2055 Long Range Transportation Plan

Final Report

Adopted September 29, 2026

slats
STATELINE AREA
TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Prepared for:

Stateline Area Transportation Study

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Final Report adopted by the SLATS Policy Board:

September 29, 2026

slats
STATELINE AREA
TRANSPORTATION STUDY

SLATS RESOLUTION 2026-9

APPROVAL OF THE SLATS 2055 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)

WHEREAS, the Stateline Area Transportation Study is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Beloit (WI-IL) Urbanized Area, and the Policy Board has the responsibility to direct, coordinate, and administer the transportation planning process in the urbanized area; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303-5306, have determined the necessity for MPOs to adopt a minimum of a 20-year multimodal Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) every 5 years; and

WHEREAS, SLATS has completed the 2055 LRTP dated September 29, 2026 in accordance with 23 CFR 450.324 to update the SLATS LRTP approved October 4, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the SLATS LRTP has been presented to the general public and all transportation stakeholders in accordance with the SLATS Public Involvement Plan; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with 23 CFR 450.336(a) SLATS hereby certifies that the metropolitan transportation planning process is addressing major issues facing the metropolitan planning area and is being conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements of:

§ 450.336 Self-certifications and Federal certifications.
(a) For all MPAs, concurrent with the submittal of the entire proposed TIP to the FHWA and the FTA as part of the STIP approval, the State and the MPO shall certify at least every 4 years that the metropolitan transportation planning process is being carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements including:

(1) 23 U.S.C. 134, 49 U.S.C. 5303, and this subpart;
(2) In nonattainment and maintenance areas, sections 174 and 176(c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7504, 7506(c) and (d)) and 40 CFR part 93;
(3) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d-1) and 49 CFR part 21;
(4) 49 U.S.C. 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity;
(5) Section 11101(e) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law No: 117-58) and 49 CFR part 26 regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in DOT funded projects.
(6) 23 CFR part 230, regarding the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal and Federal-aid highway construction contracts;
(7) The provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*) and 49 CFR parts 27, 37, and 38;
(8) The Older Americans Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101), prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
(9) Section 324 of title 23 U.S.C. regarding the prohibition of discrimination based on gender; and
(10) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) and 49 CFR part 27 regarding discrimination against individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the SLATS Policy Board has reviewed the LRTP with regard to Federal fiscal constraint requirements and assure, to the best of their knowledge, that:

1. All cost estimates for all projects programmed in this LRTP are reasonably accurate based on accepted construction cost estimating practices, and where appropriate, have considered inflation for projects in the out years;
2. The States have assured that all Federal funds paired with projects in this LRTP are available or reasonably expected to be available for those projects; and
3. Projects for which funding is not available are conspicuously identified as illustrative projects.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Policy Board of the Stateline Area Transportation Study approves the **SLATS 2055 Long Range Transportation Plan** and directs the staff to submit this document to the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration and the Wisconsin and Illinois Departments of Transportation.

Approved this 29th Day of September 2026

Diane M. Greenlee
Chair, SLATS Policy Board

ATTESTS:

Director of Planning and Building Services

About SLATS

The Stateline Area Transportation Study (SLATS), established in 1974, is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Beloit Urbanized Area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. The MPO is governed by a Policy Board consisting of elected officials or appointed representatives from local governments in Wisconsin and Illinois, along with representatives from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) comprised of local public works officials, engineers, planners, administrators, and transit representatives provides technical guidance to the Policy Board on regional transportation issues. Additional non-voting TAC members include representatives from federal and state transportation agencies, neighboring MPOs, and non-member communities located within the SLATS Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). The TAC reviews and recommends plans, policies, and programs to the Policy Board, which retains final decision-making authority. **Tables 1** and **2** summarize the membership of the Policy Board and TAC.

The City of Beloit serves as the lead agency for SLATS, with staff support provided by the City of Beloit Engineering Division. SLATS is funded through federal and state transportation planning funds, along with local contributions from participating member governments.

TABLE 1. SLATS POLICY BOARD *

Wisconsin Members	Illinois Members
• City of Beloit Council President	• Rockton Township Chair
• City of South Beloit Mayor	• Rock County Board Chair
• Town of Beloit Chair	• Village of Rockton President
• Town of Turtle Chair	• Winnebago County Board Chair
• Southwest Region Planning Chief (WisDOT)	• Region 2 Engineer (IDOT)

* Policy Board members may participate personally or designate a representative to serve as the member's voting representative.

TABLE 2. SLATS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Voting Members	Other Members (Non-Voting)
• City of Beloit Public Works Department	• Southwest Region Representative(WisDOT)
• City of Beloit Engineering Division	• District 2 Designated Representative (IDOT)
• City of Beloit Community Development Dept.	• FHWA, Wisconsin Representative
• Winnebago County Planning Department	• FHWA, Illinois Representative
• Winnebago County Highway Department	• FTA Region 5, Chicago Representative
• Rock County Planning Department	• Central Planning Office (WisDOT)
• Rock County Highway Department	• Bureau of Urban Program Planning (IDOT)
• Town of Beloit*	• Janesville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
• Town of Turtle*	• Region 1 Planning Council (Rockford MPO)
• Village of Rockton*	• Village of Roscoe
• City of South Beloit*	• Roscoe Township
• Beloit Transit System (BTS)	• Town of Rock
• Stateline Mass Transit District (SMTD)	

* May include designated public works, engineering, highway, planning, or similar representative.

Acronyms

AADT	Average Annual Daily Traffic
ACS	American Community Survey
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ATP	Active Transportation Plan
BJE	Beloit-Janesville Express
BLTS	Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress
BTC	Blackhawk Technical College
BTS	Beloit Transit System
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CTPP	Census Transportation Planning Products
DDI	Diverging Diamond Interchange
DOA	Wisconsin Department of Administration
E-E	External-External (referring to where a trip begins and ends)
E-I	External-Internal (referring to where a trip begins and ends)
EMSI	Economic Modeling Specialists International
ETC	ETC Institute
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GBEDC	Greater Beloit Economic Development Corporation
HSIP	Highway Safety Improvement Program
I-E	Internal-External (referring to where a trip begins and ends)
I-I	Internal-Internal (referring to where a trip begins and ends)
IDOT	Illinois Department of Transportation
IIJ	Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
JT	Janesville Transit System
JVL	Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport
LEHD	Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
LODES	Longitudinal Origin-Destination Employment Statistics
LOS	Level of Service
LRTP	Long Range Transportation Plan
MDW	Chicago Midway International Airport
MKE	Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport
MPA	Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MSN	Dane County Regional Airport
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan
ORD	Chicago O'Hare International Airport
PDO	Property Damage Only
PEP	Public Engagement Plan
RCT	Rock County Transit
RFD	Chicago Rockford International Airport
RMTD	Rockford Mass Transit District
SLATS	Stateline Area Transportation Study
SMTD	Stateline Mass Transit District
SS4A	Safe Streets and Roads for All
STP-U	Surface Transportation Program – Urban
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TDP	Transit Development Plan
TIF	Tax Increment Financing
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TOD	Transit-Oriented Development
TWLTL	Two-Way Left-Turn Lane
UMO	Universal Mobility On Demand (fare payment platform)
UP-NW	Union Pacific Northwest Line
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
V/C	Volume-to-Capacity Ratio
WisDOT	Wisconsin Department of Transportation
WisGo	Fare payment system used by BTS
YOE	Year of Expenditure

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Chapter 1. Overview

The Stateline Area Transportation Study (SLATS) 2055 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) establishes a shared vision for the future of the transportation system within the SLATS Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) through 2055. As the region's primary transportation policy document, the plan identifies long-term needs, priorities, and investment strategies to support the safe, efficient, reliable, and connected movement of people and goods.



As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Beloit Urbanized Area, SLATS coordinates multimodal transportation planning in partnership with local governments, state transportation agencies, transit providers, and other stakeholders. Federal law requires MPOs to maintain a fiscally constrained long-range transportation plan with a minimum 20-year horizon that addresses all transportation modes, including roadways, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, freight, and passenger rail.

The 2055 LRTP evaluates existing conditions, future needs and trends, and anticipated revenues to guide transportation investments across the region. The plan provides a framework for decision-making that supports economic vitality, mobility, safety, system preservation, environmental stewardship, community development, and quality of life throughout the SLATS MPA.

SLATS Metropolitan Planning Area

The SLATS MPA includes communities in both Wisconsin and Illinois within the Beloit Urbanized Area. As a bi-state planning area, the MPA includes portions of Rock County, Wisconsin, and Winnebago County, Illinois. **Figure 1** displays the location of the SLATS MPA, which is situated between the Janesville MPA to the north and the Rockford MPA to the south. The Madison metropolitan area is located approximately 50 miles northwest of the SLATS MPA, while the Milwaukee and Chicago metropolitan areas are located to the east.

The SLATS MPA includes all or portions of several local units of government. In Wisconsin, these include the City of Beloit, the Town of Beloit, the Town of Turtle, and a small portion of the Town of Rock. In Illinois, the MPA includes all or portions of the City of South Beloit, the Village of Rockton, the Village of Roscoe, Rockton Township, and Roscoe Township. Only a small portion of the Village of Roscoe is located within the SLATS MPA, as the majority of the village lies within the Rockford Urbanized Area. **Figure 2** provides an overview of the municipalities and jurisdictions located within the SLATS MPA.

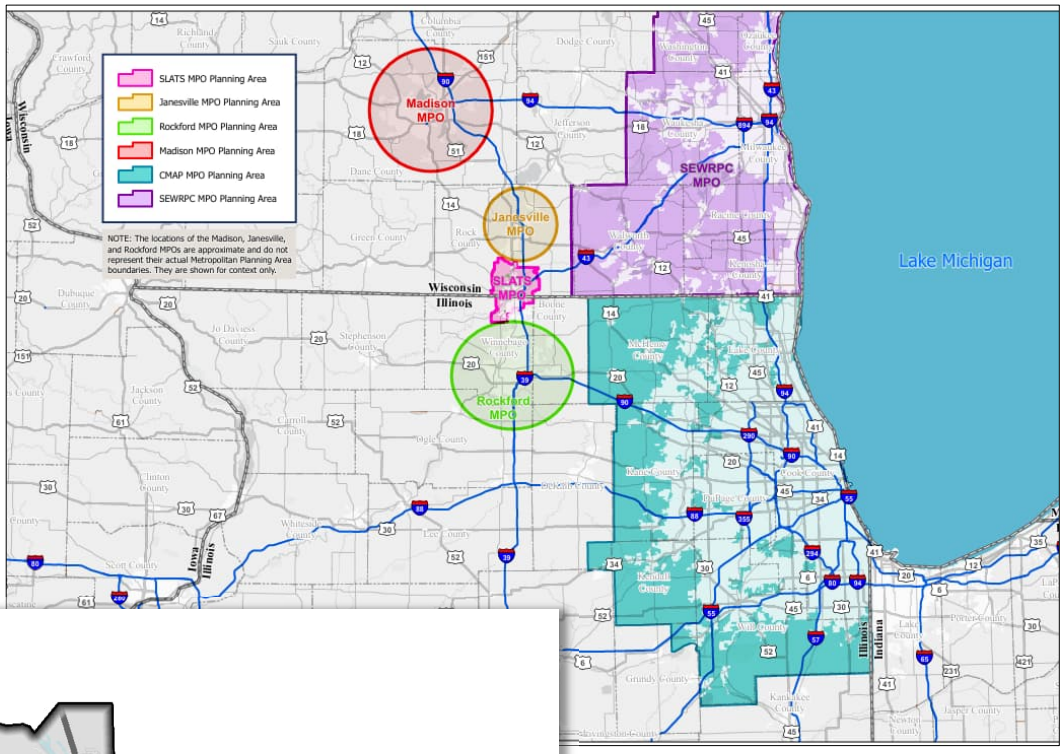


FIGURE 1. SLATS MPA – REGIONAL CONTEXT

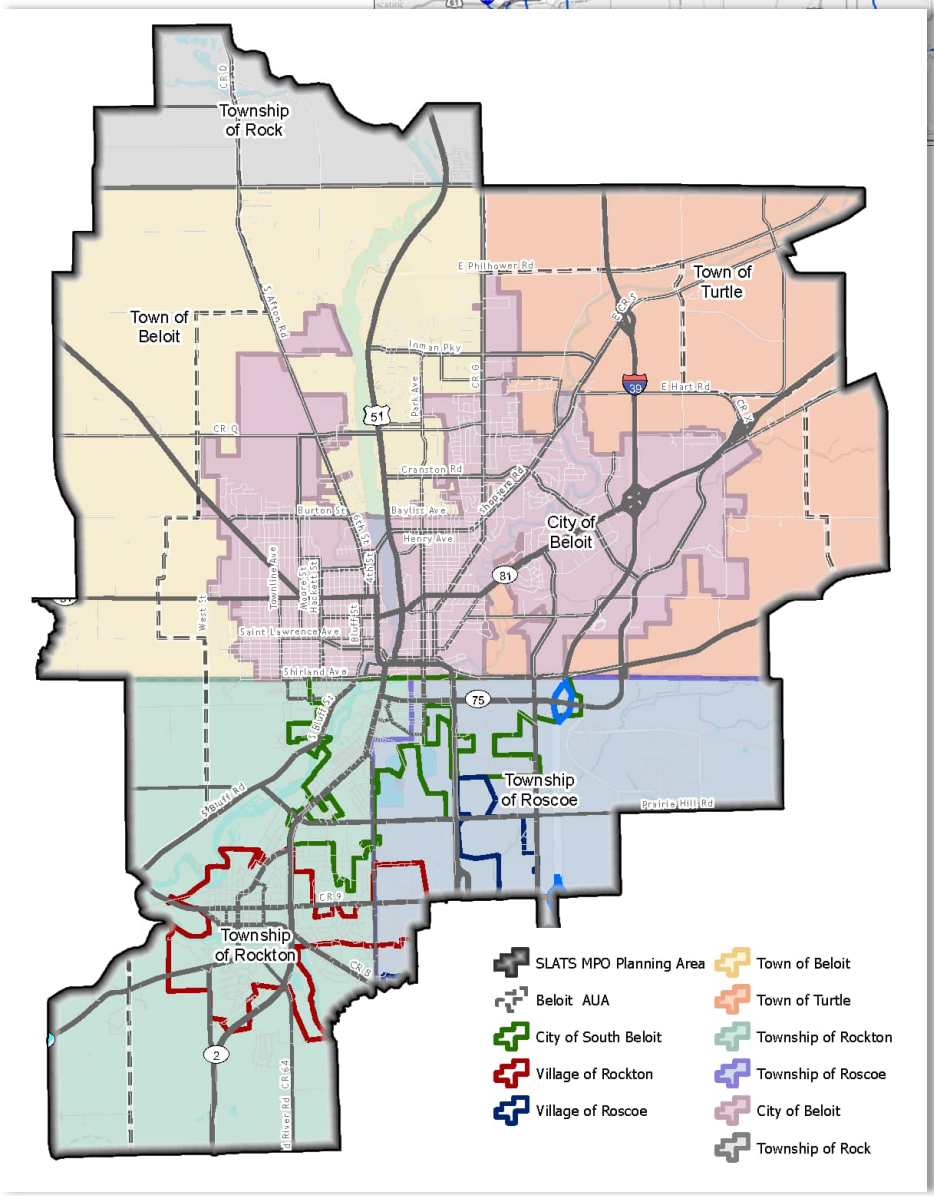


FIGURE 2. SLATS MPA – MUNICIPALITIES / JURISDICTIONS

Federal Planning Requirements

SLATS serves as the federally designated MPO for the Beloit Urbanized Area. MPOs are responsible for carrying out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3-C) transportation planning process (see **Figure 3**) within urbanized areas with populations of 50,000 or more. In partnership with local governments, state transportation agencies, transit providers, and other stakeholders, SLATS coordinates regional transportation planning across all modes of travel, including roadways, public transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, freight transportation, and passenger rail.

FIGURE 3. OVERVIEW OF THE 3-C PLANNING PROCESS



Source: Adapted from FHWA and FTA Metropolitan Transportation Planning Guidance.

One of SLATS primary responsibilities is the development and maintenance of the LRTP, referred to in federal regulations as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Federal regulations require MPOs to prepare and periodically update a fiscally constrained transportation plan with a minimum 20-year planning horizon. The LRTP evaluates existing transportation conditions, forecasts future needs, identifies reasonably anticipated revenues, and establishes investment priorities that support the region's long-term vision for mobility, accessibility, economic vitality, and quality of life.

The metropolitan transportation planning process is governed by federal statutes and regulations, including 23 U.S.C. §134, 49 U.S.C. §5303, and 23 CFR Part 450, and is supported by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Together, these requirements establish a performance-based, multimodal planning framework that emphasizes coordination among federal, state, regional, and local partners while addressing the transportation needs of all users.

Planning Factors Guiding the SLATS 2055 LRTP

Federal law requires MPOs to consider ten planning factors when developing long-range transportation plans. These factors provide a national framework for evaluating transportation needs, identifying investment priorities, and supporting a safe, efficient, and multimodal transportation system.

The ten planning factors encompass a broad range of transportation considerations, including economic vitality, safety, security, accessibility, environmental stewardship, system preservation, resiliency, tourism, and the movement of people and freight. Collectively, they help ensure transportation planning decisions address both current needs and long-term regional priorities.

The SLATS 2055 LRTP was developed with consideration of these federal planning factors. As discussed in **Chapter 3: Goals and Objectives**, the plan's goals and objectives were established to address the transportation needs and priorities of the SLATS MPA while aligning with federal planning requirements. The ten planning factors informed the development of the LRTP's goals, objectives, performance measures, and investment strategies and are reflected throughout the plan.

Figure 4 summarizes the ten federal metropolitan transportation planning factors that guided the development of the SLATS 2055 LRTP and serve as a foundation for transportation decision-making throughout the plan horizon. Compliance with these federal planning requirements is essential to maintaining eligibility for federal transportation funding and ensuring transportation projects within the SLATS MPA can advance through the planning and programming process.

FIGURE 4. FEDERAL METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING REQUIREMENTS



Source: 23 U.S. Code § 134 [(h) (1) (A - J)] – Metropolitan Transportation Planning.

LRTP Framework and Organization

The 2055 SLATS LRTP is organized to summarize how public input, technical analysis, and regional priorities collectively shape the transportation investment strategies for the SLATS MPA. Each chapter builds upon the findings of previous chapters, progressing from public and stakeholder engagement and goal setting to system evaluation, needs identification, and ultimately the development of recommended transportation investments. The LRTP consists of the following chapters:

Technical Foundation of the 2055 LRTP

The SLATS 2055 LRTP is supported by a series of appendices and modal plans that document the analyses, public and stakeholder input, and findings used to develop the plan's recommendations. Modal plans, including the **Transit Development Plan**, **Active Transportation Plan**, and **passenger rail studies**, serve as the primary source of recommendations for transit, active transportation, and passenger rail improvements.

Supporting Documents and Appendices

- Public Engagement Plan
- 2026 SLATS Transportation Survey Findings Report
- Appendix A: Public Involvement Summary
- Appendix B: Goals and Objectives
- Appendix C: Demographic Trends
- Appendix D: Existing and Future Conditions
- Appendix E: Plan Review
- Appendix F: Fiscal Constraint Analysis
- Appendix G: Transportation System Performance Report
- Appendix H: Community Impact Analysis
- Appendix I: Environmental Mitigation Analysis
- Appendix J: Regional Truck Analysis

- **Chapter 2: Public and Stakeholder Engagement** documents the public involvement process and summarizes the transportation issues, priorities, and opportunities identified by residents, transportation providers, partner agencies, and other stakeholders. This input serves as a foundation for the LRTP and helps inform and validate the technical analyses and recommendations.

- **Chapter 3: Goals and Objectives** establish the framework for the LRTP by defining the regional vision and the goals and objectives that reflect community priorities and guide transportation planning and investment decisions through 2055

- **Chapter 4: Demographic and Socioeconomic Conditions** examines population, employment, land use, and other key demographic characteristics that influence travel behavior and transportation needs throughout the region.

- **Chapter 5: Growth Trends and Future Forecasts** reviews recent development patterns and documents projected population and employment changes through 2055 to understand future transportation demand.

- **Chapter 6: Existing and Future Transportation Conditions** evaluates the multimodal transportation system, including roadway, public transportation, active transportation, freight, aviation, and passenger rail networks.

- **Chapter 7: Transportation Needs and Opportunities** synthesizes public and stakeholder input and technical analysis findings to identify the key regional transportation issues, mobility needs, and opportunities that should be addressed during the planning horizon.

- **Chapter 8: Transportation Investments and Recommendations** presents the universe of transportation projects and strategies identified through recent corridor, modal, and system planning studies, as well as the LRTP analysis process. The chapter concludes with the fiscally constrained project list and an illustrative project list representing longer-term opportunities for future planning, funding, and regional coordination.

Chapter 2. Public and Stakeholder Outreach



Public and stakeholder engagement is an essential component of the transportation planning process. Throughout development of the SLATS 2055 LRTP, SLATS implemented a comprehensive public engagement program designed to provide meaningful opportunities for participation by residents, businesses, community organizations, transportation partners, and other stakeholders. These efforts were conducted in accordance with the SLATS Public Participation Plan and applicable federal requirements, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), to help ensure broad access to the planning process and consideration of community needs across the planning area.

Public and stakeholder input played a critical role in identifying transportation needs, priorities, opportunities, and challenges throughout the SLATS MPA. The input complemented the technical analysis and helped ensure that the LRTP reflects regional values, community priorities, and local transportation needs.

This chapter describes the public and stakeholder engagement activities conducted during development of the 2055 LRTP, including the outreach methods used, participation opportunities provided, and levels of participation achieved. The feedback gathered through this process informed various elements of the plan and is referenced in later chapters, including **Chapter 3**, where it was used to confirm the LRTP goals and objectives, and **Chapter 7**, where it helped inform the identification of regional transportation needs and opportunities. Additional information regarding the public engagement strategy, outreach activities, participation opportunities, and comments received are provided in the **Public Engagement Plan** and **Appendix A (Public Involvement Summary)**.

Public Engagement Overview

SLATS is responsible for facilitating coordination among local governments, state and federal agencies, transportation providers, community organizations, businesses, and residents throughout the planning process. To support development of SLATS 2055 LRTP, a Public Engagement Plan (PEP) was prepared to guide communications, outreach, and stakeholder involvement activities. The PEP provided a framework for engagement that was inclusive, accessible, transparent, and responsive to the diverse communities within the SLATS MPA.

The PEP outlined strategies for informing and engaging stakeholders throughout the planning process and was designed to promote meaningful participation in transportation decision-making. By providing timely opportunities for public involvement and stakeholder consultation, the plan helped incorporate local knowledge, concerns, and priorities into development of the LRTP. Throughout development of

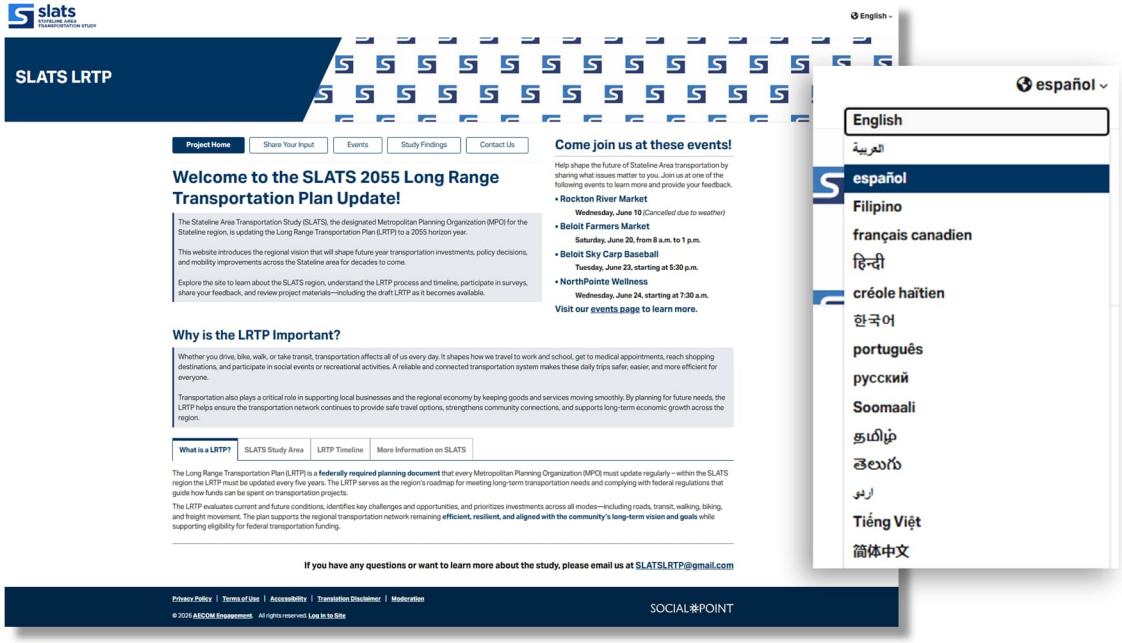
the 2055 LRTP, the PEP guided engagement activities and provided stakeholders and the public with multiple opportunities to participate in the planning process. Building upon SLATS established public participation principles, the PEP was developed to:

- Provide guidance for public and stakeholder engagement that incorporates industry best practices and meets applicable federal and state requirements.
- Identify stakeholders, partner agencies, community organizations, businesses, and residents with an interest in or potential impact from the LRTP.
- Utilize effective communication tools and outreach techniques to make planning information accessible and transparent.
- Create meaningful opportunities for stakeholders and residents to help shape transportation priorities and outcomes.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of engagement activities and adjust approaches as needed throughout the planning process.
- Establish procedures for documenting, considering, and responding to public input, including communicating how feedback influenced the LRTP.

Project Webpage

A project website (**www.SLATSLRTP.com**) was developed and hosted a variety of engagement tools and informational resources. Visitors could access project background information, review study goals and objectives, and view project schedules and key milestones. The website was also used to advertise public engagement opportunities, including pop-up events and other outreach activities, helping to increase awareness and participation throughout the study area. An additional benefit of the website was its built-in language translation capability, making the LRTP engagement process more accessible to a broader audience. This feature supported SLATS' commitment to engaging all community members and was an important component of addressing Limited English Proficiency (LEP) requirements within the planning process. **Figure 5** displays a screenshot of the SLATS LRTP project webpage, along with the languages that were available for translation.

FIGURE 5. SLATS 2055 LRTP WEBPAGE



Self-Select Survey and Interactive Mapping Exercise

In Spring 2026, SLATS conducted a self-select public survey and interactive mapping exercise through the project website to gather additional input from residents, stakeholders, and transportation system users throughout the SLATS MPA.

The self-select survey consisted of two open-ended questions that were the same questions included in the statistically valid public opinion survey. Participants were asked to identify the region's most important transportation issue through 2055 and the single transportation improvement they would most like to see implemented. The survey received nearly 100 responses and provided community members with an additional opportunity to share transportation priorities and perspectives in their own words. The open-ended responses are provided in **Appendix A**.

To supplement the survey, participants were given the opportunity to identify location-specific feedback through an interactive online mapping tool. A total of 154 markers were placed throughout the SLATS MPA, allowing participants to identify transportation issues, opportunities, and areas of concern directly on an interactive map. This exercise provided geographically referenced input that helped document transportation topics and locations important to residents and system users across the bi-state region.

Figure 6 displays the locations of comments submitted through the interactive mapping exercise. Additional information regarding the survey responses and mapping results is provided in **Appendix A**.

Your Voice, Your Transportation System

Nearly 100 open-ended comments were received from the Spring 2026 survey.

47

What do you believe is the most important transportation issue facing the Stateline Area through the year 2055?

49

If you could make just one transportation improvement within the region, what improvement would that be?

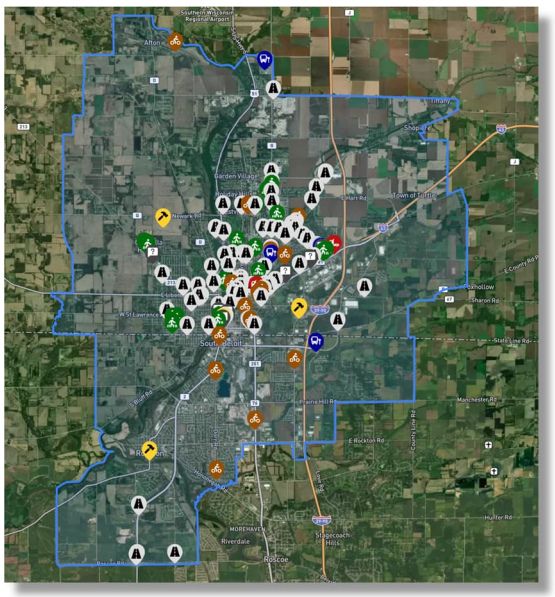
Mapping Transportation Needs

Participants placed 154 markers identifying transportation issues and improvement opportunities throughout the Stateline Area during the Spring 2026 online mapping exercise.

