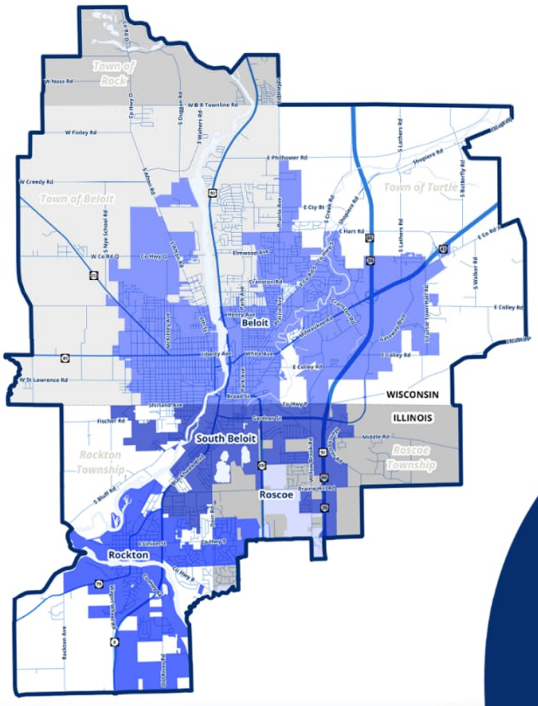






slats
STATELINE AREA
TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Appendix I

Environmental Mitigation Analysis

This appendix summarizes the environmental mitigation analysis conducted as part of the development of the SLATS 2055 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Transportation investments can affect natural, cultural, and community resources, while environmental conditions and hazards can also influence the performance, reliability, and resiliency of the transportation system. As part of the metropolitan transportation planning process, federal regulations require LRTPs to include a discussion of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas where such activities may be implemented to address the impacts of the recommended (fiscally constrained) transportation improvements.

This appendix identifies environmental resources that could potentially be affected by the proposed fiscally constrained transportation improvements, summarizes potential mitigation approaches, and highlights opportunities to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts. The analysis was informed by available environmental data, resource mapping, and relevant local and regional planning documents reviewed during development of the LRTP, including comprehensive plans, land resource management plans, and other planning efforts summarized in **Appendix E – Relevant Plans Review**. These documents provide important context regarding natural resources, land use patterns, community development objectives, agricultural/farmland preservation priorities, and environmental stewardship considerations within the SLATS metropolitan planning area (MPA). The information presented in this appendix is intended to support SLATS transportation planning and decision-making efforts and to provide environmental context for future project development and environmental review activities. Environmental and regulatory agencies were provided an opportunity to review and comment on the environmental mitigation analysis and the 2055 LRTP as part of the plan review process.

In addition, this appendix includes a discussion of transportation system security and resiliency. Consistent with federal planning requirements, the analysis considers natural hazards and other factors that may affect the long-term reliability and operation of the regional transportation system, with particular attention to risks relevant to the SLATS MPA. The discussion draws upon available hazard mitigation, emergency management, resiliency, and related planning efforts to identify vulnerabilities and considerations that may influence future transportation investment decisions.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

To support the environmental mitigation analysis, available environmental resource data were compiled and mapped to identify environmentally sensitive areas within the SLATS MPA. Figure 1 summarizes key environmental, cultural, and land resource features that warrant consideration during future project development and environmental review activities.

