

Chapter 7 - Transportation

Per State of Wisconsin Statute 66.1001 - Comprehensive Planning (2)(c), the Transportation element of a community's comprehensive plan is to be:

"A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, electric personal assistive mobility devices, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation." In addition, the statute stresses the importance of comparing the community's "objectives, policies, goals, and programs to state and regional transportation plans. The element shall also identify highways within the local governmental unit by function and incorporate state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in the community."

7.1. Transportation Planning

Transportation networks both predicate and accommodate the growth and development of a community. Just as importantly, transportation systems significantly influence the overall character of a community. National, regional, and local road networks, bike and pedestrian routes, and other recreational transportation (including water sports), airport service, public transit and freight rail serve Rock County and its citizens and industries.

County residents are largely automobile dependent. Accordingly, most trips are made by single-occupancy, personal automobiles. In the recent past, low demand for alternative transportation modes has influenced a transportation system that is primarily designed for automobiles. However, this *Plan* encourages a diverse, affordable, and reliable transportation network within the County and region to accommodate various transportation options. Benefits of a well-planned transportation system can impact fiscal resources, land use and conservation, air quality, health and safety of the citizenry, and overall quality of life.

Transportation is one aspect of planning that has the potential to negatively affect the quality of life of some sectors of the population more than others. The principles of environmental justice (*Executive Order 12898*, issued by the President in 1994) work to minimize disproportionately harmful effects on low-income and minority populations, transportation planning in Rock County, including this transportation element, works to ensure equity, and incorporate environmental justice.

7.2. Existing Plans and Projects

This section reviews state and regional, and county transportation plans and projects. Rock County's goals, objectives, and policies for transportation are consistent with these plans and projects, although this *Plan* may address concerns that are not yet acknowledged by other entities.

State Plans

- *Translinks 21: A Multi-Modal Transportation Plan for Wisconsin's 21st Century*
Completed in 1995, the *Translinks 21 Plan* outlines goals and objectives for the backbone of the State's transportation network through the year 2020. It also includes provisions to aid small communities with transit for the elderly and disabled, a new State grant to assist local communities with transportation corridor management plans, and it contains a method for assessing local road investment needs. *Translinks 21: A Multi-Modal Transportation Plan for Wisconsin's 21st Century* is the predecessor for the *Connections 2030 Plan* currently in progress.
- *Connections 2030 Plan*
While most transportation-related plans authored by the State are needs-based plans, this *Connections 2030 Plan* is a policy-based plan, currently being developed. It will be a long-range transportation plan, addressing highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit. Policy recommendations in the plan will refer to specific corridors throughout the state, five of which incorporate portions of Rock County. The corridors are as follows:
 - Alpine Valley Corridor - Janesville/Beloit to Milwaukee
 - Blackhawk Corridor - Madison to Chicago via Beloit
 - Cheese Country Corridor - Dubuque to Janesville/Beloit
 - Rock River Corridor - Janesville/Beloit to Oshkosh
 - Southern Tier Corridor - Janesville/Beloit to Racine/Kenosha
- *State Highway Plan 2020*
This plan, completed in 2000, mostly pertains to the State highway system, focusing on pavement and bridge preservation, traffic movement and safety. The entire State highway system covers 11,800 miles, and includes 4,600 bridges. Approximately 60% of all traffic in the State is carried on the system.

The plan addresses projected congestion, and in Rock County Interstate 90/39 south of the City of Janesville, to the State line, is expected to be extremely congested, with severe congestion occurring north of Janesville. Portions of U.S. Highway 51, in and around the Cities of Beloit and Janesville, also is expected to reach extreme congestion. Moderate congestion is foreseen for U.S. Highway 14, and for U.S. Highway 51 north of

the City of Janesville to the County line. These projections are under the assumption of no capacity expansions to the roadways.

The strategies and policies set forth in this plan are expansive and cover topics including preserving transportation infrastructure, improving traffic movement and safety, economic development, environmental protection, and financing. Special emphasis is given to the high investment needed to mitigate congestion in Southeastern Wisconsin.

- *Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report*

This plan, completed in 2004, is the result of a public outreach effort, to determine issues related to rail transportation. This plan is intended to direct the rail element of the *Connections 2030 Plan*. Issues identified in the plan are categorized as rail network issues, intercity passenger rail issues, safety issues and legislative issues. Commuter rail, locomotive horns at roadway/railway crossings and a proposal to reduce mercury emissions are identified as emerging issues in the plan.

- *Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020*

This plan is an inventory of airport facilities throughout the state, and what services they provide. Included are upgrade recommendations, along with information on funding and environmental consequences. The plan states that in 2000 the Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport was ranked the 8th busiest airport in the State, and in the year 2020 it is expected to maintain the 8th ranking. The airport is categorized as air carrier/cargo, and will remain classified as such through the year 2020. This classification means that the airport can accommodate all aircraft, up to and including wide body jets and large military transports. The Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport is one of only 10 airports in the State with this classification.

- *Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020*

This plan, completed in 2002, details how State and local jurisdictions can improve pedestrian safety and comfort, while increasing walking as a practical mode of transportation. Options for pedestrian facilities are explored, especially those that are user-friendly for the elderly, children and people with disabilities. The need for education efforts among law enforcement, motorists and pedestrians is discussed, as is WisDOT's leadership role, in promoting walkability.

- *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020*

This plan, completed in 1998, guides the establishment of bicycle accommodations in transportation planning. It also addresses costs, the State's role, and how popular and beneficial bicycling is. While the plan describes seven different intercity trail segments that are considered key, and the recommendations set forth to improve those segments, none of them are located within Rock County. The County's POROS Plan outlines specific plans for future bicycle routes, and is a more useful and detailed reference.

State's Corridor Studies and Plans

The impetus for State projects and plans is always either an emergency or legislative direction, a request by the public or by a local unit of government, or it develops through routine system maintenance. Five stages precede the start of actual construction. These stages are concept definition, investigation, determination, final design and pre-contract administration. Details regarding each of these steps are available on the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) website.

- *Interstate 90/39*

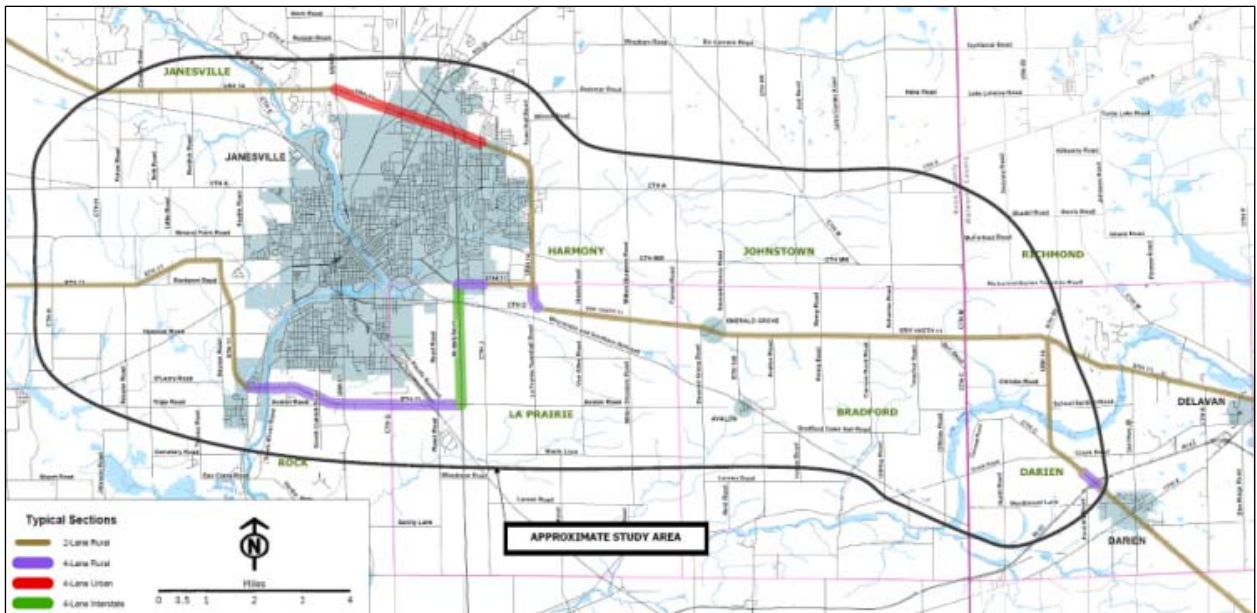
The widening of Interstate 90/39 is a major undertaking to increase capacity, planned to begin in 2013 or 2014. Over 45 miles will be widened from two lanes to three lanes in each direction for the portion of the interstate spanning from State Highway 12/18 (the Beltline) in the City of Madison to the Illinois State line. All work is planned to take place within the existing right-of-way. Construction will begin at the State line, and work northward. The project will involve major modification and restructuring of all interchanges, including substantial re-arrangement of the interchange at Interstate 43 in the City of Beloit. Also, all bridges along the route will be rehabilitated.

- *U.S. Highway 14/State Highway 11*

The U.S. Highway 14/State Highway 11 corridor is a heavily traveled and crucial link from the City of Janesville area to Darien, in Walworth County. As traffic volume has increased, so have crash rates, and corridor improvements have been deemed necessary. The study began in 2003, and is expected to wrap up in 2008. It is analyzing system linkage, future travel demand, safety, capacity and socio-economic demands. The study area for the U.S. Highway 14/State Highway 11 Corridor Study is shown in Map 7.1.