154

- 59.7% Roadway
- 15.6% Pedestrian
- 10.4% Bicycle
- 5.8% Other
- 3.9% Development/Growth
- 2.6% Transit
- 1.9% Freight

FIGURE 6. SLATS 2045 LRTP ONLINE ISSUES MAPPING



Statistically Valid Survey

To support development of the 2055 LRTP, SLATS conducted a statistically valid public opinion survey in early 2026 to help understand regional transportation priorities and investment preferences. SLATS contracted with **ETC Institute, Inc. (ETC)**, a professional survey research firm, to design, administer, and analyze the survey. The survey was conducted to provide a statistically valid and representative assessment of transportation issues, needs, priorities, and investment preferences across the SLATS MPA.



310

survey responses

Statistically valid results provide a representative assessment of transportation priorities across the Stateline Area.

±5.8% Margin of Error

95% Confidence Level

ETC mailed survey packets to randomly selected households throughout the SLATS MPA. Each packet included a cover letter, a survey questionnaire, a link to complete the survey online, multilingual participation instructions, and a postage-paid return envelope. Respondents were also provided with a toll-free number for survey assistance and administration. To increase awareness and encourage participation, ETC implemented a targeted outreach campaign that included social media advertisements on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Nextdoor, as well as reminder communications to sampled households. Throughout the survey administration period, ETC monitored response rates, tracked the effectiveness of recruitment channels, and provided regular progress updates to SLATS to help ensure the survey achieved a representative sample of the region's population.

The survey goal was to collect a minimum of 300 completed questionnaires. This target was exceeded, with 209 responses from Rock County and 101 responses from Winnebago County, for a total of 310 completed surveys. The distribution of responses mirrors the overall population distribution within the SLATS MPA, where approximately 70 percent of residents live in Rock County and 30 percent live in Winnebago County. This proportional representation helps ensure that the survey results reflect the geographic makeup of the region and provide a representative assessment of regional transportation priorities. Based on the total number of responses, the survey results have a margin of error of approximately ±5.8 percent at a 95 percent confidence level.

ETC prepared the ***2026 SLATS Transportation Survey Findings Report***, which includes the following.

- Charts summarizing overall survey results
- Tabular data for all survey questions
- Cross-tabulated results by county (Rock County and Winnebago County)
- Open-ended survey responses
- A copy of the survey instrument

Pop-up Engagement Events

As part of the 2055 LRTP public engagement, SLATS conducted a series of pop-up engagement events in June 2026 to gather input from residents in convenient, high-traffic community settings. These events were held in place of a traditional open house meeting that had originally been identified in the PEP. Rather than requiring residents to attend a formal public meeting, the project team brought information directly to locations where community members were already gathering. This approach was intended to increase visibility of the planning process, engage a broader and more diverse audience, and reduce participation barriers commonly associated with traditional public meetings.

Three pop-up events were conducted throughout the planning area:

Beloit Farmers Market
Downtown Beloit
June 20, 2026



Beloit Sky Carp
Baseball Game
June 23, 2026



NorthPointe Wellness
Rockton, Illinois
June 24, 2026



At each event, project team members provided information about the LRTP and invited participants to share their transportation priorities through an interactive voting exercise. Participants were given five puff balls (votes) that could be distributed among seven transportation investment priorities. Individuals could allocate all five votes to a single priority or spread their votes among multiple priorities, allowing the project team to better understand community preferences regarding future transportation investments.

The pop-up events provided an effective and accessible way to engage residents and collect input from individuals who may not otherwise have participated in the planning process. Feedback gathered through these events helped inform the development of the 2055 LRTP by identifying transportation issues and investment priorities that are important to communities throughout the SLATS MPA. Detailed results from the pop-up engagement activities are presented later in this chapter. **Appendix A** provides additional information on each event, including participation levels, engagement activities, and key findings.

What Matters Most?



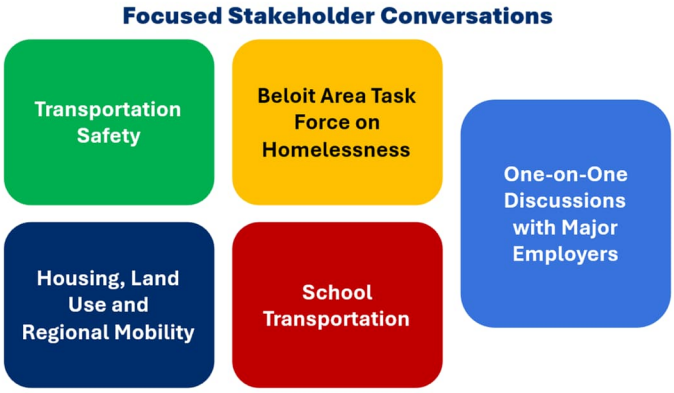
Community members allocated nearly

400

"puff ball" votes to identify their highest transportation priorities for the future.

Stakeholder Discussions

Three stakeholder discussion groups were conducted in June 2026 to gather input on transportation issues and opportunities within the MPA. The stakeholder sessions were organized around topic areas and included representatives from public agencies, community organizations, and other transportation-related interests.



In addition, a meeting was held with the Beloit Area Task Force on Homelessness in late May 2026 to better understand transportation needs and challenges affecting individuals experiencing housing instability. Outreach also included meetings with major employers in the region, conducted as part of the Beloit-Janesville Express Study, to ensure that workforce transportation needs were considered as part of the planning process. Additional information regarding the stakeholder outreach process is also included in **Appendix A**.

SLATS MPO Meetings

Beginning in spring 2026, the project team presented four times to the SLATS Policy Board and TAC. The final LRTP was presented on September 29, 2026, at which time the SLATS 2055 LRTP was unanimously approved. The meeting dates, along with the LRTP related topics, are summarized below. Presentations for the respective meetings are available on the SLATS website, as well as in **Appendix A**.

- **April 7, 2026**
  - Review and confirmation of goals and objectives
  - Review of needs analysis, including a summary of survey #1 results received to date
  - Discussion of potential projects and introduction of potential project scoring
- **June 23, 2026**
  - Confirmation of transportation needs
  - Discussion of plan priorities
- **August 24, 2026**
  - Overview of 2055 LRTP recommendations
  - Review and confirmation of fiscally constrained projects
- **September 29, 2026**
  - Presentation summarizing the LRTP development process and plan recommendations
  - Summary of public and stakeholder engagement activities
  - Summary of environmental consultation comments received during plan development
  - Public hearing, followed by a formal vote and adoption of the SLATS 2055 LRTP

Public Review and Comment

A draft of the 2055 LRTP was available for public review and comment from August 25, 2026, through September 24, 2026. Stakeholders were notified of the document's availability and encouraged to share it throughout their networks. SLATS also published notices regarding the draft plan in the *Beloit Daily*

News and on the LRTP project website. No comments on the draft 2055 LRTP were submitted to SLATS or the consultant team during the formal comment period. However, a few comments were received during the public open houses, as discussed in the following section.

Public Open House

Public open houses for the draft 2055 LRTP and draft 2027-2030 TIP were held on September 15, 2026, at South Beloit City Hall from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. and at Beloit City Hall from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. during the 30-day public review period. The open houses provided residents and stakeholders an opportunity to review the draft documents, discuss recommended projects and policies with SLATS staff and LRTP consultant team, and provide comments on the proposed multimodal transportation investments. Attendance was modest, with a handful of individuals participating throughout the day. Feedback received during the open houses was supportive of both the draft LRTP and the fiscally constrained project recommendations, and no opposition to the recommended plan was expressed.

The comments and discussion focused on the importance of continued investment in safety, system preservation, intersection improvements, regional connectivity, freight mobility, corridor preservation, and multimodal transportation facilities. Attendees indicated that the recommended roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements were consistent with the region's transportation needs and supported the vision, goals, and objectives established in the 2055 LRTP. Overall, participants agreed that the proposed fiscally constrained project program provides a reasonable and balanced framework for addressing future transportation, mobility, and accessibility needs within the SLATS MPA through 2055. Key themes identified during the public open houses are summarized in **Appendix A**.

2055 LRTP Plan Adoption

The SLATS Policy Board and TAC met on September 29, 2026, to consider adoption of the SLATS 2055 LRTP. Following a brief presentation by the consultant team, a public hearing was opened to receive comments. Three individuals spoke during the hearing. A summary of their comments is provided below and is also documented in the official meeting minutes.

- **Speaker 1**
  - Expressed concern regarding the volume of truck traffic on WIS 81 and suggested additional efforts be explored to reduce pass-through truck traffic in the region
  - Encouraged SLATS to coordinate with Dane County and City of Madison regarding further study of a Madison-Rockford passenger rail corridor
- **Speaker 2**
  - Expressed concern regarding heavy truck traffic in the Illinois portion of the SLATS MPA, in particular along IL 2, IL 75, and IL 251
  - Noted that pavement conditions are already poor in many locations and that heavy truck traffic contributes to these concerns
- **Speaker 3**
  - Expressed appreciation for bicycle and pedestrian projects being specifically identified in the LRTP, and as documented in the Active Transportation Plan
  - Commented that it is encouraging to see projects continue to advance through successive LRTP updates

Chapter 3. Goals and Objectives

The development of the SLATS 2055 LRTP provides an opportunity to reaffirm and refine the region's shared vision for the future transportation system. This vision is expressed through the LRTP goals and objectives, which serve as the policy framework for transportation planning, project development, programming, and investment decisions throughout the 2055 planning horizon.

The 2055 LRTP goals and objectives are intended to support a safe, reliable, efficient, and well-connected multimodal transportation system that advances regional economic vitality, preserves and enhances existing transportation assets, improves mobility and accessibility, and promotes sustainable community development. The framework emphasizes coordinated transportation and land use planning, environmental stewardship, system resilience, and improved access to jobs, services, and opportunities throughout the SLATS MPA.

Together, the goals and objectives provide a foundation for data-driven, performance-based decision-making and establish a consistent framework for evaluating and prioritizing transportation investments that address the region's evolving needs and long-term priorities.

SLATS 2055 LRTP Goals and Objectives

As part of the development of the SLATS 2055 LRTP, the goals and objectives from the 2045 LRTP were reviewed and evaluated to determine their continued relevance to current and emerging transportation needs. This review included consideration of federal metropolitan transportation planning requirements, as well as consistency with the policy direction and goals contained in the WisDOT and IDOT statewide LRTPs.



The plan update also incorporated input received from residents and other stakeholders through public engagement activities, including community outreach events, online engagement opportunities, and a statistically valid survey. This feedback helped identify regional priorities and transportation issues that were considered in reviewing and refining the goals and objectives.

Draft goals and objectives were presented to the SLATS TAC and Policy Board for review and discussion at the April 7, 2026 Joint Policy Board & Technical Advisory Committee Meeting. The adopted SLATS 2055 LRTP goals and objectives, summarized in **Table 3**, guide transportation planning, project prioritization, and investment decisions throughout the SLATS MPA. Additional information used to develop the goals and objectives is provided following the table and in **Appendix B**.

TABLE 3. SLATS 2055 LRTP GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals	Objectives
1) Economic Vitality – Prioritize transportation investments that foster regional economic development opportunities.	a) Coordinate transportation, land use, and economic development planning across the state line. b) Develop a transportation system to enhance access to local and regional employment centers. c) Maintain and improve existing transportation links to central business districts within the MPA. d) Improve access to major tourist destinations, including roadways, bicycling, and public transportation.
2) System Preservation – Strategically support and strengthen existing local and regional transportation assets.	a) Strive for sufficient budgetary resources to maintain the existing transportation infrastructure. b) Where possible, enhance the system efficiency of existing travel corridors as opposed to adding new roadway capacity. c) Utilize emerging technology to increase the efficiency of the existing regional transportation system. d) Improve the resilience of the regional transportation system to minimize service disruptions and to quickly recover when they occur.
3) Mobility and Accessibility – Develop a comprehensive, multimodal system that enhances mobility and accessibility for all transportation users.	a) Enhance connectivity and access in the regional roadway network to facilitate reliable travel conditions. b) Enhance transit connectivity and accessibility within the Stateline Area. c) Expand the bicycle and pedestrian system to improve regional connectivity with a particular focus on enhancements to the multi-use trail system. d) Support the development of complete streets which incorporate appropriate transit, bicycle and pedestrian accommodations into roadway improvements. e) Advance regional transit planning, including passenger rail service, to identify opportunities to connect to Rockford, Janesville, Madison, Chicago and Milwaukee.
4) Safety and Security – Improve transportation safety and security throughout the region.	a) Minimize crash exposure within the Stateline Area with an emphasis on reducing fatalities and serious injuries. b) Consider all system users (cyclists, transit users, pedestrians, motorists, freight carriers) when planning, designing and constructing transportation facilities. c) Support public education to promote safe transportation behavior.
5) Environmentally Friendly – Promote transportation investments that preserve and protect the environment.	a) Support transportation system investments that preserve open space and natural amenities, adequately accommodate stormwater runoff, and enhance connections to these regional assets. b) Proactively evaluate, and minimize, the environmental impacts of proposed transportation improvements within the region. c) Identify and expand transportation options that reduce automobile travel and/or promote energy conservation.
6) Healthy Neighborhoods – Provide well-connected, sustainable neighborhoods that enhance quality of life.	a) Facilitate the efficient, effective movement of freight through the region to minimize the negative impacts on residential neighborhoods. b) Support mixed-use, transit-oriented developments that encourage walkable, connected neighborhoods that provide an alternative to driving.
7) Land Use Integration – Strengthen the integration between land use and transportation initiatives to promote transportation system efficiency.	a) Integrate transportation planning with regional land use and housing strategies to improve access to housing, reduce transportation cost burdens, and support sustainable community development. b) When appropriate, identify and plan for corridor preservation to accommodate future year capacity needs. c) Plan the transportation system to encourage contiguous development consistent with smart growth principles.
8) Access and Opportunity – Enhance access to jobs, services, education, healthcare, housing, and other important destinations for all residents, workers, and visitors.	a) Engage residents, workers, businesses, and community organizations throughout the transportation planning process to identify and address barriers to accessing jobs, services, and essential destinations. b) Prioritize multimodal transportation investments that improve access to jobs, healthcare, education, housing, and other essential destinations, particularly for traditionally underserved populations.

Consistency with the WisDOT and IDOT Statewide LRTPs

The SLATS 2055 LRTP goals and objectives are consistent with and reflect the priorities identified in the WisDOT and IDOT statewide LRTPs. Aligning regional and statewide priorities supports coordinated transportation planning, fulfills federal planning requirements, and enhances opportunities for project implementation through future funding programs. **Table 4** summarizes the current WisDOT and IDOT statewide LRTP goals.

TABLE 4. WISDOT AND IDOT STATEWIDE LRTP GOALS

CONNECT 2050	MOVE ILLINOIS LRTP LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN
• **Sustainable Funding** – Ensure long-term transportation funding and fiscal sustainability. • **Partnerships & Collaboration** – Strengthen coordination among agencies, stakeholders, and communities. • **Data-Driven Decision Making** – Support performance-based planning and continuous improvement. • **Mobility & Connectivity** – Expand transportation options and improve movement of people and goods. • **Technology & Innovation** – Leverage technology to improve system performance and service delivery. • **Safety & Security** – Improve transportation safety and reduce fatalities and serious injuries. • **Resilience & Reliability** – Enhance system durability, reliability, and preparedness for disruptions. • **Environmental & Community Stewardship** – Balance transportation investments with environmental, cultural, and community values.	• **Economic Vitality** – Support economic growth through strategic multimodal transportation investments and efficient movement of people and goods. • **Equity & Inclusion** – Promote meaningful engagement and improve transportation outcomes for all residents and communities. • **Resilience** – Improve transportation system reliability and preparedness for climate-related and other disruptions. • **Livability & Accessibility** – Enhance quality of life through safe, efficient, accessible, and environmentally responsible transportation options. • **Mobility & Reliability** – Improve multimodal connectivity and the reliability of travel throughout the transportation system. • **Safety** – Reduce crashes, fatalities, and serious injuries through safer system design and user behavior improvements.

Source: WisDOT Statewide LRTP, https://www.wisdotplans.gov/plan/connect-2050
IDOT Statewide LRTP, https://moveil2024lrtp.com/
NOTE: Links current as of July 11, 2026.

Public Input and Goal Development



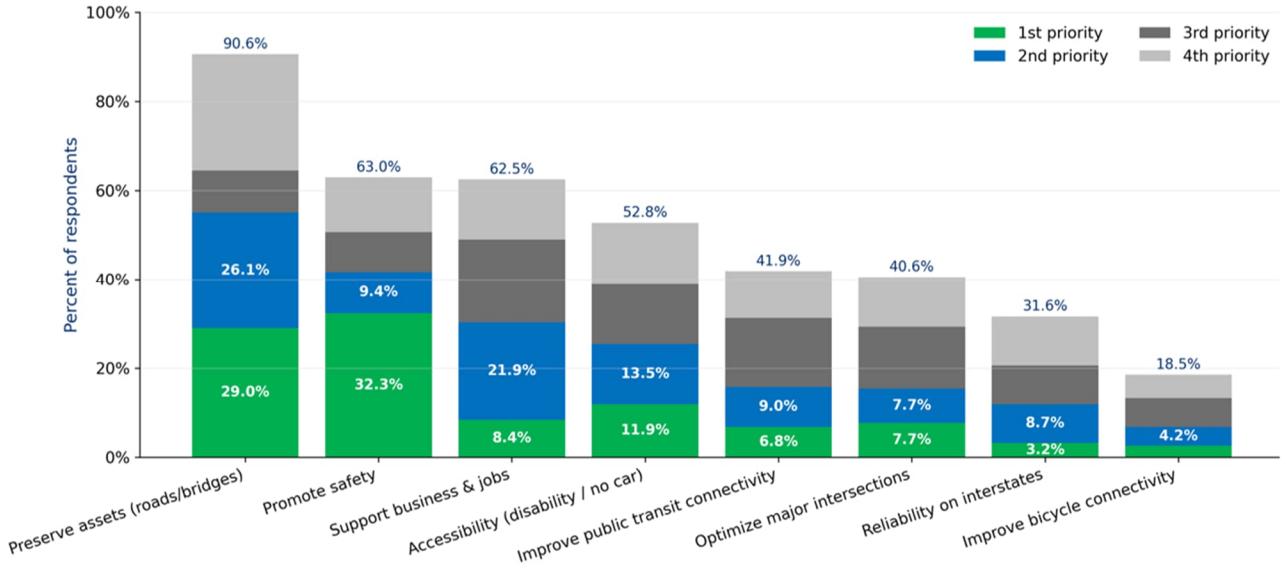
Public and stakeholder engagement played a critical role in developing the 2055 LRTP and ensuring the plan reflects the needs, priorities, and vision of communities throughout the Stateline Area. Input received through the public involvement process helped inform and validate the 2055 LRTP goals and objectives and the methodology used to evaluate and prioritize transportation investments. Additional information regarding public outreach activities is provided in **Chapter 2**, while **Appendices A** and **B** document the public engagement process and development of the LRTP goals and objectives.

Public input was gathered through a variety of activities, including stakeholder discussions, pop-up community events, a statistically valid public opinion survey, a self-select survey, and an online interactive mapping exercise. Together, these efforts provided both broad regional perspectives and location-specific feedback on transportation issues, needs, and opportunities across the SLATS MPA.

Several consistent themes emerged throughout the engagement process. Residents and stakeholders emphasized the importance of preserving existing transportation infrastructure, improving safety, supporting economic vitality, enhancing regional connectivity, and providing transportation options for people of all ages and abilities. Feedback also identified concerns related to roadway conditions, traffic operations, congestion, transit service, and access to jobs, services, and community destinations. As shown in **Figure 7**, the statistically valid survey reinforced these themes, with asset preservation, safety, economic development, and accessibility emerging as the region's top transportation priorities.

While opinions varied on specific transportation solutions, the overall public involvement process demonstrated broad support for a safe, reliable, well-maintained, and multimodal transportation system. These findings helped confirm the long-term vision for the SLATS MPA and provided important direction for development of the 2055 LRTP goals, objectives, and investment priorities.

FIGURE 7. STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY RESULTS: TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT 25 YEARS



Source: SLATS 2055 LRTP Statically Valid Survey, ETC Institute – March 2026.

Chapter 4. Demographic Trends



Analyzing changing and emerging demographic characteristics within the MPA helps inform transportation infrastructure investments and mobility service needs. Understanding population and employment trends also supports the identification of appropriate transportation facilities and services, both today and through the 2055 planning horizon. **Appendix C** provides a detailed profile of the region, including demographic characteristics (e.g., migration, vehicle availability, age, race, income, educational attainment, language proficiency, and household resources) as well as employment information (e.g., occupation, employment levels, and major employers). The following section highlights key takeaways from the demographic analysis, with a focus on population and employment trends that are shaping future transportation needs within the SLATS MPA.

Population / Households

Population figures for 2000, 2010, 2020, and 2024 for the United States, Wisconsin, Illinois, Rock County, Winnebago County, and select municipalities within the Stateline region are presented in **Table 5**. The City of Beloit is the largest municipality within the SLATS MPA, with a 2024 population of 36,534 residents. Since 2000, Beloit's population has remained relatively stable, while population trends in other MPA communities have varied, with some municipalities experiencing growth and others showing little overall change.

Because the SLATS MPA boundaries do not align with Census-designated geographies, an MPA population total cannot be directly derived from Census data. Based on regional travel demand forecasting model socioeconomic data, the SLATS MPA is estimated to be home to nearly 73,000 residents. **Figure 8** displays the population distribution within the SLATS MPA.

According to ACS data, the Beloit Urban Area contains approximately 24,379 households, with the largest share located in the City of Beloit (14,037 households, including portions outside the Urban Area boundary). The average household size in the Beloit Urban Area is 2.5 persons per household, ranging from 2.6 in Beloit to 2.7 in the Township of Roscoe and Village of Rockton. These household characteristics are generally consistent with state and national averages. Like much of the nation, the region has experienced a long-term trend toward smaller household sizes, a factor that can influence housing demand, travel patterns, and transportation needs. **Figure 9** displays the household density throughout the SLATS MPA.

TABLE 5. HISTORICAL AND RECENT POPULATION CHANGE, 2000 – 2024

	2000	2010	2020	2024	Change 2000-2010	Change 2010-2024
United States	**281,421,906**	**308,745,712**	**326,569,308**	**334,922,499**	**9.7%**	**8.5%**
Wisconsin	**5,363,675**	**5,686,986**	**5,806,975**	**5,914,872**	**6.0%**	4.0%
Rock County	152,307	160,331	162,532	164,350	5.3%	2.5%
Beloit city	*35,828*	*36,966*	*36,804*	*36,534*	*3.2%*	*-1.2%*
Illinois	**12,419,293**	**12,830,632**	**12,716,164**	**12,694,798**	**3.3%**	**-1.1%**
Winnebago County	278,418	295,266	283,635	283,292	6.1%	-4.1%
South Beloit city	*5,441*	*7,892*	*7,730*	*7,946*	*45.0%*	*0.7%*
Roscoe village	*6,350*	*10,785*	*10,632*	*10,706*	*69.8%*	*-0.7%*
Rockton village	*5,469*	*7,685*	*7,710*	*7,974*	*40.5%*	*3.8%*

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2000, 2010, and 2020); U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates Program (2024); Wisconsin Department of Administration Population Estimates.

NOTE: No MPA total is provided because MPA boundaries differ from Census-designated geographies. A MPA total is estimated using the regional travel demand forecasting model socioeconomic data. Municipality totals provided in this table include areas outside the MPA.

FIGURE 8. SLATS POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

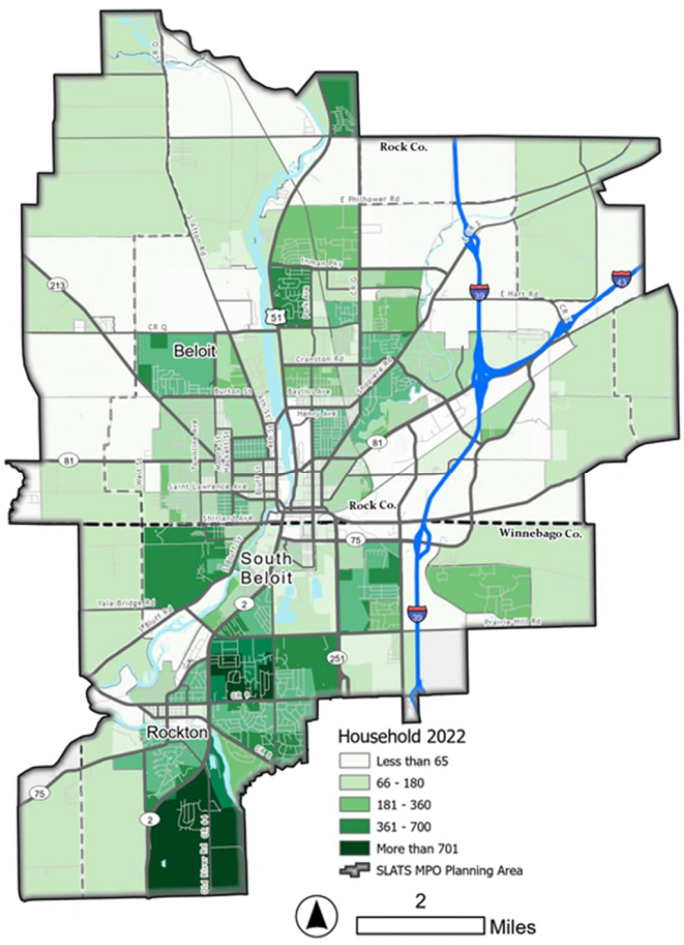
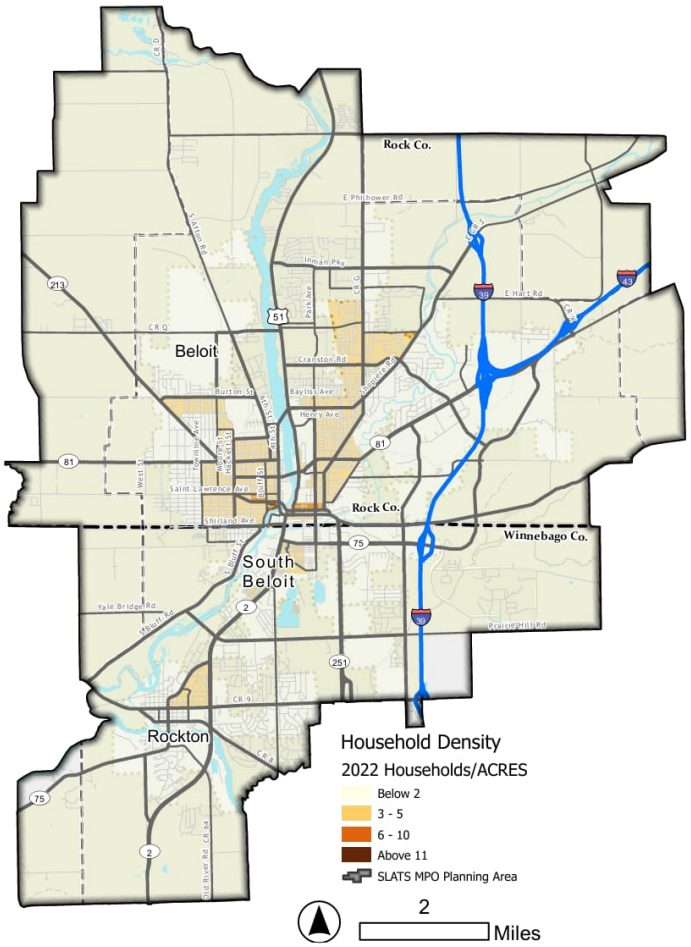
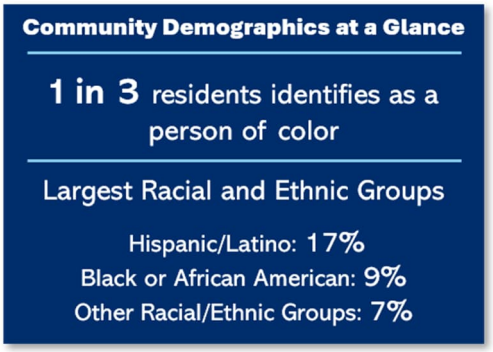


FIGURE 9. SLATS HOUSEHOLD DENSITY



Key Demographics

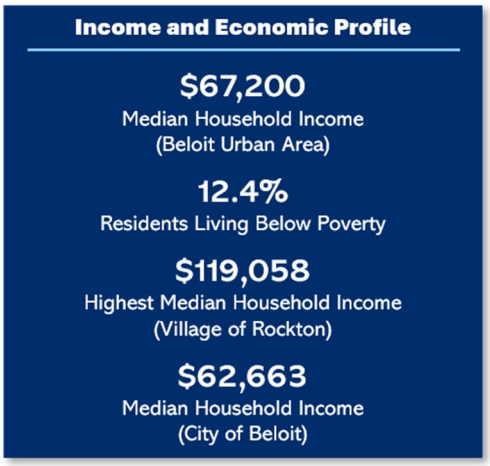
Race



The Beloit Urban Area is predominantly White, with approximately 67 percent of residents identifying as non-Hispanic White and 33 percent identifying as persons of color (including Hispanic or Latino residents and individuals of any race other than non-Hispanic White). As shown in **Figure 10**, minority populations are distributed throughout the planning area but are more concentrated in the City of Beloit. Within Beloit, approximately 41 percent of residents identify as persons of color, a substantially higher share than in neighboring communities. The share of persons of color in Beloit has increased modestly since 2021, when it was approximately 39 percent.