FIGURE 1. RESOURCES EVALUATED

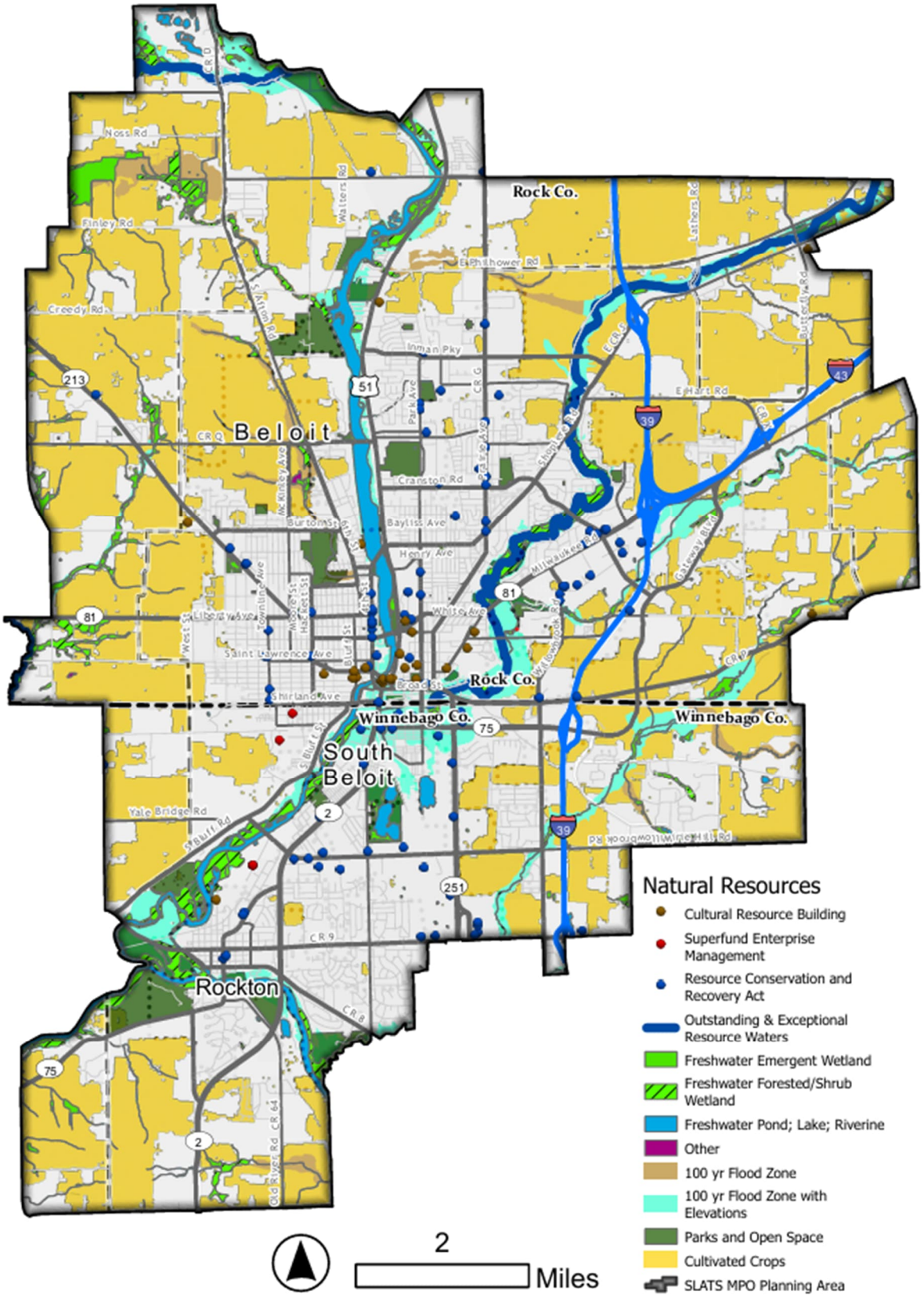


Figure 2 displays the location of environmentally sensitive resources within the SLATS MPA, including floodplains, wetlands, surface waters, parks and open space, agricultural lands, cultural resources, Superfund sites, and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) sites. These resources represent areas where transportation improvements may require additional environmental review, agency coordination, avoidance measures, or mitigation strategies as projects advance through project development.

Overlaying these environmental resources with the fiscally constrained transportation projects allows for a planning-level review of potential resource impacts and environmental considerations early in the transportation planning process. This review is intended to identify potential environmental constraints and opportunities rather than determine project-specific impacts or mitigation measures. Detailed environmental analyses, agency coordination, permitting requirements, and mitigation activities will occur, as appropriate, during subsequent phases of project development.

Potential mitigation approaches identified in this appendix are intended to provide general guidance for avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating impacts on environmental resources and should be considered by implementing agencies during future project planning, design, construction, and maintenance activities.

FIGURE 2. ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE RESOURCES



Air Quality and Transportation Emissions

The SLATS MPA is currently designated as an attainment area for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards. As a result, a transportation conformity determination is not required for the SLATS 2055 LRTP.

Although the region meets federal air quality standards, transportation activities remain a primary source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other air pollutants. Transportation planning can help support improved air quality and reduce transportation-related emissions through investments that improve system efficiency, expand transportation choices, and provide viable alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel, all of which are consistent with the goals of the SLATS 2055 LRTP.

The 2055 LRTP supports these objectives through a multimodal transportation strategy that includes investments in public transit, active transportation facilities, Complete Streets improvements, transportation system management and operations strategies, and emerging transportation technologies. Improving connectivity and accessibility for walking, bicycling, and transit can help reduce dependence on automobile travel while providing additional mobility options for residents and visitors.

As vehicle technologies continue to evolve, transportation emissions may also be influenced by increased adoption of fuel-efficient vehicles, alternative fuels, electric and hybrid vehicles, and other advancements in transportation technology. SLATS is committed to supporting a transportation planning process that is flexible to accommodate these changes while promoting an efficient, safe, and sustainable transportation system.

In addition, SLATS will continue to coordinate with the WisDOT, IDOT, local governments, transit providers, and other planning partners to support state and regional initiatives aimed at improving air quality, reducing transportation-related emissions, expanding transportation options, and advancing transportation system resiliency. Through ongoing collaboration, SLATS will help align regional transportation investments with broader state and federal efforts to promote sustainable and environmentally responsible transportation solutions.

Transportation Resilience and Environmental Sustainability

Transportation agencies at the federal, state, and local levels increasingly recognize the importance of improving the resilience and reliability of transportation infrastructure. Extreme weather events, flooding, severe storms, winter weather, and other environmental conditions can disrupt travel, damage transportation assets, increase maintenance costs, and impact access to homes, businesses, schools, healthcare facilities, and emergency services.

In the context of transportation planning, resilience refers to the ability of the transportation system to anticipate, prepare for, adapt to, withstand, respond to, and recover from disruptive events. Consistent with federal transportation planning requirements, the SLATS 2055 LRTP considers opportunities to improve the long-term resilience and reliability of the regional transportation system.

Recognizing the growing importance of transportation system resilience, SLATS incorporated resiliency-focused objectives into the previous LRTP update (2045 plan) and continues to emphasize resiliency throughout the 2055 LRTP. Particular focus is given to transportation network reliability, redundant

travel options, and infrastructure that can continue to function during and after severe weather events and other disruptions.

Within the SLATS MPA, flooding and stormwater management represent some of the most significant resiliency considerations. Portions of the planning area are located within or adjacent to the floodplains of the Rock River, Turtle Creek, and other waterways. Changing precipitation patterns and more frequent extreme rainfall events have the potential to increase localized flooding, infrastructure damage, travel disruptions, and maintenance needs. In some areas, increased stormwater runoff has contributed to drainage challenges and roadway vulnerabilities, highlighting the importance of incorporating resiliency considerations into transportation planning and project development.

Preserving natural environmental features such as wetlands, floodplains, open space, and other environmentally sensitive resources can help reduce flood risks and improve stormwater management. These resources also provide important ecological benefits, including water quality protection, habitat preservation, and groundwater recharge.

The 2055 LRTP supports continued consideration of resilience principles during project development, including appropriate stormwater management practices, infrastructure designs that address existing and future environmental conditions, protection of critical transportation assets, and transportation network connectivity that provides alternative routes during roadway closures or emergency situations. This emphasis on connectivity is particularly important given the limited number of Rock River crossings within the region and the need to maintain reliable east-west travel options during disruptive events.