Map 7.1:
U.S. Highway 14/State Highway 11 Corridor Study Area

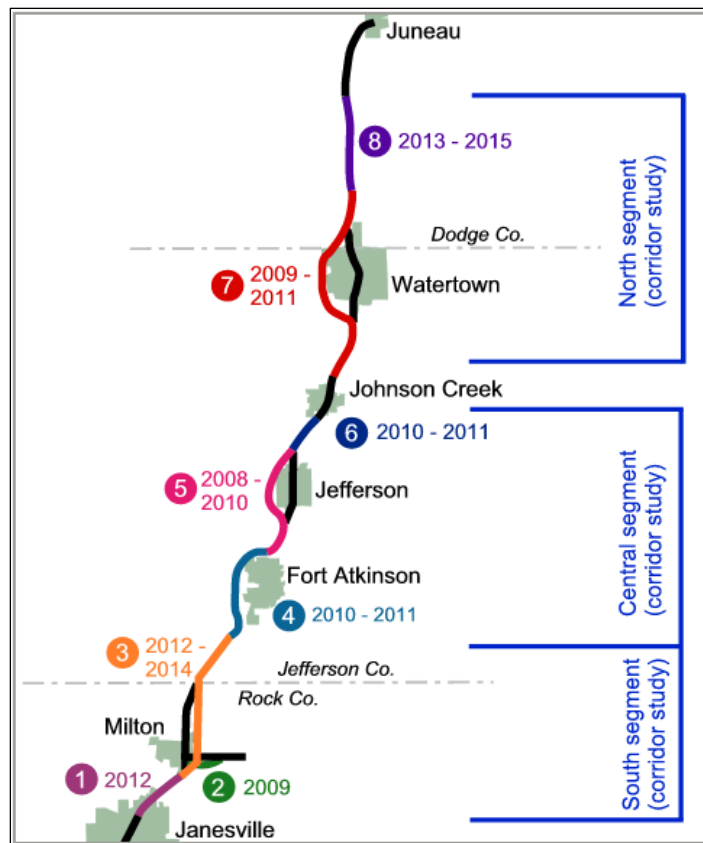


Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Map 7.2:
State Highway 26 Corridor Plan

- State Highway 26

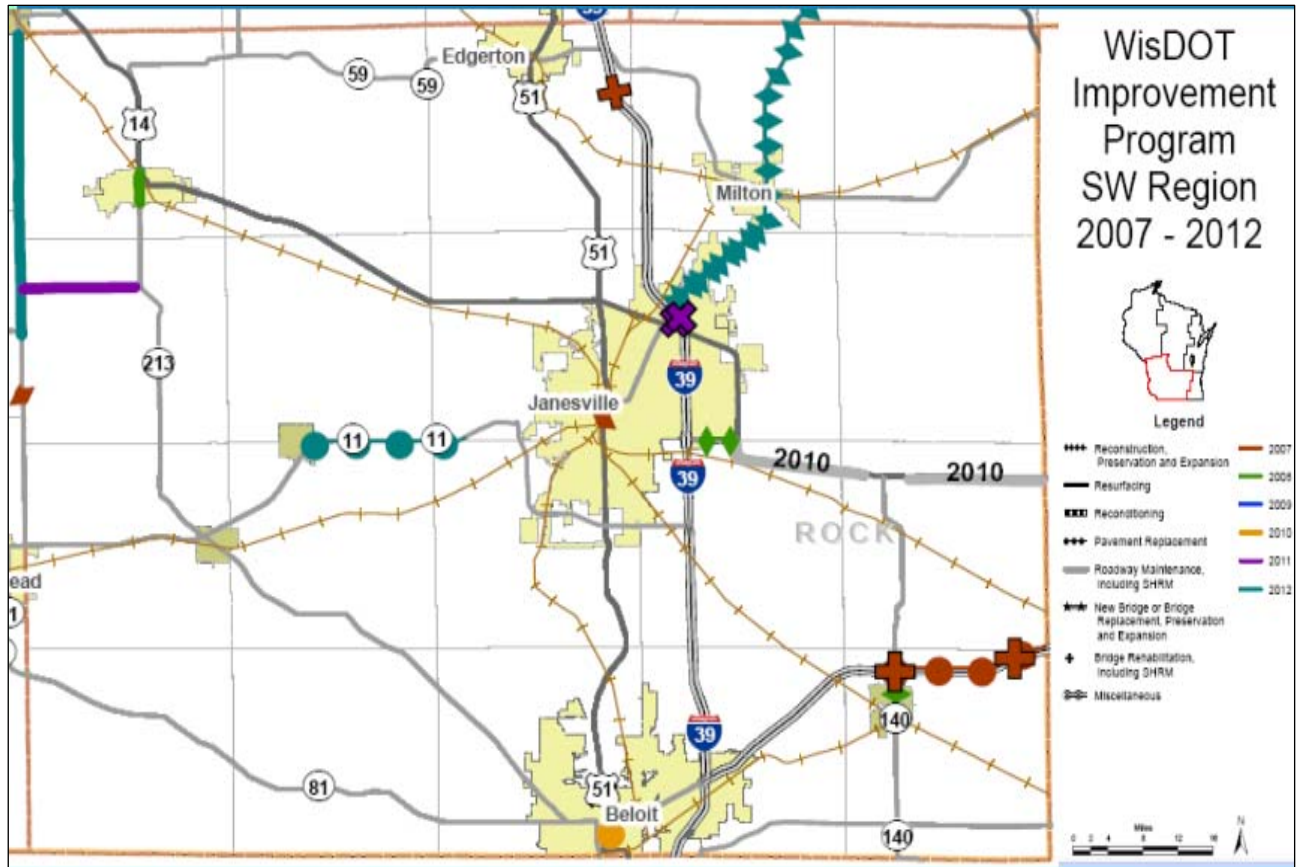
To ensure future safety and functionality of State Highway 26, from the City of Janesville area to the City of Waupun in Dodge County, the State completed the State Highway 26 Corridor Plan. This plan focuses on access management, local transportation systems, land use, interchange areas, and bike and pedestrian facilities along this 70-mile stretch of roadway. A planned realignment of State Highway 26 has resulted, and is shown in Map 7.2. In addition, a State Highway 26 Bike Route



Planning Study coincides with the Corridor Study, to provide bicycle accommodations along the corridor.

- WisDOT Improvement Program 2007-2012
The State prepares a 6-year highway improvement program for each County, each year. The improvements planned for Rock County are shown in Map 7.3.

Map 7.3:
WisDOT Improvement Program: 2007-2012



Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation - 2007

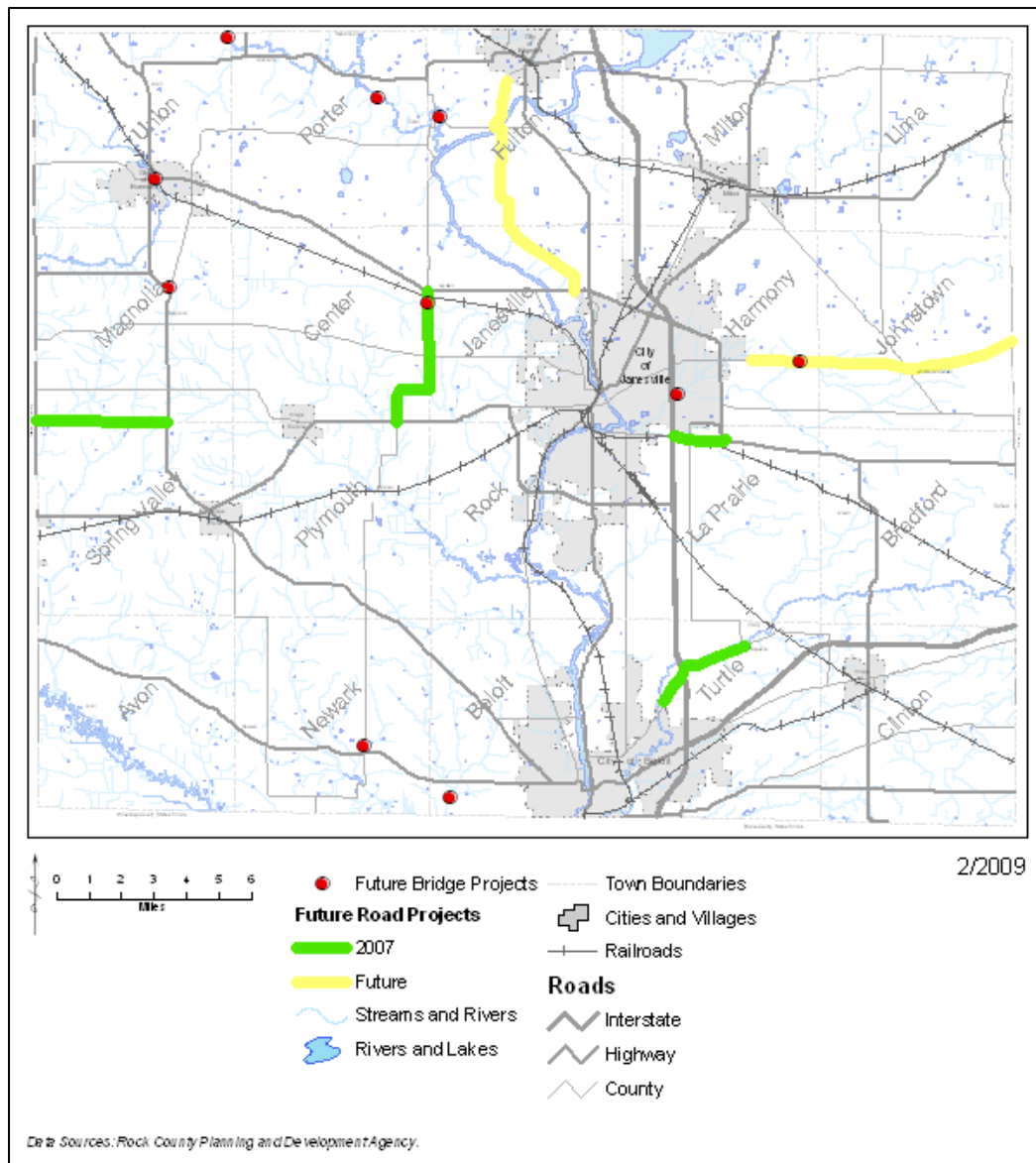


County Plans

- County Public Works Projects

Each year the Rock County Department of Public Works lists future road and bridge projects, both for the current year, and for the future. The most current map of planned projects is shown in Map 7.4. The road projects for 2007 are County Highway B in the western portion of the County, a portion of County Highway D in the Town of La Prairie, County Highway S in the Town of Turtle, and County Highway H in the Town of Center. Future projects include County Highway F, in the Towns of Fulton and Janesville and County A, in the Towns of Harmony and Johnstown.

Map 7.4:
Public Works Projects: 2007 and Future



Source: Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development Agency - 2009

- *Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport Land Use Plan*
The firm Mead and Hunt recently completed a land use plan, and related zoning amendments for the 3-mile jurisdictional area surrounding the Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport. This plan will manage growth encircling the airport, and provide tools for enforcing height regulations and other aspects of development that consider compatibility with aviation. The plan is slated for adoption on April 23, 2009 and will be incorporated into this *Plan* in Section II as Chapter 16.
- *2003 Rock County Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes and Trails Plan*
Completed by the Rock County Parks Department, with assistance from the firm HNTB, this plan includes existing and proposed off road bike and pedestrian trails, bike lanes, abandoned rail corridors and local roads with low traffic volumes. This plan was adopted as a component of the POROS Plan. The *Rock County Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes and Trails Plan*, including policies, is also a component of this Chapter.
- *Rock County, Wisconsin 2009-2014 Parks, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space (POROS) Plan*
Adopted in March of 2009, the POROS Plan includes plans and policies for several modes of recreational transportation, including bicycle/pedestrian, hiking, boating and snowmobiling.