Hispanic or Latino residents represent the largest minority population in the Beloit Urban Area, accounting for approximately 17 percent of the population. An additional 9 percent identify as Black or African American, while the remaining population identifies as Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, some other race, or two or more races. Understanding the distribution of racial and ethnic populations across the planning area provides valuable insight into travel needs, access to opportunities, and community priorities that may influence future transportation decisions.

Income / Poverty



Income levels are an important indicator of transportation needs and mobility requirements. The median household income in the Beloit Urban Area is approximately $67,200, below the national ($80,734), Illinois ($83,390), and Wisconsin ($77,485) medians. Income levels vary considerably across the region and are generally higher in the Illinois portion of the SLATS MPA. Median household income exceeds $100,000 in Roscoe Township ($108,711) and approaches $119,100 in the Village of Rockton, compared to approximately $62,700 in the City of Beloit.

According to ACS 2024 5-year estimates, approximately 12.4 percent of Beloit Urban Area residents live below the federal poverty level, which is comparable to the national average (12.5 percent). Poverty rates are higher in some communities, including the City of Beloit (15 percent) and Town of Turtle (21 percent), highlighting areas where transportation affordability and access may be particularly important considerations. **Figure 11** displays the geographic distribution of low-income populations within the SLATS MPA.

FIGURE 10. MINORITY POPULATION

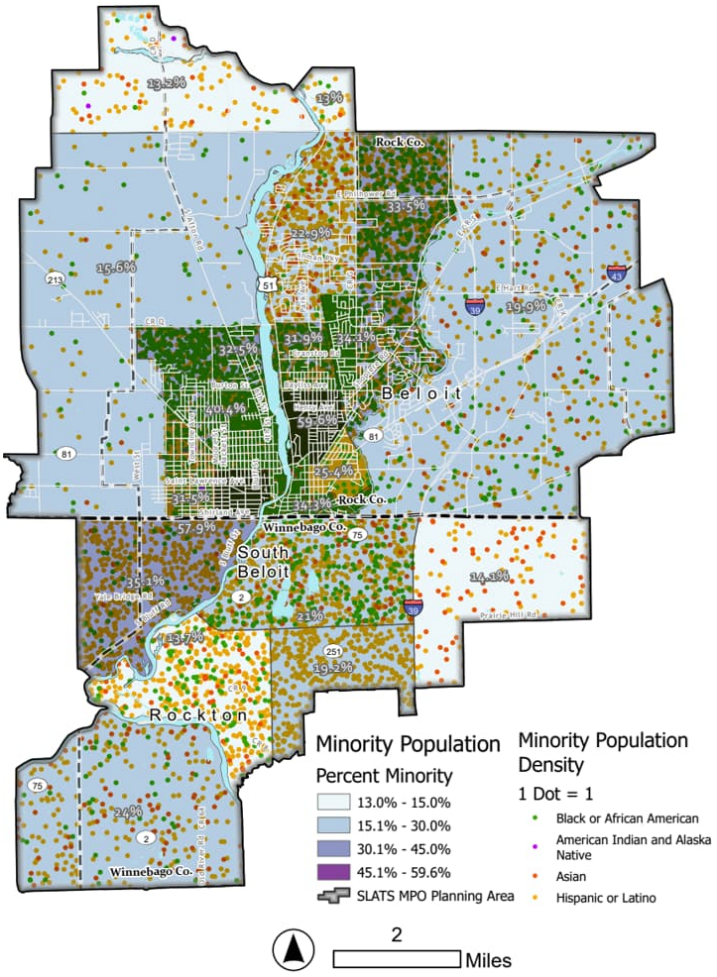
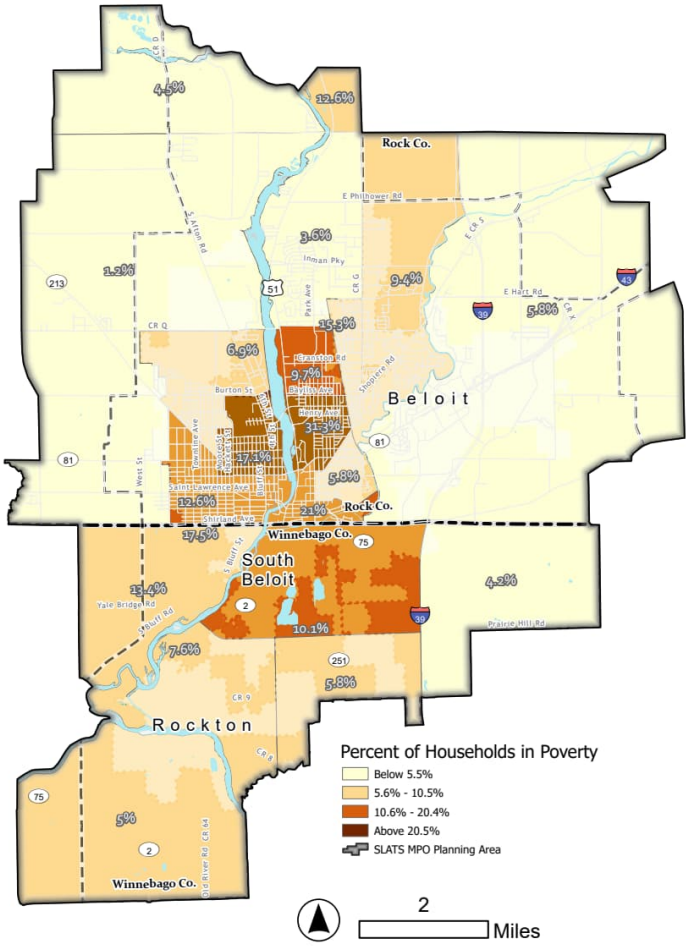


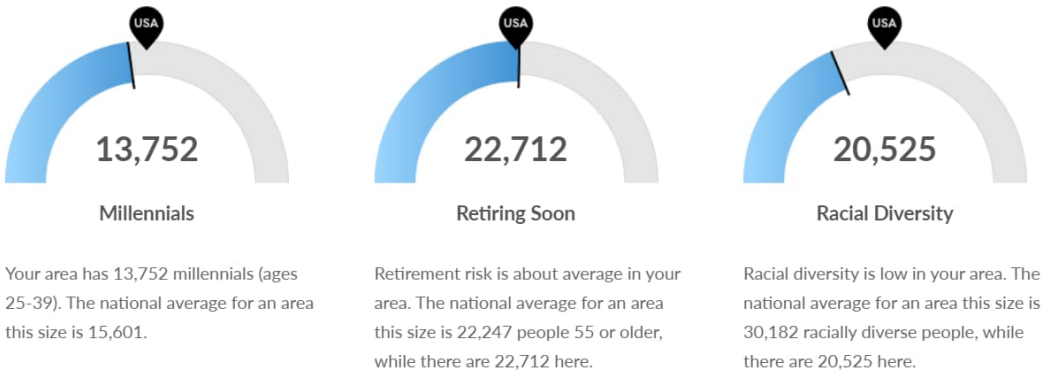
FIGURE 11. HOUSEHOLDS IN POVERTY



Age and Race Diversity Metrics

A high-level index of age and race diversity metrics for the four primary ZIP codes in the MPA is provided in **Figure 12**. These indices illustrate how the SLATS MPA compares to similar regions across the United States in the share of population within the millennial cohort (slightly below average), share of workforce retiring soon (about average), and racial diversity (below average).

FIGURE 12. COMPARATIVE DIVERSITY METRICS



Source: EMSI 2025. Data for primary ZIP codes in the MPA: 53511, 53525, 61080, 61072.

Employment

Employment is a major driver of travel demand within the SLATS MPA. According to ACS 2020-2024 estimates, approximately 30,870 residents participate in the labor force within the Beloit Urbanized Area, representing a labor force participation rate of approximately 63 percent. When portions of surrounding townships within the SLATS MPA are considered, the labor force participation rate increases to approximately 65 percent.

TABLE 6. MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Employer	Product / Services	Estimated Employees (2025-2026)
Beloit Health System	Medical Services	1,600
Ho-Chunk Nation Casino Resort	Casino / Hotel / Entertainment	1,500
Amazon Fulfillment Center	Distribution / Logistics	1,250
School District of Beloit	Public Education K-12	900
Frito-Lay	Snack Foods Manufacturing	850
Kerry Group Americas	Food Ingredients Manufacturing	725
Blackhawk Technical College	Technical College	600
ABC Supply Co. Headquarters	Building Products Distribution	600
Taylor Company	Commercial Food Service Equipment	500
Hormel Foods	Food Processing	440
Fairbanks Morse Defense	Marine & Diesel Engines	440
Mercyhealth NorthPointe Campus	Health Care Services	400
Beloit College	Higher Education	384
City of Beloit	Municipal Government	368
First National Bank & Trust	Banking and Financial Services	440
Hononegah Community High School	Public Education	250
Warner Electric	Power Transmission Equipment Manufacturing	200
Precision Dose, Inc.	Pharmaceutical Packaging & Healthcare Products	200
Kinnikinnick School District #131	Public Education	200
Mid-States Concrete Industries	Precast Concrete Manufacturing	125
Goldie B. Floberg Center	Health Care & Social Services	125

The SLATS MPA supports a diverse employment base that includes manufacturing, health care, government, retail trade, transportation and warehousing, accommodation and food services, and professional and business services. Manufacturing remains a cornerstone of the regional economy and employs a substantially larger share of workers than is typical for similarly sized metropolitan areas nationwide. As a result, the region has relatively high concentrations of production, transportation, and material-moving occupations.

Employment is concentrated in several key activity centers throughout the SLATS MPA. **Figure 13** displays the distribution of total employment throughout the planning area. Major employment concentrations are located in Downtown Beloit, along the I-39/90 corridor, and within major industrial and business park areas east and northeast of Beloit, where employers benefit from access to the regional highway network. Major employers include Beloit Health System, manufacturing and logistics firms, and other large employers located in the Gateway Business Park and surrounding employment centers (see **Table 6** for major employers). As shown in **Figure 14**, the highest employment densities occur in Downtown Beloit, the region's historic employment and commercial center, as well as in several industrial, commercial, and business park areas throughout the MPA.

Unemployment rates within the Beloit Urbanized Area remain somewhat higher than national averages, with elevated unemployment concentrated in portions of Beloit and several nearby neighborhoods. Maintaining reliable connections between residential areas and major employment centers remains important, particularly for residents who depend on public transit, walking, bicycling, or carpooling to access jobs. Additional detail regarding labor force characteristics, industry composition, employment trends, and major employers are provided in **Appendix C**.

FIGURE 13. EMPLOYMENT TOTALS

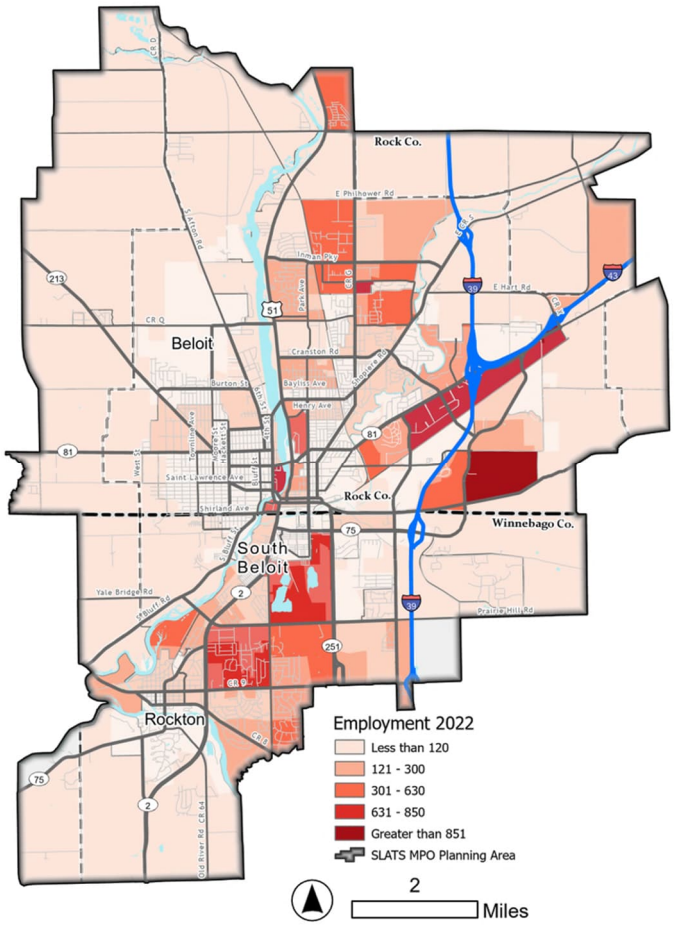
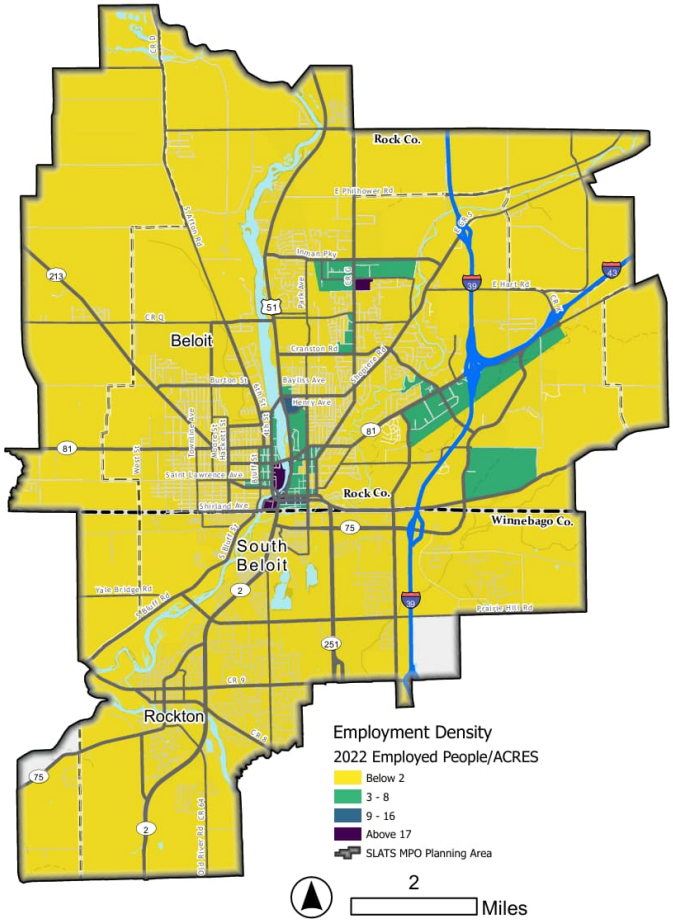


FIGURE 14. EMPLOYMENT DENSITY



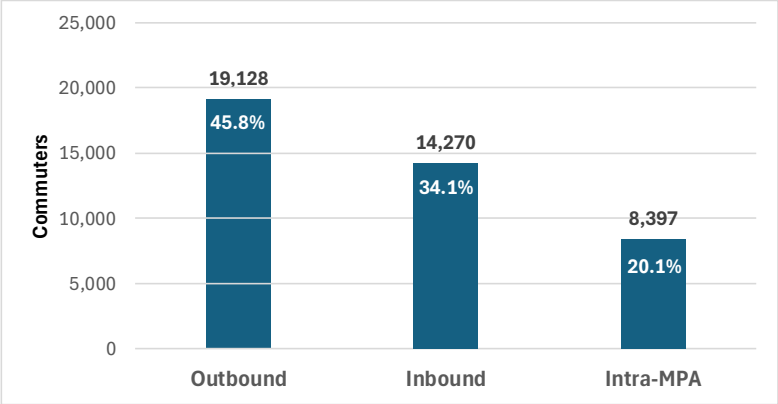
Commuting and Work from Home

The predominant mode of travel for SLATS area residents is drive alone. Commute flows in the region provide an indication of where residents of the SLATS MPA travel to for work. A comparison of commute flows originating in or destined for the county subdivisions that overlap the MPA boundary helps better understand how regional travel patterns impact the roadway network. It is important to note that this data reflects pre-pandemic travel patterns.

According to recent Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) data from the US Census, work trips that originate and/or end in the approximate MPA totaled 44,137.[1] As displayed in **Figure 15**, among these work trips, 25 percent are inbound (i.e., workers residing outside the MPA but working within), 46 percent are outbound, and 30 percent are intra-MPA (i.e., locations where home and work are both inside the approximate MPA boundary).

[1] Only travel flows with adjacent counties (Rock, Winnebago, Dane, Walworth, McHenry, Boone, Stephenson, Green) are included in these totals.

FIGURE 15. SLATS MPA COMMUTERS BY DIRECTION



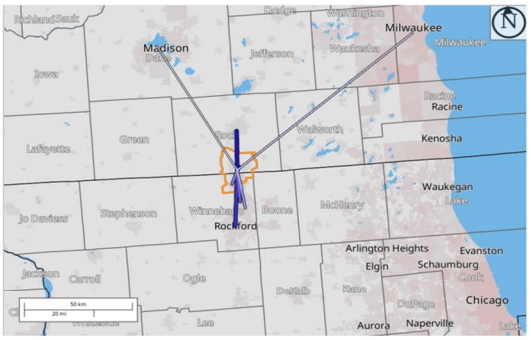
SOURCE: LODES 2023, All Jobs. Estimated MPA includes the following County Subdivisions: Beloit city, Beloit town, Rock town, and Turtle town in Wisconsin; Rockton and Roscoe townships in Illinois.

An illustration of the inbound and outbound commutes is provided in **Figure 16**. The largest share of inbound and outbound commuters travel to/from the areas of Rock and Winnebago Counties that are not within the MPA, such as Janesville and Rockford. The non-MPA areas of Rock County attract/generate about 30 percent to 40 percent of the inbound and outbound commuters. Similarly, the non-MPA areas of Winnebago attract/generate about 40 percent of the inbound and outbound commuters.

The next tier of commute origins includes Walworth, Dane, and Boone Counties, each sending about 600 to 700 commuters to the SLATS MPA. In the opposite direction, the most common outbound commute destination is Dane County (about 3,300 commute trips), followed by Walworth and Boone counties with over 1,000 commute trips.

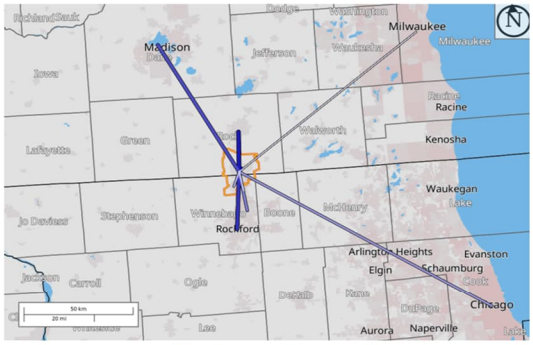
FIGURE 16. INBOUND AND OUTBOUND COMMUTER FLOWS (MPA TO/FROM ADJACENT COUNTIES)

Where People who Work in the SLATS MPA Live



Location	Count	Share
Beloit city, WI	5,117	22.6%
Janesville city, WI	2,123	9.4%
Rockford city, IL	1,524	6.7%
South Beloit city, IL	805	3.6%
Machesney Park village, IL	614	2.7%
Rockton village, IL	577	2.5%
Loves Park city, IL	468	2.1%
Roscoe village, IL	446	2.0%
Milwaukee city, WI	307	1.4%
Madison city, WI	294	1.3%
All Other Locations	10,392	45.8%

Where People who Live in the SLATS MPA Work



Location	Count	Share
Beloit city, WI	6,080	22.1%
Janesville city, WI	3,626	13.2%
Rockford city, IL	1,958	7.1%
Madison city, WI	1,391	5.1%
South Beloit city, IL	906	3.3%
Loves Park city, IL	639	2.3%
Chicago city, IL	473	1.7%
Rockton village, IL	471	1.7%
Roscoe village, IL	435	1.6%
Milwaukee city, WI	395	1.4%
All Other Locations	11,151	40.5%

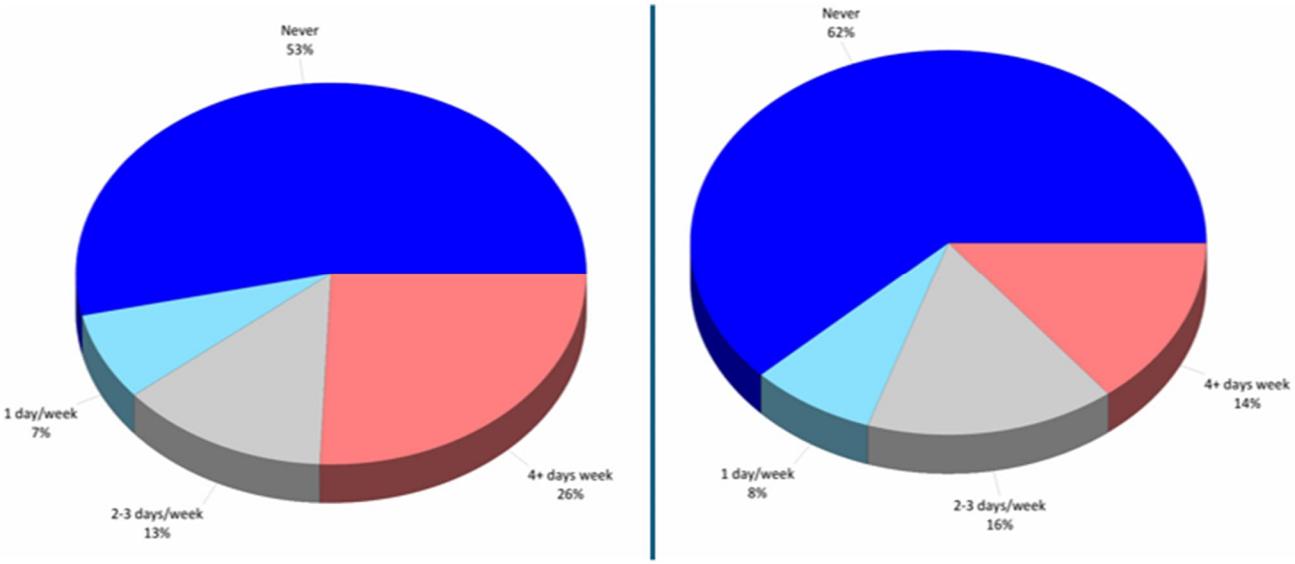
SOURCE: LODES 2023, All Jobs. Estimated MPA includes the following County Subdivisions: Beloit city, Beloit town, Rock town, and Turtle town in Wisconsin; Rockton and Roscoe townships in Illinois.

Impact of COVID-19 and Work-from-Home Trends

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly altered commuting patterns throughout the United States, including within the Stateline region. While the region continues to maintain strong employment connections with Janesville, Rockford, Madison, and other surrounding communities, many employers and workers have adopted remote and hybrid work arrangements that have changed how, when, and how often people travel. As a result, traditional commuting patterns have evolved, and future travel demand may differ from historical trends.

Data collected through the ***2026 SLATS Transportation Survey*** indicates that work-from-home arrangements have increased substantially since the pandemic. As shown in **Figure 17**, prior to COVID-19, approximately 14 percent of employed respondents reported working from home four or more days per week. By 2026, that share increased to approximately 26 percent, representing a nearly twofold increase in regular remote work activity. At the same time, the proportion of respondents who reported never working from home declined from 62 percent to 53 percent. These trends, summarized in Figure 18, highlight the increasing role of telework and hybrid work arrangements in shaping travel behavior across the Stateline region.

FIGURE 17. WORK FROM HOME TRENDS (PRE- AND POST-COVID)



SOURCE: 2026 SLATS Transportation Survey, March 2026.

Survey respondents also anticipate that remote and hybrid work arrangements will continue to increase over the planning horizon. Approximately 57 percent of respondents indicated that telework will increase by 2055, including 27 percent who expect a significant increase and 30 percent who expect a moderate increase. These findings suggest that future travel demand may become more distributed throughout the day, potentially reducing some traditional peak-period commute trips while creating more diverse travel patterns and greater scheduling flexibility.

57% of respondents believe telework will significantly increase (27%) or increase (30%) by 2055.

Although telework may reduce the frequency of some commute trips, residents will continue to travel for employment, education, healthcare, shopping, recreation, and other daily activities. In addition, the region's strong economic connections with Madison, Janesville, Rockford, Chicago, and surrounding communities are expected to continue generating substantial travel demand. The continued growth of remote and hybrid work arrangements presents both opportunities and challenges for transportation planning. Reduced commuting demand may lessen congestion on some corridors, but the transportation system must continue to support economic activity, workforce mobility, freight movement, tourism, and regional connectivity.

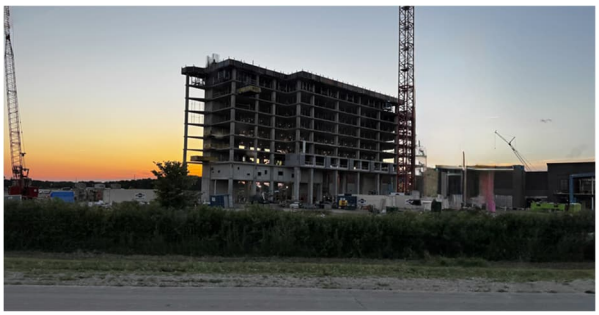
As a result, the 2055 LRTP recognizes the importance of monitoring evolving workplace trends and adapting transportation investments to changing travel behavior. Future transportation planning efforts should remain flexible and responsive to shifts in work patterns while continuing to support a safe, efficient, and multimodal transportation system that meets the mobility needs of residents, businesses, and visitors throughout the Stateline region.

Chapter 5. Current and Future Growth Patterns

This chapter examines recent growth and development trends within the SLATS MPA and evaluates how future changes in population, households, employment, and land use may influence travel demand through 2055. Understanding where people live, work, shop, and access services and recreational opportunities is an important component of transportation planning, as development patterns directly affect travel behavior, infrastructure needs, and long-term transportation investment priorities.

The chapter begins with a discussion of recent development activity and growth trends occurring throughout the Stateline region, followed by a review of local and county comprehensive plans that help establish the planning context for future growth. The chapter then presents population, household, and employment forecasts used to support the regional travel demand model and concludes with a discussion of the potential implications these trends may have on future travel demand and transportation system performance. Additional information regarding existing and future conditions is provided in **Appendix D**, while a detailed review of local and county comprehensive plans is provided in **Appendix E**.