One of the more significant flooding and drainage concerns within the planning area is located along the Stateline Road corridor between Gardner Street and Broad Street. To better understand current and future transportation, land use, and environmental conditions in this area, SLATS is planning to undertake a future transportation and land use study. The study will evaluate transportation needs, development patterns, drainage and flooding concerns, and other environmental constraints. The results will help inform future concept development, project design, and prioritization efforts, while supporting future LRTP updates.

Hazard Mitigation and System Security

Federal transportation planning regulations identify security as an important consideration in the long-range transportation planning process. For the SLATS MPA, the primary security considerations relate to natural hazards and other events that may affect the safe and reliable operation of the transportation system.

In planning the future transportation network, SLATS reviewed current hazard mitigation planning documents applicable to the metropolitan planning area, including county hazard mitigation plans and related emergency management resources. These documents identify natural hazards, vulnerable facilities and areas, and mitigation strategies that can help inform transportation planning and project development.

Hazards identified through these planning efforts that have the potential to affect communities within the SLATS MPA include:

- Flooding and local drainage issues

- Severe thunderstorms
- Tornadoes
- Winter storms
- Extreme heat and drought
- Wildfire
- Earthquakes

While tornadoes have the potential to be the most destructive natural hazard affecting the region, winter storms are generally more frequent, result in recurring transportation disruptions, and often create substantial costs for local governments associated with roadway maintenance and operations. Flooding also presents a significant transportation concern within the planning area. Communities along the Pecatonica River and Turtle Creek, including the City of Beloit, Town of Beloit, Town of Turtle, City of South Beloit, Rockton Township, and the Village of Rockton, are particularly vulnerable to overbank flooding. In addition, repetitive flood losses have historically occurred primarily along the Rock River corridor. Flooding in these areas has the potential to affect roadway operations, bridge infrastructure, trails, freight movement, and access to homes, businesses, schools, healthcare facilities, and emergency services.

As transportation projects advance through project development and environmental review, opportunities to reduce vulnerability to identified hazards should be considered where appropriate. Potential measures may include improving drainage infrastructure, increasing roadway or trail elevations in flood-prone areas, incorporating flood-resistant roadway and bridge design practices, protecting critical transportation assets, enhancing emergency access, and preserving transportation network connectivity through alternative travel routes.

Environmental Mitigation Analysis for the 2055 LRTP

The fiscally constrained transportation improvements included in the SLATS 2055 LRTP were reviewed in relation to the environmental resources identified in Figure 1 and displayed in Figure 2. For purposes of this planning-level analysis, intersection projects were evaluated using a 0.25-mile-radius buffer, while corridor and roadway-focused projects were evaluated using a 200-foot buffer on each side of the project corridor. This assessment was conducted using available environmental resource mapping, GIS data, and project location information to identify environmental resources that may be located within or near future transportation improvements and may warrant additional review as projects advance through future phases of project development.

Consistent with federal transportation planning requirements, the purpose of this analysis is not to determine project-specific impacts, identify permit requirements, or prescribe mitigation measures. Rather, the analysis is intended to identify environmental resources that may be affected by future transportation improvements and highlight areas where avoidance, minimization, mitigation, resource agency coordination, or additional environmental review may be warranted. The analysis also serves as a high-level screening to identify potential environmental constraints or concerns that could substantially influence future project development, design, cost, scheduling, or feasibility.

Figure 3 displays the fiscally constrained transportation projects in relation to environmentally sensitive resources within the SLATS MPA. As projects advance into programming, preliminary engineering, environmental review, and final design, additional site-specific analysis will be required to verify the

presence and extent of environmental resources, evaluate project-specific impacts, and identify appropriate avoidance, minimization, mitigation, permitting, and coordination requirements. Tables 1 and 2 summarize planning-level environmental considerations associated with the fiscally constrained projects based on available information at the time of LRTP development. The tables identify notable environmental resources and considerations that may warrant further evaluation during subsequent phases of project development.

It is important to note that the identification of environmental resources within a project buffer area does not necessarily indicate that a project will result in environmental impacts or that project implementation will be restricted. The type, scale, and location of the proposed improvement are critical factors in determining the potential for environmental impacts. The SLATS 2055 LRTP is primarily focused on intersection improvements, operational enhancements, and roadway rehabilitation projects that were identified through the technical planning process and feedback received from stakeholders and the public. Many of these projects are anticipated to occur within or adjacent to existing transportation corridors and generally have relatively limited footprints compared to major corridor expansions or new roadway construction. As a result, many of the environmental resources identified through this screening process may ultimately be avoided or experience minimal direct impacts during project implementation.

Finally, the environmental mitigation analysis presented in this appendix is based on a planning-level review of available environmental resource mapping and project location data. Additional environmental resources or constraints may be identified during future project development, environmental review, field investigations, agency coordination, and public involvement activities. The potential environmental considerations identified in this appendix do not constitute a determination of impacts, permit requirements, mitigation obligations, or project feasibility. Projects located near wetlands, floodplains, surface waters, cultural resources, parks, agricultural lands, or environmental remediation sites may require more detailed environmental analysis and coordination with appropriate resource and regulatory agencies as they advance through subsequent phases of project development.