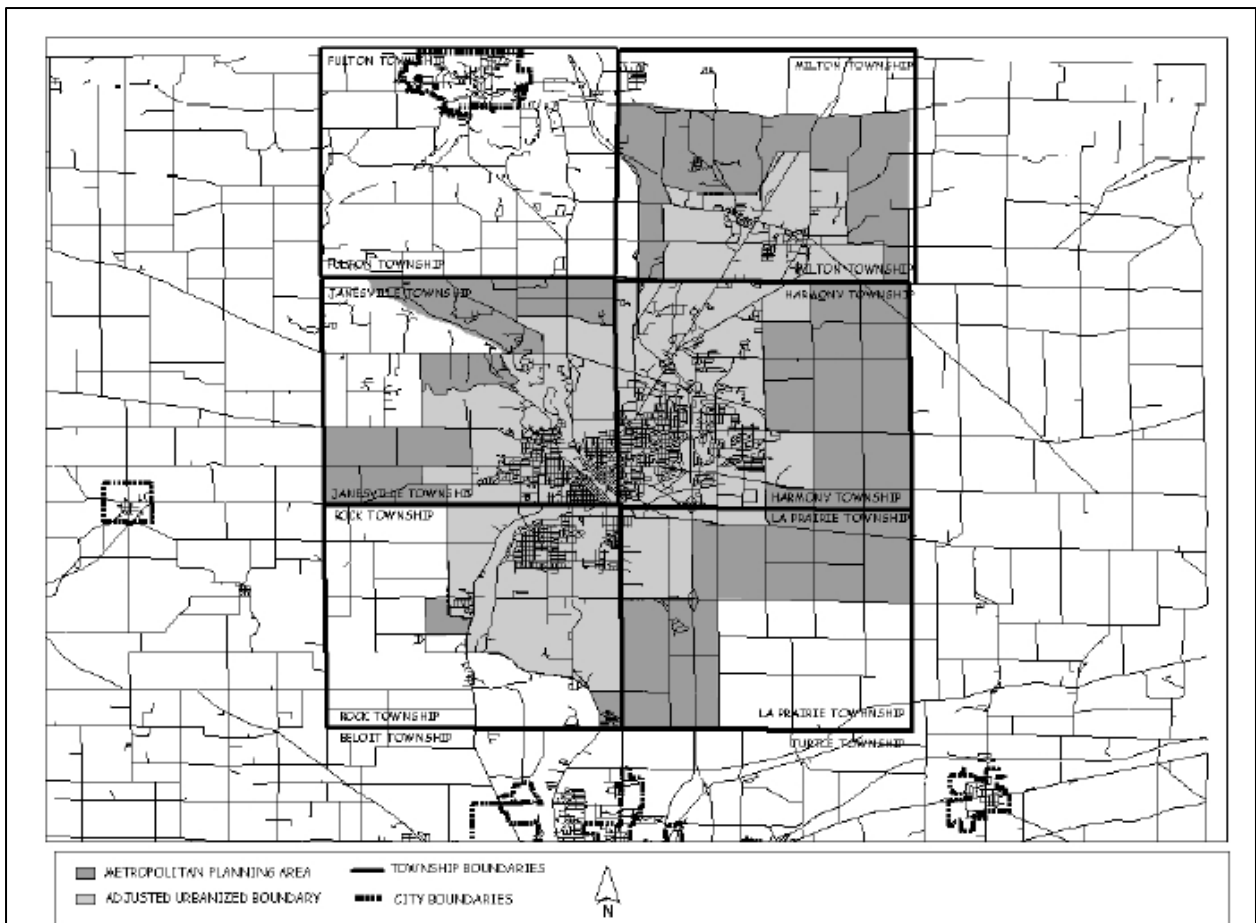
Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Plans

- 2005-2035 Janesville Area Long Range Transportation Plan

This plan is federally mandated in order for the metropolitan planning area surrounding the City of Janesville to qualify for federal and state transportation funding assistance. The metropolitan planning organization (MPO) is known simply as the Janesville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (JAMPO). JAMPO’s urbanized area includes a population of 78,544 people. The area is shown in Map 7.5.

The plan’s overall goal is to develop and maintain an increasingly energy efficient transportation system which includes and integrates all modes of travel and provides for the safe and effective movement of people and goods, while optimizing the financial resources of the communities. Specific recommendations are set forth in the plan to address transit, bicycle and pedestrian, streets and highways and freight movement.

**Map 7.5:
Janesville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (JAMPO) Planning Area**



Source: JAMPO Work Program - 2007

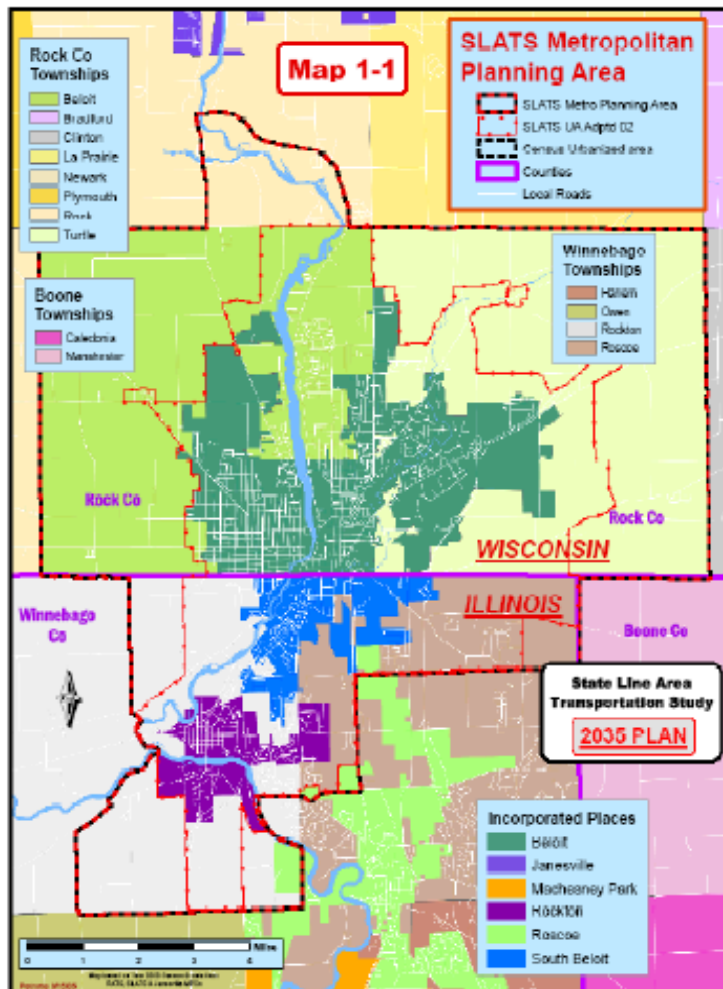
- Stateline Area Transportation Study 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan

This plan is federally mandated in order for the metropolitan planning area surrounding the City of Beloit to qualify for Federal and State transportation funding assistance. The MPO is known as the Stateline Area Transportation Study (SLATS). The SLATS urbanized area covers 55 square miles, and includes a population of 58,732 people. The area is shown in Map 7.6.

The six main goals set forth in this plan are:

1. Tie into the regional economy and promote efficiency and accessibility
2. Enhance regional multimodal connectivity
3. Encourage community development
4. Improve safety for all uses and all modes
5. Maintain and maximize the use of the existing infrastructure
6. Minimize negative impacts to the environment

Map 7.6:
SLATS Metropolitan Planning Area



Source: SLATS Long-Range Transportation Plan

The demographic characteristics of residents within the SLATS planning area are evaluated, as are their means of travel. The needs and services provided by mass transit are examined, as well as roadway functionality, level of service and future road layouts.

The plan also explains the SLATS project evaluation criteria, which will continue to be used to prioritize projects for inclusion in the annual Transportation Improvement Program put together by the MPO.

A *Bike and Pedestrian System Plan* was completed by SLATS in 2004, and the *Long-Range Transportation Plan* summarizes and reiterates that plan. The plan calls for citizens to be aware of bike and pedestrian users, safe bike and pedestrian facilities, and the development of an overall bike and pedestrian friendly community.

- *South Central Wisconsin Commuter Study*

This corridor-planning project aims to improve transit links from the Janesville/Beloit area to points in the Chicago metropolitan area and to Dane County, Wisconsin. SLATS staff is facilitating the study. The Chicago-area connections were of initial concern. However, to respond to public input and demand, commuter alternatives to the Madison, Wisconsin area has since gained focus. While the feasibility of extending Metra commuter rail to Rock County is widely regarded as the heart of this study, it also assesses the idea of bus rapid transit to connect the communities along the Interstate 90/39 corridor, between the Cities of Rockford, Illinois and Madison, Wisconsin.

A stakeholder survey has been completed as part of this study, and a market analysis has begun. The market analysis has revealed that travel flows to and from south-central Wisconsin were highest to and from the Cities of Madison and Rockford. And there is a lot of travel between the Cities of Janesville and Beloit.

As of early April 2007, the final draft of the *Initial Transportation Inventory Report* was complete. This portion of the study inventories rail and bus service, and highways in the region. Also, regional transit initiatives proposed by others in the region are examined.

The next steps in the commuter study process are to continue the market analysis, and a purpose and needs report. This report will set the framework for goals and objectives of the study, and help determine which transportation alternatives are most reasonable.

7.3. Existing Conditions

Existing Road System

Rock County is well connected to the surrounding region through an extensive roadway network. In general, Rock County's roadways are comprised of rural highway miles. Rock County has a total of 1,290 miles of roadways. This total includes a portion of the United States Interstate highway system, Wisconsin's State highway system, Rock County's County highway system, and local Town roads.

- *Functional Classification*

In general terms, functional classification reflects a highway's balance between providing land access and/or mobility to its users. Functional classification is the process by which public streets and highways are grouped according to the character of service they are intended to provide. Generally, highways fall into one of four broad categories. They include:

- Freeways
- Arterials
- Collector
- Local Roads

WisDOT has further subdivided the general categories previously listed (see *State of Wisconsin, Department of Transportation, Facilities Development Manual, Procedure 4-1-15*). These classifications together with a brief discussion of each is as follows:

- *Principal Arterials*: Serve corridor movements having trip length and travel density characteristics of an interstate or an interregional nature. These routes generally serve all urban areas with a population greater than 50,000 inhabitants. The rural principal arterials are further subdivided into interstate highways and other principal arterials.
- *Minor Arterials*: In conjunction with other principal arterials, serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing interregional and inter-area traffic movements.
- *Major Collectors*: Provide service to moderate sized communities, and other inter-area traffic generators, and link those generators to nearby larger population centers or higher functionally classified roadways.
- *Minor Collectors*: Provide service to all remaining smaller communities, link the locally important traffic generators with their rural hinterland, and are spaced consistent with population density so as to collect traffic from local roads and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance to a collector road.
- *Local Roads*: Provide access to adjacent land and provide for travel over relatively short distances on an inter-township or intra-township basis. All roads not classified as arterials or collectors are local functional roads.

- Roadways

There are 255 centerline miles of State and Interstate highways in Rock County. Interstate Highway 90/39 (I-90/39) serves as the county's principal limited access north-south traffic artery. This facility generally bisects Rock County running north to south and is designed to smoothly and rapidly carry regionally oriented traffic on an uninterrupted basis throughout south-central Wisconsin to points north and west such as the Cities of Madison, Eau Claire, and Wausau, Wisconsin, and Saint Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota, all the way west to Seattle, Washington. I-90/39 to the south of Rock County serves northern, north central, and northeastern Illinois. To the east I-90 links Rock County to the Chicago metropolitan area and beyond all the way through New York City, and terminating in Boston, Massachusetts, while I-39 travels south from Rockford into north central Illinois, and beyond to Normal, Illinois.