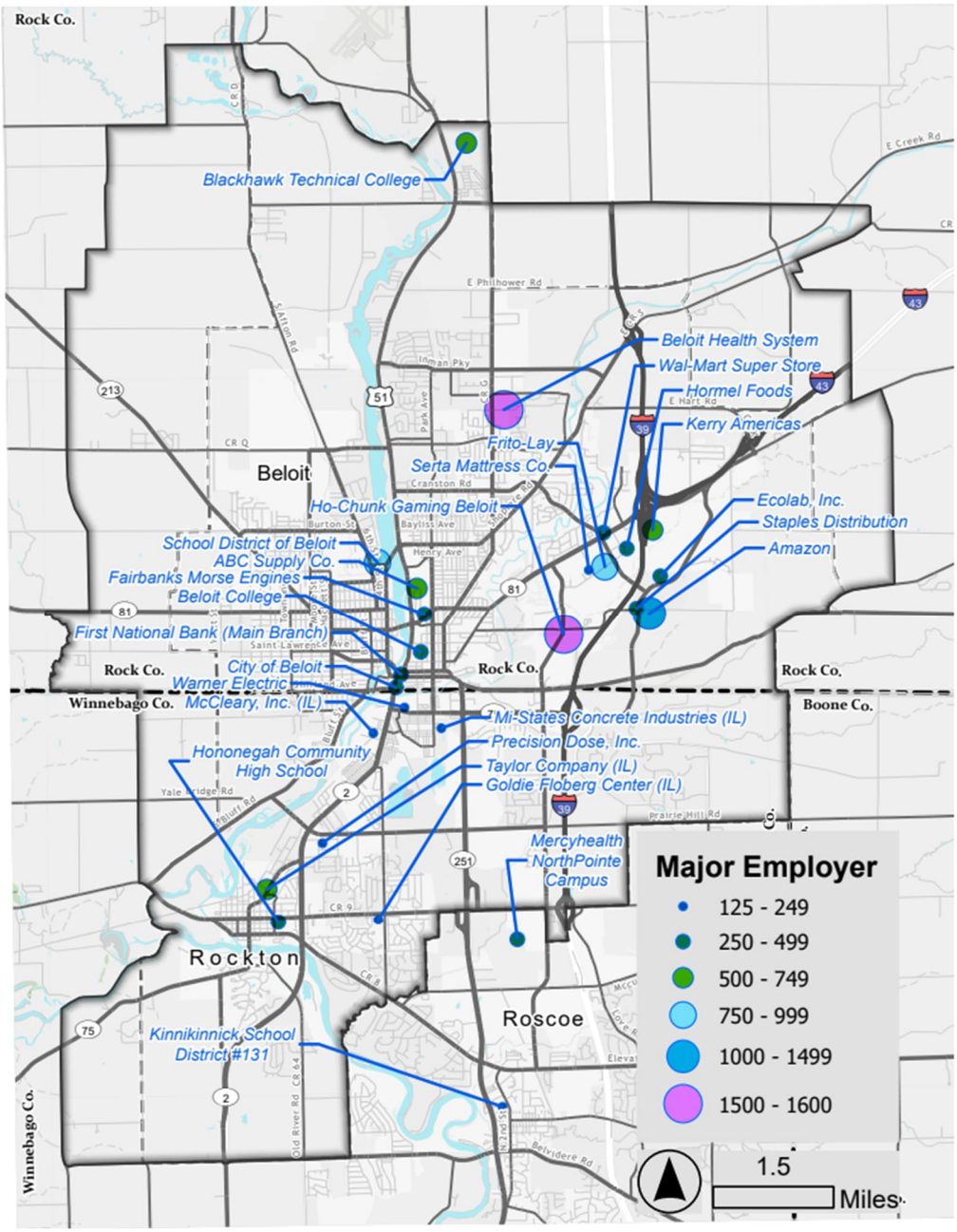
Recent Growth and Development



Recent investments and development activity have continued to strengthen the Stateline region's position as an important center for economic activity, freight movement, tourism, and employment. A major milestone was the completion of the I-39/90 and I-43 system interchange reconstruction in 2021, which improved regional mobility, enhanced access between key highway corridors, and expanded opportunities for economic development throughout the region. The interstate network remains one of the area's most significant competitive advantages, serving as a critical freight gateway for both Wisconsin and Illinois and supporting the movement of goods throughout the Midwest and national freight network. With direct connections to major metropolitan markets, distribution centers, manufacturing hubs, and interstate trucking corridors, I-39/90 and I-43 play a vital role in supporting regional businesses, freight-intensive industries, and long-term economic growth.

The Gateway Business Park and adjacent areas along Gateway Boulevard continue to be among the region's primary employment and development centers. Home to globally and nationally recognized employers, including major distribution, manufacturing, and logistics operations, the business park has benefited from its strategic location along the interstate system. With significant developable land remaining under the ownership or control of the City of Beloit and Greater Beloit Economic Development Corporation, the area is expected to remain a focal point for future industrial and commercial growth. **Figure 18** illustrates the concentration of employers across the SLATS MPA.

FIGURE 18. REGIONAL EMPLOYERS



Several major projects are expected to influence future travel patterns and economic activity within the region. Most notable is the Ho-Chunk Gaming Beloit Casino Resort, which is currently under construction and planned to open in Fall 2026. The development is expected to become one of the largest casino destinations in Wisconsin and includes gaming, hotel, convention, entertainment, and dining facilities. The project is anticipated to generate approximately 1,000 direct jobs and an estimated 500 additional jobs associated with hospitality, food service, lodging, and support businesses. As a major tourism and employment destination located near I-39/90 and Willowbrook Road, the development is expected to increase travel demand and further reinforce the importance of maintaining efficient access to the interstate system and surrounding employment areas. In addition to attracting visitors from throughout the region and beyond, the scale of the development will likely

require employers to recruit workers from outside the SLATS MPA, increasing the importance of reliable regional transportation connections for both employees and visitors.



Additional growth opportunities are also emerging elsewhere in the region. Downtown Beloit continues to experience reinvestment and redevelopment following the opening of ABC Supply Stadium, home of the Beloit Sky Carp, which has helped attract new residential, commercial, entertainment, and tourism-related activity to the downtown area. These investments, combined with continued public and private redevelopment efforts, have strengthened downtown Beloit's role as a regional destination and activity center.



Across the Stateline, South Beloit continues to pursue redevelopment initiatives and infrastructure improvements to support future economic growth. Significant development potential remains along the Willowbrook Road corridor, near the I-39/90 interchange, and within undeveloped areas north of IL 75 between IL 251 and I-39/90. These areas are planned for commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development and are well-positioned to benefit from their proximity to the interstate.

A proposal for a large-scale data center campus in the Towns of Beloit and Turtle has emerged as a potential future development opportunity within the region. While the project remained under review at the time of the 2055 LRTP development process and could represent a significant private investment if approved, data centers typically generate relatively modest transportation demand once operational. Nevertheless, the proposal highlights the importance of monitoring evolving land use, infrastructure, and development patterns that may influence future transportation planning and investment decisions.



Collectively, these investments demonstrate the continued growth potential of the Stateline region. Much of this growth is expected to occur near major transportation corridors, interstate interchanges, and established employment centers, reinforcing the importance of preserving transportation system performance, maintaining freight mobility, and improving regional connectivity. As development activity continues along the I-39/90 corridor and in areas to the east, SLATS may need to periodically evaluate whether adjustments to the MPA boundary are warranted to reflect evolving development patterns and urban growth. Continued coordination between transportation planning, land use planning, and economic development efforts will be important to ensure future development supports regional transportation goals, preserves planned transportation corridors, and does not adversely affect existing or future multimodal transportation investments.

Planning Context and Policy Review

A review of local and county comprehensive plans provides important context for understanding current and future transportation needs across the Stateline region. These plans reflect community goals related to growth, land use, housing, economic development, environmental stewardship, and transportation, all of which influence travel patterns and long-term transportation investment needs. As decisions regarding where and how development occurs continue to shape the demand for transportation infrastructure and services, coordination between transportation planning and land use planning remains essential.



A detailed review of local and county plans is provided in Appendix E.

Several common themes emerged from the comprehensive plan review. Communities throughout the region emphasize the importance of preserving and maintaining existing infrastructure, supporting economic development, improving regional connectivity, expanding transportation options, and accommodating future growth in a coordinated manner. Many plans also recognize the need to provide safe and accessible transportation facilities for users of all ages and abilities while balancing growth with the preservation of community character, agricultural resources, and environmental assets.

The comprehensive plan review also helped identify planned growth areas, redevelopment opportunities, future transportation corridors, and investment priorities that may influence travel demand over the life of the LRTP. Collectively, these plans provide a valuable local perspective on how communities envision future growth and development occurring throughout the region. Understanding these local priorities helps ensure that regional transportation investments are responsive to community needs and remain consistent with broader land use, economic development, and community development objectives.

The review also highlighted the strong relationship between development patterns and transportation system performance. More compact development and redevelopment within established areas can support walking, bicycling, transit, and more efficient use of existing infrastructure, while dispersed development patterns may increase reliance on the automobile and require additional transportation investments. As a result, many communities continue to promote development patterns that improve access to jobs, services, education, healthcare, and other destinations while making efficient use of public infrastructure.

Overall, the comprehensive plans reviewed are generally consistent with the goals and objectives of the SLATS 2055 LRTP. Together, they reinforce the importance of integrating land use and transportation decisions, supporting economic development, enhancing multimodal mobility, and maintaining a safe and efficient transportation system.

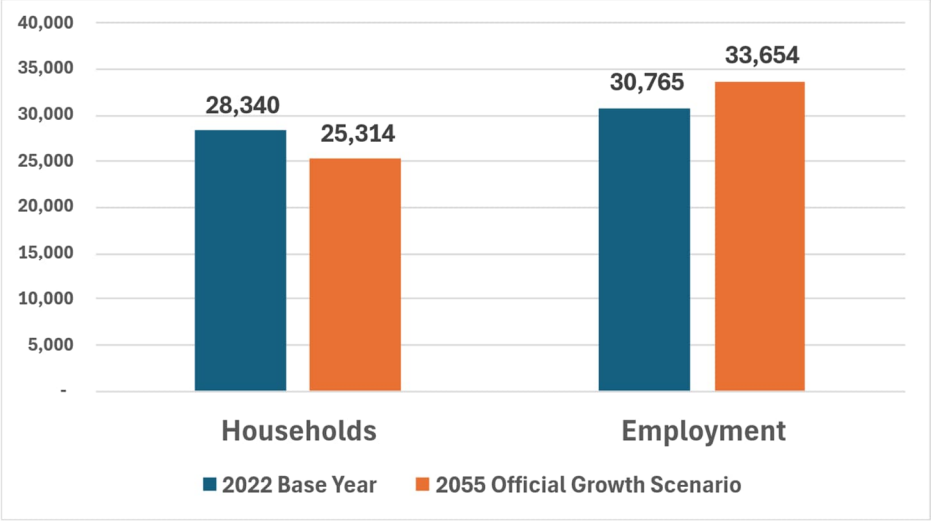
Projected Socioeconomic Trends Through 2055

Population, household, and employment forecasts provide a critical foundation for the SLATS 2055 LRTP and serve as key inputs to the Rock County Travel Demand Model, which includes the SLATS MPA and is maintained by WisDOT modeling staff. These forecasts help estimate future travel patterns, transportation demand, and infrastructure needs throughout the planning horizon. For the Wisconsin portion of the MPA, population, household, and employment forecasts were developed by WisDOT using the most current demographic and socioeconomic data available from the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA). For the Illinois portion of the MPA, forecasts were derived from the most recent socioeconomic data and projections available through previous regional travel demand modeling efforts.

The socioeconomic forecasts used for the 2055 LRTP are based on the Wisconsin DOA Vintage 2024 Population Projections, released in January 2025. These projections reflect long-term demographic trends occurring throughout Wisconsin, including changes in birth rates, increasing life expectancy, an aging population, and evolving household characteristics.

As shown in **Figure 19**, the SLATS region is projected to experience modest demographic change through 2055. Households are forecast to decline slightly between 2022 and 2055, while regional employment is expected to increase slightly. These trends are generally consistent with long-term demographic patterns occurring across much of Wisconsin and the Midwest, including slower population growth, an aging population, and changing household characteristics. While overall demographic growth is expected to be limited, new residential, commercial, and industrial development is expected to occur throughout the SLATS MPA, particularly adjacent to existing urban areas, employment centers, and major transportation corridors. In addition, interstate and regional travel demand along key facilities such as I-39/90, I-43, and other principal arterial corridors is expected to remain strong, reinforcing the need to maintain a safe, efficient, and reliable transportation system that supports economic activity, freight movement, and regional mobility through 2055.

FIGURE 19. PROJECTED HOUSEHOLD AND EMPLOYMENT TRENDS (2022-2055)



SOURCE: WisDOT; 2022 and 2055 Socioeconomic Modeling Data for the SLATS MPA.

Household forecasts provide additional insight into future development patterns and transportation demand. As shown in **Figures 20** and **21**, the highest concentrations of households and household density in 2055 are expected to remain within and adjacent to the existing urbanized areas of Beloit, South Beloit, and Rockton. While much of the planning area is projected to experience modest change, **Figure 22** illustrates that household growth is anticipated to be concentrated within established neighborhoods, redevelopment areas, and locations with access to existing transportation infrastructure and public services. These development patterns generally align with the growth strategies identified in local comprehensive plans and support the efficient use of existing transportation facilities.

Employment forecasts show a similar pattern. **Figures 23** and **24** indicate that employment activity will continue to be concentrated near existing commercial, industrial, and employment centers, particularly along the I-39/90 corridor, within and adjacent to the Gateway Business Park, and other established activity centers. These areas benefit from direct access to the regional highway system and are expected to remain key economic drivers for the Stateline region. As shown in **Figure 25**, the strongest employment growth is projected to occur in and around these existing employment hubs, particularly near interstate interchanges and major transportation corridors. This trend is further reinforced by major employment investments, including the Ho-Chunk Casino development, which is expected to open in Fall 2026 and generate approximately 1,000 direct jobs and an estimated 500 additional jobs associated with supporting hospitality, lodging, restaurant, and related services.

Together, the household and employment forecasts provide a consistent and technically defensible foundation for evaluating future transportation conditions and identifying long-range transportation needs. While any long-range forecast is subject to uncertainty, the projections used in this LRTP reflect the best available demographic and economic data and provide a reasonable basis for assessing future transportation system performance through 2055.

The transportation implications of these forecasts extend beyond changes in population alone. Future travel demand will continue to be influenced by employment concentrations, freight activity, land development patterns, and regional travel flows. Continued development near existing urbanized areas, employment centers, and major transportation corridors reinforces the importance of preserving system performance, improving regional connectivity, supporting freight movement, and maintaining reliable access to jobs and services. Major facilities such as I-39/90, I-43, and other principal arterial corridors will remain critical components of the regional transportation network, serving existing and emerging employment centers, commercial districts, freight facilities, and other major trip generators through 2055.

FIGURE 20. 2055 HOUSEHOLDS

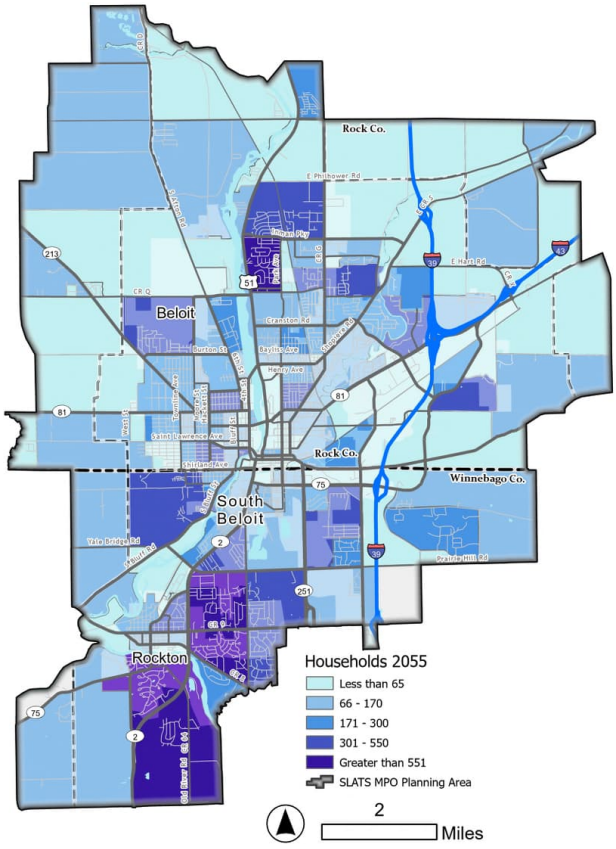


FIGURE 21. 2055 HOUSEHOLD DENSITY



FIGURE 22. HOUSEHOLD CHANGE (PERCENT CHANGE, 2022 – 2055)

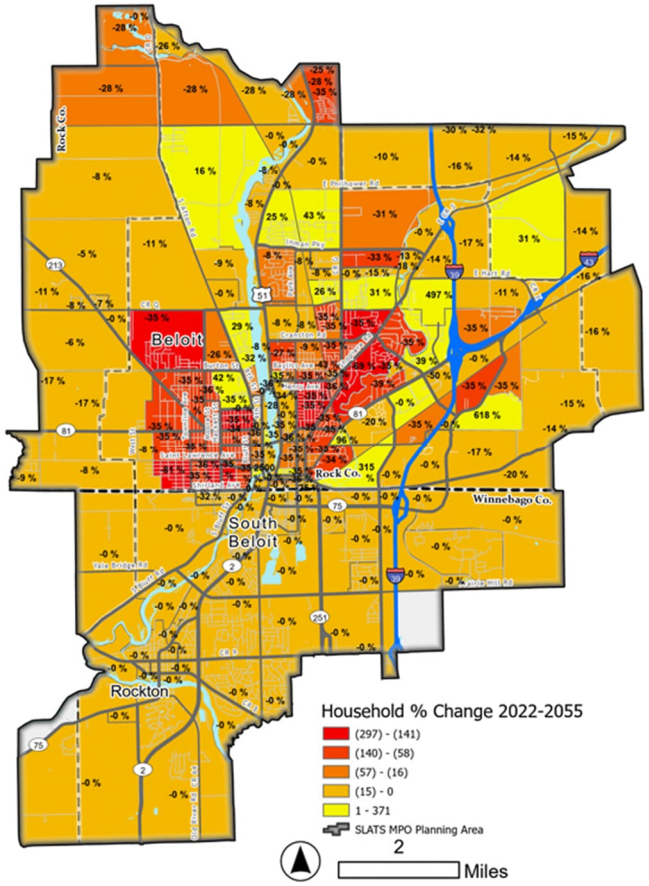


FIGURE 23. EMPLOYMENT 2055

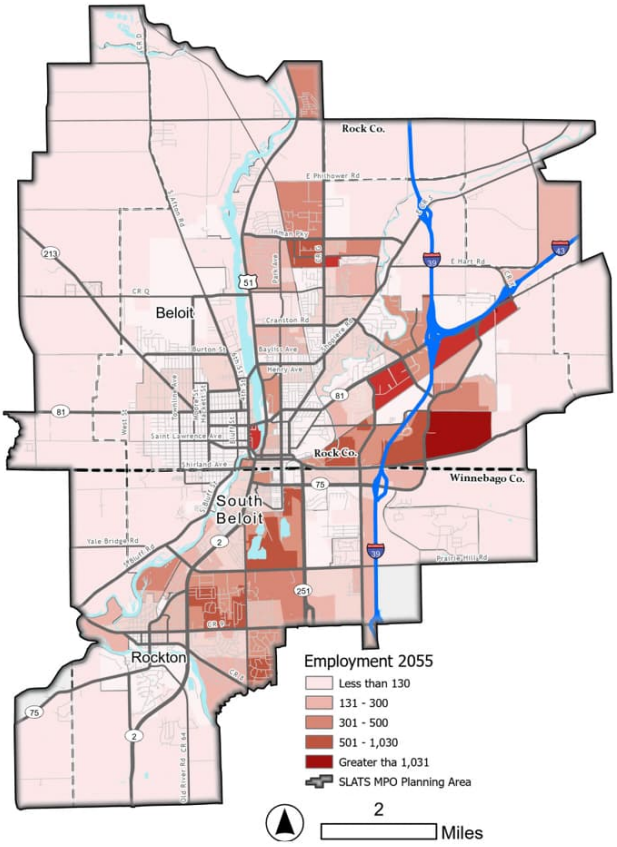


FIGURE 24. 2055 EMPLOYMENT DENSITY

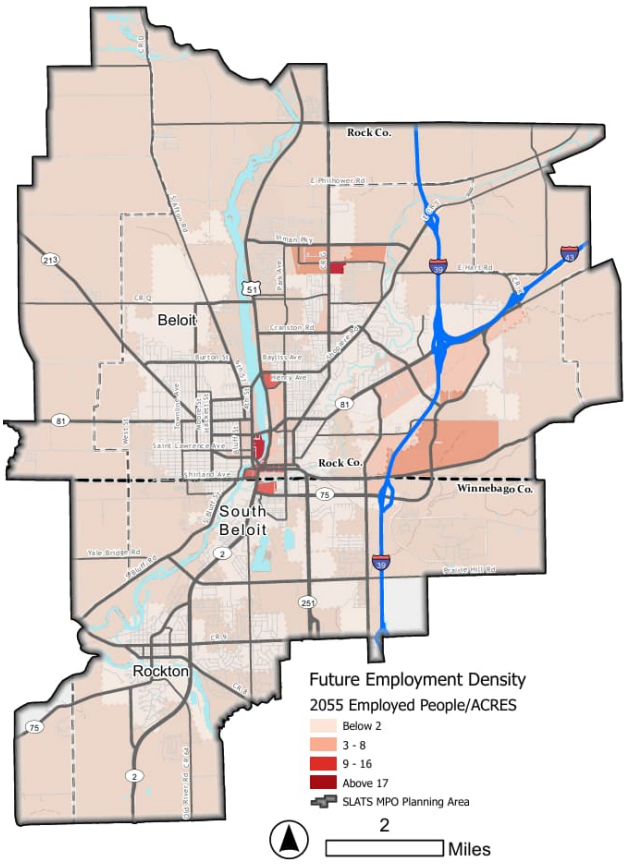
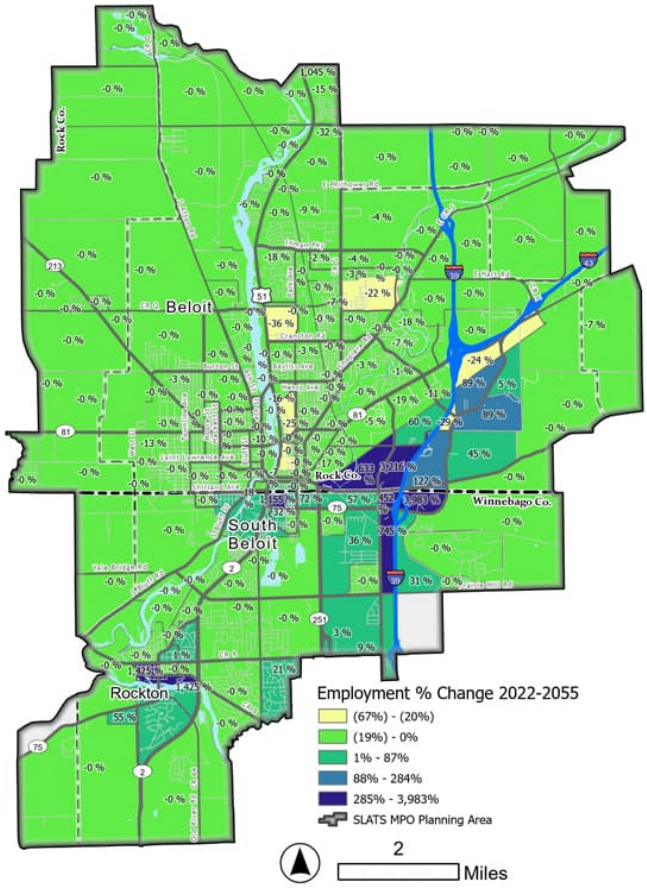


FIGURE 25. EMPLOYMENT CHANGE (PERCENT CHANGE, 2022 – 2055)



Implications for Future Travel Demand

Household and employment forecasts provide an important foundation for understanding future transportation demand within the SLATS MPA. Although the forecasts indicate relatively modest overall change through the planning horizon, travel demand will continue to be shaped by economic activity, development patterns, commuting behavior, and regional travel movements. Transportation needs are influenced not only by the number of households and jobs in the region, but also by where people live and work, how they travel, and the movement of goods throughout the regional economy.

While the regional transportation system is generally expected to accommodate future travel demand, localized congestion, delay, and operational challenges are to be expected along certain roadway segments, and at intersections, and interchange areas. These conditions are most evident during peak travel periods, including morning and afternoon commutes, school arrival and dismissal times, and other periods of concentrated travel demand. Continued residential, commercial, and employment growth in targeted areas may further increase traffic volumes at specific locations, creating the need for operational, safety, and capacity improvements to maintain reliable access to homes, jobs, schools, and community destinations.

The SLATS region also serves an important role in the movement of people and goods throughout southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois. Interstate and regional highway corridors are expected to continue carrying substantial volumes of passenger and commercial truck traffic regardless of local demographic trends. Facilities along the I-39/90 corridor, particularly in areas south of the Wisconsin-Illinois state line, continue to function as major centers for truck parking, fueling, and related traveler services. As freight activity and through-travel continue to grow, preserving efficient freight mobility and maintaining reliable access to major employment centers, commercial destinations, and other regional trip generators will remain important transportation priorities.

The transportation system must also adapt to changing demographic characteristics and travel preferences. An aging population, evolving workforce and commuting patterns, technological advancements, and continued interest in multimodal transportation options may influence how residents access jobs, services, healthcare, education, and other destinations. As a result, future transportation investments should focus not only on accommodating travel demand, but also on improving system reliability, safety, accessibility, connectivity, and transportation choice across the region.

Chapter 6. Existing and Future Transportation Conditions

This chapter provides an overview of the existing transportation network within the SLATS MPA and establishes a baseline understanding of current conditions and performance. The multimodal network includes roadways and freight facilities, public transportation services, active transportation infrastructure, regional passenger rail opportunities, aviation facilities, and emerging transportation technologies.

Understanding how the transportation network functions today is essential for identifying future needs and investment priorities. This chapter evaluates the performance of each transportation mode, summarizes recent planning efforts and system trends, and highlights key strengths, challenges, and opportunities affecting mobility throughout the region.

Transportation System Performance Report

Consistent with federal performance-based planning requirements, Appendix G documents SLATS adopted transportation performance measures and targets, evaluates existing system performance, and describes how the 2055 LRTP supports progress toward achieving those performance objectives.

The chapter also examines future travel demand and evaluates how projected household, employment, and land use trends may influence transportation conditions through 2055. These findings provide the foundation for identifying the transportation needs, priorities, and investment strategies presented in subsequent chapters. Additional information regarding future-year forecasts and projected transportation conditions is provided in **Appendix D**.

Roadways

The SLATS region is served by an extensive roadway network that provides local, regional, and interstate connectivity throughout the MPA. I-39/90 serves as the region's primary north-south corridor, connecting the Stateline area with Rockford to the south and Janesville, Madison, and other destinations to the north. I-43 connects to I-39/90 near Milwaukee Road and provides an important connection to Milwaukee and communities throughout southeastern Wisconsin. Supporting these interstate facilities is a network of arterial, collector, and local roadways that provide access to residential neighborhoods, employment centers, commercial destinations, schools, and community facilities.

The roadway network accommodates a diverse range of users, including motorists, commercial trucks, transit vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians. In addition to supporting local travel, the region plays an important role in the movement of goods throughout southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois. As a result, maintaining the safety, reliability, and operational performance of the roadway network remains essential to supporting regional mobility, economic activity, and quality of life. The following sections summarize the roadway system's functional classification, existing and projected traffic volumes and operating conditions, and key roadway safety trends within the SLATS MPA.