FIGURE 3. ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION ANALYSIS – FISCALLY CONSTRAINED PROJECTS

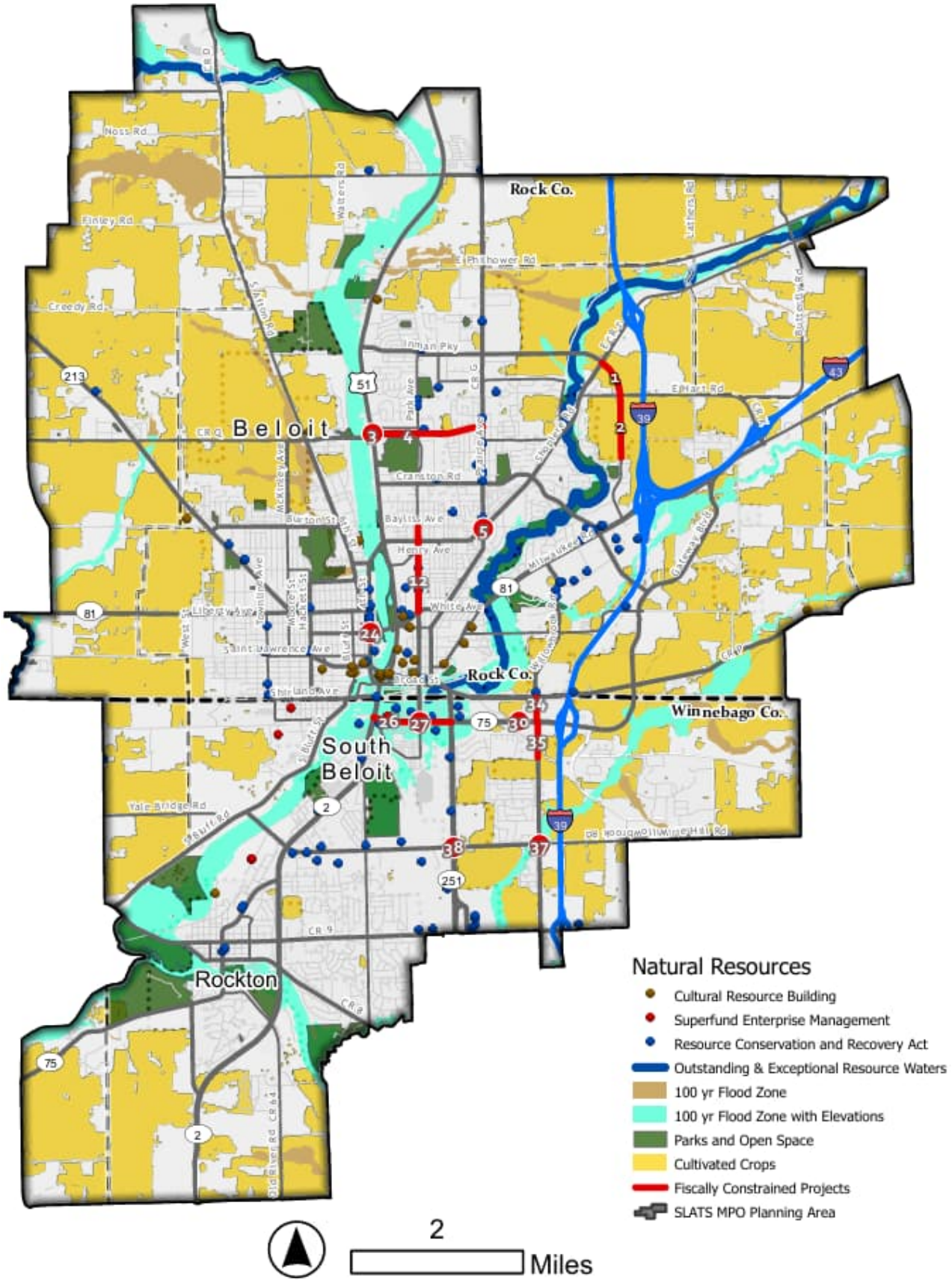


TABLE 1. ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION ANALYSIS SUMMARY (FISCALLY CONSTRAINED PROJECTS IN WISCONSIN)

Wisconsin portion of the SLATS MPA		
Project ID	Project Description	Potential / Notable Environmental Concerns
5	Shopiere Road (Prairie Ave / Bayliss Ave / Moccasin Trail) - construct roundabout; improve access and operations by closing Bayliss and realigning Moccasin.	Two RCRA sites are located in proximity to the intersection, and approximately 0.28 acres of parkland are identified within the buffer. While these conditions do not preclude project implementation, future project development should evaluate potential contamination, permitting requirements, parkland coordination, and any remediation needs.
3	US 51 / Newark intersection (Elmwood Avenue Phase 1) – realign/reconfigure to improve access and network connectivity	Environmental screening identified potential impacts to approximately 38.1 acres of 100-year floodplain, 0.85 acres of shrub wetland, and 0.05 acres of parkland. Future project development should assess potential floodplain encroachment, wetland impacts, stormwater management requirements, and potential parkland coordination.
24	4th Street / Portland Avenue intersection – construct roundabout	Potential impacts include approximately 46.8 acres of 100-year floodplain, 17.6 acres of parkland, 4.1 acres associated with cultural resources, one Superfund site, and six RCRA sites within the project buffer area. Because the project consists of improvements at an existing intersection, significant impacts to these resources are not anticipated. However, future project development should evaluate opportunities to avoid and minimize impacts to nearby floodplain and park resources, coordinate regarding any cultural resource considerations, and assess potential contamination, permitting, remediation, or other environmental concerns associated with the identified Superfund and RCRA sites.
1	BT Extension (Shopiere to Hart) Phase 1 – new roadway connection to improve network connectivity and access	The corridor traverses an area of approximately 20.5 acres of cropland. Future project development should evaluate potential farmland conversion and coordinate with applicable agricultural resource protection requirements. It is worth noting that this corridor is documented in the City of Beloit Street Map.
12	Park Avenue (Bayliss to White) – rehabilitation and operational improvements; construct bicycle facility consistent with the Active Transportation Plan recommendations	Potential impacts are limited; however, two RCRA sites are located within the project buffer area. Given the project's rehabilitation-focused nature within an existing corridor, significant environmental impacts are not anticipated. Future project development should evaluate any potential contamination, permitting, remediation, or other environmental considerations associated with these sites.
2	BT Extension (Hart to Milwaukee, via Winchester Drive) Phase 2 – new roadway connection to improve connectivity and access	The corridor traverses an area of approximately 35.9 acres of cropland. Future project development should evaluate potential farmland conversion and coordinate with applicable agricultural resource protection requirements. Impacts to agricultural drainage patterns and adjacent agricultural operations should also be considered during project development. It is worth noting that this corridor is documented in the City of Beloit Street Map.
4A	Elmwood Avenue (Riverside and Park) Phase 2 – reconfiguration with continuous cross-section	No mapped impacts were identified within the screened environmental datasets. Standard review of natural resources, drainage, and utility constraints is recommended during project development.
4B	Elmwood Avenue (Park and Prairie) Phase 3 – reconfiguration with continuous cross-section	One RCRA site was identified within the project buffer area, and approximately 0.65 acres of cropland were identified within the screened environmental datasets. Future project development should evaluate any potential contamination, permitting, remediation, or other environmental considerations associated with the RCRA site, as well as any potential impacts to agricultural land.