Interstate Highway 43 (I-43) is a limited access principal artery serving the southeast portion of Rock County and provides its users with an uninterrupted link to eastern Wisconsin. I-43 links Rock County with the Milwaukee metro area and many communities located along the Lake Michigan shoreline including the City of Green Bay.

U.S. Highway 14 is a multi-purpose principal arterial that connect Rock County to Dane County and Walworth County. U.S. Highway 14 provides continuous travel between La Crosse, through Rock County and continues on to an interchange with I-43 and beyond, into Illinois and the northwest suburbs of Chicago.

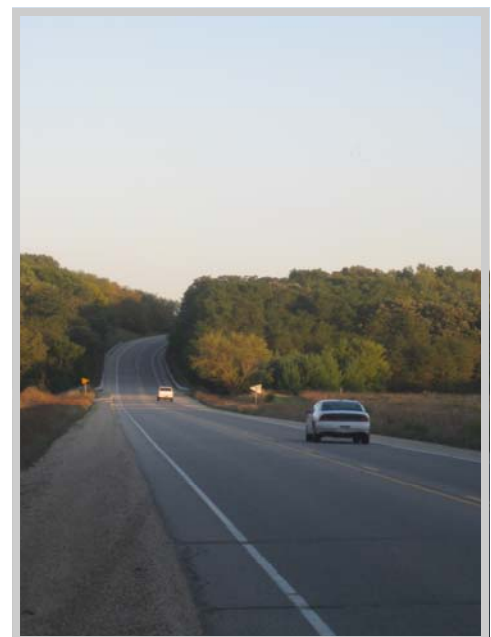
U.S. Highway 51 is a multi-purpose principal north/south arterial that connects Rock County to Dane County and northern Illinois. U.S. Highway 51 travels through Rock County and provides continuous travel between the Cities of Madison, Wisconsin and Rockford, Illinois. U.S. Highway 51 also provides direct access to a variety of urban and rural land uses along the route.



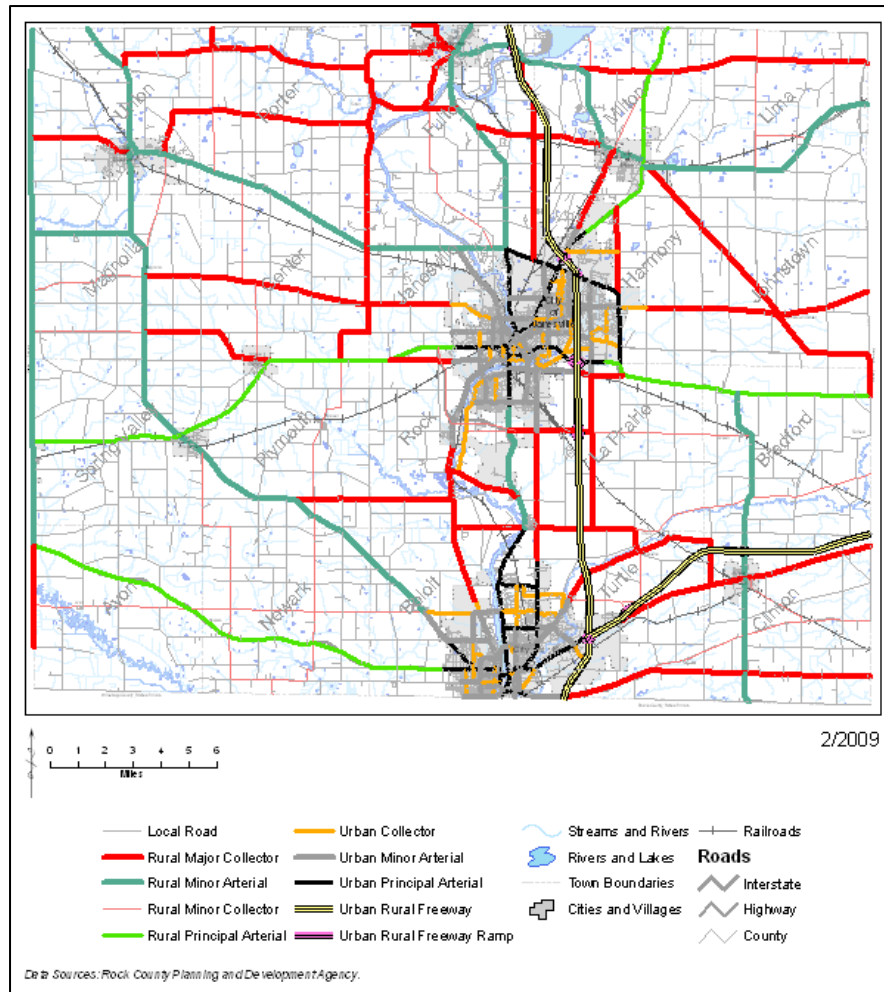
State Highway 11 (STH 11) is a principal east/west arterial that traverses Rock County from border to border. On the east side of Rock County STH 11 is a dually designated route with U.S. Highway 14, In central Rock County, near the City of Janesville, STH 11 and U.S. Highway 14 diverge. STH 11 continues on to the west into Green County, continuing through southern Wisconsin to the City of Dubuque, Iowa. STH 11 primarily serves rural oriented land uses.

There are 210 centerline miles of County highways in Rock County and 825 centerline miles of Town roads. These less-traveled roadways form a transportation network that connects all Cities, Villages and unincorporated hamlets in the County.

Rock County is unique in that the County Public Works Department performs all road maintenance for 17 of the County's 20 Towns. They can also provide asphalt repaving for local Town roads in the County.



Map 7.7:
Road Functional Classifications



Source: Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development Agency

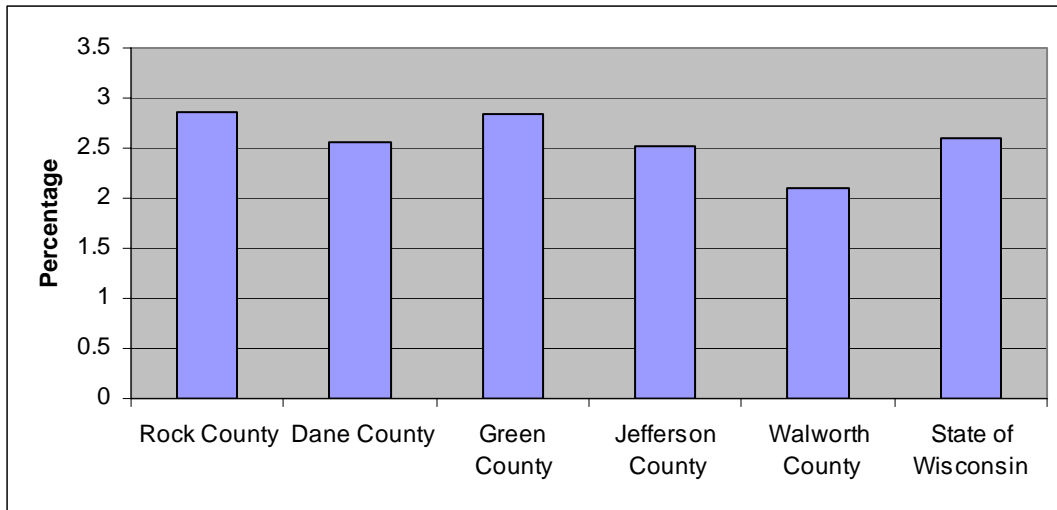
- Rustic Roads**

Section II: Chapter 4 - Cultural Resources of this *Plan* includes rustic roads as a cultural resource. These roads are used for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian travel in unhurried, quiet and leisurely enjoyment. The Wisconsin Legislature in 1973 gave counties the authority to designate rustic roads, and two have been designated in Rock County. They include Serns Road running from the City of Milton north to County Highway N and Riley Road running from U.S. Highway 14 north to the County line.
- Traffic Accidents**

The quantity of traffic accidents in the County is a likely indicator of the overall traffic volumes and safety of the roadways. From 2000 to 2005, the average number of accidents was 3,868 per year, not including accidents taking place on private roadways. This far surpasses the Statewide average of 1,803 accidents per county, per year. Figure 7.1 represents the number of traffic accidents as a percentage of the total population in Rock County compared to neighboring counties and the State as a whole. The average

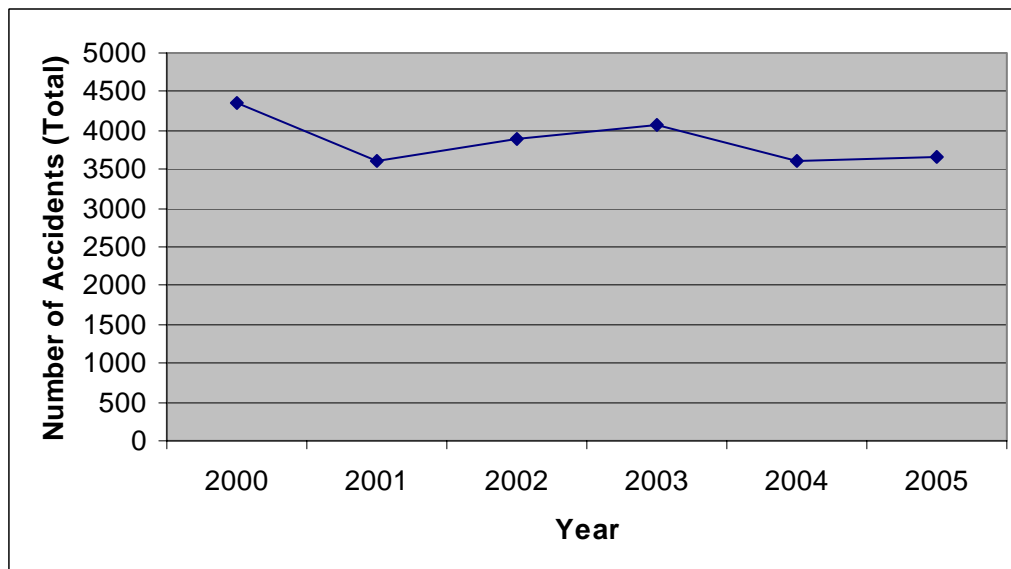
number of fatal traffic accidents is also higher in Rock County than the average for all Wisconsin counties. From 2002 to 2005, Rock County averaged 31 fatal accidents per year, while Statewide counties averaged 11 fatal accidents per year. However, many of the State's counties are rural, with low populations in comparison to Rock County. Figures 7.2 and 7.3 display the number of vehicle crashes, and the number of fatal accidents in Rock County in recent years. There is no apparent trend in the number of accidents and fatal accidents, as they have remained static in recent years.