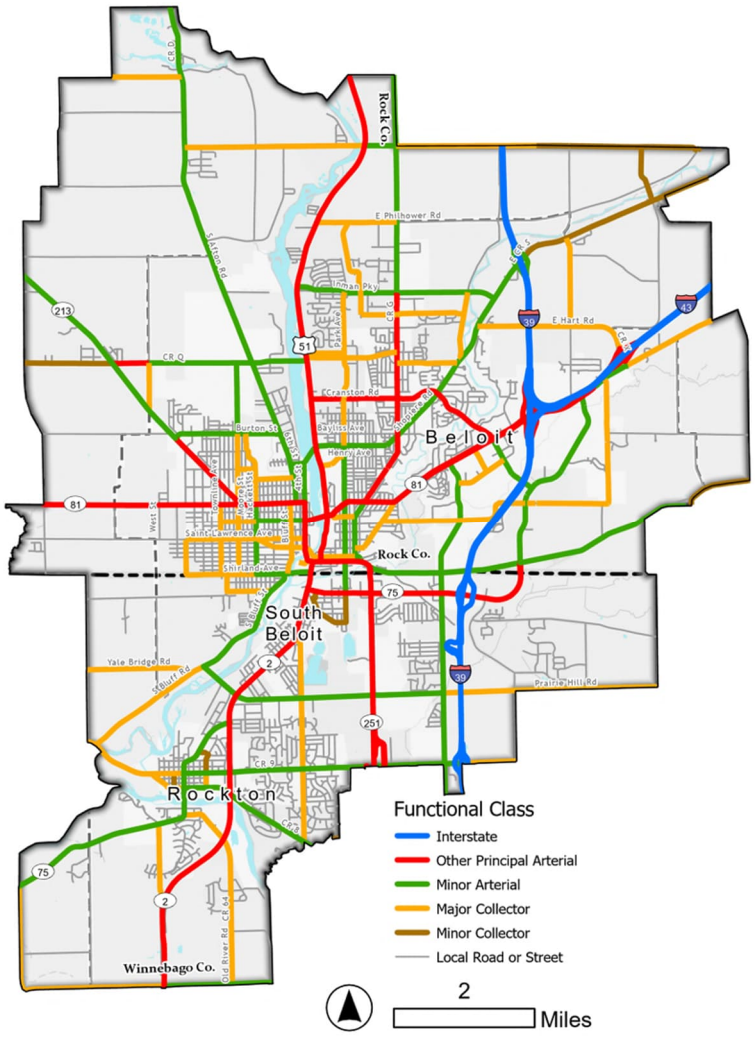
Functional Classification

Functional classification is the process of categorizing roadways based on the type of trips they serve and the level of mobility and land access they provide within the transportation network. Established by the FHWA, the functional classification system defines the role each roadway plays in moving people and goods, ranging from Interstate facilities that accommodate regional and interstate travel to local streets that provide direct access to homes, businesses, and other destinations. Functional classification is an important consideration in transportation planning, roadway design, safety analysis, system performance monitoring, and eligibility for federal transportation funding programs.

Within the SLATS MPA, the roadway network is organized as a connected hierarchy of interstate highways, principal arterials, minor arterials, collectors, and local roadways. I-39/90 serves as the region's primary interstate corridor, providing connections to major markets throughout Wisconsin, Illinois, and the broader Midwest. Principal and minor arterial roadways, including key state and U.S. highways, provide mobility between communities, employment centers, commercial areas, and major activity centers. Collector roadways distribute traffic between arterial routes and local streets, while local roadways primarily provide direct access to adjacent land uses.

Figure 26 displays the functional classification system within the SLATS MPA, highlighting the roadway hierarchy that supports local, regional, and interstate travel.

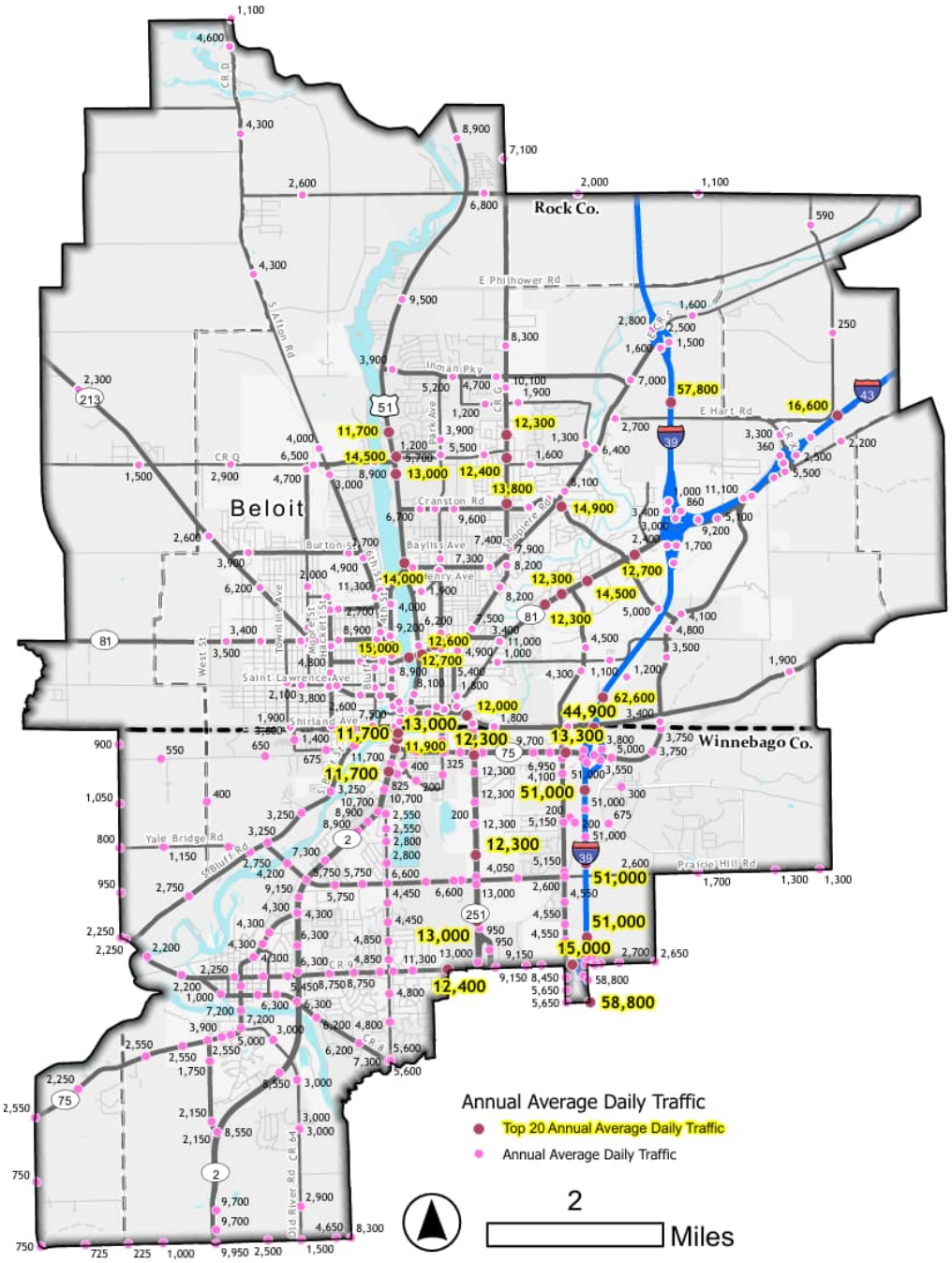
FIGURE 26. SLATS FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION



Average Daily Traffic Volumes

Traffic volumes within the SLATS MPA are concentrated along the principal arterial network, particularly on the I-39/90 corridor and major east-west and north-south routes serving Beloit, South Beloit, Rockton, and surrounding communities. The highest Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes in the region occur on I-39/90, where volumes range from 57,000 to 62,600 vehicles per day. These volumes reflect the corridor's critical role in accommodating regional travel, interstate commerce, commercial truck activity, and long-distance trips between Wisconsin, Illinois, and destinations throughout the Midwest. **Figure 27** displays current AADT volumes throughout the SLATS MPA.

FIGURE 27. AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRAFFIC (AADT) VOLUMES



Outside of the interstate system, the roadway network exhibits a clear hierarchy of traffic demand. Principal arterials such as Milwaukee Road, Cranston Road, Prairie Avenue, Riverside Drive, Henry Avenue, and key segments of US 51 carry some of the highest traffic volumes in the region, generally ranging from 10,000 to 15,000 vehicles per day. These corridors provide important connections between residential neighborhoods, commercial districts, employment centers, schools, and other major activity centers. Traffic volumes generally decrease on collector and local roadways, with many segments carrying fewer than 5,000 vehicles per day. Overall, the distribution of traffic volumes highlights the concentration of travel activity within the Beloit urbanized area while emphasizing the importance of maintaining the operational performance, reliability, and safety of key arterial corridors that support both local mobility and regional connectivity.

Figure 28 compares interstate traffic volumes from 2010 and 2023. Despite relatively modest changes in regional demographic forecasts, as discussed in Chapter 4, traffic volumes along the interstate system have increased substantially over the past decade. Traffic volumes on I-39/90 increased between approximately 13 percent and 42 percent at key locations within the SLATS MPA, while traffic volumes on I-43 east of Hart Road increased by nearly 18 percent. These trends underscore the continuing importance of interstate travel, freight movement, and regional connectivity to the Stateline area. The growth in interstate traffic also reflects the region's strategic location along major north-south transportation corridors connecting Wisconsin, Illinois, and the broader Midwest.

FIGURE 28. HISTORIC INTERSTATE VOLUMES (2010 VS. 2023)

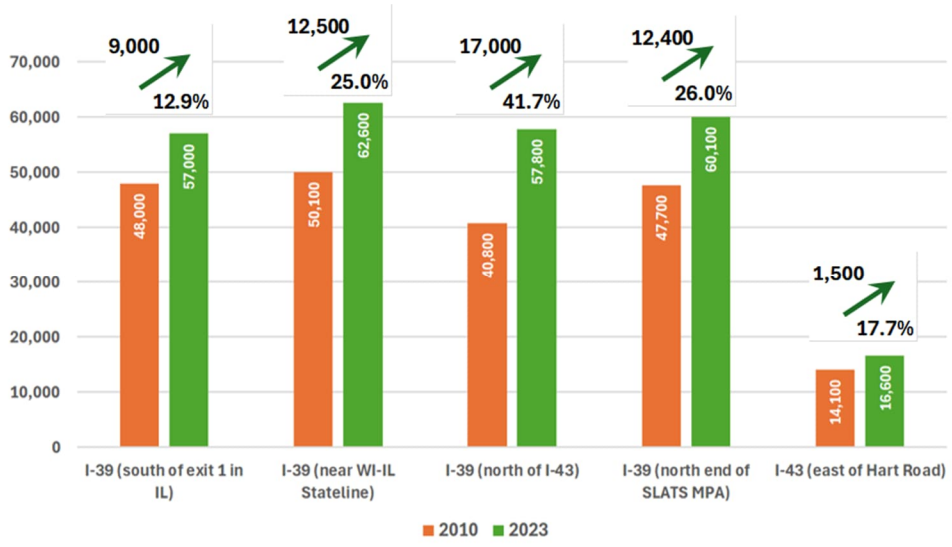
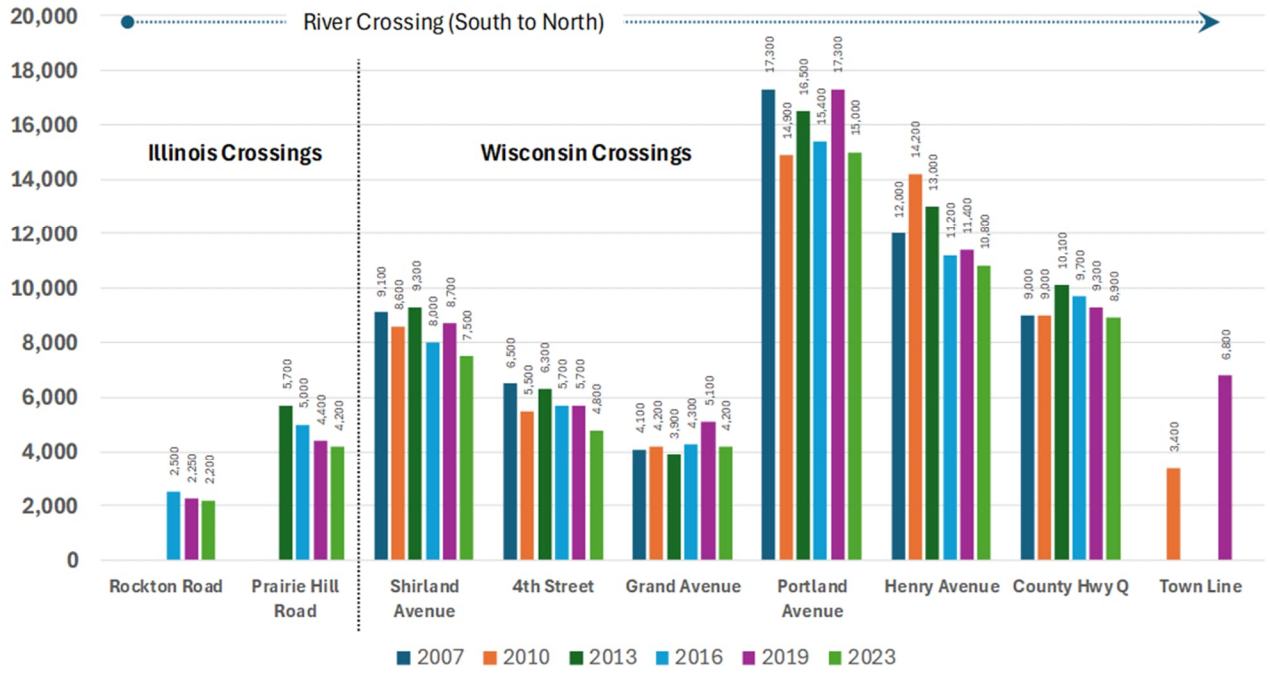


Figure 29 summarizes historic traffic volumes across the principal east-west Rock River crossings within the SLATS MPA. Between 2016 and 2023, total river crossing volumes declined from approximately 68,700 to 64,300 daily crossings, a decrease of about 6 percent. Although overall crossing activity has decreased, several crossings continue to serve high levels of traffic, particularly Portland Avenue and Henry Avenue. These crossings play a critical role in connecting communities, employment centers, schools, and commercial destinations throughout the region. The ability of these crossings to function efficiently is closely tied to the operational performance of adjacent intersections and roadway corridors on both sides of the river. As a result, maintaining reliable east-west connectivity requires not only preserving the capacity and condition of the river crossings themselves, but also addressing

intersection operations, traffic flow, and network connectivity throughout the surrounding transportation system. This relationship underscores the importance of preserving and enhancing east-west connectivity as an ongoing transportation planning priority within the SLATS region.

FIGURE 29. HISTORIC EAST-WEST RIVER CROSSING VOLUMES



Existing (2022) and Future (2055) Level of Service

SLATS coordinates with WisDOT to evaluate existing and future traffic conditions using the Rock County Travel Demand Model. As part of the 2055 LRTP, the model was used to assess existing (2022) and projected 2055 traffic conditions based on the household and employment forecasts presented in **Chapter 5**. The future-year analysis assumes a no-build scenario, meaning the existing roadway network is evaluated under future travel conditions without major capacity expansions. The travel demand model estimates average daily traffic volumes on roadway segments throughout the network, which are then compared to roadway capacity to calculate volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratios and corresponding Level of Service (LOS) measures.

The model results indicate that the transportation system generally performs well under both existing and future conditions. As shown in **Figures 30** and **31**, most roadway segments within the SLATS MPA operate at LOS A, B, or C under both 2022 and projected 2055 conditions. Only a limited number of roadway segments, primarily on the Illinois side of the MPA, are projected to operate at LOS D conditions. In urbanized areas, LOS D is generally considered an acceptable operating condition and often reflects efficient use of available roadway capacity. Overall, the analysis suggests that the regional roadway network is expected to continue providing acceptable operating conditions through 2055.

FIGURE 30. BASE YEAR 2022 LEVEL OF SERVICE

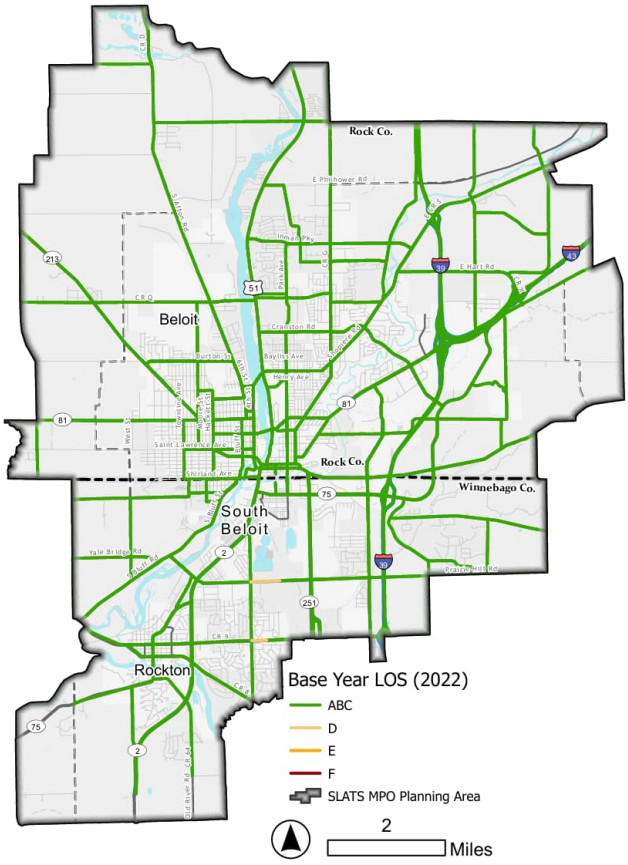
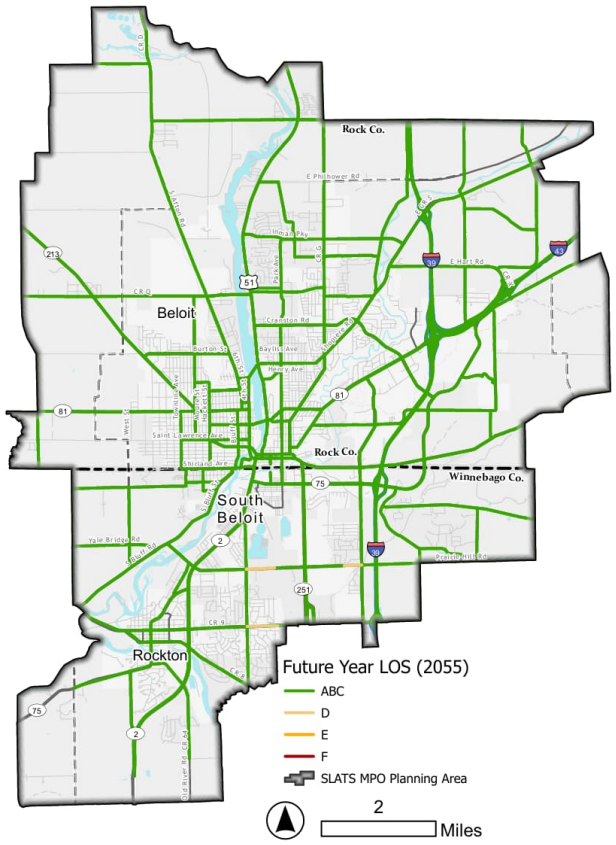


FIGURE 31. PROJECTED YEAR 2055 NO-BUILD LEVEL OF SERVICE



While the travel demand model indicates strong overall system performance, it is important to recognize that the analysis is based on average daily traffic volumes and does not fully capture peak-period traffic operations. As discussed previously, travelers may experience localized congestion, delay, and queuing at specific intersections, interchange areas, arterial corridors, and river crossing approaches during morning and afternoon commute periods, school arrival and dismissal times, and other periods of concentrated travel demand. Commercial truck traffic can further influence operations at certain locations, particularly along corridors that provide connections between I-39/90, employment centers, freight destinations, and other major trip generators. The public and stakeholders often refer to the WIS 81 corridor as having significant pass-through truck traffic that negatively impacts traffic operations.

The limited number of Rock River crossings within the MPA also remains an important consideration from both an operational and connectivity perspective. Although the travel demand model does not identify significant capacity deficiencies on the crossings themselves, the performance of these facilities is closely tied to the operation of the roadway and intersection network on both sides of the river. As a result, maintaining reliable east-west connectivity will continue to require attention to corridor operations, intersection performance, and overall network connectivity in addition to the river crossings themselves.

Roadway Safety

SLATS places a high priority on maintaining a safe transportation system for all users while supporting the efficient movement of people and goods throughout the MPA. Safety remains a primary focus of the 2055 LRTP and is reflected in the plan's goals and objectives. Consistent with federal Transportation Performance Management requirements, SLATS conducts on-going coordination with WisDOT, IDOT, and local partners to monitor safety performance and reduce fatalities and serious injuries on the regional transportation system.

SLATS also coordinates with WisDOT, IDOT, local governments, and other transportation partners to support implementation of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). Through this coordination, crash data, roadway characteristics, and safety performance trends are used to identify locations with elevated crash risk and to prioritize projects and strategies intended to reduce fatalities and serious injuries. Findings from the HSIP process help inform the regional understanding of roadway safety conditions and needs.

Table 7 summarizes crash severity data for the SLATS MPA between 2020 and 2024. During this five-year period, 7,577 crashes were reported, including 24 fatalities and 194 serious injury crashes. While fatal and serious injury crashes account for a relatively small share of total crashes, they have the greatest impact on public safety and are closely monitored as part of the regional transportation planning process.

TABLE 7. TOTAL CRASHES BY SEVERITY (2020 TO 2024)

	MPO Area	Fatal (K)	Serious Injury (A)	Minor Injury (B)	Possible Injury (C)	Property Damage Only (PDO)	Total
2020	Wisconsin	5	38	136	101	1,009	1,289
	Illinois	1	5	23	9	181	219
	Subtotal	***6***	***43***	***159***	***110***	***1,190***	***1,508***
2021	Wisconsin	6	34	115	89	1,163	1,407
	Illinois	0	11	30	10	188	239
	Subtotal	**6**	**45**	**145**	**99**	**1,351**	***1,646***
2022	Wisconsin	3	36	104	85	1,012	1,240
	Illinois	2	6	33	13	188	242
	Subtotal	**5**	**42**	**137**	**98**	**1,200**	***1,482***
2023	Wisconsin	1	23	124	95	954	1,197
	Illinois	2	3	33	27	195	260
	Subtotal	**3**	**26**	**157**	**122**	**1,149**	***1,457***
2024	Wisconsin	2	26	92	78	986	1,184
	Illinois	2	12	35	27	224	300
	Subtotal	**4**	**38**	**127**	**105**	**1,210**	***1,484***
	Grand Total	**24**	**194**	**725**	**534**	**6,100**	**7,577**

Source: WisDOT and IDOT Crash Data, 2020 to 2024.

As shown in **Figure 32**, crash activity is concentrated along the region's higher-volume roadway network, including major arterial corridors, downtown Beloit, interstate interchange areas, and key Rock River crossings. Many of these locations serve as important connections between neighborhoods, employment centers, commercial areas, schools, and other community destinations, resulting in higher levels of traffic activity and potential conflict points.

Figure 33 identifies the highest crash locations within the SLATS MPA. These locations are primarily concentrated along major arterial corridors and at intersections where traffic volumes, turning movements, access points, and multimodal activity converge. Several of the highest crash locations are located near downtown Beloit and along key east-west and north-south travel routes, highlighting the importance of continued monitoring of corridor and intersection safety performance.

FIGURE 32. TOTAL CRASHES (2020 – 2024)

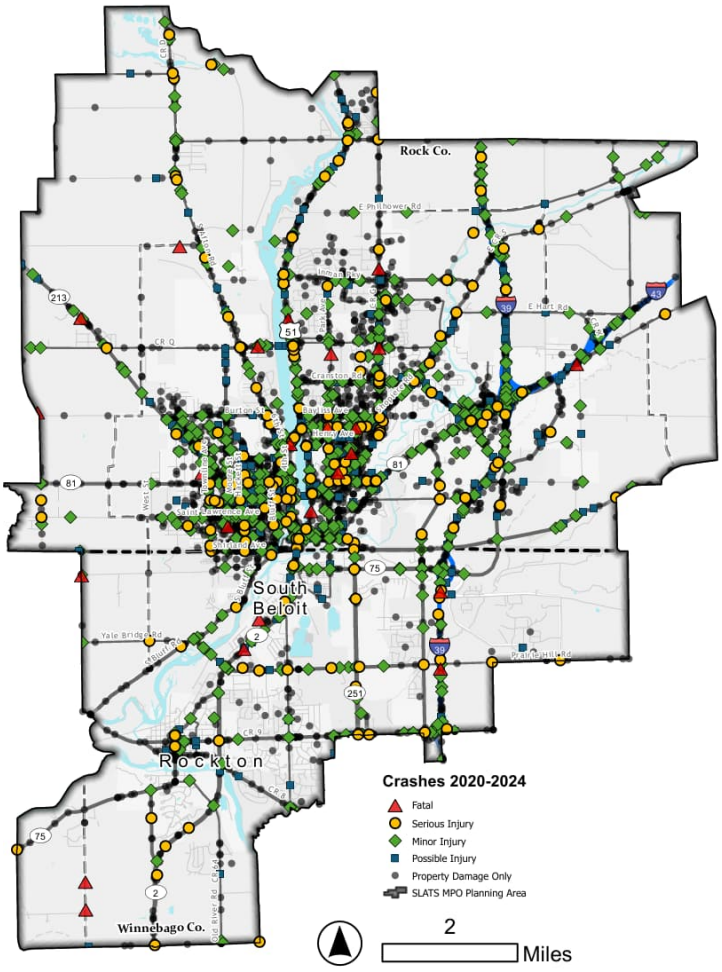


FIGURE 33. HIGH CRASH LOCATIONS

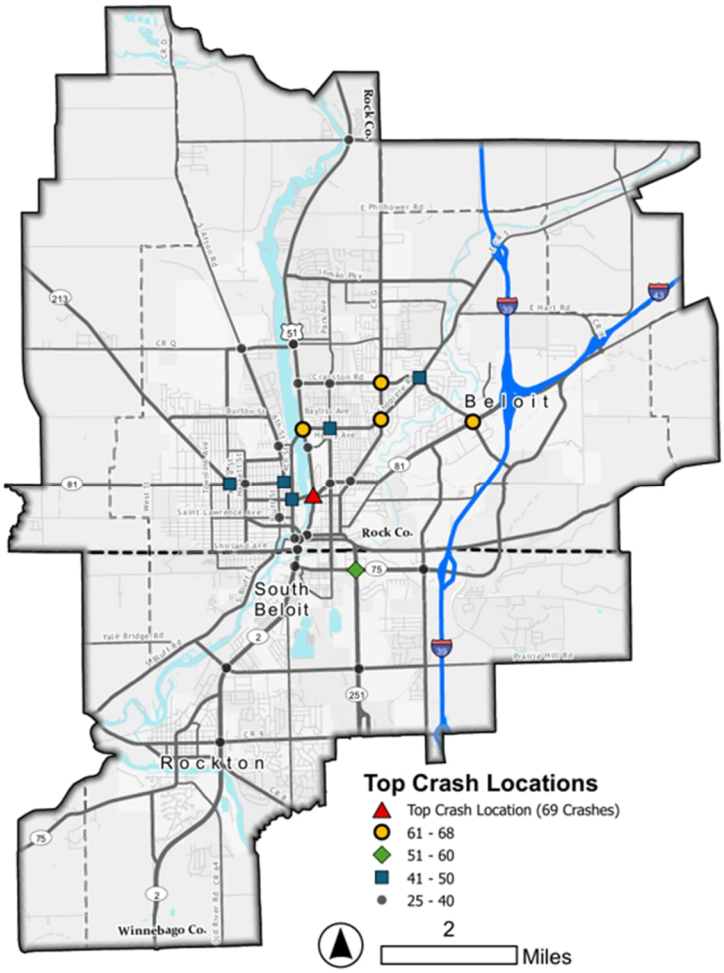
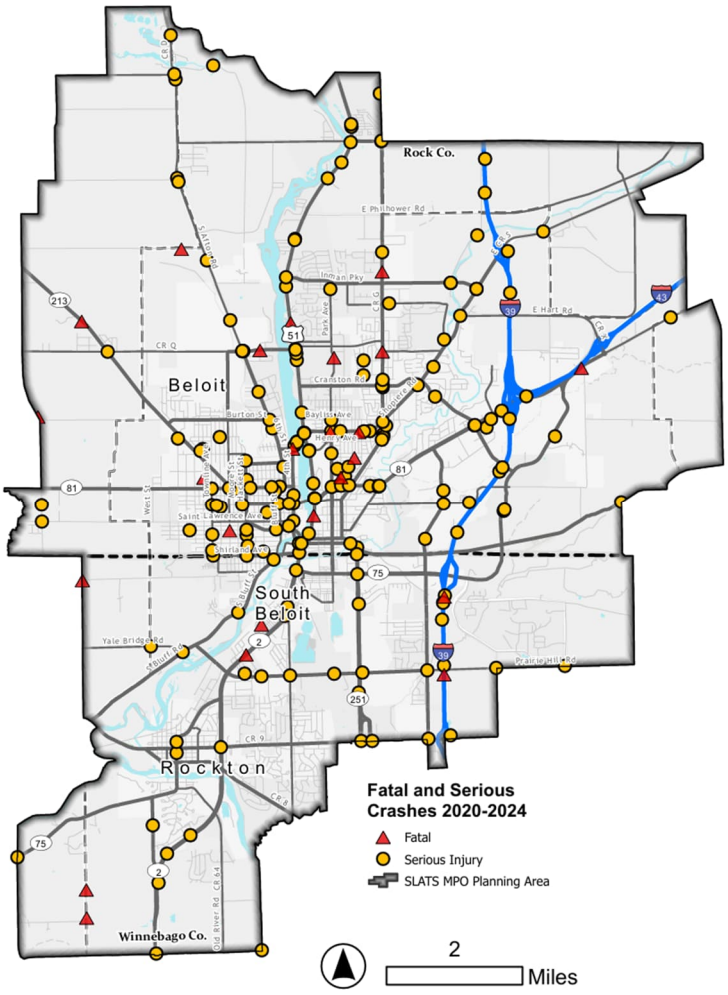


Figure 34 highlights the locations of crashes resulting in fatalities and serious injuries between 2020 and 2024. During this period, the SLATS MPA experienced 24 fatal crashes and 194 serious injury crashes. While these crashes represent a relatively small percentage of all reported crashes, they account for the most significant transportation safety outcomes and therefore warrant particular attention.

