. The projects are mapped against these areas (**Figures C-1** and **C-2**) to see if any of the projects could negatively impact any of these groups.

In order to ensure consistency among planning efforts, these plans are considered a component of the MTP by reference.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

The 30-day public comment period for the MTP began on Tuesday, August 4, 2015 and concluded on Wednesday, September 2, 2015. A public information meeting was held on August 18, 2015 at the Main Library in La Crosse to present the challenges to travel for all users and the strategies to overcome those challenges. People were invited to the public meeting through e-mail contact lists, which include contacts for persons representing minority and low-income groups, flyers posted at public services (i.e. La Crosse County Health and Human Services) and local businesses, and Facebook.

Substantive comments from the public meeting, e-mails, phone calls, and review agencies were incorporated and documented in a summary document that is available on the LAPC website at www.lapc.org.

The *La Crosse & La Crescent Metropolitan Area Public Participation Plan* documents the process and requirements for public input for LAPC plans and programs.

SUPPORTIVE PLANNING ACTIVITIES

GRAND RIVER TRANSIT SERVICE ENHANCEMENT & POLICY PLAN 2015-2025

The *Grand River Transit Service Enhancement & Policy Plan* (Transit Enhancement Plan or TEP for short) was completed as a work program task that LAPC staff completes exclusively for the City of La Crosse. The last transit plan—the *2008-2015 Transit Development Plan for the La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility*—was completed in 2007 and was about to expire, so staff set about to reassess MTU's performance and transit capacity and to recommend service improvement strategies over the next 10 years. With transit as one of the tools we use to address access and mobility in the region, especially for disadvantaged populations, one of the priority outcomes was to develop recommendations that would provide people with more and better options for travel.

The planning process for the TEP began on Monday, March 31, 2014 with an all-day public input session at the Grand River Station and concluded on May 19, 2015 with the last day of the 30-day public comment period for the TEP. The La Crosse MTU Board is expected to adopt the TEP in August 2015.

COULEE REGION TRANSPORTATION STUDY

The *Coulee Region Transportation Study* is a Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) study initiated by WisDOT to re-study and streamline previous attempts to address mobility issues in the La Crosse area. This process is a significantly-improved process by ensuring that the public has input at every step. It also allows for a wider range of strategies to be considered in the solution package.

WisDOT kicked-off the PEL process by presenting an overview of the process to the LAPC TAC and Policy Board on January 21, 2015. The first community and technical advisory group (CAG and TAG) meetings occurred in February and the first general public involvement meetings (PIMs) occurred in March. CAG and TAG meetings have and will continue to occur monthly, while the PIMs will have occurred a total of four to five times by the end of the year-long planning process.

The work schedule for the Study includes data collection and strategy development during the spring of 2015, evaluation of the strategies during the summer, refinement of the strategies during the fall, and publication of a final report in the

winter of 2015-2016. As members of the TAG, LAPC staff and members of the LAPC TAC have continual input into the PEL process.

Because the outcome of this study includes a range of strategies that will be considered more fully in the next phase of the planning process, we do not anticipate a preferred alternative being recommended before we enter the planning process for our next transportation plan update.

LA CROSSE TRANSPORTATION VISION

The City of La Crosse collaborated with Toole Design Group to host a series of workshops where officials and members of the public developed a transportation vision for the community. The goal was not only to develop a firm position on near-term projects but also to create a vision that clearly articulates how the community wants their transportation system to look like in twenty or even fifty years.

LAPC staff participated in three stakeholder interviews, providing input on highway, bicycle and pedestrian, and land use issues.

The results of the Vision are being used to inform strategies development in the *Coulee Region Transportation Study*.

INTRODUCTION

The intent of this chapter is to provide a general picture of demographic and economic growth and strength in the region over time. Please note that some measures do not have data available at the community level (or the data are not yet available) and cannot be aggregated to the planning area. In these cases, La Crosse County as the county that contains most of the planning area or the La Crosse WI-MN Metropolitan Statistical Area (La Crosse and Houston Counties) is used to illustrate the measure.

POPULATION

POPULATION GROWTH

Table 3-1 summarizes the population change between 1990 and 2010 for the municipalities within the LAPC planning area, their respective counties, the La Crosse WI-MN urbanized area (UA), and the planning area itself.

Between 1990 and 2000 the area of greatest growth was in the Village of Holmen with a near doubling of population from 3,220 to 6,200. That trend continued into the next decade, with Holmen gaining 2,805 people to total 9,005 in 2010. This amounts to a 180 percent increase—a near tripling of population—from 1990. It also accounted for 35 percent of the total growth of La Crosse County and 30 percent of the total growth of the planning area from 1990 to 2010. Much of the increase in population in Holmen came as a result of annexations from the towns of Holland and Onalaska.

Holmen is likely to continue to see growth with its Seven Bridges tax incremental district (TID) to accommodate low-to-high density residential, commercial, and industrial development. The Village is also considering forming another TID along Holmen Dr S.

While the City of Onalaska experienced over 57 percent growth from 11,284 to 17,736 between 1990 and 2010, the City of La Crosse experienced less than one percent growth.

TABLE 3-1: POPULATION GROWTH 1990 – 2010

	Population			Change		% Change		
Region	1990	2000	2010	1990-2000	2000-2010	1990-2000	2000-2010	1990-2010
La Crosse County	97,904	107,120	114,638	9,216	7,518	9.4	7.0	17.1
Barre (T)	909	1,014	1,234	105	220	11.6	21.7	35.8
Campbell (T)	4,478	4,410	4,314	-68	-96	-1.5	-2.2	-3.7
Greenfield (T)	1,617	1,538	2,060	-79	522	-4.9	33.9	27.4
Hamilton (T)	1,633	2,103	2,436	470	333	28.8	15.8	49.2
Holland (T)	2,172	3,042	3,701	870	659	40.1	21.7	70.4
Holmen (V)	3,220	6,200	9,005	2,980	2,805	92.5	45.2	179.7
La Crosse (C)	51,003	51,818	51,320	815	-498	1.6	-1.0	0.6
Medary (T)	1,585	1,463	1,461	-122	-2	-7.7	-0.1	-7.8
Onalaska (C)	11,284	14,839	17,736	3,555	2,897	31.5	19.5	57.2
Onalaska (T)	5,907	5,210	5,623	-697	413	-11.8	7.9	-4.8
Shelby (T)	5,151	4,687	4,715	-464	28	-9.0	0.6	-8.5
West Salem (V)	3,611	4,738	4,799	1,127	61	31.2	1.3	32.9
Winona County	47,828	49,985	51,461	2,157	1,476	4.5	3.0	7.6
Dresbach (T)	307	413	456	106	43	34.5	10.4	48.5
Houston County	18,497	19,718	19,027	1,221	-691	6.6	-3.5	2.9
La Crescent (C)	4,311	4,923	4,830	612	-93	14.2	-1.9	12.0
La Crescent (T)	1,427	1,487	1,446	60	-41	4.2	-2.8	1.3
La Crosse WI-MN UA	78,928	89,966	100,868	11,038	10,902	14.0	12.1	27.8
Planning Area[1]	***95,737***	***107,131***	***115,136***	***11,394***	***8,005***	***11.9***	***7.5***	***20.3***

[1]The planning area statistics are calculated from the community statistics listed above, not the county or urban area statistics. Also, only those communities within the LAPC planning area are shown. In 2013 the planning area of the LAPC expanded to include all of the 2010 Census urbanized area (La Crosse WI-MN UA), which incorporated a small portion of the Town of Bergen in Vernon County. This area of Vernon County is estimated to add 273 people to the population of the planning area, totaling 115,409.

Source: American FactFinder, U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov.

DIVERSITY

Between 2000 and 2010, the population of the planning area became more racially diverse, with its percent minority increasing from 6.0 percent to 8.9 percent. This can be attributed to the population of Hmong and other Asians that make up 4.1 percent of the planning area population and 46.1 percent of the minority population. The Black or African American minority race is the next largest minority race at 1.2 percent of the planning area population and 15.7 percent of the minority population.

ESTIMATED AND PROJECTED AGE

Figure 3-1 compares by age the 2010 population and the 2040 population projections for La Crosse County.

The distribution of the population by age shows little difference between the two time frames until about age 70 at which time the 2040 projections start showing a doubling or more of population from 2010. In 2010, 18.6 percent of the La Crosse County population was over 70; in 2040, 39.4 percent of the population is expected to be over 70. The number of persons 70 and older will increase 74.2 percent from 21,359 in 2010 to 37,200 in 2040.

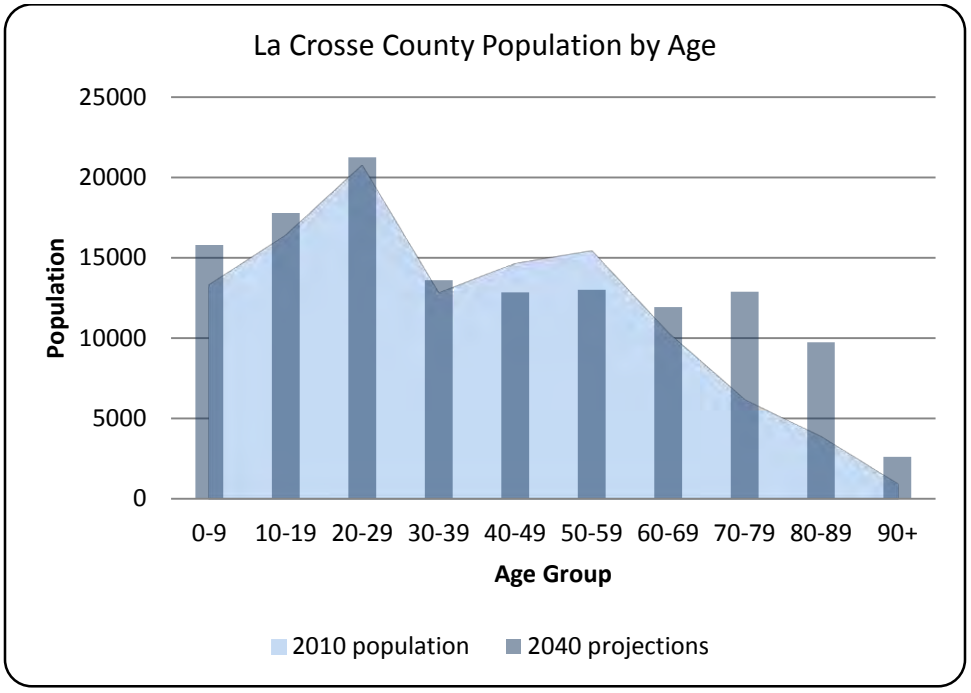

Figure 3-1: Total population by age group for La Crosse County, Wisconsin.
Data Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, www.doa.state.wi.us.

According to the Minnesota State Demographic Center, the population age 70 and older will increase from 2010 to 2040 by 123 percent (from 2,441 to 5,443) in Houston County and by 127 percent (from 4,950 to 11,216) in Winona County.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Table 3-2 summarizes educational attainment for persons 25 years and older for the communities wholly within the planning area. The data, which are derived from the 2007-2011 American Community Survey, show the percent of the population with a given educational attainment and its respective margin of error.

In general, persons 25 years and older in the planning area have become more educated. The percent of the population with no high school diploma or just a high school diploma has decreased over time, while the percent of the population with some college or an advanced degree has gone up.

TABLE 3-2: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR PERSONS 25 YEARS AND OLDER, 5-YR ACS 2007-2011

	Percent of Population[1]							
Community	No High School Diploma	MOE[2]	High School Diploma	MOE	Some College or Associate Degree	MOE	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	MOE
Cities								
La Crescent	4.9	2.0	29.6	4.9	35.0	6.7	30.4	4.8
La Crosse	8.2	1.1	31.2	2.0	34.1	2.0	26.5	1.7
Onalaska	4.7	1.6	26.0	2.6	34.6	3.5	34.7	3.6
Villages								
Holmen	6.7	2.6	31.3	5.0	34.1	4.0	27.9	4.3
West Salem	8.5	3.4	30.0	4.7	35.4	5.4	26.0	4.4
Towns								
Barre	3.4	2.0	32.1	5.5	33.0	6.3	31.5	6.9
Campbell	7.0	2.7	31.1	4.7	33.4	6.3	28.6	5.4
Dresbach	6.7	5.2	34.3	11.6	24.5	8.8	34.3	8.1
Greenfield	6.0	2.1	29.2	4.4	33.5	4.9	31.4	5.6
Hamilton	2.8	1.7	25.7	4.8	37.6	5.7	34.0	4.7
Holland	4.9	2.5	34.0	5.5	37.4	5.9	23.7	4.8
La Crescent	4.6	2.1	24.6	5.1	38.7	6.0	32.2	5.8
Medary	2.7	1.4	24.2	4.4	32.4	5.2	40.6	5.5
Onalaska	4.0	1.7	27.7	4.5	37.8	5.6	30.5	5.2
Shelby	3.8	1.9	23.3	4.6	30.7	5.9	42.2	5.0
Planning Area	**6.4**	**2.6**	**29.4**	**1.1**	**34.4**	**1.2**	**29.7**	**1.1**
2000	10.1	-----	30.9	-----	32.6	-----	26.4	-----
1990	17.0	-----	33.5	-----	27.6	-----	21.9	-----

[1]Universe: Persons 25 years and older.

[2]Measure of error.

Source: American Community Survey 2007-2011, S1501 Educational Attainment.

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

EMPLOYMENT

Figure 3-2 illustrates the annual average unadjusted employment rate for the La Crosse WI-MN Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) for 2000 through 2012. In 2009, the La Crosse WI-MN MSA experienced the highest annual average unemployment rate (unadjusted) since 1983. Seven percent of the labor force was unemployed—an increase of 3.7 percentage points from 2000 (but still 1.6 percentage points less than in 1983). As the states slowly recover from the recession, unemployment steadily fell to 5.5 percent in 2012.

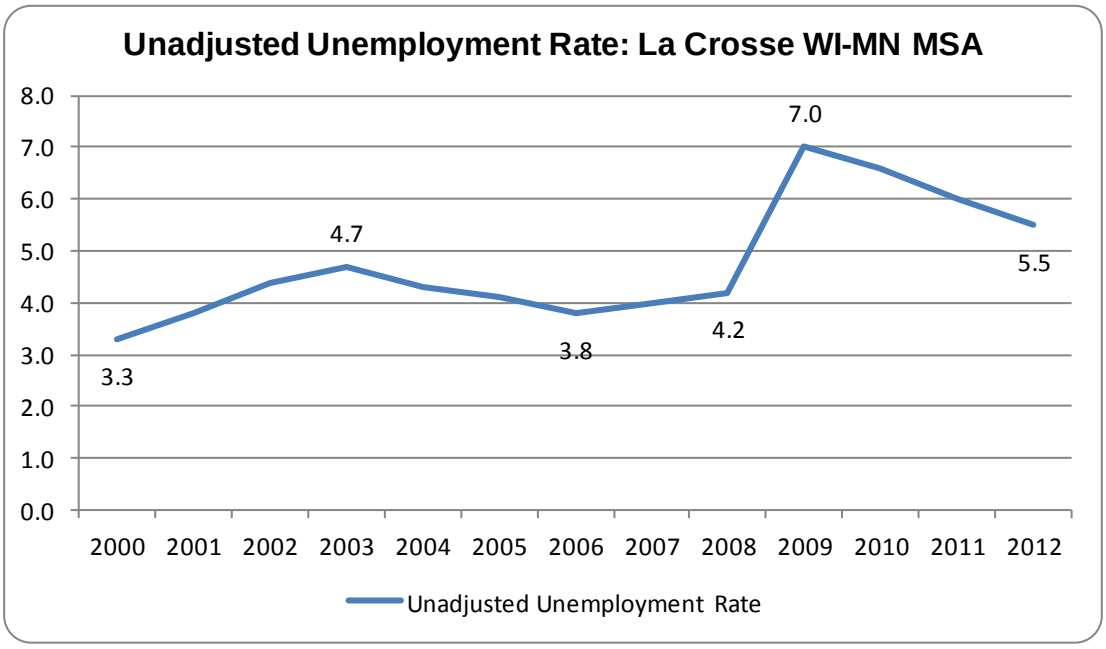

Figure 3-2: Unadjusted unemployment rate, La Crosse WI-MN Metropolitan Statistical Area. *Source:* WORKnet, LAUS 1970-2012, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES AND EMPLOYERS

The top employers in the La Crosse and La Crescent area in 2012 are listed by rank in **Table 3-3**. Not surprisingly, the two health systems—Gundersen Lutheran (now Gundersen Health System) and Mayo—are ranked one and two, respectively. This follows that the fields with the highest demand are in the health care sector.

TABLE 3-3: LA CROSSE-LA CRESCENT AREA TOP TEN EMPLOYERS, 2012

Rank	Employer Name
1	Gundersen Lutheran
2	Mayo Clinic Health System
3	The Trane Co.
4	University of Wisconsin – La Crosse
5	Centurytel Service Group
6	City of La Crosse
7	Logistics Health Inc.
8	Western Technical College
9	APAC Customer Services Inc.
10	Chart Energy & Chemicals Inc.

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, WORKnet.Wisconsin.gov; employment data from InfoUSA.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, the top five industry subsectors by average employment in 2012 in La Crosse County were:

1) Educational Services (6,119);
2) Food Services and Drinking Places (5,251);
3) Administrative and Support Services (2,671);
4) Nursing and Residential Care Facilities (2,344); and
5) Social Assistance (2,276).

Unfortunately, the subsector with the second highest average employment in La Crosse County—food services and drinking places—is also the subsector with the lowest average monthly wages ($1,077). This subsector falls within the Leisure and Hospitality industry division, which has the lowest average annual wage by county ($11,821) or state ($15,221).

POVERTY AND INCOME

Persons in Poverty

According to the 2007-2011 ACS Ratio of Income to Poverty Level, 13.2 percent of the population for whom poverty status is determined lives in poverty in the La Crosse WI-MN MSA—up from 10.0 percent as reported in the 2000 Census. La Crosse

County increased from 10.7 percent to 14.0 percent and the planning area increased from 10.4 percent to 13.8 percent. The influence of the lower poverty rates in Houston County, Minnesota are evidenced in the lower rates for the MSA, which includes Houston County, and the planning area, which includes the Town and City of La Crescent in Houston County.

Median Household Income

Table 3-4 illustrates the median household incomes for the states, counties, and municipalities affecting the planning area as reported in the 2000 Census (1999 income inflated to 2011 dollars) and the 2007-2011 ACS. The higher of the inflated 2000 median income or the 2007-2011 median income is shaded for effect, not significance. Significant change *appears* to exist if the 1999 inflated value falls outside the range of the margin of error for the 2007-2011 value.

Since 1999, the median household income has decreased in all geographies except the Town of Greenfield, which has an inflated 1999 income that is less than the 2007-2011 median income AND is outside the margin of error. The states of Wisconsin and Minnesota decreased 14.8 percent and 10.4 percent, respectively; and the counties of La Crosse, Houston, and Winona decreased 5.2 percent, 3.5 percent, and 14.2 percent, respectively. The decrease between the 2000 Census value and the 2007-2011 value appears to be significant for both states, the counties of La Crosse and Winona, the cities of La Crosse and Onalaska, the village of West Salem, and the town of Shelby (the inflated value falls outside the range for the margin of error).

When comparing median incomes reported in the 2007-2011 ACS, both Houston and Winona Counties have median incomes that are significantly less than the median income for Minnesota. The median income for La Crosse County is not significantly different from that of Wisconsin. The village of Holmen and the towns of Barre, Greenfield, Hamilton, Medary, Onalaska in La Crosse County and the town of Dresbach in Winona County have median incomes significantly higher than their respective counties (and states).

TABLE 3-4: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2000 CENSUS & 2007-2011 ACS

Region	Median Income						1999 inflated income w/in MOE range?
	2000 Census[1]	1999 Income in 2011 $[2]	2007-2011 ACS	MOE[3]	Lower Bound MOE	Upper Bound MOE	
Wisconsin	43,791	**59,118**	50,395	428	49,967	50,823	**No**
La Crosse County	39,472	**53,287**	50,510	1,192	49,318	51,702	**No**
Barre (T)	49,474	66,790	68,889	5,294	63,595	74,183	Yes
Campbell (T)	44,736	60,394	59,441	4,180	55,261	63,621	Yes
Greenfield (T)	49,653	67,032	71,750	4,220	67,530	75,970	No
Hamilton (T)	57,955	78,239	79,875	12,358	67,517	92,233	Yes
Holland (T)	55,846	75,392	74,432	5,521	68,911	79,953	Yes
Holmen (V)	42,021	56,728	59,972	4,822	55,150	64,794	Yes
La Crosse (C)	31,103	**41,989**	38,287	1,932	36,355	40,219	**No**
Medary (T)	57,431	77,532	78,468	6,163	72,305	84,631	Yes
Onalaska (C)	47,800	**64,530**	57,377	4,713	52,664	62,090	**No**
Onalaska (T)	54,075	73,001	73,824	7,405	66,419	81,229	Yes
Shelby (T)	64,890	**87,602**	73,477	5,110	68,367	78,587	**No**
West Salem (V)	43,449	**58,656**	51,576	3,396	48,180	54,972	**No**
Minnesota	47,111	**63,600**	56,954	488	56,466	57,442	**No**
Winona County	38,700	**52,245**	44,848	1,733	43,115	46,581	**No**
Dresbach (T)	47,813	64,548	82,604	25,062	57,542	107,666	Yes
Houston County	40,680	54,918	53,017	2,178	50,839	55,195	Yes
La Crescent (C)	45,433	61,335	60,200	6,199	54,001	66,399	Yes
La Crescent (T)	58,603	79,114	71,711	11,732	59,979	83,443	Yes

[1]Reported income earned in 1999.
[2]Income inflated to 2011 dollars.
[3]Measure of error.
Source: Census 2000 and 2007-2011 ACS 5-yr, American FactFinder, U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov.

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

The number of building permits for residential, public, and business construction is used as an indicator of economic development by assuming all new construction building permits issued result in new construction. (The reality may be that actual construction may not take place at all or may take place in a different year from when the permit was issued.) The table does not include permits issued for home improvements like additions, decks, or garages.

Over the five-year period 2008-2012 the number of building permits issued in the planning area for new construction (**Table 3-5**) decreased for all permit types other than for mobile homes, which increased 21.4 percent. Although activity began to rebound in 2012 compared to 2011, overall activity in 2012 had not recovered to either 2008 or 2010 levels, and was less than the five-year average. Residential activity in 2012, however, was the one sector that showed modest to significant increases compared to 2011 and the five-year average.

TABLE 3-5: BUILDING PERMITS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION, LAPC PLANNING AREA, 2008-2012

							Percent Change		
Permit Type	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	5-yr average	2012 from 5-yr ave.	2011 to 2012	2008 to 2012
Residential	231	173	205	203	213	205	3.9%	4.9%	-7.8%
Single-family	179	127	172	169	178	165	7.9%	5.3%	-0.6%
Duplex	25	29	14	9	13	18	-27.8%	44.4%	-48.0%
Multifamily	13	9	9	10	5	9.2	-45.7%	-50.0%	-61.5%
Mobile home	14	8	10	15	17	12.8	32.8%	13.3%	21.4%
Lodges & Recreational	2	2	1	0	0	1	-100.0%	0.0%	-100.0%
Public buildings	7	9	9	1	4	6	-33.3%	300.0%	-42.9%
Business	41	39	79	45	37	48.2	-23.2%	-17.8%	-9.8%
Commercial	38	35	78	43	35	45.8	-23.6%	-18.6%	-7.9%
Industrial	3	4	1	2	2	2.4	-16.7%	0.0%	-33.3%
Total	**281**	**223**	**294**	**249**	**254**	**260.2**	**-2.4%**	**2.0%**	**-9.6%**

Sources: La Crosse County EconoWatch; La Crosse County *Zoning Occupancy*; Winona County; the cities of La Crosse, Onalaska, and La Crescent; and the villages of Holmen and West Salem.

COMMUTING PATTERNS

COUNTY-TO-COUNTY WORKER FLOWS

County-to-county worker flows are compiled from responses to decennial Census and ACS questions regarding where people worked. **Table 3-6** illustrates the county-to-county worker flows (county of residence to county of work) for the counties with communities in the planning area (La Crosse, Houston, and Winona Counties) as well as additional Wisconsin counties surrounding La Crosse County. The numbers in italics represent the flows from the five-year 2006-2010 ACS; the numbers in regular type represent the flows reported in the 2009-2013 ACS. Shaded cells represent internal flows (people live and work in the same county).

TABLE 3-6: COUNTY-TO-COUNTY FLOWS FOR WORKERS 16 AND OLDER, 2006-2010 & 2009-2013

County of Residence	County of Work							
	Houston	Winona	Buffalo	Jackson	La Crosse	Monroe	Trempealeau	Vernon
Houston	*4,721*[1] 4,299[2]	*401* 447	*0* 10	*0* 7	*3,990* 4,098	*45* 52	*32* 46	*25* 37
Winona	*161* 172	*22,806* 22,405	*46* 126	*0* 0	*1,217* 1,383	*21* 36	*257* 274	*5* 3
Buffalo	*2* 2	*1,283* 1,269	*3,348* 3,113	*0* 5	*86* 70	*21* 7	*786* 834	*0* 0
Jackson	*5* 3	*9* 14	*11* 12	*6,561* 6,260	*363* 375	*626* 719	*849* 819	*7* 15
La Crosse	*415* 410	*459* 529	*42* 33	*177* 205	*53,387* 54,399	*1,895* 2,016	*989* 918	*683* 610
Monroe	*3* 2	*29* 23	*0* 0	*331* 348	*2,179* 2,006	*17,134* 17,006	*47* 40	*353* 399
Trempealeau	*7* 7	*901* 839	*196* 179	*265* 365	*1,597* 1,699	*77* 75	*9,899* 10,067	*9* 10
Vernon	*36* 42	*13* 33	*7* 9	*25* 42	*2,880* 2,793	*687* 797	*3* 9	*8,456* 8,069

[1]2006-2010 ACS county-to-county commuter flows are illustrated in italics.

[2]2009-2013 ACS commuter flows are illustrated in regular text.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 and 2009-2013 American Community Survey.

Figure 3-3 illustrates the number of workers that live and work in the same county and the number of workers by county that commute into and out of La Crosse County.

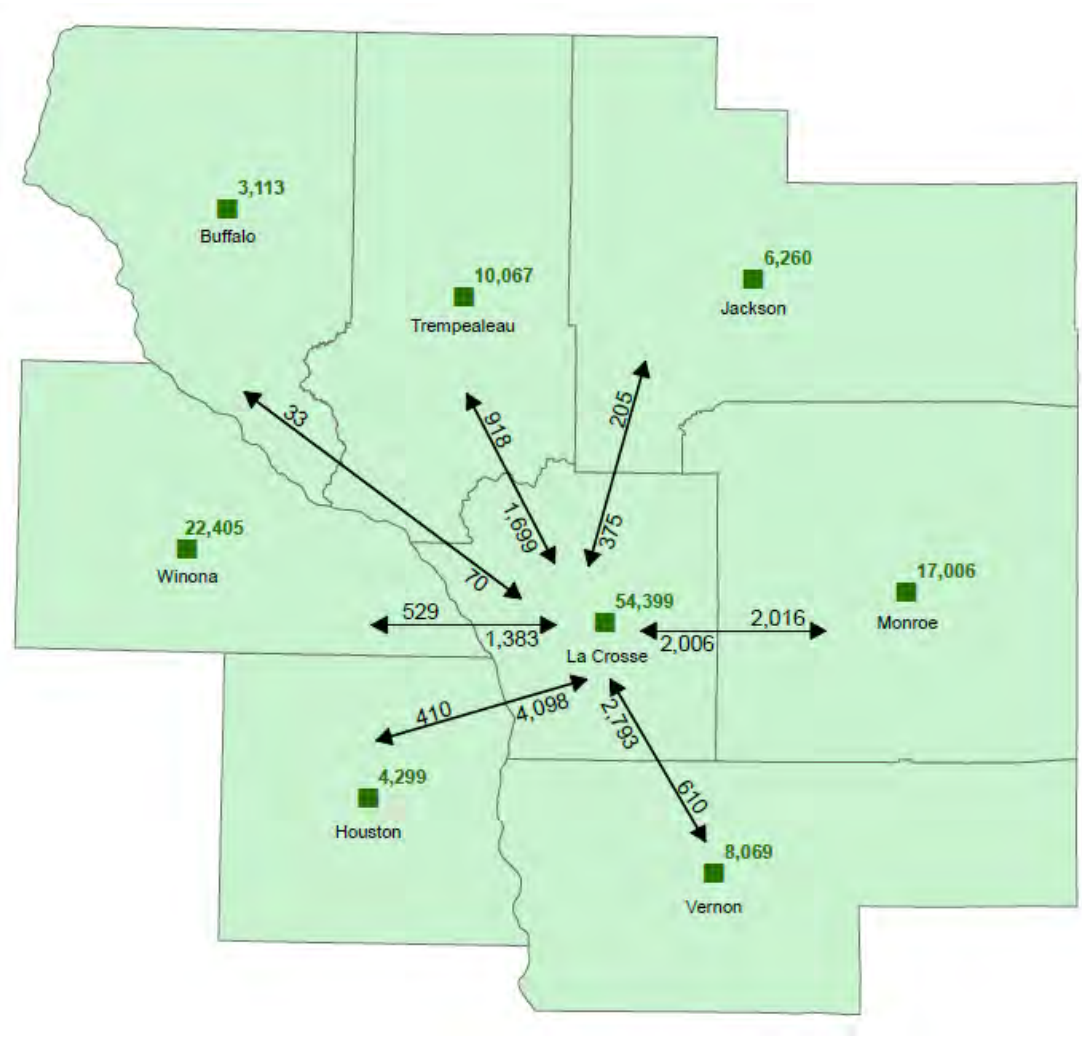

Figure 3-3: County-to-county worker flows.
Data Source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey (ACS).

Table 3-7 illustrates the actual and percent change in worker flows between the 2006-2010 and 2009-2013 data sets. The top number represents the actual change and the bottom number represents the percent change between the two data sets.

The difference between the two data sets in internal commuter flow for Houston County, and flows from Winona County to Buffalo County, from Buffalo County to Jackson County, and from Trempealeau County to Jackson County are determined to be statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

TABLE 3-7: CHANGE IN COUNTY-TO-COUNTY WORKER FLOWS, 2006-2010 & 2009-2013

County of Residence	County of Work							
	Houston	Winona	Buffalo	Jackson	La Crosse	Monroe	Trempealeau	Vernon
Houston	-422[1] -8.9%[2]	46 11.5%	10 1,000.0%	7 700.0%	108 2.7%	7 15.6%	14 43.8%	12 48.0%
Winona	11 6.8%	-401 -1.8%	80 173.9%	0 0.0%	166 13.6%	15 71.4%	17 6.6%	-2 -40.0%
Buffalo	0 0.0%	-14 -1.1%	-235 -7.0%	5 500.0%	-16 -18.6%	-14 -66.7%	48 6.1%	0 0.0%
Jackson	-2 -40.0%	5 55.6%	1 9.1%	-301 -4.6%	12 3.3%	93 14.9%	-30 -3.5%	8 114.3%
La Crosse	-5 -1.2%	70 15.3%	-9 -21.4%	-4 -2.2%	1,012 1.9%	121 6.4%	-71 -7.2%	-73 -10.7%
Monroe	-1 -33.3%	-6 -20.7%	0 0.0%	17 5.1%	-173 -7.9%	-128 -0.7%	-7 -14.9%	46 13.0%
Trempealeau	0 0.0%	-62 -6.9%	-17 -8.7%	100 37.7%	102 6.4%	-2 -2.6%	168 1.7%	1 11.1%
Vernon	6 16.7%	20 153.8%	2 28.6%	17 68.0%	-87 -3.0%	110 16.0%	6 200.0%	-387 -4.6%

[1]The top number represents the actual change in workers between the two data sets, 2006-2010 and 2009-2013.
[2]The bottom number represents the percent change in workers.
Flow differences indicated in red are determined to be statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level.
Source: 2006-2010 and 2009-2013 American Community Survey.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an inventory of highway, bicycle and shared-use, pedestrian, passenger (rail, bus, and air), freight (rail, air, and water), and transit facilities. Each modal section provides an inventory of existing accommodations and facilities and a discussion of safety performance measures. All performance measures for the LAPC are summarized with their targets in the *Performance Measures Annual Progress Report Summary*, which is posted to the LAPC website at www.lapc.org.

HIGHWAY

INVENTORY

Functional Classification

Of approximately 670 miles of urban roads, one-third is classified as urban collector or arterial. Functional classification—the process by which roadways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they provide—include rural and urban arterials, collectors, and local roads. Urban roadways classified as collector or arterial are eligible for federal Surface Transportation Program – Urban (STP-U) funds. **Figure 4-1** illustrates the system of functionally classified roads in the planning area in 2015.

Table 4-1 illustrates urban mileages in 2001, 2004, and 2010. Urban mileage refers to the miles of roads that fall within the adjusted urbanized area boundary.[1] The large change between 2001 and 2004 is due mainly to the increase in the size of the adjusted urbanized area. The change between 2004 and 2010 is due to roads being reclassified because of changes in traffic and use.

The 2010 decennial census resulted in an update of the adjusted urbanized area boundary and the urban/rural designation of our roads. The urban/rural reclassification has not yet been officially approved, so the exact mileages are not available. Because the adjusted urbanized area boundary was reduced in size, we know that the urban mileages in 2015 will be less than they were in 2010.

[1] The Census-designated urbanized area boundary is adjusted and smoothed by staff of the representative metropolitan planning organizations in coordination with their state departments of transportation.

TABLE 4-1: URBAN MILEAGE[1] BY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

Functional Classification	Urban Mileage						Mileage Change
	2001		2004		2010		'01-'10
	Total	% of total	Total	% of total	Total	% of total	Total change
Principal Arterial	59.58	12.4%	70.47	10.9%	72.35	10.8%	+12.77
Minor Arterial	50.16	10.5%	64.54	9.9%	65.48	9.8%	+15.32
Collector	40.06	8.4%	75.18	11.6%	79.28	11.8%	+39.22
Local	329.32	68.7%	438.98	67.6%	452.07	67.6%	+122.75
Total Urban Miles	**479.12**	**100.0%**	**649.17**	**100.0%**	**669.18**	**100.0%**	**+190.06**
Total Classified Miles	**149.80**	**31.3%**	**210.19**	**32.4%**	**217.11**	**32.44%**	**+69.39**

[1]Urban mileage refers to the miles of roads that fall within the adjusted urbanized area boundary.
Source: WisDOT, Mn/DOT, LAPC geographic information system (GIS).

National Highway System

The National Highway System (NHS) consists of roadways important to the nation's economy, defense, and mobility: interstates, other principle arterials, the Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET), major STRAHNET connectors, and intermodal connectors. In the planning area, roads designated as part of the NHS include:

- **Interstates:** I-90.
- **Other Principal Arterials:** USH 53 (includes Copeland Ave / Rose St; 3rd St / 4th St), USH 14/61 (includes parts of Cass St and Cameron Ave; and all of South Ave and Mormon Coulee Rd), STH 16 (includes La Crosse St), STH 157 (including Main St between STH 35 and USH 53), STH 35 between STH 157 in Onalaska and I-90, STH 33 between 3rd St and 32nd St, all of Gillette St, and all of Losey Blvd.
- **Intermodal Connectors:** Clinton St between Rose St and Bainbridge St, Bainbridge St between Clinton St and the F.J. Robers intermodal facility, King St between Front St and 4th St, Front St between King St and Cass St, Cass St between Front St and 2nd St, and 2nd St between Cass St and King St.

The planning area does not contain any roads designated as part of the Strategic Highway Network or as major STRAHNET connectors.

In 2012, however, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) required that all principal arterials (illustrated in red in **Figure 4-1**) be added to the NHS. This change added significantly to the mileage of NHS routes in the planning area.

Figure 4-1: Functional Classification of Roads, 2015

SOURCES: Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Transportation.

La Crosse Area Planning Committee, May 2015.

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Motor Vehicle Travel

Vehicle miles of travel (VMT) estimates are based on annual average daily traffic estimates, but include a distance traveled component that together provide a measure of highway vehicle usage over a geographic area like a county or state.

Figure 4-2 illustrates annual vehicle miles of travel for Minnesota and Wisconsin. While Minnesota experienced a 0.9 percent increase between 2005 and 2012, Wisconsin experienced a 1.6 percent decrease. The La Crosse Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which includes the counties of Houston and La Crosse, experienced an 8 percent decrease in VMT (**Figure 4-3**).

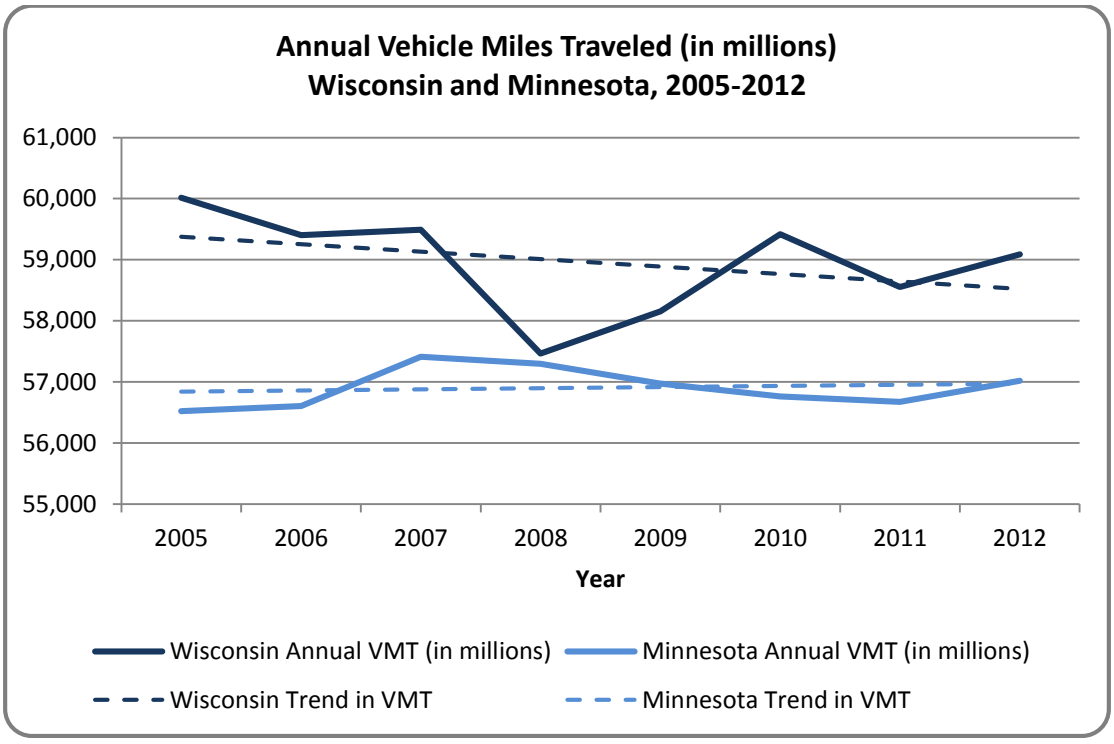


Figure 4-2: Vehicle miles of travel for Minnesota and Wisconsin, 2005-2012.
Data sources: Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation.

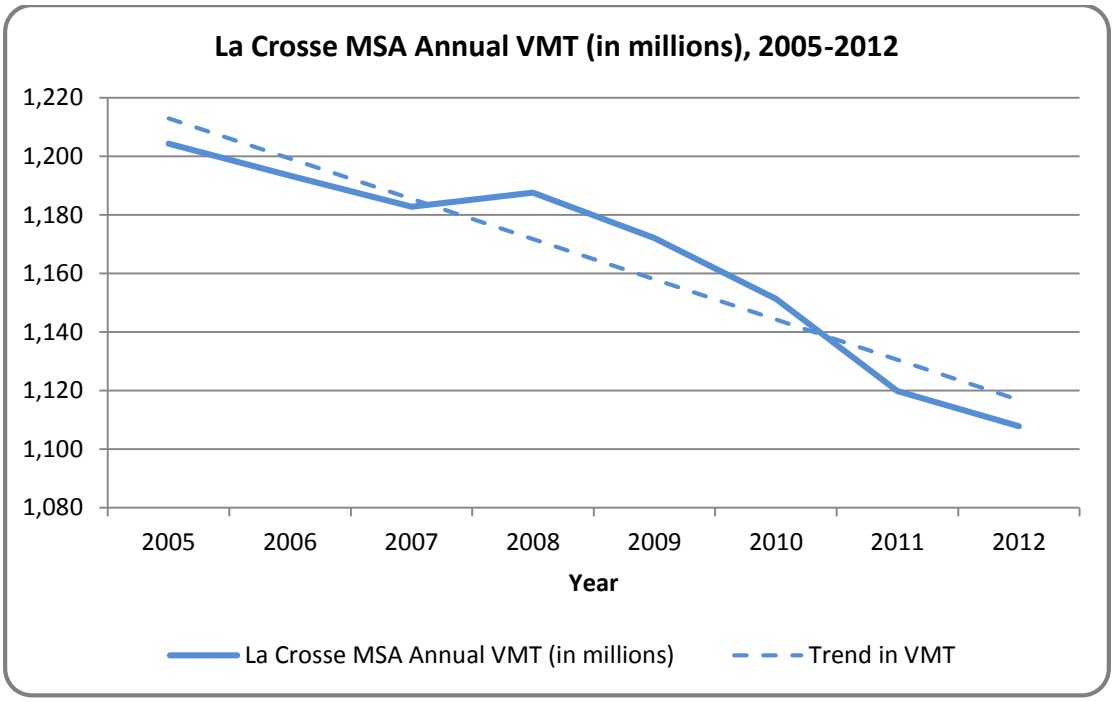


Figure 4-3: Vehicle miles of travel for Minnesota and Wisconsin, 2005-2012.
Data sources: Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation.

As mentioned previously, factored into VMT is annual average daily traffic (AADT). **Table 4-2** shows the AADT for continuous count stations at non-interstate locations in La Crosse County. Four of the nine stations recorded less traffic in 2012 than in 2008, resulting in a decrease in the percent change in AADT for 2008-2012. Three of the four (South Ave between Tyler and Farnam, Rose St south of Livingston, and STH 35 north of Troy), however, experienced increases from 2011 to 2012.

TABLE 4-2: ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC AT CONTINUOUS COUNT[1] FOR NON-INTERSTATE LOCATIONS IN LA CROSSE COUNTY

Location	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2008-2012	2011-2012
USH 14/61 South Ave between Tyler St and Farnam St	20,327	19,074	19,737	18,106	18,959	-6.7%	4.7%
STH 16 north of Bluff Pass	34,112	34,580	35,041	34,651	34,471	1.1%	-0.5%
USH 53 between STH 157 Main St and I-90	31,582	32,370	29,809	33,138	36,679	16.1%	10.7%
STH 35 Lang Dr north of La Crosse St	17,886	19,874	19,780	14,774	20,274	13.4%	37.2%
USH 53 Rose St south of Livingston St	23,983	23,873	24,142	23,674	23,774	-0.9%	0.4%
STH 35 West Ave north of Mississippi St	No data	18,318	19,290	19,481	28,322	-------	45.4%
USH 53 Copeland Ave between Grove St and the La Crosse River	31,805	32,651	31,242	31,011	30,163	-5.2%	-2.7%
STH 35 north of Troy St	13,022	12,983	13,295	13,596	12,073	-7.3%	11.2%
USH 53 south of Briggs Rd	12,372	12,977	13,107	13,427	13,684	10.6%	1.9%

[1]The WisDOT collects continuous count data from 221 permanent data collection stations primarily located on the State Trunk Highway System.

SAFETY

Total Roadway Crashes

Total roadway crashes reported in the planning area are illustrated in **Figure 4-4** by year. Total crashes in 2012 decreased 10 percent from 2008 and 2 percent from the five-year crash average. The five-year crash average for 2008-2012 (timeframe analyzed for this MTP) decreased more than one percent from the five-year crash average for 2005-2009 (timeframe analyzed for the 2035 MTP).

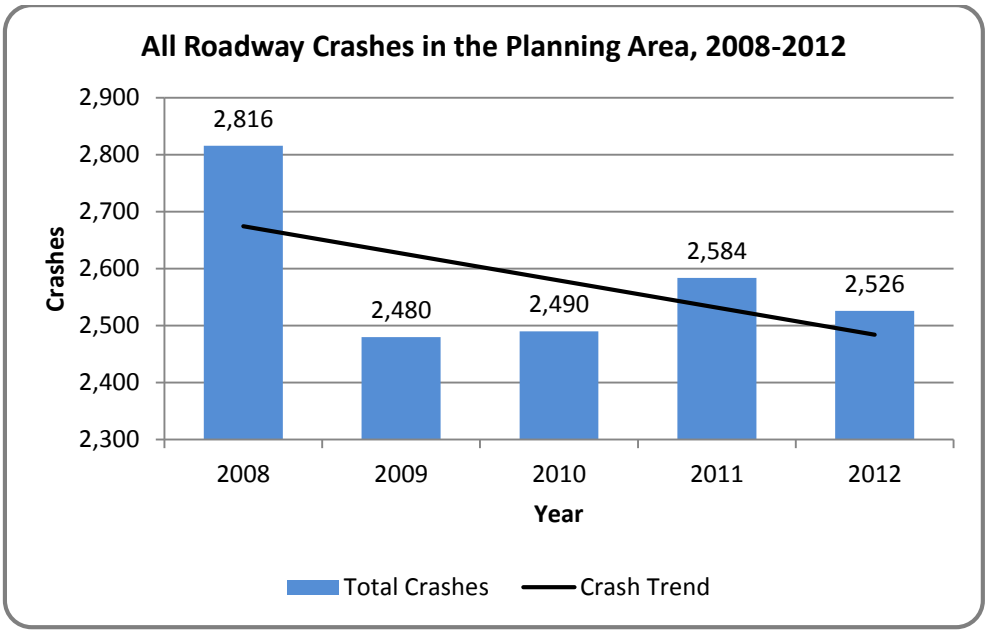


Figure 4-4: Total reported vehicle crashes in the planning area, 2008-2012.
Data sources: Wisconsin TOPS Lab, UW-Madison; Wisconsin Department of Transportation; MnCMAT (Crash Mapping Analysis Tool), Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Figure 4-5 illustrates crashes per million miles traveled by year for 2008 through 2012 for La Crosse County (data for vehicle miles traveled are not available by municipality to aggregate to the planning area). Because the trend in reported crashes is declining at a lesser rate than the concurrent trend in declining vehicle miles traveled in La Crosse County, the number of crashes per million miles traveled is trending upward. The five-year average of 2.8 for 2008-2012 increased more than three percent from the five-year average for the 2035 MTP of 2.7 for 2005-2009.

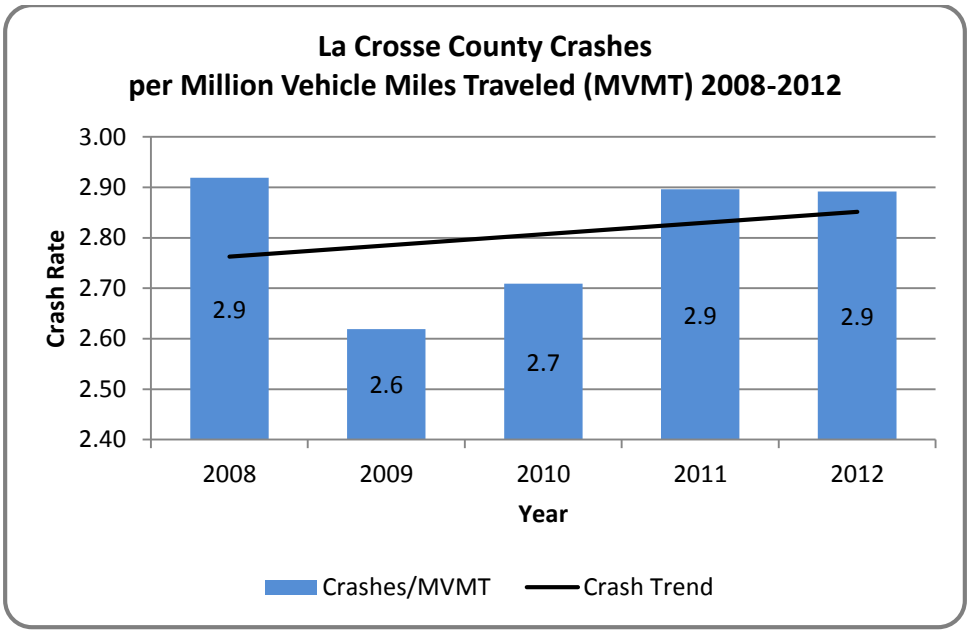


Figure 4-5: Crashes per million vehicle miles traveled for La Crosse County, 2008-2012.
Data sources: Wisconsin TOPS Lab, UW-Madison; Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

High Crash Rate Intersections and Roadway Segments

Crash rates, which represent the number of crashes per million vehicles entering for intersections or per 100 million vehicle miles traveled for segments, are used so that locations with different numbers of crashes and traffic volumes can be compared. Any intersection with a crash rate above 1.0 is a location of concern and can be submitted as a project for Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds, but projects addressing areas with higher crash rates and/or that will result in a lower-cost-to-higher-crash-rate reduction have a higher likelihood of getting funded.

Table 4-3 illustrates the intersection locations in the planning area with crash rates greater than 1.0. The roadway segments with crash rates above the statewide average (above 291 for large urban divided roads and 435 for large urban undivided roads) are shown in **Table 4-4**. (There are no intersections >1.0 or segments greater than the Minnesota statewide average in the Minnesota portion of the planning area.) The high crash rate intersections and segments are illustrated in **Figure 4-6**.

To address the safety issue on Cass St, WisDOT will be reconstructing this segment in 2017 from a four-lane facility to a two-lane facility with a center turn lane, bike lanes, and a roundabout at 7th St.