Figure 7.1:
Traffic Accidents As A Percentage of the Total Population:
Rock County and Neighboring Jurisdictions: 2000



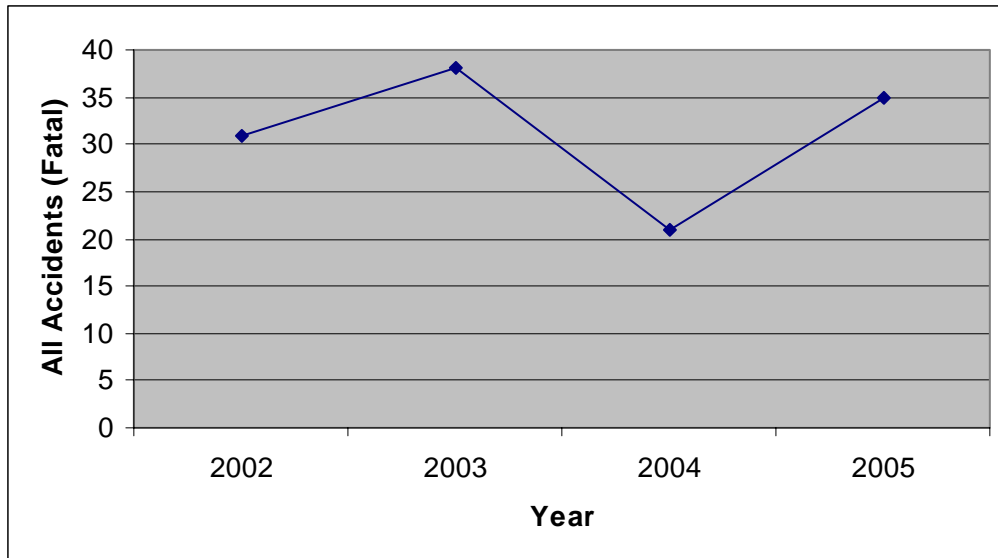
Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation - Department of Motor Vehicles Traffic Accident Database

Figure 7.2:
Traffic Accidents: Rock County: 2000 - 2005



Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation - Department of Motor Vehicles Traffic Accident Database

Figure 7.3:
Fatal Traffic Accidents: Rock County: 2002 - 2005



Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation - Department of Motor Vehicles Traffic Accident Database

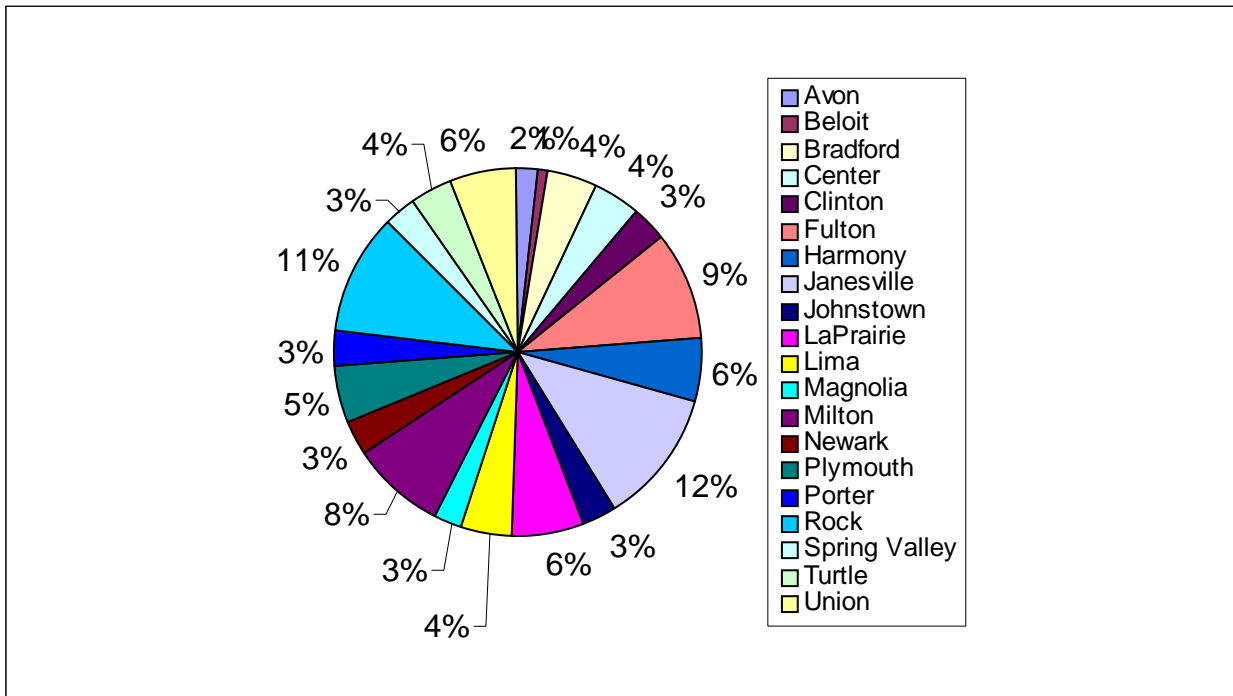
Crash data was obtained from the Rock County Sheriff’s Department. This data is indicative of only vehicle accidents that Sheriff’s personnel responded to. While most occurred in the unincorporated areas of Rock County, it is possible that they responded to accidents in Cities and Villages, or there may have been some accidents outside of Cities and Villages that they did not respond to, depending on the availability of emergency responders from all jurisdictions.

In 2006, the Sheriff’s Department responded to 896 accidents total. Only eight of these accidents were reported to involve deer. 417 individuals were injured in these accidents, and there were 19 fatalities. Figure 7.4 illustrates the Towns in which these accidents took place. The Towns of Janesville, Rock, Fulton and Milton accounted for the most accidents, making up 12%, 11%, 9% and 8% of the total, respectively.

Figure 7.5 depicts the number of accidents the Sheriff’s Department responded to on County Highways. Figure 7.6 depicts the number of accidents the Sheriff’s Department responded to on State Highways. Figure 7.7 depicts the number of accidents the Sheriff’s Department responded to on U.S. Highways. According to this data, it appears that the roadways on which most accidents occurred in unincorporated Rock County (not counting the Interstates) are the State and U.S. Highways. There were 78 accidents on U.S. Highway 14, in 2006, which greatly outnumbered accident occurrences on other roadways. U.S. Highway 51, State Highway 11, State Highway 59 and State Highway 213 had 46, 38, 46 and 39 accidents respectively.

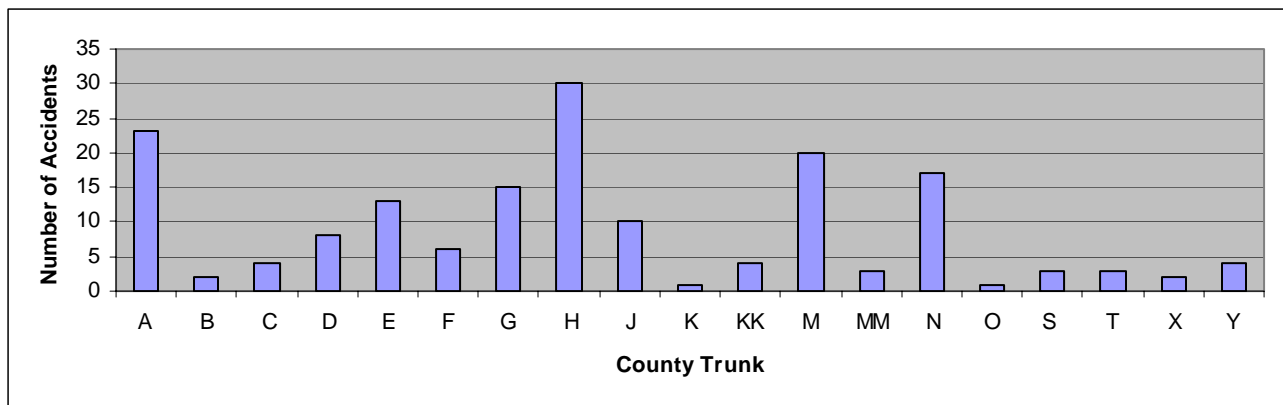
Concerning County highways, the frequency of accidents was higher on County Highways H, A and M, with 30, 23 and 20 accidents respectively in 2006. While these highways are heavily traveled, they are not the most heavily traveled in the County. County Highways G, D and N are actually busier.

Figure 7.4:
Traffic Accidents Responded to by Rock County Sheriff: 2006



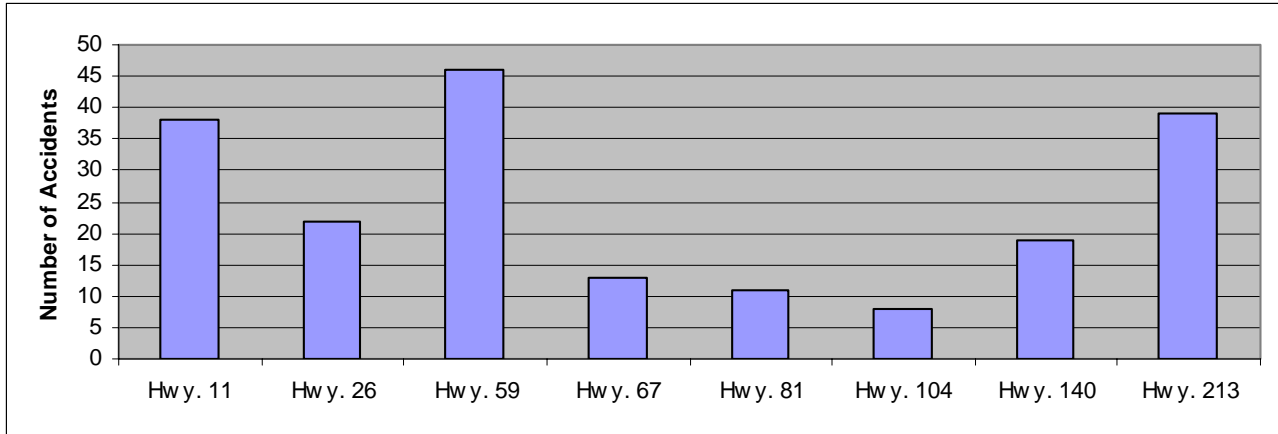
Source: Rock County Sheriff's Department

Figure 7.5:
Vehicle Accidents on County Highways: Rock County: 2006



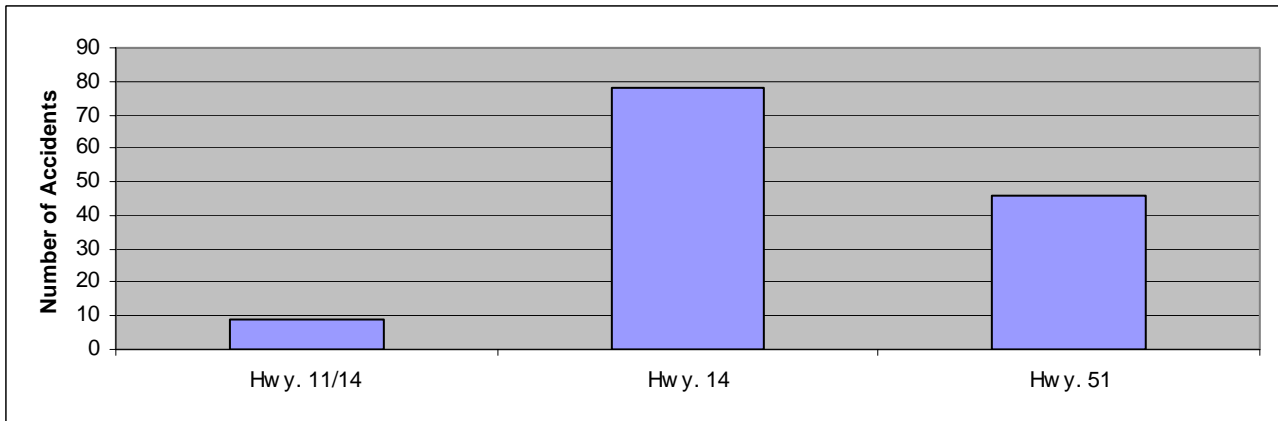
Source: Rock County Sheriff's Department

Figure 7.6:
Vehicle Accidents on State Highways: Rock County: 2006



Source: Rock County Sheriff's Department

Figure 7.7
Vehicle Accidents on U.S. Highways: Rock County: 2006



Source: Rock County Sheriff's Department

Bridges

There are 118 locally maintained bridges in Rock County, meaning they are County, Town, City, or Village bridges. Of these, the County maintains 30. There are an additional 120 bridges in Rock County that are State maintained.