Source: AECOM (2026)

TABLE 2. ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION ANALYSIS SUMMARY (FISCALLY CONSTRAINED PROJECTS IN ILLINOIS)

Illinois portion of the SLATS MPA		
Project	**Project Description**	
34	**Willowbrook Road (Stateline to Gardner)** – capacity and operational improvements coordinated with WI improvements	One RCRA site was identified within the project buffer area. Given the corridor's primarily developed setting and the nature of the proposed capacity and operational improvements, significant environmental impacts are not anticipated. Future project development should consider any potential contamination, permitting, remediation, or other environmental considerations associated with the RCRA site.
35	**Willowbrook Road (Gardner to Bastian)** – rehabilitation including pavement and shoulder improvements	Approximately 1.05 acres of cropland were identified within the project buffer area. As the project consists primarily of roadway rehabilitation and shoulder improvements within an existing corridor, environmental concerns are expected to be limited. Future project development should evaluate any potential agricultural land impacts and applicable farmland protection requirements, as well as stormwater runoff.
27	**Gardner Street (IL 75) Park Avenue intersection** – geometric improvements to improve truck movements and safety	Potential impacts include approximately 119.6 acres of 100-year floodplain, 1.95 acres of freshwater wetland, 5.86 acres of shrub wetland, 0.16 acres of wetland pond, and three RCRA sites within the project buffer area. However, because the project consists of geometric improvements at an existing intersection, significant impacts to these resources are not anticipated. As the project advances, additional evaluation should focus on opportunities to avoid and minimize impacts to nearby floodplains and wetlands, address stormwater management and permitting requirements, and assess any environmental considerations associated with the identified RCRA sites. Additionally, SLATS is planning to conduct a future transportation and land use study within the vicinity of this corridor. The study will provide a more detailed assessment of transportation needs, land use patterns, and environmental constraints, helping to refine future project concepts, identify opportunities to avoid or minimize environmental impacts, and support future LRTP updates.
30	**Gardner Street (IL 75) Manchester Road intersection** – realignment with geometric, safety, and operational improvements	Approximately 32.6 acres of cropland were identified within the project buffer area. However, because the project consists of intersection realignment and geometric, safety, and operational improvements at an existing intersection, significant impacts to agricultural land are not anticipated. Future project development should evaluate any potential farmland conversion and coordinate with applicable agricultural resource protection requirements. Additionally, SLATS is planning a future transportation and land use study within this corridor that will provide a more detailed assessment of existing and future transportation needs, land use patterns, and environmental constraints. The study will help inform future project development, refine design concepts, identify opportunities to avoid or minimize environmental impacts, and support future LRTP updates.
37	**Prairie Hill Road (IL-251 intersection)** – operational improvements; potential roundabout	Potential impacts include approximately 31.3 acres of 100-year floodplain, 4.23 acres of shrub wetland, 1.27 acres of wetland pond, and 21.5 acres of cropland within the project buffer area. However, because the project consists of operational improvements at an existing intersection, significant impacts to these resources are not anticipated. Future project development should evaluate opportunities to avoid and minimize impacts to nearby floodplains and wetlands, address stormwater management and permitting requirements, and consider potential effects on agricultural land.
38	**Prairie Hill Road (N. 2nd Street (IL 251) intersection)** – geometric improvements and access management	Approximately 26.9 acres of cropland were identified within the project buffer area. However, given the localized nature of the proposed geometric and access management improvements at an existing intersection, significant impacts to agricultural land are not anticipated. Environmental concerns are expected to be limited, although future project development should evaluate any potential impacts to agricultural land and coordinate with applicable farmland protection requirements.

NOTES 1) Project 26 is a planned reconstruction of IL 75 (IL 2 to IL 251) by IDOT in FY 2036.

Source: AECOM (2026)

The fiscally constrained projects included in the 2055 LRTP are not intended to address all identified environmental issues directly. Rather, the LRTP provides a framework for considering environmental stewardship, resource conservation, sustainability, hazard mitigation, and infrastructure resilience during future planning, project development, design, engineering, construction, operations, and maintenance activities. As projects advance, additional environmental analysis and coordination will occur to identify opportunities to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts to natural, cultural, and community resources. Continued coordination with federal, state, regional, and local agencies, resource agencies, local governments, and other stakeholders will help ensure that future transportation investments support a safe, reliable, efficient, and environmentally responsible transportation system throughout the SLATS MPA.

Environmental Mitigation Planning Guidance

The identification of a potential environmental consideration does not mean that a project cannot advance for further study or ultimately be implemented. Rather, the environmental mitigation analysis helps identify resources that may warrant additional evaluation as projects move through planning, environmental review, design, construction, operations, and maintenance activities.