As shown in the figure, fatal and serious injury crashes are distributed throughout the MPA, although concentrations are evident along major roadway corridors, near interstate interchange areas, and within portions of the Beloit-South Beloit urban area. Several locations correspond to higher-volume arterial roadways and key transportation corridors that play important roles in regional mobility, freight movement, and east-west connectivity. The distribution of these crashes underscores that safety challenges are not confined to a single roadway or jurisdiction and require ongoing coordination among transportation agencies, local governments, law enforcement agencies, and other partners.

FIGURE 34. FATAL AND SERIOUS INJURY CRASH LOCATIONS



The crash patterns identified through this analysis provide valuable insight into existing transportation conditions and help highlight locations that may warrant continued monitoring. In addition to roadway geometry and traffic volumes, factors such as intersection operations, access density, multimodal activity, driver behavior, and commercial vehicle traffic can influence crash occurrence and severity.

As travel patterns, development activity, and traffic volumes evolve, roadway safety will remain an important consideration throughout the SLATS MPA. Continued monitoring of crash trends and locations, particularly along higher-volume corridors, major intersections, interstate interchange areas, and key east-west connections, will help improve understanding of regional safety needs and support future transportation planning efforts.

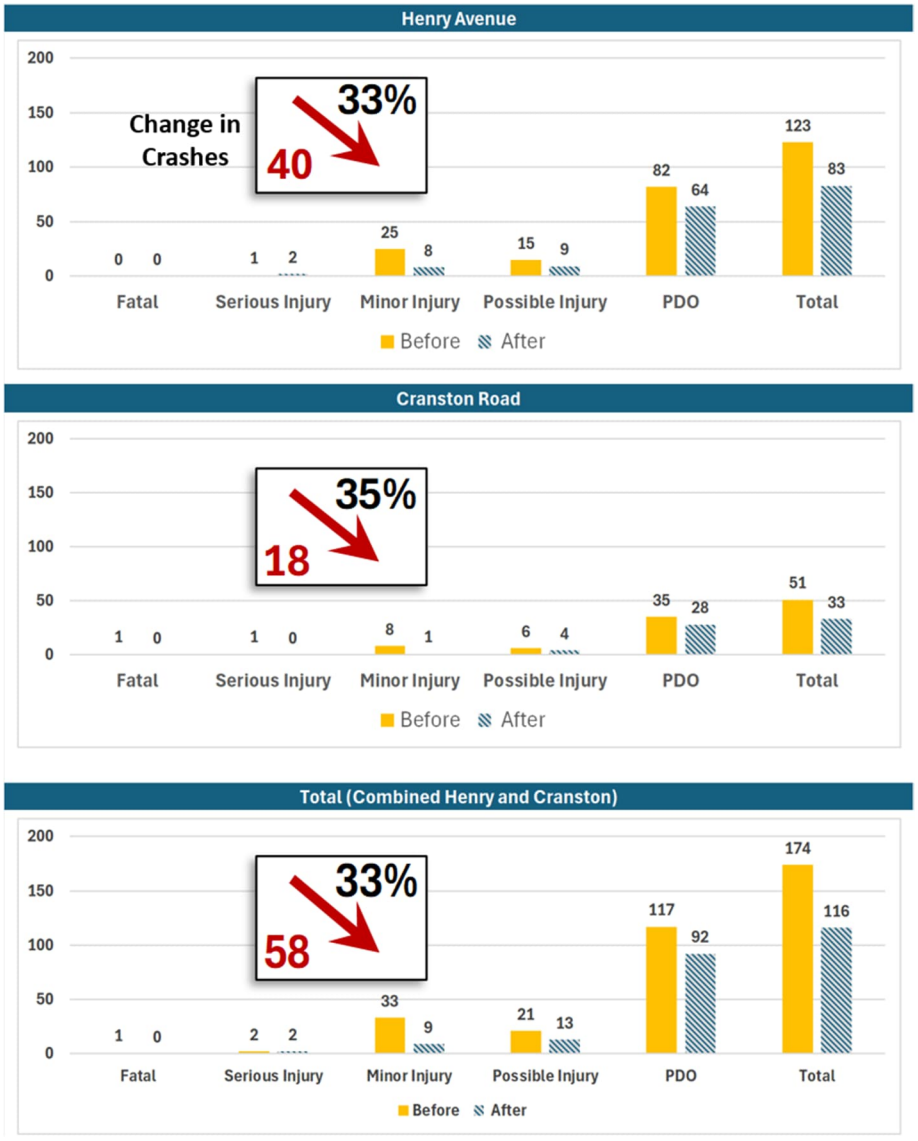
Roadway Reconfiguration Safety Evaluation

Over the past decade, several roadway reconfiguration projects have been implemented within the SLATS region as part of broader efforts to improve roadway safety and better align roadway design with traffic demand. Roadway reconfiguration projects are typically considered on corridors where traffic volumes can be accommodated with fewer through lanes, allowing roadway space to be reallocated to improve operations and safety. While additional roadway space may be used to

accommodate bicyclists or other multimodal improvements, the primary purpose of these projects is to improve safety performance, reduce crash frequency and severity, and better match roadway design to existing operating conditions.

To evaluate the effectiveness of these improvements, SLATS reviewed crash trends along the Henry Avenue and Cranston Road corridors before and after roadway reconfiguration. As shown in **Figure 35**, both corridors experienced substantial reductions in overall crashes following implementation. Henry Avenue experienced a 33 percent reduction in total crashes, while Cranston Road experienced a 35 percent reduction. Combined, the two corridors saw total crashes decrease from 174 to 116 crashes, representing an overall reduction of 33 percent.

FIGURE 35. TOTAL CRASH COMPARISON BEFORE AND AFTER ROADWAY RECONFIGURATION

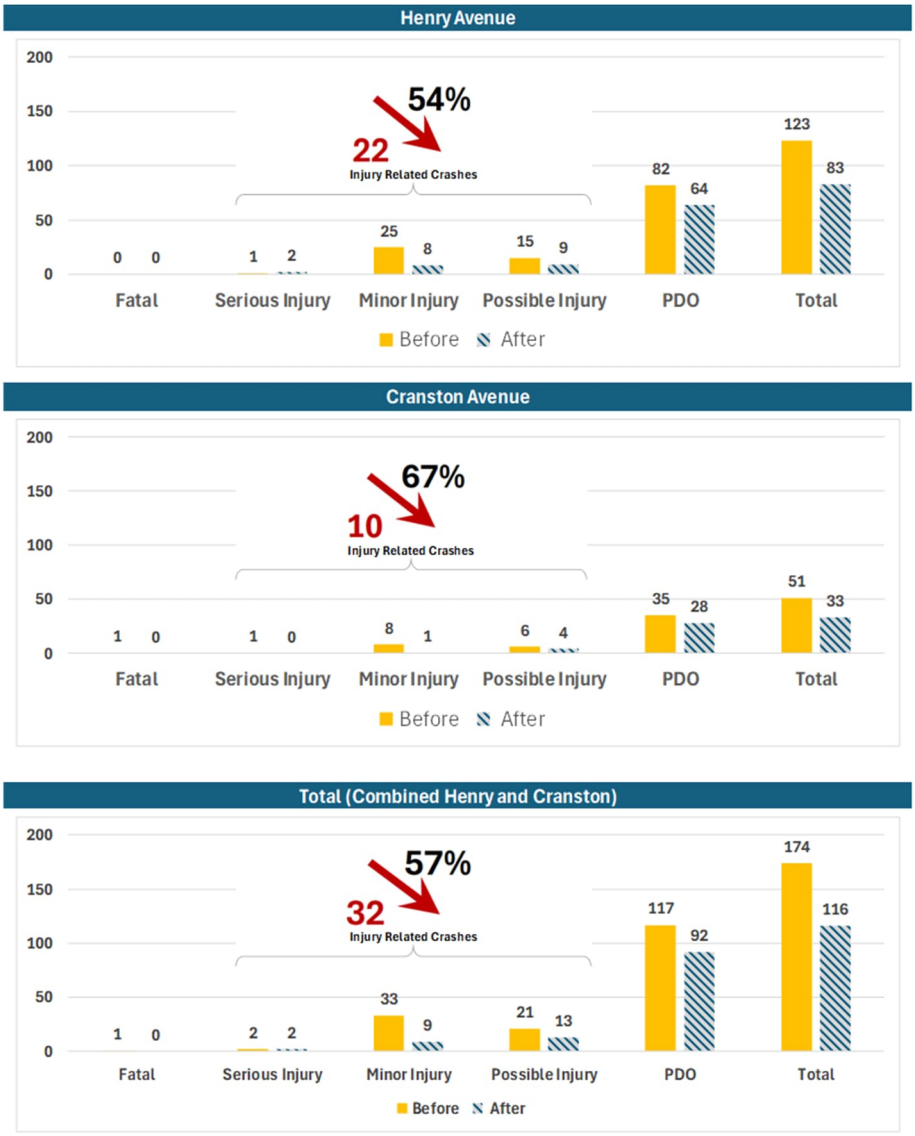


Source: WisDOT Crash Data.

While reductions in total crashes are important, one of the primary objectives of roadway reconfiguration is to reduce crashes that result in injuries. As shown in **Figure 36**, injury-related crashes declined significantly on both corridors following implementation. Henry Avenue experienced a 54

percent reduction in injury crashes, while Cranston Road experienced a 67 percent reduction. Combined, injury crashes declined from 56 to 24 crashes, representing an overall reduction of 57 percent.

FIGURE 36. INJURY CRASH COMPARISON BEFORE AND AFTER ROADWAY RECONFIGURATION



Source: WisDOT Crash Data.

These results suggest that roadway reconfiguration can be an effective safety improvement on corridors with appropriate traffic volumes and roadway characteristics. In addition to reducing overall crash frequency, the projects appear to have contributed to a meaningful reduction in injury-related crashes, which often represent the most significant safety concern for roadway users. Supporting crash data and analysis are provided in **Appendix D**.

Public Transportation



Public transportation plays an important role in the regional transportation system by providing mobility and access to jobs, education, healthcare, shopping, and other essential destinations. Transit services help expand mobility options for residents of all ages and abilities, including individuals who do not own a vehicle, prefer not to drive, are unable to drive, or rely on transit for some or all of their daily travel needs. As the SLATS region population and travel patterns continue to evolve, public transportation will remain an important component of a balanced and connected multimodal transportation network.

The Stateline region is served primarily by two transit providers: the Beloit Transit System (BTS) and the Stateline Mass Transit District (SMTD). Most of the higher-density areas within Beloit are served by BTS fixed-route bus service, while South Beloit and surrounding communities are served by SMTD's demand-response and deviated-route services. Historically, the majority of SMTD ridership has been concentrated in South Beloit, Rockton, and Roscoe, reflecting the importance of transit service within the urbanized portion of the Stateline region. In addition to BTS and SMTD, complementary transportation providers offer public transportation and specialized mobility services within and near the MPA.

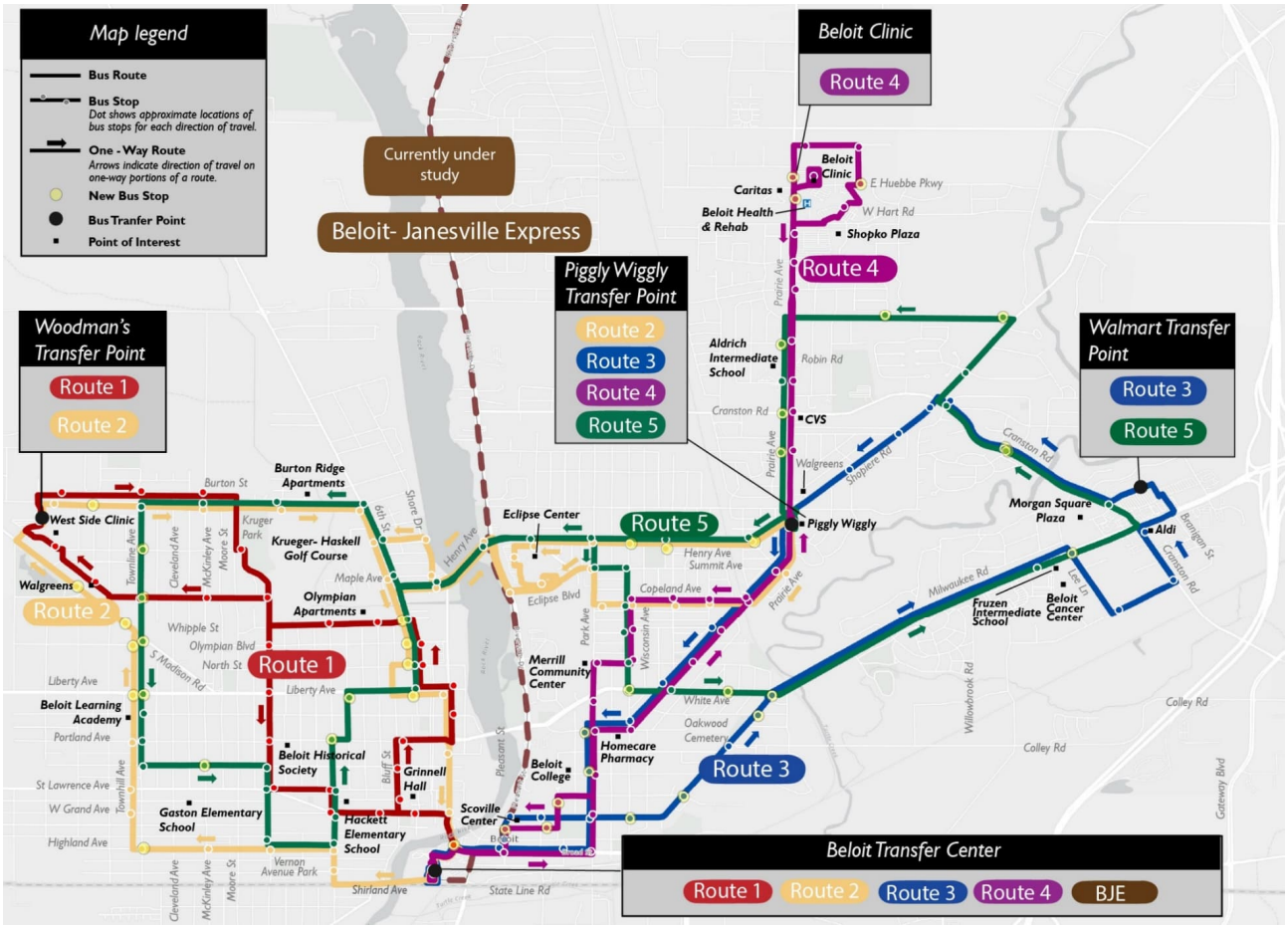
Beloit Transit System



BTS operates a fleet of modern, climate-controlled buses equipped with bike racks to support sustainable transportation options. The fixed-route service operates Monday through Friday, with demand-response service on Saturdays, which primarily covers the City of Beloit, and portions of the Town of Beloit in southern Wisconsin, and portions of the City of South Beloit in northern Illinois. Additionally, BTS coordinates with Janesville Transit (JT) to operate the Beloit–Janesville Express (BJE) commuter route. BJE is a vital regional route connecting people to jobs, social services, medical appointments, and educational institutions. **Figure 37** displays the BTS fixed-route service.

You Buy We Fly, a local transportation company, began providing complementary Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service for BTS as of January 1, 2026. Prior to this, paratransit service had been provided by County Transit (RCT) for several years. ADA paratransit services ensure that individuals with disabilities who are unable to use BTS services have access to door-to-door transportation. *You Buy We Fly* service operates during the same days and hours as BTS, offering essential mobility support to qualifying residents.

FIGURE 37. BELOIT TRANSIT SERVICE (FIXED-ROUTE SERVICE)



2026 Transit Development Plan

The **2026 Stateline Area Transit Development Plan (TDP)** provides the most recent comprehensive assessment of public transportation services within the SLATS MPA. Led by SLATS in partnership with BTS and SMTD, the plan establishes a framework for improving transit service, enhancing mobility, and addressing the evolving transportation needs of residents, businesses, and visitors throughout the region.

The TDP evaluated existing transit services, ridership trends, service performance, financial conditions, demographic characteristics, and future travel demand. The study also included extensive public and stakeholder engagement, combining system performance data with input gathered through surveys, interviews, community meetings, and outreach activities. This comprehensive analysis was used to identify current service gaps, unmet mobility needs, and opportunities to improve transit accessibility and efficiency throughout the Stateline area.

In addition to evaluating existing transit operations, the TDP examined opportunities to strengthen coordination between BTS and SMTD, improve regional connectivity, expand access to underserved populations and destinations, and enhance the overall rider experience. The study also explored alternative service delivery models, technology improvements, and strategies to support long-term financial sustainability.

A key component of the TDP was the **Regional Transit Study**, which evaluated opportunities to improve coordination between transit providers and enhance regional mobility throughout the SLATS MPA. The study assessed a range of regional service concepts and developed planning-level capital and operating cost estimates to support future transit investment decisions.

The findings and recommendations of the TDP provide the foundation for transit planning within the Stateline region and inform the transit-related policies, strategies, and investments included in the 2055 LRTP.

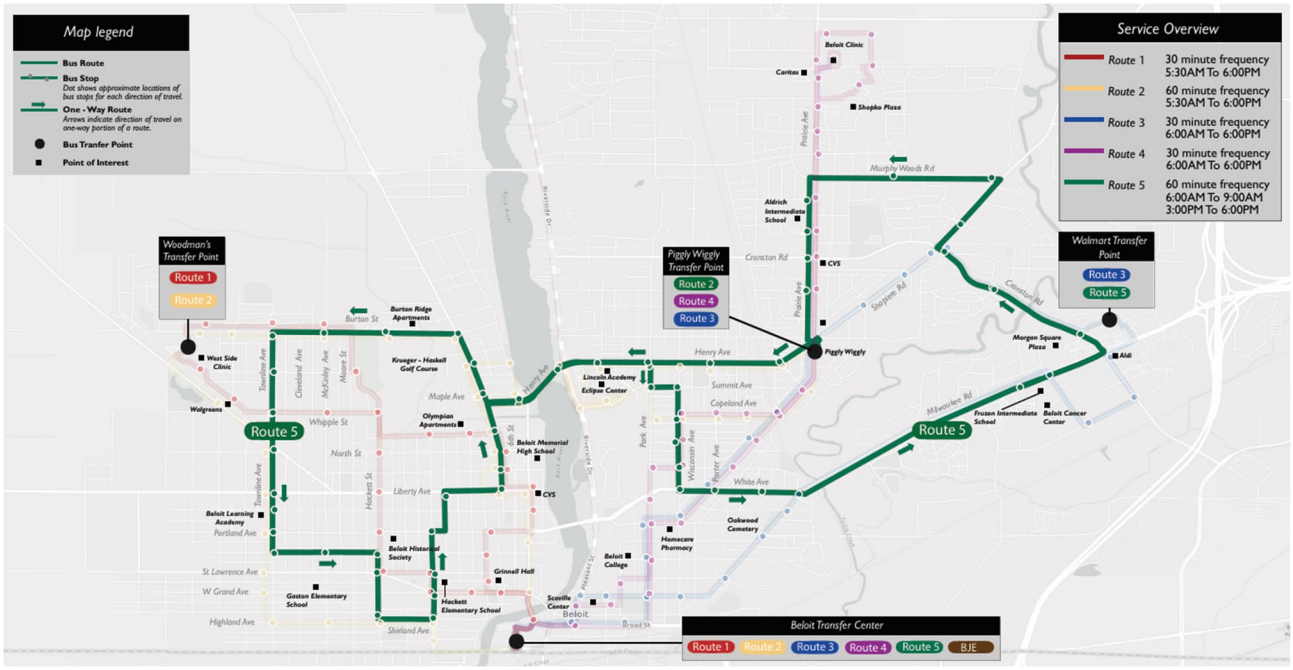
Recent Transit Service Enhancements and Planning Initiatives

School Tripper Route

As part of the recommendations identified through the 2026 Stateline Area TDP, BTS implemented a new School Tripper Route (Route 5) on September 2, 2025 (see **Figure 38**). The service replaced the former Gateway Route, which experienced relatively low ridership compared to the rest of the fixed-route system. The new route was designed to provide more direct connections between residential neighborhoods and Beloit area schools while maintaining a cost-neutral operating plan.

The School Tripper Route operates during peak school travel periods, generally between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., and serves students attending the School District of Beloit, Beloit Turner, and other educational destinations. Although designed to support student travel, the route operates year-round and also provides access to employment, recreation, and other community destinations. The service was implemented in conjunction with a new reduced student fare of $0.50 per trip, supporting BTS goals of increasing youth mobility, boosting ridership, and improving access to educational opportunities.

FIGURE 38. SCHOOL TRIPPER ROUTE



Beloit-Janesville Express (BJE) Intercity Transit Study

In 2026, BTS and Janesville Transit System (JT), in partnership with the Greater Beloit Economic Development Corporation (GBEDC), completed the Beloit-Janesville Express (BJE) Intercity Transit Study. The study evaluated opportunities to improve the long-term sustainability, efficiency, and effectiveness of the regional transit service while maintaining connections to key employment, educational, healthcare, and community destinations throughout Rock County.

Advancing Regional Transit Connectivity

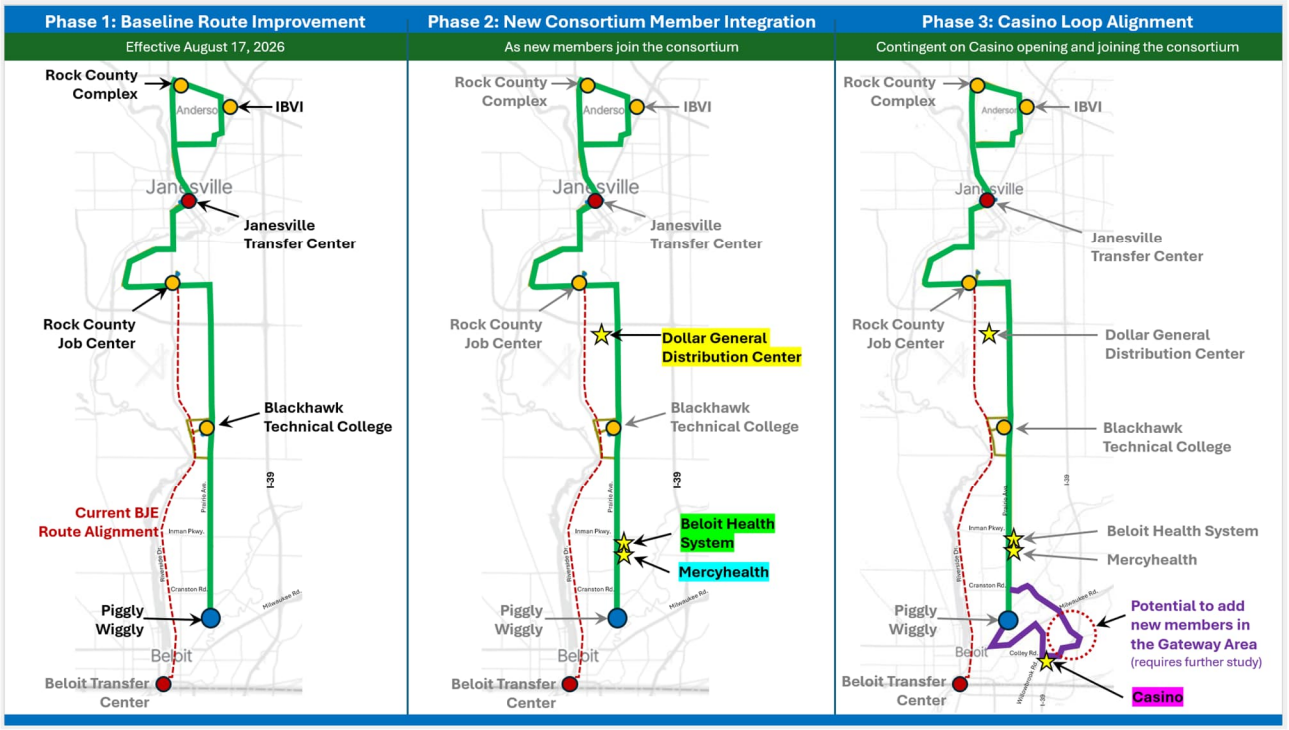


The **2026 Beloit-Janesville Express Intercity Transit Study** evaluated opportunities to improve regional transit service, expand access to jobs and services, and strengthen connections between Beloit and Janesville. The study's recommendations, including service enhancements implemented in 2026, support the multimodal planning objectives of the 2055 LRTP and federal transportation planning goals related to mobility, accessibility, and economic vitality.

The study identified opportunities to enhance service through route realignment, improved access to major employment and healthcare destinations, and the potential expansion of consortium membership (see **Figure 39**). As a result, the BJE route was realigned to the Prairie Avenue corridor and the southern terminus was relocated from the Beloit Transfer Center to the Piggly Wiggly transit hub, effective Fall 2026. These changes improved access to key destinations while creating opportunities to serve future consortium members along the corridor.

The study also established a phased implementation strategy to guide future service enhancements. Potential next steps include incorporating additional consortium members along the corridor and evaluating a future extension to the Ho-Chunk Nation Casino and surrounding employment areas as development occurs. These improvements are intended to strengthen regional mobility, support workforce access, and improve long-term financial sustainability of the service.

FIGURE 39. BELOIT JANESVILLE EXPRESS (FALL 2026 SERVICE CHANGE)



Fare Modernization and Fare Capping

BTS implemented a comprehensive fare modernization program on September 2, 2025, following approval by the Beloit City Council. The initiative introduced the WisGo account-based fare payment system, powered by the UMO platform, and simplified the agency's fare structure.

Under the new system, riders can pay fares using a reloadable WisGo smart card or the UMO mobile app, which accepts credit cards, debit cards, and mobile wallet payments. The fare modernization effort also introduced fare capping, allowing riders to pay per trip rather than purchase passes in advance. Once a rider reaches the applicable weekly or monthly spending limit, additional rides are provided at no additional cost for the remainder of that period.

As part of the fare update, BTS maintained its existing base fares of $1.50 for adults and $0.75 for seniors and individuals with disabilities. New reduced-fare categories were also established, including $0.75 for veterans and $0.50 for K-12 students (ages 5-18). Weekly and monthly fare caps were implemented for all rider categories using WisGo or the UMO app, ensuring that frequent riders automatically receive the lowest available fare. To simplify the fare structure and support the transition to fare capping, BTS also eliminated free transfers.

The fare modernization program improved access to transit by providing more flexible payment options, reducing barriers associated with upfront pass purchases, and ensuring that riders benefit from discounted fares based on their actual transit usage.