Air

The Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport is located west of U.S. Highway 51, between the Cities of Janesville and Beloit. It covers 1,405 acres and employs 125 people. There is no commercial passenger air service at the airport. As covered in the *Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020*, the Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport is categorized as an air carrier/cargo airport.

The airport is mainly utilized for corporate aviation and general aviation. Approximately 80,000 flights take place at the airport annually, 75% of which are freight operations, while 25% are air taxi services.

A Federal Aeronautics Association operated control tower is manned at the airport, from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. each day. There are three runways. Their lengths are 7,300 feet, 5,000 feet and 6,701 feet. Two of the runways are 150 feet wide, while the third is 75 feet wide. All taxiways are 50 feet wide.

There are 16 privately owned hangars at the airport, and several services are based at the premises. These include fuel sales, rental, repair, instruction and charter services. An automobile rental agency is located at the airport. There is a terminal that offers a restaurant and conference room, as well as an aircraft sales dealership.



Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport

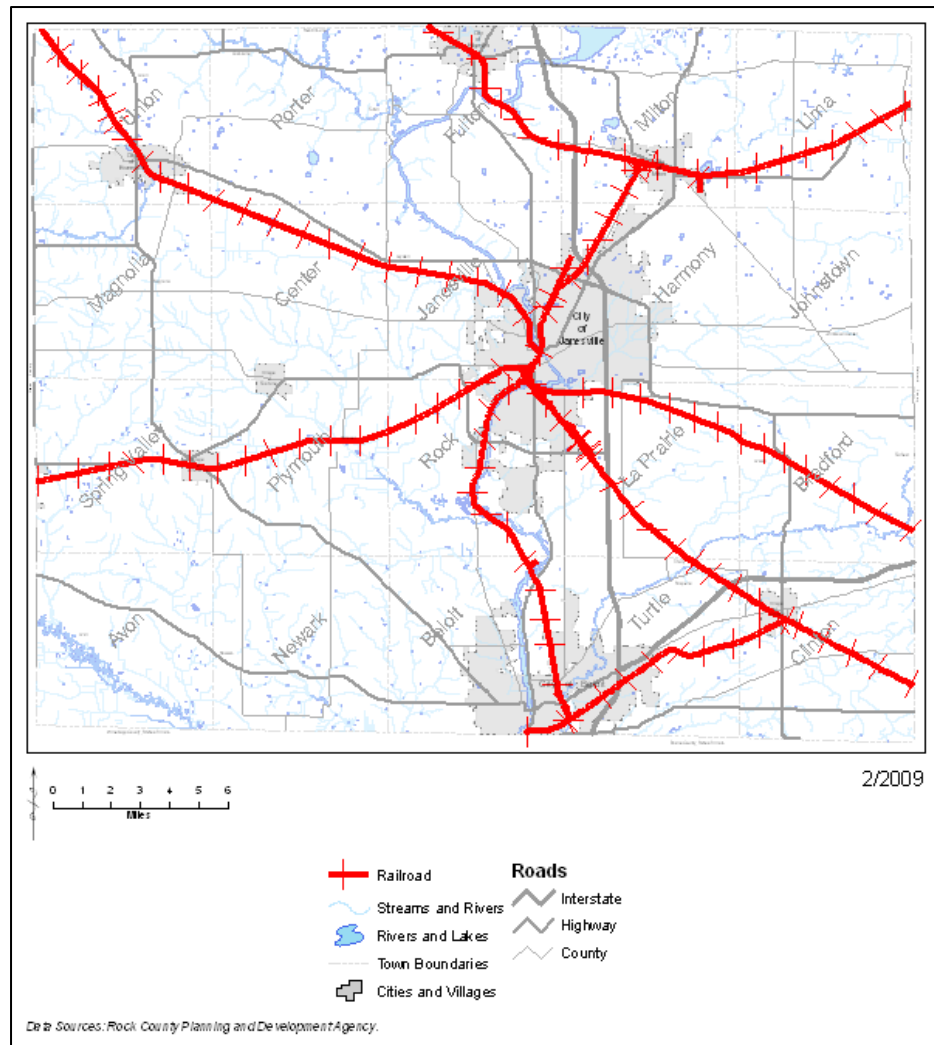
The airport also serves as a diversion airport, to accommodate planes in trouble. Emergency personnel are on-site, as are crash, fire and rescue vehicles. The on-site fire station is managed by the City of Janesville. There is on-site security provided by the Rock County Sheriff's Department. There are eight snow removal vehicles that operate at the airport. Rock County maintains ownership and control of the airport property, even though the City of Janesville annexed the property in the summer of 2007.

In addition to the Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport, there is the Beloit Airport, which is privately owned. Also, a number of private landing strips are located throughout the County.

Rail

Complemented by three distinct providers, Rock County's railroad network moves freight to and from the Great Lakes, the Mississippi River and various intermodal linkages. These linkages provide a vital supply chain function that connects area businesses to domestic, as well as, international destinations. Although currently passenger rail service does not exist within Rock County, its feasibility is under investigation, per the aforementioned *South Central Wisconsin Commuter Rail Study*. In doing so, the importance of preserving and/or enhancing Rock County's rail corridors has developed into an elevated priority.

Map 7.8:
Rail System



Source: Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development Agency

The Union Pacific Railroad (UP) is a Class I provider that operates on tracks that extend from Evansville through Janesville and then southeast into Clinton before crossing over the Wisconsin/Illinois border. Aside from their trackage, the UP operates a large rail yard centrally located within the City of Janesville. Its yard traffic is predominately dedicated towards serving the automotive, food processing and other non-farm bulk commodity industries. In between the daily scheduled trains to and from Chicago, train build-out and switching movements are common yard activities. In addition to UP's local presence, the provider has also invested heavily in the region via their Global III (Rochelle, Illinois) intermodal facility.

The Canadian Pacific Railway (CP) operates on tracks that stretch from Davis Junction, Illinois, through the City of Beloit and then into the City of Janesville. The CP line is commonly referred to as a short-line and provides freight services for coal, farm commodities, marine engines,

petroleum, plastics and transportation equipment.

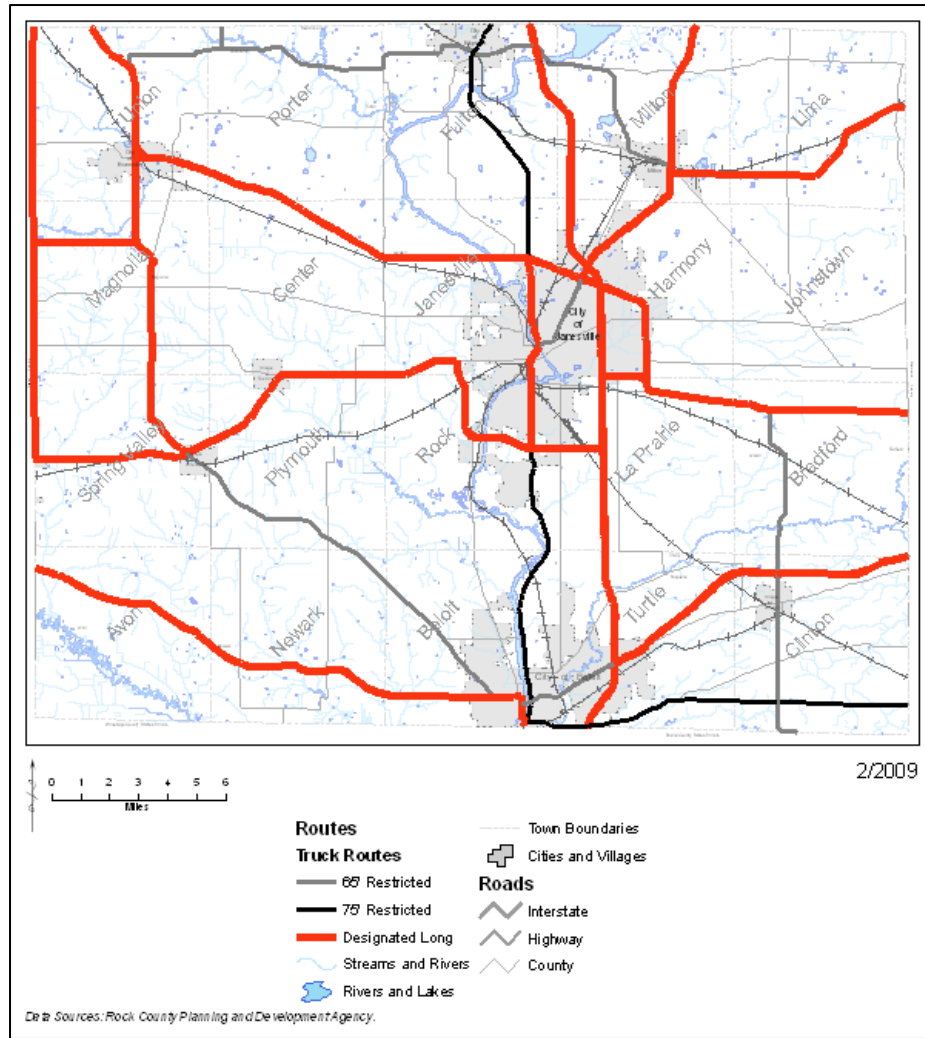
The provider that occupies the most trackage throughout Rock County is the Wisconsin and Southern Railroad (WSOR). Considered a Class II operator, WSOR tracks criss-cross the County providing freight linkages for both rural and urban communities. A wide array of products, ranging from bulk commodities (farm and non-farm) to plastic and metal materials are commonly found traveling on WSOR's tracks. WSOR also operates a small cross-docking facility at their City of Janesville Pearl Street location. Rock County, through their affiliation with the Pecatonica Rail Transit Commission, is an active contributor towards WSOR's public/private ownership and operations structure.