From a planning perspective, the projects included in the 2055 LRTP should be evaluated in greater detail as they advance through subsequent stages of project development to determine the presence and extent of potential environmental impacts. The environmental mitigation analysis provides a framework for coordinating with appropriate local, state, and federal agencies to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to environmental resources while supporting the implementation of transportation improvements.

The guidelines for evaluating potential impacts to sensitive environmental resources follow a three-step approach commonly referred to as mitigation sequencing. The first step is to avoid impacts to environmental resources whenever practicable. If impacts cannot be entirely avoided, the second step is to minimize impacts to the greatest extent possible through project planning, design, construction, and operational measures. The third step is to provide compensatory mitigation for unavoidable impacts, where appropriate and required by regulatory agencies.

Regardless of project type or environmental resource, these guidelines should be considered during all phases of transportation project development. While SLATS does not implement transportation projects directly, these planning-level best practices are provided to help guide future project sponsors and implementing agencies in protecting environmental resources, supporting community values, and promoting sustainable transportation investments throughout the region. Consistent with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), transportation planning and project development should also consider system resilience, environmental sustainability, asset management, and long-term infrastructure performance.

Planning & Design Guidelines

The following planning and design guidelines are intended to help project sponsors identify, avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential environmental impacts early in project development. Applying these considerations during planning and design can improve project outcomes, support environmental stewardship, and reduce potential permitting and implementation challenges.

- Utilize Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) throughout the planning and project development process. CSS considers the physical, environmental, visual, economic, and social context of a project while encouraging collaboration among stakeholders to develop transportation improvements that fit community needs.
- Identify the area of potential environmental influence associated with each transportation project, including the project footprint and adjacent areas that may be affected directly or indirectly.
- Continue to update environmental resource inventories and mapping to ensure planning decisions are informed by the best available information regarding natural, cultural, historic, and community resources.
- Coordinate transportation projects with applicable county hazard mitigation plans, comprehensive plans, watershed management plans, bicycle and pedestrian plans, parks and recreation plans, and other relevant local and regional planning efforts.
- Engage resource agencies, local governments, property owners, and other stakeholders early in project development to identify environmental concerns, opportunities, and potential mitigation strategies.
- Avoid impacts to environmental resources whenever practicable through project planning, alignment selection, design modifications, and operational improvements.
- Incorporate stormwater management, erosion control, and water quality protection measures into project planning and design. Where appropriate, consider green infrastructure, nature-based solutions, and other practices that can improve long-term system performance while reducing environmental impacts.
- Consider current and future environmental conditions, including flooding, severe weather events, and other risks that may affect transportation infrastructure throughout its service life.
- Preserve and enhance natural environmental features such as wetlands, floodplains, riparian corridors, native vegetation, open space, and other environmentally sensitive resources where feasible.
- Upgrade pedestrian facilities and other transportation infrastructure to meet current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements when projects trigger such improvements.
- Consider opportunities to improve transportation system reliability, redundancy, and resilience by protecting critical transportation assets and maintaining alternative travel routes during emergencies, maintenance activities, or weather-related disruptions.
- Incorporate principles of environmental stewardship, sustainability, and infrastructure resilience consistent with the goals and objectives of the IIJA.

Construction & Maintenance Guidelines

The following construction and maintenance guidelines provide best practices for protecting environmental resources during project implementation and ongoing operations. Incorporating these measures can help minimize temporary and long-term impacts to natural, cultural, and community resources while supporting sustainable infrastructure management.

- Include all special requirements related to environmentally sensitive resources in plans, specifications, and estimates used by contractors and subcontractors. Clearly identify activities that are not appropriate within or adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas.

- Minimize the size of construction and staging areas and establish clearly marked boundaries using fencing, flagging, or other measures to prevent encroachment into sensitive resources.
- Use the least intrusive construction materials and techniques practicable.
- Avoid disturbing the construction site more than necessary by::
  - Protecting existing vegetation and natural habitat. If disturbance is unavoidable, restore disturbed areas with appropriate native species as soon as feasible.
  - Implementing sediment and erosion control measures throughout construction activities.
  - Avoiding the stockpiling of materials within environmentally sensitive areas.
  - Protecting water quality through runoff controls, street sweeping, stormwater management practices, and proper management of construction debris.
  - Protecting cultural, archaeological, and historic resources.
  - Minimizing construction-related noise and vibration where practical.
  - Providing adequate solid waste management and disposal practices.
  - Conducting on-site monitoring, as appropriate, to ensure environmental protection measures are functioning as intended.
  - Maintaining equipment in good working condition and avoiding fueling, storage, or maintenance activities near environmentally sensitive resources whenever possible.
  - Reducing land disturbance through efficient organization and sequencing of construction activities.
- Incorporate asset resilience, lifecycle cost considerations, and long-term maintenance needs into construction and maintenance decisions.
- Utilize sustainable construction practices, including recycling materials, reducing waste generation, conserving resources, and minimizing unnecessary environmental disturbance whenever practicable.

Agency, Tribal, and Planning Coordination

Consistent with federal transportation planning requirements, SLATS coordinated with local, regional, state, and federal partners during development of the 2055 LRTP and the associated environmental mitigation analysis. The analysis was informed by available environmental data, resource mapping, and relevant local and regional planning documents reviewed during development of the LRTP, including comprehensive plans, land resource management plans, hazard mitigation plans, agricultural and farmland preservation plans, transportation plans, and other planning efforts (some of which are summarized in Appendix E – Relevant Plans Review). These documents provide important context regarding natural resources, land use patterns, community development objectives, agricultural preservation priorities, transportation needs, and environmental stewardship considerations within the SLATS MPA.

In particular, the review of local and regional planning documents helped identify areas of environmental sensitivity, planned growth and development patterns, farmland preservation priorities, flood-prone areas, parks and open space resources, and other environmental considerations that may influence future transportation investments. This information was used in conjunction with environmental resource mapping and project location data to support the planning-level environmental screening conducted for the fiscally constrained projects included in the 2055 LRTP.