TABLE 4-3: TOP CRASH RATE INTERSECTIONS (>1.0), PLANNING AREA, 2009-2013

Location	5-yr Total	Ave/year	Crash Rate
Cass St & 5th Ave S	48	9.6	2.68
STH 16 & Theater Rd	88	17.6	1.78
STH 16 & Kinney Coulee Rd S/Pralle Center Dr	96	19.2	1.73
4th St & Jackson St	41	8.2	1.49
STH 16 & Gillette St	109	21.8	1.45
STH 16 & CTH OS/Kinney Coulee Rd N	86	17.2	1.45
STH 157 & CTH PH	76	15.2	1.43
Lang Dr/West Ave & La Crosse St	84	16.8	1.32
Rose St & George St	78	15.6	1.20
Losey Blvd & Green Bay St	50	10	1.18
Losey Blvd & State Rd	72	14.4	1.14
Gillette St & River Valley Dr	32	6.4	1.07
Losey Blvd & Mormon Coulee Rd	62	12.4	1.04

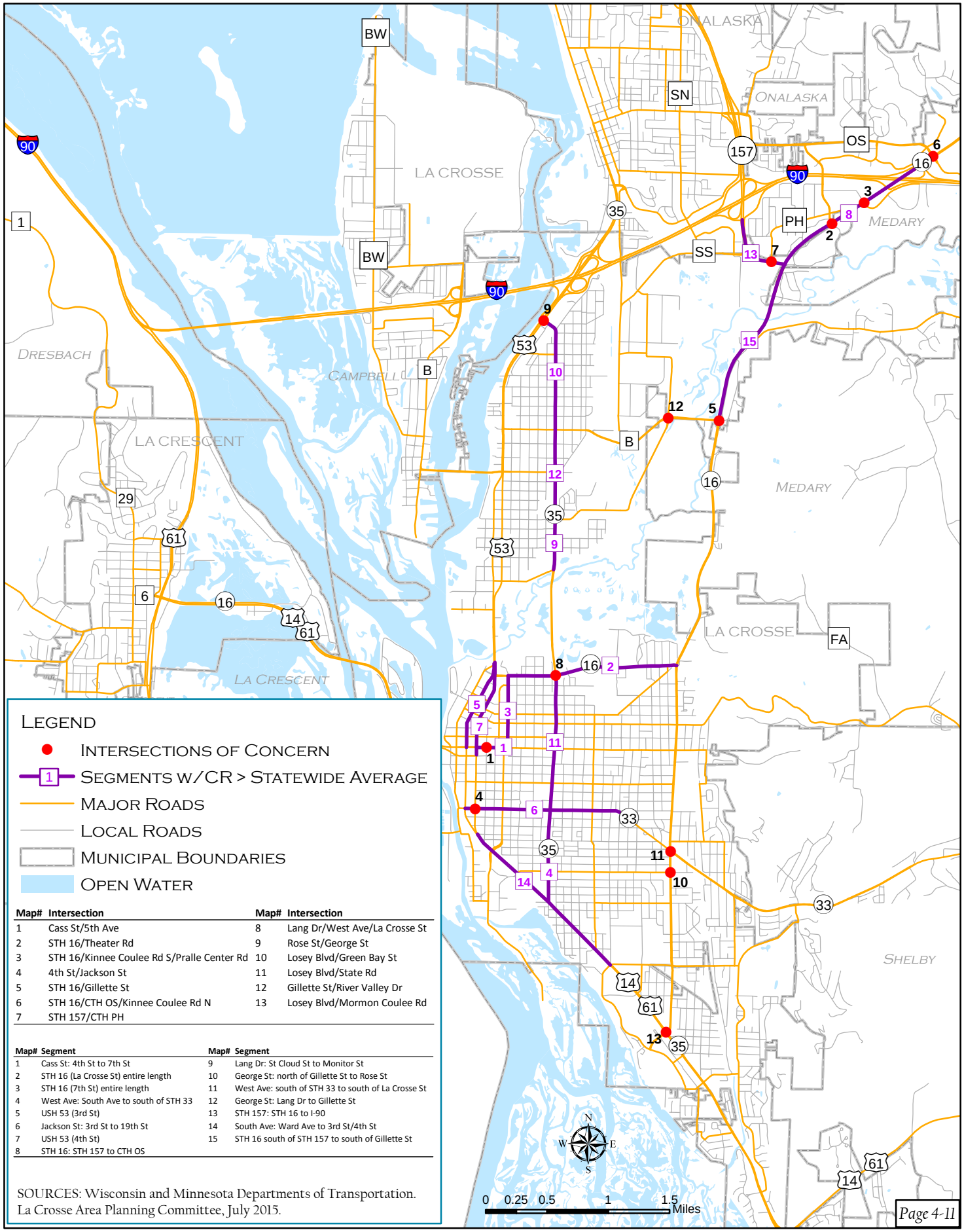
Source: Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation.
NOTE: No intersections within the Minnesota portion of the planning area have crash rates > 1.0.

TABLE 4-4: ROADWAY SEGMENTS IN THE PLANNING AREA WITH CRASH RATES GREATER THAN THE STATEWIDE AVERAGE,[1] 2009-2013

Location	Crash Rate
Cass St from 4th St to 7th St	1,929
STH 16 (La Crosse St) entire length	962
STH 16 (7th St) entire length	961
STH 35 (West Ave) from South Ave to south of STH 33	852
USH 53 (3rd St)	755
STH 33 (Jackson St) from 3rd St to 19th St	751
USH 53 (4th St)	750
STH 16 from STH 157 to CTH OS	715
STH 35 (Lang Dr) from St Cloud St to Monitor St	663
STH 35 (George St) from north of Gillette St to Rose St	614
STH 35 (West Ave) from south of STH 33 to north of La Crosse	601
STH 35 (George St) from Lang Dr to Gillette St	537
STH 157 from STH 16 to I 90	467
USH 14 (South Ave) from Ward Ave to 3rd St/4th St	466
STH 16 south of STH 157 to south of Gillette St	367

[1]The Wisconsin statewide average crash rates are 291 for large urban divided roads and 435 for large urban undivided roads. NOTE: No roadway segments within the Minnesota portion of the planning area have higher than Minnesota statewide average crash rates.
Source: Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Transportation.

Figure 4-6: High Crash Rate Intersections and Roadway Segments, 2009-2013



Legend

- Intersections of Concern
- 1 — Segments w/CR > Statewide Average
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Municipal Boundaries
- Open Water

Map#	Intersection	Map#	Intersection
1	Cass St/5th Ave	8	Lang Dr/West Ave/La Crosse St
2	STH 16/Theater Rd	9	Rose St/George St
3	STH 16/Kinnee Coulee Rd S/Pralle Center Rd	10	Losey Blvd/Green Bay St
4	4th St/Jackson St	11	Losey Blvd/State Rd
5	STH 16/Gillette St	12	Gillette St/River Valley Dr
6	STH 16/CTH OS/Kinnee Coulee Rd N	13	Losey Blvd/Mormon Coulee Rd
7	STH 157/CTH PH		

Map#	Segment	Map#	Segment
1	Cass St: 4th St to 7th St	9	Lang Dr: St Cloud St to Monitor St
2	STH 16 (La Crosse St) entire length	10	George St: north of Gillette St to Rose St
3	STH 16 (7th St) entire length	11	West Ave: south of STH 33 to south of La Crosse St
4	West Ave: South Ave to south of STH 33	12	George St: Lang Dr to Gillette St
5	USH 53 (3rd St)	13	STH 157: STH 16 to I-90
6	Jackson St: 3rd St to 19th St	14	South Ave: Ward Ave to 3rd St/4th St
7	USH 53 (4th St)	15	STH 16 south of STH 157 to south of Gillette St
8	STH 16: STH 157 to CTH OS		

SOURCES: Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Transportation.
La Crosse Area Planning Committee, July 2015.

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Severe-Injury and Fatal Crashes

Although the trend in total crashes has been decreasing, the trends in severe injury (**Figure 4-7**) and fatal (**Figure 4-8**) crashes have been increasing. While the five-year average for severe injury crashes for 2008-2012 increased about one percent from the five-year average for 2005-2009, the five-year average for fatalities increased a significant 27 percent.

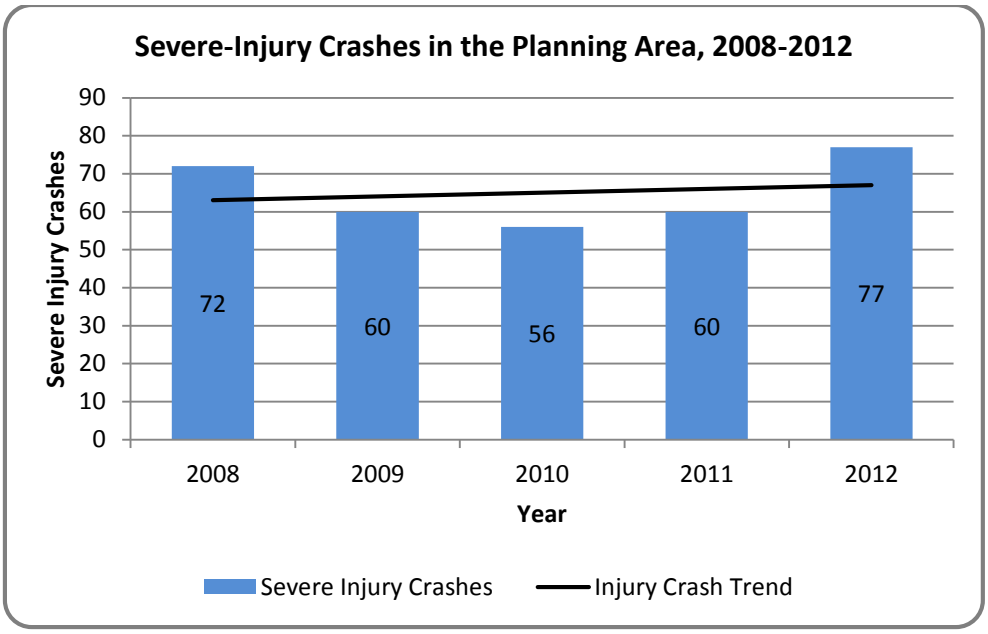


Figure 4-7: Severe-injury crashes in the planning area, 2008-2012.
Data sources: Wisconsin TOPS Lab, UW-Madison; Wisconsin Department of Transportation; MnCMAT (Crash Mapping Analysis Tool), Minnesota Department of Transportation.

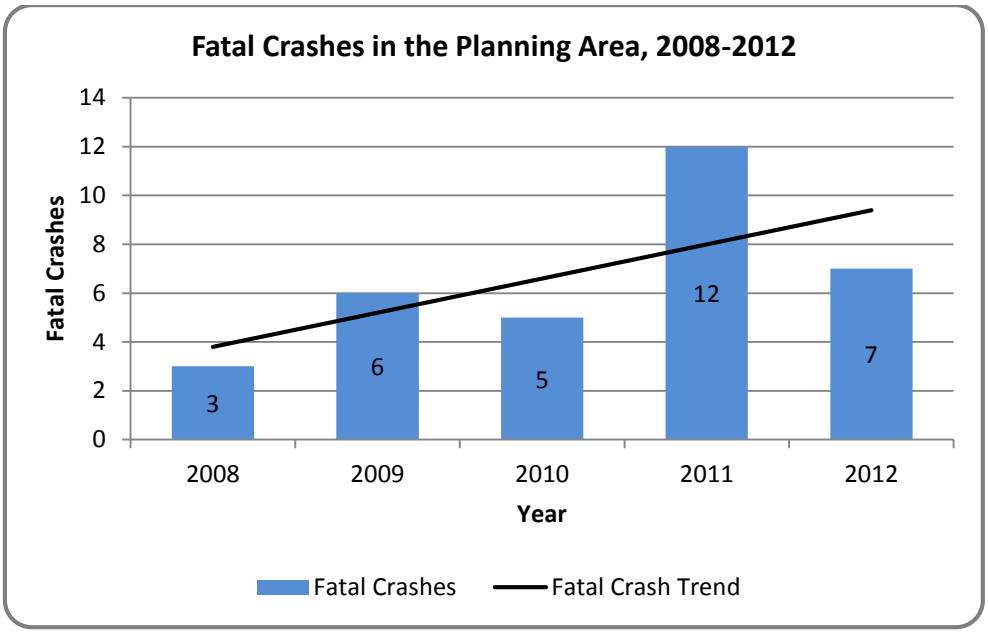


Figure 4-8: Fatal crashes in the planning area, 2008-2012.
Data sources: Wisconsin TOPS Lab, UW-Madison; Wisconsin Department of Transportation; MnCMAT (Crash Mapping Analysis Tool), Minnesota Department of Transportation.

BICYCLE & SHARED-USE FACILITIES

INVENTORY

Dedicated On- and Off-Road Bicycle Accommodations

One of the most important bicycle accommodations to encourage bicycling is a separated, dedicated facility like a bike lane or a shared-use trail. Because dedicated facilities are not always possible or practical, roadways with wide shoulders and outside lanes, or shared road markings ("sharrows") can adequately serve as shared facilities if their traffic volumes and speeds are low. As motor vehicle volumes and speeds increase, bicyclists more often take to the sidewalk—a facility designed for slower moving pedestrians.

Since 2009, the planning area has tripled its lane miles of bike lanes and sharrows, and has added several new trails to include the Holmen Park Trail in Holmen; the Isle La Plume Trail, the EcoPark Trail, the Southern Bluffs Trail, and the Green Island Trail in La Crosse; the Mill St Trail in West Salem; and the Sand Lake Rd Trail in Onalaska. All of these trails serve to improve connections between origins and destinations. **Table 4-5** summarizes the types of on- and off-road bicycle facilities in lane miles for each community in the planning area as of July 2015.

Figure 4-9 illustrates existing trails and on-road bicycle facilities in the planning area as of July 2015. The sharrow markings in the City of La Crosse, however, are becoming worn and faded and need to be re-painted.

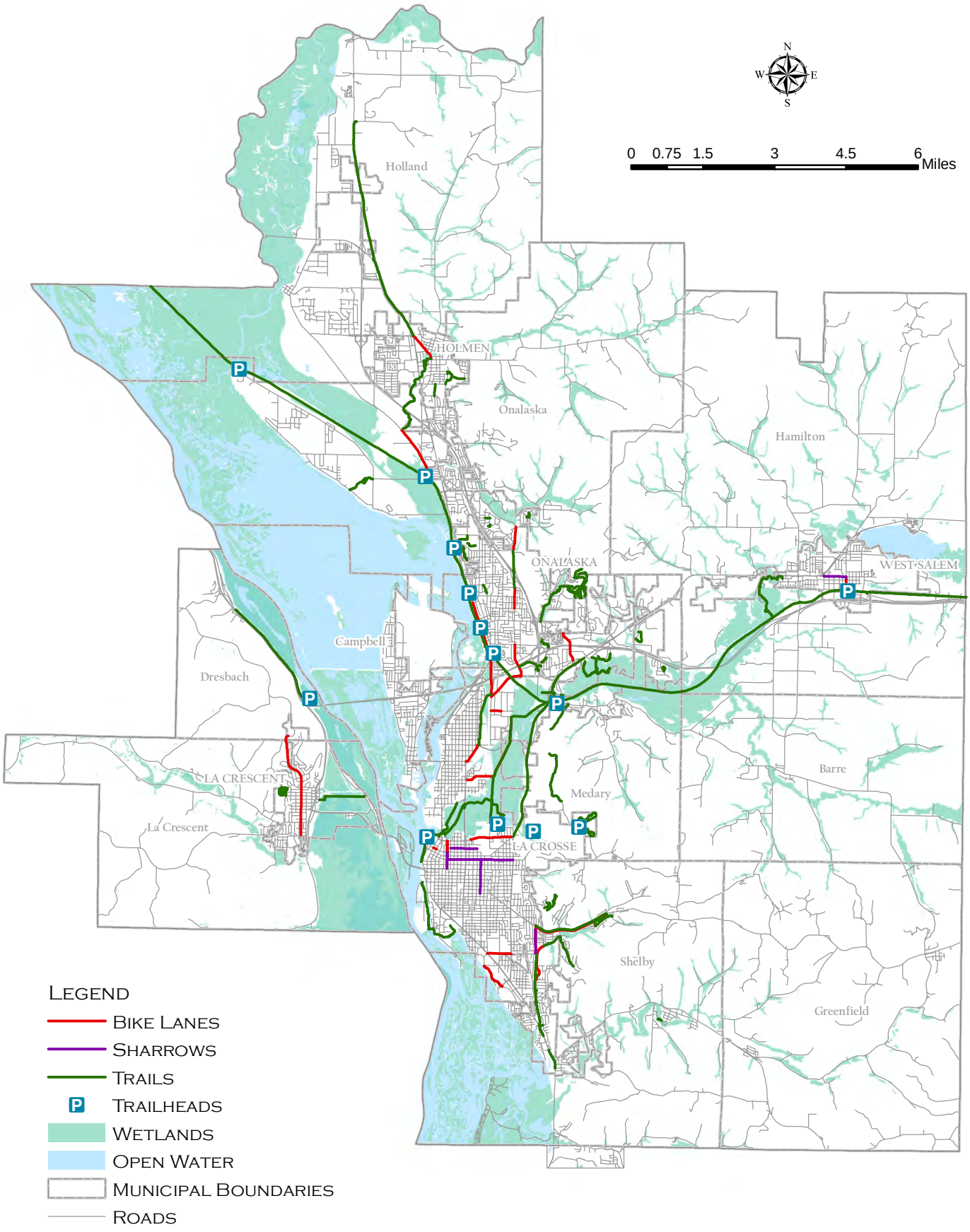
TABLE 4-5: LANE MILES OF BIKEWAY FACILITIES IN THE PLANNING AREA, JULY 2015

Community	Trails Local[1]/State	Designated bike lanes[2]	Undesignated bike lanes[3]	Sharrows[4]	Total
Barre (T)	0.0/0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Campbell (T)	0.0/0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dresbach (T)	0.0/2.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.4
Greenfield (T)	0.0/0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hamilton (T)	0.7/5.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.4
Holland (T)	3.3/2.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.7
Holmen (V)	2.7/0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	3.3
La Crescent (C)	2.2/0.0	4.5	0.0	0.0	6.7
La Crescent (T)	0.0/0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
La Crosse (C)	18.7/3.2	12.3	0.0	6.9	41.1
Medary (T)	3.2/0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0
Onalaska (C)	12.0/1.8	6.7	1.9	0.0	22.4
Onalaska (T)	2.2/6.8	2.3	0.0	0.0	11.3
Shelby (T)	4.2/0.0	3.2	0.0	0.0	7.4
West Salem (V)	0.3/1.0	0.6	0.0	1.1	3.0
Planning Area	49.5/24.1	30.2	1.9	8.0	113.7

[1]Excludes bluff trails (i.e. Hixon Forest) that cannot be seen on aerial photography.
[2]A lane that includes pavement markings and signage identifying its exclusive use by bicyclists.
[3]A lane does not have pavement markings or signage dedicating its use to bicyclists; but, the engineering is such that it meets AASHTO requirements for a bike lane.
[4]Shared lane marking.
Source: LAPC geographic information system.

Figure 4-10 illustrates the increase in lane miles of bike lanes and trails in the planning area through 2014. From 2010 to 2014, trail lane miles increased 8.6 percent, while bike-lane lane miles increased 74.6 percent.

Figure 4-9: Bicycle and Trail Facilities



SOURCE: La Crosse Area Planning Committee, May 2015.

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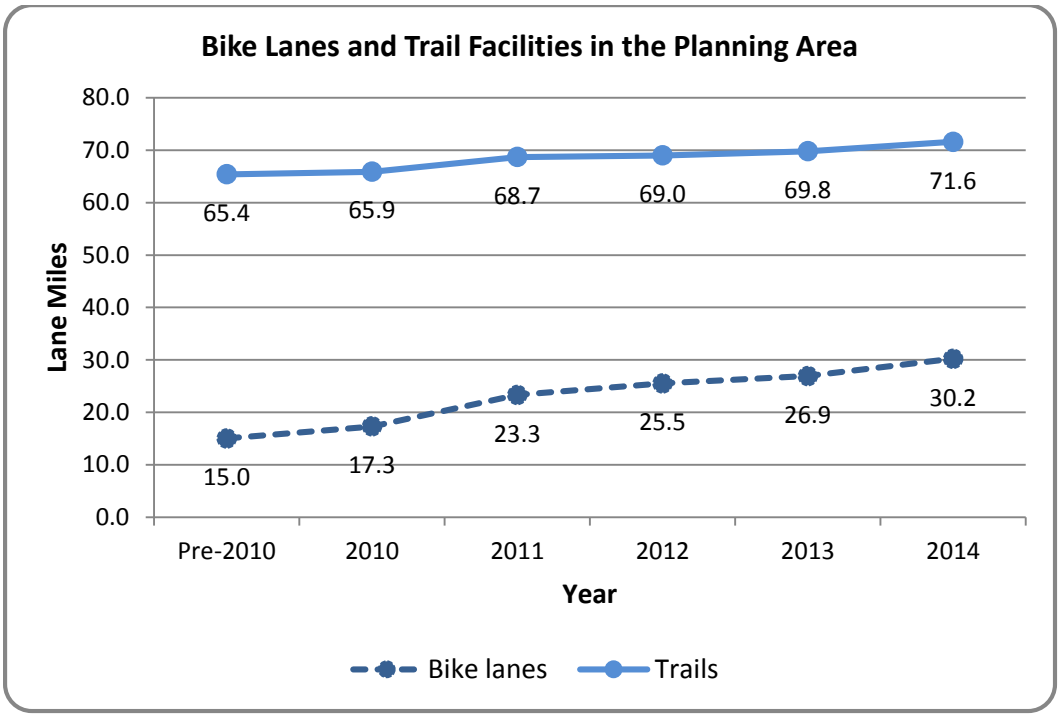


Figure 4-10: Total lane miles of marked bike lanes and trails in the planning area.

Bicycle Parking

One of the important accommodations needed to encourage people to bike is to provide them with safe and secure bicycle parking. **Figure 4-11** illustrates the various types of bicycle parking accommodations used at public facilities in the area.

The City of La Crosse has installed bicycle lockers (a), wave racks (b), campus racks (c) in its public parking structures and at the transit center, and inverted U-racks (d), including custom racks (e and f), at businesses throughout the downtown. In 2013, a pedestrian bumpout was constructed on the east side of 4th St at its intersection with Pearl St and a bicycle corral installed (h).

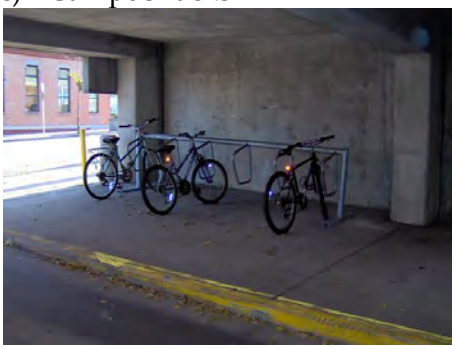
The intersection of Main St and 4th Ave in the City of Onalaska has 12 bike bollards (f)—3 at each corner—available to the general public. This type of bicycle parking accommodation is also popular at the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse.

The City of La Crescent has installed custom U-racks with an "apple" theme at schools and throughout the downtown.

a) Bicycle lockers

b) Wave racks

c) Campus racks

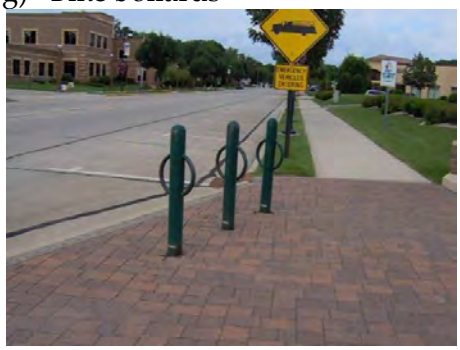


d) Inverted U-racks

e) Custom inverted U-racks

f) Custom racks

g) Bike bollards



h) Bicycle corral

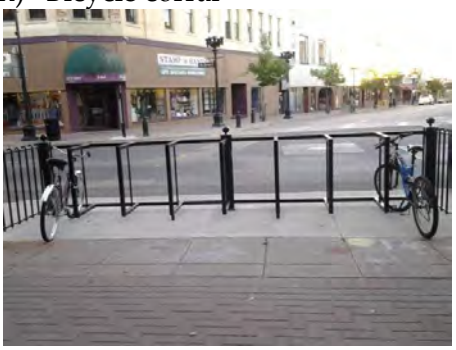


Figure 4-11: Common public bicycle parking structures used in the planning area.

Table 4-6 provides a list of locations of significant public bicycle parking in La Crosse and Onalaska, the types of racks, and the number of spaces available as of January 1, 2014. Because racks installed at businesses may have the appearance of belonging to that business, they are not included in the inventory of public bicycle parking.

TABLE 4-6: PUBLIC BICYCLE PARKING FACILITIES AS OF JANUARY 1, 2014

Location	Bike Lockers	Wave Racks	Campus Racks	Other
Main St parking ramp, La Crosse	4	1 3-loop rack 5 spaces	1 rack 6 spaces	0
La Crosse Center parking ramp, La Crosse	0	0	1 rack 6 spaces	2 inverted U-racks; 2 bicycles
Market Square parking ramp, La Crosse	4	2 5-loop racks 10 spaces[1]	0	0
Riverside parking ramp, La Crosse	0	2 5-loop 14 spaces	0	0
Grand River Station, La Crosse	8	0	0	6 inverted U-racks
4th St pedestrian bumpout, La Crosse	0	0	0	Bike corral 8 spaces
Pearl St & 4th St (NW corner), La Crosse	0	0	1 rack 6 spaces	0
Main St & 4th Ave, Onalaska	0	0	0	12 bike bollards

[1]The Market Square ramp has one five-loop wave rack installed in a manner where bikes can only be parked from the front (3 spaces).

Bicycle Travel

According to the U.S. Census, the percent of workers 16 and older who biked to work in the planning area declined from 1.0 percent in 1990 to 0.6 percent in 2000, and then rose again to 1.2 percent (± 0.4 percent) for the 2007-2011 ACS. **Table 4-7** summarizes the mode share for bicycles in 1990, 2000, and 2007-2011. While the change between the two estimates is statistically significant, the number of bicyclists to work is likely insignificant in its effect on the increase in bicycle-motor-vehicle crashes in 2012. The number of students bicycling to school (which would not be captured in this data set) is likely to be very significant at certain locations.

TABLE 4-7: BICYCLING TO WORK IN THE PLANNING AREA

Demographic	Year			
	1990[1]	2000[1]	2007-2011[2]	2007-2011 MOE[1]
Total workers 16 and older	49,644	56,369	60,811	1,082
Total bike to work	476	359	728	±263
% bike to work	1.0%	0.6%	1.2%	±0.4%

[1]Although the 1990 and 2000 data are based on survey data, they did not include measures of error (MOE) (hence the absence of MOEs) like the ACS data for 2007-2011.

[2]The 2007-2011 ACS data are derived from a sample of the population of workers 16 years and older. The totals in the table represent the five-year average

SAFETY

Total Bicycle Crashes

Figure 4-12 illustrates the total bicycle crashes by year in the planning area for the years 2008-2012. The five-year average of 46.8 crashes is up 17 percent from the five-year average for 2005-2009 (40.0) reported in the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). While the trend for 2008-2011 shows a decrease in crashes, something occurred in 2012 that resulted in a near doubling of bicycle crashes reported as were reported in 2011. If we exclude 2012 as an anomaly, the bicycle-crash average for 2008-2011 (41.8) is still up from the bicycle-crash average for 2005-2009 (40.0). Again excluding 2012, the overall trend for 2005-2011 shows a slight decrease of less than one percent in bicycle crashes in the planning area.

The reason for the high number of reported crashes in 2012 is unclear. Continued monitoring will determine if 2012 was just an anomaly or if the region is beginning to experience a new trend for unsafe bicycle travel.

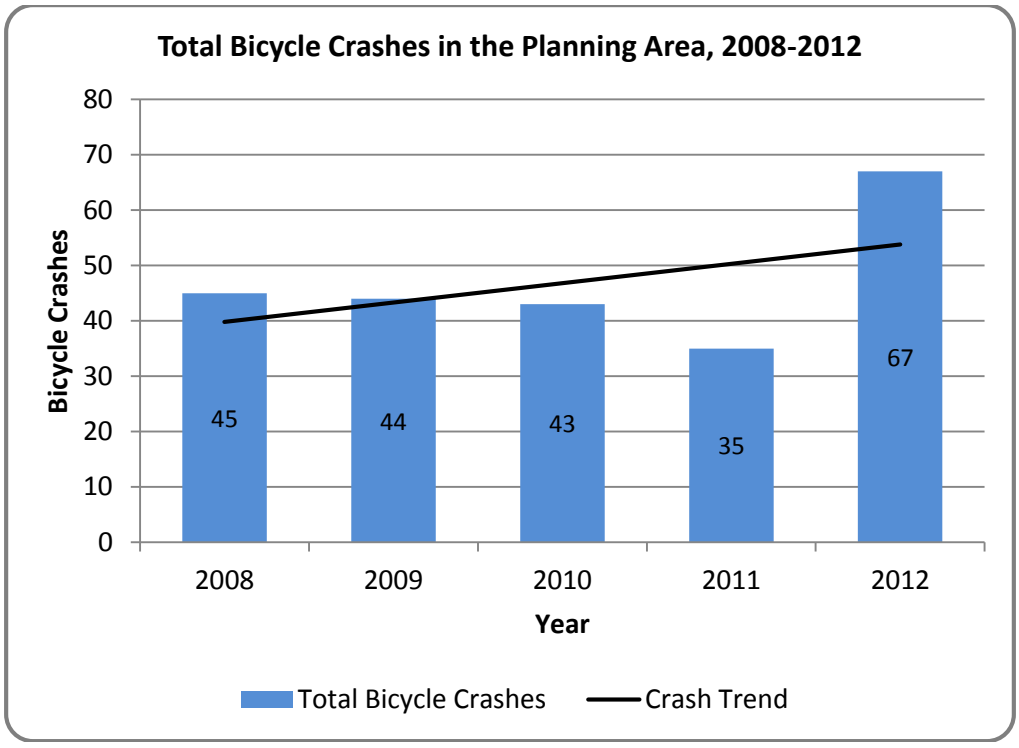


Figure 4-12: Total bicycle crashes in the LAPC planning area.
Data Source: Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory, UW-Madison; Minnesota Crash Mapping Analysis Tool, Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Of the 234 crashes in the planning area involving a bicycle for 2008-2012, police issued a citation in only 98 (42 percent) of the crashes: 41 bicyclists and 57 motorists were issued citations. Of the crashes where citations were issued, the top cause for both bicyclists and motorists was the failure to yield right of way. Hit-and-run crashes comprised 14 percent (32) of all the crashes for 2008-2012.

Severe-Injury and Fatal Crashes

Of the 234 bicycle crashes reported in the planning area for 2008-2012, 10 crashes resulted in no injury and no crashes resulted in a fatality. Over 54 percent of total bicycle injury crashes (224) resulted in a non-incapacitating injury. Possible injury crashes comprised 33 percent of the injury crashes, while severe-injury crashes comprised 13 percent. Alcohol was involved in only one crash and the intoxicated bicyclist received a non-incapacitating injury.

Only 17 bicyclists (7.3 percent) were reported to have worn a helmet. Thirteen of the 17 helmeted bicyclists were injured: two received incapacitating injuries and 11 received non-incapacitating injuries.

Figure 4-13 shows bicycle-injury crashes by type and year for the planning area. As mentioned earlier in this section, the reason for the high number of reported crashes in 2012 is unclear, but the chart reveals that significantly more possible injury crashes were reported than in previous years.

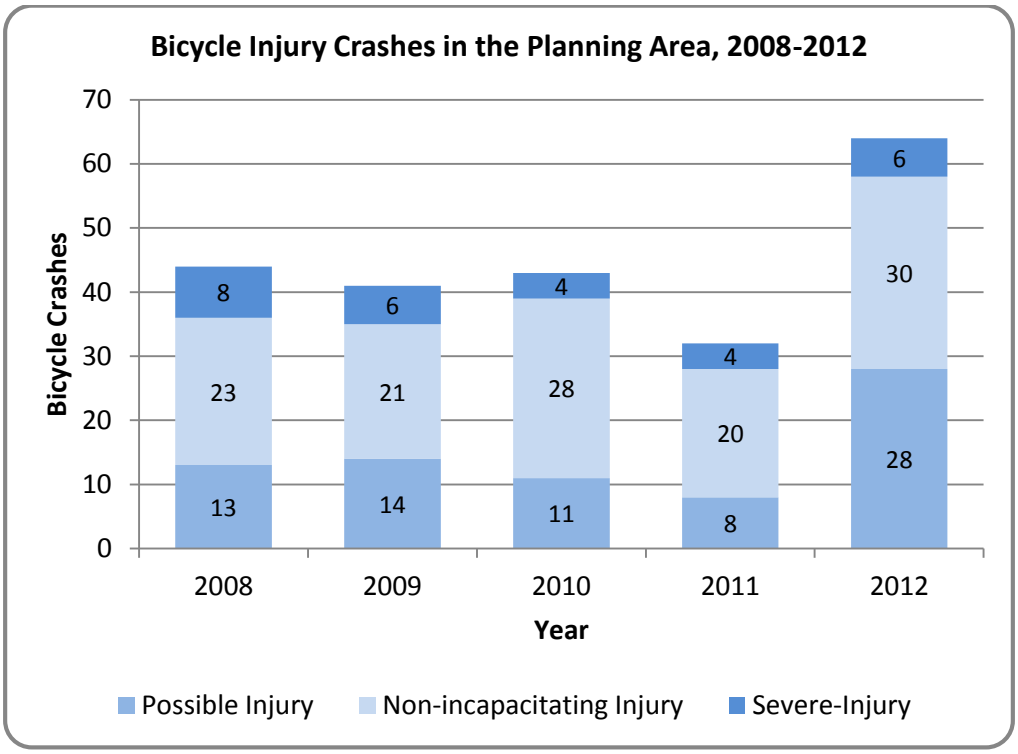


Figure 4-13: Injury crashes in the planning area involving bicyclists, 2008-2012.
Data Sources: Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory (TOPS Lab), UW-Madison; Minnesota Crash Mapping Analysis Tool, Minnesota Department of Transportation.

High Bicycle-Crash Locations

Table 4-8 lists the intersections with the most incidences of bicycle-motor vehicle crashes during 2008-2012.

The top two, which averaged one crash per year, occurred at Lang Dr and Monitor St, and at West Ave and La Crosse St. The other five intersections each experienced four crashes during the five-year period: West Ave and Cass St, West Ave and Jackson St, West Ave and Badger St, Mormon Coulee Rd and Broadview Pl/Shelby Rd, and State Rd and Losey Blvd.

The West Ave/La Crosse St and State Rd/Losey Blvd intersections have been identified by WisDOT as intersections of concern (crash rates greater than 1.0) with crash rates of 1.32 and 1.14, respectively, for 2009-2013.

TABLE 4-8: TOP BICYCLE-MOTOR VEHICLE CRASH LOCATIONS, 2008-2012

Location	Total Crashes
Lang Dr[2] / Monitor St	5
West Ave[2] / La Crosse St*	5
West Ave[2] / Badger St	4
West Ave[2] / Cass St	4
West Ave[2] / Jackson St*	4
State Rd / Losey Blvd[3]*	4
Mormon Coulee Rd[4] / Broadview Pl / Shelby Rd*	4

*These locations are also high pedestrian crash locations.
Data Sources: Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory, UW-Madison; WisDOT.

As reported in the 2030 MTP, West Ave and Pine St (**Figure 4-14**) was a high-crash location, but, since the reconstruction of West Ave (four-lane with median) and the installation of a pedestrian activated signal in 2008, the high-crash location has shifted north to Badger St. This location experienced all of its four bicycle-motor-vehicle crashes in 2012. In an attempt to determine why the high crash location shifted, LAPC staff conducted a two-hour count and behavioral observation on Thursday, September 19, 2013 from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. of bicyclists and pedestrians crossing West Ave at Pine St and at Badger St.

In summary, the occurrence of crashes seems to have shifted from the West Ave – Pine St intersection north to the West Ave – Badger St intersection because: 1) a high volume of motor-vehicle traffic queues through the Badger St crossing (**Figure 4-15**), resulting in conflicts with the high volumes of bicyclists and pedestrians crossing at Badger St; 2) the volume of bicycle and pedestrian crossings at Badger St is 36 percent higher than at Pine St; 3) bicyclists do not dismount and walk their bicycles in the crosswalk (**Figure 4-16**); 4) some bicyclists weave between vehicles when the vehicles are queued through the crossing; and, 5) the median storage is insufficient to accommodate the volume of bicyclists and pedestrians.

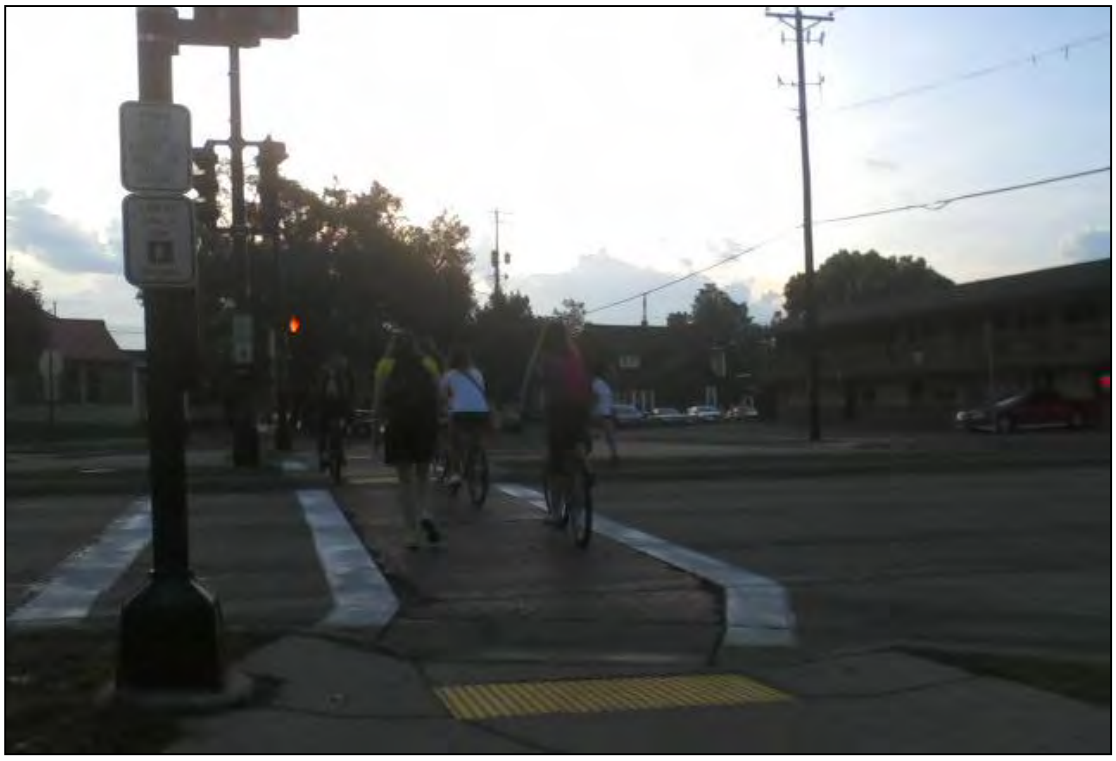


Figure 4-14: Bicyclists and pedestrians crossing West Ave against the signal at Pine St.

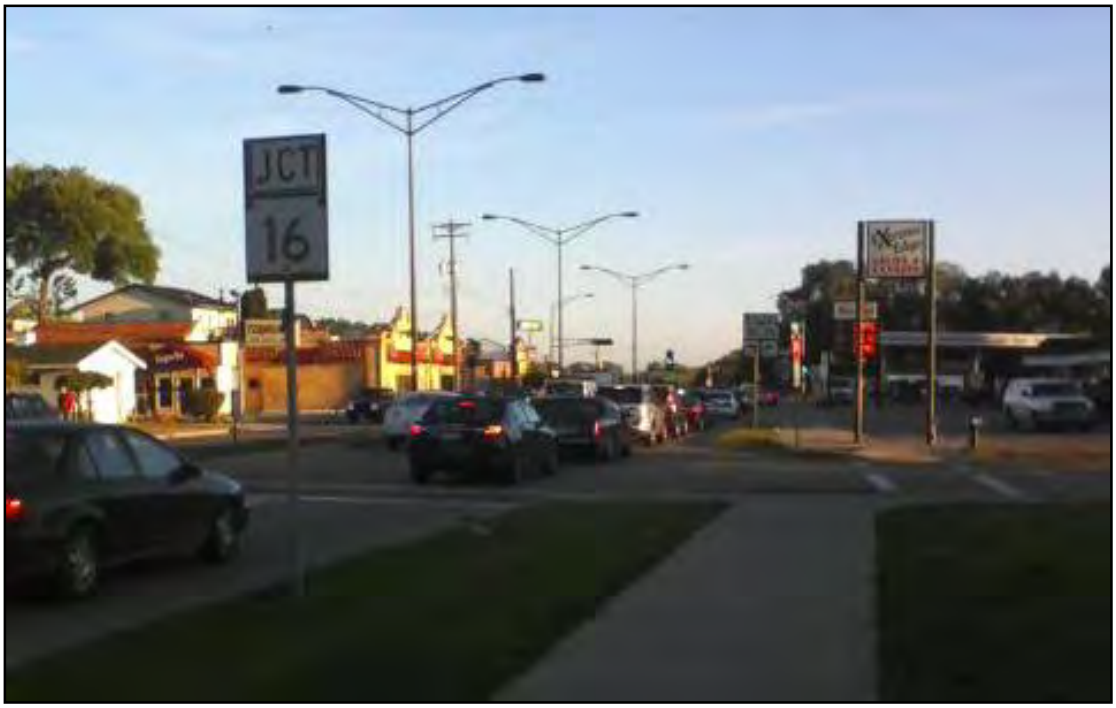


Figure 4-15: Early morning traffic on West Ave backing up through the Badger St crossing.

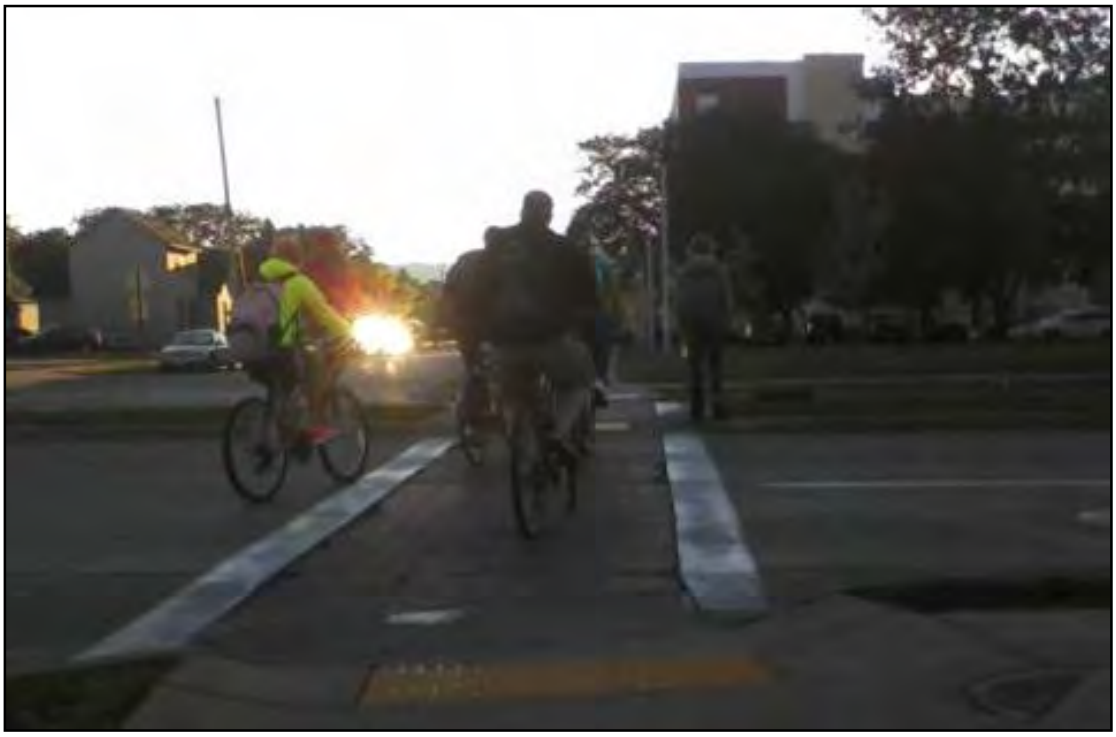


Figure 4-16: Several bicyclists and pedestrians crossing West Ave at Badger St.

BICYCLE FRIENDLINESS

In an effort to improve conditions for bicycling, the League of American Bicyclists created its Bicycle Friendly America℠ program. This program provides guidance, hands-on assistance, and recognition to states, communities, universities, and businesses for making bicycling a real transportation and recreation option for all.

Each year, the League assesses all 50 states. Communities, businesses, and universities are assessed through a voluntary application process. The assessment involves grading each state and applicant by a set of criteria that include the five E's: Engineering; Education; Evaluation; Enforcement; and Encouragement. Designations for Bicycle Friendliness are awarded as Platinum (most bicycle friendly), Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Honorable Mention (not quite there yet).

The League of American Bicyclists in its 2015 ranking of bicycle-friendly states has ranked Minnesota #2 (the same as in 2014) and Wisconsin #9 (down from #3 in 2014). Wisconsin ranked poorly in the categories "legislation and enforcement" and "infrastructure and funding."

Within the planning area, the City of La Crosse is ranked a Silver-level Bicycle-Friendly Community and the City of Onalaska a Bronze-level. A number of businesses are also ranked as bicycle-friendly:

- La Crosse Area Family YMCA (Silver)
- SAP Labs (Bronze)
- Candlewood Suites (Bronze)
- Dairyland Power Cooperative (Bronze)
- Gundersen Lutheran-Onalaska (Bronze)
- Mayo Clinic Health System-La Crosse (Bronze)
- Western Technical College (Bronze)
- 360 Real Estate (Bronze)
- Smith's Cycling and Fitness (Bronze).

Logistics Health Inc. and the Onalaska School District both received Honorable Mentions. As of yet, we have no bicycle friendly universities.

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

INVENTORY

Pedestrian Facilities

Pedestrian travel is accommodated through a system of walkways that include highway shoulders, paths or trails, and sidewalks. Highway shoulders are often paved, but may also be composed of gravel or aggregate. Because shoulders are shared by pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists, pedestrians must take extra care and should walk on the side of the road that faces traffic. (Bicyclists, on the other hand, travel *with* traffic.) Paths include walkways through parking lots and trails for shared-use with bicyclists, in-line skaters, and others.

Sidewalks offer the most efficient and effective means for making short trips in urban areas. They run parallel to roadways, providing equivalent connections between origins and destinations as the roadways themselves. The most efficient and effective way for communities to provide pedestrian facilities is for the communities to require installation of sidewalks during development of new subdivisions. **Table 4-9** illustrates the municipal code requirements for the installation of sidewalks. With the exception of the City of La Crescent and the Village of West Salem, the incorporated communities require sidewalks on one or both sides of new streets based on their function. La Crosse and Holmen require sidewalks on both sides of ALL streets; whereas, Onalaska requires sidewalks on both sides of only arterial and collector streets (excludes local streets). In the Village of West Salem, sidewalks are required at the discretion of the Village Board.

The Wisconsin towns in the planning area are subject to the land development requirements of La Crosse County. La Crosse County does not require sidewalks as an improvement; however, sidewalks are an aspect of development taken into consideration during plat review.

Minimum widths for sidewalks range from four feet in West Salem to six feet in La Crosse. Onalaska and Holmen require sidewalks to be a minimum of five feet wide. All reserve the right to require wider-than-average sidewalks when deemed necessary in areas with schools and commercial areas.

Subdivisions built in the townships are generally built without sidewalks, forcing pedestrians to walk in the roadway. In more urbanized areas like in the Town of Campbell, walking in the street can be a safety issue. In general:

- Cities and villages (incorporated areas) have relatively complete systems within and near their cores (central business districts).
- Cities and villages have gaps in the sidewalk system or lack sidewalks entirely in their industrial and fringe areas. The development codes for industrial areas often do not require sidewalks or may require them on only one side of the road. The lack of sidewalks in fringe areas is due mainly to the annexation of town land where development codes typically do not require sidewalks.

TABLE 4-9: SIDEWALKS AS A REQUIRED IMPROVEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

Jurisdiction	Sidewalk Location	Sidewalk Width	Required Improvement
La Crosse	One side of frontage streets; both sides of all other streets	6-ft	Yes
Onalaska	One side of frontage streets; both sides of arterial and collector streets	5-ft	Yes
La Crescent	City discretion	Not stated	No
Holmen	One side of frontage streets; both sides of all other streets	5-ft	Yes
West Salem	Village discretion	4-ft	No
Towns (County regulations)	Not addressed	N/A	No

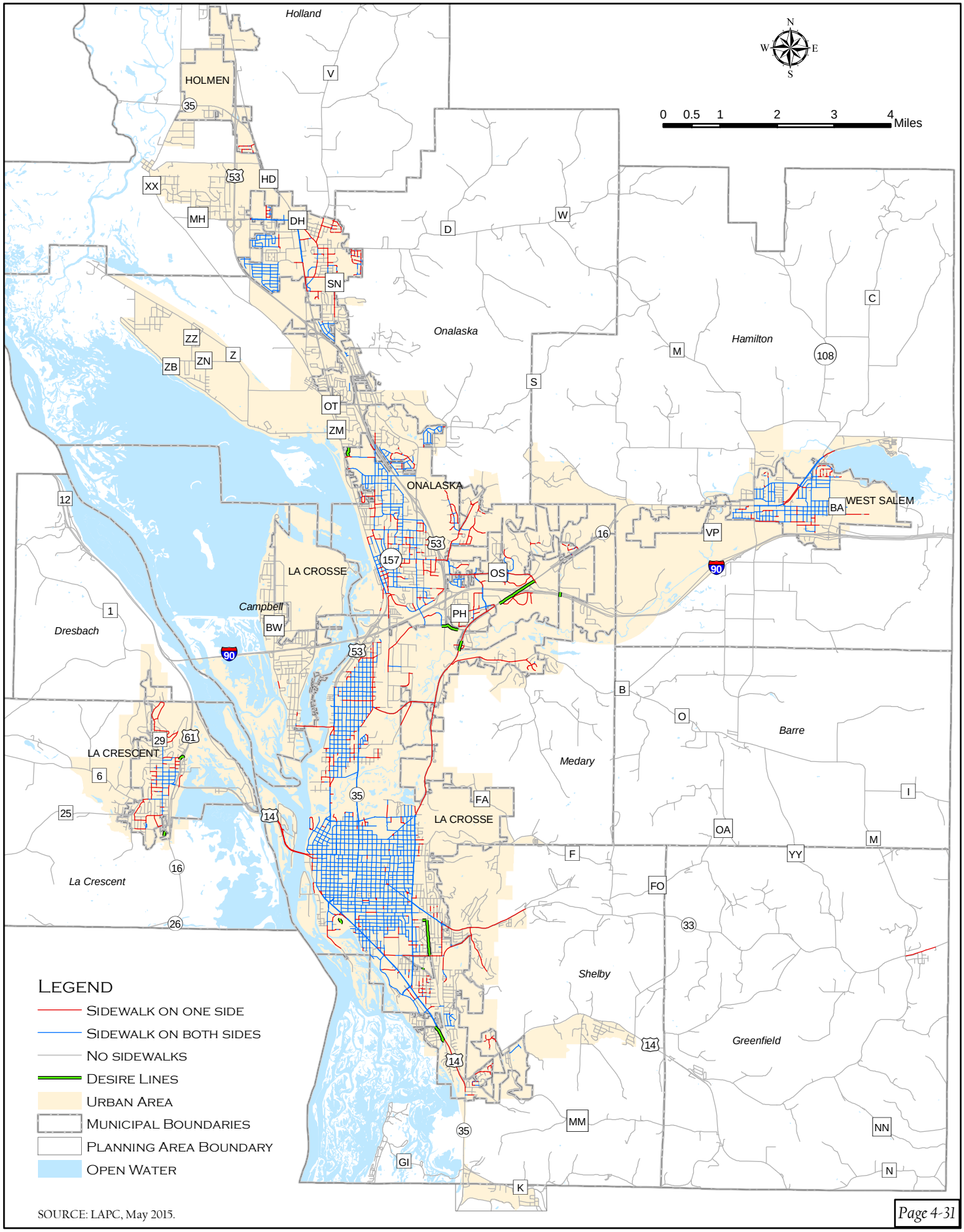
Source: Local subdivision and development codes.

Figure 4-17 illustrates the availability of sidewalks along roadways in the planning area. Road segments are coded by the presence of sidewalks on one side, both sides, or neither side (generally not a concern in rural areas). Less than 30 percent of the lineal miles of roads in the urban area[2] have sidewalks on both sides of the road.

The figure also illustrate the locations of desire lines (or "goat paths")—paths that have been carved out by people walking and biking through areas where facilities are absent, but obviously needed. **Figures 4-18** and **4-19** illustrate some deeply worn paths along STH 16 and STH 157, while **Figure 4-20** illustrates a path that connects residents of a mobile home park on the east side of TH 14 to downtown La Crescent.