Trucking

A number of private trucking companies provide cartage service within Rock County. The type and number of trucking companies that operate in the County are as follows, contract (10), heavy (nine), liquid/dry bulk (six), motor freight (18), local cartage (two). Approximately 77% of all freight movement in Rock County is by truck.

Map 7.9:
Truck Routes



Source: Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development Agency

Transit

- City Buses

Both the Cities of Beloit and Janesville currently operate transit systems. The Janesville Transit System operates 25 buses and has six routes, three of which offer nighttime service that runs until 10:15 in the evening. Beloit Transit operates 13 buses and has five routes, none of which operate in the evening. In addition to the routes that run throughout the two cities, there is a route called the Beloit-Janesville Express, which runs between the two Cities. This route operates daytime, Monday through Friday. It originates at the Beloit transfer center and the Janesville transfer center, with stops at the Rock County Job Center, University of Wisconsin-Rock County, Blackhawk Technical College and various Rock Valley Community Programs.

- Coach USA

An interstate bus line operated by Coach USA (formerly Van Galder) travels between the Cities of Madison, Wisconsin and Chicago, Illinois. This line makes a stop in the City of Janesville. There are two southbound routes, one with a final destination of O'Hare Airport, and the other that goes to downtown Chicago. For the O'Hare destination buses leave Janesville 13 times a day, between 3:20 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Stops are made in the Cities of South Beloit and Rockford, Illinois before continuing to O'Hare Airport. The routes that head to downtown Chicago leave Janesville six times a day, between 6:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Six times a day buses travel from downtown Chicago to Madison, arriving in Janesville between 12:55 p.m. and 1:05 a.m. Buses arrive in Janesville 14 times a day heading to Madison from O'Hare, between 8:35 a.m. and 1:05 a.m.

- Greyhound Bus Line

A Greyhound bus line also serves Rock County. There is a Greyhound terminal in the City of Beloit. However, tickets are not sold at the terminal, and must be purchased online or by telephone. Buses departing the Beloit Greyhound station head north to the City of Madison and south to Chicago. These buses then link to routes nationwide.

Both Van Galder and Greyhound bus lines offer charter services, for group travel, tour packages, or other special events.

- Para-Transit

The Rock County Council on Aging provides specialized transit services, which are designed for use by elderly or disabled persons. To be eligible for the service, an individual must be at least 55 years of age, or physically disabled. Rides are made available to all areas within Rock County, using wheelchair lift-equipped vans.

The service is for passengers who must be able to use the van independently, or with a minimal amount of driver assistance (for example, no wheelchairs are helped up/down stairs). Transport is available throughout the county Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Trip fares are based on a one-way trip basis. One-way trips can be made within the patron's home community or to destinations outside the community for an additional charge. Group rides are also available for purchase.

Users arrange trips by calling the Specialized Transit Agency by 12:00 p.m. at least two days in advance of the scheduled trip. Passengers are picked up at their scheduled time and taken to their destination. Once the rider's scheduled appointment has completed, he/she must place a call to the Specialized Transit Agency in order to notify the van driver that it's time to make a return trip.

The Rock County Council on Aging also offers a volunteer driver escort program called RIDES, where volunteers offer their time and their own vehicles to drive patrons to medical appointments. Transportation is offered to all areas within the boundaries of the Cities of Madison, Milwaukee, and Monroe, Wisconsin, and Rockford, Illinois, and riders are charged per mile.

Bike and Pedestrian

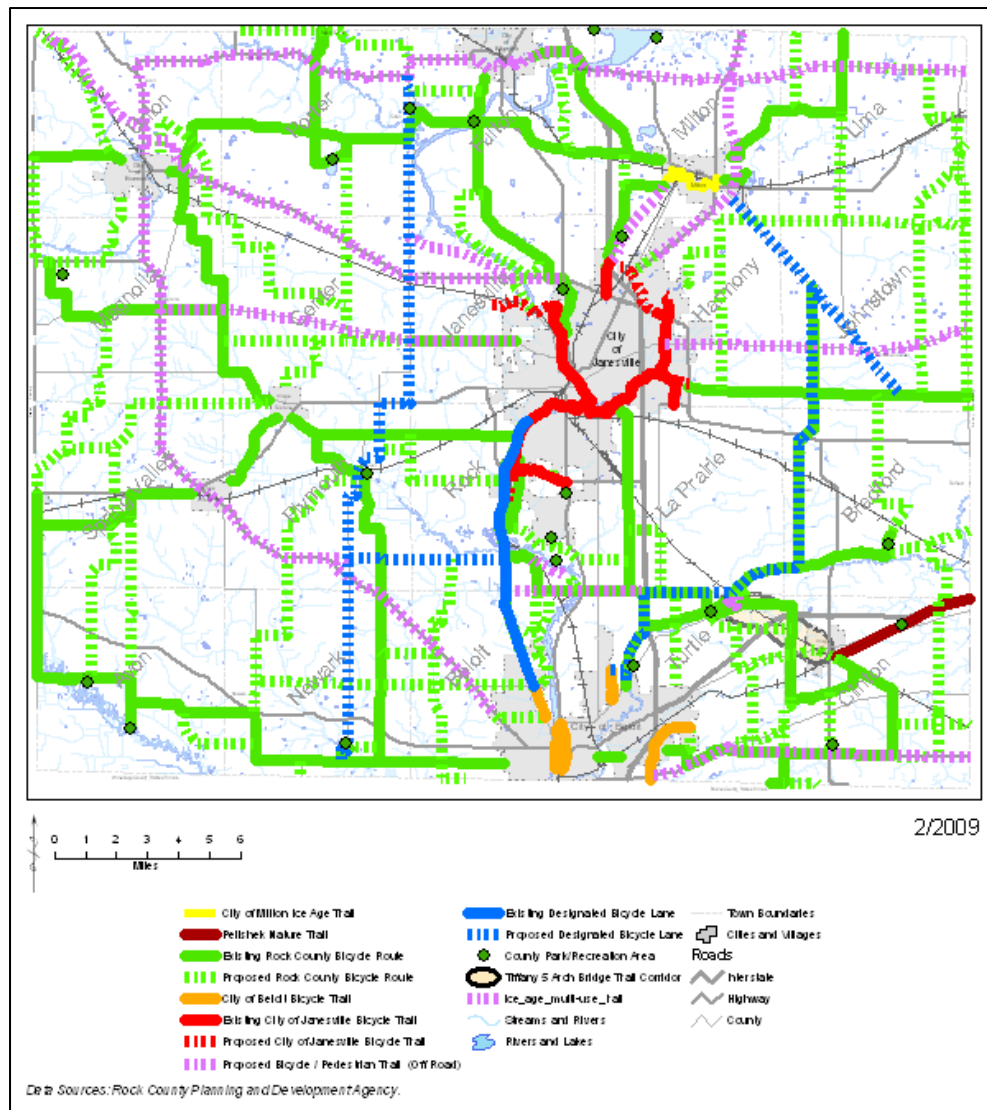
An expansive network of bicycle and pedestrian routes span Rock County. The system of routes includes the Pelishek Nature Trail, the Ice Age National Scenic Trail (portions of which are planned to cross the entire width of the County), the City of Beloit Bicycle Trail, the City of Janesville Bicycle Trail and designated bicycle lanes, all interconnected by Rock County bicycle routes. The system of routes connects urbanized areas with destinations that offer recreation and natural amenities. The County Parks can all be accessed via bicycle/pedestrian routes and lanes.

The Wisconsin State Bikeway connects the Cities of Kenosha and La Crosse, and includes a 36-mile portion that spans the northern part of Rock County. The route is not marked, but route information is available from the WDNR.

More routes are planned to further connect existing ones, and these are set forth in the POROS Plan, which was adopted in March of 2009. Criteria for the location of future routes include smooth terrain and low traffic volume. Loop routes are to be integrated into the system to allow the opportunity for shorter outings.



Map 7.10:
Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes and Trails Plan



Source: Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development Agency

Recreational Transportation

- Snowmobile Trails

Each year easements are obtained from various landowners, and together they comprise the Rock County Snowmobile Trail. There are approximately 226 miles of trail. The trail is made possible by the Wisconsin Snowmobile Trail Fund, which finances the easements in their entirety. Also, 22 bridges have been paid for with the trail grant program. Since the inception of the Rock County Snowmobile Trail, in 1981, it has encircled the entire county, with numerous trail spurs connecting adjoining trails in adjacent counties.

- Multi-Use Trails

While the Pelishek Nature Trail and the Ice Age National Scenic Trail are listed as bike and pedestrian routes, they are indeed off-road trails that serve a multitude of recreational uses, including hiking. And horseback riding is permitted on the Ice Age Trail. Smaller trails are also found in some of the County's parks. While Carver-Roehl offers hiking/nature trails and cross-country skiing, Gibbs Lake and Magnolia Bluff offer similar trail uses, in addition to horse paths. Lee Park has hiking/nature trails, which are also incorporated in the county snowmobile trail network during the winter.

- Boating

A number of rivers, streams and lakes in Rock County are ideal for boating and other water sports. In the POROS Plan, a detailed *River Trails Plan* identifies waterways that are favorable for canoeing and kayaking. Lake Koshkonong, the southern portion of which is located in Rock County, is a popular destination for boating and other water sports.

7.4. Current and Future Needs

Conditions

According to public input, the physical condition of Rock County's roadways is viewed to be in good condition, and is not a concern. However, from a monetary standpoint the County has been utilizing funds primarily towards repairs, rather than preventative maintenance. A national push has been occurring to focus on preventative maintenance, due to how it saves money in the long run. The key is to get to a point where there are no pressing road repair needs, in order to be proactive, which is easier said than done. In addition, the focus should be on maintenance, rather than expansion, of the County's transportation networks, in most places.

One of the best means to organize road repair needs is by maintaining an up-to-date inventory. WisDOT offers an online database for local jurisdictions to utilize, the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR). Rock County is conscientious about sustaining the data regarding County maintained transportation facilities. However, the Towns in the County mostly enter the initial data, but fail to update it. The benefits of keeping the information updated must be understood by all jurisdictions with the County, and effort must be put forth to do so.

When it comes to financing transportation improvements and repairs, a plethora of state and national aid is available. The County must actively seek funding assistance when available and appropriate.

Congestion

It is commonly believed that you cannot build your way out of congestion. If new routes are constructed to ease capacity, oftentimes development then is generated along the new route, only adding to the congestion. While the question use to be "Which comes first, transportation or land use?" it is now understood that the two must come together. Transportation and land use planning must be integrated to context-sensitive transportation investments, and to ease congestion. This *Plan* addresses this issue in Section II: Chapter 5 - Land Use.

Another way to ease congestion is by reducing the number of single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips in the area. Over 94% of random survey respondents in Rock County drive alone to work and/or school each day. Carpooling is only slightly utilized, and busing, walking and biking are even less popular. While reducing SOV trips is more applicable and realistic in urbanized areas, rather than in an unincorporated county, there are changes that could be made. Existing facilities and routes for bicycling and walking should be promoted, new bicycling and walking facilities and routes could be made available and transit could be more convenient.