To further support the environmental mitigation analysis, the draft LRTP, including the environmental mitigation findings, was distributed to appropriate agencies and stakeholders for review and comment prior to the plan adoption. This process provided an opportunity for agencies to review the proposed transportation improvements, identify environmental concerns, and provide input regarding environmental

resources that may warrant additional consideration as projects advance into future phases of project development and environmental review.

SLATS also engaged the Ho-Chunk Nation during development of the LRTP to better understand transportation needs and perspectives relevant to the region. While no tribal lands are located within the SLATS MPA, continued coordination with tribal governments, environmental resource agencies, transportation agencies, local governments, and other stakeholders will help ensure that environmental, cultural, community, and transportation considerations are appropriately considered as projects advance through future stages of planning, environmental review, and implementation.

Environmental Mitigation Conclusion

Based on the planning-level environmental screening conducted for the fiscally constrained projects included in the SLATS 2055 LRTP, no fatal environmental flaws were identified that would preclude project implementation. While several projects were found to be located near environmentally sensitive resources, the majority of the identified considerations are expected to be manageable through avoidance, minimization, mitigation, and coordination with appropriate resource agencies during subsequent phases of project development.

Environmental screening indicates that most fiscally constrained projects are located within existing or developed transportation corridors and primarily consist of intersection improvements, operational enhancements, roadway rehabilitation projects, and other improvements with relatively limited physical footprints. As a result, significant environmental impacts are generally not anticipated for most projects. Identified environmental resources include agricultural lands, floodplains, wetlands, parkland, cultural resources, and environmental remediation sites, including RCRA and Superfund locations. Where such resources occur within project screening areas, additional evaluation during project development will be necessary to determine whether impacts can be avoided or minimized through project design refinements.

The projects with the greatest potential for environmental sensitivity are the BT Extension Phase 1 and Phase 2 corridors, which traverse less developed areas containing agricultural lands, drainage corridors, wetlands, and floodplain resources. As these projects advance, more extensive environmental review, agency coordination, and engineering analysis may be necessary to fully evaluate environmental constraints and identify appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation strategies. Additional study may also be warranted for projects located near significant floodplain, wetland, parkland, cultural, or environmental remediation resources.

Consistent with the goals of the SLATS 2055 LRTP, transportation investments will continue to support multimodal mobility, Complete Streets principles, transportation system resiliency, and environmental stewardship. Continued implementation of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements can provide environmental benefits by expanding transportation options, improving connectivity, supporting healthier lifestyles, and enhancing overall quality of life for residents throughout the region.

Overall, the environmental mitigation analysis indicates that the fiscally constrained projects can reasonably advance for further study and implementation, provided that appropriate environmental review, agency coordination, and mitigation planning occur during future project development. SLATS will continue to coordinate with federal, state, regional, and local partners to ensure that future transportation investments support an efficient, safe, resilient, and environmentally responsible transportation system.

Summary of Comments Received

Two comments were received during the environmental consultation review period between September 10th and September 25th. A screenshot of the emails is provided below, followed by the project team's response to each email received.

Comment From Winnebago County Soil & Water Conservation District

RE: Request for Review and Comment: Draft SLATS 2055 LRTP and Environmental Mitigation Analysis

Summarize | Reply | Reply All | Forward

danthonyswcd@comcast.net
To Meyer, Jim; Nee, T.J.
Cc eknudsonswcd@gmail.com; 'Jackson Sitter'
Thu 9/17/2026 2:55 PM

You forwarded this message on 9/17/2026 3:11 PM.

Jim,

Thank you for providing this information for our review. The document looks very thorough. Thank you for taking into consideration of the sensitive areas with the MPO, including the Rock River, Turtle Creek and Dry Run Creek river corridors.

The only other consideration is to incorporate anything in our Winnebago County Greenways plan - Greenways Plan. The Greenways plan is currently being updated, with a targeted completion date of later this fall. The plan encourages the incorporation or extension of multi-use paths along populated road corridors, as well as along river corridors. I have copied Jackson Sitter who is working on that plan.

I have also copied Emma Knudson, who is taking over the technical work for the District in this capacity, as I am stepping down from the District later this fall.

Let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Dennis Anthony
Executive Director/Soil Scientist, CPSC, CPESC
Winnebago County Soil & Water Conservation District
4833 Owen Center Road, Rockford, IL 61101
Phone: 815-965-2392, x3247
www.winnebagoswcd.org
"Conserving Our Land Today for Tomorrow"

"Ethical behavior is doing the right thing when no one else is watching" – Aldo Leopold

Project Team Response to Comment

RE: Request for Review and Comment: Draft SLATS 2055 LRTP and Environmental Mitigation Analysis

Reply | Reply All | Forward

Meyer, Jim
To 'danthonyswcd@comcast.net'; Nee, T.J.
Cc eknudsonswcd@gmail.com; 'Jackson Sitter'
Mon 9/21/2026 8:05 AM

Hi Dennis,

Thank you for your review and comments. We appreciate the recommendation regarding the Winnebago County Greenways Plan and the additional information on the ongoing update effort.

As part of our review, we confirmed that the recommendations contained in the SLATS Active Transportation Plan, adopted by the SLATS Policy Board on May 4, 2026, as well as the goals and objectives of the 2055 LRTP, are consistent with the goals and objectives of the current Greenways Plan. In particular, the plans share a common emphasis on expanding regional trail connectivity, improving access along key transportation and river corridors, and connecting communities to recreational opportunities and natural resource assets.

The SLATS Active Transportation Plan serves as the region's primary planning document for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, identifying the recommended active transportation network, priority projects, and supporting policies and programs. The 2055 LRTP incorporates and builds upon these recommendations as part of the region's broader multimodal transportation vision, ensuring that active transportation investments are fully integrated into SLATS long-range transportation planning efforts.