[2] The "urban area" is the adjusted urban area boundary, which is the Census-designated urban area boundary smoothed and modified to include areas of anticipated development. The adjusted boundary is approved by the State DOTs and the FHWA.

Figure 4-17: Existing and Desired Pedestrian Facilities



SOURCE: LAPC, May 2015.

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Figure 4-18 illustrates a significant desire line between two ends of the at-grade shared-use facility along STH 16. When the ramps were constructed for Holiday Heights, the shared-use path was routed down to Holiday Heights alongside the ramp and back up again along Medary Ln to reconnect to STH 16 (a). While this path is convenient for residents of Holiday Heights, it takes users traveling between La Crosse and Onalaska significantly out of their way. So, not surprisingly, users will instead continue to walk or bike across the bridge next to traffic (b) between the sidewalk along the bluff and the Medary Ln facility seen in (a). When WisDOT widens this bridge to three lanes in 2019, a protected shared-use facility should be constructed so the entire length of the facility is at grade with STH 16.

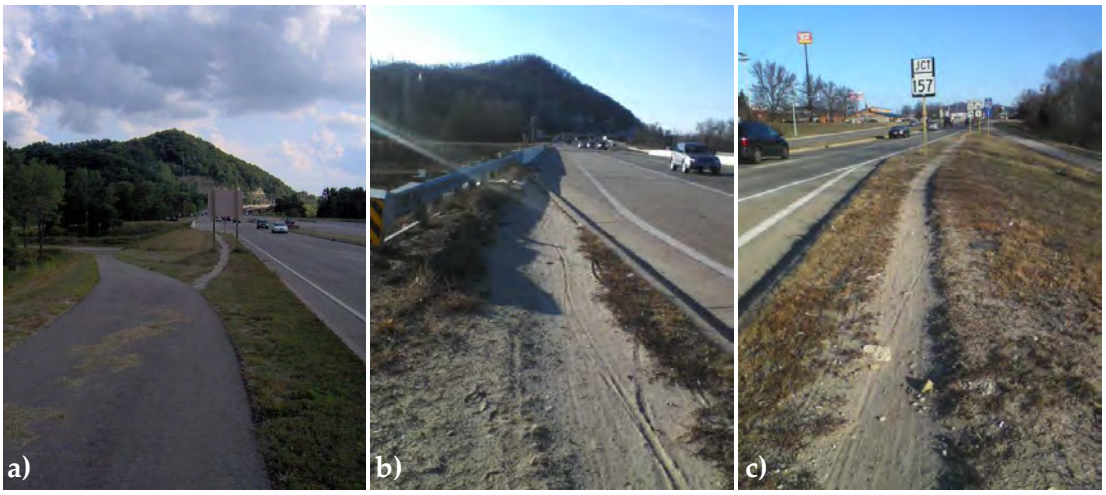

Figure 4-18: Desire lines along STH 16 illustrating users desire to maintain a straight line of travel along STH 16 instead of being diverted down to Holiday Heights and back up again.

Figure 4-19 illustrates desire lines along STH 157 in Onalaska (a), a utility easement between Central High School and private property connecting Strong Ave to 28th St across the BNSF railroad track in La Crosse (b), and through the Family and Children's Center property connecting Weston St to Barlow St in La Crosse (c).

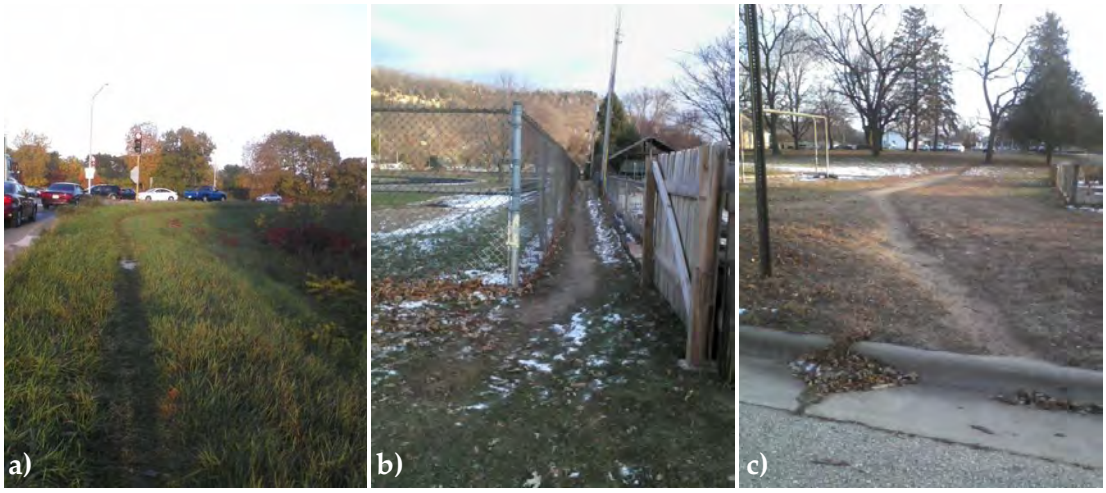

Figure 4-19: Desire lines along STH 157, Onalaska (a); between Central H. S. and private property, La Crosse (b); and through the Family & Children's Center property, La Crosse (c).

Figure 4-20 illustrates how residents of the Hill's Mobile Home Park east of TH 14/61 in La Crescent, Minnesota wend their way behind one of the businesses (a) and up an embankment (b) to cross the highway to access the Kwik Trip (c) and other businesses on the west side of the highway. Because of slope issues, and high traffic speeds and volumes, a study to determine the feasibility of an underpass or overpass should be conducted.

Figure 4-20: Pedestrian path between mobile home park on east side of TH 14/61 to Kwik Trip and other businesses on the west side of the highway in La Crescent, Minnesota.

Pedestrian Travel

According to the U.S. Census, the percent of workers 16 and older who walked to work in the planning area declined significantly from 7.6 percent in 1990 to 4.8 percent in 2000. Unlike the mode share for bicycling to work, which showed a significant increase between 2000 and 2007-2011, the share of workers 16 and older walking to work continued to decline modestly to 4.2 percent ± 0.6 percent. **Table 4-10** summarizes the mode share for walking in 1990, 2000, and 2007-2011.

TABLE 4-10: WALKING TO WORK IN THE PLANNING AREA

Demographic	Year			
	1990[1]	2000[1]	2007-2011[2]	2007-2011 MOE[1]
Total workers 16 and older	49,644	56,369	60,811	1,082
Total walk to work	3,788	2,708	2,576	±360
% walk to work	7.6%	4.8%	4.2%	±0.6%

[1]Although the 1990 and 2000 data are based on survey data, they did not include measures of error (MOE) (hence the absence of MOEs) like the ACS data for 2007-2011.

[2]The 2007-2011 ACS data are derived from a sample of the population of workers 16 years and older. The totals in the table represent the five-year average.

SAFETY

Total Pedestrian Crashes

Figure 4-21 illustrates the total number of pedestrian crashes in the planning area for 2008-2012. As illustrated, pedestrian crashes seem to be trending upward over time. This contrasts to the declining crash trend for 2005-2009 reported in the 2035 MTP. The reason for the change in direction is the rather significant increase in pedestrian crashes reported in 2011. If 2011 were removed from the equation, pedestrian crashes would still be trending downward.

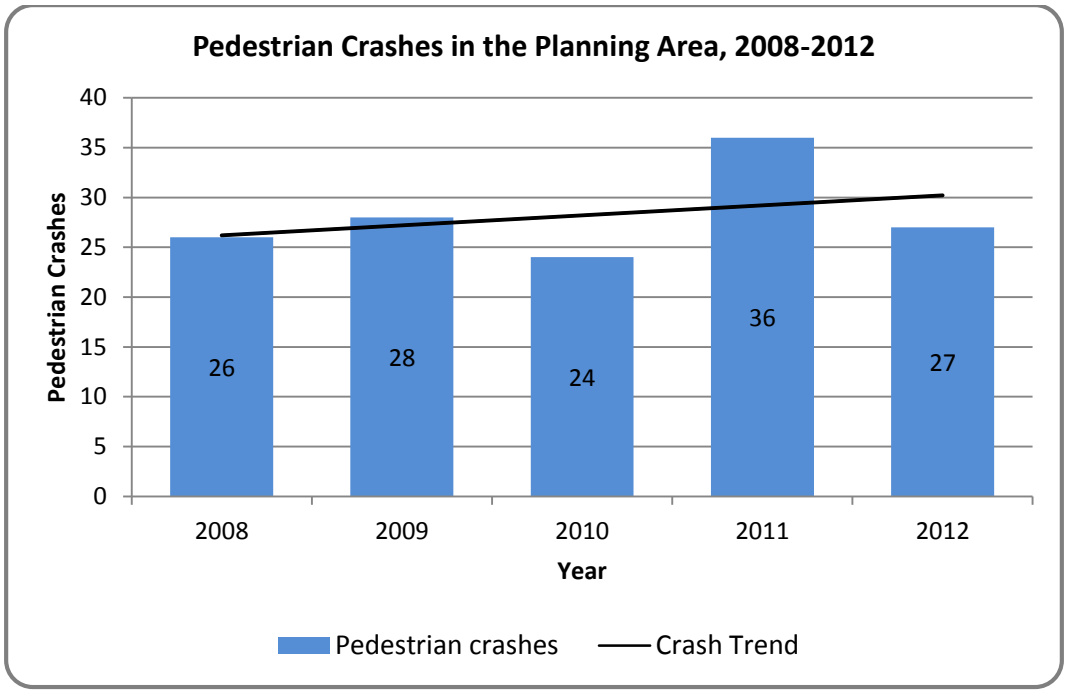

Figure 4-21: Pedestrian crashes in the planning area, 2008-2012.
Data Sources: Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory, UW-Madison; Minnesota Crash Mapping Analysis Tool, Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Of the 141 pedestrian crashes in the planning area in 2008-2012, police issued a citation in 57 percent of the crashes—82 percent of which went to the motorist. Hit-and-run crashes comprised 7 percent (10) of all the pedestrian crashes.

Severe-Injury and Fatal Crashes

Figure 4-22 shows pedestrian injury crashes by type and year for the planning area.

Of the 141 pedestrian crashes reported in the planning area for 2008-2012, only three crashes resulted in no injury. Over 51 percent of total pedestrian injury crashes (72) resulted in a non-incapacitating injury. Possible injury crashes comprised 27 percent (38) of the injury crashes, while incapacitating injury crashes comprised 14 percent (20). The five-year average for fatalities doubled from 0.8 for 2005-2009 to 1.6 for 2008-2012, illustrating a definite upward trend in fatal pedestrian crashes. Alcohol was involved in 15 percent (21) of the pedestrian crashes in 2008-2012; however, alcohol was involved in only one of the fatal crashes. Drugs were involved in one other fatal crash.

Of the eight fatal crashes, only one resulted in a citation of the motorist. One crash was a hit-and-run (out of 10 total hit-and-run crashes) and the other six were considered pedestrian error (i.e. crossing outside of a crosswalk, failure to yield right-of-way, darting into the street) or no error because the motorist had no traffic control and environmental conditions were such that the pedestrian was not visible.

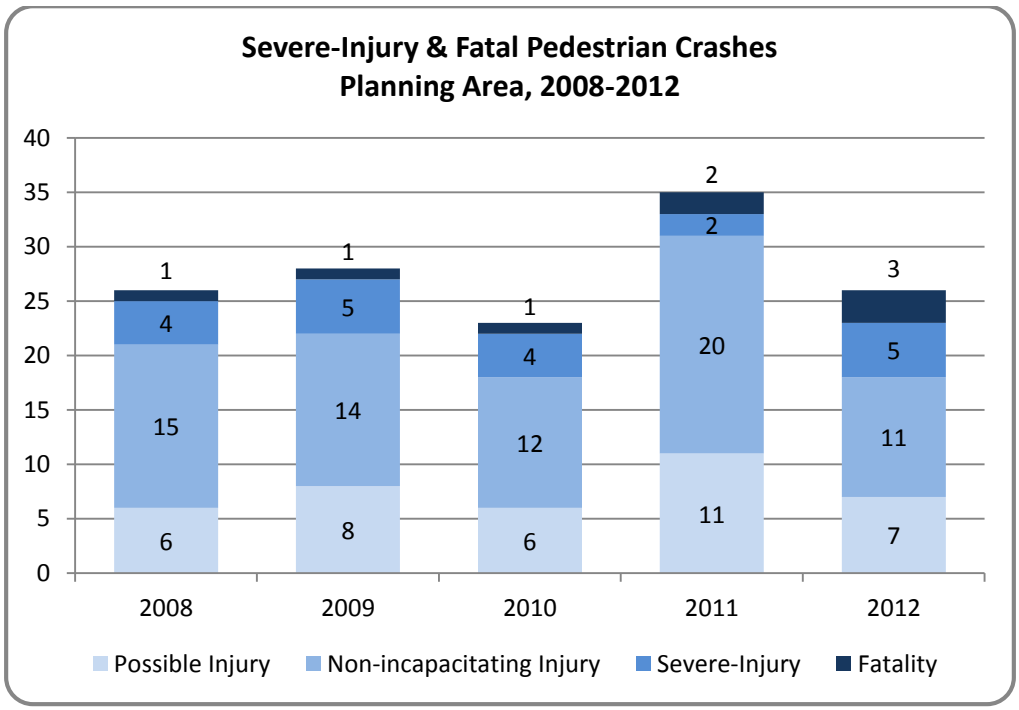

Figure 4-22: Pedestrian fatal and injury crashes in the planning area, 2008-2012.
Data Sources: Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory, UW-Madison; Minnesota Crash Mapping Analysis Tool, Minnesota Department of Transportation.

High Pedestrian Crash Locations

The top pedestrian-motor vehicle crash locations for 2008-2012 are illustrated in **Table 4-11**. Four of five of these locations are also high-crash locations for bicyclists. (No pedestrian crashes were reported at the high-bicycle-crash location at West Ave and Badger St discussed under bicycle safety in the previous section.)

The West Ave/La Crosse St and State Rd/Losey Blvd intersections have been identified by WisDOT as intersections of concern (crash rates greater than 1.0) with crash rates of 1.32 and 1.14, respectively, for 2009-2013.

TABLE 4-11: TOP PEDESTRIAN-MOTOR VEHICLE CRASH LOCATIONS, 2008-2012

Location (Intersection)	Total Crashes
Mormon Coulee Rd / Broadview Pl / Shelby Rd*	5
West Ave / La Crosse St*	5
West Ave / Jackson St*	5
State Rd / Losey Blvd*	3
Mormon Coulee Rd / Losey Blvd	3

*These locations are also high bicycle crash locations.

Data Source: Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory, UW-Madison.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

In 2007, La Crosse County added a grant-funded SRTS Coordinator to apply for infrastructure and non-infrastructure grants and to work with local schools to improve the walking and bicycling environment for students and to encourage more biking and walking in general. To date, the La Crosse County SRTS coordinator has worked to:

- Develop encouragement programs like Walking School Buses, Walk n' Roll to School Days, and Walk & Wheel to School Week.
- Integrate bicycle education into school physical education programs.
- Establish after-school bicycle maintenance shops.
- Develop education opportunities for teachers and students through teacher training, bicycle rodeos, and school events.
- Improve safety through the purchase of equipment for safety patrols and crossing guards.
- Plan and fund the construction of such infrastructure as bicycle lanes, sidewalks, traffic signals, rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs), flashing school crossing signs, and high-visibility pavement markings.

The benefits of the SRTS program in La Crosse County include improved walking and bicycling conditions near schools, reduced traffic congestion near schools, and an increase in walking and bicycling to school. Walking School Bus participation in La Crosse County, for example, grew from 2-8 students per week in 2007 to 20-50 students per week in 2012. Since 2007, over 13,000 walking and bicycling trips to school can be attributed to Walking School Buses at participating schools.

The SRTS program initiated in 2006 in La Crescent was managed by Active Living La Crescent and then by the Healthy Community Partnership (HCP). SRTS program under Active Living La Crescent was responsible for establishing the Bike Shoppe, advocating for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and incorporating bicycle safety training into school curriculum. Although the SRTS program no longer has an official coordinator, the program continues to flourish through volunteer work at the schools.

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PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION

INVENTORY

Three passenger services are available to residents of the La Crosse area: passenger rail provided by Amtrak; intercity bus provided by Jefferson Bus Lines; and commercial passenger air provided by several air carriers serving the La Crosse Regional Airport.

Passenger Rail

AMTRAK

Amtrak business is broke out into three major services: 1) the Northeast Corridor (NEC), which generates 52 percent of all Amtrak ticket revenues; 2) 15 long-distance corridors that range in length from 764 miles to 2,438 miles; and 3) 15 state-supported/short-distance corridors, including the Hiawatha Service between Milwaukee, WI and Chicago, IL.

Service through the planning area is provided daily by the Empire Builder by one eastbound and one westbound train on Canadian Pacific Railway track. The Empire Builder provides long-distance service between Chicago and the Pacific Northwest. Westbound from Chicago, this train travels through Sturtevant, Milwaukee, Columbus, Portage, Wisconsin Dells, and Tomah in Wisconsin before it arrives at the La Crosse station at 601 St. Andrew St. The train leaves La Crosse at approximately 7:14 p.m., passing through Winona and Red Wing in Minnesota before it arrives in St. Paul on its way to Seattle, WA or Portland, OR. The eastbound train is scheduled to arrive in La Crosse at about 10:47 a.m. Because 72 percent of the miles traveled by Amtrak trains are on tracks owned by other railroads or "host railroads," Amtrak service experiences many delays. From October 2012 to October 2013, the Empire Builder experienced on-time performance of only 60 percent. Train interference and track and signals accounted for 73 percent of delay minutes.

Ridership

Figure 4-23 spans eight years of Amtrak arrivals and departures for the La Crosse Amtrak station—the five years covered by the 2035 MTP (2005-2009) and the five years covered by this 2040 MTP (2008-2012). As the figure illustrates, the trend in ridership is upwards despite the dip in ridership from 2010 to 2011. The five-year average in ridership for the 2040 MTP (30,148) is up 5 percent from the five-year

average for the 2035 MTP (28,741). The total number of passengers in 2012 was up 14 percent from 2005, but down 9 percent from the eight-year peak in 2010.

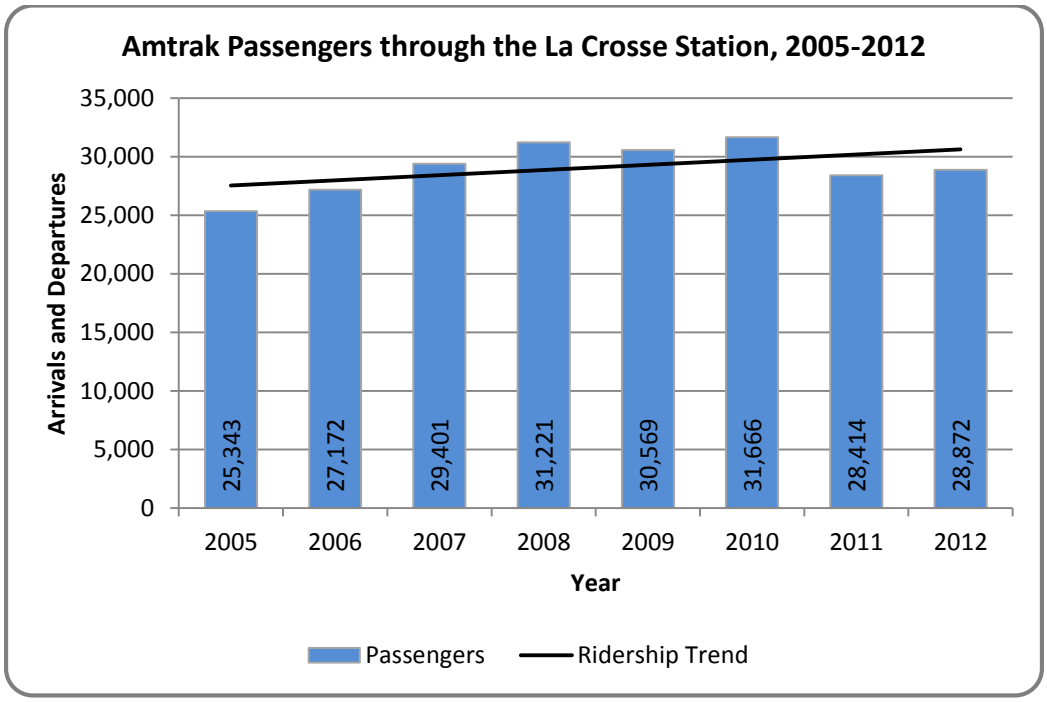


Figure 4-23: Amtrak passengers through the La Crosse Amtrak Station.
Data source: La Crosse County EconoWatch; Amtrak.com.

Local Access

The Amtrak station is accessed by car from the south via Rose St, Monitor St, and Caledonia St, and from the east via St Andrew St. Barriers to the west (Copeland Ave/Rose St viaducts) and north (railroad) of the station and a lack of through-streets make access from those directions difficult and unsafe. The 50 parking spaces available for Amtrak users have been sufficient for those who choose to park their vehicles at the station.

Municipal Transit Utility (MTU) indirectly serves the station with its Route 5 Valley View and Route 6 Northside buses. Route 5 will offer northbound and downtown bound connections with a five-block walk to George St at St Andrew St. Northbound Route 6 can be accessed with a two-block walk south of the station down an alley to Rose St at Gould St or with a five-block circuitous walk north on local streets to St Cloud St at Rose St. Route 6 does not provide safe and reasonable access to downtown bound service. MTU does not currently offer demand response service to the station.

MIDWEST REGIONAL RAIL INITIATIVE (MWRRI)

The MWRRI is a joint project of the departments of transportation for the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The proposed Midwest Regional Rail System is a 3,000-mile, Chicago-based passenger rail network, offering high-speed travel competitive with driving and flying. **Figure 4-24** illustrates the system and its high-speed rail corridors (up to 110 mph), lower speed rail corridors (less than 110 mph), and feeder bus service as recommended in 2004. Since Wisconsin rejected Federal funds for rolling stock and rail service between Milwaukee and Madison in 2010, the "most reasonable and feasible passenger rail alternative" through Wisconsin as recommended in the FRA-approved Final Alternatives Selection Report, no longer goes through Madison, but follows the existing Amtrak service through Columbus, Portage, Wisconsin Dells, and Tomah before arriving in La Crosse (**Figure 4-25**).

While Wisconsin has taken a subordinate role in the further study of high-speed rail service through Wisconsin, Minnesota continues the study with a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to 1) focus the purpose and need developed by MWRRI for the Twin Cities-to-Milwaukee corridor; 2) evaluate train types, levels of service, and ridership; and, 3) analyze impacts to determine a preferred service and design alternative for the route alternative identified in the Final Alternatives Selection Report

The Tier 1 EIS for the Twin Cities-to-Milwaukee Corridor is expected to be completed in 2015, with preliminary engineering occurring in 2015-2016, and design and construction occurring in 2016-2018. Service between the Twin Cities and Chicago is anticipated to begin in 2019 contingent upon funding availability, successful negotiations with railroads, securing necessary federal approvals, minimal environmental mitigation factors, ability to secure necessary right-of-way, identified operating and maintenance funding, equipment availability, and continued legislative support.

Meanwhile, Amtrak has completed a feasibility study of an additional daily passenger train between the Twin Cities or St. Cloud and Chicago. The study concluded that the route between St. Paul and Chicago is the most feasible for initial service with potential extensions to Minneapolis and St. Cloud. The purpose of the second daily train is to provide improved eastbound reliability and increased train frequency.

Figure 4-24: Midwest Regional Rail System as recommended in 2004.
Source: Minnesota Department of Transportation, www.dot.state.mn.us.

Figure 4-25: Proposed Twin Cities-to-Milwaukee High Speed Rail Corridor, 2013.
Source: Minnesota Department of Transportation, www.dot.state.mn.us.

Intercity Bus

JEFFERSON LINES

Intercity bus service is provided to the City of La Crosse by Jefferson Lines, which is operated by Jefferson Partners LP out of Minneapolis, MN. Jefferson serves 13 states in the central United States from Montana to Minnesota and south to Texas and the province of Manitoba in Canada.

Jefferson Lines offers one eastbound trip and one westbound trip through the La Crosse area. The eastbound motor coach from Minneapolis arrives at Grand River Station at 3rd St and Jay St in downtown La Crosse at 2:45 p.m. and then leaves at 2:50 p.m. bound for Whitney Center (3:00 p.m.), University of Wisconsin – La Crosse (UWL), before heading to Sparta, Baraboo, Madison, and its final destination of Milwaukee. The westbound motor coach from Milwaukee stops at Whitney Center at 1:10 p.m. before arriving at Grand River Station at 1:20 p.m. The bus leaves the Station at 1:25 p.m. as it makes its way to Winona, Rochester, Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport, Mall of America, and Minneapolis.

The ticket counter at Grand River Station is staffed by Jefferson Lines from 12:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday so passengers may purchase tickets or ship packages. Tickets may also be purchased between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday at the information desk in Cartwright Center on the UWL campus. The campus location, however, is not staffed by Jefferson Lines nor does it offer package shipping services.

Because of construction on the UWL campus, the Jefferson Lines bus stop has been temporarily moved to Mitchell Hall on Pine St. Construction is expected to continue into 2020.

Ridership

Figure 4-26 illustrates the steady increase in passengers boarding and alighting in La Crosse for 2008 through 2012. The number of passengers in 2012 increased 35 percent from 2008 and 51 percent from the five-year low in 2009. Since 2009, ridership has increased by more than 500 people per year.

Figure 4-26: Total Jefferson Lines passengers for Grand River Station and UWL.
Data source: Jefferson Lines.

Local Access

Since Jefferson Lines moved its La Crosse stop from the Amtrak station to Grand River Station in 2010, La Crosse residents and visitors have improved access to both the intercity bus and local transit services. As the hub of all core MTU transit routes, transfers between MTU and Jefferson are seamless, with no need to walk blocks to make a connection as was needed at the Amtrak station location. Any wait times can be done in comfort in Grand River Station where seating, vending, and washrooms are available.

Commercial Air Passenger Service

LA CROSSE REGIONAL AIRPORT

La Crosse Regional Airport is owned and operated by the City of La Crosse and is classified as a primary (at least 10,000 passengers annually) commercial service airport—an airport that supports regularly scheduled, year-round commercial airline service and the full-range of general aviation activity to domestic and international destinations.

The airport has 804 parking spaces available for public parking—65 for short-term parking and 739 for long-term parking. Hourly parking rates for short-term parking are $1.25 per 30 minutes up to a maximum of $10.00 per day. The daily parking rate

for long-term parking is $1.25 for the first hour and $1.00 for each additional hour up to a maximum of $7.00 per day or $35 per week. Visitors to the area may also rent a vehicle from Avis, Hertz, or National.

The two principal air carriers that serve the airport are American Airlines, which has non-stop service to Chicago, and Delta, which has non-stop service to the Twin Cities and to Detroit as seasonal service. Other air carriers include Allegiant Air, American Eagle Airlines (American Airlines), Chautauqua Airlines, Endeavor Air, Miami Air International, SkyWest Airlines, Sun Country Airlines, Swift Air, Tradewind Aviation, and USA Jet Airlines.

Passenger Volumes

In the 2035 MTP, passenger volumes through the Airport were represented by boardings onto domestic air carriers. This 2040 MTP and from here on out the measure for passenger volumes is total enplanements (passengers) on all domestic and international carriers serving the La Crosse Regional Airport. Because of the differences in source data, the data sets cannot be compared. Their trends, however, can be compared.

As was the case in passengers boarding at the Airport for 2005-2008 reported in the 2035 MTP, the trend in total passengers enplaned at the Airport for 2008-2012 is declining (**Figure 4-27**). The total number of passengers enplaned in 2012 is down 9 percent from the five-year average (206,057) and down 16 percent from the five-year peak in 2008 (222,359). The Airport manager is looking to reverse this trend with the help of a Small Community Air Service Development Grant and local support to help provide a direct connection to Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas.

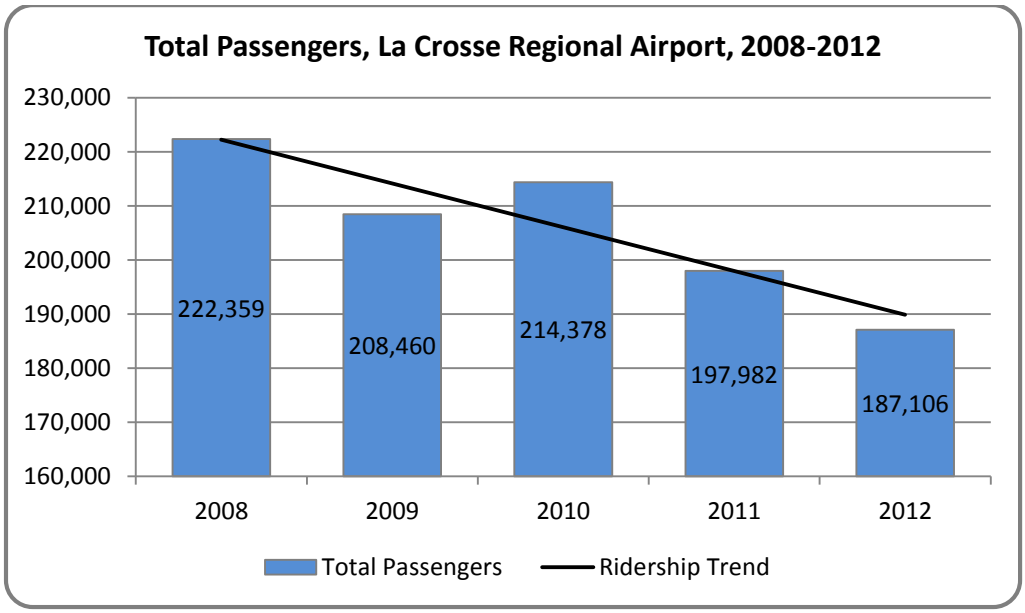


Figure 4-27: Total passengers enplaned at the La Crosse Regional Airport.
Data source: T-100 Market All Carriers, Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

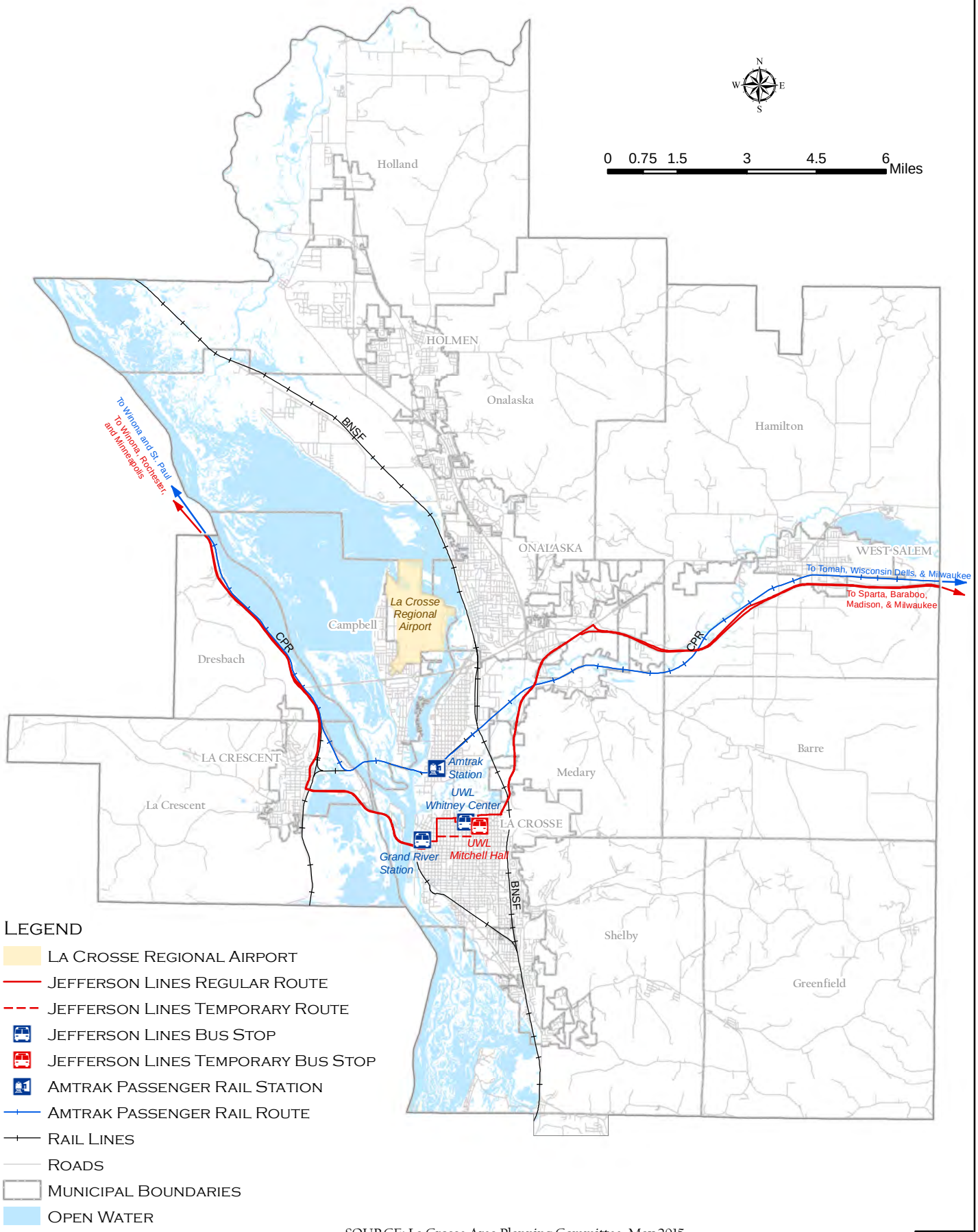
Local Access

Access to the airport is best achieved via I-90 from the east or west and via Fanta Rd or Lakeshore Dr from the south. Because the airport is on French Island, I-90 and Clinton St (CTH B) are the only means of access onto the island from anywhere outside the Town of Campbell.

MTU provides door-to-door service to the main terminal of the Airport through demand response on Route 7 French Island. This route only operates Monday through Friday.

Figure 4-28 shows the location of the La Crosse Regional Airport and the alignments for Amtrak and Jefferson Lines through the planning area.

Figure 4-28: Passenger Air, Rail, and Bus Services



Legend

- La Crosse Regional Airport
- Jefferson Lines Regular Route
- Jefferson Lines Temporary Route
- Jefferson Lines Bus Stop
- Jefferson Lines Temporary Bus Stop
- Amtrak Passenger Rail Station
- Amtrak Passenger Rail Route
- Rail Lines
- Roads
- Municipal Boundaries
- Open Water

SOURCE: La Crosse Area Planning Committee, May 2015.

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SAFETY AND SECURITY

Passenger Rail

AMTRAK

Safety
Amtrak continues to maintain a clear safety record with no incidents occurring within the planning area.

Security
Ensuring safety and security for the users of Amtrak is a bit more challenging than it is for airlines, for example, because Amtrak has multiple points of access and shares facilities with commuter rail operations and city transit systems that handle millions of daily passengers at hundreds of stations. To ensure passenger rail security, Amtrak has instituted a range of behind-the-scenes and front line security measures practiced by Amtrak Police Department and Ticket Agents. Security measures, some of which are conducted randomly, include:

- Uniformed police officers and Special Operations Units
- Random passenger and carry-on baggage screening and inspection
- K-9 units
- Screening checked baggage
- Onboard security checks
- Identification checks

Crime prevention tips are also provided at stations and on the Amtrak Web site.

Intercity Bus

JEFFERSON BUS LINES

Safety
The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) assesses motor carrier safety through its Safety Measurement System (SMS). The SMS provides an assessment of a motor carrier's on-road performance and investigation results within the Behavior Analysis and Safety Improvement Categories (BASICs). Assessments cover 24 months of activity and the results are updated monthly.

The SMS assessment illustrated in **Table 4-13** is for Jefferson Lines as a company, not for a particular a particular route or bus. Thus the assessment includes all 78 motor coaches operating in 13 states and in Manitoba, Canada, and is for the 24 months ending October 25, 2013.

Jefferson Lines did not exceed the intervention threshold for four of the five public categories. The threshold was exceeded for driver fitness. Although the status for the hazardous materials compliance category is not public, one can assume Jefferson Lines does not exceed the threshold as the category is not applicable to a passenger bus service. The status for the crash indicator category is also not public—it is available only to logged-in users such as State partners. A list of crash activity, however, is available for public viewing. For the 24 months ending October 25, 2013, Jefferson Lines experienced four crashes—all of which involved tow-aways—and one fatality that occurred in Arkansas.

TABLE 4-12: SAFETY MEASUREMENT SYSTEM ASSESSMENT OF JEFFERSON LINES

BASIC[1]	Description	Status
Unsafe driving	Operation of CMVs[2] by drivers in a dangerous or careless manner	Does not exceed intervention threshold based upon On-road Performance and Investigation Results.
Hours-of-service compliance	Operation of CMVs by drivers who are ill, fatigued, or in non-compliance with the Hours-of-Service (HOS) regulations.	Does not exceed intervention threshold based upon On-road Performance and Investigation Results.
Driver fitness	Operation of CMVs by drivers who are unfit to operate a CMV due to lack of training, experience, or medical qualifications.	Exceeds the Intervention Threshold to be prioritized for intervention.

TABLE 4-12: SAFETY MEASUREMENT SYSTEM ASSESSMENT OF JEFFERSON LINES (CONTINUED)

BASIC[1]	Description	Status
Controlled substances and alcohol	Operation of CMVs by drivers who are impaired due to alcohol, illegal drugs, and misuse of prescription or over-the-counter medications.	Does not exceed intervention threshold based upon On-road Performance and Investigation Results.
Vehicle maintenance	Failure to properly maintain a CMV and/or to properly prevent shifting loads.	Does not exceed intervention threshold based upon On-road Performance and Investigation Results.
Hazardous materials compliance	Unsafe handling of hazardous materials on a CMV.	Not public.
Crash indicator	Histories or patterns of high-crash involvement, including frequency and severity.	Not public.

[1] Behavior Analysis and Safety Improvement Category.
[2]Commercial motor vehicle.

Security
Jefferson Lines does not have a published security policy for its passenger service. Checked bags must have a baggage claim check and an identification tag for the baggage handler to place the baggage underneath the bus. Baggage transfers between buses are the responsibility of the passenger, unless a customer such as an elderly passenger, person with disabilities, or adult with small children is in need of help. Persons needing assistance can obtain a special handling identification tag.

Commercial Air Passenger Service

LA CROSSE REGIONAL AIRPORT

Safety
The Aviation Accident/Incident Database from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) reports no accidents/incidents at the airport; however, a helicopter in route to University of Wisconsin Hospital in Madison crashed into trees along a ridgeline after departing Gundersen Lutheran Hospital on May 10, 2008. The pilot,

physician, and flight nurse sustained fatal injuries. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) determined the probable causes of the accident to be:

1) The pilot's failure to maintain clearance from trees along the top of a ridgeline due to inadequate pre-flight planning;
2) Insufficient altitude; and,
3) The lack of a helicopter terrain awareness and warning system.

Because this accident is included in the five-year time frames for both the 2035 MTP (2005-2008) and the 2040 MTP (2008-2012) and no other incidents occurred in either time frame, the five-year crash average for 2008-2012 is unchanged from the five-year crash average for 2005-2008.

Security

Security rules and regulations at the Airport are established by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), which requires all passengers to pass through screening checkpoints. The TSA website (www.tsa.gov/traveler-information) provides detailed information to help travelers navigate the screening process.

FREIGHT FACILITIES

INVENTORY

Freight movement within and through the planning area occurs via water, rail, truck, and air. Barge freight is moved through the planning area on the Mississippi and Black Rivers, as well as to and from intermodal facilities and two municipal docks (Isle La Plume and South Copeland); rail freight is carried by the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) or the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad; truck freight is moved by many over-the-road freight carriers primarily on the National Highway System (NHS); and air freight is carried into and out of the La Crosse Regional Airport on commercial passenger air carriers. Service costs per pound of freight carried vary widely by mode of transport. Water transport is the cheapest per pound, followed by rail, and then truck, with air transport being the most expensive. In general, low-value, high-weight commodities are transported by water and high-value, low-weight commodities are transported by air.

Navigation Facilities

The Mississippi Valley Division (MVD)—one of nine divisions that make up the United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE)—manages the entire length of the Mississippi River from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. The MVD consists of six interdependent districts—St. Paul, Rock Island, St. Louis, Memphis, Vicksburg, and New Orleans—responsible for maintaining navigation channels for the transport of goods. The St. Paul District has jurisdiction over 284 miles of the Upper Mississippi River. The District is responsible for maintaining a 9-foot-deep navigation channel—243.6 miles on the Mississippi River and 40.6 miles on the Minnesota, St. Croix, and Black Rivers—and the 12 uppermost navigation pools, and locks and dams from Guttenburg, Iowa north to Upper St. Anthony's Falls in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The planning area includes the southern half of navigation pool 7, which extends from Lock & Dam 7 (LD 7) located north of La Crescent, Minnesota near Dresbach, Minnesota upstream to LD 6 near Trempealeau, Wisconsin; LD 7 located on Mississippi River mile 702.5 in the Town of Dresbach; and the northern half of navigation pool 8, which extends from LD 8 near Genoa, Wisconsin, upstream to LD 7. **Figure 4-29** illustrates navigation pools 7 and 8 and the locations of LDs 6, 7, and 8.

LD 7 was constructed with a lock 110 feet wide by 600 feet long and a concrete dam 940 feet long, and placed into operation in April of 1937.

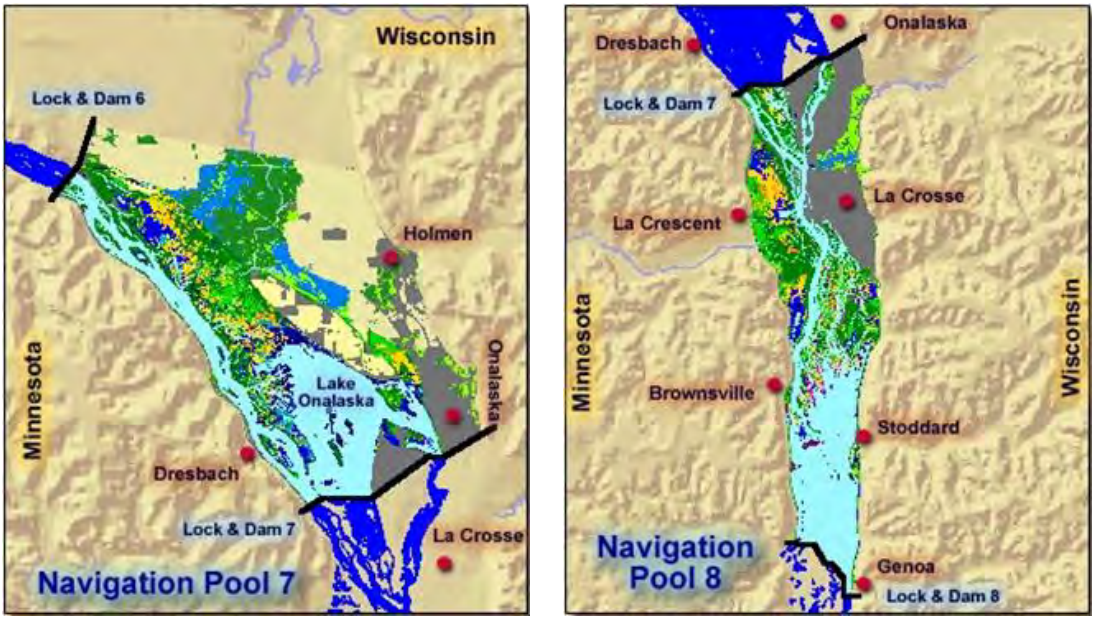


Figure 4-29: Mississippi River navigation pools and locks & dams influencing the planning area. *Source:* Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center, USGS, www.umesc.usgs.gov.

Table 4-13 summarizes the characteristics of the major fleeting sites in the Port of La Crosse. (The map numbers relate to the locations in **Figure 4-31**.) Fleeting sites allow barges to be set aside while they wait to be loaded and unloaded. This practice allows enough barges to fill up and be collected for a tow. It also keeps the main port from becoming congested.

TABLE 4-13: SUMMARY OF MAJOR FLEETING SITES

Map #[1]	Site	Location	Notes
1	Isle La Plume Fleeting Site	East side of main channel of the Mississippi River (mile 696.4), west of Isle La Plume, south of the municipal dock, and across Main Channel from Hintgen Island fleeting site, La Crosse.	• 24-ft mooring cell. • One of the major fleeting sites in the Port of La Crosse. • Operated by a local fleeting service under lease with the City Harbor Commission. • WisDNR permit allows a capacity of 32 barges arranged in 8 tiers.
2	Harold E. Craig / Hintgen Island Fleeting Site	West side of main channel of the Mississippi (mile 696.4) and opposite the Isle La Plume fleeting site owned by the City of La Crosse.	• Operated by Brennan Marine Inc. • Capacity to hold 15 barges in 5 tiers. • Staging site during low demand for working the starboard side of a tow. • Space for 15 additional barges.
3	Municipal Dock Raparian Lease	North of Isle La Plume Fleeting site on east side of Main Channel of Mississippi River (mile 696.4); across Main Channel from Hintgen Island fleeting site, south end of Isle La Plume, La Crosse.	• Public dock. • No rail access. • No longer used for cargo handling. • Waterfront used for barge fleeting berths. • Leased to Brennan Marine, Inc.

TABLE 4-13: SUMMARY OF MAJOR FLEETING SITES (CONTINUED)

Map #[1]	Site	Location	Notes
4	Xcel Energy/Northern States Power	West side of plant on Black River, French Island, Town of Campbell.	• Overflow site for barge fleeting.
5	Midwest Industrial Fuel	Black River, approximately one mile above Mississippi River mile 698.1; 0.2 mile above CP Rail System Bridge.	• Temporary barge fleeting when not receiving product (9 barges). • Three additional spaces are available upon notification to the WisDNR. • Four spaces lost when asphalt tows offload.
6	F.J. Robers	Black River (mile 1.0), south of Brennan Marine on Bainbridge St, French Island, Town of Campbell.	• Fleeting for 6 barges. • Dock operations result in minimum fleeting.

[1]The map number corresponds to the numbered locations illustrated in Figure 4-31.
Source: Port of La Crosse Harbor and Waterfront Plan 2011.

Railroad Facilities

BURLINGTON NORTHERN AND SANTA FE RAILROAD (BNSF)

BNSF operates one of the largest railroad networks in North America, with 32,500 route miles covering 28 states throughout the western two-thirds of the U.S. and two Canadian provinces. In 2012, BNSF transported 4.7 million intermodal containers (truck trailers or containers), and hauled over 1 million carloads of agricultural commodities, 1.7 million carloads of industrial products, and 2.2 million coal shipments. Each doublestack intermodal train can take 280 trucks off the highways.

Train Frequency

The portion of BNSF that operates in Wisconsin is part of its Chicago Operating Division. As reported in the *2035 La Crosse and La Crescent Metropolitan Transportation Plan*, the mainline through the planning area averaged about 45 to 50 trains per day. BNSF reports for 2013 that the mainline averages 55 to 60 trains per day (a 20 to 22 percent increase) and the city track averages 5 trains per week.

Because the BNSF rail line through La Crosse County drops from a dual track to a single track between roughly Farnam St and the rail yard in north La Crosse, trains will sit on the track as they wait their turn, often blocking off neighborhoods in the process. BNSF proposed to address train delays, safety concerns, and increasing demand for service by constructing a second track to fill the gap. BNSF received the proper approvals and has begun construction, which is expected to be completed by the fall of 2015. Local groups oppose the construction because of the loss of over seven acres of wetland, the likelihood of increased train traffic, and the fear of accidents involving trains transporting crude oil.

Intermodal Freight Handling

The La Crosse rail yard in north La Crosse serves as a preferred team track to address the occasional handling (no more than 52 cars per year) of carload rail freight. Customers who need more intensive service are referred to a transload facility where commodities can be directly transferred between modes (i.e. truck to rail).

BNSF prohibits the following materials for Team Track:

- Hazardous waste and non-hazardous wastes.
- All oils including vegetable and animal fats.
- Environmentally sensitive materials as defined by 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

- Chemicals that could impact groundwater or storm water (i.e. salts, fertilizers, plastic pellets).
- Explosives as defined by the Bureau of Explosives (BOE) 6000 series tariff.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY (CPR)

Canadian Pacific (CP) is a freight rail service provider that operates on 14,700 miles of track through 6 Canadian provinces and 13 states (**Figure 4-30**). CP also offers passenger rail tours on its Royal Canadian Pacific in eastern British Columbia and western Alberta. Regular passenger rail service on CP trackage is provided by ViaRail in Canada and Amtrak in the United States.

The CP rail line runs east-west through the planning area through the communities of Dresbach, La Crescent, Campbell, La Crosse, Medary, Hamilton, and West Salem. Between 2002 and 2008, the Iowa, Chicago, and Eastern (IC&E) Railroad operated through La Crescent as an affiliate of the Dakota, Minnesota, and Eastern (DM&E) Railroad; but, in 2008, CP acquired the DM&E and IC&E to gain access to agricultural products, ethanol, and coal.

Figure 4-30: Canadian Pacific Railway network. *Source:* www.cpr.ca.

Train Frequency

An estimated 25 to 30 freight trains pass through La Crosse each day.

Intermodal Freight Handling

CP ships such products as wind power generation equipment, ethanol, large machinery and equipment, sulphur, industrial products (i.e. chemicals, plastics,

aggregates, ores and metals, steel), grain, truck trailers, fertilizer and potash, vehicles and vehicle parts, food products, coal, and forest products. More than 100 transload facilities across North America provide direct transfer of commodities between truck and rail. Transload services in the planning area can be obtained at F.J Robers on French Island.

Railroad facilities in the planning area are illustrated in **Figure 4-31**.

Trucking Facilities

TRUCK ROUTES

By federal law, truck traffic is allowed on all roads designated as part of the National Highway System (NHS), which is comprised of interstates, U.S. and State highways, roads classified as primary arterials, and roads established by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as important connector routes (see page 4-2 for a list of the NHS roads in the planning area). Local municipalities may by ordinance prohibit truck traffic, but only on local roads and functionally-classified facilities that are not part of the NHS.

Figure 4-31 illustrates the truck-freight network, which includes the NHS system, state-designated oversize-overweight truck routes, truck routes designated by local ordinance, and additional roads to provide connectivity and a complete network.

Only the City of Onalaska and the Village of Holmen have designated truck routes to aid freight movement off of the NHS within and through their communities. One of two significant recommendations that came out of a focus group meeting of area freight interests during our Coulee Vision 2050 planning process is to establish signed truck routes through the region. The other is for the traffic signals on the major arterials to be timed so that trucks are not stopped at every signal.

Air Cargo Facilities

Although the La Crosse Airport handles some freight and mail carried by its commercial passenger air carriers, it does not have dedicated air cargo service.

Intermodal Facilities

Freight activities in the region occur through numerous carriers including air cargo, delivery, and other trucking services; marinas; railroads; and brokers. Intermodal facilities are of special interest in that they provide access and service by more than one type of freight carrier. **Table 4-14** summarizes the intermodal facilities in the planning area. The map number refers to the site's location in **Figure 4-31**. All but the former transload facility, Watco (which is no longer in operation), has water access and operates within the Port of La Crosse, which stretches for about 4 miles from Black River mile 1.2 (the location of Brennan Marine) south to Mississippi River mile 698.0 just beyond the Harold E. Craig Fleeting site.

Figure 4-31 illustrates the existing freight networks (rail and truck) and intermodal facilities.