Stateline Mass Transit District

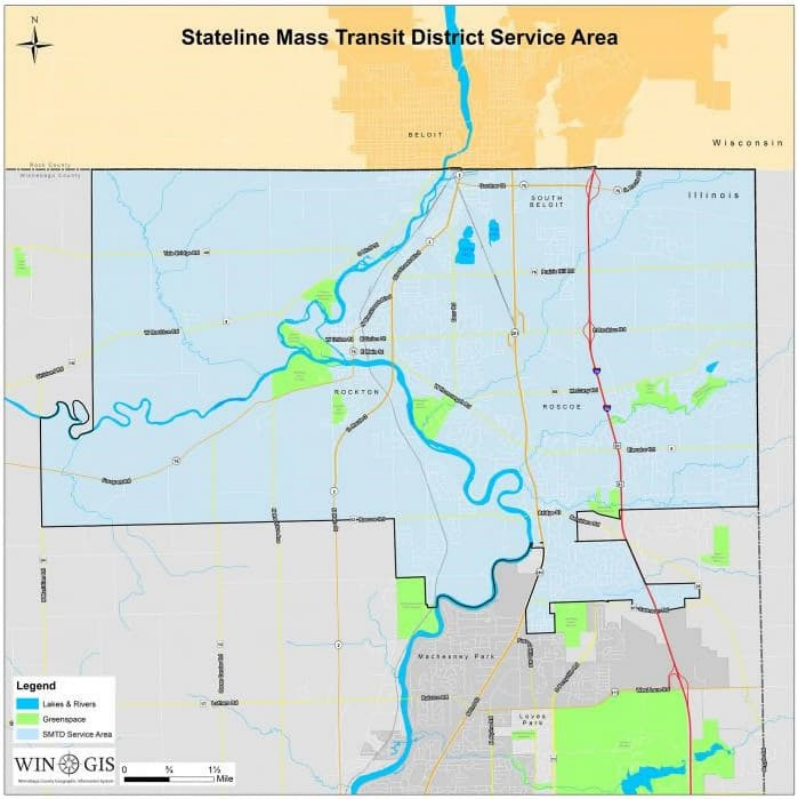


SMTD operates on-demand (curb-to-curb) transportation services within the Illinois portion of the Stateline area (see **Figure 40**). Operating 7 days a week, SMTD connects residents in northern Illinois to essential destinations, including shopping centers, medical facilities, educational institutions, and recreational areas. Figure xx displays the service area which includes the greater South Beloit, Rockton, and Roscoe areas, as well as Rockton and Roscoe Townships. SMTD operates on weekdays from 5:15 AM to 10:00 PM, on Saturdays from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM, and on Sundays from 8:15 AM to 4:30 PM. SMTD riders can purchase bus fares through the Token Transit app, enabling contactless ticketing with a simple phone-based process.

SMTD vans are designed for accessibility and comfort, ensuring that all residents, including those with mobility challenges, can use the service. The on-demand nature of SMTD's operations provides flexible and efficient transportation, connecting riders to key locations within the Stateline area. Additionally, SMTD provides limited service across the Stateline, into Beloit, for medical appointments, ensuring that residents have access to essential healthcare services. SMTD also connects to the Rockford Mass Transit (RMTD) fixed-route service at a transfer point in Machesney Park, and to the BTS Transfer Center on Shirland Avenue. These connections provide important regional connections to jobs, education and other services throughout the region.

SMTD receives funding provided by the Federal Transportation Administration and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). SMTD does not have a separate paratransit service but operates buses that are ADA-compliant and can accommodate individuals with disabilities

FIGURE 40. SMTD SERVICE AREA



Source: SMTD.

Rock County Transit

The Rock County Council on Aging operates Rock County Transit (RCT), which provides demand-response transportation service throughout Rock County. RCT provides transportation services for use by individuals at least 55 years of age or people who have a disability. Service is provided to all areas within Rock County using wheelchair accessible buses. RCT operates on weekdays from 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM for out-of-town trips and until 4:00 PM for trips within the city. Reservations are required to be made at least 3 days in advance.

RCT serves eligible individuals regardless of trip purpose. However, with fares of $5.00 for a one-way trip or $10.00 for a round trip within a community, and $6.00 for a one-way trip or $12.00 for a round trip between communities, the service is generally more costly than other local transit options. Riders may use the service for medical appointments, work-related transportation, shopping, personal errands, visits to nursing homes, hair appointments, and/or social trips.

RCT has also operated ADA paratransit service under contracts with the City of Janesville and the City of Beloit to provide door-to-door transportation for eligible individuals. Beginning in 2026, Rock County no longer operates paratransit service to the City of Beloit. These services are now being provided by 'You Buy We Fly.'

Student Shuttle Services



A free shuttle service is available Monday through Friday during the Fall and Spring semesters for Blackhawk Technical College (BTC) and Rock University High School students. A valid student ID is required to ride.

Beginning in Fall 2025, BTC expanded its shuttle service by adding a regular stop at South Beloit High School in South Beloit, Illinois, as reflected in BTC's Fall 2025 shuttle schedule. In discussions with BTC transportation representatives, staff indicated that this expansion was driven by growing demand from students residing in northern Illinois who rely on transit service to access educational opportunities in the Beloit–Janesville area. The addition of South Beloit service reinforces previous findings that highlight the need to enhance coordinated, north–south transportation options across the Illinois–Wisconsin border.

Intercity Bus Providers



Intercity buses provide longer and faster trips compared to local transit options, with fares that are typically higher and vary depending on the distance traveled. Van Galder/Coach USA offers frequent service with multiple daily trips in the Stateline area, connecting South Beloit to Rockford, Janesville, Madison, and both Chicago airports. The closest Van Galder/Coach USA stop to Beloit is at the FasMart/McDonald's Travel Plaza, located at 15766 Manchester Road. Until the service was eliminated in August 2025, the Gateway Extra (Route 5) provided up to six daily connections between the Beloit Transfer Center and the Van Galder/Coach USA stop.

In addition to Van Galder/Coach USA, two intercity bus services operate in the Greater Rockford-Beloit–Janesville area: Greyhound Bus Lines and Burlington Trailways, both of which operate exclusively in Rockford. These companies provide daily round-trip service between Rockford and Chicago; however, neither offers direct connections to the Stateline area.

Active Transportation

The Stateline region's network of sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and shared-use trails support both transportation and recreation, providing residents and visitors with opportunities to travel, exercise, and enjoy the area's communities and natural resources. Whether accessing schools, jobs, parks, downtown districts, commercial areas, or regional trail systems, active transportation facilities play an important role in enhancing mobility, improving quality of life, and creating a more connected and livable region.



The 2026 SLATS Active Transportation Plan establishes a coordinated long-range vision for improving walking, bicycling, and trail connectivity throughout the SLATS MPA. Developed through a comprehensive planning process that included public engagement, field assessments, and technical analysis, the plan evaluates existing facilities, identifies network gaps and barriers, and outlines opportunities to improve active transportation throughout the Stateline region.

As the region's primary active transportation planning document, the plan provides a framework for creating a safer, more connected, and more accessible network for users of all ages and abilities. It also serves as the primary source of bicycle, pedestrian, and trail recommendations incorporated into the 2055 LRTP, helping ensure that future transportation investments support both everyday mobility and recreational opportunities across the region.

Existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The SLATS region has a strong foundation of bicycle, pedestrian, and trail facilities, particularly within the urbanized portions of Beloit, South Beloit, Rockton, and Roscoe. Over the past decade, local communities have continued to invest in sidewalks, shared-use paths, bicycle facilities, and regional trail connections, expanding opportunities for walking and bicycling throughout the Stateline Area.

As shown in **Figure 41**, pedestrian infrastructure is generally concentrated within established neighborhoods, downtown areas, school zones, and commercial corridors. **Figure 42** displays the region's bicycle network, which includes a combination of shared-use paths, bicycle lanes, signed bicycle routes, and local streets. The region also benefits from several significant off-street trail facilities, shown in **Figure 43**, that provide connections between communities, parks, natural areas, and major destinations. These facilities represent some of the region's most valuable active transportation assets and provide important links to broader state and regional trail networks.

Figure 41. Existing Pedestrian Facilities



Figure 42. Existing Bicycle Facilities

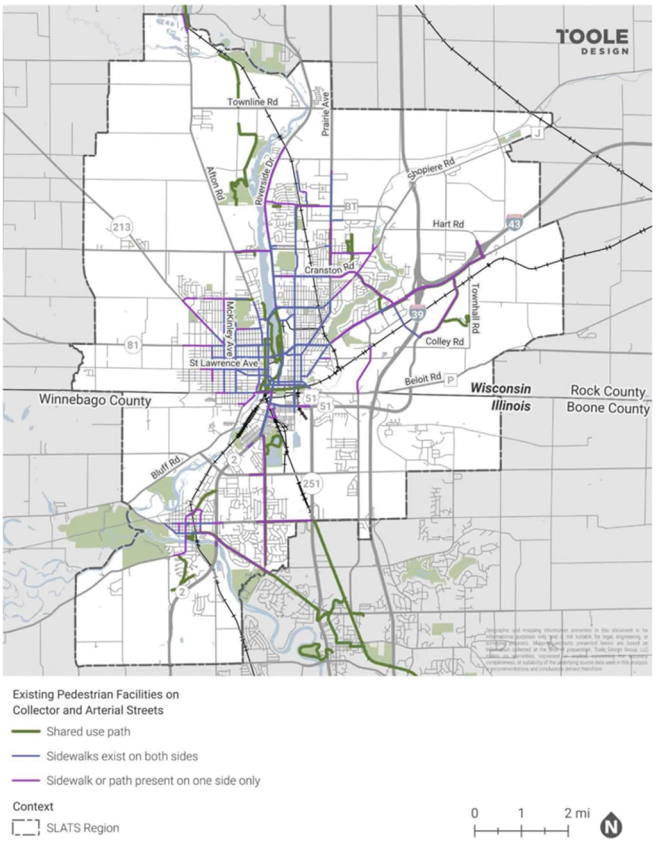
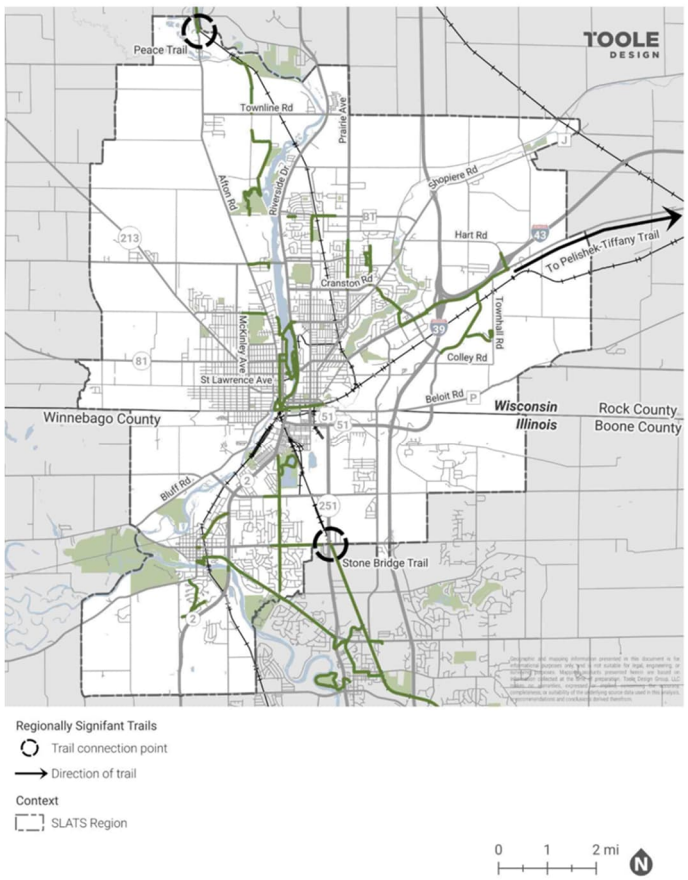


Figure 43. Regionally Significant Trails



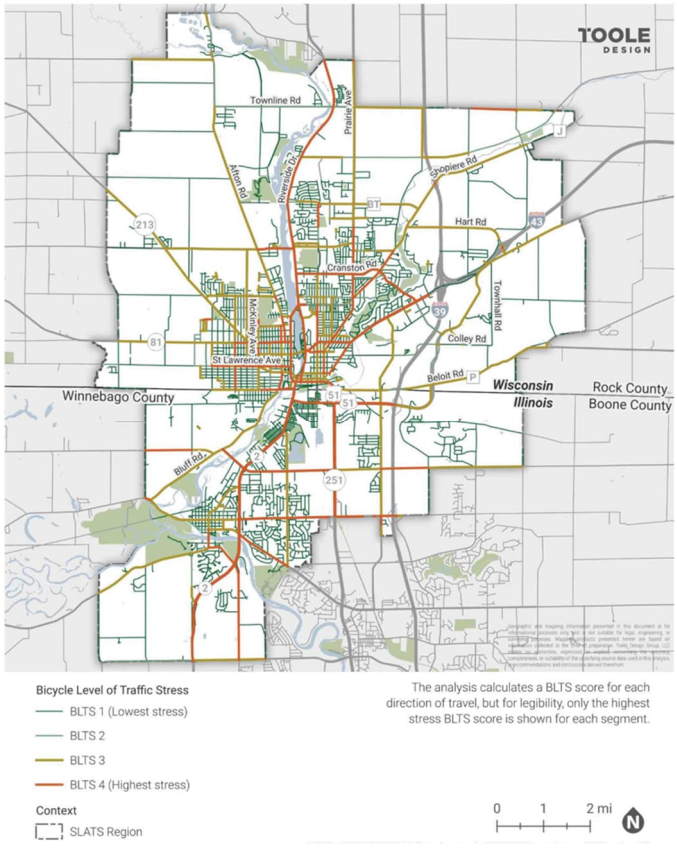
Existing Conditions and Key Challenges

While the region has a substantial inventory of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, the Active Transportation Plan identified connectivity as the primary challenge facing the active transportation network. Sidewalks are generally available within developed areas, and many communities have invested in shared-use paths, bicycle facilities, and trail improvements over the past decade. However, gaps remain along some corridors, at key roadway crossings, and near the edges of developing areas. Similarly, many bicycle facilities function well within individual neighborhoods or communities but are not always connected to one another, limiting the ability to travel safely and conveniently between destinations using a continuous network.

A Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (BLTS) analysis found that much of the roadway system creates higher-stress conditions for on-street bicycling, particularly along arterial and collector roadways. Although many residential streets provide comfortable riding conditions, these low-stress areas are often separated by higher-volume roadways with higher traffic speeds, multiple travel lanes, and limited bicycle accommodations. As a result, bicyclists and pedestrians may encounter barriers when attempting to access schools, parks, employment centers, commercial areas, transit stops, and other community destinations.

As shown in **Figure 44**, the challenge is often not the lack of local facilities, but rather the ability to safely and comfortably travel between destinations. The analysis identified several locations where major roadways, limited crossing opportunities, and disconnected facility segments reduce overall network connectivity. Sidewalk gaps, difficult street crossings, and transitions between on-street and off-street facilities can further limit the use of active transportation, particularly for children, older adults, and less experienced bicyclists.

FIGURE 44. BICYCLE LEVEL OF TRAFFIC STRESS



Public engagement conducted as part of the Active Transportation Plan reinforced these findings. Residents identified vehicle speeds, traffic volume, limited separation from motor vehicles, and challenging roadway crossings as some of the most significant barriers to walking and bicycling. The findings suggest that future improvements should focus not only on expanding the network, but also on creating safer and more comfortable connections between existing facilities. Shared-use paths, side paths, enhanced crossing treatments, and other low-stress connections can help overcome barriers created by higher-volume roadways and support a more connected regional active transportation network.

Opportunities to Strengthen Active Transportation Connections

The 2026 SLATS Active Transportation Plan concluded that the Stateline region has a strong foundation of sidewalks, bicycle facilities, shared-use paths, and regional trails. However, the plan also found that many of these facilities function as individual segments rather than as a fully connected regional network. The existing conditions assessment, public engagement process, and BLTS analysis identified several opportunities to improve connectivity, accessibility, and user comfort throughout the SLATS MPA. These opportunities help inform the active transportation priorities and needs discussed throughout the remainder of this LRTP.

Connecting the Region's Trail Systems

One of the most significant opportunities identified through the Active Transportation Plan is the creation of a continuous connection between Wisconsin's Peace Trail and Illinois' Stone Bridge Trail. These two facilities connect to larger statewide trail systems but remain disconnected within the Stateline region, creating a gap in an otherwise extensive regional trail network. The plan describes this connection as a unique opportunity to strengthen bicycle and pedestrian travel between Wisconsin and Illinois while expanding access to recreation, tourism, parks, downtown districts, and other community destinations.

Beyond its recreational value, a trail-to-trail connection would improve regional mobility by linking communities, neighborhoods, schools, and employment areas with a low-stress active transportation corridor. The Active Transportation Plan notes that even near-term improvements, such as filling network gaps, improving connections between existing facilities, and establishing a coordinated wayfinding system, could significantly improve regional connectivity and access to the broader trail network.

Building a Connected Low-Stress Network

The BLTS analysis found that while many residential streets provide comfortable bicycling conditions, most arterial and collector roadways create higher-stress conditions for on-street bicycle travel. As a result, many low-stress neighborhoods function as isolated "islands" that are disconnected from one another by higher-volume roadways. The analysis concluded that one of the region's greatest opportunities is creating safe and comfortable connections between these areas.

The plan found that expanding shared-use paths, side paths, protected bicycle facilities, and other low-stress connections would help overcome barriers created by major roadways and improve access to destinations throughout the region. Public engagement findings strongly reinforced this conclusion,

with residents expressing a preference for facilities that provide greater separation from motor vehicle traffic and improve overall comfort for users of all ages and abilities.

Improving Crossings and Network Accessibility

The Active Transportation Plan also identified roadway crossings as a recurring challenge throughout the region. While many communities have established sidewalk and trail networks, crossing major roadways often remains difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists. The existing conditions review noted variability in crossing treatments, sidewalk widths, facility transitions, and connections between trails and adjacent neighborhoods. Several shared-use paths and trail facilities provide strong corridor connectivity but offer limited access to nearby cross streets and destinations.

Improving the comfort, visibility, and accessibility of roadway crossings represents an important opportunity to strengthen the overall active transportation network. Public feedback consistently identified vehicle speeds, stressful crossings, and limited separation from traffic as key barriers to walking and bicycling. Addressing these challenges can help improve access to schools, parks, employment centers, downtown districts, transit services, and other community destinations while supporting a more connected and accessible transportation system.

Regional Passenger Rail

Passenger rail has the potential to expand transportation choices, strengthen regional connectivity, and enhance access to jobs, education, healthcare, and other destinations throughout southern Wisconsin, northern Illinois, and the broader Midwest. In addition to providing an alternative to automobile travel, passenger rail can support economic development, downtown revitalization, tourism, and more compact, walkable development patterns around station areas. As the Stateline region continues to grow and diversify its transportation options, passenger rail remains a long-term opportunity that could improve mobility and strengthen connections to major metropolitan areas throughout the region.

Resident Perspective: Regional Rail Would Change How I Travel

(from 2026 Statistically Valid Survey)

"I commute to work in the greater Madison area. If a rail system were implemented, it would provide a cost-effective option for commuting to work. This will allow for cost savings as well as being conscious of the environmental impacts of driving a vehicle to work daily. I would also be able to use my time on the rail rather than driving a vehicle."

SLATS has evaluated passenger rail opportunities for more than two decades through a series of planning studies examining potential passenger and commuter rail connections serving Beloit and the surrounding region. Most recently, the 2021 SLATS Passenger Rail Study evaluated several potential service concepts and corridors connecting Beloit with Madison, Rockford, and the Chicago metropolitan area. While additional analysis, coordination, and funding commitments would be required before service could be implemented, the study identified passenger rail as a potentially transformative long-term transportation investment for the Stateline region.

Existing Conditions

The SLATS region is not currently served by passenger rail. The nearest existing passenger rail service is Metra's Union Pacific Northwest Line in Harvard, Illinois, which provides commuter rail service to the Chicago metropolitan area. In addition, Illinois is advancing efforts to restore intercity passenger rail service between Rockford and Chicago, which would expand passenger rail access within northern Illinois and could create future opportunities for extending service northward toward Beloit and southern Wisconsin.

Recognizing the potential benefits associated with improved regional mobility, economic development, workforce access, and expanded transportation choice, SLATS completed the Passenger Rail Study in 2021 to evaluate the feasibility of restoring passenger rail service to the Stateline region. The study evaluated several passenger and commuter rail concepts, including an extension of Metra service from Harvard to Beloit, a Harvard-to-Madison corridor, and a Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford corridor. Using Census Transportation Planning Products (CTPP) data and long-range population and employment forecasts, the study assessed ridership potential for each alternative at a planning-level scale.

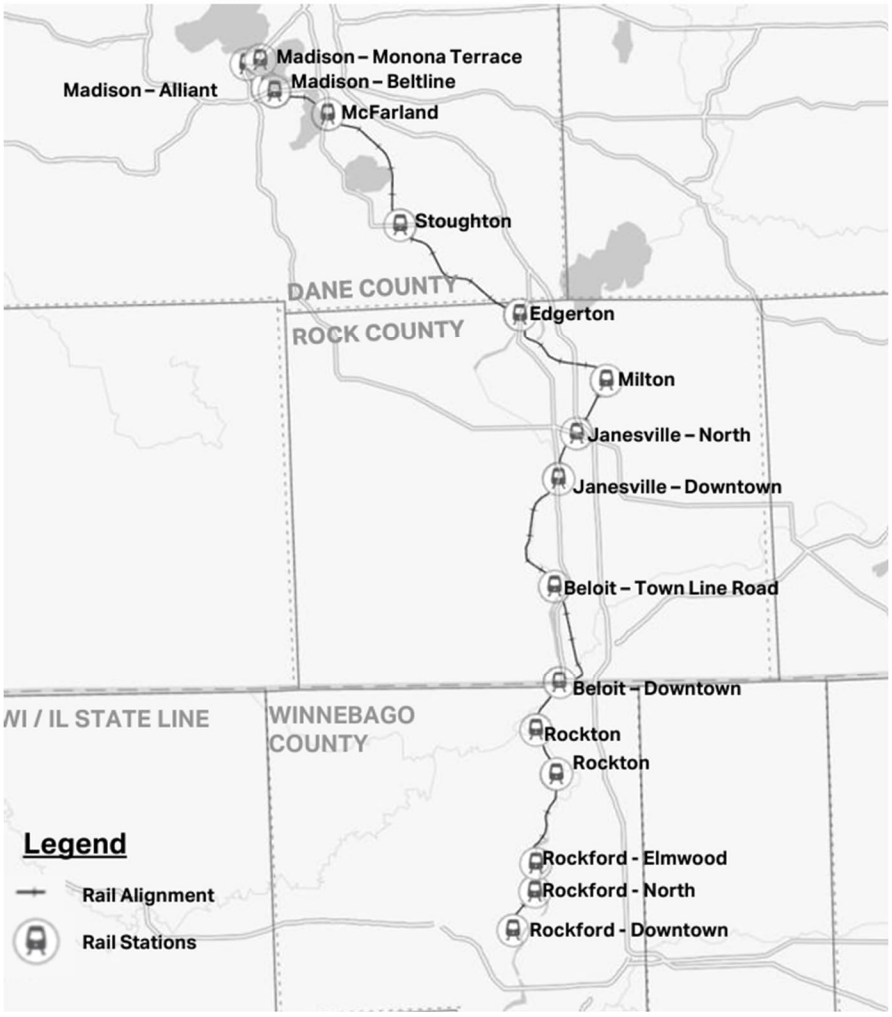
The analysis found that a direct extension of Metra service from Harvard to Beloit exhibited relatively low ridership potential and was eliminated from further consideration. However, both the Harvard-Janesville-Madison corridor and the Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford corridor demonstrated strong ridership potential and could provide meaningful transportation benefits to Rock County and the broader region. The Harvard-Janesville-Madison corridor was projected to attract up to 2,140 daily

riders, while the Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford corridor showed the highest projected ridership, reaching up to 2,260 daily riders. Although these estimates require additional analysis and refinement, the results suggest that passenger rail could provide significant transportation, economic development, and accessibility benefits throughout the region.

While the Harvard-Janesville-Madison alignment would serve Rock County, it would not provide a direct connection to the SLATS MPA. As a result, recent planning efforts have focused on the Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford corridor because it would directly serve the SLATS MPA while providing connections to planned passenger rail service in Rockford, including future service to Chicago.

The study also found that regional employment centers, particularly those within the Madison metropolitan area, were among the most significant drivers of potential ridership demand. As a result, future passenger rail planning efforts would need to carefully consider station locations, service patterns, connectivity to other transportation modes, and coordination with ongoing planning initiatives in Wisconsin and Illinois to determine the most viable corridor and implementation strategy. The Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford corridor, as displayed in **Figure 45**, remains the primary passenger rail corridor of interest within the SLATS region.

FIGURE 45. MADISON-ROCKFORD PASSENGER RAIL ALIGNMENT



Source: SLATS Passenger Rail Impact Study, May 2025.

Recent Passenger Rail Planning Initiatives

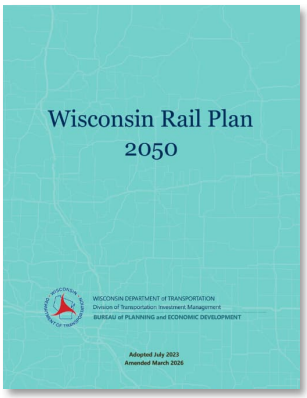
SLATS Passenger Rail Impact Study (2025)



In 2025, SLATS completed the Passenger Rail Impact Study, which evaluated the potential economic development, land use, redevelopment, and accessibility benefits associated with future passenger rail service between Rockford, Beloit, Janesville, and Madison. Building upon previous corridor feasibility analyses, the study examined opportunities for transit-oriented development (TOD), housing growth, job creation, downtown revitalization, and redevelopment around potential station locations.

The study concluded that communities within the Stateline region, particularly Beloit and Janesville, could benefit from improved regional accessibility, expanded economic opportunities, and increased redevelopment potential associated with future passenger rail investment. The findings also highlighted the importance of coordinating transportation planning, land use decisions, and station area planning to maximize the long-term benefits of passenger rail service.

Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050



The Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050, amended in 2026, identifies the Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford corridor as a potential long-term intercity passenger rail investment. The plan recognizes the corridor as an opportunity to strengthen passenger rail connections between southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois while improving access to the broader Midwest passenger rail network.

Although no funding has been committed for implementation, inclusion of the corridor in the Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050 represents an important milestone. The designation establishes the corridor as a recognized long-range transportation priority, preserves opportunities for future planning and investment, and supports continued coordination among local, regional, state, and federal partners. The corridor also complements ongoing efforts in Illinois to restore passenger rail service between Chicago and Rockford, which is currently anticipated to begin by the end of 2027.

Together, these planning initiatives help preserve the potential for future passenger rail connections linking Madison, Janesville, Beloit, Rockford, and Chicago. In addition, ongoing station planning and redevelopment discussions in downtown Rockford demonstrate how passenger rail investments can support broader economic development and community revitalization objectives. While additional planning, funding, and interagency coordination would be required before service could be extended into the Stateline region, the corridor continues to be recognized as a long-term opportunity for expanding regional mobility and transportation choice.

Future Considerations

The passenger rail studies completed by SLATS demonstrate continued interest in expanding passenger rail service within the Stateline region. While significant planning, funding, and interagency

coordination would be required before service could be implemented, recent studies indicate that passenger rail remains a viable long-term transportation opportunity worthy of continued evaluation.

In addition to the studies completed by SLATS, Rock County has established an ad hoc passenger rail committee to advance discussions regarding future passenger rail opportunities in southern Wisconsin and the Stateline region. The committee provides a forum for local governments, regional organizations, and other stakeholders to coordinate efforts, monitor ongoing rail initiatives in Wisconsin and Illinois, and advocate for continued study of the Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford corridor. Continued coordination among SLATS, Rock County, WisDOT, IDOT, municipalities, rail operators, and other partners will be essential to advancing future passenger rail planning efforts.

Future planning activities will likely focus on corridor preservation, more detailed ridership analysis, interagency coordination, and identifying opportunities to improve connections between potential passenger rail stations and local transportation networks, including public transit, walking, bicycling, and roadway facilities. These efforts can help position the region to respond to future funding opportunities and build upon ongoing passenger rail initiatives in Wisconsin and Illinois. Together, these activities help preserve the long-term potential for passenger rail service connecting the Stateline region to major population, employment, and activity centers throughout the Midwest.

Freight Transportation

Freight transportation is a critical component of the regional transportation system and plays an essential role in supporting the Stateline area's economy. Manufacturers, distribution centers, retailers, agricultural producers, and service industries all rely on the efficient movement of goods to access suppliers, customers, and markets. A reliable freight network supports economic competitiveness, attracts investment, facilitates job creation, and helps connect the SLATS MPA to regional, national, and international supply chains.