Safety

The inventorying of detailed accident data can be helpful in identifying problem intersections or roadways, and alleviating accident occurrences. Although the technology exists to record exact longitude and latitude points of an accident, as soon as emergency personal arrive at the scene, as system to do so has yet to be established in Rock County. This process is referred to as geocoding, and it can be used along with the existing GIS in the County to create a uniform crash data analysis system, across jurisdictions.

Many of the traffic accident issues in Rock County would be alleviated with a reduction in traffic congestion, and the installation of traffic calming devices where appropriate. Another crucial element for driver safety in the unincorporated County is access management and vision clearance measures. Currently, the County tries to require easements for vision triangles at intersections when a land division takes place, but landowner cooperation varies.

Also, all too often landowners wish to create new buildable lots in locations that are not conducive for safe driveway access. Locating driveways in unsafe locations that do not provide adequate sight clearance can prove dangerous for the property owner, and for innocent Rock County drivers and passengers alike. Currently, Rock County and some of the Towns have policies in place to regulate driveway placement, but an enforceable countywide ordinance would be more effective. A driveway ordinance could regulate width, length and slope of driveways, in addition to driveway placement, to assure ingress and egress for emergency vehicles and ensure that properties are accessible, even in foul weather conditions.

Some safety concerns apply to transportation innovations in the unforeseeable future.

Technology is paving the way for means to maximize mobility, and with these advancements come new safety risks, and Rock County should be proactive enough to regulate these types of advancements before they potentially become dangerous.

An innovation gaining popularity, which is being regulated by some jurisdictions nationwide, is the neighborhood electric vehicle (NEV). These vehicles run on batteries, can only drive short distances at a time and are lightweight. For these reasons, they are being prohibited on some roadways, and restricted to roads with posted speed limits of 35 mph or lower. State of Wisconsin Statute 349.26 states that NEVS can be operated on roadways that are posted at 35 mph or lower, but only if the governing body first adopts an ordinance allowing the use. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has recognized NEVs as a form of transportation since 1998. Rock County should develop and enforce rules for the use of NEVs here, before they become more common-place.

Safety is also an issue for other modes, including railroads, air, and recreational transportation. State programs are offered to help fund appropriate safety improvements.

Accessibility

While Rock County does offer adequate opportunities for para-transit service, there should be improvements in marketing to spread awareness of such programs. Aside from transit for the elderly and disabled, even City bus systems in the County could improve public outreach in hopes to make mass transit a viable transportation option for all sectors of the population. Perhaps additional fixed routes are needed to better serve the citizens of Rock County.

Providing transportation alternatives to those who commute out of Rock County is another aspect of accessibility that warrants exploration. SLATS is sure to provide some answers, particularly addressing those who commute to the south and the Chicago area. To serve those who commute to the north and to the Madison area, a park and ride facility may be feasible. At one point, a park and ride was proposed for the Newville area in the Town of Fulton, but local decision-makers ultimately opposed it. Unofficial parking lots in the Newville area are common parking points for people carpooling to destinations northward. The K-Mart parking lot in Janesville also serves as a sort of non-official parking facility. At this time, the City of Madison Metro Transit is considering the practicability of establishing a park and ride in the City of Evansville area.

Connectivity Standards

Oftentimes the way land is developed and divided in the unincorporated county does not lend itself well to future development surrounding the area. For instance, flag lots prohibit the installation of through streets at suitable intervals and an abundance of cul-de-sacs impede accessibility from one neighborhood to another. Though most homeowners enjoy this type of isolation, it could prove dangerous in an emergency. Traditional neighborhood design layouts, that often incorporate grid networks and through-streets, should be encouraged for future development, to promote walkability/bikability and increase safety and a sense of community, and allow future connectivity, if development does occur.

Enhancements and Beautification

Recreational trails, such as those for bicycles and pedestrians, are the most abundant type of transportation enhancement in Rock County. But to truly make the area bike and pedestrian friendly, more needs to be done. Existing routes and trails should be promoted and utilized to the utmost. Many new developments provide no accommodations for bikes and/or pedestrians. And many schools throughout the County are not safely accessible, except by personal automobile. These issues could be remedied if additional facilities and services for biking, walking, and other non-auto modes of transportation are maintained, expanded and/or created. At the least, additional right-of-way should be preserved, to allow the installation of bike/pedestrian facilities and routes in the future. Shoulder improvements should be considered when resurfacing takes place on County roads, to accommodate bicycles along mapped bicycle routes, as appropriate.

Boating is another recreational opportunity that could be expanded in Rock County. Many of the waterways throughout the County are ideal for canoeing and kayaking, yet no official canoe or kayak launch exists. Most desirable would be facilities for canoe and kayak rentals, along one of the waterways in the County.

Roadside beautification is another form of transportation enhancements, and the County endorses the use of native plantings. Currently, when right-of-way areas are reseeded during construction and improvements, non-native materials are used, which are difficult to remove once established.



7.5. Transportation Goals, Objectives and Policies

This section states the County's transportation goals, objectives and policies.

Transportation Goal

- 7.1. Provide a safe, efficient and equitable transportation system that meets the needs of diverse users while minimizing impacts on farmland and the environment.

Transportation Objectives and Policies

- 7.1.1. Provide safe roadway conditions, while cooperating with local and State entities.
- 7.1.1.a. State and federal funding programs shall be applied for and utilized whenever possible, to help finance highway and bridge, transit, rail, enhancements and other transportation improvements, especially those that reduce single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips and air pollution, and benefit economic development in the County.
 - 7.1.1.b. A uniform crash data analysis system shall be established and implemented, that involves emergency and/or police and sheriff personnel using global positioning system (GPS) units to record the exact location of accident occurrences so data can be geocoded using a geographic information system (GIS).
- 7.1.2. Coordinate transportation and land use planning, to minimize sprawl and traffic congestion.
- 7.1.2.a. Rezoning and land divisions in the County shall be approved in appropriate locations adjacent to municipalities and existing developed areas, in efficient development patterns, such as traditional neighborhood design, so as to best utilize existing transportation networks without contributing to sprawl or traffic congestion, while ensuring that new road networks do not interfere with environmentally significant areas.
- 7.1.3. Ensure safety at railway crossings.
- 7.1.3.a. Rock County shall work with the State Office of the Commissioner of Railroads, when appropriate, to work towards replacement and/or enhancement of warning devices where needed.
- 7.1.4. Maintain the scenic value and rural character of the County's roadways.

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- 7.1.4.a. The feasibility and opportunity to regulate roadside plantings in Rock County, both for beautification and during construction, shall be explored, to promote the use of native plant materials.
 - 7.1.4.b. Rock County shall aim to promote rustic roads in the County, and aim to acquire more rustic road designations for appropriate roadways.
 - 7.1.5. Maintain the efficiency, profitability and safety of the Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport.
 - 7.1.5.a. Continued cooperation and involvement with the State's Airport Improvement Program shall remain, to leverage federal, state and local resources for the betterment of the Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport.
 - 7.1.5.b. The recommendations of the *Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport Land Use Plan* shall be adhered to, where appropriate.
 - 7.1.6. Ensure that Rock County be a safe and enjoyable location for recreational transportation, such as snowmobiling, boating bicycling and walking.
 - 7.1.6.a. Snowmobile routes shall continue to be properly designated and maintained.
 - 7.1.6.b. The feasibility of the installation of canoe and/or kayak launch(es) in Rock County shall be explored, and if appropriate, shall be supported.
 - 7.1.6.c. New bicycle facilities shall be current AASHTO standards as set forth in their *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, as required when state or federal funds are utilized.
 - 7.1.6.d. Signage for bicycle facilities shall utilize guidelines set forth in the *Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
 - 7.1.7. Keep abreast of new transportation trends and advancements, and regulate them as appropriate.
 - 7.1.7.a. The use of neighborhood electric vehicles (NEVs) in the County shall be regulated as appropriate to ensure safety of all citizens, while recognizing the benefit of low-emission, low-fuel consumption vehicles.
 - 7.1.8. Ensure that each new buildable lot has safe sight distance and driveway access.
 - 7.1.8.a. A Countywide driveway ordinance shall be drafted and adopted, to regulate driveway placement, width, length, slope and to uphold access control.
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Transportation Goal

- 7.2. Offer alternate mode options to help minimize single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips within Rock County and the region, to lessen traffic congestion and vehicle emissions.

Transportation Objectives and Policies

- 7.2.1. Ensure that facilities and services for biking, walking, and other non-auto modes of transportation are maintained, expanded and/or created.
- 7.2.1.a. Bicycle and pedestrian routes shall be incorporated into new development areas, with encouraged use of wide sidewalks to accommodate both bicycle and pedestrian traffic.
 - 7.2.1.b. Shoulder improvements shall be made to County roads during resurfacing projects, to accommodate bicycles along mapped bicycle routes, where appropriate.
 - 7.2.1.c. Bike and pedestrian trails and routes in Rock County shall be connected to nearby trails and routes in adjacent counties, such as the Sugar River Trail (Green County) and the Glacial River Trail (Jefferson County).
 - 7.2.1.d. The findings of the South Central Wisconsin Commuter Study shall be supported, to provide transportation alternatives to commuters in the Southern Wisconsin/Northern Illinois region.
 - 7.2.1.e. Further study shall be conducted to assess the commuter activity between Rock County and the Madison metropolitan area.
 - 7.2.1.f. The feasibility of a park and ride facility in the northern tier of Rock County shall be explored and pursued, if appropriate.
 - 7.2.1.g. The opportunity for a park and ride facility in the Town of Union, to be serviced by the City of Madison Metro Transit, shall be supported by Rock County.
- 7.2.2. Promote and improve awareness and utilization of existing transit services, especially those that serve the elderly and disabled.
- 7.2.2.a. Advertising and outreach shall be utilized to generate increased awareness of the transit services offered by the Rock County Council on Aging.
 - 7.2.2.b. Additional fixed transit routes shall be explored to better serve patrons who shop, work or require services outside of currently available routes.

Transportation Goal

- 7.3. Support regionalism and fiscal responsibility regarding transportation-related improvements in Rock County.

Transportation Objectives and Policies

- 7.3.1. Support the use of the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) to manage and inventory road attributes, administration, condition and maintenance requirements.
- 7.3.1.a. All jurisdictions within Rock County shall be encouraged to utilize the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads database.
- 7.3.2. Continue involving Rock County representatives in transportation-related committees and planning efforts throughout Rock County and the region.
- 7.3.2.a. The County shall support the study of a State Highway 11 bypass, circumventing the southern side of the City of Janesville from U.S. Highway 14 to Interstate 43.
- 7.3.2.b. Capacity improvements to Highway 14, between the City of Janesville and the Dane County line in the Town of Union, to facility corridor preservation and safe movement of vehicular traffic, shall be supported by Rock County.
- 7.3.2.c. The County shall support the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and impacted area communities regarding any decisions to reroute Highway 14 in the City of Evansville area.