TABLE 4-14: SUMMARY OF INTERMODAL FACILITIES

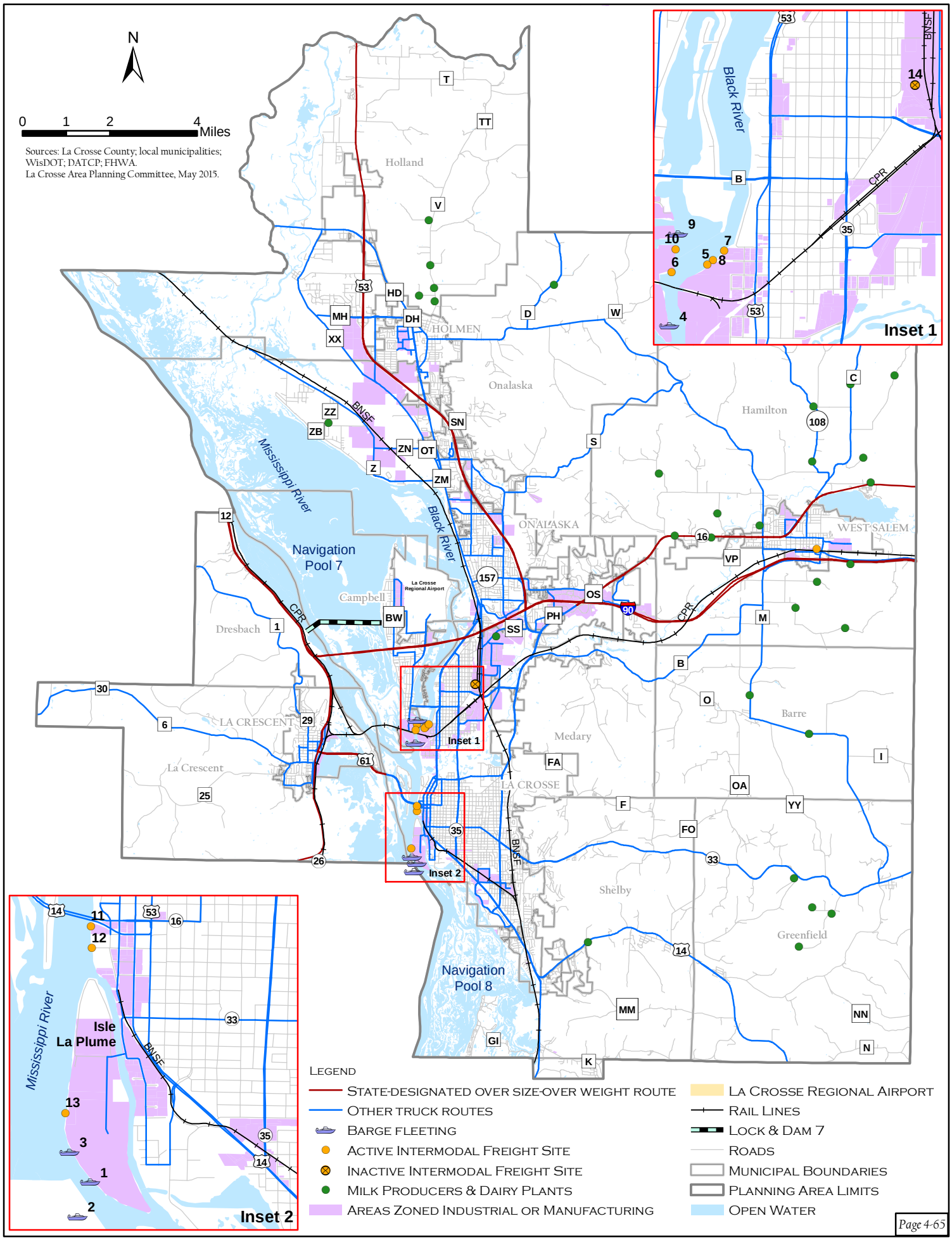
Map #[1]	Facility	Location	Uses	Access Mode
4	Xcel/NSP Dock	French Slough Black River (mile 0.7R); French Island.	*Shipping:* None. *Receiving:* Fuel oil (rarely). *Storage/Services:* Barge overflow; local excursion boats.	Barge only.
5	Midwest Industrial Fuel	Black River (mile 1.2); Sumner St, La Crosse.	*Shipping:* None. *Receiving:* Asphalt by barge and rail; petroleum products. *Storage/Services:* Fueling towboats; mooring barges for fleeting.	Barge, truck, and rail (CPR).
6	F.J. Robers Co.	Black River (mile 1.0); Bainbridge St, French Island, Town of Campbell.	*Shipping:* Steel products (bars, ingots, IORS sheet pipe, scrap, etc.); cement; salt; coal, coke, and other iron products; aggregates (sand, gravel, crushed stone, granite, limestone, etc.); generators and transformers; special rail projects; and fertilizers (phosphates, nitrogens, urea, etc.). *Receiving:* Same as shipping; grain [Agri-Grain Marketing (operator for Cargill)]; vegetable oils (Westway Trading Company); cottonseed for animal feed (Cottonseed LLC).	Barge, truck, and rail (CPR).
7	City of La Crosse Municipal Dock	Black River (mile 1.4); South side of Copeland Park at western terminus of St. Cloud St, La Crosse.	*Shipping:* Heavy machinery (Trane Co. and Chart Heat Exchangers). *Receiving:* Iron ore (Hanke Trucking). *Storage/Services:* Excursion boats (Skipperliner).	Barge and truck.
8	Hydrite Chemical Co	Black River (mile 1.3); Sumner St, La Crosse.	*Shipping:* None. *Receiving:* Liquid caustic soda.	Barge and rail (CPR).

TABLE 4-14: SUMMARY OF INTERMODAL FACILITIES (CONTINUED)

Map #[1]	Facility	Location	Uses	Access Mode
9	Brennan Marine, Inc.	Black River (mile 1.2); Bainbridge St, French Island, Town of Campbell.	*Storage/Services:* Switching; fleeting; barge cleaning; dry dock (largest north of St Louis, MO); barge topside repairs; diving; short-haul towing; freight movement.	Operates a fleet of towing vessels during the navigational season; available for short-haul towing and placement moves. No rail access.
10	Cargill Aghorizons	Black River (mile 0.5); Bainbridge St, French Island, Town of Campbell.	*Shipping:* Grain (by barge). *Receiving:* Grain (by truck).	Barge and truck. No rail access.
11	Holcim (US) Inc.	Mississippi River (mile 697.5); Cross St, La Crosse.	*Shipping:* Cement (by truck). *Receiving:* Cement (by barge).	Barge and truck. No rail access.
12	First Supply Plumbing (Division Street Dock)	Mississippi River (mile 697.4); Division St, La Crosse.	*Storage/Services:* Ductile iron pipe transported by truck.	Barge and truck access. No rail access.
13	Hanke Terminals	Mississippi River (mile 696.4); Isle La Plume, La Crosse.	*Shipping:* None. *Receiving:* Dry bulk (coal, road salt, pig iron, and aggregate). *Storage/Services:* 2 acres open storage and 4 acres at the Island St rail siding.	Barge and truck access. No rail access.
14	Watco Transload & Intermodal Services	1736 Credit Union Ct, La Crosse.	*Storage:* 20,000 sq ft warehouse. *Switching:* Canadian Pacific to BNSF. *Delivering carrier:* BNSF. This facility is currently inactive.	Truck and Rail (space for 10 rail cars)

[1]The map number corresponds to the numbered locations illustrated in Figure 4-31.
Source: Port of La Crosse Harbor and Waterfront Plan 2011.

Figure 4-31: Freight Activity and Facilities



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COMMODITY FLOWS

Water Freight

LOCK & DAM 7

Barge traffic passing *through* the planning area will lock through LD 7 just north of La Crescent in Dresbach, Minnesota. The number of barges through LD 7 (**Figure 4-32**) increased significantly (54 percent) between 2008 and 2009, but declined 13 percent between 2009 and 2012. The number of loaded barges peaked in 2010 at 6,357.

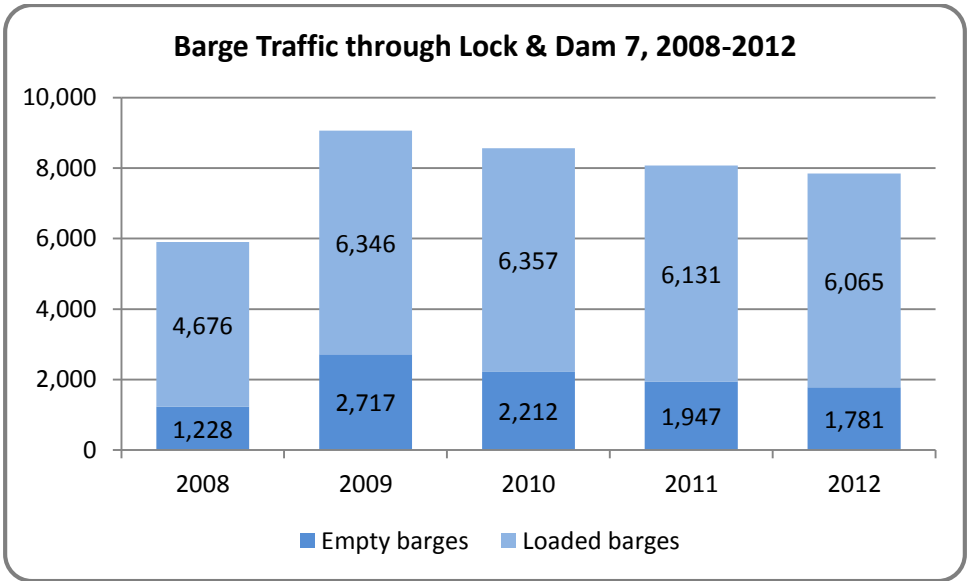


Figure 4-32: Barge traffic through Lock & Dam 7.
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, www.mvp.usace.army.mil.

Commodities and their respective tonnages by year are illustrated in **Table 4-15**. **Figure 4-33** illustrates total commodity tonnage by year (bar chart); commodity categories 10, 20, and 40 aggregated into "Natural and crude products"; categories 50 and 70 aggregated into "Manufactured good"; Food and farm products; and Chemicals and related products. Because of the small totals, "Waste material" and "Unknown or Other" are not illustrated.

Total tons of commodities in 2012 increased 29 percent since 2008, but declined 4 percent from the 5-yr peak in 2010. Despite a 10 percent drop in tons between 2010 and 2012, food and farm products continue to dominate in total tons, making up

nearly half of the commodity tons through LD 7. Tonnages for chemicals and related products and for manufactured goods have been steadily increasing.

TABLE 4-15: COMMODITY TONNAGES PASSING THROUGH LOCK & DAM 7, 2008-2012

Commodity	Tons (in thousands) by Year				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
10 - Coal, lignite, and coal coke	786	648	514	385	218
20 - Petroleum and petroleum products	220	470	423	293	281
30 - Chemicals and related products	1,320	1,133	1,553	1,791	1,912
40 - Crude materials, except fuels	1,950	1,980	1,562	1,736	1,529
50 - Primary manufactured goods	271	361	599	723	815
60 - Food and farm products	2,606	4,925	5,015	4,518	4,524
70 - Manufactured equipment & machinery	90	15	13	16	29
80 - Waste material	0	0	0	0	11
90 - Unknown or Other	16	15	56	16	9
Total	**7,259**	**9,547**	**9,733**	**9,477**	**9,328**

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, www.mvp.usace.army.mil.

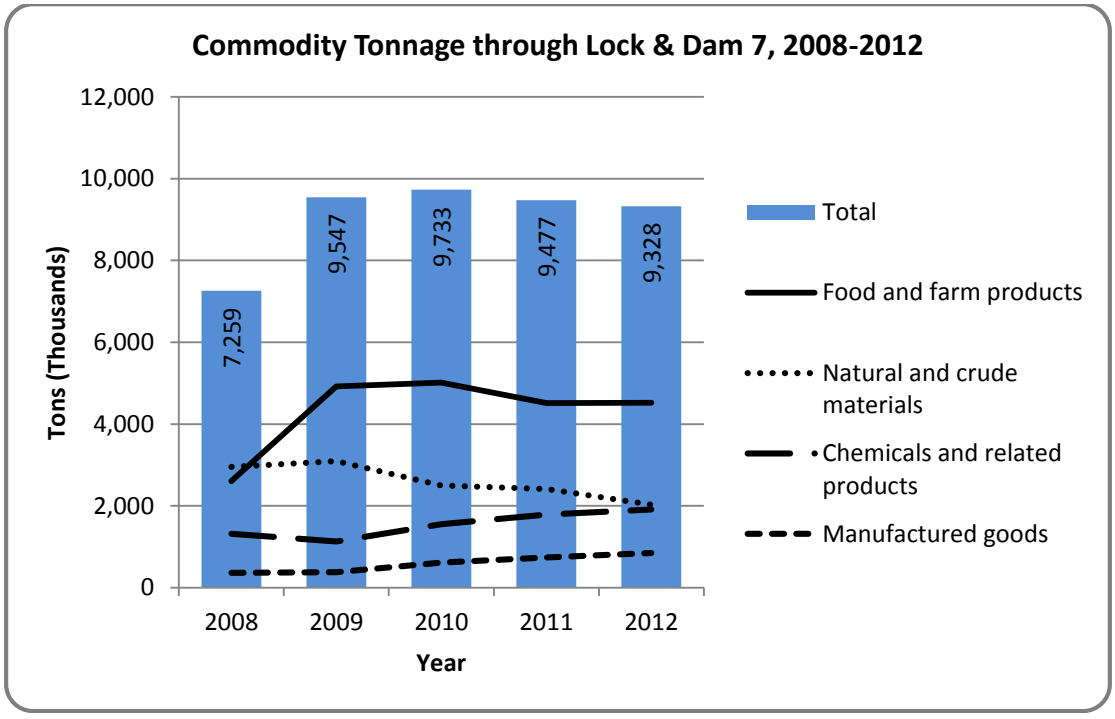


Figure 4-33: Total tons of commodities passing through Lock & Dam 7.
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, www.mvp.usace.army.mil.

PORT OF LA CROSSE

Depending on the origin and destination of each tow (a towboat pulling one or more barges), commodities handled in the Port of La Crosse may or may not pass through LD 7. Barges carrying commodities heading to or coming from Winona or the Cities will pass through LD 7; the rest pass through LD 8, which lies outside the planning area in Genoa.

According to the Brennan Marine report of loadings and unloadings, the number of barges handled in the Port between 2008 and 2012 increased 26 percent from 403 to 509. Activity in the Port includes shipping grain (i.e. corn, soybean, dried distillers grains) and scrap and receiving pig iron, cement, salt, cottonseed, coal, steel slag, lightweight aggregate, caustic soda, and fertilizer.

Commodities and their tonnages loaded and unloaded in the Port of La Crosse are illustrated in **Table 4-16**. Despite a 10 percent decline between 2011 and 2012, the total tons handled increased 21 percent over the five-year time period. More than half (52 percent) of the commodity tons handled from 2008-2012 were unloaded in the Port for use in the planning area. Grain is our one significant export, representing 47 percent of total tons handled.

TABLE 4-16: COMMODITY TONNAGES HANDLED IN THE PORT OF LA CROSSE, 2008-2012

Commodity	Tons by Year					% Change	
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2008-2012	2011-2012
Loadings	***282,000***	***237,000***	***363,000***	***415,500***	***349,500***	***23.9***	***-15.9***
Farm products	268,500	216,000	361,500	415,500	349,500	30.2	-15.8
Waste or scrap	13,500	21,000	1,500	0	0	-100.0	None
Unloadings	***345,000***	***240,000***	***369,000***	***423,000***	***408,000***	***18.3***	***-3.5***
Chemicals	118,500	115,500	102,000	88,500	73,500	-38.0	-16.9
Clay, concrete, glass, stone	109,500	64,500	159,000	244,500	222,000	102.7	-9.2
Coal	25,500	7,500	9,000	0	0	-100.0	None
Food or kindred	15,000	6,000	19,500	16,500	33,000	120.0	100.0
Primary metal products	76,500	42,000	79,500	73,500	79,500	3.9	8.2
Waste or scrap	0	4,500	0	0	0	None	None
Total	**627,000**	**477,000**	**732,000**	**838,500**	**757,500**	**20.8**	**-9.7**

Source: Brennan Marine report of Port activity. Commodities are aggregated to high level standard transportation commodity codes (STCC).

Rail Freight

As discussed in the section on freight facilities, rail freight is transported to and from the planning area via CPR and BNSF. CPR delivers materials to Hydrite Chemical Co and Midwest Industrial Fuel, and utilizes the intermodal services at F.J. Robers for transfers between rail and barge and between rail and truck. BNSF provides direct service to industries along the Heileman Spur, including Trane Co and City Brewing Co.

In an effort to improve efficiencies, railroads have consolidated and abandoned redundant and light-density lines. This has led to higher traffic densities and longer lengths of haul. Railroads also negotiate service contracts with shippers to establish rates, service levels, equipment, and minimum annual volume of traffic to name a few. For example, Canadian Pacific established a minimum annual volume of traffic of 20,000 full cars inbound and 20,000 outbound before they would invest in a transload facility in the La Crosse area. The volumes are necessary to justify the cost of manning and maintaining the facility. BNSF will handle single cars through their team track in the north La Crosse yard, but dedicated train service for high volumes of single commodities to a single location is not available here.

The change in commodity tonnages between the 2002 and 2011 Commodity Flow Surveys illustrated in **Tables 4-17** and **4-18** suggests the implementation of rail policies that maximize efficiencies. Industries shipping or receiving small annual tonnages in 2002 either shifted to a different mode or substantially increased their tonnages by rail in 2011.

TABLE 4-17: RAIL FREIGHT ORIGINATING IN LA CROSSE COUNTY, 2002 AND 2011

Commodity (STCC[1])	2002		2011	
	Tons	Percent	Tons	Percent
Chemicals (28)	23	0.01	0	0.00
Fabricated metal (34)	4	0.00	0	0.00
Farm products (01)	0	0.00	3,816	6.49
Food or kindred (20)	160,777	61.53	20,280	34.48
Lumber or wood products (24)	79,233	30.32	33,120	56.31
Machinery other than electrical (35)	1	0.00	0	0.00
Nonmetallic minerals (14)	18	0.01	0	0.00
Primary metal products (33)	28	0.01	0	0.00
Transportation equipment (37)	5	0.00	1,600	2.72
Waste or scrap (40)	21,286	8.15	0	0.00
Total	**261,316**	**100.00**	**58,816**	**100.00**

[1]Standard Transportation Commodity Code.
Source: 2002 and 2011 Commodity Flow Surveys c/o WisDOT.

TABLE 4-18: RAIL FREIGHT TERMINATING IN LA CROSSE COUNTY, 2002 AND 2011

Commodity (STCC[1])	2002		2011	
	Tons	Percent	Tons	Percent
Chemicals (28)	60,848	14.91	15,132	5.48
Clay, concrete, glass, or stone (32)	186	0.05	4,040	1.46
Crude petroleum, natural gas or gasoline (13)	0	0.00	6,160	2.23
Farm products (01)	34	0.01	0	0.00
Food or kindred (20)	208,227	51.01	65,940	23.88
Forest products (08)	0	0.00	29,140	10.55
Hazardous materials (48)	15,247	3.74	7,600	2.75
Lumber or wood products (24)	99,754	24.44	64,920	23.51
Metallic ores (10)	2	0.00	0	0.00
Nonmetallic minerals (14)	3,865	0.95	0	0.00
Petroleum or coal products (29)	1,560	0.38	13,480	4.88
Primary metal products (33)	13,578	3.33	3,480	1.26
Pulp, paper, or allied products (26)	444	0.11	0	0.00
Waste or scrap (40)	4,471	1.10	66,200	23.98
Total	**408,216**	**100.00**	**276,092**	**100.00**

[1]Standard Transportation Commodity Code.
Source: 2002 and 2011 Commodity Flow Surveys c/o WisDOT.

Truck Freight

The top 10 commodities shipped out of La Crosse County by truck are illustrated in **Table 4-19**. Eight of the 10 top commodities in 2011 were also in the top 10 in 2002. While nonmetallic minerals (i.e. broken or crushed stone, riprap, gravel, sand, clay, fertilizer minerals) made up only 4 percent of the total tonnage shipped by truck in 2002, they topped the list in 2011 with 36 percent of the total. Miscellaneous freight shipments, which include freight from movements between warehouses and/or retail locations and mixed freight, ranked second in 2011 in tonnage originating in La Crosse County, with 21 percent of the total tonnage shipped. This is down from 2002 where miscellaneous freight shipments ranked first and accounted for 31 percent of the total tonnage shipped. (NOTE: In 2002, miscellaneous freight may have included containers, etc. which would account for the lack of tonnage in that category.)

TABLE 4-19: TOP 10 COMMODITIES ORIGINATING IN LA CROSSE COUNTY BY TRUCK, 2011

Commodity (STCC[1])	2002		2011	
	Tons	Percent	Tons	Percent
Nonmetallic minerals (14)	141,286	4.31	1,184,827	36.00
Miscellaneous freight shipments[2] (41 and 46)	1,003,858	30.62	687,390	20.89
Food or kindred (20)	646,202	19.71	448,935	13.64
Farm products (01)	233,833	7.13	263,043	7.99
Lumber or wood products (24)	586,573	17.89	218,970	6.65
Waste or scrap (40)	141,406	4.31	118,188	3.59
Containers, etc., returned empty (42)	0[4]	0.00	85,974	2.61
Clay, concrete, glass or stone products (32)	80,560	2.46	73,429	2.23
Fabricated metal (34)	196,770	6.00	48,036	1.46
Machinery other than electrical (35)	9,472	0.29	46,626	1.42
Other[3]	238,508	7.27	115,420[5]	35.1
Total	**3,278,468**	**100.00**	**3,290,838[5]**	**100.00**

[1]Standard Transportation Commodity Code.
[2]Includes "secondary traffic," which are the movements between warehouses and retail locations, from the 2002 CFS and "warehouse and distribution center" from the 2011 CFS.
[3]All other high level commodity codes.
[4]Although this category was part of the STCC coding in 2002, it was not provided in the CFS data obtained from WisDOT. It is likely (but not known) that these tonnages were aggregated into "secondary traffic" (miscellaneous freight shipments category).
[5]Includes 11,296 tons of mail, express or other contract freight. This category was not included in the 2002 CFS data obtained from WisDOT.
Source: 2002 and 2011 Commodity Flow Surveys c/o WisDOT.

The top 10 commodities delivered to La Crosse County in 2011 by truck are illustrated in **Table 4-20**. As with the commodities originating in the County, there has been little change between 2002 and 2011 in the top 10 types of commodities entering the County. The one change is that pulp and paper products moved out of the top 10 (as it did for commodities originating in La Crosse County) and waste or scrap moved in.

Nonmetallic minerals—mainly riprap—comprised 26 percent of the total tonnage terminating in the County in 2011. Food or kindred ranked second with 16 percent.

TABLE 4-20: TOP 10 COMMODITIES TERMINATING IN LA CROSSE COUNTY BY TRUCK, 2011

Commodity (STCC[1])	2002		2011	
	Tons	Percent	Tons	Percent
Nonmetallic minerals (14)	420,932	11.52	832,475	26.08
Food or kindred (20)	265,424	7.26	494,378	15.49
Miscellaneous freight shipments[2] (41 and 46)	648,883	17.76	387,370	12.14
Farm products (01)	932,432	25.52	354,477	11.11
Petroleum or coal products (29)	290,766	7.96	322,439	10.10
Clay, concrete, glass or stone products (32)	363,243	9.94	141,793	4.44
Chemicals or allied products (28)	211,875	5.80	118,381	3.71
Lumber or wood products (24)	148,983	4.08	110,107	3.45
Waste or scrap (40)	46,332	1.27	82,618	2.59
Primary metal products (33)	52,491	1.44	79,295	2.48
Other[3]	272,570	7.46	268,273[4]	8.41
Total	**3,653,931**	**100.00**	**3,191,606[4]**	**100.00**

[1]Standard Transportation Commodity Code.
[2]Includes "secondary traffic," which are the movements between warehouses and retail locations, from the 2002 CFS and "warehouse and distribution center" from the 2011 CFS.
[3]All other high level commodity codes.
[4]Includes 10,075 tons of mail, express or other contract freight. This category was not included in the 2002 CFS data obtained from WisDOT.
Source: 2002 and 2011 Commodity Flow Surveys c/o WisDOT.

Air Freight

La Crosse Regional Airport is a commercial service airport with no dedicated air cargo operations. All freight received is carried by commercial passenger air carriers. As illustrated in **Table 4-21**, the tons of freight and mail originating and terminating at the La Crosse Airport have declined substantially since 2008. The reason behind the 26 tons reported for 2011 is unknown. It may be an anomaly—the amount of freight tons originating from the airport may just have been very low that year—or all of the freight tons were not reported. At any rate, the Airport is playing an ever decreasing role in the movement of freight.

TABLE 4-21: TOTAL FREIGHT[1] TONS THROUGH LA CROSSE REGIONAL AIRPORT, 2008-2012

Movement	Tons by Year					% Change	
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2008-2012	2011-2012
Originating	12,748	14,270	1,226	26	3,098	-75.7	11,815.4
Terminating	28,689	11,909	2,534	4,528	1,161	-96.0	-74.4
Total	**41,437**	**26,179**	**3,760**	**4,554**	**4,259**	**-89.7**	**-6.5**

[1]Includes mail.
Source: T-100 Market All Carriers database, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, www.transtats.bts.gov.

Summary of Modal Commodity Flows

Table 4-22 summarizes the mode share in 2011 of all freight tons originating and terminating in La Crosse County. Not surprisingly, trucks carry the greatest share (85 percent) of total tons shipped and received, while barge comes in a distant second at 11 percent.

TABLE 4-22: SUMMARY OF COMMODITY TONS TO/FROM LA CROSSE COUNTY, 2011

Mode	Originating	Terminating	Total	% Originating	% Terminating	% Total
Water[1]	415,500	423,000	838,500	11.0	10.9	10.9
Rail[2]	58,816	276,092	334,908	1.6	7.1	4.4
Truck[2]	3,290,838	3,191,606	6,482,444	87.4	82.0	84.6
Air[3]	26	4,528	4,554	0.0	0.0	0.1
Total	3,765,180	3,891,169	7,660,406	100.0	100.0	100.0

Sources: [1]Brennan Marine; [2]2011 Commodity Flow Survey c/o WisDOT; [3]T-100 Market All Carriers, Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

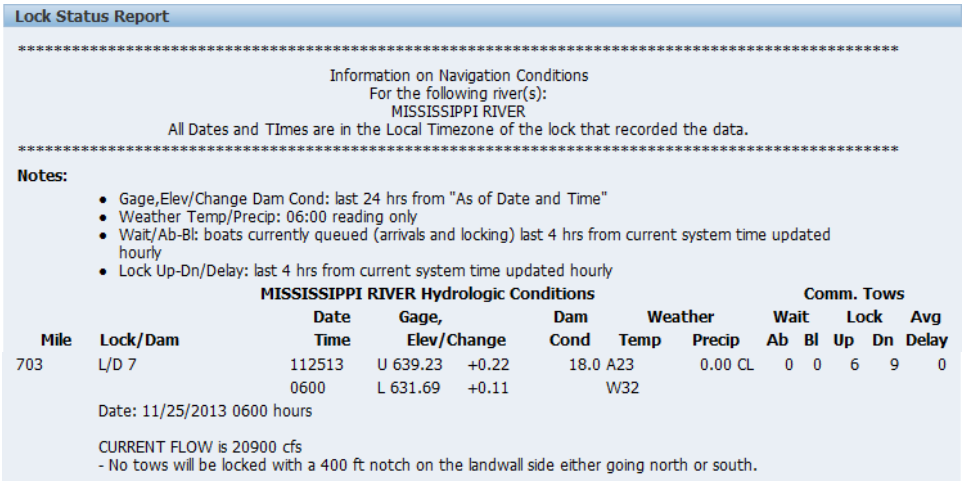
SAFETY

Navigation

The St. Paul District of the USACE maintains a strict program of operations and maintenance of its channels, embankments, and locks and dams to help prevent navigation accidents and incidents. Towboat and barge accidents and incidents, when they occur, generally result from environmental conditions such as outdraft currents that sweep towboats and barges away from the lock and into the gated part of the dam.

In July of 2013, a tugboat went over the roller gate of Lock and Dam 7 and tipped over, resulting in one fatality. Law enforcement and the owner of the tugboat blame mechanical failure, high water, and a strong current; however, the U.S. Coast Guard has not yet made a determination and is still investigating (December 2013). Earlier that year in May, a houseboat lost power and went over the dam, but fortunately none of the 11 passengers was injured. In response to this incident, a representative of the USACE stated that boaters should maintain a 600-ft distance away from the upstream area of the dam and a 150-ft distance on the downstream side.

The USACE endeavors to make river use safe by maintaining a navigation website of public access data that includes navigation reports and charts. One important tool on the website is the Lock Performance Monitoring System. This tool will provide a report of near-real-time navigation conditions (**Figure 4-34**) as well as a report of the most recent vessel traffic by river for each lock and dam. Navigation charts show the locations of navigation lights, daybeacons, lighted and channel buoys, and potential hazards—visible and submerged. The aforementioned information can be accessed from the main navigation web page at:
http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Navigation.aspx.



Lock Status Report

****

Information on Navigation Conditions
For the following river(s):
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
All Dates and TImes are in the Local Timezone of the lock that recorded the data.

****

Notes:

- Gage,Elev/Change Dam Cond: last 24 hrs from "As of Date and Time"
- Weather Temp/Precip: 06:00 reading only
- Wait/Ab-Bl: boats currently queued (arrivals and locking) last 4 hrs from current system time updated hourly
- Lock Up-Dn/Delay: last 4 hrs from current system time updated hourly

MISSISSIPPI RIVER Hydrologic Conditions

		Date	Gage,		Dam	Weather		Comm. Tows Wait		Lock		Avg
Mile	Lock/Dam	Time	Elev	Change	Cond	Temp	Precip	Ab	Bl	Up	Dn	Delay
703	L/D 7	112513	U 639.23	+0.22	18.0	A23	0.00 CL	0	0	6	9	0
		0600	L 631.69	+0.11		W32						

Date: 11/25/2013 0600 hours

CURRENT FLOW is 20900 cfs
- No tows will be locked with a 400 ft notch on the landwall side either going north or south.

Figure 4-34: Lock status report for Lock and Dam 7, November 25, 2013.
Source: Lock Performance Monitoring System, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

RAIL

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) collects and analyzes data from the railroads and converts the information into statistical tables, charts, and reports that can be accessed on the FRA Safety Data site. Collisions and incidents are continuously monitored, with serious events investigated for cause and compliance with existing safety laws and regulations.

The total number of highway-rail crossing collisions (public and private) reported for 2008-2012 (4) is down from those reported for 2005-2009 (6), resulting in a 33 percent drop in the five-year accident average (1.2 to 0.8). Of the four collisions that occurred in the planning area for 2008-2012, only one resulted in an injury and this occurred as the driver of a golf cart crossed the track in front of an oncoming freight train.

TRUCKING

Heavy truck crashes in the planning area experienced a five-year crash average of 117 crashes for 2008-2012. (Heavy trucks are defined as two-axle, six-tire single-unit trucks; three-or-more axle single-unit trucks; single-unit trucks with trailer; truck tractors with or without trailers; and other heavy trucks of unknown type. Utility trucks or pickup trucks are not heavy trucks.) **Figure 4-35** illustrates a declining trend in crashes, where 2012 experienced 25 percent fewer heavy truck crashes than in 2008 and 11 percent less than the five-year crash average.

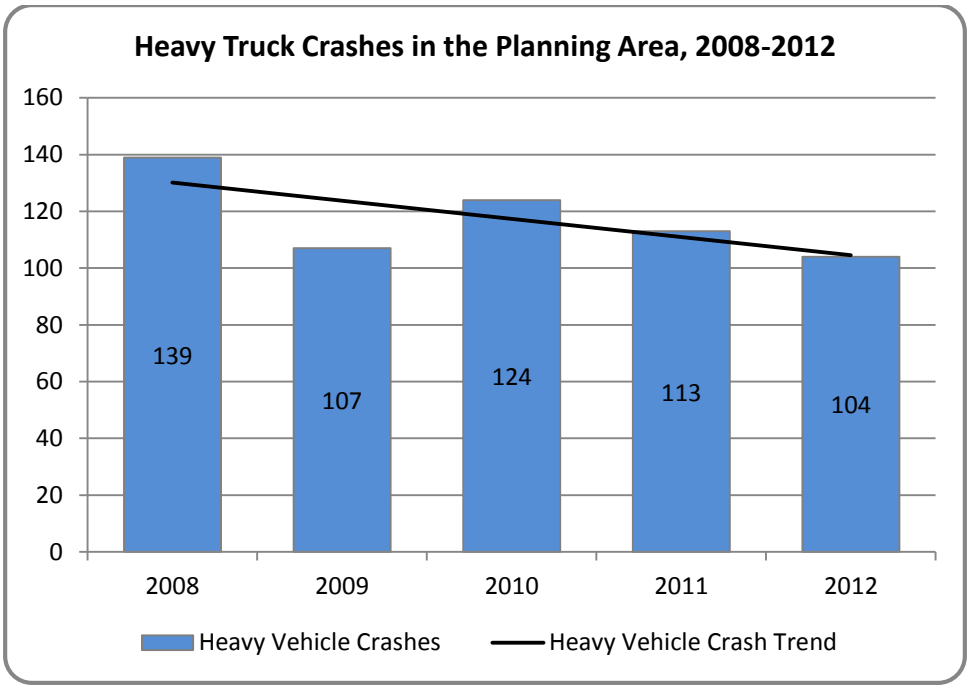


Figure 4-35: Total heavy truck crashes occurring in the planning area by year.
Data sources: Wisconsin TOPS Lab, UW-Madison; Wisconsin Department of Transportation; MnCMAT (Crash Mapping Analysis Tool), Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Despite the decline in total heavy truck crashes for 2008-2012, the trends for severe injury (**Figure 4-36**) and fatal crashes (**Figure 4-37**) in the planning area rose. The trends would have been flat or declining had it not been for a spike of heavy truck-related injury and fatal crashes in 2011. The crashes occurred at different locations within the planning area, so degrading operations of an intersection, for example, was not a cause. All but one crash experienced dry conditions, so weather was not a cause.

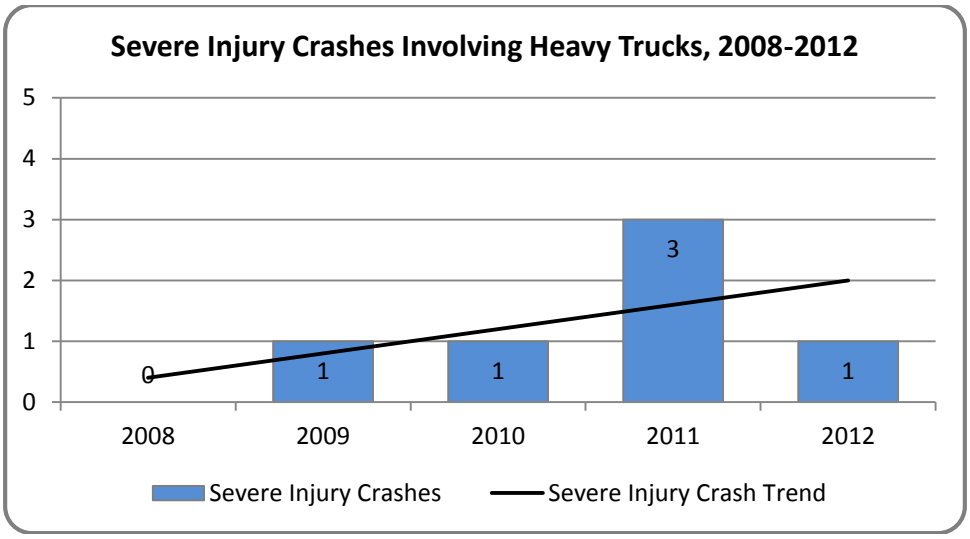


Figure 4-36: Severe injury crashes involving heavy trucks in the planning area by year. *Data sources:* Wisconsin TOPS Lab, UW-Madison; Wisconsin Department of Transportation; MnCMAT (Crash Mapping Analysis Tool), Minnesota Department of Transportation.

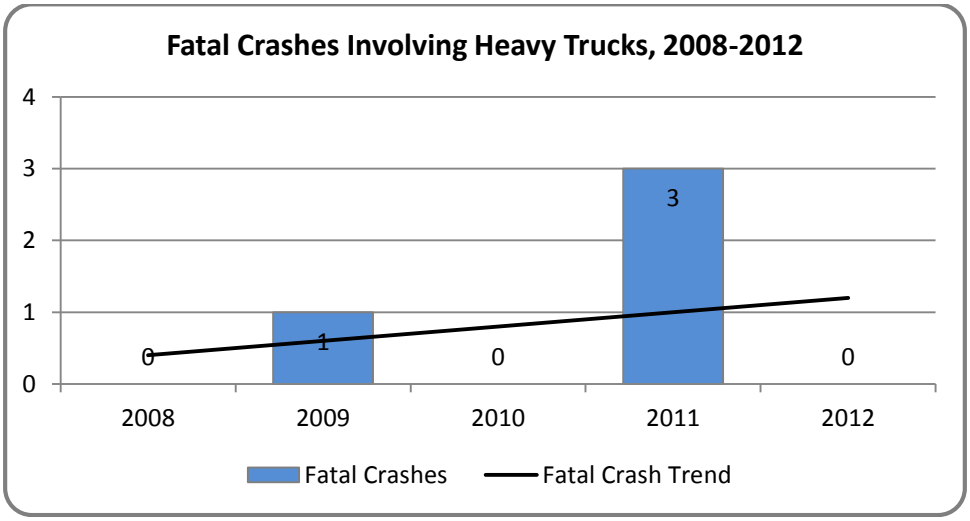


Figure 4-37: Fatal crashes involving heavy trucks occurring in the planning area by year. *Data sources:* Wisconsin TOPS Lab, UW-Madison; Wisconsin Department of Transportation; MnCMAT (Crash Mapping Analysis Tool), Minnesota Department of Transportation.

AIR

As mentioned in the previous section on commodity flows, the La Crosse Municipal Airport does not experience dedicated air cargo operations. Safety issues regarding passenger service is addressed under *Passenger Networks*.

TRANSIT FACILITIES

INVENTORY

Transit Facilities

GRAND RIVER STATION

The Grand River Station is a mixed-income, mixed-use development that includes the MTU transit center and commercial space on the ground level and apartments above. Of the 72 rental apartments, 59 are affordable for residents earning 30, 50 and 60 percent of the La Crosse County median income and 28 are market-rate.

The Station also provides space for Jefferson Bus Lines: one bus bay for the boarding and alighting of passengers and one seat at the ticket counter for ticket sales and package shipping.

PARK-AND-RIDES

The La Crosse area now has only one park-and-ride designed to serve MTU users and it is located at the La Crescent ice arena. It has 65 parking spaces and two bus shelters, and is served by MTU Route 10 La Crescent.

The park-and-ride at the Valley View Mall was moved in 2011 for a Texas Roadhouse restaurant. The original location for the park-and-ride allowed for 144 parking spaces and was directly served by Route 5 Valley View Mall and Route 9 Onalaska. The new location is not well-defined—signs point drivers to a general area in the parking lot—and is not directly served by MTU. Potential MTU passengers would have to walk through the parking lot and along travel lanes with no sidewalks to access the bus line. Because this location is not pedestrian or transit friendly, users of the park-and-ride are unlikely to be using it to access the MTU system, but instead to form carpools to work locations outside the La Crosse area.

General Public Transit Services

General public transit services available in the planning area are provided by the La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility (MTU), Onalaska/Holmen/West Salem Public Transit (OHWSPT), and La Crosse County Rural Transportation (LCRT). Two

regional services—Rolling Hills Transit and Scenic Mississippi Regional Transit (S.M.R.T.)—provide rural connections to the City of La Crosse.

MTU FIXED-ROUTE SERVICE

The La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility (MTU) is a department of the City of La Crosse charged with providing fixed-route transit service to residents in the City as well as to residents within communities that contract with MTU for service.

MTU currently operates nine fixed routes:

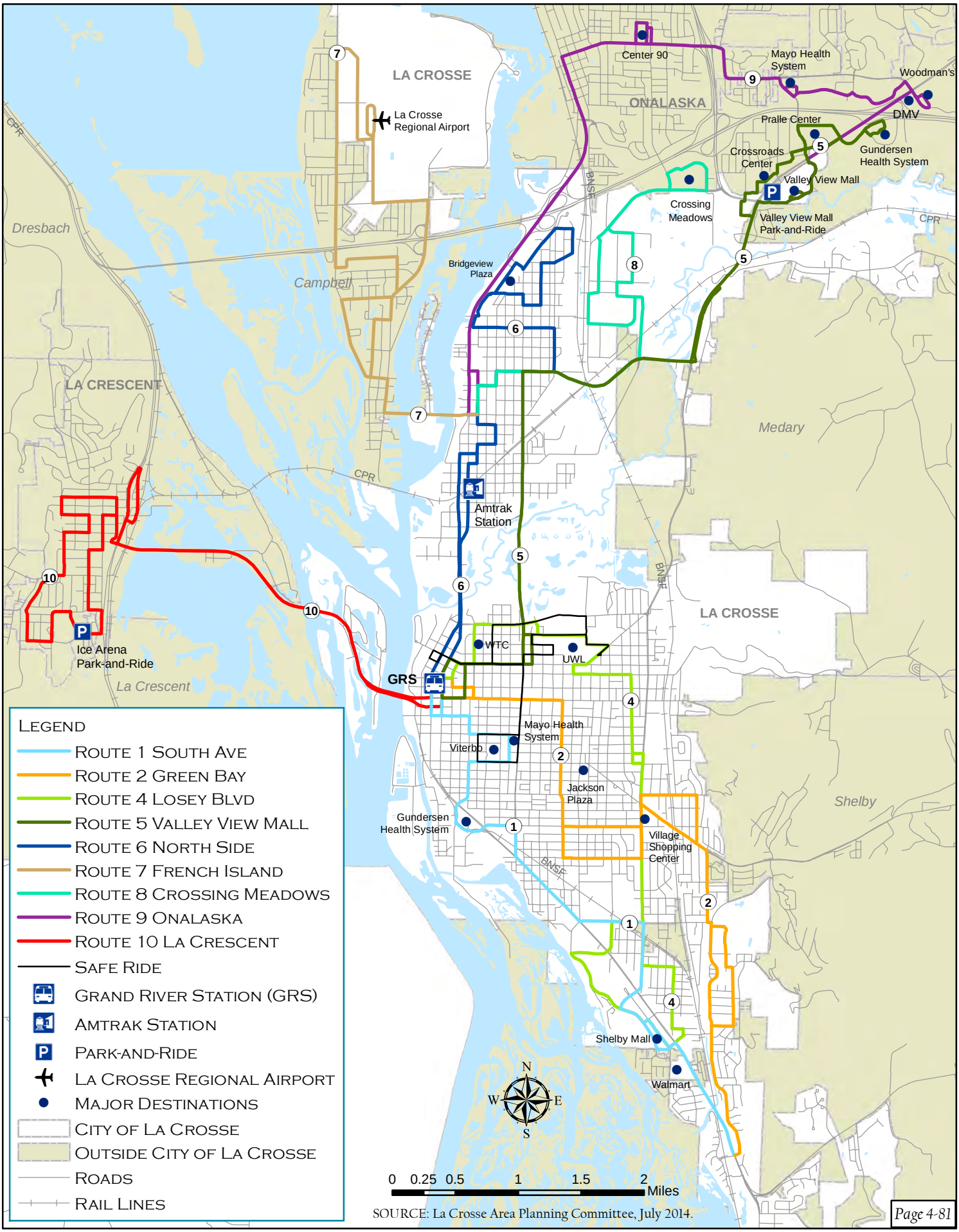
- Route 1 South Ave
- Route 2 Green Bay
- Route 4 Losey Blvd
- Route 5 Valley View Mall
- Route 6 Northside
- Route 7 French Island
- Route 8 Crossing Meadows
- Route 9 Onalaska
- Route 10 La Crescent

Routes 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 are core routes that begin service at 5:12 a.m. and end service at 10:40 p.m. Other than Route 5 Valley View, the routes provide 30-minute service until 6:40 p.m. and then shift to 60-minute service. During the academic year, the Route 5 Valley View maintains 30-minute service for the entire day. A new student circulator, with 10-minute service, is planned to begin in the fall of 2015.

Routes 7, 9, and 10 are contracted with MTU by the Town of Campbell, the City of Onalaska, and the City of La Crescent, respectively, for 60-minute service during the day on weekdays. Routes 7 and 10 provide deviated fixed-route service to meet federal requirements for serving persons with disabilities. Route 8 is a La Crosse route serving the north industrial park with 60-minute service during the day on weekdays only.

MTU also operates a Safe Ride service between downtown La Crosse and the UW-La Crosse and Viterbo campuses during the academic year. The Safe Ride is a state-funded service designed to reduce drinking and driving by college students. It operates every 15 minutes from 10:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. on Thursdays and Fridays, and from 9:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. on Saturdays. MTU core, contracted, and Safe Ride routes are illustrated in **Figure 4-38**. Please note that during campus construction the Route 4 Losey Blvd is detoured along East Ave and La Crosse St until 2020.

Figure 4-38: MTU Transit Routes



SOURCE: La Crosse Area Planning Committee, July 2014.

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Ridership

MTU fixed-route ridership (**Figure 4-39**) in 2012 decreased 4.1 percent from 2008 and was down 4.3 percent from the five-year average of 1,204,474. Peak ridership occurred in 2011 during which time the U.S. experienced record-high gas prices.

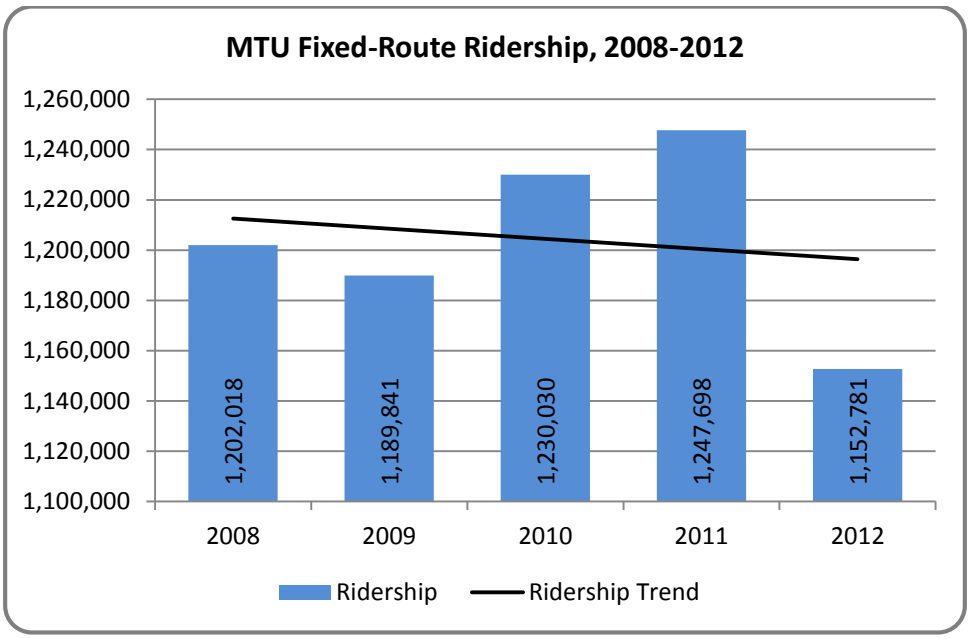


Figure 4-39: MTU fixed-route ridership, 2008-2012.
Data source: Annual profiles, National Transit Database, Federal Transit Administration.

ONALASKA/HOLMEN/WEST SALEM PUBLIC TRANSIT (OHWSPT)

OHWSPT is a demand-response, door-to-door public transportation service administered by the City of Onalaska. It operates in the City of Onalaska, the Village of Holmen, and the Village of West Salem. Service is also available to the La Crosse Regional Airport. OHWSPT operates from 6:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., seven days a week, with free transfers to MTU at Bridgeview Plaza, Center 90, and Valley View Mall.

Ridership

OHWSPT has experienced continuous increases in ridership over the years as illustrated in **Figure 4-40**. Ridership in 2012 increased 30 percent from 2008 and was 14 percent higher than the five-year average.

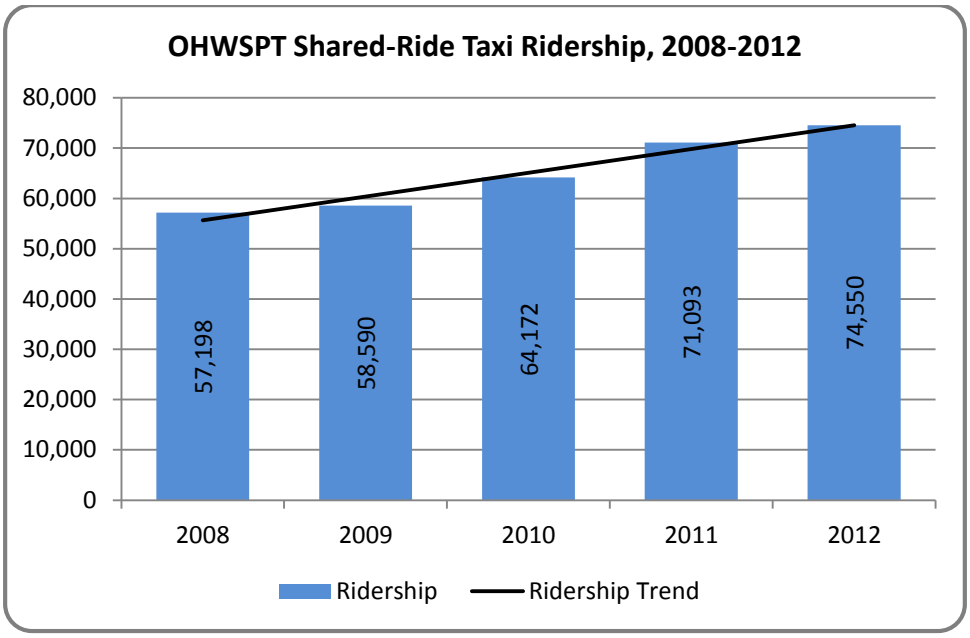


Figure 4-40: Onalaska/Holmen/West Salem Public Transit ridership, 2008-2012.
Data source: Running Inc.

LA CROSSE COUNTY RURAL TRANSIT (LCRT) SERVICE

In 2008, the La Crosse County Aging Unit began administering La Crosse County Rural Transit (LCRT) as a service provided by Running Inc., the same service provider as for OHWSPT. LCRT is available to residents of the Town of Holland, the Village of Bangor, and the Village of Rockland seven days per week from 6:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The coordination with OHWSPT allows for seamless travel between LCRT and OHWSPT communities.

Ridership

The ridership for rural transit in La Crosse County has been trending upward since its inception in March of 2008 (see **Figure 4-41**). Although 2012 experienced a slight dip in ridership, total trips were still 16 percent higher than the five-year average.