In addition, as transportation projects advance through planning, design, and implementation over the life of the LRTP, the Greenways Plan will continue to serve as an important reference to help inform future planning efforts, identify opportunities to enhance trail and greenway connections, and maintain consistency with regional conservation, land use, recreation, and active transportation objectives.

Thank you again for the input. We look forward to reviewing the updated Greenways Plan when it is completed later this year.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or additional comments.

Thank you.
Jim

Jim Meyer, AICP
AECOM

Comment From U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Illinois-Iowa Field Office)

Re: Request for Review and Comment: Draft SLATS 2055 LRTP and Environmental Mitigation Analysis

Summarize

OA Oldfield, Anna M <anna_oldfield@fws.gov>
To Meyer, Jim

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Fri 9/25/2026 12:12 PM

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Good afternoon,

Thank you very much for the opportunity to review the draft SLATS 2055 Long Range Transportation Plan and the accompanying Environmental Mitigation Analysis. We appreciate all the work your team has put into incorporating environmental considerations throughout the planning process.

Moving forward, our office will coordinate closely with the Federal Highway Administration, the state Departments of Transportations and any local project sponsors as individual projects advance. This coordination will include reviewing projects for potential effects on federally listed species, as well as designated critical habitats, consistent with our responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act.

We look forward to continued collaboration and appreciate the proactive engagement with environmental resources demonstrated in the draft plan.

Best regards,
Anna

Anna Oldfield
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Illinois - Iowa Field Office
1511 47th Avenue
Moline, IL 61265
309-315-9141

Project Team Response to Comment

RE: Request for Review and Comment: Draft SLATS 2055 LRTP and Environmental Mitigation Analysis

Meyer, Jim
To 'Oldfield, Anna M'
Cc Nee, T.J.

Reply | Reply All | Forward

Thu 10/1/2026 9:12 AM

Good morning Anna,

Thank you for your review of the draft SLATS 2055 LRTP and Environmental Mitigation Analysis, and for providing these comments. We appreciate the on-going coordination and partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service throughout the transportation planning process.

SLATS and its planning partners are committed to coordinating with the appropriate environmental resource agencies, regulatory agencies, and stakeholders as future transportation studies are conducted and as projects identified in the LRTP advance toward implementation. This coordination will support ongoing efforts to identify and consider potential environmental impacts, including effects on federally listed species and critical habitats, during subsequent project development and environmental review processes.

We appreciate your participation in this effort and look forward to continued collaboration in the future.

Thank you,
Jim

Jim Meyer, AICP
AECOM
Senior Transportation Project Manager
1-612-802-3725
jim.meyer@aecom.com

Supporting Documents

Based on the planning-level environmental screening conducted for the fiscally constrained projects included in the SLATS 2055 LRTP, no fatal environmental flaws were identified that would preclude project implementation. The following pages contain the email sent to the environmental, or related agencies, followed by a list of agencies who were contacted.

Email Sent to Environmental Agencies on September 10, 2026

Request for Review and Comment: Draft SLATS 2055 LRTP and Environmental Mitigation Analysis

Summarize

Meyer, Jim
To Meyer, Jim; Nee, T.J.

Reply | Reply All | Forward

Thu 9/10/2026 2:14 PM

SLATS 2055 LRTP Appendix I_Environmental Mitigation Analysis.pdf
1 MB

Good afternoon,

On behalf of the **Stateline Area Transportation Study (SLATS)**, the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Beloit, Wisconsin-South Beloit, Illinois Urbanized Area, I am pleased to share the draft SLATS 2055 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for your review. Following extensive technical analysis, public and stakeholder outreach, and project evaluation, the draft plan is now available for review. Once adopted, the LRTP will guide transportation investments and policies within the Stateline metropolitan planning area through 2055.

As part of the LRTP development process, SLATS prepared an **Environmental Mitigation Analysis** to identify environmentally sensitive resources that may be located within or near the fiscally constrained transportation projects included in the plan. Consistent with federal transportation planning requirements, this analysis is intended to support the early consideration of environmental resources and potential mitigation opportunities during transportation planning. The analysis is not intended to serve as a project-level environmental review or impact determination.

The draft LRTP is available at www.slatslrtp.com. A copy of the Environmental Mitigation Analysis is also attached for your convenience. Please feel free to forward this email to other members of your organization who may have an interest in reviewing these materials.

SLATS respectfully requests your review of these materials and welcomes any comments regarding environmental resources, mitigation opportunities, or relevant planning efforts that should be considered as projects advance.

Please submit any comments by **Friday, September 25, 2026** by replying to this email. Comments received by this date will be considered prior to presentation of the final plan to the SLATS Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Board for adoption.

In addition, SLATS will host two public open houses on September 15, 2026:

- South Beloit City Hall: 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Beloit City Hall: 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

You are welcome to attend either meeting to discuss any questions or comments with the project team.

Thank you for your time and assistance. We appreciate any feedback you may have.

Sincerely,

Jim Meyer, AICP
AECOM
Senior Transportation Project Manager
1-612-802-3725
jim.meyer@aecom.com

Agencies Contacted During the LRTP

- U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Wisconsin State Historical Society
- Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service
- IDOT
- Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
- Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources

- Illinois Department of Agriculture
- Illinois State Archaeological Survey
- Rock County Land Conservation
- Winnebago County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
- Natural Land Institute
- Nature at the Confluence
- Welty Environmental Center
- WisDOT
- Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin
- Forest County Potawatomi Community of Wisconsin
- Ho-Chunk Nation
- Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin
- Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
- Prairie Island Indian Community
- Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin
- Sac and Fox Nation of Oklahoma
- Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri
- Sac and Fox of the Mississippi in Iowa
- Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
- Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
- Citizen Potawatomi Nation
- Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians
- Potawatomi Nation-Hannahville Indian Community