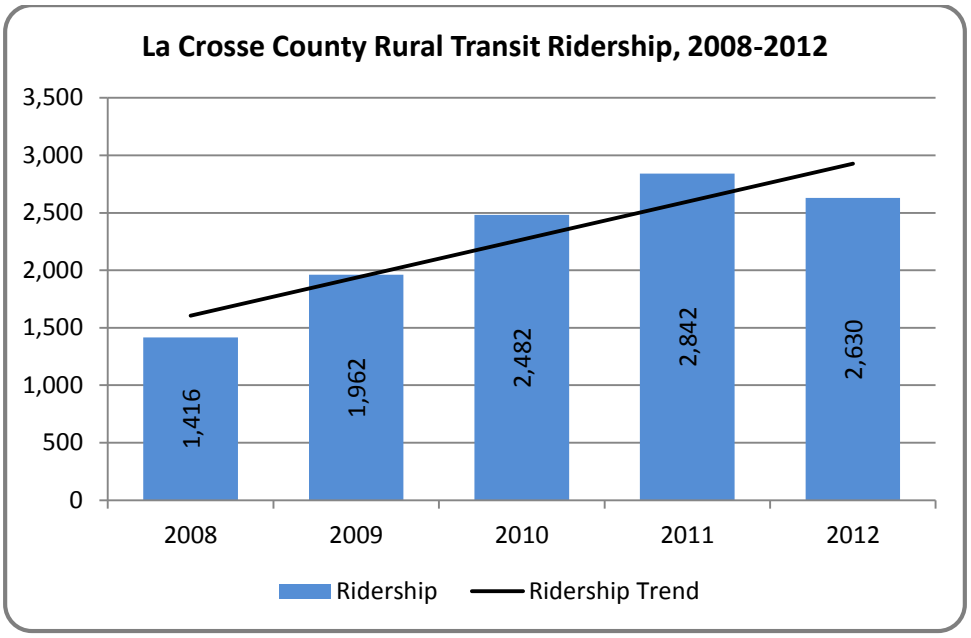


Figure 4-41: La Crosse County Rural Transit ridership, 2008-2012.
Data source: Running Inc.

FIND-A-RIDE

Find-A-Ride is a grant-funded transportation referral service administered by the La Crosse County Aging Unit. The service currently helps travelers connect to transportation services in La Crosse County, but plans are in the works to do the same in Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, Juneau, Monroe, Trempealeau, and Vernon Counties in Wisconsin as well as in the southeast portion of Minnesota and the northeast portion of Iowa.

OTHER PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICES

Additional public transit services available in the planning area include Rolling Hills Transit and Scenic Mississippi Regional Transit (S.M.R.T.). Rolling Hills Transit service is provided by Semcac, a community action agency serving southeast Minnesota counties including Houston and Winona Counties. The door-to-door service is available Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to the general public with a 24-hour advance reservation.

Under the administration of the City of Prairie du Chien, S.M.R.T. began service in December of 2012. This deviating fixed-route service connects several rural communities on three routes in Crawford and Vernon Counties to each other and to

a number of businesses and the MTU system in the City of La Crosse. S.M.R.T. has eight designated stops in La Crosse; but as need arises and time allows, drivers will deviate to drop a rider at an undesignated stop. Ridership increased 39.1 percent from 13,013 trips in 2013 to 18,100 trips in 2014. **Figure 4-42** shows the general alignments of the S.M.R.T. routes.

Figure 4-42: Scenic Mississippi Regional Transit routes.
Source: www.ridesmrt.com.

Specialized Transportation Services

Specialized transportation services are provided specifically for the elderly and persons with disabilities. The MTU through its complementary paratransit service, MTU Mobility Plus, assists persons with disabilities while the La Crosse County Aging Unit serves persons with disabilities as well as those age 60 and older.

MTU MOBILITY PLUS

MTU Mobility Plus is the complementary paratransit service required by federal law to serve persons with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed-route system. MTU offers complementary paratransit service for all of its routes except Routes 7 and 10, which operate as deviated fixed-route service. To meet the special needs of persons with disabilities and to comply with the ADA, MTU operates lift-equipped buses on all of its routes.

Figure 4-43 shows annual passenger trips for MTU Mobility Plus for 2008-2012. The number of passenger trips in 2012 decreased by 24.0 percent from 2008 and was down 13.9 percent from the five-year average of 81,881.

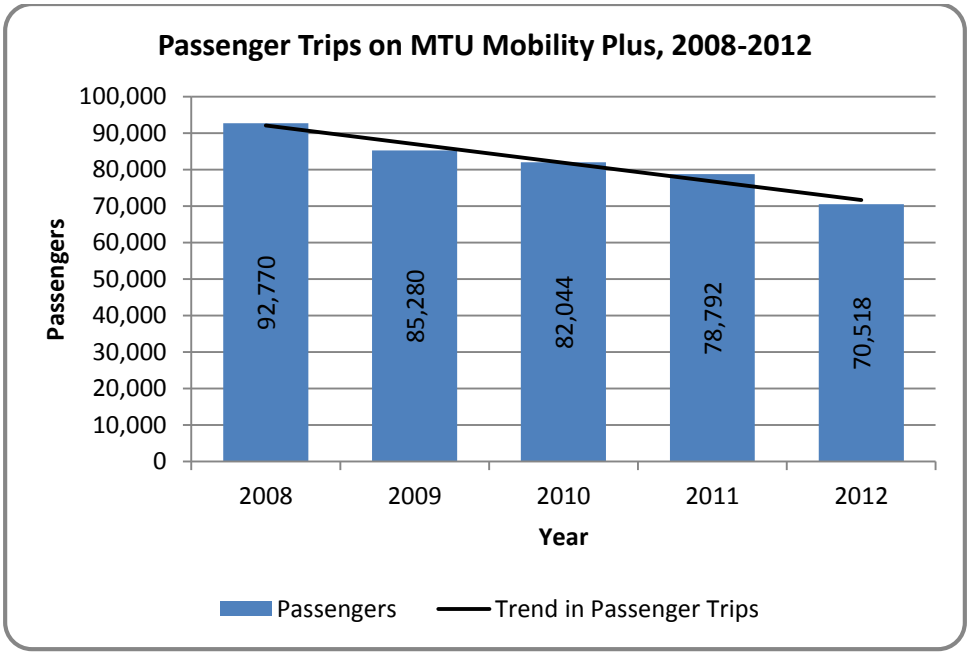


Figure 4-43: MTU paratransit ridership, 2008-2012.
Data source: Annual profiles, National Transit Database, Federal Transit Administration.

LA CROSSE COUNTY MINIBUS & VOLUNTEER DRIVER PROGRAM

The Aging Unit provides transportation services to the elderly (60 years and older) and to adults with disabilities throughout La Crosse County through the La Crosse County Minibus and through the Volunteer Driver Program (VDP). Both programs serve the same populations and operate on a zonal fare system. Although the zones for the programs cover the same geographies, the services differ in fare, reservation, and days available. Round-trips by the VDP are $8.00 for Zone 1, $12.00 for Zone 2, and $16.00 for Zone 3, and require a reservation 48 hours in advance. One-way trips by the Minibus are $3.50 for Zone 1, $4.00 for Zone 2, and $4.50 for Zone 3, and require a reservation only 24 hours in advance. VDP is available for service from 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday only. The Minibus, on the other hand, begins at 7:00 a.m. Monday through Friday and includes Saturday service from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

TRANSIT CAPACITY & QUALITY OF SERVICE

The Transit Capacity & Quality of Service (TCQS) framework is used to assess transit operations and transit's perceived performance from the passenger's perspective. This process was recently completed for MTU and can be found in its entirety in the *Grand River Transit Service Enhancement & Policy Plan 2015-2025*. The measures relevant to the MTP are discussed below.

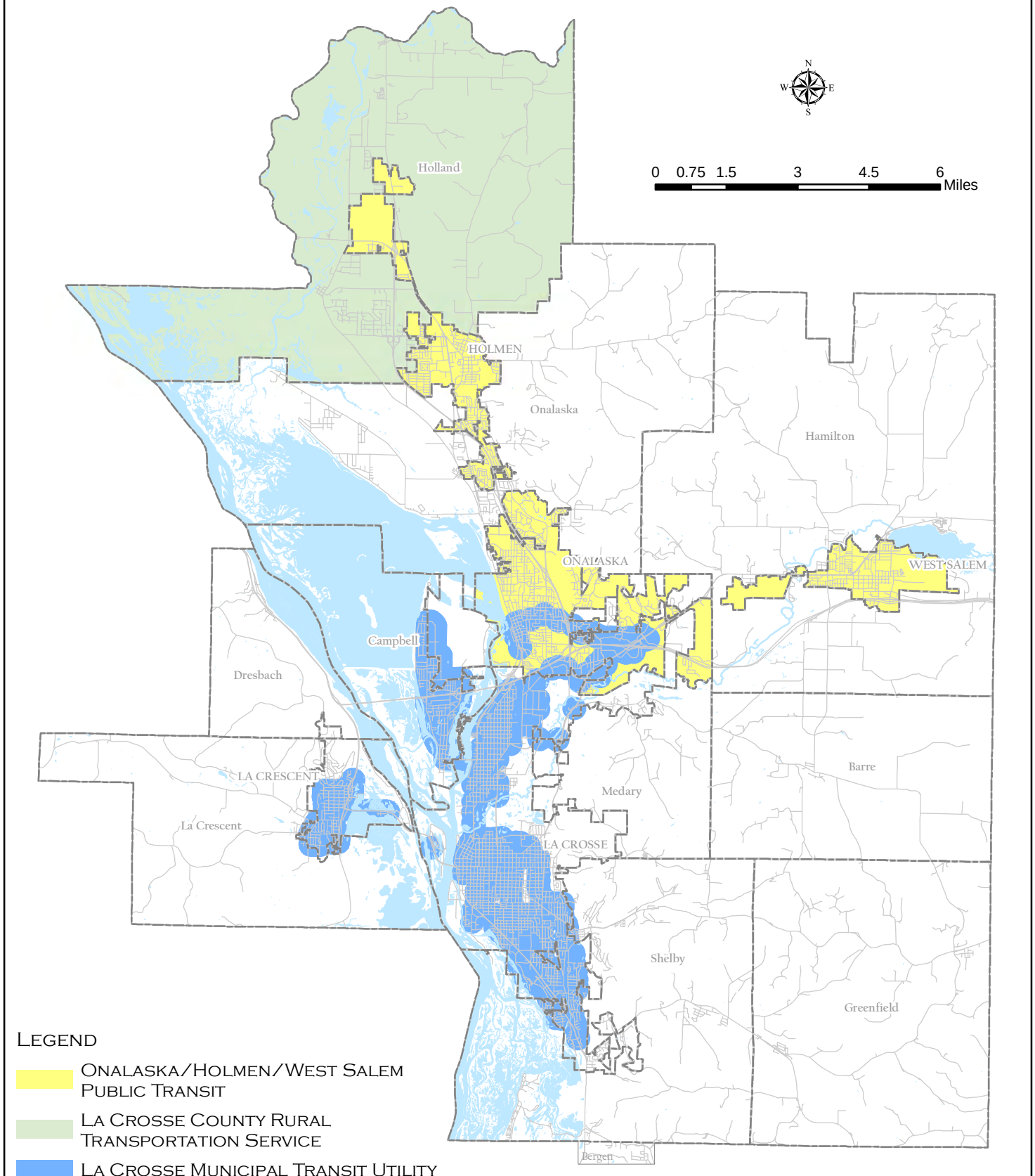
Transit Availability

Transit availability is measured by the percent of square miles of land area in the planning area and the percent of population in the planning area that is served by general public transit. Availability is also measured by the hours of service—the number of hours each day that transit is available

Over 90 percent of the population of the City of La Crosse is within 1/4-mile of an MTU bus stop and nearly 100 percent of the populations of the City of La Crescent and the Town of Campbell are served by deviated fixed-route service. With the door-to-door demand response services provided by OHWSPT and LCRT for the whole of the communities of Onalaska, Holmen, West Salem, and Holland, services from MTU, OHWSPT, LCRT provide service to 79.0 percent of the population and 25.8 percent of the land area of the planning area.

Figure 4-44 illustrates the service areas for the La Crosse MTU, OHWSPT, and LCRT.

Figure 4-44: General Public Transit Service Areas



SOURCE: La Crosse Area Planning Committee, March 2014.

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Revenue Hours of Service

LA CROSSE MUNICIPAL TRANSIT UTILITY

Figure 4-45 illustrates the revenue hours (the hours for which transit is available to a passenger) for the MTU fixed-route system. In 2012, MTU experienced a 0.8 percent decrease in revenue hours from 2008 and was down 1.5 percent from the five-year average of 54,959. The peak in revenue hours in 2010 was the result of an expansion of the Route 9 Onalaska. In 2011, however, weekday service hours for that route were reduced and Saturday and Sunday service was eliminated.

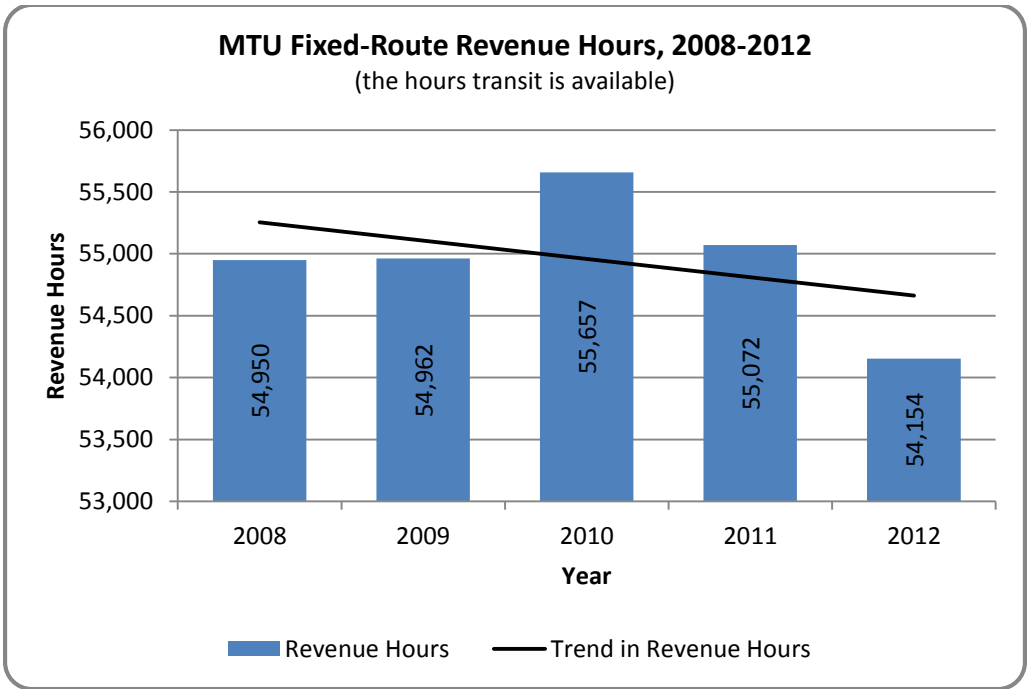

Figure 4-45: Fixed-route revenue hours, La Crosse MTU, 2008-2012.
Data source: National Transit Database, annual profiles.

ONALASKA/HOLMEN/WEST SALEM PUBLIC TRANSIT

Figure 4-46 illustrates the revenue hours for Onalaska/Holmen/West Salem Public Transit. The hours for which the shared-ride taxi service was available steadily increased from 2008 to 2012. In 2012, revenue hours were up 30.1 percent from 2008 up 14.3 percent from the five-year average of 28,473.

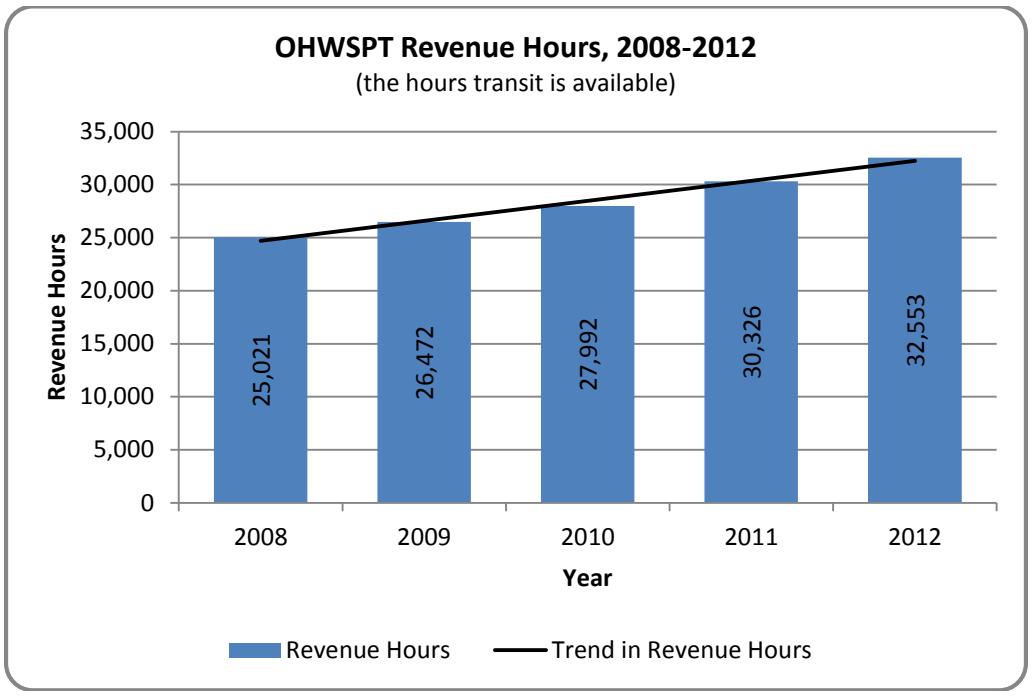

Figure 4-46: Onalaska/Holmen/West Salem Public Transit revenue hours, 2008-2012.
Data source: Running, Inc.

LA CROSSE COUNTY RURAL TRANSIT

Figure 4-47 illustrates the revenue hours for La Crosse County Rural Transit. Because the service did not begin until March of 2008, this measure will be discussed based on the four full years of service, 2009-2012.The hours for which the shared-ride taxi service were available steadily increased from 2008 to 2012. In 2012, revenue hours were up 1.9 percent from 2009 and 1.1 percent from the four-year average of 4,552.

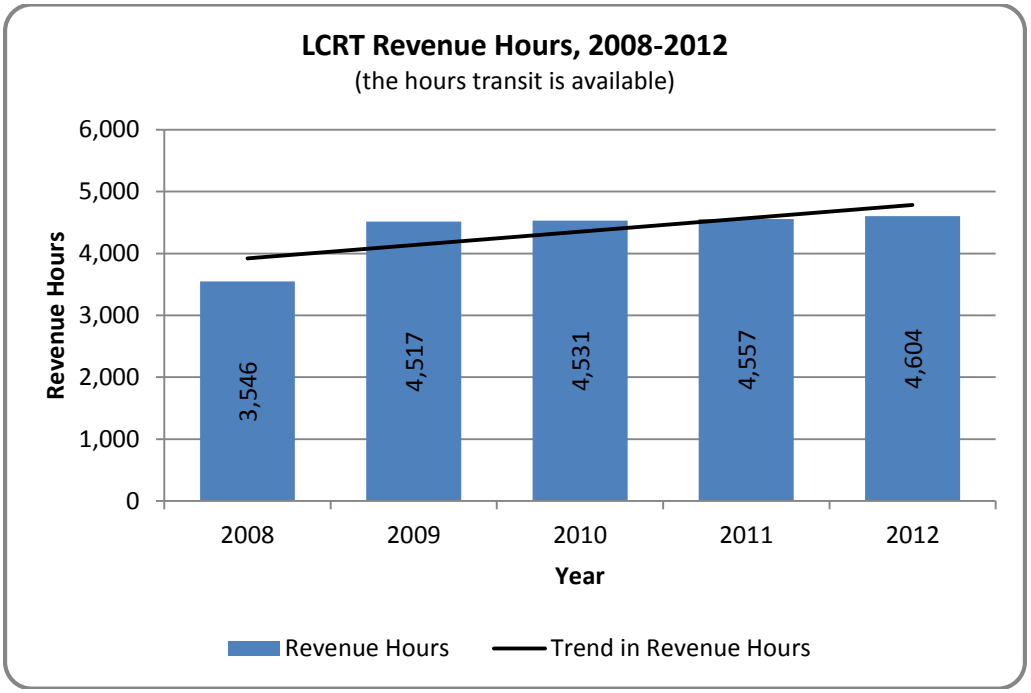

Figure 4-47: La Crosse County Rural Transit revenue hours, 2008-2012.
Data source: Running, Inc.

Passenger Miles

Annual passenger miles is equal to the cumulative sum of the distances ridden by each passenger. These data are only available for the La Crosse MTU.

LA CROSSE MUNICIPAL TRANSIT UTILITY

Figure 4-48 illustrates the MTU fixed-route passenger miles for 2008-2012. In 2012, MTU experienced a 2.6 percent increase in passenger miles from 2008 and was up 2.8 percent from the five-year average of 3,584,636.

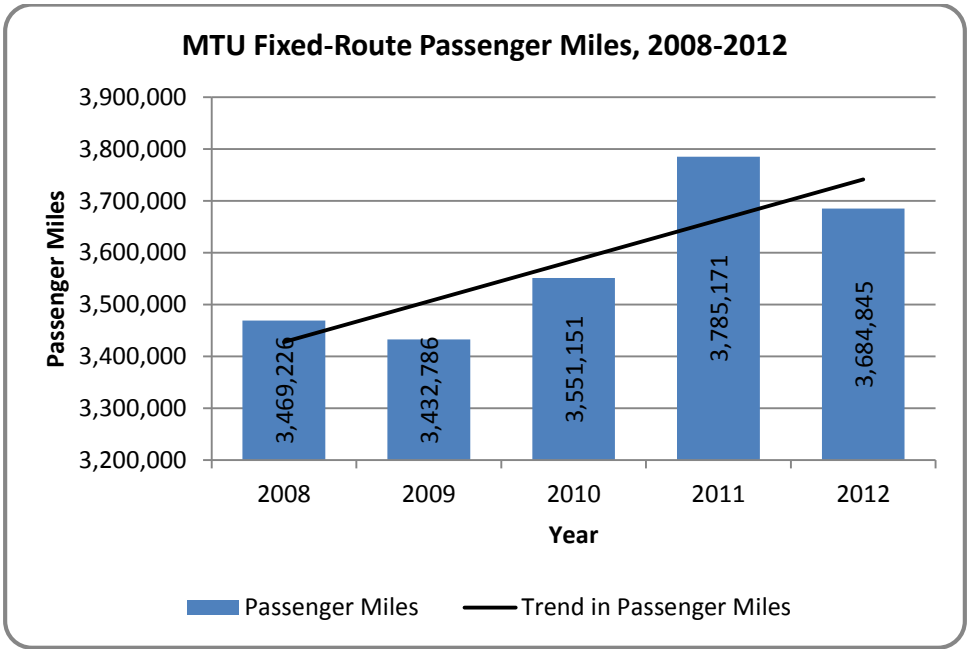

Figure 4-48: Fixed-route passenger miles, La Crosse MTU, 2008-2012.
Data source: National Transit Database, annual profiles.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Transit Incidences

Recipients of the Urbanized Area Formula Program (§5307) are required to report safety and other performance data to the National Transit Database (NTD). The

Safety and Security Module of the NTD is used to collect such safety data as the number of incidents (collisions, fires, derailments, and security issues), fatalities, and injuries. Onalaska/Holmen/West Salem Public Transit reported no incidences for 2008-2012. The number of incidences per 100,000 vehicle revenue miles (VRM) for MTU were the same at one collision in each year for the years 2008, 2010, 2011, and 2012. Unfortunately, the collision in 2012 resulted in one fatality. No collisions occurred in 2009.

Transit Vehicle Breakdowns

Although measures related to vehicle reliability are not safety measures per se, they may predict an increased risk to passengers and others of the motoring public. As vehicles age, they have a greater likelihood of breaking down in traffic and posing a safety hazard for other motor vehicles and transit passengers alike.

Figure 4-49 illustrates the average miles traveled per road call for the MTU fixed-route bus fleet. Not surprisingly, the average number of miles traveled has been decreasing as the age of the fleet has been increasing (**Figure 4-50**).

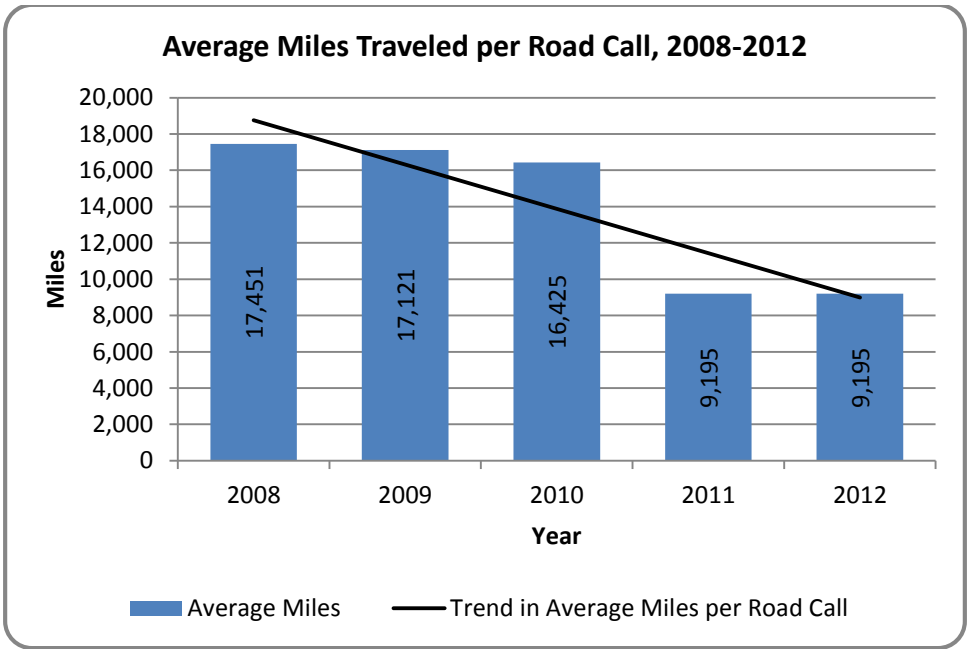

Figure 4-49: Average miles traveled per road call, La Crosse MTU, 2008-2012.
Data source: La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility.

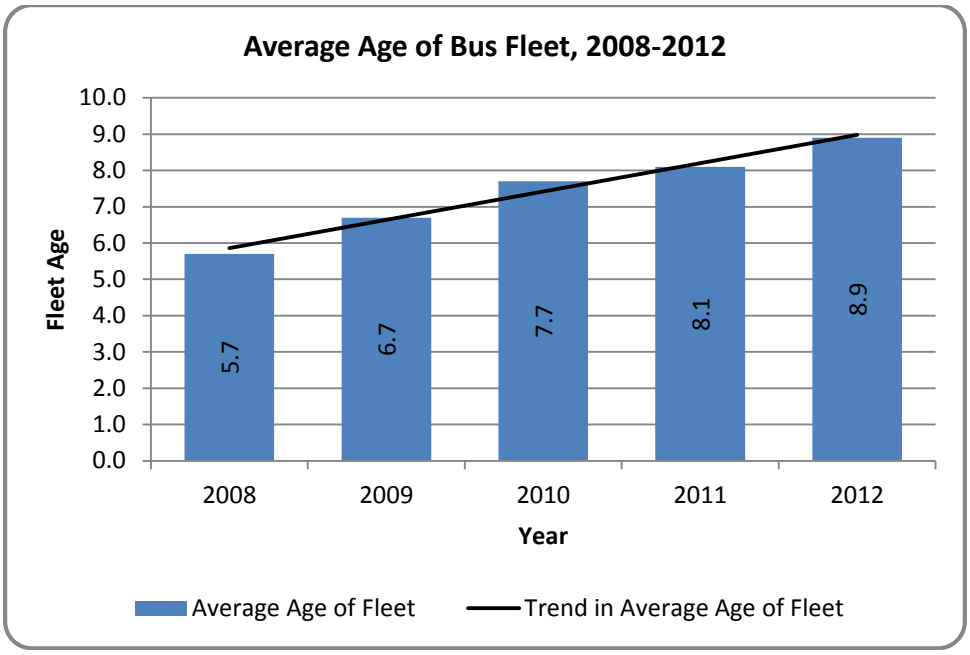

Figure 4-50: Average age of bus fleet for the La Crosse MTU, 2008-2012.
Data source: National Transit Database.

Plans & Programs

SECURITY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Adopted in May of 2012, this Plan was developed to optimize the level of protection MTU can provide its customers, employees, and other individuals who come in contact with the system during normal and emergency conditions. The Plan has four objectives:

1. Achieve a level of security performance and emergency readiness that meets the operating experience of similarly sized transit systems around the nation.
2. Undertake periodic vulnerability assessments, and based on the results of this program, establish a course of action for improving physical security measures.
3. Train employees on security awareness and emergency management issues, to obtain motivated compliance with rules and procedures that support a safe operating environment.
4. Increase and strengthen coordination with the City of La Crosse and La Crosse County regarding security and emergency response issues.

MTU bus drivers are responsible for exercising maximum care and good judgment in identifying and reporting suspicious activities, in managing security incidents, and in responding to emergencies. MTU uses a curriculum developed by the National Transit Institute and various other sources as a new and refresher training to teach operators skills and techniques for maintaining a safe environment on their buses. The training focuses on customer service techniques to prevent or control a dangerous situation.

TRANSIT WATCH

In 2006 MTU implemented the Transit Watch program to involve passengers in helping identify potential threats to the MTU transit system. The program is marketed on tri-fold brochures that are distributed on all buses. The brochures encourage riders to be alert for "suspicious" packages and behavior, inform riders how to spot suspicious packages or persons and what to do in such an event, and provide some tips for emergency planning.

MTU management also participates in security threat and vulnerability assessment training.

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides inventories of agricultural, water, natural, recreational, and cultural resources within the planning area. The purpose of these inventories is to provide a baseline of existing conditions for use during project scoping and environmental assessment as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and its state equivalents.

The MTP planning process considers the protection of agricultural, water, natural, recreational, and cultural resources by:

- Providing an inventory of the resources considered under the NEPA process for use during the environmental consultation process.
- Considering local, State, and Federal plans in the development of future land use scenarios and projections.
- Considering all options to avoid and minimize resource impacts in traffic/land use modeling scenarios.
- Identifying mitigation measures for alternatives used in traffic/land use modeling scenarios that cannot reasonably avoid or minimize impacts.
- Ensuring mitigation measures identified for alternatives are consistent with the preferred means of mitigation identified by resource agencies.
- Ensuring Plan recommendations look to preserve such key resources as our Legacy places and State Natural Areas.
- Involving resource agencies at key times during the planning process.

The following sections on agricultural, water, natural and recreational, and cultural resources include inventories meant to 1) ensure resources plans are considered in the transportation planning process, and 2) provide spatial aids in the environmental consultation process. Each section also includes a general discussion of mitigation options that may be considered for proposed actions.

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AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Agricultural resources are protected by the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981, by local agricultural preservation plans, and by local zoning regulations. The purpose of the Act is to "minimize the extent to which Federal programs contribute to the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses, and to assure that Federal programs are administered in a manner that, to the extent practicable, will be compatible with State, unit of local government, and private programs and policies to protect farmland." The Act is enforced by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)—a department of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

If a federally-funded project has the potential to convert important farmland to non-farm use, the NRCS must assess the level of impact proposed. The NRCS uses a land evaluation and site assessment (LESA) system to establish a farmland conversion impact rating score on proposed sites of federally-funded and assisted projects. This score is used as an indicator for the project sponsor to consider alternative sites if the potential adverse impacts on the farmland exceed the recommended allowable level.

INVENTORY

Agricultural Resource Plans

- *La Crosse County Land and Water Resource Management Plan 2012-2016*—The purpose of this plan is to:
  - Identify and prioritize natural resources issues and concerns for La Crosse County;
  - Develop a coordinated effort to resolve those issues and concerns;
  - Provide guidance for cooperating agencies to assist in implementing the Plan;
  - Develop activities, goals, and objectives that give clear direction for implementation of the Plan; and,
  - Obtain financial assistance to implement this Plan.

  This plan is required by Chapter 92 of the Wisconsin State Statutes.
- *Farmland Preservation Plan*—This Plan was created by ordinance in 2012 as part of the *La Crosse County, Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan, 2007-2027*. The purpose of this plan is to encourage the use of planning and farmland

preservation tools to limit non-agricultural development in areas with favorable conditions for agricultural enterprises.

This plan is required by Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin State Statutes.

- *Winona County Comprehensive Plan 2000*—Winona County does not have standalone farmland preservation plan; however, it adopted an Ag Preservation Ordinance in 1989 as based on the comprehensive plan current at that time. The existing comprehensive plan also addresses farmland. Winona County participates in the Minnesota Agricultural Land Preservation Program, Chapter 40A of the Minnesota Statutes. According to the statute, any county outside the Twin Cities metropolitan area may prepare a proposed agricultural land preservation plan for review by the Commissioner of Agriculture. Counties adopting such a plan may offer restrictive covenants on qualifying land limiting its use to agriculture or forestry. In return, farmers receive tax credits, protection for normal agricultural practices, and other benefits.
- *2008-2018 Houston County Comprehensive Land Use Plan*—Houston County does not have a standalone farmland preservation plan; but, it does address farmland preservation in its comprehensive plan.

Data Inventory

The NRCS maintains a database of soil conditions for the United States. These data include a soil attribute describing the soil by its value as prime or important farmland: "all areas are prime farmland," "prime farmland if drained," and "farmland of statewide importance." Prime farmland is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as farmland that has the *best combination* of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and that is available for these uses. Farmland of statewide importance is land other than prime farmland that is of statewide or local importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, or oilseed crops as determined by the appropriate State or local unit of government agency or agencies.

Of the 204,134 acres within the planning area, about 20.2 percent of the soils have conditions conducive for prime and important farmland:

- All areas are prime farmland: 24,559 acres (12.0 percent).
- Prime farmland if drained: 3,841 acres (1.9 percent).
- Farmland of statewide importance: 12,750 acres (6.2 percent).

Of the 41,150 acres of prime and important farmland in the planning area, 40,052 acres or 97% reside in a natural or farmed state, and 92% of the natural or farmed acreage occurs in areas five-or-more acres in size.

The planning area includes only one agricultural enterprise area, the Halfway Creek Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA), which is an area where the local community has prioritized preservation of farmland and agricultural development. Designation of an AEA under the Working Lands Initiative is a tool that the local community can use to help promote the future viability of existing agricultural and agriculture-related land use. Once an area is officially designated as an AEA, eligible farmers owning land within the area may enter into a farmland preservation agreement with the state. This enables the landowners to receive tax credits in exchange for agreeing to keep their farm in agricultural use for at least 15 years.

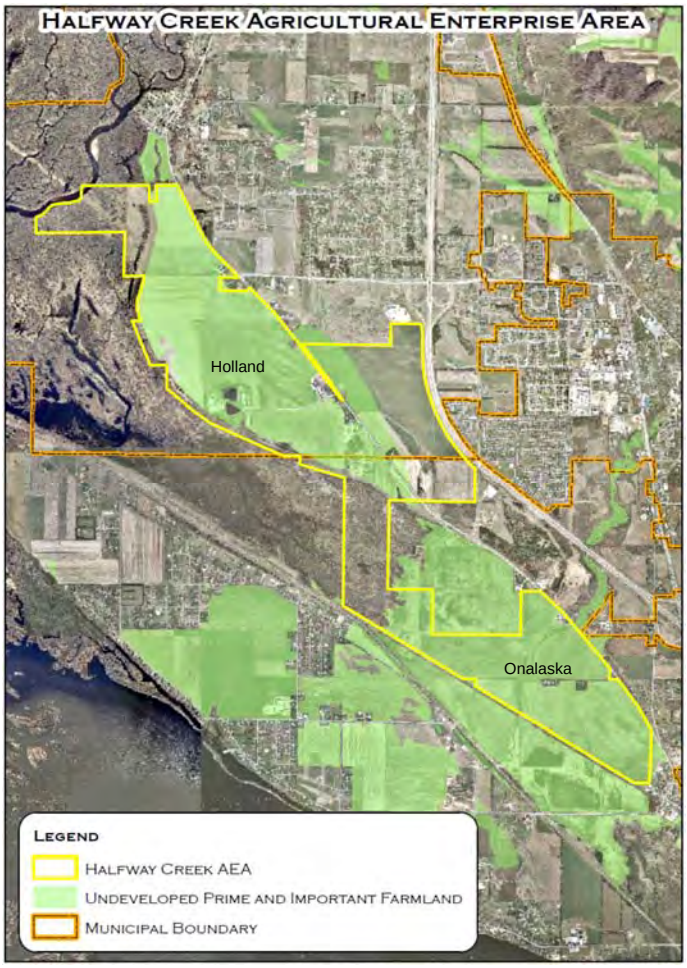

Figure 5-1: Halfway Creek Agricultural Enterprise Area

Figure 5-1 illustrates the 1,621 acres of the Halfway Creek AEA in the towns of Holland and Onalaska. Roughly, 68% of the AEA is comprised of prime and important farmland.

Figure 5-2 illustrates the Halfway Creek AEA and all undeveloped prime and important farmland in the planning area.

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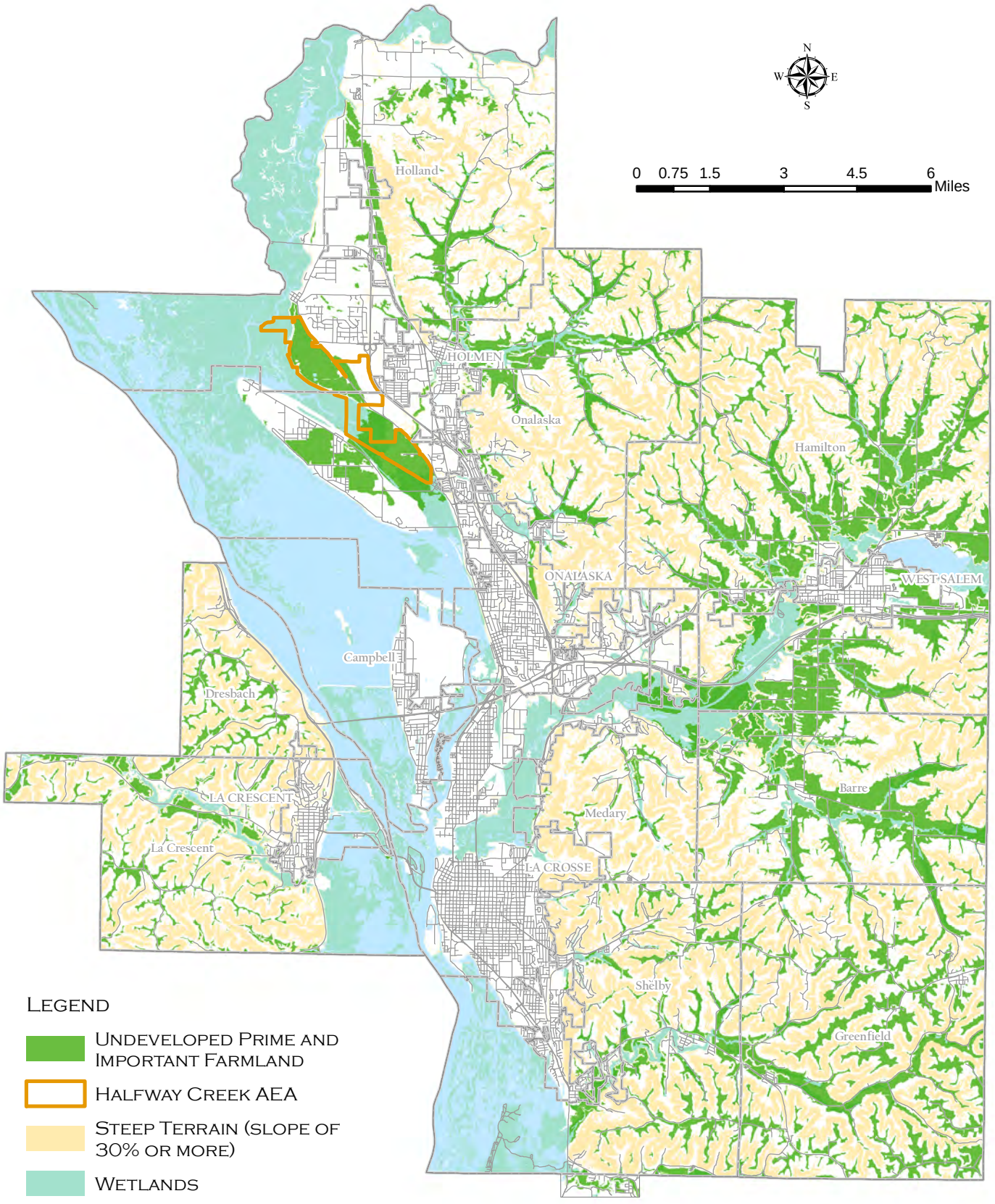
Figure 5-2: Undeveloped Prime and Important Farmland



SOURCES: United States Department of Agriculture; Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer protection.

La Crosse Area Planning Committee, June 2013.

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PROTECTION & MITIGATION

As a means of protecting farmland, La Crosse County has prepared a Farmland Preservation Plan that recommends a number of "farmland protection tools":

- Educational Tools:
  - Options Review for Developers. With this tool, the County could request that property owners wishing to urbanize their property would be required to meet with government institutions or conservation organizations to discuss farmland and open space preservation alternatives.
  - Workshops.
- Financing Tools:
  - Use Value Assessment. This tool allows agricultural land to be assessed at a lower rate, thus lowering property taxes, by assessing for use rather than market value.
  - Managed Forest Law. The goal of this program is to encourage long-term sound forest management. Land owners with parcels of at least 10 acres of forestland and who manage their land for forest products, water quality, wildlife habitat, and public recreation are eligible for a lower tax rate.
- Planning Tools:
  - Comprehensive Plans.
  - Sewer Service Area Plans.
- Regulatory Tools:
  - Transfer of Development Rights.
  - Conservation Easement.
  - Urban Growth Boundary.
  - Conservation Subdivision Design.
  - Infill Development and Increased Densities in Urban Areas.
  - Traditional Agricultural Zoning.
  - State-certified Farmland Zoning.
- Right-to-Farm Laws. These laws support the economic vitality of farming by discouraging neighbors from filing lawsuits against agricultural operations

and prohibiting local governments from enacting ordinances that would impose unreasonable restrictions on agriculture.

- Voluntary Tools:
  - Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) Program. This program was established as part of the 2009 Working Lands Initiative to help fund the acquisition of farmland in Wisconsin to permanently protect it from development.
  - Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEA). An AEA is a contiguous land area devoted primarily to agricultural use and locally targeted for agricultural preservation and agribusiness development.
  - The Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP). This program provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and ranchland in agricultural uses.
- Bargain Sales and Property Donations. This tool has been used more in La Crosse County for preserving natural land than farmland. Property owners have deeded their land to the Mississippi Valley Conservancy for preservation and recreation.

The Minnesota Agricultural Land Preservation Program, Chapter 40A of the Minnesota Statutes, helps counties in Minnesota preserve agricultural land. Under this program, farmers may receive property tax credits for preserving their farms for long-term agricultural use. Eligible farmers must place a restrictive covenant on their land, limiting its use to agriculture or forestry.

WATER RESOURCES

Water resources are sources of water that are useful or potentially useful. They include surface waters, groundwater, wetlands, stormwater, and wastewater.

INVENTORY

Water Resource Plans

- *La Crosse County Land and Water Resource Management Plan 2012-2016*—The purpose of this plan is to:
  - Identify and prioritize natural resources issues and concerns for La Crosse County;
  - Develop a coordinated effort to resolve those issues and concerns;
  - Provide guidance for cooperating agencies to assist in implementing the Plan;
  - Develop activities, goals, and objectives that give clear direction for implementation of the Plan; and,
  - Obtain financial assistance to implement this Plan.

  This plan is required by Chapter 92 of the Wisconsin State Statutes.
- *Houston County Comprehensive Water Plan 2007-2017*—The purpose of this plan is to identify the primary water resource concerns of local citizens and outline strategies to address those concerns through sound public policy, coordinating implementation with cooperating agencies and partners.

  This Plan is required by Chapter 103B of the Minnesota State Statutes.
- *Winona County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan 2011-2015*—The purpose of this plan is to establish goals and a related set of objectives and actions to protect, enhance, and manage water resources within Winona County in cooperation with local, regional, and state partners.

  This Plan is required by Chapter 103B of the Minnesota State Statutes.
- *La Crosse Sewer Service Area Water Quality Management Plan 2013-2035*—The purpose of this plan is to indicate the most cost effective and environmentally sound waste water treatment configuration for the sewer service planning area, to protect surface and ground water from point and non-point sources

of pollution, and to meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act and Wisconsin State Administrative Code Chapter NR 121.

- *The State of the Bad Axe-La Crosse River Basin*, 2002—This report provides an overview of land and water resource quality, identifies challenges facing these resources, and outlines actions the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and its partners can take to protect and restore the natural resources throughout the basin.
- *Coon Creek Watershed Plan*, 2011—The purpose of this plan is to analyze and evaluate the condition of the watershed, resulting in an overview of conditions and recommendations for resource management.

Data Inventory

WATERSHEDS

Watersheds (or drainage basins) are land areas that catch rain or snow and drain to marshes, streams, rivers, lakes, or ground water. They are important because they provide us with drinking water, water to irrigate crops, and recreational opportunities, such as swimming and boating, to name a few.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) organizes watersheds of the United States into a hydrologic system that divides and subdivides the U.S. into successively smaller watersheds all called "hydrologic units." Hydrologic units are used for collecting and organizing hydrologic data.

The hydrologic unit system divides and subdivides the United States into four nested levels of units. The largest units are called regions and represent either the drainage area of a major river, such as the Upper Mississippi River region, or the combined drainage areas of a series of rivers, such as the Souris-Red-Rainy region, which ultimately drain into Lake Winnipeg and Hudson Bay. The successively smaller units within regions are subregions, accounting units, and cataloging units. For descriptive purposes, we will refer to the largest watersheds as regions, the next largest or "subregions" as basins, and "accounting units" and "cataloging units" as watersheds.

As illustrated in **Figure 5-3**, Wisconsin lies within the Upper Mississippi and Great Lakes Regions; and Minnesota lies within the Upper Mississippi, the Great Lakes, and the Souris-Red-Rainy Regions. Wisconsin is divided into 24 basins, while Minnesota is divided into 10 basins. Some of the basins extend into neighboring states (Illinois, Iowa, and North and South Dakota) and Canada.

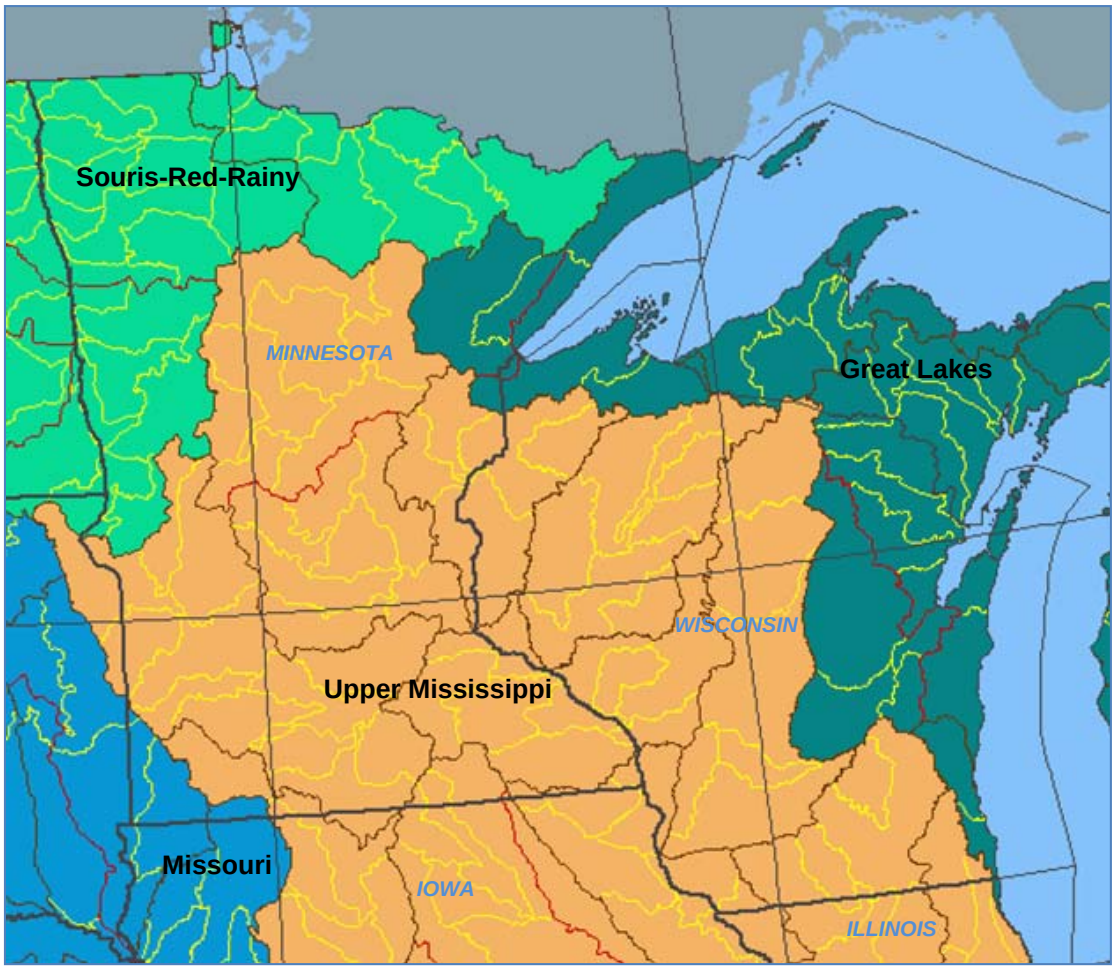

Figure 5-3: Hydrologic regions in Minnesota and Wisconsin.
Source: www.nationalatlas.gov, USGS.

Figure 5-4 illustrates the basins—the Lower Mississippi River, the Black River, and the Bad Axe-La Crosse River—and watersheds—the Root River, the Mississippi River – La Crescent, the Little La Crosse River, the Lower Black River, the Lower La Crosse River, and the Coon Creek—of the Upper Mississippi River Region that influence our planning area.

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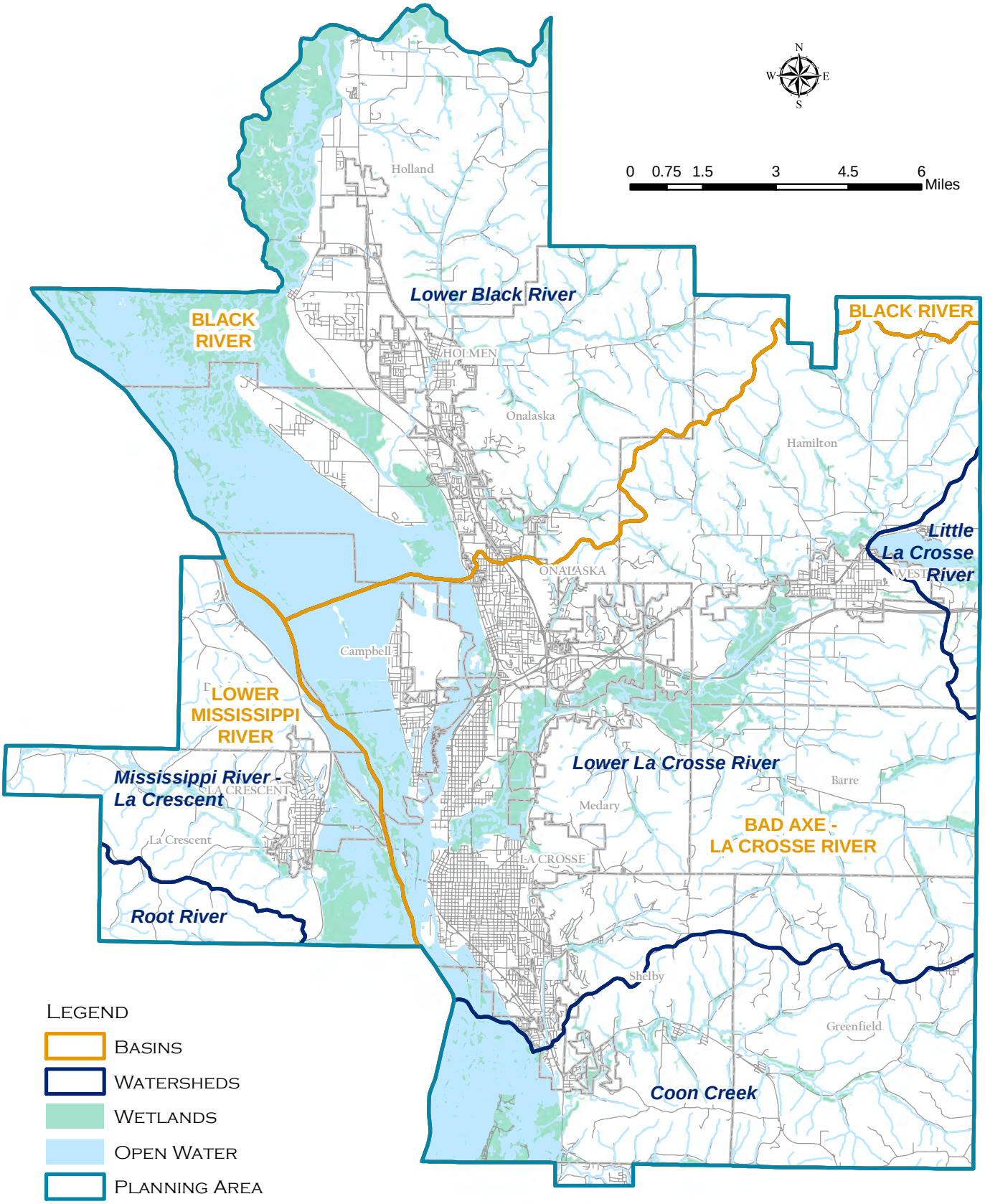
Figure 5-4: Basins and Watersheds



SOURCES: Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources; U.S. Geological Survey.

La Crosse Area Planning Committee, June 2013.

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Table 5-1 summarizes the relationships among the communities, watersheds, and basins.

TABLE 5-1: BASINS AND WATERSHEDS OF THE LAPC PLANNING AREA

Basin	Watershed	Communities
Lower Mississippi River	Mississippi River – La Crescent	Dresbach, City of La Crescent, Town of La Crescent
	Root River	Town of La Crescent
Bad Axe – La Crosse River	Lower La Crosse River	Campbell, City of Onalaska, Hamilton,West Salem, Medary, Barre, Shelby, La Crosse, Greenfield
	Little La Crosse River	Hamilton, West Salem, Barre
	Coon Creek	Shelby, La Crosse, Greenfield, Bergen
Black River	Lower Black River	City of Onalaska, Town of Onalaska, Holmen, Holland, Campbell

OUTSTANDING AND EXCEPTIONAL RESOURCE WATERS

Waters designated as Outstanding Resources Waters (ORWs) or Exceptional Resource Waters (ERWs) are surface waters that provide outstanding recreational opportunities, support valuable fisheries and wildlife habitat, have good water quality, and are not significantly impacted by human activities. ORWs, specifically, have excellent water quality and high quality fisheries. They do not receive wastewater discharges nor will any be allowed unless the quality of the discharges meets or exceeds the quality of the receiving water. ORWs include national and state wild and scenic rivers and Class I (highest quality) trout streams. The LAPC planning area has no outstanding resource waters.

ERWs have excellent water quality and valued fisheries, but may already receive wastewater discharges or may receive future discharges necessary to correct environmental or public health problems. The planning area has three exceptional resource waters: Bostwick Creek in the Town of Barre; and Larson Coulee Creek and Hoger Creek in the Town of Hamilton (see **Figure 5-5**).

IMPAIRED WATERS

The Clean Water Act requires states to adopt water quality standards to protect lakes, streams, and wetlands from pollution. The standards define how much of a pollutant (bacteria, nutrients, turbidity, mercury, etc.) can be in the water and still

meet designated uses, such as drinking water, fishing, and swimming. A water body is "impaired" if it fails to meet one or more water quality standards.

Water quality standards regulate how clean a water body should be. The standards consist of the water body's designated uses, water quality criteria to protect those uses and determine if they are being attained, and antidegradation policies to help protect high quality water bodies. States designate uses based on their goals and expectations for their waters.

Table 5-2 summarizes and Figure 6-5 illustrates the region's ORW and ERW and impaired waters. The top water pollutants found in the planning area include mercury, phosphorous, sediment, and PCBs. Since our last transportation plan was adopted in 2010, the La Crosse River has been added to the impaired waters list for total phosphorous and total phosphorous has been added to the list of impairments for the Mississippi River and Neshonoc Lake.

TABLE 5-2: OUTSTANDING AND EXCEPTIONAL RESOURCE WATERS AND IMPAIRED WATERS

Name	Status	Pollutant(s)
Black River	Impaired	Mercury
Bostwick Creek – CTH M to headwaters	ERW; Class I trout stream	N/A
Bostwick Creek – Barre Mills to CTH M	ERW; Class II trout stream	N/A
Larson Coulee Creek	ERW; Class I trout stream	N/A
Hoger Creek	ERW; Class I trout stream	N/A
Gill Coulee Creek – La Crosse River to unnamed creek (1.39 mi)	Impaired; Class III trout stream	Mercury; sediment
Gill Coulee Creek – unnamed creek to headwaters (3.47 mi)	Impaired; Class II trout stream	Mercury; sediment
Halfway Creek	Impaired; Class III trout stream	Mercury; sediment
Long Coulee Creek	Impaired; warm water forage fish; Class II trout stream	Mercury; sediment
Johnson Coulee Creek	Impaired; limited aquatic life; Class II trout stream	Mercury; sediment
Mississippi River	Impaired; warm water sport fish	Total phosphorous; mercury; PCBs
La Crosse River	Impaired	Total phosphorous
Neshonoc Lake	Impaired	Total phosphorous; sediment; mercury; PCBs

Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

WETLANDS

Wetlands are part of the foundation of our nation's water resources and are vital to the health of waterways and communities that are downstream. Wetlands—which include swamps, marshes, bogs, and fens—feed downstream waters, trap floodwaters, recharge groundwater supplies, remove pollution, and provide fish and wildlife habitat. Wetlands are also economic drivers because of their key role in fishing, hunting, agriculture, and recreation.

Wetlands in La Crosse County have been mapped and are included on topographic maps; however, they are not digitally mapped. The WisDNR recommends using the soils dataset compiled and managed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and mapping "hydric" soils. Wetlands have been digitally mapped by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for surrounding counties. **Figure 5-5** illustrates the outstanding and exceptional resource waters, impaired waters, and wetlands in the planning area.

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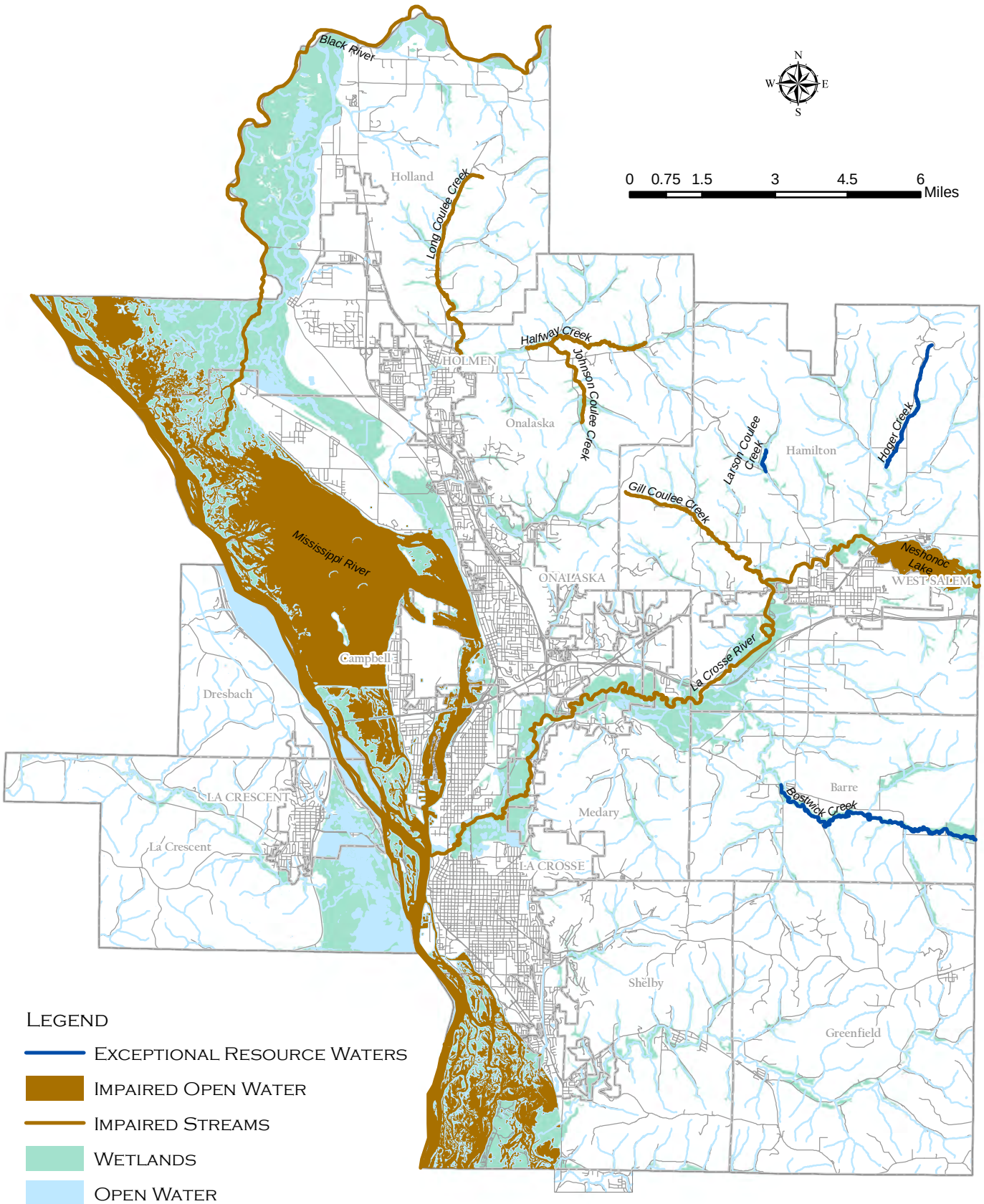
Figure 5-5: Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters and Impaired Waters



Legend

- Exceptional Resource Waters
- Impaired Open Water
- Impaired Streams
- Wetlands
- Open Water
- Municipal Boundaries
- Roads

SOURCES: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

La Crosse Area Planning Committee, June 2013.

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PROTECTION & MITIGATION

The process of avoiding and minimizing impacts to regulated aquatic resources occurs through the regulatory programs established by federal and state resource agencies authorized to implement the Clean Water Act and other federal Acts designed to protect the quality of our water and wetlands. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) are the authorized agencies in their respective states and they engage in a number of activities to protect our waters and wetlands. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is charged with implementing Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The St. Paul District of the USACE oversees the program in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Watershed Planning

Agencies take a watershed approach to protecting our waters. This includes a circular process of monitoring, assessment and integrated reporting, and management. Specific tasks involve:

- **Water Quality Standards development** to set the appropriate level of protection by:
  - Determining the types of activities the water should support;
  - Developing water quality criteria to protect these uses from excess pollution;
  - Establishing an antidegradation policy to maintain and protect existing uses and high quality waters; and,
  - Identifying general policies to implement these protection levels in point source discharge permits.
- **Water quality management planning** to implement plans to protect, maintain, or restore water quality. High quality waters are identified in the states' outstanding and exceptional resources waters lists. Waters that do not meet water quality standards are identified in the states' impaired waters lists, which state why the water is not meeting standards and what pollutants or indicators need to be addressed to restore aquatic health.
- **Water Quality Monitoring** to provide supporting information in developing Total Daily Maximum Loads (TMDLs) for waters listed on the states' 303(d) impaired waters lists.

To identify and restore impaired waters, Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act requires states to:

1. Assess all waters of the state to determine if they meet water quality standards.
2. List waters that do not meet standards (also known as the 303d list) and update every even-numbered year.
3. Conduct total maximum daily load (TMDL) studies in order to set pollutant reduction goals needed to restore waters. Alternatives to TMDLs (the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still safely meet water quality standards) include Environmental Accountability Projects (EAPs), where management actions are underway and the anticipated outcome is full restoration of water quality standards.

The level of monitoring is greatly dependent on the types and sources of impairments as well as the size and complexity of the watershed to be monitored. WDNR, for example, has developed technical guidance for monitoring and model selection for TMDL development (WDNR 2001).

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act

The mission of the Corps of Engineers' Regulatory Program is to protect the nation's aquatic resources, while allowing reasonable development through fair, flexible and balanced permit decisions. The Corps evaluates permit applications for essentially all construction activities that occur in the nation's waters, including wetlands.

Under Section 404, a Corps permit is required for the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. Many waterbodies and wetlands in the nation are waters of the U.S. and are subject to the Corps' Section 404 regulatory authority.

Project Mitigation

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the USACE encourage that everything possible be done to avoid and minimize impacting aquatic resources. In cases where unavoidable impacts are expected to occur, the agencies recommend searching for compensatory mitigation—the restoration, establishment, enhancement, and/or preservation of aquatic resources for the purpose of offsetting those impacts. Sources of compensatory mitigation include:

- **Mitigation banks.** One or more sites where aquatic resources such as wetlands or streams are restored, established, enhanced and / or preserved for the purpose of providing compensatory mitigation in advance of authorized impacts to similar resources. Currently, La Crosse County has no wetland banks; however, WisDOT does have one wetland bank in Juneau County and one in Crawford County. MnDOT has one large wetland bank in Houston County for Minnesota projects.
- **In-lieu fee program.** A program that involves the compensatory mitigation of aquatic and related terrestrial resources through funds paid to a government or non-governmental natural resource management organization.
- **Permittee-responsible mitigation.** Individual projects constructed by permittees to provide compensatory mitigation for activities authorized by Corps of Engineers' permits.

Ideally, mitigation should be located within the same watershed as the impact site and should be located where it is most likely to successfully replace lost functions and services. The Corps considers the type and location options for mitigation in the following order although flexibility in approach can be exercised on a project-specific basis: mitigation bank credits, in-lieu fee program credits, permittee-responsible mitigation under a watershed approach, permittee-responsible mitigation through on-site and in-kind mitigation, and permittee-responsible mitigation through off-site and/or out-of-kind mitigation. More information can be found in the document, *2013 Guidelines for Wetland Compensatory Mitigation in Wisconsin*, prepared by the USACE and the WDNR.

Because wetlands in La Crosse County are not digitally mapped, hydric soils were mapped as a close approximation. While this is acceptable as an initial environmental scan, the USACE recommends that as projects progress, more precise wetland boundaries be delineated to more fully assess the potential impacts to these resources.

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NATURAL & RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

The use of parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges for a transportation purpose is subject to Section 4(f) of 49 U.S.C. 303 and 23 U.S.C. 138 and possibly Section 6(f) of 16 U.S.C. 2509. The intent of Section 4(f) is to protect parkland and other included land from use by transportation agencies. Transportation agencies using Federal funds are prohibited from using such lands unless 1) no feasible or prudent alternative to the use is available and 2) the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the protected resource.

The intent of Section 6(f) is to protect land used for outdoor recreational purposes. The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (LAWCON) stipulates that any land planned, developed, or improved with LAWCON funds cannot be converted to a use other than an outdoor recreational use unless replacement land of at least equal fair market value and reasonably equivalent usefulness is provided. Anytime a transportation project will cause such a conversion, regardless of funding source, replacement land must be provided.

The inventories provided include areas that are locally important, which may not be covered under Sections 4(f) or 6(f).

INVENTORY

Natural & Recreational Resource Plans

- *Wisconsin's Strategy for Wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need*, 2005.
- *Fish, Wildlife and Habitat Management Plan*, 2007.
- *Wisconsin Land Legacy Report*, 2006.
- *Wisconsin Karner Blue Butterfly Habitat Conservation Plan*, 1999.
- *Coulee Experimental State Forest*, 2009.
- *The 2011-2016 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*, 2012.
- *Minnesota's 2008-2012 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*, 2008.
- *Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan*, 2008
- *Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare: An Action Plan for Minnesota Wildlife*, 2006.
- *Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Conservation Plan*, 2006.

- *Karner Blue Butterfly Recovery Plan*, 2003.
- *Higgins Eye Pearlymussel Recovery Plan*, 2004.
- *National Recovery Plan for Northern Monkshood*, 1983.
- *La Crosse County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2006-2010*, 2006.
- *La Crosse County Land & Water Resource Management Plan 2012-2016*, 2011.
- *Hixon Forest Comprehensive Plan*, 2005.
- *A Land Use Management Plan for the La Crosse River Valley*, 1997.
- Local comprehensive plans.

Data Inventory

The resources of interest inventoried below are based on the resources outlined in the Facilities Development Manual (FDM) that are required to be considered during the environmental review process. Some of those resources—wild rivers, scenic urban waterways, national and state parks, and national forests—are not present in the planning area.

NATURAL & RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

Areas of natural interest are often areas of recreational interest. Outstanding and exceptional resource waters and fish refuges provide opportunities for fishing; parks, trails, and forests provide opportunities for hiking, biking, and birdwatching; and, wildlife management areas and natural areas provide opportunities for recreation and education.

- **National Refuges:**
  - Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge
- **State Trails:**
  - Great River State Trail
  - La Crosse River State Trail
- **State Forests:**
  - Coulee Experimental Forest
- **State Wildlife Management Areas:**
  - Van Loon Wildlife Area

- Mississippi Islands Wildlife Area

- **State Natural Areas:**
  - Great River Trail Prairies State Natural Area
  - Midway Railroad Prairie State Natural Area
- **Legacy Places (Western Coulee and Ridges Ecological Landscape):**
  - La Crosse River
  - Black River
  - Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge
  - Coulee Coldwater Riparian Resources
  - Coulee Experimental Forest
- **Other Ecologically Significant Places**
  - Holland Sand Prairie
  - Van Loon Bottoms
  - Van Loon Floodplain Savannah
  - Half Moon Bottoms
  - Black River Savannah
  - Coulee Forests
- **High Quality Trout Streams**

The natural resources in the area also serve as recreational resources for boaters, kayakers, fishermen, hunters, snowmobilers, bicyclists, and others. Access to our major water bodies occurs at a number of boat access sites—official sites verified by the Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources and unofficial sites identified by local users. Table 6-3 identifies the boat access sites in the planning area, their type of access to the water, and the waterbody accessed.

Figure 5-6 illustrates the natural and recreational resources in the planning area. These include boat access sites (by Map # from **Table 5-3**), state-classified trout streams, official blue trails (a designated kayaking/canoeing water trail), wildlife and natural areas, and state-managed recreation lands (state trails and forests). Trout streams are classified by quality where Class I streams are of the highest quality, allowing for sufficient natural reproduction to sustain populations of wild trout at or near carry capacity. Class II trout streams have some natural reproduction, but not enough to utilize available food and space. Stocking is required to maintain a desirable sport fishery. Class III trout streams have marginal trout habitat with no

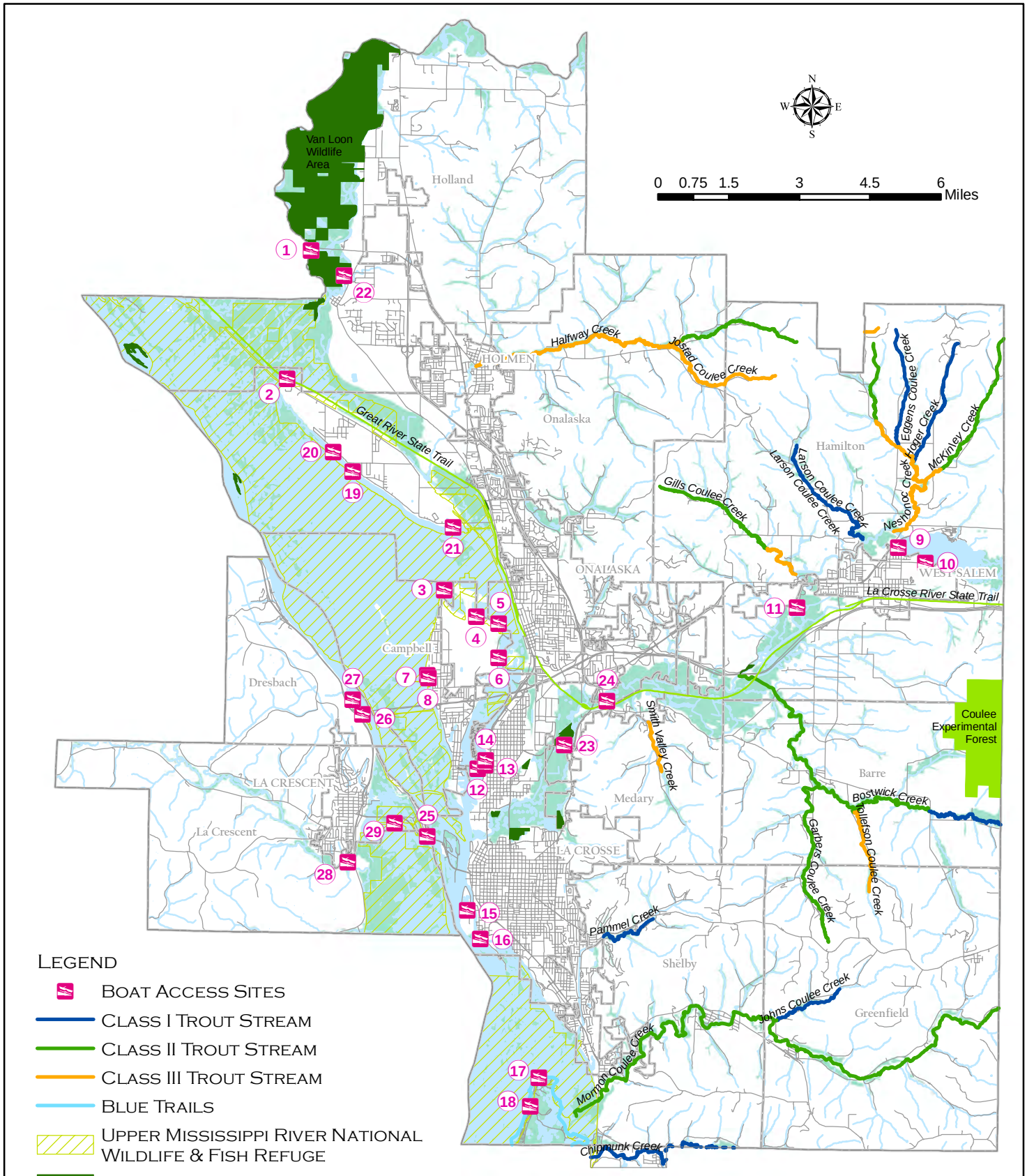
natural reproduction occurring. These streams require annual stocking of trout to provide for trout fishing. The planning area has about 19 miles of Class I, 40 miles of Class II, and 20 miles of Class III trout streams.

TABLE 5-3: BOAT ACCESS SITES

Map #	Site Name	Access	Waterbody Accessed
1	Black River Landing	Ramp	Black River
2*	Lytles Landing Canoe Launch	Carry-in	Black River
3	Nelson Park Landing	Ramp	Lake Onalaska
4	Fishermans Road	Ramp	Lake Onalaska-Mississippi River
5	Fishermans Road	Ramp	Lake Onalaska-Mississippi River
6	Fisherman Road Landing	Ramp	Black River-Mississippi River
7	Upper French Island Spillway Landing	Ramp	Lake Onalaska
8	Lower French Island Spillway	Ramp	French Slough
9	Neshonoc Swarthout Park Boat Ramp	Ramp	Neshonoc Lake
10	Neshonoc South Boat Ramp	Ramp	Neshonoc Lake
11	Veterans Memorial Park Canoe Launch	Carry-in	La Crosse River
12	Veterans Freedom Park Boat Ramp	Ramp	Black River-Mississippi River
13	Northside Beach Boat Ramp 1	Ramp	Black River-Mississippi River
14	Northside Beach Boat Ramp 2	Ramp	Black River-Mississippi River
15	La Crosse Municipal Boat Harbor	Ramp	Mississippi River
16	Green Island Park Boat Ramp	Ramp	Mississippi River
17	Goose Island Boat Ramp 2	Ramp	Wigwam Slough-Mississippi River
18	Wigwam Slough	Ramp	Wigwam Slough-Mississippi River
19	Brice Prairie Channel Landing	Ramp	Lake Onalaska-Mississippi River
20	Brice Prairie Walk-in Access	Carry-in	Lake Onalaska
21	Lake Onalaska Ramp	Ramp	Lake Onalaska
22**	New Channel	Carry-in	Black River-New Channel
23**	Earl's Landing	Ramp	La Crosse River
24**	Unknown – Medary Ln	Ramp	La Crosse River
25**	Unknown – USFWS	Ramp	Mississippi River
26	Lower I-90 Landing	Ramp	Mississippi River
27	Upper I-90 Access	Ramp	Mississippi River
28**	Unknown – Pine Creek	Carry-in	Pine Creek
29**	Unknown – Twilite St	Carry-in	Blue Lake

*Accessible to persons with disabilities.
**These sites have not been verified by the Departments of Natural Resources.
Source: Wisconsin & Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources; local sources.

Figure 5-6: Natural and Recreational Resources



Legend

- Boat Access Sites
- Class I Trout Stream
- Class II Trout Stream
- Class III Trout Stream
- Blue Trails
- Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge
- Wildlife, Habitat, and Natural Areas
- Recreation Lands
- Wetlands
- Open Water, Rivers, & Streams

SOURCES: Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources.

La Crosse Area Planning Committee, July 2013.

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ENDANGERED & THREATENED SPECIES

An important aspect of the human use of our natural resources is how native species are impacted. Congress passed the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1973, recognizing the "esthetic, ecological, educational, recreational, and scientific value to our Nation and its people." The Act further expresses concern that many of our native plants and animals are in danger of becoming extinct. The purpose of the ESA is to protect and recover imperiled species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. The FWS administers the ESA for terrestrial and freshwater species and is responsible for "listing" endangered and threatened species. In order to comply with the ESA, states have created rules for state transportation agencies to work with their departments of natural resources to determine the presence of endangered or threatened species within a project area.

Endangered, threatened, and special concern species are not illustrated because of the sensitivity of the resource. Their locations within the planning area are known by town and range. The information below provides a general reference only. It should not be used as a substitute for DNR review of a specific project area.

- **Endangered, Threatened, & Special Concern Species:**[1]
  - Birds (**Table 5-4**): No birds are on the federal list for being endangered or threatened. Listed as "special concern," the Bald Eagle is fully protected in Wisconsin and recommended to be downgraded to the watchlist in Minnesota. Although it is protected by the Migratory Bird Act (along with the Prothonotary Warbler and Western Meadowlark), the Wisconsin DNR added the Black Tern to the Endangered and Threatened List on January 1, 2014. As of July 2013, Minnesota has a pending change in state status of the Peregrine Falcon from threatened to special concern.

[1] The State Departments of Natural Resources (DNRs) maintain a Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) for their respective states. The NHI provides an inventory of all Federal- and State-listed birds, fish, herptiles (reptiles and amphibians, collectively), invertebrates, mammals, plants, and communities, with their occurrences recorded by town and range. The inventory also includes species determined to be of special concern and natural communities of high quality. Special concern species are those species about which some problem of abundance or distribution is suspected, but not yet proved. The main purpose of this category is to focus attention on certain species before they become threatened or endangered.

The Wisconsin list was downloaded from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Web site on May 15, 2013 and is current as of November 4, 2011. The Minnesota list was obtained from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources by written request and was received in July 2013. These data are valid for one year.

TABLE 5-4: BIRDS LISTED IN THE NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY

Common Name	State & Federal (US) Status
Acadian Flycatcher	Threatened: WI
Bald Eagle	Special Concern—fully protected: WI
Bell's Vireo	Threatened: WI
Black Tern	Endangered: WI
Cerulean Warbler	Threatened: WI
Common Gallinule	Special Concern: MN
Great Egret	Threatened: WI
Henslow's Sparrow	Threatened: WI
Hooded Warbler	Threatened: WI
Kentucky Warbler	Threatened: WI
King Rail	Endangered: MN
Peregrine Falcon	Endangered: WI; Threatened: MN
Prothonotary Warbler	Special Concern: WI[1]
Red-shouldered Hawk	Threatened: WI
Western Meadowlark	Special Concern: WI[1]

[1]Fully protected by Federal & State laws under the Migratory Bird Act.

- Herptiles (**Table 5-5**): The Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake is a candidate for future federal protection status. The Milksnake and Fox Snake continue to be tracked in Minnesota without legal status. The Wisconsin DNR recommends de-listing the Blanding's Turtle.

TABLE 5-5: HERPTILES LISTED IN THE NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY

Common Name	State & Federal (US) Status
Blanding's Turtle	Threatened: MN; WI
Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake	Endangered: WI; Candidate: US[1]
Gophersnake	Special Concern—fully protected: WI
Gray Ratsnake	Special Concern—fully protected: WI
Northern Cricket Frog	Endangered: WI
Slender Glass Lizard	Endangered: WI
Smooth Softshell Turtle	Special Concern: MN
Timber Rattlesnake	Special Concern—fully protected: WI
Wood Turtle	Threatened: WI

[1]Candidate for future Federal protection status.

- Fish (**Table 5-6**): No fish species within the planning area are federally listed as threatened or endangered. As of July 2013, a pending change in Minnesota state status, however, would move the Skipjack Herring, Crystal Darter, and Pallid Shiner from special concern to endangered; the Black Buffalo from special concern to threatened; and the Bluntnose Darter from being tracked with no legal status to being a species of special concern.

TABLE 5-6: FISH LISTED IN THE NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY

Common Name	State & Federal (US) Status
American Eel	Special Concern: WI[1]
Black Buffalo	Threatened: WI; Special Concern: MN
Black Redhorse	Endangered: WI
Blue Sucker	Threatened: WI; Special Concern: MN
Crystal Darter	Endangered: WI; Special Concern: MN
Gilt Darter	Threatened: WI
Goldeye	Endangered: WI
Lake Sturgeon	Special Concern: MN
Mud Darter	Special Concern: WI[1]
Paddlefish	Threatened: MN; WI
Pallid Shiner	Endangered: WI; Special Concern: MN
Pirate Perch	Special Concern: MN; WI[1]
Pugnose Minnow	Special Concern: WI[1]
River Redhorse	Threatened: WI
Shoal Chub	Threatened: WI
Silver Chub	Special Concern: WI[1]
Skipjack Herring	Special Concern: MN
Starhead Topminnow	Endangered: WI
Weed Shiner	Special Concern: WI[1]
Western Sand Darter	Special Concern: WI[1]
Yellow Bass	Special Concern: MN

[1]No laws regulating use, possession or harvesting.
Source: Natural Heritage Inventory, Wisconsin and Minnesota DNRs.

- Invertebrates (**Table 5-7**): The Higgins' eye and Sheepnose (listed in 2012) mussels are federally listed as endangered and the Bullhead mussel is proposed to be federally listed as endangered. The Minnesota DNR

recommends changing the status of the Fluted-shell and Spike mussels from special concern to threatened, the Washboard and Pistolgrip mussels from threatened to endangered, and the Hickorynut mussel from special concern to the watch list. The Wisconsin DNR recommends adding the Fawnsfoot mussel to the Endangered and Threatened List.

TABLE 5-7: INVERTEBRATES LISTED IN THE NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY

Common Name	State & Federal (US) Status
A Brush-legged Mayfly	Special Concern: WI[1]
A Cleft-footed Minnow Mayfly	Special Concern: WI[1]
Black Sandshell	Special Concern: MN
Buckhorn	Threatened: WI
Bullhead	Endangered: WI; Proposed: US[2]
Butterfly	Threatened: MN
Ebonyshell	Endangered: WI, MN, US
Elktoe	Threatened: MN
Fawnsfoot	Special Concern: WI[3]
Fluted-Shell	Special Concern: MN
Fox Small Square-gilled Mayfly	Special Concern: WI[1]
Hickorynut	Special Concern: MN; Candidate: US[4]
Higgins' Eye	Endangered: WI, MN, US
Monkeyface	Threatened: WI, MN
Mucket	Threatened: MN
Ojibwe Small Square-gilled Mayfly	Special Concern: WI[1]
Pecatonica River Mayfly	Endangered: WI
Pistolgrip	Threatened: MN
Rock Pocketbook	Endangered: MN
Salamander Mussel	Threatened: WI
Sandy Stream Tiger Beetle	Special Concern: MN
Spike	Special Concern: MN
Washboard	Special Concern: WI[3]; Threatened: MN
Wing Snaggletooth	Threatened: WI
Wisconsin Small Square-gilled Mayfly	Special Concern: WI[1]

[1] No laws regulating use, possession or harvesting.
[2] Federally proposed endangered.
[3] Fully protected.
[4] Candidate for Federal listing.
Source: Natural Heritage Inventory, Wisconsin and Minnesota DNRs.

- Plants (**Table 5-8**): No plants in the planning area are federally listed as threatened or endangered. Minnesota DNR recommends changing the state status of Clasping Milkweed, Witch-hazel, and Catchfly Grass from special concern to threatened; of Green Dragon, Gray's Sedge, and Muskingum Sedge from being tracked with no legal status to special concern; and, of Cliff Goldenrod from special concern to the watchlist. Wisconsin DNR recommends de-listing the Snowy Campion.

TABLE 5-8: PLANTS LISTED IN THE NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY

Common Name	State & Federal (US) Status
Arrow-headed Rattle-box	Special Concern (WI)
Carey's Sedge	Threatened (WI)
Carolina Anemone	Endangered (WI)
Catchfly Grass	Special Concern (MN)
Cattail Sedge	Special Concern (MN)
Clasping Milkweed	Special Concern (MN)
Cliff Goldenrod	Special Concern (MN)
Clustered Poppy Mallow	Special Concern (WI)
Davis' Sedge	Threatened (MN)
Dragon Wormwood	Special Concern (WI)
Ebony Spleenwort	Special Concern (MN)
Hill's Thistle	Threatened (WI)
Large Water-Starwort	Threatened (WI)
Marsh Horsetail	Special Concern (WI)
One-Flowered Broomrape	Special Concern (WI)
Oregon Woodsia	Special Concern (WI)
Pale Green Orchid	Threatened (WI)
Prairie False-dandelion	Special Concern (WI)
Prairie Bush-clover[1]	Endangered (WI)
Prairie Milkweed	Threatened (WI)
Prairie Sagebrush	Special Concern (WI)
Prairie White-fringed Orchid[1]	Endangered (WI)
Purple Cliff-brake	Special Concern (MN)
Purple Sand-grass	Special Concern (MN)
Rock Clubmoss	Special Concern (WI); Threatened (MN)
Rock Stitchwort	Special Concern (WI)
Rocky Mountain Sedge	Special Concern (WI)

TABLE 5-8: PLANTS LISTED IN THE NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY (CONT.)

Common Name	State & Federal (US) Status
Silky Prairie-clover	Special Concern (WI)
Small-flowered Woolly Bean	Special Concern (WI)
Snowy Campion	Threatened (WI)
Vasey's Pondweed	Special Concern (WI)
Wild Licorice	Special Concern (WI)
Witch-hazel	Special Concern (MN)

[1]Federal status: endangered.

Source: Natural Heritage Inventory, Wisconsin and Minnesota DNRs.

- Mammals (**Table 5-9**): The Northern Long-Eared Bat was listed by the Fish & Wildlife Service in 2015 as threatened. The Western Harvest Mouse is tracked with no legal status in Minnesota.

TABLE 5-9: MAMMALS LISTED IN THE NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY

Common Name	State & Federal (US) Status
Northern Long-Eared Bat	Threatened (US)
Prairie Vole	Special Concern (MN)
Woodland Vole	Special Concern (MN)

Source: Natural Heritage Inventory, Wisconsin & Minnesota DNRs.

- Natural Communities (**Table 5-10**): A community is an assemblage of different plant and animal species, living together in a particular area, at a particular time, in a specific habitat. The NHI Program tracks examples of all types of natural communities that are deemed significant because of their undisturbed condition, size, what occurs around them, or for other reasons.

  Bird rookeries and places of communal hibernation for snakes, turtles, frogs, or salamanders (herp hibernaculum) have been added to the NHI as special concern in Wisconsin.

TABLE 5-10: NATURAL COMMUNITIES

Common Name	Significant Location(s)
Alder Thicket[1] (WI)	Along La Crosse River
Bird Rookery (WI)	
Colonial Waterbird Nesting Area (MN)	
Dry Bedrock Bluff Prairie (Southern) (MN)	R.J. Dorer State Forest
Dry Cliff (WI)	Hixon Forest
Dry Mesic-Prairie (WI)	Midway Railroad Prairie State Natural Area
Dry Prairie (WI)	Hixon Forest
Emergent Marsh (WI)	Along Mississippi & Black Rivers
Floodplain Forest (WI)	Along Mississippi and Lower Black Rivers
Mesic Sandstone Cliff (Southern) (MN)	
Moist Cliff (WI)	
Northern Bulrush-Spikerush Marsh (MN)	
Northern Wet Forest[2] (WI)	La Crosse marsh
Oak-Shagbark Hickory Woodlands (MN)	
Red Oak – White Oak (Sugar Maple) Forest (MN)	
Riverine Lake/Pond (WI)	
Sand Barrens (WI)	
Sand Beach/Sandbar (River) (MN)	
Sand Prairie (WI)	Holland Sand Prairie
Seepage Meadow/Carr (MN)	
Shrub-Carr (WI)	
Silver Maple – (Virginia Creeper) Floodplain Forest (MN)	Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge
Southern Dry Forest (WI)	Hixon Forest
Southern Dry-Mesic Forest (WI)	Hixon Forest
Southern Mesic Forest (WI)	Hixon Forest
Southern Sedge Meadow (WI)	Along La Crosse & Black Rivers
Swamp White Oak Terrace Forest (MN)	

[1]Recommended that entire river corridors be protected and sustained from the lowlands well into the uplands; buffers within floodplains should be used to prevent compaction, trampling, and sedimentation.
[2]Recommended to block and/or buffer tamarack stands when possible.
Source: Natural Heritage Inventory, Wisconsin and Minnesota DNRs.

PROTECTION & MITIGATION

Protection of our natural and recreational resources is accomplished through federal and state regulations, and local ordinances. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Minnesota and Wisconsin DNRs are the agencies authorized to enforce these regulations. Local plans and programs reinforce state goals and establish local goals and objectives.

Plans & Programs

FEDERAL

- **Department of Transportation Act of 1966**: Section 4(f) stipulates that the FHWA and other DOT agencies cannot approve the use of publicly-owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or public and private historical sites unless:
  - There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land; and,
  - The action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from use.
- **Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCFA)**: Section 6(f) protects federal grant-assisted recreation sites from conversion to some other use.
- **Endangered Species Act**: The FWS is responsible for administering the Endangered Species Act. To fulfill its responsibilities, the FWS:
  - Identifies and assesses declining species that may need Act protection and takes steps to conserve those species.
  - Lists candidate species as endangered or threatened and designating critical habitat. The FWS also delists species determined to no longer need Act protection.
  - Protects, conserves, and restores listed species.
  - Consults with other Federal agencies to help them fulfill their obligations.
  - Issues permits to "take" listed species under certain conditions.
  - Helps permit applicants prepare Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) that minimize and mitigate the effects of their take.
  - Provides grants to States under Section 6 of the Act.

STATES

- **Natural Heritage Inventory programs:** The Wisconsin and Minnesota DNRs are responsible for maintaining data on the locations and status of rare species, natural communities, and natural features. Dynamic Working Lists are updated as new information becomes available.
- **Endangered and Threatened Species List:** The states' lists serve to restrict the taking, possession, or marketing of species threatened with extinction. The annual process of updating the Natural Heritage Working List provides the primary triggers that initiate a comprehensive assessment of a species and can result in revisions to the Endangered and Threatened Species List (official list).
- **Natural Heritage Conservation Program:** The Program's policy recommends that the official list be reviewed at least every five years or as needed. "As needed" triggers include recovery goals met, immediate need for protection, or significant new data on a single species or group of species. Wisconsin law (Chapter NR 27.04) also allows any three persons to petition the DNR to review the status of any listed or unlisted wild animal or plant.
- **Endangered Resources Review Program:** This program helps customers and partners comply with Wisconsin's endangered species laws and helps conserve rare plants, animals, and habitats. The Wisconsin DNR works with landowners, businesses, communities, and others to consider the potential impacts of land development, planning, and management projects on rare and sensitive species and habitats very early in the project planning process.
- **State Natural Areas programs:** These programs protect outstanding natural communities, significant geological formations, and archaeological sites.
- **Wildlife Action Plans:** These plans identify Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and outline priority conservation actions to protect species and their habitats. SGCN have low and/or declining populations that are in need of conservation action. They include species that are:
    - Already listed as threatened or endangered;
    - At risk because of threats to their life history needs or habitats;
    - Stable in number in-state, but declining in adjacent states or nationally; or,
    - Of unknown status in-state and suspected to be vulnerable.
- **Prairie and Wetland Restoration Plans**

- **Native Prairie Bank Program:** This program allows Minnesota landowners to protect native prairie on their property through a conservation easement with Minnesota DNR.
- **Landowner Incentive Program:** This program helps Wisconsin private landowners create and manage habitat for species that are rare or declining.
- **Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans:** These plans are required by the LWCFA to help allocate federal conservation funds equitably among communities.

LOCAL

- **County Outdoor Recreation Plans:** These plans qualify the Counties and their local units of government to apply for grants under the LWCF and State Stewardship Funds.
- **Hixon Forest Comprehensive Plan**: The plan calls for a portion of the property to be managed for protection of the rare natural communities such as dry prairie, dry cliff and mesic to dry-mesic southern woodlands, which contain natural communities including valuable plants and animal species. The remaining property will be managed for habitat areas. The property is to be open to the public for hunting, hiking, wildlife watching, and a variety of low-impact recreational activities.

Conservation and Mitigation Banking

Conservation banks are parcels of land containing natural resources that are conserved and managed for life for specified listed species and used to offset impacts occurring elsewhere to the same resources on non-bank lands. These banks are established for long-term protection of a specific species that is impacted on a project site. Because the planning area contains no conservation banks, natural areas lost from major transportation projects are compensated outside the region through restoration, compensation, and mitigation banking.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

"Cultural" resources here refer to historic, archaeological, and tribal resources. The Federal government has enacted a number of acts to protect these resources from transportation agencies using Federal funds:

- The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Section 106 protects cultural resources that are on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).
- The Archaeological Resources Protection Act protects archaeological resources on tribal lands and non-tribal lands under Federal jurisdiction.
- The Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Section 4(f) protects all historic areas as well as all publicly-owned public parks and waterfowl and wildlife refuges.
- The Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987, Section 123(f), created a fund for the preservation or mitigation of historic bridges.

The NRHP is the official list of the Nation's historic places deemed worthy of preservation. The NRHP is part of a national program administered by the National Park Service (NPS) to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archaeological resources. The NPS relies significantly on State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO) to carry out such activities as surveying, evaluating, and nominating significant historic buildings, sites, structures, districts, and objects to the National Register.

INVENTORY

Cultural Resource Plans

- *An Intensive Architectural and Historical Survey Report of La Crosse County*, 2004.
- *Wisconsin Historic Preservation Plan 2006-2015*, 2005.
- *Management Plan for Historic Bridges*, 2006.
- *Gaining Ground: A Preservation Plan for Minnesota's Historic Properties 2006-2010*, 2006.

Data Inventory

HISTORIC PLACES

The inventories provided below represent registered and locally-designated historic places. They are grouped by registered places (Table 6-11)—those listed in the State and/or National Historic Registers and protected by Federal and State laws—and by locally-designated places (Table 6-12)—those listed by a municipality and protected by ordinance. Places that are registered are not necessarily locally-designated and those that are locally-designated are not necessarily registered. An asterisk next to a place in the table of registered places denotes those that are also locally-designated. The table of locally-designated places illustrates only locally designated places. Only registered places are protected from Federal action and are required to be considered in the environmental review process. Locally-designated places are considered here for additional historic reference. Communities with historic preservation ordinances have more power to protect their historic places than communities without such an ordinance. The cities of La Crosse and Onalaska and La Crosse County have ordinances for the protection of historic places.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is the Nation's official list of cultural resources determined worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect historic and archeological resources. Places listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Table 5-11 lists the places listed in the National Register of Historic Places as of January 1, 2015 that fall within the planning area.

TABLE 5-11: NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Property	Location
10th & Cass Sts Neighborhood Historic District*	La Crosse
23rd & 24th Sts Historic District	La Crosse
Agger Rock Shelter	Address restricted, Holland
Anderson, Mons, House*	410 Cass St, La Crosse
Barron, E. R., Building	426-430 Main St, La Crosse

TABLE 5-11: NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES (CONT.)

Property	Location
Bridge No. 1-6 (McGilvray Road)*	Van Loon Wildlife Area, Holland
Callahan, John L., House*	933 Rose St, La Crosse
Cargill, William W., House	235 West Ave S, La Crosse
Cass and King St Residential Historic District*	La Crosse
Chambers-Markle Farmstead*	6104 STH 35, Shelby
Chase, Dr. H. H., and Henry G. Wohlhuter Bungalows*	221 & 223 11th St S, La Crosse
Chicago, Milwaukee, and Saint Paul Railway Passenger Depot*	601 Saint Andrew St, La Crosse
Christ Church of La Crosse*	831 Main St, La Crosse
Daniel Cameron House	429-35 7th St S, La Crescent
District School No. 1 (Wilson School House)*	W5718 USH 14/61, La Crosse
Edgewood Place Historic District	2520, 2526, 2532, 2537, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2546 Edgewood Place, La Crosse
Freight House*	107-109 Vine St, La Crosse
Funke, Joseph B., Company	101 State St, La Crosse
Garland, Hamlin, House*	357 W Garland St, West Salem
Gund Brewing Company Bottling Works	2130 South Ave, La Crosse
Hixon, Gideon C., House*	429 7th St N, La Crosse
La Crosse Commercial Historic District*	La Crosse
La Crosse County School of Agriculture and Domestic Economy (Onalaska High School)	700 Wilson Ave, Onalaska
La Crosse State Teachers College Training School Building (Morris Hall)	1615 State St, La Crosse
Laverty-Martindale House*	237 10th St S, La Crosse
Losey Memorial Arch*	1407 La Crosse St, La Crosse
Main Hall—La Crosse State Normal School*	1724 State St, La Crosse
Maria Angelorum Chapel	901 Franciscan Way, La Crosse
Midway Village Site	Address restricted, Onalaska
Mundstock, Carl August, Farm	USH 14/61, N side, E of jct. w/STH 35, Shelby
Nichols, Frank Eugene, House (Lumber Barron Inn)	421 2nd Ave N, Onalaska
Oehler Mill Complex	W5539 & W5565 CTH MM, Shelby
Olson Site	Address restricted, Onalaska
Ott, Will, House	1532 Madison St, La Crosse

TABLE 5-11: NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES (CONT.)

Property	Location
Our Lady of Sorrows Chapel	519 Losey Blvd S, La Crosse
Overhead Site	Address restricted, Shelby
Palmer Brother's Octagons	358 Leonard St N* & STH 108, West Salem
Physical Education Building-La Crosse State Normal School (Wittich Hall)	UW La Crosse, La Crosse
Powell Place	200-212 Main St, La Crosse
Roosevelt, W. A., Company	230 N Front St, La Crosse
Samuels' Cave*	Address restricted, Barre
Sand Lake Archaeological District	Address restricted, Onalaska
Sand Lake Site (47Lc44)	Address restricted, Onalaska
Smith Valley School*	4130 Smith Valley Rd, Medary
Swennes Archaeological District	Address restricted, Hamilton
U.S. Fish Control Laboratory* (LACVB)	410 Veterans Memorial Dr, La Crosse
Valley View Site	Address restricted, Medary
Vincent, James, House	1024 Cass St, La Crosse
Waterworks Building (Pump House)*	119 King St, La Crosse
West Salem Village Hall	103 Leonard St S, West Salem
Wisconsin Telephone Company Building	125 4th St N, La Crosse
Zeisler, George, Building*	201 Pearl St, La Crosse

*Places are also locally-designated. *Source:* National Register of Historic Places.

Locally-Designated Historic Places

Although all of the incorporated municipalities (La Crescent, La Crosse, Onalaska, Holmen, and West Salem) within the planning area have some type of historical preservation society or commission, only the cities of Onalaska and La Crosse have ordinances (Chapter 3 and Chapter 2.27, respectively) that serve to protect their locally-designated places. La Crosse County, as the only county in Wisconsin with a historic preservation commission, "safeguard[s] the County's historic, prehistoric, and cultural heritage" in the unincorporated areas through its Historic Sites Preservation Commission, which was created by Chapter 22 of the La Crosse County code of ordinances.

Table 5-12 lists locally-designated historic places within the planning area that are not on the NRHP. Locally designated places that are also on the National Register are identified in **Table 5-11**. The table does not include designated places that have been demolished.

TABLE 5-12: LOCALLY-DESIGNATED HISTORIC PLACES

Property	Location
Anderson (Dr. Wendell A.) Home	924 Cass St, La Crosse
Batavian Bank Building	319 Main St, La Crosse
Bentley-Wheeler House	950 Cass St, La Crosse
Boathouses	Mississippi & Black Rivers
Bodega Brew Pub	122 4th St S, La Crosse
Brick Streets (20th St & 17th Pl: Main to Cass)	La Crosse
Burgermeister Building	323 Pearl St, La Crosse
Burr Oak Tree	112 State St, Holmen
Burton, Frank A., House	1018 Cass St, La Crosse
Burton, George/Belle, House	1428 Main St, La Crosse
Burton, S. S., House	929 King St, La Crosse
City Cast Iron Drinking Fountains	La Crosse
Civil Conservation Corp Camp	McHugh Rd, Holmen
Concordia Ballroom Hall	1129 La Crosse St, La Crosse
Cooperative Creamery	Holmen
Copeland Park	La Crosse
Crosby, W.W., House	221 10th St S, La Crosse
Easton-Copeland House	1327 Cass St, La Crosse
Funke, Joseph B., Company.	101 State St, La Crosse
Gantert, Stephan, House	1307 Main St, La Crosse
German Reformed Church	901 4th St S, La Crosse
Grand Crossing Tower/Railroad Car	Copeland Park, La Crosse
Grand Hotel Commercial Block	205 Pearl St, La Crosse
Halfway Creek Lutheran Church	W6016 CTH W, Holland
Howard/Kumm House	4115 Bank Dr, Shelby
Heideman House	823 Adams St, La Crosse
Heileman City Brewery Beer Stube	1000 3rd St S, La Crosse
Heileman, Gottlieb/Johanna, House	925 3rd St S, La Crosse
Hixon, Frank P., House	1431 King St, La Crosse
Holley, J.M., House	230 8th St N, La Crosse
Hollywood Theater	123 5th Ave S, La Crosse
Holmen Canning Company	Legion St W, Holmen
Holway, N.B./Jesse, House	1419 Cass St, La Crosse
Jacobus House	608 6th St N, La Crosse

TABLE 5-12: LOCALLY-DESIGNATED HISTORIC PLACES (CONT.)

Property	Location
James Foundry	100 King St, La Crosse
Jostad's Store	Main St & State St, Holmen
Kendhammer, Frank/Alice	751 22nd St N, La Crosse
Kinnear, Dr. R. M. I., House	222 10th St S, La Crosse
Kroner, Adam/Minnie, House	947 Division St, La Crosse
Kroner, Fred, Hardware Company	300 3rd St S, La Crosse
Kroner, Fred, House	923 Cameron St, La Crosse
La Crosse Footware (portion of south façade)	1407 St Andrew St, La Crosse
La Crosse Public Library-North Branch	1552 Kane St, La Crosse
Leonard, Thomas, Home	99 Jefferson St E, West Salem
Long Coulee School	Holmen
Luther College Historical Marker	Holmen
Magill Brothers Building	800 Rose St, La Crosse
Maple Shade School	Holmen
Martindale, Cyphus, House	714 Cass St, La Crosse
Masonic Temple	724 Main St, La Crosse
McMillan Building	401 Main St, La Crosse
Meason, L. E., House	208 9th St S, La Crosse
Myrick Park	2007 La Crosse St, La Crosse
Native American Archaeological Sites	Long Coulee area, Holland
New Amsterdam Presbyterian Church	N7283 John St, Holland
New Amsterdam School	Holland
Olson/Weigel Home	N1904 Wedgewood Dr, Shelby
Onalaska Brewery	849 2nd Ave SW, Onalaska
Old Fountain Hotel & Sacia Cemetery	W6533 CTH T, Holland
Original Bishops House	608 11th St S, La Crosse
Ott Pure Oil Station	4th St & Cass St, La Crosse
Pamperin Cigar Company Building	113 2nd St S, La Crosse
Percley Bentley House	938 Cass St, La Crosse
Pettibone Beach House	1002 Pettibone Dr N, La Crosse
Pettibone Gazebo	1006 Pettibone Dr S, La Crosse
Pettibone, A. M., House	143 8th St S, La Crosse
Potter, William E., Building (façade only)	107-109 3rd St S, La Crosse
Ranum-Nelson House	1132 Rose St, La Crosse

TABLE 5-12: LOCALLY-DESIGNATED HISTORIC PLACES (CONT.)

Property	Location
Ray, George H., House	204 10th St S, La Crosse
Rediske Cobbler Shop	6th St & Badger St, La Crosse
Riverside Park	La Crosse
Rivoli Theater	117 4th St N, La Crosse
Rublee, Arial P., House	N4785 CTH M, Hamilton
Rynning, Erik/Cathinka, House	1418 Charles St, La Crosse
St Elias Antiochian Orthodox Church	716 Copeland Ave, La Crosse
Salzer, Henry, House	1634 King St, La Crosse
Salzer Memorial Church	525 7th St S, La Crosse
Sanford, Albert, House	119 17th St S, La Crosse
Schintgen Building	225 3rd St N, La Crosse
Schroeder, Leo, House	930 6th St S, La Crosse
Scott, Argyle/Jesse, House	1721 King St, La Crosse
Segelke, Charles, House	504 5th Ave S, La Crosse
Schmaltz Rd Stone Bridge	Greenfield
Spence, T. H., House	920 King St, La Crosse
Strassers Tavern	1310 Denton St, La Crosse
Strauss/Wing House	1004-1006 Main St, La Crosse
Torrance House	214 8th St S, La Crosse
Traditions Restaurant	201 Main St, Onalaska
Tuteur-Steinam-Powell House	101 9th St S, La Crosse
US Weather Bureau	432 Cass St, La Crosse
Villa St. Joseph Convent	W2658 STH 33, Greenfield
Washburn, C. C., House	612 Ferry St, La Crosse
Wesley United Methodist Church	721 King St, La Crosse
Withee House	112 10th St S, La Crosse
Wright, John and Razy, Farm	W5670 CTH F, Medary
YMCA Building (original)	629 Main St, La Crosse

Sources: Cities of La Crosse and Onalaska; Historical Societies for La Crosse County, Holmen, West Salem, and La Crescent.

TRIBAL LANDS

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires all federal agencies to consult with Indian Tribes for undertakings that may affect properties of traditional religious and cultural significance on or off Tribal lands. Tribal lands are lands held by the United States in trust for an Indian tribe or lands owned by an Indian tribe subject to federal restrictions against alienation (a transfer of the title to property by one person to another) and over which an Indian tribe exercises governmental power.

Table 5-13 lists the federally recognized Tribes with elected or appointed Tribal governments residing within Minnesota and Wisconsin.

TABLE 5-13: TRIBES OF WISCONSIN AND MINNESOTA

Wisconsin	Minnesota
Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians*	Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Indians*
Forest County Potawatomi Community*	Fond du Lac of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians*
Ho-Chunk Nation*	Grand Portage Band of Chippewa Indians*
Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians*	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
Lac Du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians*	Lower Sioux Indian Community*
Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin*	Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin*	Prairie Island Indian Community
Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians*	Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians
Sokaogon Chippewa Community*	Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux (Dakota) Community
St. Croix Band of Chippewa Indians*	Upper Sioux Community*
Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians*	White Earth Reservation*

*Tribes who have signed agreements with their respective Departments of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration.
Source: Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Transportation.

Of the Tribes listed, only the Ho-Chunk Nation is represented in the planning area. The Tribe holds legal interest in several parcels of Tribal land in the Town of Holland at the La Crosse County / Trempealeau County border and on Brice Prairie in the Town of Onalaska (see **Figure 5-7**).

Other parcels owned by the Tribe include the historic Three Rivers House (Masonic Temple) near downtown La Crosse and several residential properties in West Salem, Onalaska, and La Crosse. The Three Rivers House serves as the La Crosse branch office and the La Crosse Youth & Learning Center. The residential properties are owned under the Ho-Chunk Housing & Community Development Agency and the Home Ownership Program. These properties are not considered Tribal lands.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

The State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO) run ongoing statewide survey programs that inventory prehistoric and historic archaeological sites that are described by type, function, time period, artifacts, general location, and setting. The locations of the sites are restricted from public viewing so as to protect these sites from being disturbed. The SHPOs either map these sites in generalized "sensitive" areas (Wisconsin) or identify them by Town and Range (Minnesota).

Figure 5-7 illustrates the region's cultural resources. The shaded areas represent archaeologically sensitive areas and city properties, historic districts, and tribal lands. Historic places listed in a table whose addresses have been restricted or made unavailable to the public are not illustrated in the map.

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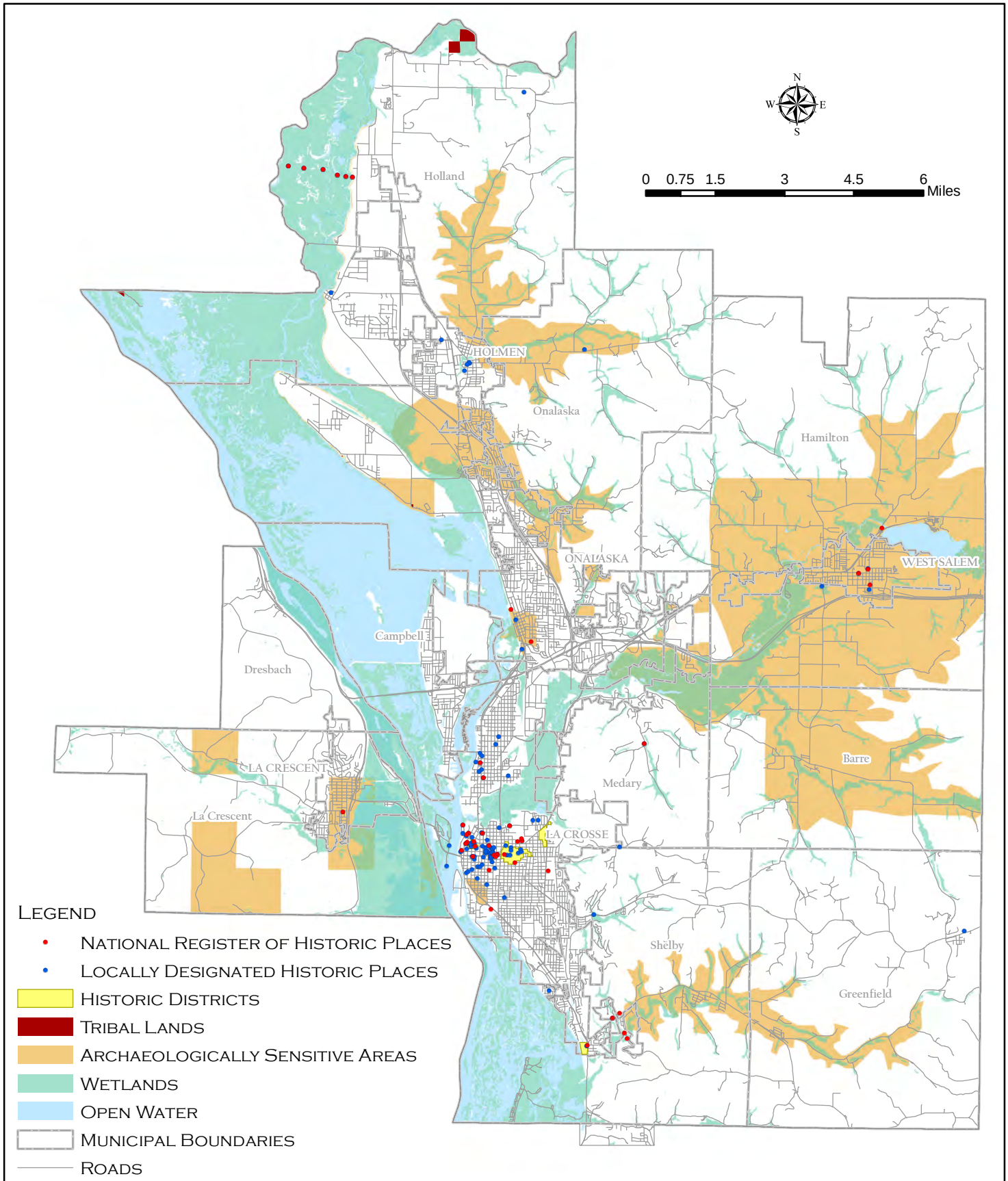
Figure 5-7: Cultural Resources



NOTE: Archaeological sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places database are not shown because their addresses are restricted from the general public.

Digital representation of "sensitive" areas in Minnesota was unavailable, so the areas shown are generalized to town and range sections with known archaeological sites.

SOURCES: National Park Service, Minnesota Historical Society, and Wisconsin Historical Society Web sites; La Crosse County; Cities of La Crosse and Onalaska.

La Crosse Area Planning Committee, July 2013.

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PRESERVATION & MITIGATION

National Historic Preservation Act

Preservation and mitigation of historic sites occurs through the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 process. Because the State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) for Minnesota and Wisconsin have memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with the DOTs and FHWA, mitigation is dealt with on a case-by-case basis, with the final mitigation decision made by the SHPO. Government-to-government consultation with the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) is required when Tribal land or Native American historic and/or archaeological sites could be impacted. The determination process involves:

1) Determining if Section 106 applies:
   - Is the Federal action an undertaking under 36 CFR Part 800?
2) Determining the area of potential effects and identifying and evaluating resources:
   - Is there a potential for historic properties to exist in areas affected by the undertaking?
   - If properties do exist, are they eligible or potentially eligible for the National Register?
3) Determining how historic properties will be affected.
4) Resolving adverse effects through avoidance, minimization, or mitigation.

Typically, the Section 106 process is done after the NEPA process. Because NEPA is the decision-making process, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) feels integrating the Section 106 process into NEPA provides historic preservation its best chance to avoid or minimize adverse effects. Integration would result in historic properties being considered early in the process and becoming part of project alternative identification and selection.

The current practice of on-site, project-by-project mitigation, however, results in the loss of archaeological sites, historic structures and buildings, and traditional cultural properties and sacred sites. The ACHP has proposed considering applying similar mitigation strategies to historic preservation as those used for environmental mitigation (off-site mitigation and mitigation banking for archaeological sites).

Tribal Consultation

GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS

Federal Executive Order 13175, *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments* (Nov. 6, 2000), sets forth the criteria agencies should follow when formulating and implementing policies that have tribal implications. It requires Federal agencies to establish a consultation process for interactions with Indian tribes in the development of regulatory policies that have tribal implications. The Memorandum of Tribal Consultation issued on November 5, 2009 reaffirms the legal and political relationship between the Federal government and Tribal governments and tasked executive departments and agencies with creating detailed plans of actions that they will take to implement Executive Order 13175.

To comply with Federal law, Wisconsin issued Executive Order 39 and Minnesota issued Executive Order 13-10 to affirm the government-to-government relationship at the State level. The outcome of these executive orders was the development of partnership agreements between the States and their respective Tribal governments. WisDOT, for example, has entered into a Tribal Partnership Agreement with all 11 of Wisconsin's Tribal governments. The agreement established a WisDOT Tribal Task Force comprised of WisDOT and Tribal officials to serve as a forum to discuss transportation issues and policies impacting Tribes.

NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION ACT (NAGPRA)

The main purpose of NAGPRA is to protect Native American burial sites and associated items. Implemented by the Secretary of the Interior, the Act addresses the rights of lineal descendants, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations in certain Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to the Native American group or culture itself. All Federal agencies are subject to NAGPRA.

Other State and Local Laws

Applicable laws in Wisconsin include the Historic Preservation Program, the Burial Sites Preservation Program, the Long-Range Public Building Program, Uniform Conservation Easement Act, and local ordinances. Applicable laws in Minnesota include the Minnesota Field Archaeology Act and the Minnesota Historic Sites Act.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the safety, mobility, and policy-based challenges identified in the Coulee Region and the strategies developed and recommended to help address those challenges. The challenges and strategies were largely identified during the planning processes of three major local planning efforts:

- *Coulee Vision 2050*, which developed a long-term vision for growth and transportation in the La Crosse and La Crescent region;
- *La Crosse Transportation Vision*, whose purpose is to proactively guide transportation direction, policies, plans, and designs that could affect the City of La Crosse over the next 5 to 50 years; and,
- *Coulee Region Transportation Study*, whose purpose is to identify strategies that address safety, infrastructure deterioration, congestion, multimodal deficiencies, and the environment, and that support economic development and livability in the Coulee Region.

The major action steps presented concentrate on three key areas: cooperative land use planning and boundary agreements; regional transit planning; and intelligent transportation systems (ITS).

CHALLENGES

The greatest transportation challenges identified through the planning and public processes fall into one or more of three main categories: mobility; safety; and land use. These challenges include, but are not limited to:

- Intersections and roads with high crash rates and congested travel conditions;
- Major roads that lack bicycle accommodations and sidewalks, and act as barriers to bicycle and pedestrian travel;
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities that are inadequate to serve the needs of all users;
- Areas of conflict between high volume motor vehicle traffic and high volume bicycle and pedestrian traffic;

- Transit stops that are hard to access because of difficult road crossings and a lack of pedestrian infrastructure;
- Roadway incidents that exacerbate traffic congestion and delays;
- Signal coordination and timing that results in stop-and-go flow and sitting through more than one signal phase at an intersection;
- Poor pavement condition;
- Land use decisions that promote reliance on a personal vehicle;
- Declining federal and state assistance;
- Increased restrictions on generating tax base; and,
- Unaligned policies at different levels of government.

SAFETY CHALLENGES

As discussed in Chapter 4 and illustrated in **Figure 4-6**, many of our major corridors and intersections have very high crash rates. WisDOT has flagged these areas (all but one is in the City of La Crosse) for deeper scrutiny and analysis during the planning process for the *Coulee Region Transportation Study*.

Although the planning area experienced a downward trend in total roadway crashes from 2008-2012 (**Figure 4-4**), the number of crashes per million miles traveled (**Figure 4-5**), the number of severe-injury crashes (**Figure 4-7**), and the number of fatal crashes (**Figure 4-8**) trended upward during that time period. Bicycle crashes (**Figure 4-12**) and pedestrian crashes (**Figure 4-21**) would have trended flat were it not for one year (2012 for bicycle crashes and 2011 for pedestrian crashes) where crashes were untypically high. Although the planning area experienced no fatal bicycle crashes from 2008-2012, it did experience eight fatal pedestrian crashes.

Figure 6-1 illustrates the roads and intersections identified in the region as having safety concerns because their five-year crash rate averages are higher than the statewide average for roadway segments or are greater than 1.0 for intersections. The road segments of safety concern include:

- All of George St
- Lang Dr between Monitor St and George St
- STH 157 between STH 16 and I-90
- STH 16 between CTH OS and Gillette St
- La Crosse St between 7th St and STH 16/Losey Blvd

- 3rd St between Cass St and Copeland Ave
- 4th St between Cameron Ave and Copeland Ave
- 7th St between Cass St and La Crosse St
- Cass St between 4th St and 7th St
- All of West Ave
- Jackson St between 3rd St and 19th St
- South Ave between Green Bay St and Ward Ave

Of the 13 high crash rate intersections, 2 are associated with roads that are "congested" (see "Mobility Challenges" below for more discussion) and 9 are associated with roads with high crash rates.

MOBILITY CHALLENGES

Mobility challenges include conditions that make travel difficult for users of the transportation network. All of the challenges noted earlier could be considered a mobility challenge at some level, but, the first seven would have a direct impact on the ability to travel and/or the level of service of travel.

Level of service (LOS) is one measure that describes the capacity and quality of service of a transportation facility. In this application, it addresses the mobility of motor vehicles and does not factor in the mobility of bicyclists and pedestrians. Although there are methodologies to address the level of service for bicyclists and pedestrians, not all of the necessary data are available to conduct these analyses. In general, however, the roads listed here as well as any four-or-more lane road will pose a challenge to bicyclists and pedestrians, especially the elderly and the disabled, because they are: 1) difficult to cross without aids like high visibility crosswalks, extended walk signals, cameras, or pedestrian signals; and, 2) difficult to travel along without sidewalks, bike lanes, shoulders, or other accommodation.

Besides illustrating the roads and intersections with high crash rates, **Figure 6-1** also illustrates the roads in the region identified during the planning process for the *Coulee Region Transportation Study* currently to have a poor level of service (where LOS D is "moderate congestion"; LOS E is "severe congestion"; or LOS F is "extreme congestion") during peak travel times (typically from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm, but can vary). These roads include:

- USH 53 between George St and I-90;
- STH 16 between STH 157 and La Crosse St; and,

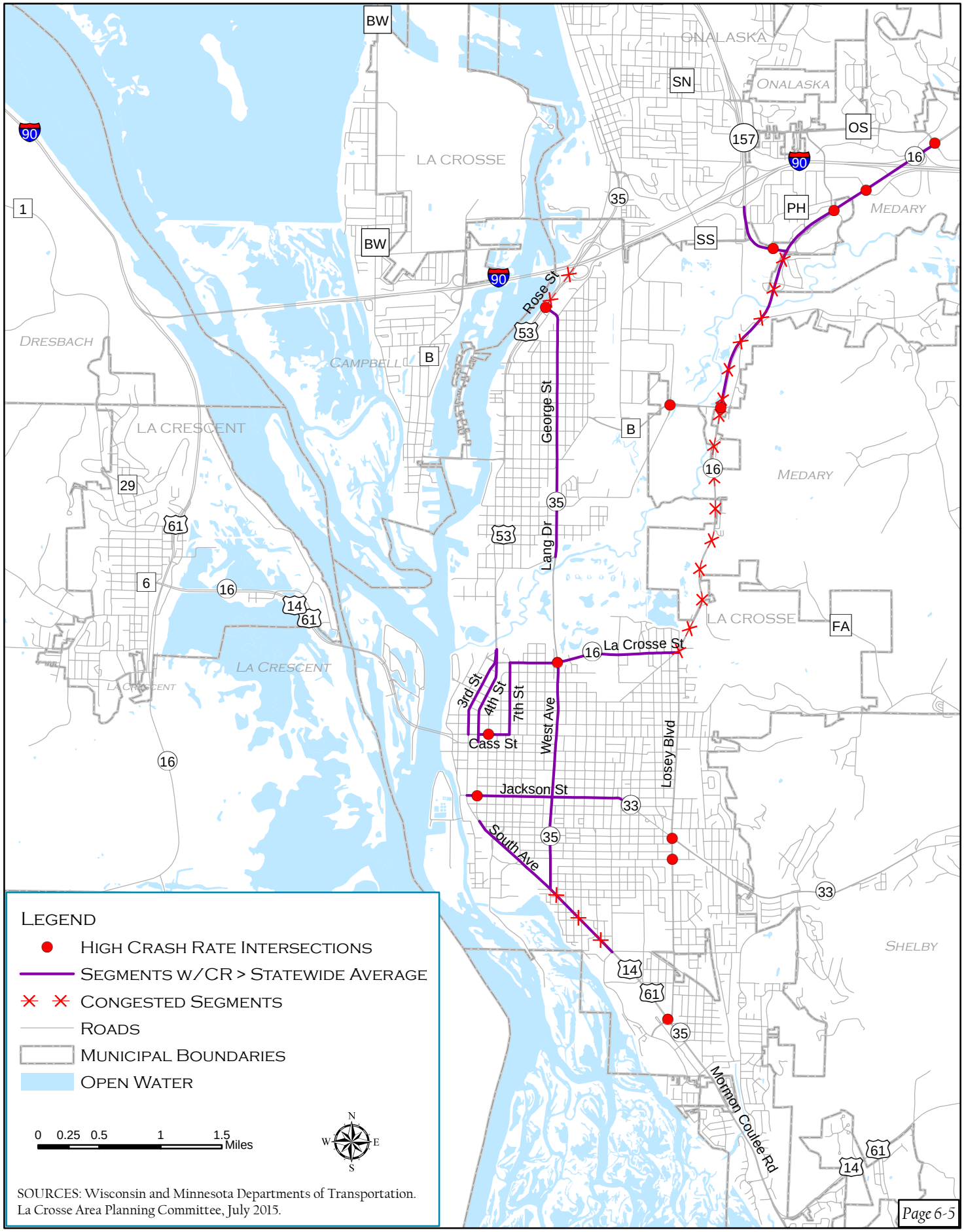
- South Ave between West Ave and Ward Ave.

As part of the analysis process for the *Study*, WisDOT used household and employment projections to identify roadway segments and intersections that will likely be congested (have a poor level of service) in 2050. The analysis also included existing and committed projects currently in our transportation improvement program (TIP) with the exception of the USH 53/12th Ave Extended project. The result of this analysis (**Figure 6-2**) has determined that the following roads will have a poor level of service in 2050:

- STH 16 between Landfill Rd and La Crosse St;
- All of Losey Blvd;
- STH 157 between STH 16 and I-90;
- Gillette St (CTH B) between STH 16 and Onalaska Ave;
- USH 53 between George St and I-90;
- All of Copeland Ave (USH 53);
- One-way segment of Rose St (USH 53);
- All of La Crosse St;
- All of 3rd St;
- All of 4th St;
- All of South Ave; and,
- STH 33 between 19th St and Hagen Rd.

WisDOT will strive through its *Coulee Region Transportation Study* to bring the level of service of all roads to a level of service "D" or better. This is consistent with the MnDOT's acceptance of level of service "D" in urban and urbanizing areas.

Figure 6-1: Roads and Intersections Identified for Safety and Mobility Concerns, 2015



SOURCES: Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Transportation.
La Crosse Area Planning Committee, July 2015.

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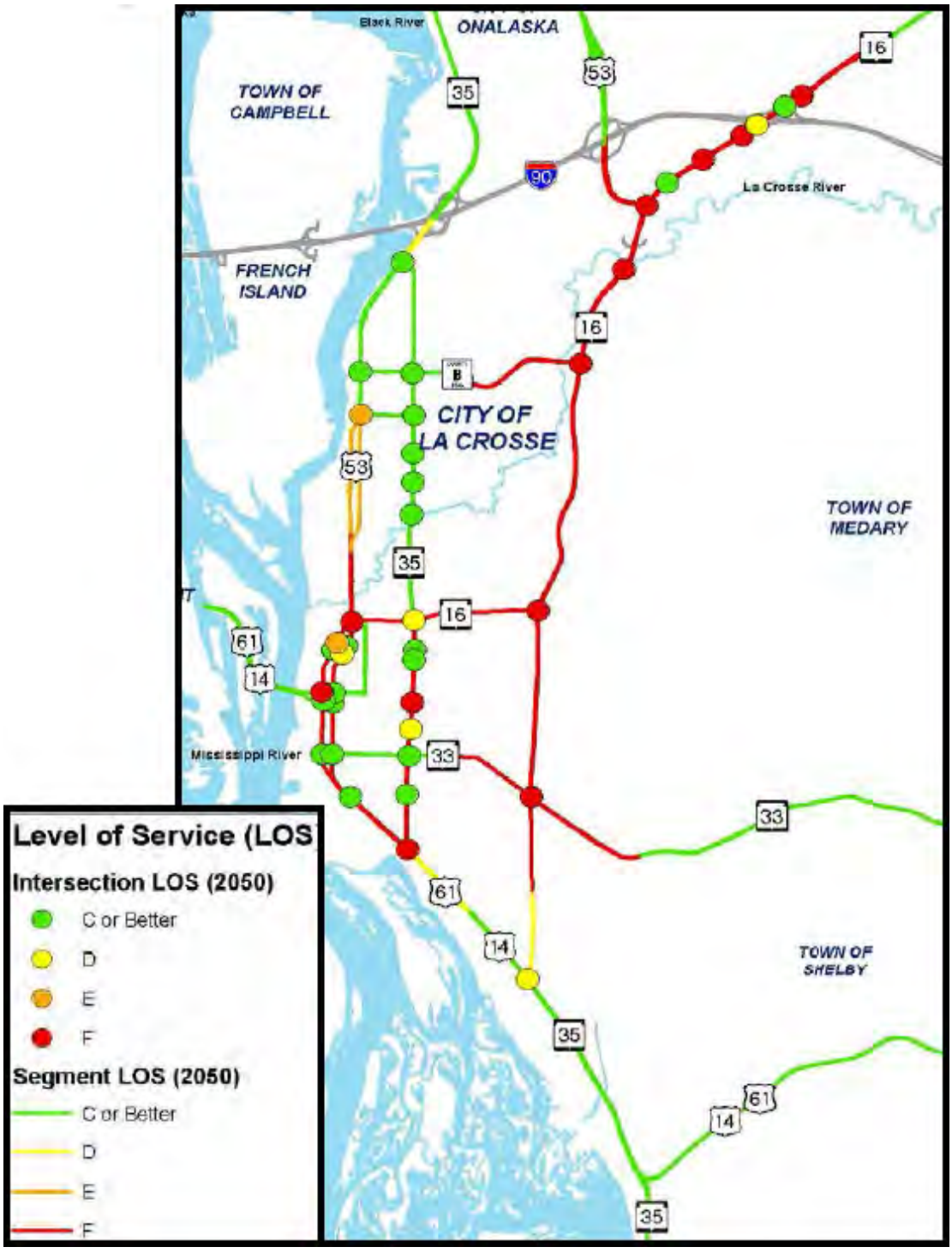

Figure 6-2: Estimated level of service in 2050 of roads and intersections within the study area for the *Coulee Region Transportation Study*. *Source:* Public presentation, WisDOT.

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POLICY-BASED CHALLENGES

Local Policies & Land Use

An analysis of current land use and development patterns conducted for the *Coulee Vision 2050* plan shows that current comprehensive plans provide for far more housing supply than there is demand (**Table 6-1**). While it is a common practice to plan for 200 percent or more of expected demand to allow for flexibility relative to the uncertainty of market conditions and property owner decisions, the aggregate regional plan for the next 20 years plans for roughly 600 percent of likely residential land demand and 121 years of greenfield development over that period.

Generally speaking, the current land use plans do little to encourage infill development and do not support the implementation of a regional transit system. The Village of Holmen, for example, could consider transit in the land use plan for its TIF district by creating an overlay for transit-oriented development.

TABLE 6-1: PLANNED DEVELOPMENT AREAS (PER ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLANS)

Future Land Use Category	Net Available Acreage	Density	Estimated Dwelling Units/Acre	Estimated Units	Estimated Population Capacity
Low Density Residential	14,400	< 3 DU/acre	2	28,800	72,000
Medium Density Residential	1,680	3-6 DU/acre	4	6,720	16,800
High Density Residential	10	> 6 DU/acre	10	100	240
Low Density Mixed Use	880	≤ 3 Stories	2	1,760	4,400
High Density Mixed Use	280	≥ 4 Stories	5	1,400	3,500
Commercial	160	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment (Industry, Business Park)	640	NA	NA	NA	NA
Public	480	NA	NA	NA	NA
Total	**18,530**			**38,780**	**96,940**
			Estimated population growth per year		800
			Estimated years of greenfield residential development		**121**

Source: Copied from *Coulee Vision 2050: A Vision for the La Crosse-La Crescent Area*.

State Policies & Funding

Activities at the State level, especially the budgetary process, can pose significant challenges to improving the transportation network at the local level. The State of Wisconsin has opted to reduce the amount of state aids and shift the cost for some improvements to the local entities. Some of the major actions in Wisconsin that have posed challenges to funding transportation at the local level include:

- **Amending the "Complete Streets" law in the 2015-2017 Wisconsin State Budget.** Wisconsin statute 84.01(35), which generally required WisDOT to include bicycle and pedestrian facilities as a part of new highway construction or reconstruction projects funded in whole or in part with state funds, was amended to only "give due consideration." Also, "the governing body of each municipality in which a portion of the project will occur" must now adopt "a resolution authorizing the [DOT] to establish the bikeway or pedestrian way." Additional provisions, such as the repeal of TRANS 75, make it easier to opt out of providing facilities.
- **Eliminating state funding for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).** This federal program helps fund bicycle and pedestrian projects. The 2015-2017 Wisconsin State Budget deletes $1,000,000 annually. This is likely to result in fewer projects or smaller projects in Wisconsin getting funded or the local contribution increasing to meet the shortfall.
- **Prohibiting the use of state moneys for Community Sensitive Solutions (CSS).** CCS has been used for aesthetic preferences and bicycle and pedestrian enhancements adjacent to a highway improvement project. The 2015-2017 Wisconsin State Budget prohibits the use of state moneys for projects the Department of Transportation determines are primarily related to the aesthetic preferences of the communities. How this will affect the planning for an adjacent shared-use path, for example, is unknown.
- **Reducing segregated funds for state highway rehabilitation**. The 2015-2017 Wisconsin State Budget replaces the segregated fund appropriation with a bond-funded appropriation. This means that the spending will be the same, but, the payment with interest will occur in the future.
- **Repealing enabling legislation for regional transit authorities (RTAs).** An RTA is special-purpose district, generally with taxing authority, created to provide public transportation within a defined region. Because the eligibility requirements for the 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program prohibit large urban areas (over 200,000 people) from using those funds for transit operations, the funding authority of an RTA offers a mechanism by which

transit districts can be self-supportive. Wisconsin repealed its enabling legislation in the 2011-2013 Wisconsin State Budget.

Although the 2015 legislative session in Minnesota provided a modest increase in funding in transportation programs, the legislature could not come to consensus on how to provide additional funding. The uncertainty will pose a challenge to future planning efforts.

Federal Policies & Funding

The federal transportation bill—currently Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act or MAP-21—is a funding and authorization bill designed to govern federal surface transportation spending. Assistance is distributed to the states and to transit agencies operating in urbanized areas. Some of the more notable challenges with federal legislation include:

- **Short-term (i.e. 6-month, 1-year) extensions and re-authorizations of the transportation bill.** This fosters uncertainty and the inability to engage in sustainable, long-range planning.
- **"Complete Streets" as a policy recommendation, not a criterion for funding (when applicable).** At this time, the transportation bill does not require highway projects to consider bicycle and pedestrian accommodations as a condition of funding. This can perpetuate the reliance on the personal automobile because travelers have only one option.
- **Restriction on the use of 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program funds for transit operations.** As mentioned in the previous section, transit systems operating in urban areas over 200,000 people cannot use 5307 funds for operations. And, like in Wisconsin, where transit systems are unable to generate local tax revenue, this becomes a major barrier to not only expanding service but to maintaining existing levels of service.

STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES

SAFETY STRATEGIES

TIP Projects

Although the roads addressed by three of five safety projects programmed in the current 2015-2018 TIP do not specifically address intersections or segments of road that have been identified to have high crash rates in 2015 (**Figure 6-1**), these projects mitigate the potential for serious injury and fatal crashes:

- **I-90 westbound off-ramp at USH 53 northbound/STH 157:** This project is in the design phase to construct an acceleration lane between the westbound and northbound movements. No construction date has been set.
- **I-90 clear zone tree removal between La Crosse and Sparta:** This project is programmed to occur in 2017.
- **CTH GI, Town of Shelby, BNSF railroad crossing:** This project is currently underway and is replacing the obsolete warning device equipment with new automatic flashing lights, gates, and constant timing.

The fourth safety project, which will be completed in 2017, involves reconstructing **Cass St between 4th St and 7th St** from a four-lane facility to a two-lane facility with a TWLTL and bicycle lanes, realigning the north and south approaches of 7th St, and reconstructing the intersection at 7th St with a roundabout. This project is designed to address the safety issues and high crash rates on Cass St at its intersections with 5th Ave and 7th St, while providing safer accommodations for bicyclists.

The fifth project will address the high-crash-rate segment of **USH 14 South Ave between Green Bay St and Ward Ave**.

The reconstruction of **STH 16 between Landfill Rd** in Medary and Veteran's Park in West Salem could be considered a safety project even though it does not explicitly address high crash rates. By eliminating merging movements between climbing lanes and through lanes and by removing left- and right-turning vehicles from the through lanes, the potential for conflicts and crashes is greatly reduced.

Freight-specific Strategies

The City of La Crosse entered into an agreement with the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad regarding the construction of a second track between the rail yard in north La Crosse and Farnam St in south La Crosse. The City negotiated provisions that would improve the safety of users of the golf course and the general traveling public at road crossings. The second track should reduce the incidence of trains cutting off neighborhoods from emergency services. In the case of an incident within La Crosse County, La Crosse County Emergency Management has prepared an Emergency Evacuation Plan.

Transit-specific Strategies

Transit strategies to address safety can be divided into two categories: 1) strategies that are employed by La Crosse MTU as the main provider of fixed-route transit services in the planning area; and 2) strategies that have been recommended by outside agencies, namely the LAPC as the assigned agency to complete at regular intervals a transit plan for the La Crosse MTU.

MTU strives to ensure the safety of its passengers by:

- Replacing buses when needed, which includes leveraging STP-U funds;
- Hiring the most qualified drivers;
- Providing new driver and refresher driver training;
- Tracking the number of collisions per 100,000 vehicle revenue miles (accident rate); and,
- Tracking the average miles traveled between vehicle breakdowns.

The LAPC in its *Grand River Transit Service Enhancement and Policy Plan 2015-2025* (Transit Enhancement Plan or TEP for short) identifies areas of concern and recommends spot improvements and additional studies to address better the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians when accessing transit services. The strategies listed under "Bicycle and Pedestrian Strategies" below will also improve the safety of transit riders.

Bicycle- and Pedestrian-specific Strategies

The communities have been more proactive about constructing bicycle and pedestrian facilities as part of their larger road construction projects, but more needs to be done. Analyses have shown existing and forecasted future safety and mobility problems in the region and by constructing/reconstructing roads without infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians, the forecast will come true. Without safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, travelers have little choice but to drive.

The strategies used to date include:

- **Leveraging Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds.** This program funds highway safety projects at sites that have experienced a high crash history.
- **Leveraging the STP-U project prioritization process.** The LAPC uses a set of criteria to rank projects submitted for STP-U funds. Projects that increase the

safety of bicyclists and/or pedestrians receive more points under those criteria.

- **Leveraging Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funds for projects to improve the safety of elementary-school-age children walking and biking to school.** The Federal SRTS program is no longer a standalone program, but is now wrapped into the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). State funding for TAP in Wisconsin, which includes SRTS, has been eliminated through Act 55. Unlike Wisconsin, Minnesota continues to fund SRTS with state funds.
- **Programming enhanced pedestrian crossing projects in municipal capital improvement programs.** The City of La Crosse and the City of Onalaska have installed rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) at crossings of high pedestrian traffic, have been identified as unsafe, and/or are difficult because of the characteristics of the road (i.e. four-lane; high-volume).

Future strategies include:

- **Those listed above.**
- **Conducting a bicycle and pedestrian safety analysis.** This activity will provide a detailed analysis of bicycle and pedestrian crashes in the planning area over a five-year period. The goal is to ascertain the underlying reasons for the crashes (i.e. physical environment, traveler behavior) and to provide recommendations that address the issues.
- **Advocating for the use of traffic calming measures and enhanced crossings.**
- **Advocating for new and reconstructed roads to be designed for posted speeds.**

MOBILITY STRATEGIES

TIP Projects

Many of the existing and committed projects listed in the TIP were designed to address mobility issues. These projects were included in the 2050 traffic model that produced the results illustrated in **Figure 6-2** discussed earlier. Only two of those projects appear to have a positive effect on reducing congestion in 2050:

- **Jackson St between 3rd St and 19th St:** Jackson St is programmed to be reconstructed in 2020 with bike lanes and possibly a roundabout at West Ave and/or at 19th St. This project is meant to address the high crash rates that currently exist within this corridor.

- **7th St between La Crosse St and Cass St:** The roundabout and realignment of 7th St discussed in the Cass St project above will address the high crash rate at the Cass St and 7th St intersection and the conflicts resulting from the jogged flow of traffic for "through" traffic on 7th St.

Two projects that occur on existing roads of concern that should improve mobility include:

- La Crosse St between Oakland St and Losey Blvd.
- South Avenue between Green Bay St and Ward Ave.

Several other projects that were included in the traffic model for 2050 are planned on roads that currently do not show future mobility problems, but are programmed to address infrastructure, safety, and/or operational or physical deficiencies of the roadway.

- I-90 between the east end of the Black River Bridge and Theater Rd.
- STH 35 between Poplar St and CTH OT.
- Riders Club Rd between STH 35 and Sand Lake Rd (STH S).
- Theater Rd between CTH PH and STH 16.
- CTH OS (Main St) between STH 16 and Market Place Dr.

More information about them can be found in our 2015-2018 TIP.

WisDOT hopes that the strategies to be developed through the *Coulee Region Transportation Study* planning process will address some of the congestion issues anticipated in 2050 under the modeling scenario of existing and committed projects. The Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) process under which the *Study* is being conducted will allow for a wider range of strategies that incorporate bicycle, pedestrian, transit, operations, and other components.

Freight-specific Strategies

Coulee Vision 2050 recommends creating a system of signed truck routes, especially through the City of La Crosse, for the efficient movement of truck freight within and through the region.

Two railroad-specific projects are designed to improve mobility for the railroads, which will in turn improve mobility at railroad crossings:

- **The construction by BNSF of a second track between the rail yard in north La Crosse and Farnam St in south La Crosse.** Delay may still occur at Grand Crossing just south of the rail yard where BNSF Railroad and Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) intersect.
- **Construction by CPR of a second siding track between the Mississippi River and CPR rail yard.** This extra siding can help reduce road delay by allowing one train to move over for another. Currently, the intersections at Hagar St and Avon St and at Liberty St and St Cloud St can be blocked off for extended periods of time as competing trains, including Amtrak, wait to take their turn. Again, conflicts can occur between CPR and BNSF at Grand Crossing.

Transit-specific Strategies

- **Prepare a short-, mid-, and long-range transit plan for MTU at least every 10 years.** LAPC staff has completed two transit plans to date for the La Crosse MTU:
  - *2008-2015 Transit Development Plan for the La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility*, 2007.
  - *Grand River Transit Service Enhancement & Policy Plan 2015-2025*, 2015.

  The transit plan includes a quality of service analysis that identifies gaps for passengers accessing essential services as well as an analysis of pedestrian access to transit stops. It also explicitly determines if disadvantaged populations (elderly, disabled, minority, low-income) are adequately served.
- **Encourage the City of La Crosse and MTU to implement the recommendations in the transit plan.**
- **Work with other interested partners to develop a regional transit system.** The LAPC work program includes a task to begin working with La Crosse County and the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC) on a study to develop a regional transit system in La Crosse County, with

possible connections in surrounding counties. **Figure 6-3** illustrates the conceptual route map included in *Coulee Vision 2050*.

- **Develop a framework for an RTA in the region.** The LAPC work program includes a task to begin implementing the recommendations from the MTU transit plan and the LAPC transportation plan.

Bicycle- and Pedestrian-specific Strategies

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are an integral part of the overall transportation network. They provide travel options for people who cannot, should not, or choose not to drive. The strategies used to date to help fund and construct bicycle and pedestrian accommodations include:

- **Transportation Alternatives Program.**
- **Surface Transportation Program-Urban (STP-U).** As noted earlier under "challenges," Trans 75 was repealed in the 2015-2017 state budget, which will now allow project designers to exclude consideration of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in roadway projects. This may be moot if the Complete Streets provision in the transportation bill that was passed by the U.S. Senate makes it through the House. This provision will require all states to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians in all stages of the design of streets.
- **STP-U project prioritization process.** The LAPC uses a set of criteria to rank projects submitted for STP-U funds. Projects that include bicycle and/or pedestrian accommodations receive more points under those criteria.
- **Community Sensitive Solutions (CSS) funds.** Prior to its repeal in the 2015-2017 state budget, Wisconsin DOT allowed up to 1.5 percent of the cost of a project to be used for aesthetic preferences or bicycle and pedestrian enhancements adjacent to a highway project. Part of the cost of the shared-use path that is planned to be constructed adjacent to the STH 16 expansion project between Landfill Rd in La Crosse and Veteran's Park in West Salem will be paid through CSS.

Future strategies include:

- **Those listed above.**
- **Conducting a gap analysis of key bicycle and pedestrian connections.**
- **Recommending and advocating for the construction of facilities at problem locations identified in chapter 4.**

- **Advocating for the local construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities so as to avoid the wait and the constraints of federal and/or state funding sources.** Federal regulations require that bicycle facilities be built to a particular standard when using federal funds. Often is the case that a road may not be able to accommodate such a facility and will require undesired widening. Locally-funded projects have flexibility in design.

POLICY-BASED STRATEGIES

Land Use Strategies

PREFERRED LAND USE SCENARIO: MORE INFILL, LESS SPRAWL

The preferred vision for *Coulee Vision* as developed through the long-range transportation planning process assumes that the outlying communities have taken steps to limit urban sprawl by removing some planned growth areas from their current adopted comprehensive plans and by increasing the allowable density of most areas closer to community centers. It also assumes successful boundary agreements between municipalities and adjacent towns to redirect new town development to areas near the municipalities while preventing annexation of that development.

Coulee Vision 2050 envisions the implementation of land use and transportation policies that will focus growth as infill development both through targeting development and adopting policies to restrict and prevent sprawl. In order to support infill development the region's transit system will need to be enhanced to accommodate the increased demand while improving the quality of life for the residences of the La Crosse/La Crescent area. **Figure 6-4** illustrates the preferred future regional land use vision.

Other policy-based strategies to address mobility include:

- Encouraging the local municipalities to incorporate the land use and transportation guiding principles outlined in chapter 1 into their own comprehensive plans.
- Encouraging the local municipalities to update their development requirements to establish parking maximums instead of minimums and to allow for shared parking.
- Encouraging the local municipalities to incorporate transit-oriented development into their development and re-development plans.

CITY OF LA CROSSE TRANSPORTATION VISION

The City of La Crosse Transportation Vision is "to be a beautiful, livable, vibrant, historic city between the rivers, bluffs, and marsh that is the economic, educational, medical, social, cultural, and transportation hub for the region." The Vision aims to protect and enhance the regional economy, quality of life, natural environment, aesthetics, and human connections, with an emphasis on improving safety for everyone. The City envisions changing the policies, the practices, and the physical design of its streets and highways, as well as the allied parking infrastructure within city limits, and within the region to the extent that it affects La Crosse.

A key component of the City's vision is to reduce the dependency on the single-occupant vehicle as the primary mode of transportation and to prioritize cycling, walking, public and private transit, telecommuting, land use changes, parking changes, and other supportive measures.

The City of La Crosse should implement the recommendations from its Parking Study Final Report (Rich and Associates, Inc., May 2009) that are still relevant and re-evaluate the recommendations that may be out of date.

Funding Strategies

STP-U PRIORITIZATION PROCESS

In response to a change in how WisDOT manages its STP-U program, the LAPC technical advisory committee (TAC) is developing policies that will maximize available STP-U funds. The TAC will also be reviewing and updating the criteria used to rank projects submitted for STP-U funding. Current criteria include:

- Economic development
- Safety and security
- Congestion relief
- Mobility and accessibility
- Key component of the transportation system
- Promotes implementation of land use plans
- Multimodalism
- Impacts on the natural environment
- Energy conservation
- Social and community effects
- Intermodal/multimodal connectivity

- Supports efficient land use patterns
- Cost effectiveness
- Preserves existing system
- Transportation corridor preservation
- Project coordination
- Timeliness

All but the last two criteria, which award either 0 or 6 points, award 0, 2, 4, or 6 points depending on how well a project meets the objectives of the criterion. Currently, none of the criteria are weighted to give more emphasis to one over another, although that is a topic for discussion.

For more information on the STP-U project prioritization process, please see the LAPC TIP document (not just the TIP sheets) on the LAPC website at www.lapc.org.

Figure 6-3: Conceptual Regional Transit Services
Based on Vision Alternative 3: More Infill, Less Sprawl

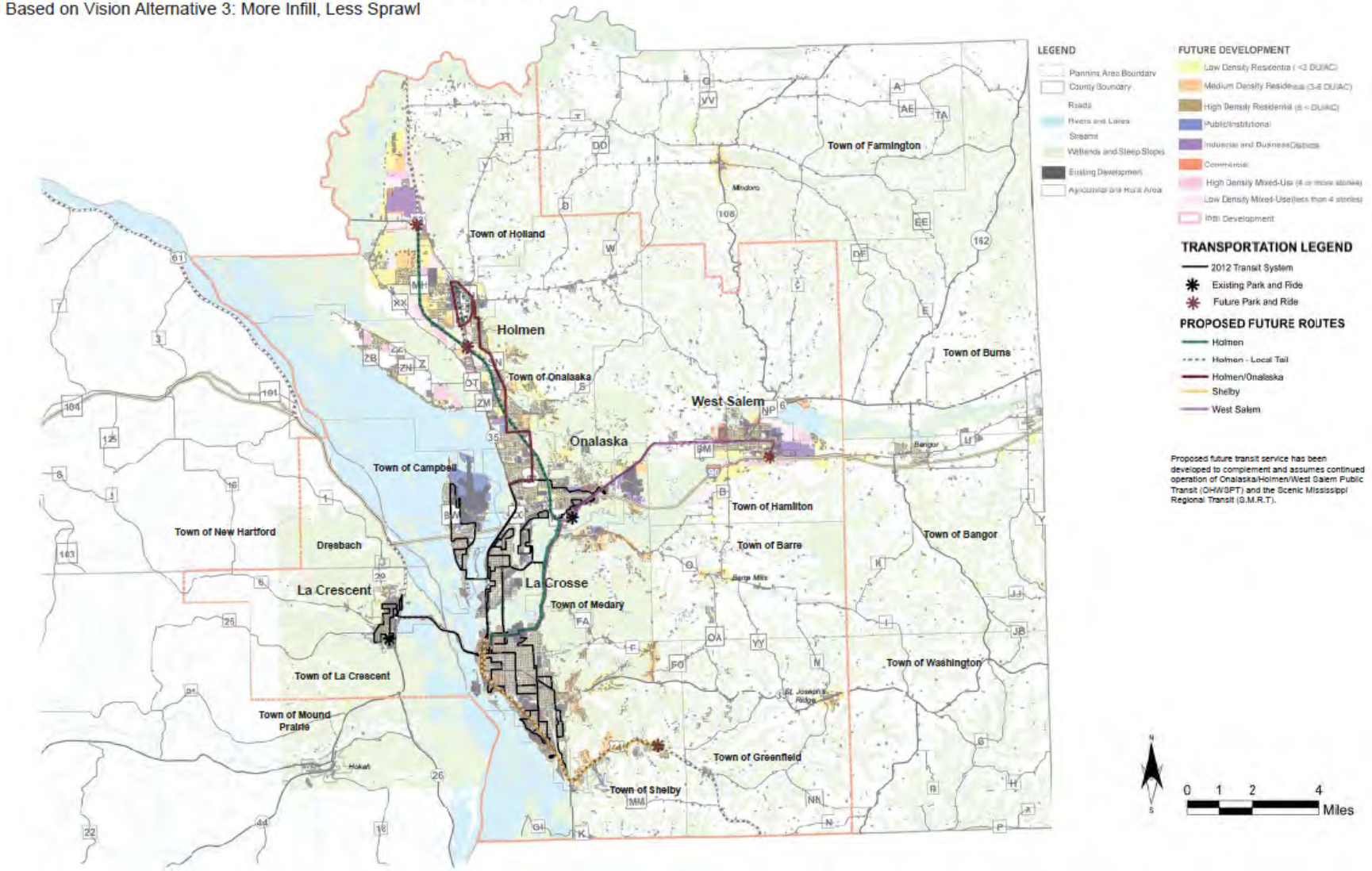

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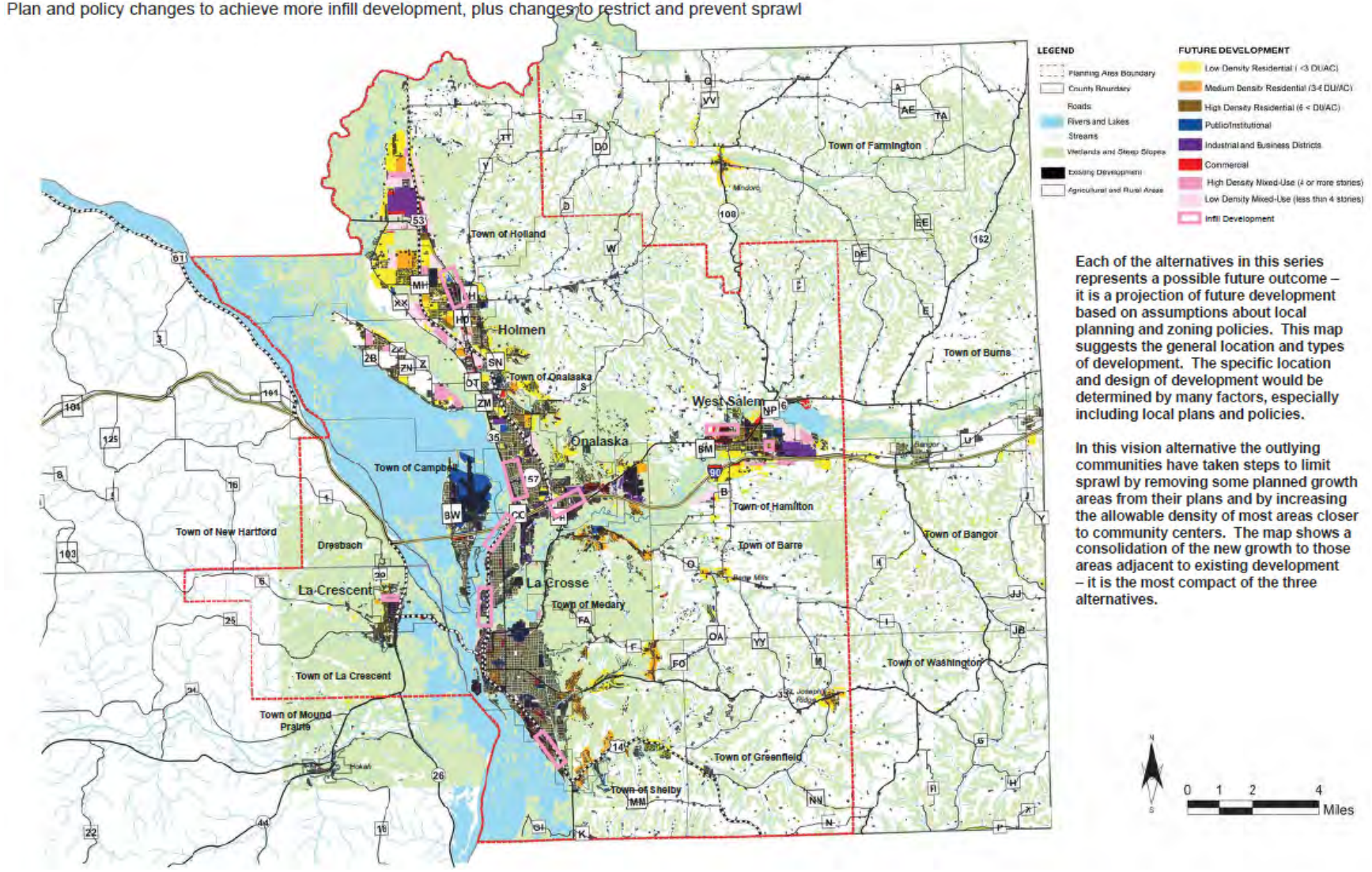
Figure 6-4: Vision Alternative #3-More Infill, Less Sprawl

Plan and policy changes to achieve more infill development, plus changes to restrict and prevent sprawl



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ACTION STEPS

INTRODUCTION

Implementation of the 2040 MTP projects will require the LAPC, communities, and regional stakeholders to take action to turn *Coulee Vision* into a reality. The following outlines action steps and key milestones over the next 10 years that will help move the region closer to achieving this shared vision. The actions, and ultimately outcomes, of this process will set the stage for the next ten to twenty years of planning activities. The implementation plan is composed of three major components:

- Collaborative Land Use Planning & Intermunicipal Boundary Agreements;
- Regional Transit Planning; and,
- Intelligent Transportation Systems.

COLLABORATIVE LAND USE PLANNING & INTERMUNICIPAL BOUNDARY AGREEMENTS

In early 2014, LAPC staff and the AECOM/MSA consultant team began working with LAPC member communities to discuss, encourage, and facilitate the creation of intermunicipal boundary agreements. A local leadership survey revealed that municipal leaders were: 1) worried about many of the same issues—competition for development and inadequate mobility options for residents, for example; and, 2) supportive of efforts to discuss and pursue boundary agreements.

In 2015, LAPC and MSA staff began facilitating meetings with representatives of the City of La Crosse, the City of Onalaska, the Town of Medary, and the Town of Shelby to discuss boundary agreements with their neighboring communities. Members of the core committee agreed that, while current municipal leaders are in office, a deadline of late 2016 should be set to develop boundary agreements.

Action Steps

The current planning effort includes action on an important implementation item – boundary agreements. However, there are other actions the LAPC can and should do, besides helping to facilitate boundary agreements, to implement *Coulee Vision 2050*. The key action steps and milestones to support collaborative land use planning

in the region are illustrated in **Figure 6-5**. The enumerated action steps that follow correspond to the numbered timeline labels in the figure.

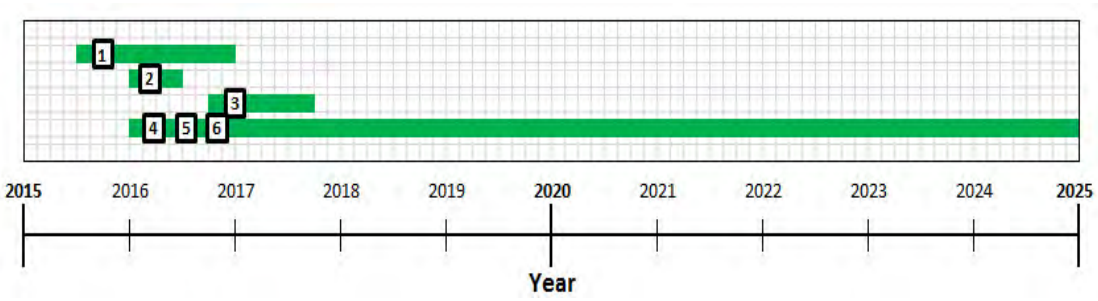

Figure 6-5: Collaborative land use planning timeline, 2015-2025.
NOTE: The numbers in the timeline correspond to the enumerated action steps below.

1. **Facilitate/support adoption of boundary agreements among member jurisdictions.**
   - Continue to convene meetings in support of active boundary agreement discussions involving the cities of La Crosse and Onalaska and the towns of Shelby, Medary, and Campbell.
   - Encourage the initiation of discussions among other jurisdictions and provide active facilitation assistance as budgets allow.
2. **Review and adjust LAPC staffing and funding to enable a continued role in regional land use and development planning.**
   - Review capacity of current staff to review comprehensive plan updates for consistency with *Coulee Vision 2050* and participate in the La Crosse County Extraterritorial Technical Advisory Committee.
   - Review the capacity of current funding sources and also the eligibility of land use planning activities under current funding.
3. **Review/update the *La Crosse Sewer Service Area Water Quality Management Plan* and its administrative procedures.**
   - Evaluate the compatibility of the Plan with any plans to extend sewer for the purpose of development in unincorporated areas and consider appropriate updates.
   - Review administrative procedures as necessary to accommodate the inclusion of more communities in the sewer service area (e.g. Holmen).

4. **Review comprehensive plan updates and amendments for consistency with *Coulee Vision 2050*.**
   - Arrange with member communities for LAPC staff to be included in their list of contacts for draft plan review.
   - Provide comments on the plan through a letter of support.
   - Identify large-scale capital transportation projects that need substantial federal and state funding assistance, and ensure consistency with the MTP and TIP.
5. **Coordinate with La Crosse County and the Extraterritorial Technical Advisory Committee to review land use planning and development proposals for rural areas.**
   - Attend meetings and provide feedback to enhance the consistency between *Coulee Vision 2050* and any rural development proposals.
6. **Review proposed amendments to the *La Crosse County, Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan 2007-2027* and the County zoning ordinance to encourage rural growth limitations.**
   - Participate in any zoning ordinance amendment processes to encourage changes consistent with *Coulee Vision 2050*.

Conclusions

Coulee Vision 2050 describes a future in which people of all ages and abilities across the La Crosse-La Crescent region have personal mobility options that fit their needs. This future includes connected bike and pedestrian facilities and a robust transit system, and it is dependent upon more compact growth patterns than currently found across much of the region. The LAPC has an important role to play in the coordination and reinforcement of land use planning, policies and development review activities to help realize that vision.

REGIONAL TRANSIT PLANNING

Coulee Vision 2050 identified a desire among residents and regional stakeholders to expand transportation choice and mobility options within the region and to expand public transportation services as the preferred solution to address traffic congestion.

The action steps presented here build on the concept of regional transit service outlined in *Coulee Vision 2050*. The action steps provide a framework to expand mobility options and to move the region toward a transit operating structure that will support the overall vision. The action steps encompass two key concepts: 1) building on the existing transit system to expand regional transit coverage to area residents; and, 2) developing a new, separate governmental entity whose purpose will be the administration and funding of regional transportation services.

Action Steps

Coulee Vision 2050 identified the concept of expanding regional transit service and the potential to develop an RTA. While current legislation does not permit RTAs in Wisconsin, there are still actions that the LAPC can, and should, take to expand public transportation options within the region. In the short-term, the LAPC should work with stakeholders to identify future issues and opportunities to implement improvements that will support regional service expansion. The key action steps and milestones to enhance regional transit planning in the region are illustrated in **Figure 6-6**. The numbers in the timeline correspond to the numbered action steps that follow.

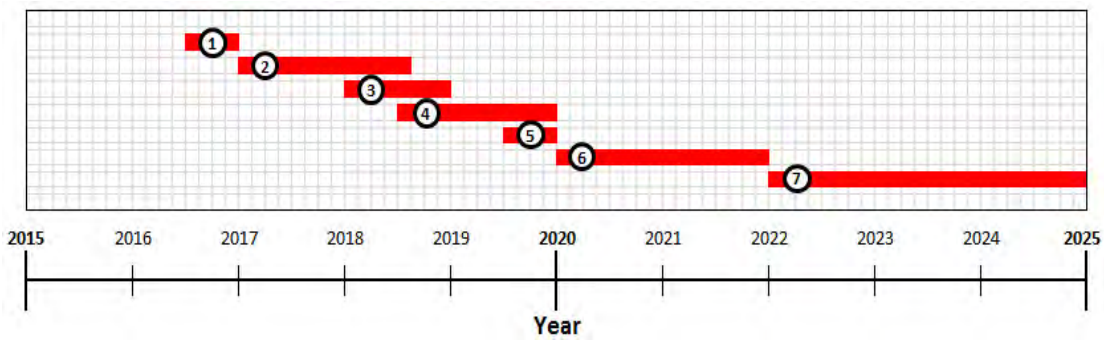

Figure 6-6: Regional transit planning timeline, 2015-2025.
NOTE: The numbers in the timeline correspond to the numbered action steps below.

1. **Develop scope of work**
   - Define the scope of current and future regional bus service needs.
   - Conduct a needs assessment that aligns the current and future demand for transit service and determines what is needed to maintain a state of good repair.

2. **Develop a regional transit implementation plan**
   - Establish a task force/committee or utilize existing LAPC committees.
   - Develop a problem statement.
   - Define existing and future transit needs.
   - Prioritize specific programs/investments.
     - The plan should identify in detail key action steps for the LAPC to expand regional transit service, and possibly form an RTA.
3. **Establish governance / funding structure**
   - Articulate why transit funding is a problem. Build from the problem statement and needs assessment and utilize quantitative and qualitative data to demonstrate why the problem matters.
4. **Public outreach, education and advocacy**
   - Design and carry out a public education and advocacy plan and campaign.
   - Identify key persons to champion transit in the region.
5. **Establish a Regional Transit Board**
   - Develop a framework for the powers, duties, and limitations of an RTA. The board should consider:
     - Governance structure and composition;
     - Funding and financing authorities and rationales for their use;
     - Participation options for the affected localities;
     - Services provided (i.e. fixed-route, demand response, transportation demand management);
     - Transportation functions provided (i.e. planning, construction, operations, maintenance); and
     - Transparency in capital planning and programming (project and program selection).
     - Lay out a clear and reasonable timetable. The timeline would provide parameters and could be grouped for phased implementation.
6. **Implement regional route coordination (fit into RTA model)**
   - Work to develop regional transit service within the existing transit management and funding structures while concurrently advocating for an RTA.

7. **Continue outreach, monitoring, and refinement of services.**

Conclusion

Given the current political climate, implementation of an RTA within the La Crosse-La Crescent area may be several years off. In the interim, continued dialogue and strategic research can help to favorably position the region should future RTA legislation be passed. Until political will emerges and gains statewide momentum, the LAPC can take actions that will support the expansion of regional transit service. These regional concepts are consistent with the LAPC's overall vision of expanding multimodal options to ultimately expand transportation choice and reduce the demand for the use of private automobiles for travel through the region.

INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS (ITS)

Intelligent transportation systems (ITS) are the targeted application of technologies and traffic management strategies to improve the transportation system. This includes a wide range of tools to help traffic managers, transit agencies, emergency responders, traveler information providers, and a host of other transportation stakeholders achieve their missions more effectively. The result is a transportation network that is safer, congestion that is less severe and more predictable, traveler information systems that are more accessible and timely, and an overall travel experience that is more convenient.

Examples of ITS include:

- Traffic management tools like closed-circuit TV (CCTV) cameras and vehicle detection systems that measure and record travel demand;
- Advanced traffic signal systems that react to traffic in real-time;
- Transit applications like transit signal priority and universal fare cards that make transit a more attractive commuting option;
- Traveler information sources like bus arrival time signs and 511 that help travelers plan and track their trips;
- Safety applications like deicing systems or curve warning signs that reduce crashes; and,
- Monitoring systems like weather and pavement sensors that help to predict adverse travel conditions.

Action Steps

The use of ITS in the LAPC region can have significant benefits in increasing the overall efficiency of the current transportation network. In addition, many of the ITS applications are lower cost investments compared to extensive widening or capacity improvements. Typically, ITS by itself is not the complete answer. Instead, the combination of ITS applications, along with strategic capacity investment, can help a transportation system operate more efficiently. **Figure 6-7** summarizes the key action steps and milestones to expand ITS applications in the region. The numbers in the timeline correspond to the numbered action steps that follow.

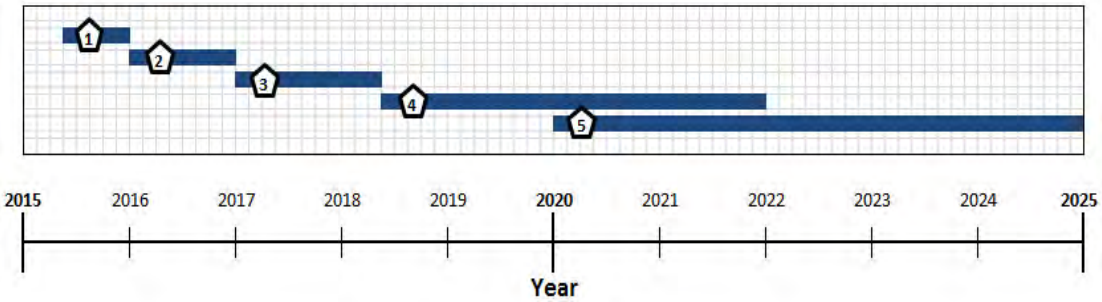

Figure 6-7: Intelligent transportation systems timeline, 2015-2025.
NOTE: The numbers in the timeline correspond to the enumerated action steps below.

1. Coordinate with WisDOT to review the Statewide ITS Architecture and to evaluate potential ITS applications as part of the *Coulee Region Transportation Study*.
2. Coordinate with MnDOT and the Minnesota Regional ITS Architecture on all ITS activities.
3. Conduct a workshop with regional stakeholders to explain ITS capabilities, document existing ITS within the region, identify a local ITS "champion(s)," and outline a process for advancing regional ITS.
4. Hire an ITS consulting firm to develop a detailed ITS architecture, concept of operations, and implementation plan.
   - Regional ITS Architecture – 12 months.
   - Concept of Operations – 8 months (starting in month 5 of the architecture process).
   - ITS Implementation Plan – 12 months (starting at the conclusion of the architecture & Concept of Operations process).

5. Coordinate with WisDOT and MnDOT to implement ITS improvements to enhance local and regional traffic and transit operations.
6. Monitor ITS deployments and maintain the ITS planning documents.

Conclusion

One of the main findings of the *Coulee Vision 2050* process was the desire among area residents to address regional capacity deficiencies through means other than adding new travel lanes. Expanding the use of ITS applications within the region has the potential to increase the efficient use of the existing transportation system and enhance overall safety and mobility for the traveling public. The LAPC should take action to further expand the use of ITS applications in the region to help in meeting the desired goals of the MTP.

INTRODUCTION

As part of Coulee Vision 2040 implementation process, the LAPC has conducted a financial analysis to support the identification, evaluation, and prioritization of transportation projects that will be included in the fiscally-constrained Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The MTP financial analysis demonstrates the balance between expected revenue sources and the estimated costs of projects, otherwise referred to as a fiscally constrained plan. These activities are federally required and are critical to developing a meaningful MTP.

Any tables included in this chapter that forecast future needs and funding include an inflation adjustment to reflect year of expense dollars. Estimated costs are adjusted by an annual inflation factor of 2.4 percent[1] from 2015 to the horizon year 2040. **Tables 7-1** and **7-2** are not adjusted since these tables include historical data which is used to estimate future year revenues.

Values unavailable for current year estimates use the annual average of the previous five years. The use of year-of-expense dollars indicates that corresponding increases in funding will be required to maintain the desired level of preservation, maintenance, and expansion.

HISTORICAL FUNDING

FUNDING FROM LOCAL SOURCES

Expenditure and revenue data were collected from multiple sources including the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), the Minnesota Office of the State Auditor, the LAPC, and individual counties and municipalities.[2] These data are summarized by county or municipality,

[1] The inflation factor of 2.4% is based on an estimate provided by the Wisconsin State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). As stated in the STIP, the inflationary rate is based on the current ten year average change in the Consumer Price Index and matches the rate assumed by Wisconsin MPOs in their TIPs and long range plans.

[2] It should be noted that expenditures for 2013 were not available on the States websites. Any values included for 2013 were provided by the respective municipality and may not represent end-of-the year amounts. These values are included for informational purposes only.

type of transportation activity (including a breakdown of highway maintenance), and funding source (i.e. Federal, State and local).

Table 7-1 summarizes historical transportation expenses by county and municipality for 2010-2014. Expenses include construction, the local share of projects funded with state and/or federal dollars, State Highway Aids, and transit costs.

TABLE 7-1: SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES BY MUNICIPALITY ($X1000)

Municipality	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Houston County	$9,011	$8,401	$9,403	$12,679	$9,413
C. La Crescent	$548	$919	$1,322	$1,354	$1,075
T. La Crescent	$137	$167	$136	$139	$159
Winona County	$10,750	$12,542	$14,072	$14,410	$11,175
T. Dresbach	$115	$105	$65	$33	$94
La Crosse County	$6,385	$5,532	$7,017	$9,703	$6,226
C. La Crosse	$24,013	$19,956	$28,803	$29,494	$24,957
C. Onalaska	$2,133	$3,672	$3,131	$3,300	$3,009
V. Holmen	$913	$786	$741	$759	$821
V. West Salem	$609	$412	$1,368	$518	$716
T. Barre	$91	$136	$65	$67	$105
T. Campbell	$340	$242	$256	$247	$270
T. Greenfield	$304	$168	$225	$230	$244
T. Hamilton	$373	$329	$300	$307	$360
T. Holland	$282	$348	$345	$353	$328
T. Medary	$112	$165	$68	$80	$104
T. Onalaska	$530	$435	$444	$454	$520
T. Shelby	$691	$788	$662	$677	$844
Planning Area	**$57,338**	**$55,102**	**$68,423**	**$74,806**	**$60,422**

Sources: The Minnesota County Finances Report, the Minnesota City Finances Report, and the Minnesota Town Finances Report from the Minnesota Office of the State Auditor; the Expenditures Report and the County and Municipal Revenues and Expenditures Report published by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue.

FUNDING FROM FEDERAL AND STATE SOURCES

Table 7-2 illustrates historic revenues from federal and state sources for transportation projects listed in the LAPC TIP from 2010-2014.

TABLE 7-2: HISTORICAL STATE & FEDERAL HIGHWAY & TRANSIT FUNDING ($X1000)

Funding Source:	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Federal Street and Highway	$11,860	$12,145	$12,437	$12,735	$13,041
State Street and Highway	$5,307	$5,435	$5,565	$5,699	$5,835
Transit (Federal)	$2,818	$2,886	$2,955	$3,026	$3,099
Transit (Minnesota)	$89	$91	$93	$96	$98
Transit (Wisconsin)	$2,101	$2,151	$2,203	$2,256	$2,310
Local Match	$4,359	$4,463	$4,570	$4,680	$4,792
Planning Area:	**$26,534**	**$27,171**	**$27,823**	**$28,491**	**$29,175**

PROJECTED FUNDING

Estimates of future funding of state and federal programs were provided by WisDOT. Costs for programs funded by the state but managed by the municipalities are included in and forecast with local historical and future costs. Federal, State and local funding programs and sources are subject to change depending on program restructuring.

SHORT-RANGE FUNDING (2015-2018)

Table 7-3 illustrates short-range funding projections for 2015 – 2018 based on TIP funding and local funding (average of total expenses found in **Table 7-1**).

TABLE 7-3: SHORT-RANGE FUNDING PROJECTIONS (2015 - 2018) (X $1000 WITH 2.4% ANNUAL INFLATION FACTOR)

Funding Source / Program		**2015-2018**
Federal Highway Administration	Interstate Highway Maintenance, National Highway System, Surface Transportation Program, etc.	$98,301
Federal Transit Administration	Urban Area Formula Program (5307), Transit Capital Investment Grants (5309), Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (5310), etc.	$24,266
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services	Medical Assistance (Transit)	$145
Total Federal		**$122,711**
Wisconsin State Transit Funds	State Urban Mass Transit Operating Assistance Program (85.20), County Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance (85.21), etc.	$5,737
Minnesota State Transit Funds	La Crescent Transit Operating Assistance	$270
Wisconsin State Funds (Non-Transit)	State Funds (SF, MAJOR) and State Shares of Federal (Non Transit) Projects	$26,292
Minnesota State Funds (Non-Transit)	State Funds (SF) and State Shares of Federal (Non Transit) Projects	$162,362
Total State		**$194,660**
Local Funds (Local Share of State and Federal funded projects and local costs)	Local Funds (Wisconsin)	$146,736
	Local Funds (Minnesota)	$10,300
Total Local		**$157,036**
Total Programmed Projects		**$474,407**

MID- AND LONG-RANGE FUNDING (2019-2040)

Mid- and long-range funding projections illustrated in **Table 7-4** include constant dollar and year-of-expense dollar assumptions for state and federal programs, transit funding, and local expenses.

TABLE 7-4: MID- AND LONG-RANGE FUNDING PROJECTIONS (2019 - 2040) ($ X 1000 WITH 2.4% ANNUAL INFLATION FACTOR)

Funding Source	Project or Program	2015-2018	2019-2040 (2015$)	2019-2040 (Year of Funding $)
WisDOT Funding Projections	State Highway Expansion	$0	$0	$0
	Wisconsin Majors Program[1]	$140,000	$140,000	$157,626
	Combined Backbone and non-Backbone	$4,681	$102,998	$139,428
	STH "Low Cost" Bridges	$169	$3,715	$5,029
	STH Maintenance and Operations	$3,466	$76,241	$103,207
Transit	Federal and State (Average 2010-2013 TIP)	$3,150	$69,312	$93,826
Local[2]	Wisconsin Local (2005 - 2009 Average)	$32,533	$715,728	$968,870
	Minnesota Local (2005 - 2009Average)	$2,134	$46,946	$63,549
MnDOT Federal & State funding	Estimate based on past funding	$1,238	$1,238	$1,433
Total:		**$165,367**	**$1,134,173**	**$1,509,265**

[1]Anticipated construction year of 2025.

[2] Includes State Transportation Aids.

FUTURE NEEDS

PROJECT COST ESTIMATES

The existing and committed project list was updated for the MTP to include projects submitted by a sponsoring agency (i.e. State of Wisconsin, State of Minnesota, La Crosse County, municipality). Current projects in the 2015-2018 TIP are considered committed projects as funding is dedicated for implementation. The priority projects identified are consistent with local and regional goals established for the MTP. Additional evaluation of these projects will aid in determining financial feasibility.

Table 7-5 summarizes some of the significant construction projects programmed in the LAPC transportation improvement program (TIP). The entire project list can be seen on the LAPC website at www.lapc.org.

TABLE 7-5: EXISTING & COMMITTED PROJECTS, 2015-2018

Project	Description	Year	Estimated Cost (x$1000)
USH 53/12th Ave extended	New roadway between CTH SS and Gillette St	2020-2024	$149,000
STH 16	Expansion to 4-Lanes (Landfill Rd to Vets Park in West Salem)	2016	$13,206.5
STH 16 (La Crosse St)	Oakland Ave to Losey Blvd	2020	$3,139.5
I-90 auxiliary lanes	Between exits at STH 35 (53 South) and STH 157 (53 North)	2013-2017	$25,818.6
STH 35	Poplar St to USH 53	2016	$12,962.6
STH 16 (Cass St)	4th St to 7th St	2017	$2,974.6
USH 14 (South Ave/ Mormon Coulee Rd)	Green Bay St to Ward Ave	2017-2020	$8,901.5
STH 33 (Jackson St)	3rd Street to 19th St	2020	$6,501.5
Riders Club Rd	STH 35 to Sand Lake Rd (STH S)	2018	$1,484.6

Illustrative Projects include:

- Theater Rd. from CTH PH to STH 16
- CTH OS (East Main St.) from STH 16 to Market Place Dr.
- STH 16 Multipurpose Trail from CTH PH to Landfill Rd.
- East Main St./Green Coulee Rd. – Corridor Improvements
- STH 33 (Jackson St.) 19th St. to Losey Blvd. Reconstruct

LONG-RANGE PRESERVATION AND RECONSTRUCTION NEEDS

Given the projected funding over the next 25 years, the LAPC must strategically invest in transportation projects that will best preserve the existing and future transportation infrastructure. Strategic project investment will enhance regional transportation mobility and support priorities such as improving safety, supporting economic development, and reducing congestion. The top priorities of the LAPC – promoting a smarter regional growth pattern, encouraging the expansion of regional transit service, and focusing on the use of technology to enhance travel safety and efficiency –all have positive impacts on preserving the existing transportation infrastructure by making more efficient use of current assets.

The *Coulee Region Transportation Study* seeks to resolve transportation issues between I-90 and USH 14/61. The strategies that come out of the study must address safety, infrastructure deterioration, congestion, multimodal deficiencies, and the environment, and support economic development and livability. The LAPC has prioritized the use of existing transportation infrastructure over new roads, if possible, to address congestion in the region.

Table 7-6 illustrates the estimated preservation and reconstruction needs for the total planning area for State and U.S. highways based on one preservation treatment and one reconstruction during the 25-year planning horizon. This table does not include costs for roadway expansion, new roadways or bridges, intersection and ramp costs. Anticipated projects will occur in the final 15 years of the planning horizon (2015 – 2040). Costs have been adjusted for inflation with an increase of 2.4 percent per year.

TABLE 7-6: STATE AND US ROADS PRESERVATION AND RECONSTRUCTION COSTS (2015 - 2040) ($ X 1000)

Roadway Type	Lanes	Miles	Preservation (2015 $)	Reconstruction (2015 $)	Preservation & Reconstruction (2015 $)	Preservation & Reconstruction (Year of Expense $)
Rural	2	13.8	$3,905	$23,424	$27,329	$34,931
Urban	2	22.9	$15,524	$64,683	$80,207	$102,520
Rural	4	14.7	$8,309	$48,193	$56,502	$72,221
Urban	4	63.5	$85,834	$350,489	$436,323	$557,703
Planning Area Total:		**115.1**	**$113,572**	**$486,790**	**$600,361**	**$767,375**

Table 7-7 illustrates estimated total planning area local roads preservation and reconstruction needs based on one preservation treatment and one reconstruction during the 25-year planning horizon. Costs have been adjusted for inflation with an increase of 2.4 percent for 2015 – 2040.

TABLE 7-7: LOCAL ROADS PRESERVATION & RECONSTRUCTION COSTS (2015 - 2040) ($ X1000)

Road Type	Total Preservation (2015 $)	Total Reconstruction (2015 $)	Preservation & Reconstruction (2015 $)	Preservation & Reconstruction (Year of Expense $)
With Curb	$27,816	$222,536	$250,353	$319,999
Without Curb	$31,512	$25,209	$56,721	$72,500
Planning Area Total:	**$59,328**	**$247,745**	**$307,073**	**$392,498**

TRANSIT FUNDING

MTU's current transit funding sources are dependent on the system's operational performance. A major indicator of transit service performance is assessed using the Transit Capacity & Quality of Service (TCQS) framework for the region's fixed-route service. Regional boards and public input also help in prioritizing funding decisions toward the region's transit assets. The following summarizes transit revenues and expenses.

REVENUES

There are four major areas of funding contributing toward MTU's annual revenue. Federal, State and local fund revenues account for the majority of the system's funding share while fare revenue and other funding sources provide a smaller share of the annual revenue.

Table 7-8 illustrates historical and estimated total MTU revenues from 2012-2018. Based on information from the MTU, revenues have been adjusted for inflation using a 1.0 percent annual increase. Current year estimates are based on historical five-year averages. Estimated revenues from 2019-2040 total $146 million.

TABLE 7-8: MTU OPERATING REVENUES (2012 - 2018) ($ X 1000)

Revenues	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Fare Revenue	$1,380	$1,393	$1,407	$1,421	$1,436	$1,450	$1,465
Local Funds	$693	$700	$707	$715	$722	$729	$736
State Funds	$1,548	$1,563	$1,579	$1,595	$1,611	$1,627	$1,643
Federal Funds	$1,800	$1,818	$1,836	$1,854	$1,873	$1,892	$1,910
Other Funds	$146	$148	$149	$151	$152	$154	$155
Total	$5,567	$5,622	$5,679	$5,735	$5,793	$5,851	$5,909

EXPENSES

MTU expenses are mainly comprised of administration costs such as wages and benefits. Other expenses include insurance, utilities, marketing, asset purchases and maintenance. **Table 7-9** illustrates historical and estimated total MTU expenses from 2012-2018. Based on information from the MTU, expenses have been adjusted for inflation using a 2.4 percent annual increase. Current year estimates are based on historical five year averages. Estimated expenses from 2019-2040 total $188 million.

TABLE 7-9: MTU OPERATING EXPENSES, 2012-2018 ($ X 1000)

Expenses	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Administration (wages & benefits)	$3,361	$3,442	$3,524	$3,609	$3,696	$3,784	$3,875
Insurance, Utilities, Marketing, other	$255	$261	$267	$274	$280	$287	$294
ADA Purchased Transportation	$1,066	$1,091	$1,118	$1,144	$1,172	$1,200	$1,229
Fuel and Maintenance	$885	$906	$928	$950	$973	$996	$1,020
Total	$5,567	$5,700	$5,837	$5,977	$6,121	$6,268	$6,418

TRANSIT ASSESSMENT

An assessment of current revenues and expenditures helps to plan for and prioritize future transit needs within the community. The projected long-term funding gap between 2019 and 2040 totals roughly $42 million based on revenue and expense estimates. Understanding this shortfall of funding, it is important to leverage existing transit assets and future community needs to identify priority areas for transit investment. Increased utilization of the transit system's assets will maximize

funding capabilities and help to preserve service levels at the current levels. Better utilizing available revenue and limiting expenses will aid in the transit system's long term sustainability.

Current revenue and expenditure inflation rates contribute heavily to the shortfall of MTU funding. Based on input from MTU, projected operating revenues will increase at 1.0 percent annually while operating expenses will increase at 2.4 percent annually. This gap, along with other funding factors, would cause MTU to experience a substantial funding gap as you get closer to the 2040 planning horizon. According to current estimates, the funding gap between revenues and expenses will increase from $241,823 in 2015 to $508,806 in 2018. As mentioned earlier, this trend projected to 2040 creates a total funding shortfall of $42 million. For MTU, this is a substantial gap and potentially threatens the long-term sustainability of the transit service.

Given the projected financial situation, a sustainable funding solution is needed to maintain existing service levels, and to provide for future service expansion. Given the current funding situation for Federal, State and local governments, the most likely scenario is that transit funding will remain relatively constant in future years. As such, this funding situation highlights the importance of identifying additional alternative funding mechanisms to maintain current service levels. Currently, fare revenue accounts for roughly 25 percent of MTU operating revenue. While increasing ridership and fare revenue is one way to increase funding, it is unrealistic to expect transit fares to cover the future revenue gap.

As previously stated, the LAPC has had discussions regarding the need to invest in the existing transit, and in fact grow the service to provide enhanced regional coverage. The *Coulee Vision 2050* study went as far to recommend the implementation of a Regional Transit Authority (RTA). An RTA would provide a new funding mechanism for the region that would close the project funding gap and ultimately help maintain a state of good repair and expand service coverage. The LAPC is committed to advancing the concept of the RTA structure and as such, this is priority in the implementation section of the plan.

SUMMARY OF LONG-RANGE NEEDS AND FUNDING

Table 7-10 shows that anticipated preservation and reconstruction needs will exceed projected funding. Several actions are possible to address this shortfall.

Preservation of the existing transportation system and assets remains a high priority for the LAPC. These costs represent the highest need and local revenues represent the largest portion of funding. Considering the high cost of preservation, sometimes additional funding from Federal and State sources is necessary to cover cost overruns. However, these funds can be unpredictable. Other funding sources such as grant opportunities may present themselves and provide additional funding. Knowing this, LAPC staff will coordinate awareness of available programs and grants to assist area municipalities in securing eligible funding.

LAPC staff will also assist the county and other municipalities in estimating and prioritizing preservation and reconstruction needs. Maintenance dollars must be spent to achieve the best long-term value and align with the goals of Coulee Vision.

While preservation needs are many, the LAPC must continue to emphasize a balance between expansion and preservation projects. The LAPC has developed a system of prioritizing projects that are subject to strategic selection due to limited funding. This process also ensures that projects address the MTP goals, as well as other regional goals set forth in studies such as *Coulee Vision 2050*. The on-going *Coulee Region Transportation Study* also sets forth goals and the results of this study will have significant impact on future infrastructure decisions in the region. More information regarding the project selection process is contained in the LAPC annual TIP.

Ultimately, the LAPC is committed to more efficient use of existing transportation assets and increased investment in transit and non-motorized facilities to address the areas regional mobility needs.

TABLE 7-10: SUMMARY OF LONG-RANGE NEEDS AND FUNDING (2015-2040) ($X 1000)

Long-Range Needs and Funding	$2015	Year of Expense $
Anticipated Needs		
Programmed Projects (2010 - 2013, includes transit)	$322,928	$363,824
Projected Transit Costs (2015 - 2040)[1]	$69,312	$93,826
Anticipated Preservation Projects (2015 - 2040)	$36,592	$76,211
Anticipated Expansion Projects (2015 - 2040)	$90,072	$101,484
Anticipated New Roadway Projects (2015 - 2040)	$47,288	$53,672
Local Roads Preservation & Reconstruction (2015 - 2040)[2]	$301,725	$386,306
State & US Highways Preservation and Reconstruction (2015 - 2040)[3]	$747,207	$895,953
Planning Area Total	**$1,615,123**	**$1,971,276**
Long-Range Funding		
Programmed Projects (2015 - 2018, includes transit)	$322,928	$363,824
Projected Transit Costs (2015 - 2040)	$69,312	$93,826
Projected Federal and State Funding (2015 - 2040, STH)	$300,950	$381,588
Projected Local Funding (2015 - 2040)	$762,673	$1,033,853
Planning Area Total	**$1,455,863**	**$1,873,090**

[1]Needs and Funding Costs are inflated at 2.4% per year

[2]Anticipated Preservation and Reconstruction Project costs are subtracted from total needs

[3]Includes unanticipated Expansion, Structures and Intersections

LIST OF TERMS

AADT	Annual Average Daily Traffic
ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ACS	American Community Survey
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADT	Average Daily Traffic
BEA	Bureau of Economic Analysis
BLS	Bureau of Labor Statistics
BNSF	Burlington Northern & Santa Fe Railroad
BTS	Bureau of Transportation Statistics
CB&Q	Chicago Burlington & Quincy Railroad
CBD	Central Business District
CCTV	Closed-circuit TV
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CFS	Commodity Flow Survey
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CPR	Canadian Pacific Railway
CSS	Community Sensitive Solutions
CTH	County Highway
CTPP	Census Transportation Planning Package
DMV	Department of Motor Vehicles
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
DOA	Department of Administration
DOT	Department of Transportation
DWD	Department of Workforce Development
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FDM	Facilities Development Manual
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FMCSA	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GIS	Geographic Information System
HOV	High-Occupancy Vehicle

HPT	Human Powered Trails
HSC	Highway Safety Commission
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
ITS	Intelligent Transportation System
LAPC	La Crosse Area Planning Committee
LD	Lock and Dam
LESA	Land Evaluation and Site Assessment
LOS	Level of Service
MCMIS	Motor Carrier Management Information System
MCSAP	Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program
MnDOT	Minnesota Department of Transportation
MPA	Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MRRPC	Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan
MTU	Municipal Transit Utility
MUTCD	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
MVC	Mississippi Valley Conservancy
MVD	Mississippi Valley Division
MWRRI	Midwest Regional Rail Initiative
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHI	Natural Heritage Inventory; National Highway Institute
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NHS	National Highway System
NHSTA	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NTD	National Transit Database
NTSB	National Transportation Safety Board
NVIS	Night Vision Imaging System
OHWSPT	Onalaska Holmen West Salem Public Transit
OMNI	Operations and Maintenance Navigation Information
PDR	Purchase of Development Rights
PEL	Planning and Environmental Linkages
RTA	Regional Transit Authority; also, Regional Transportation Authority

SACP	Safety Assurance and Compliance Program
SEA	Safety Evaluation Area
SOV	Single-Occupancy Vehicle
SRTS	Safe Routes to School
STB	Surface Transportation Board
STH	State Highway
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
STP-R	Surface Transportation Program – Rural
STP-U	Surface Transportation Program – Urban
STRAHNET	Strategic Highway Network
STRAP	Supplemental Transportation Rural Assistance Program
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TAWS	Terrain Awareness Warning System
TAZ	Traffic Analysis Zone
TCQS	Transit Capacity & Quality of Service
TCRP	Transit Cooperative Research Program
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TEP	Transit Enhancement Plan
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TOD	Transit-Oriented Development
TWLTL	Two-Way Left Turn Lane
UMR-IWW	Upper Mississippi River – Illinois Waterway
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
U.S.C.	United States Code
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
USH	United States Highway
UWL	University of Wisconsin–La Crosse
VDP	Volunteer Driver Program
VIV	Video Inspection Vehicle
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
VRH	Vehicle Revenue Hour
VRM	Vehicle Revenue Mile
WisDNR	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
WisDOT	Wisconsin Department of Transportation

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ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTATION

On Monday, June 22, 2015, correspondence was e-mailed to 16 environmental and cultural resource agency contacts from Wisconsin and Minnesota. The environmental review materials—resource sections from Chapter 5 (Agricultural, Water, Natural and Recreational, and Cultural), maps displaying expansion projects in relation to resources, and a document describing the expansion projects—were distributed as attachments via three e-mails (cultural; water, natural, and recreational; and agricultural).

CORRESPONDENCE

To Whom It May Concern:

I am contacting you because your name is either on a list for State and Federal environmental or cultural resource agencies and/or you are currently one of the resource agency representatives for the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC).

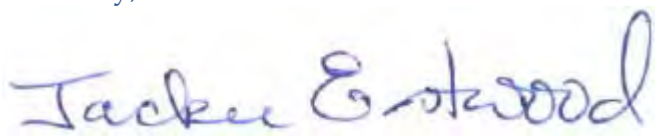
As you know, Federal law requires that metropolitan planning organizations initiate consultations with Tribal, Federal, State, and Local environmental resource agencies when developing a long-range metropolitan transportation plan (MTP). The LAPC is currently updating its MTP and would sincerely appreciate your participation. I will ask of you to complete two tasks:

1) Review the relevant text from Chapter 5: Environmental Review for completeness and accuracy; and,
2) Comment on the potential negative impacts, if any, of the planned and programmed expansion projects displayed on the attached resource map(s).

My goal is to have all resource agency consultation completed by Friday, July 17, 2015 so as to have sufficient time to incorporate corrections and comments into the MTP before it is made available to the public for the 30-day public comment period scheduled to begin on Monday, August 3, 2015.

If I have contacted you in error and you know of the appropriate contact, please let me know.
I appreciate your participation in the LAPC consultation process and will be looking forward to your input.

Sincerely,



Jackie Eastwood
Transportation Planner
La Crosse Area Planning Committee
La Crosse and La Crescent MPO
County of La Crosse
400 4th St N, Room 2300
La Crosse, WI 54601
PH: 608.785.6141

DISTRIBUTION

Rather than distribute all of the resource inventories and maps to each of the contacts, LAPC staff organized the materials by resource similarity and sent them to their most likely review agency representative. The resource maps included the expansion projects listed in our 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The materials were distributed as follows:

Agricultural

Jimmy Bramblett, State Conservationist, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service

Cultural

Tim Acklin, Senior Planner, Heritage Preservation, City of La Crosse

Tom Cinadr, Survey and Inventory Manager, Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office

Jim Draeger, State Historic Preservation Officer, Wisconsin State Historical Society

Bill Quakenbush, Tribal Heritage Preservation Officer, Ho-Chunk Nation

Water, Natural and Recreational

Tamara Cameron, Regulatory Branch Chief, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Peter Fasbender, Field Office Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Scott Fritz, Southeast Minnesota Conservation Officer, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Rebecca Graser, Wisconsin Program Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Michael Halsted, Statewide Transportation Policy Coordinator, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Karen Kalvelage, DNR Service Center, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Kendra Niemec, Acting District Manager, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Patty Trap, Acting Regional Director, Midwest Region, National Parks Service

Sarah Walling, Nutrient Management and Water Quality Section Chief, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

Ken Westlake, Chief, NEPA Implementation Section, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5

COMMENTS

Comments were received only from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. They were incorporated as requested.

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ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

In accordance with Executive Order (EO) 12898, U.S. DOT 1997, and EO 13166, the LAPC determines the impacts of the transportation improvement program (TIP) and metropolitan transportation plan (MTP) on low-income, minority, and limited-English proficient (LEP) populations in the planning area. The LAPC uses the following definitions to identify areas that may be disproportionately impacted by projects in the TIP and MTP:

- *Eligible low-income population*: Any readily identifiable group of low-income persons (family income is at or below 150% of the poverty line) who live in geographic proximity. Areas of high eligible low-income population are identified as tracts whose percent eligible low-income is greater than the percent eligible low-income of the planning area (22.1 percent). Tract data were obtained from C17002, Ratio of Income to Poverty Level in the Past 12 Months, 2007-2011 American Community Survey (ACS).
- *Minority population*: Any readily identifiable group of minority persons (American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander) who live in geographic proximity. Areas of high minority population are identified as block groups whose percent minority is greater than the percent minority of the planning area (8.9 percent). Block group data were obtained from QT-P6 Race Alone or in Combination and Hispanic or Latino, 2010 Decennial Census.
- *Limited-English Proficient (LEP)*: Any group of persons who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English. Areas of high limited-English proficiency are identified as tracts whose percent LEP is greater than the percent LEP of the planning area (0.37 percent). Tract data were obtained from S1601 Language Spoken at Home, 2007-2011 ACS.

NOTE: Because neither block groups nor tracts follow municipal boundaries, the demographic percents for the planning area were calculated from the totals of the individual communities that reside within the planning area, not the totals of the block groups or tracts.

Six expansion projects are currently listed in the 2016-2019 TIP:

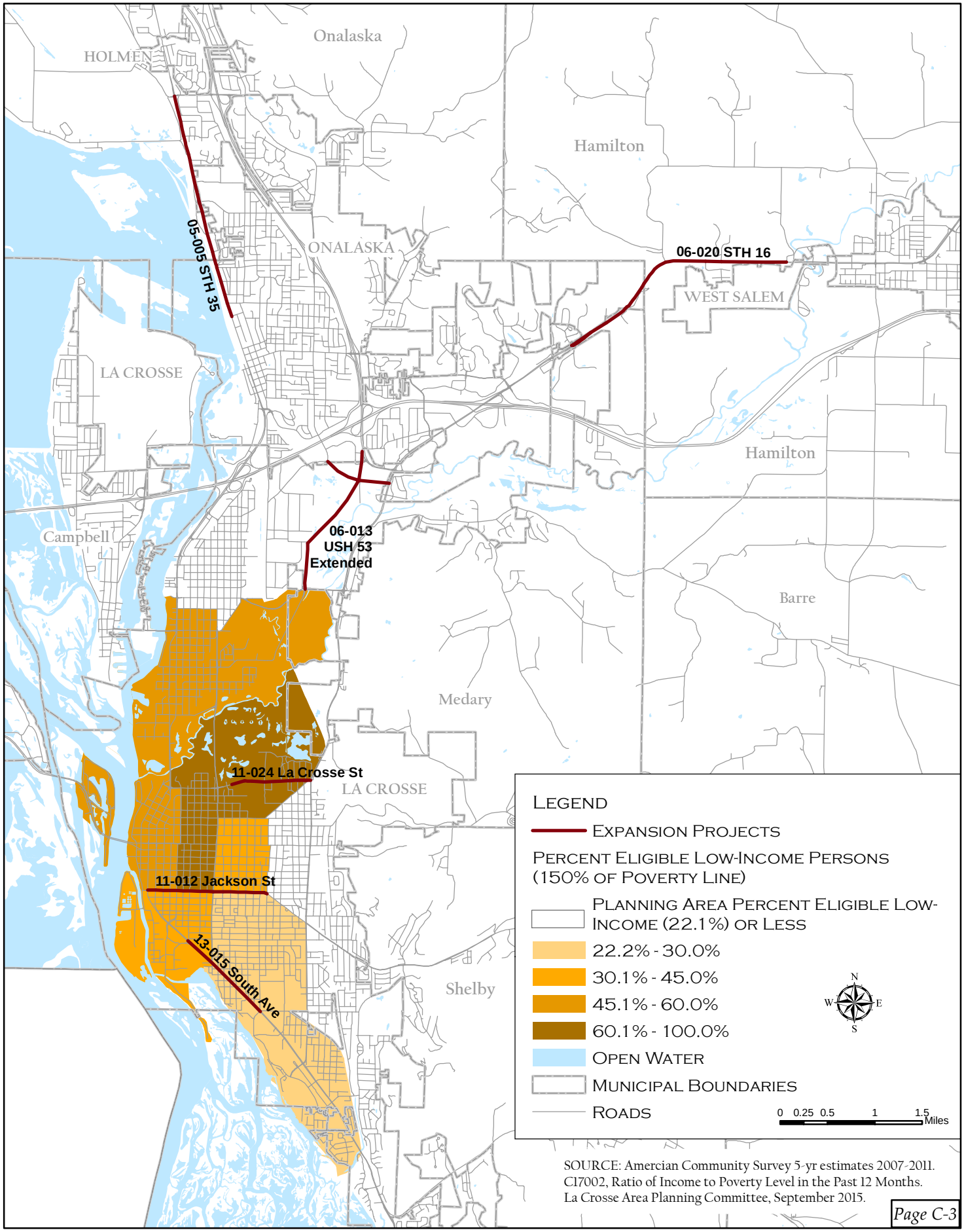
- 243-05-005 STH 35 from Poplar St in the City of Onalaska to CTH OT in the Town of Onalaska. Construction anticipated in 2016.
- 243-06-013 USH 53 / 12th Ave extended from CTH SS in the City of Onalaska to Gillette St in the City of La Crosse. Construction anticipated in 2020-2024.
- 243-06-020 STH 16 from Landfill Rd in the City of Onalaska to Veteran's Park in the Village of West Salem. Construction anticipated in 2016.
- 243-11-012 STH 33 Jackson St between 3rd St and 19th St in the City of La Crosse. Construction anticipated in 2020.
- 243-11-024 STH 16 La Crosse St between Oakland St and Losey Blvd in the City of La Crosse. Construction anticipated in 2020.
- 243-13-015 USH 14 South Ave between Green Bay St and Ward Ave in the City of La Crosse. Construction anticipated in 2019.

The *Coulee Region Transportation Study*, which is currently underway and will be considering a mix of strategies to address safety and mobility issues in the La Crosse area, may recommend a build strategy that could impact vulnerable populations. It is too soon in the *Study* process to describe what that strategy may look like.

Figure C-1 shows the six expansion projects in relation to tracts with a high percent of eligible low-income persons—tracts whose percent low-income is greater than that of the planning area (22.1%). The projects are labeled with just the last five digits of the TIP project numbers listed above. **Figure C-2** shows the projects in relation to block groups whose percent minority is greater than 8.9% (percent minority of the planning area) and to tracts whose percent LEP is greater than 0.37% (percent LEP of the planning area).

The STH 16 La Crosse St, STH 33 Jackson St, and USH 14 South Ave projects appear to have the greatest potential to negatively impact low-income, minority, and LEP persons.

Figure C-1: Tracts with High Percent of Eligible Low-Income Persons



SOURCE: Amercian Community Survey 5-yr estimates 2007-2011.
C17002, Ratio of Income to Poverty Level in the Past 12 Months.
La Crosse Area Planning Committee, September 2015.

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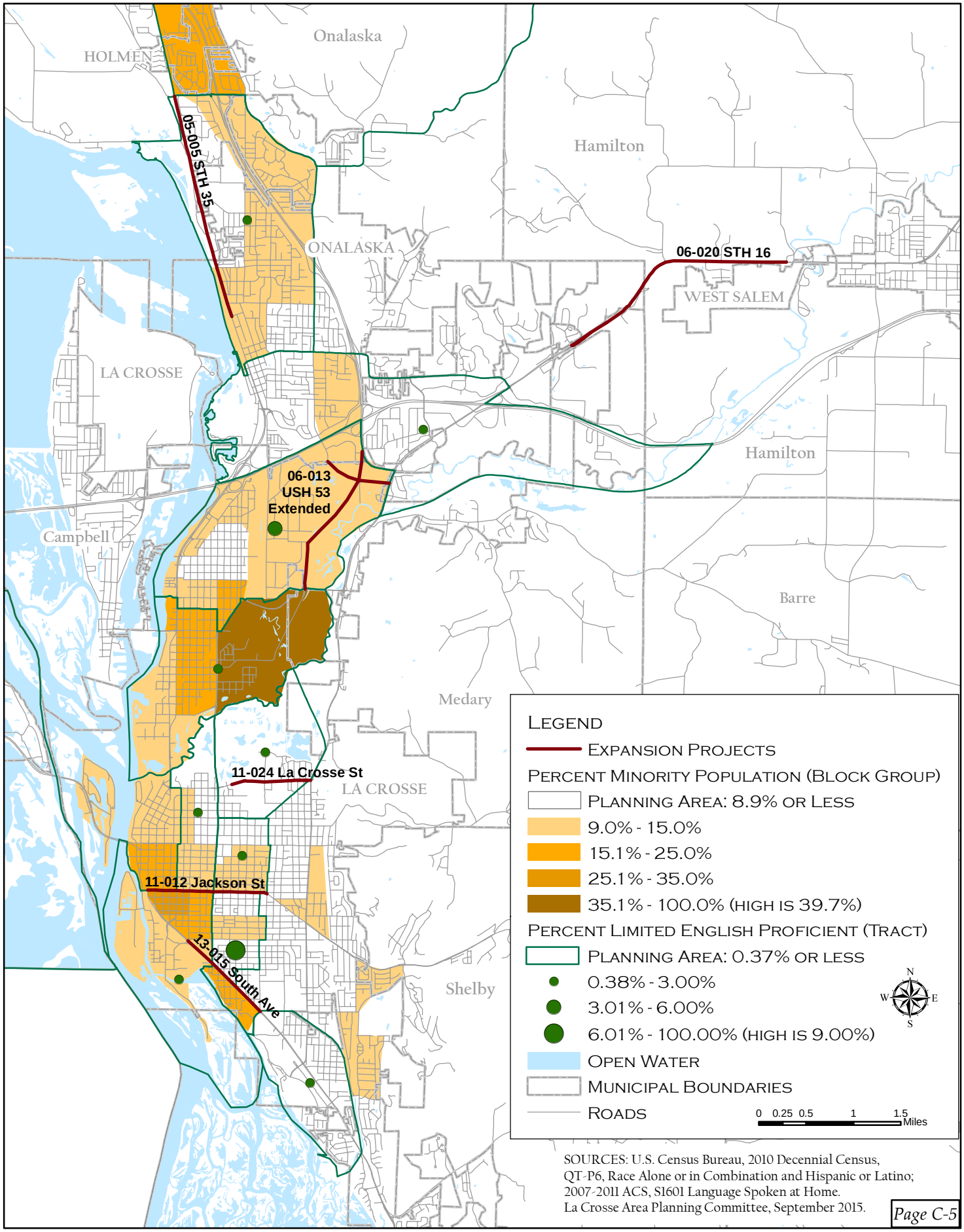
Figure C-2:
Areas with a High Percent of Minorities and/or Limited English Perficient



SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census, QT-P6, Race Alone or in Combination and Hispanic or Latino; 2007-2011 ACS, S1601 Language Spoken at Home.
La Crosse Area Planning Committee, September 2015.

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