The SLATS region occupies a strategic location along the Wisconsin-Illinois border and is served by one of the Midwest's most important transportation corridors, I-39/90. The region provides direct access to Madison, Milwaukee, Rockford, Chicago, and numerous national freight markets. As a result, freight movement represents a significant component of transportation activity throughout the MPA and influences roadway operations, economic development, safety, and transportation investment decisions.

The following sections summarize existing freight conditions, truck travel patterns, rail freight operations, and future freight trends affecting the region.

Highway Freight Network and Truck Activity

The highway system serves as the backbone of the regional freight network. I-39/90 is the region's primary freight corridor and accommodates both local freight activity and significant volumes of interstate truck traffic traveling throughout Wisconsin, Illinois, and the broader Midwest. The corridor is part of both Wisconsin's and Illinois' designated freight networks and serves as a major north-south route connecting Chicago, Rockford, Beloit, Janesville, Madison, and destinations beyond. The corridor is also supported by a concentration of truck-oriented land uses and services, particularly near the Wisconsin-Illinois state line and the Gardner Street (IL 75) interchange (Exit 1), where truck parking, fueling facilities, vehicle services, and logistics-related businesses serve both regional and long-distance freight traffic. The Rockton Road interchange (Exit 3) also provides important access to industrial and commercial areas within the Stateline region.



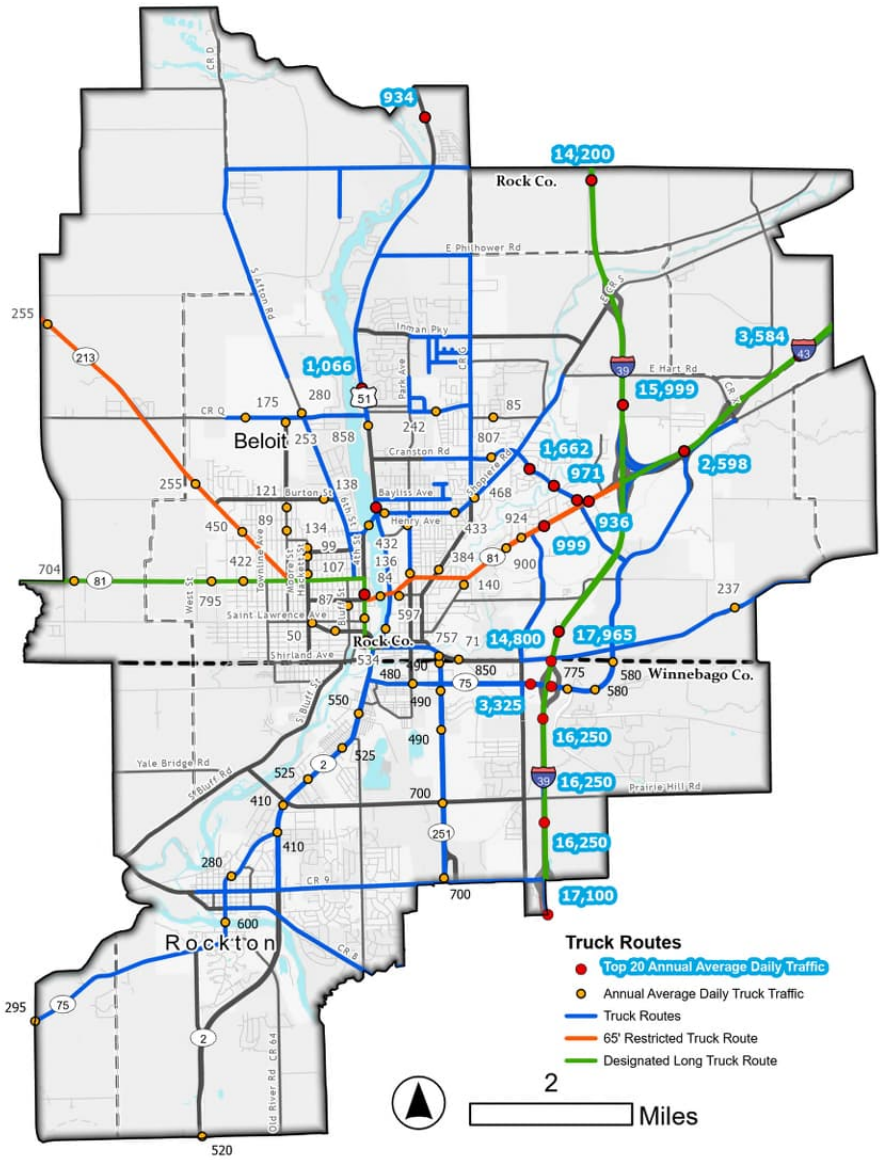
Truck traffic is concentrated on the interstate system and on roadway corridors that provide access to industrial, commercial, and logistics-related development. **Figure 46** identifies the region's key truck routes and corresponding average daily truck traffic volumes. The highest truck volumes occur along I-39/90, where average daily truck volumes approach 18,000 trucks per day near the Wisconsin-Illinois state line. With total daily traffic volumes ranging from approximately 51,000 to 62,600 vehicles per day, trucks account for nearly one-third of all traffic on the corridor. I-43 also serves an important freight function, carrying more than 2,600 trucks per day east of the I-39/90 interchange and nearly 3,600 trucks per day near the eastern boundary of the SLATS MPA.

Outside the interstate network, truck traffic is concentrated along key arterial routes including Gardner Street (IL 75), Milwaukee Road (WIS 81), US 51, WIS 213, Willowbrook Road, and other roadways serving

industrial, manufacturing, commercial, and transportation-related land uses. These facilities provide critical connections between employment centers, industrial parks, distribution facilities, truck service centers, and the interstate system. Stakeholder outreach and public engagement conducted during development of the LRTP identified several of these corridors as locations where truck traffic can contribute to localized congestion, operational challenges, and conflicts with other roadway users.

The region's limited number of Rock River crossings also play an important role in freight movement. These crossings provide critical east-west connectivity between Beloit and South Beloit and support truck access to industrial, commercial, and employment areas on both sides of the river. While truck traffic represents only a portion of overall traffic on these facilities, freight vehicles are often more noticeable to travelers and can contribute to perceptions of delay, particularly when operating through downtown areas, crossing the river, or maneuvering through closely spaced intersections and signalized corridors. Maintaining efficient operations on these crossings and their connecting roadway networks remains important for supporting both freight mobility and regional economic activity.

FIGURE 46. TRUCK ROUTES AND AVERAGE DAILY TRUCK VOLUMES



Gardner Street (IL 75) Freight Truck Bottleneck

The 2023 IDOT Statewide Freight Plan identifies the segment of Gardner Street (IL 75) between I-39/90 and IL 251 in South Beloit as a freight bottleneck. Public and stakeholder outreach conducted for this plan similarly identified the corridor as an area where heavy truck activity, closely spaced intersections, and numerous access points affect traffic operations. As shown in **Figure 47**, trucks serving nearby industrial facilities, commercial businesses, and truck service centers frequently maneuver through the Gardner Street and Willowbrook Road intersection.

FIGURE 47. GARDNER STREET FREIGHT BOTTLENECK



Eastbound on Garnder Street, at Willowbrook Road Intersection

Gardner Street is a critical freight corridor connecting I-39/90, IL 251, industrial and manufacturing areas, the Gateway business district, and the broader regional transportation network. Average daily truck traffic exceeds 2,500 trucks east of the interchange and approximately 3,300 trucks west of I-39/90, reflecting the corridor's importance to regional freight movement and economic activity.

Looking ahead, additional traffic associated with the Ho-Chunk Casino and Resort, as well as continued commercial and industrial development, is expected to increase travel demand in the area. The I-39/90 interchange and the Gardner Street/Willowbrook Road intersection will serve as key gateways to the casino, South Beloit, and downtown Beloit, with additional traffic expected to utilize Willowbrook Road from areas south of the corridor. Continued monitoring of traffic operations and coordination between transportation and land use planning efforts will be important to maintain freight mobility, support economic development, and identify future operational and safety improvements as travel patterns evolve.

Regional Truck Travel Analysis

As part of the 2055 LRTP, SLATS completed a regional truck travel analysis to better understand truck activity within and through the MPA. The analysis evaluated truck movements based on trip origins and destinations and categorized trips into four groups:

- **External-External (E-E):** Trucks passing through the region without stopping.
- **External-Internal (E-I):** Trucks entering the region from outside destinations.
- **Internal-External (I-E):** Trucks originating within the MPA and traveling elsewhere.
- **Internal-Internal (I-I):** Trucks with both origins and destinations within the MPA.

As summarized in **Figure 48**, the majority of truck activity within the SLATS region consists of pass-through truck traffic. Approximately 15,500 trucks per day travel through the MPA without stopping, with nearly all of these trips remaining on the interstate system. These findings reinforce the importance of I-39/90 as a major freight corridor connecting Wisconsin, Illinois, and other Midwest markets. In comparison, approximately 3,800 trucks per day are destined for locations within the SLATS MPA, with most trips serving areas along the I-39/90 corridor.

The analysis also found that truck traffic using US and state highways is generally associated with local or regional destinations rather than long-distance through travel. Most trucks entering the region on non-interstate routes utilize the access point closest to their destination, rather than crossing the entire region. As shown in **Figure 49**, the regional truck travel analysis found that relatively few trucks travel east-west across the entire SLATS MPA on state highways. However, commercial truck traffic is present on a daily basis along several key corridors and activity centers where freight vehicles interact with local traffic, pedestrians, bicyclists, and adjacent land uses. As a result, freight movements can contribute to localized operational, safety, and quality-of-life concerns that remain important transportation planning considerations within the region.

Overall, the analysis suggests that freight-related concerns within the SLATS region are generally concentrated along specific corridors, access routes, industrial areas, and activity centers, rather than resulting from widespread truck traffic traveling across the region on local highways. The findings reinforce the importance of maintaining efficient connections between I-39/90, industrial and commercial areas, and other key freight generators while continuing to monitor locations where truck traffic interacts with local traffic, pedestrians, bicyclists, and community destinations.

FIGURE 48. REGIONAL TRUCK ANALYSIS

Regional Truck Travel Analysis Summary

- Approximately **15,500 trucks per day** pass through the SLATS MPA
  - Most are interstate truck trips are pass-through trips (remain on the Interstate)
  - The highest pass-through truck volumes occur on I-39/90, traveling north-south between zones 1 and 4
- In contrast, most truck trips using a US or State Highway begin or end in the SLATS MPA (non-pass-through trips)
- Approximately **3,800 trucks per day** are destined to the SLATS MPA (zones A-F)
  - 63% travel on the Interstate
  - 37% travel on the US and State Highways

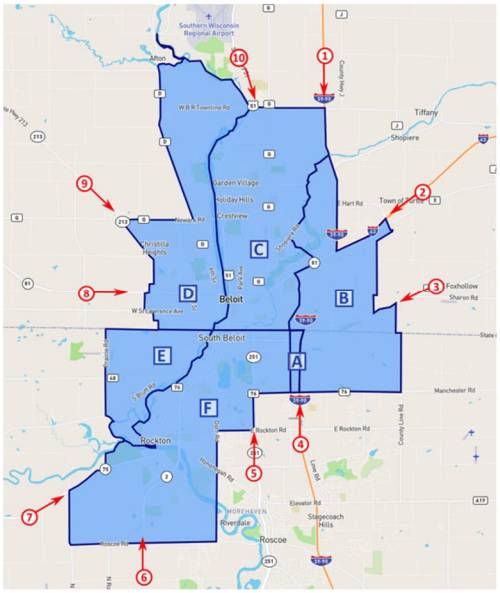
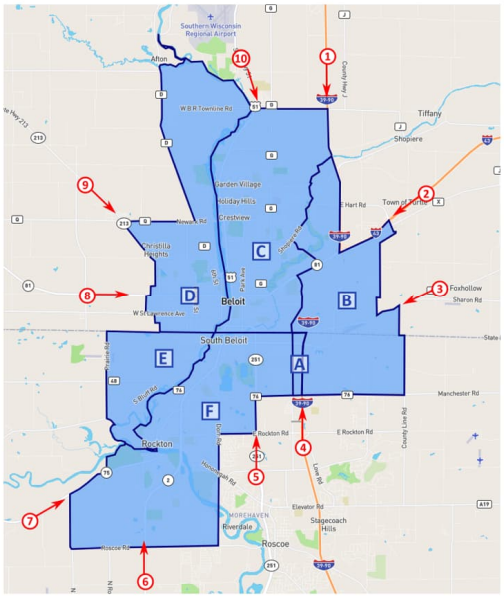


FIGURE 49. PASS THROUGH TRUCK TRAFFIC

Regional Truck Travel Analysis Summary

East-West Travel in the Region

- About **18% of trucks (220)** traveling on I-43 (from zone 2) continue west on WI 81 (to zone 8), without making local deliveries, pickups, or business stops within the SLATS MPA
- Roughly **20 trucks per day** travel east-west across the SLATS MPA via state highways (zones 3, 7, 8, and 9), without making local deliveries, pickups, or business stops within the SLATS MPA
- Trucks traveling to or from the SLATS MPA, using a non-interstate route, typically use their access point closest to their destination (rather than crossing the entire region - for example, trucks entering from Zone 9 are generally destined for Zone D)
- Most trucks traveling to the SLATS MPA are destined for areas along the I-39/90 corridor (zones A and B)



Freight Rail Network

Freight rail remains an important component of the regional freight transportation system and provides critical connections between local industries and national freight markets. Rail transportation supports the movement of manufactured goods, industrial products, agricultural commodities, food products, chemicals, building materials, and other bulk freight that would otherwise require additional truck traffic on the regional roadway network. By providing an efficient option for long-distance and high-volume shipments, freight rail helps support economic competitiveness while reducing pressure on key highway corridors.

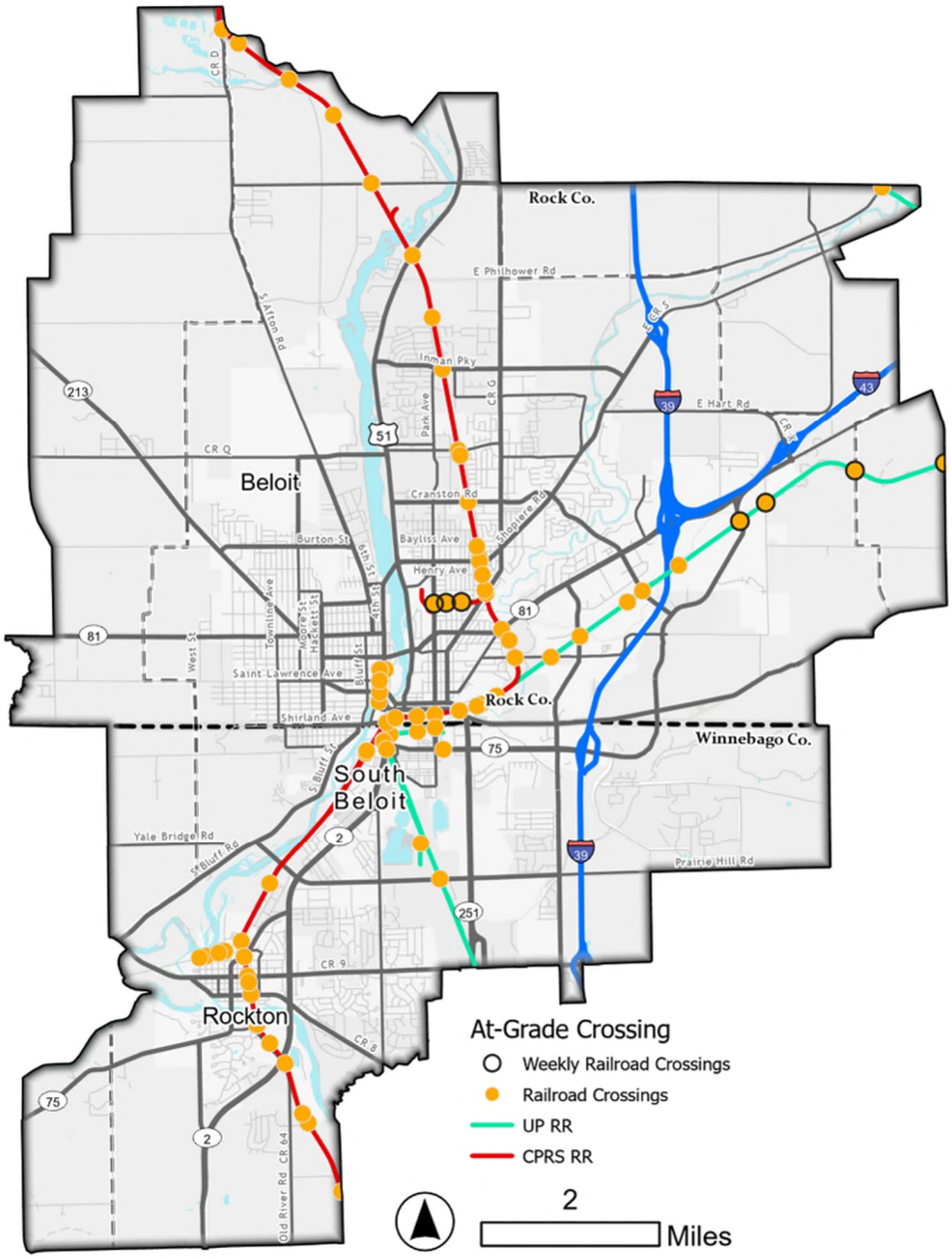
The SLATS region is served by freight rail corridors operated by major rail carriers that connect the Stateline area to regional and national rail networks. These rail lines provide access to major freight markets throughout Wisconsin, Illinois, and the broader Midwest, supporting the movement of goods to and from manufacturers, industrial facilities, distribution centers, and other freight-dependent businesses located within the region. Rail access has historically been an important factor in the growth of the Beloit area's manufacturing base and continues to serve industries that rely on the efficient movement of large-volume commodities and finished products.

Freight moving by rail through the region includes a variety of commodities commonly associated with the Stateline area's industrial economy, including manufactured products, agricultural commodities, chemicals, food products, building materials, and industrial inputs. The continued availability of rail service provides businesses with access to competitive transportation options while helping reduce reliance on long-haul truck movements.

Railroad-highway grade crossings represent important points of interaction between rail operations and the roadway system. As shown in **Figure 50**, active rail corridors traverse portions of Beloit, South Beloit, and Rockton and intersect with a number of local and regional roadways. While crossings generally operate safely, train movements can occasionally affect traffic operations, local mobility,

freight movement, and emergency response routing. Several crossing improvements have been completed in recent years, including upgrades in the State Street and Shirland Avenue area near the Wisconsin-Illinois state line, helping improve crossing safety and operational reliability.

FIGURE 50. RAIL NETWORK AND AT-GRADE CROSSING LOCATIONS



Future Freight Priorities

Growing freight demand is expected to remain an important transportation consideration through the 2055 planning horizon. While population and household forecasts indicate relatively modest demographic change within the SLATS region, national and state freight forecasts suggest that freight activity will continue to grow due to economic activity, supply chain demand, logistics operations, manufacturing output, and e-commerce trends. Additional details are included in **Appendix D**.

Wisconsin Freight Planning Priorities

WisDOT's freight planning efforts continue to identify the I-39/90 corridor as one of Wisconsin's most important freight routes. The corridor serves as a critical connection between southern Wisconsin, northern Illinois, and major Midwest manufacturing, distribution, and agricultural markets. Within the SLATS region, I-39/90 supports both local freight activity and significant volumes of interstate truck traffic, making freight mobility and system reliability important considerations for future transportation planning.

The Wisconsin Freight Plan emphasizes the importance of preserving the performance of key interstate corridors, supporting first- and last-mile freight connections to industrial and commercial areas, improving freight reliability, and maintaining access to regional employment centers. The plan also recognizes the importance of freight-dependent industries, economic development sites, and multimodal freight connections. For the SLATS region, these priorities reinforce the need to maintain efficient access between I-39/90, local industrial and business parks, freight rail facilities, and other major freight generators throughout the Stateline Area.

Illinois Freight Planning Priorities

IDOT's freight planning efforts also identify the I-39/90 corridor as a key component of the Illinois freight system and an important connection between the Chicago metropolitan area, Rockford region, Wisconsin, and national freight markets. The corridor supports significant commercial truck traffic and serves a growing concentration of industrial, warehousing, distribution, and truck-service-related development near the Wisconsin-Illinois state line.

The Illinois State Freight Plan specifically identifies Gardner Street (IL 75) between I-39/90 and IL 251 as a freight bottleneck. The corridor serves as a critical connection between the interstate system, industrial and commercial areas, truck service facilities, and regional employment centers. Public and stakeholder outreach conducted for the LRTP identified similar concerns related to truck traffic, intersection operations, safety, and corridor performance. Looking ahead, continued development in the South Beloit area, including commercial growth and travel demand associated with the Ho-Chunk Casino and Resort, may place additional pressure on the Gardner Street and Willowbrook Road corridors, reinforcing the importance of ongoing monitoring and coordination among transportation agencies and local governments.

Aviation

Aviation plays a supporting role in the regional transportation system by providing business, recreational, and freight transportation services. While the region is not served by commercial passenger flights, local aviation facilities contribute to regional mobility, economic development, workforce recruitment, and connectivity to state, national, and international transportation networks.

Existing Conditions

The SLATS region is served by two general aviation airports: Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport (JVL) and Beloit Airport (44C). Together, these facilities support a range of aviation activities, including business aviation, pilot training, aircraft maintenance, emergency services, recreational flying, and limited air cargo operations.

Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport is in the City of Janesville, just north of the SLATS MPA. Owned and operated by Rock County, the airport occupies more than 1,300 acres and features three paved runways, including a primary runway approximately 7,300 feet in length. Designated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as a National General Aviation Airport, the facility supports corporate aviation, air charter services, flight training, aircraft maintenance, and aviation-related business development. The airport recorded approximately 54,700 annual aircraft operations and was home to 87 based aircraft in 2024.

Beloit Airport is a privately owned public-use airport located on the east side of the City of Beloit near the Wisconsin-Illinois state line. The airport features a single 3,300-foot paved runway and supports recreational aviation, flight training, aircraft storage, and other general aviation activities. The facility complements the services available at Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport and provides an important local aviation resource for the Stateline region.

Commercial air service for residents and businesses within the SLATS MPA is primarily provided through nearby regional and national airports, including Chicago Rockford International Airport (RFD), Dane County Regional Airport (MSN), Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport (MKE), Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD), and Chicago Midway International Airport (MDW). These facilities provide access to domestic and international destinations and support passenger travel, freight movement, tourism, and regional economic activity.

Future Considerations

The region's airports are expected to continue serving an important role in supporting business aviation, pilot training, emergency services, recreational flying, and economic development. Maintaining safe and reliable access to these facilities, particularly through the regional roadway network, will remain important to their long-term viability and continued contribution to the regional economy.

Future transportation planning efforts should continue to consider opportunities to improve connections between aviation facilities and the broader multimodal transportation system. Coordination with roadway, transit, freight, and land use planning initiatives can help ensure that airports remain accessible to businesses, employees, visitors, and aviation users while supporting future economic development opportunities throughout the Stateline region.

Chapter 7. Regional Transportation Needs

This chapter summarizes the transportation needs and priorities that emerged through the development of the 2055 LRTP. These needs were identified through a combination of public and stakeholder engagement, technical analysis, and findings from recent transportation planning efforts completed throughout the region.

Public outreach helped identify the transportation issues most important to residents, businesses, community organizations, and transportation partners, while the technical analysis completed as part of the LRTP helped validate those concerns and identify additional trends, opportunities, and challenges affecting the regional transportation system. The following sections summarize the key findings from both efforts and identify the major transportation needs that serve as the foundation for the identifying projects and strategies presented in **Chapter 8**.

What We Heard: Public and Stakeholder Input

Public and stakeholder engagement played a central role in the development of the SLATS 2055 LRTP. Input was gathered through a statistically valid survey, an open public survey, interactive mapping activities, stakeholder discussions, pop-up events, agency coordination, and ongoing review by the SLATS Policy Board and Technical Advisory Committee.



The feedback collected through these efforts helped identify both broad regional transportation priorities and location-specific concerns affecting individual corridors, intersections, neighborhoods, and communities. Public input provided important context regarding how people experience the transportation system on a daily basis and helped identify issues, opportunities, and investment priorities that are most important to residents, businesses, visitors, local governments, and transportation partners throughout the Stateline region.

Recurring themes included transportation safety, roadway maintenance and preservation, regional connectivity, public transportation, walking and bicycling facilities, freight movement, economic development, and future transportation options such as passenger rail. These themes helped shape the technical analysis conducted for the LRTP and informed the identification of regional transportation needs and priorities discussed later in this chapter.

The following sections summarize the key themes and transportation needs identified through public and stakeholder engagement. Additional details regarding the outreach process and survey results are provided in **Appendix A**.

Statistically Valid Transportation Survey

The statistically valid transportation survey provided important insight into the transportation values, priorities, and future expectations of residents across the Stateline region. Overall, the results indicate strong support for a balanced transportation system that maintains existing infrastructure, improves safety, expands transportation options, and supports economic development.

Safety and system preservation emerged as the region's highest transportation priorities. Respondents consistently indicated that maintaining existing roads, bridges, and transportation infrastructure, while continuing efforts to improve safety, should remain the principal focus of future transportation investments. This finding aligns with comments received throughout the LRTP outreach process, where residents emphasized maintaining the transportation system before pursuing major expansion projects.

Survey respondents also expressed strong support for expanded transportation choices and improved regional connectivity. Investments in passenger rail service between Madison and Rockford, enhanced local and regional bus service, improved sidewalks, and expanded bicycle facilities all received significant support. Respondents recognized the importance of improving connections between communities, employment centers, healthcare facilities, educational institutions, and other regional destinations.

What We Heard:
Findings from Statistically Valid Survey

The statistically valid survey identified several clear transportation priorities that help guide the SLATS 2055 LRTP.

Safety and Preservation First

Residents want to maintain existing roads, bridges, and transportation assets while continuing to improve safety for all users.

Roadway Investment Remains Essential

Maintaining and improving the roadway network remains a top funding priority for supporting daily travel, freight movement, and economic activity.

Strong Support for Transportation Options

Respondents expressed strong support for expanded transit, passenger rail, walking, and bicycling options, with many indicating they would use these modes more frequently if additional transportation choices and improved connections were available..

Transportation Supports Economic Growth

Investments that improve access to jobs, support freight movement, reduce congestion, and enhance mobility were viewed as important economic development strategies.

Accessibility for All Users

Meeting the transportation needs of older adults, individuals with disabilities, transit users, and households with limited vehicle access remains a significant priority.

Travel Patterns Are Changing

Increased teleworking, online shopping, and evolving travel behaviors highlight the need for a transportation system that can adapt over time.

Transportation was also viewed as an important driver of economic vitality and quality of life. Respondents identified investments that support freight movement, improve access to jobs, reduce congestion, and expand mobility options as important strategies for supporting economic growth and workforce development. Participants also highlighted the importance of meeting the transportation needs of older adults, individuals with disabilities, transit users, bicyclists, pedestrians, and households with limited access to a vehicle.

Finally, survey results suggest that future transportation investments could influence how people travel throughout the region. Many respondents anticipated increased teleworking and changing travel behaviors by 2055, while nearly two-thirds indicated that expanded transportation options could change the way they travel. Together, these results suggest a growing interest in providing a transportation system that is flexible, connected, and responsive to evolving mobility needs. A complete summary of survey results is provided in **Appendix A**.

Pop-up Events



Pop-up engagement activities reinforced many of the themes identified through the statistically valid survey. Participants were asked to allocate votes among several transportation investment priorities, providing insight into where residents believe future transportation funding should be focused. Results of the exercise are summarized in **Table 8** and **Figure 51**.

Maintaining existing roads received the greatest level of support, followed by investments that improve safety for all users. Participants also expressed strong interest in passenger rail service, connected walking and bicycling facilities, and enhanced local and regional transit service. Comparatively less emphasis was placed on building new roadways, suggesting that residents generally prefer investments that improve, maintain, and enhance the existing transportation system.

Across all events, several consistent themes emerged. Residents emphasized the importance of preserving infrastructure, improving traffic safety, expanding transportation choices, and strengthening regional connectivity. Interest in passenger rail was particularly notable, reflecting a desire for additional travel options and stronger connections to destinations both within and beyond the SLATS planning area. Collectively, these findings helped reinforce key LRTP themes related to safety, preservation, multimodal transportation, and regional mobility.

In total, 391 votes were cast across the three events, providing valuable insight into community transportation priorities and preferences. Additional information on the pop-up event format, locations, and engagement methods is provided in **Chapter 2** and **Appendix A**.

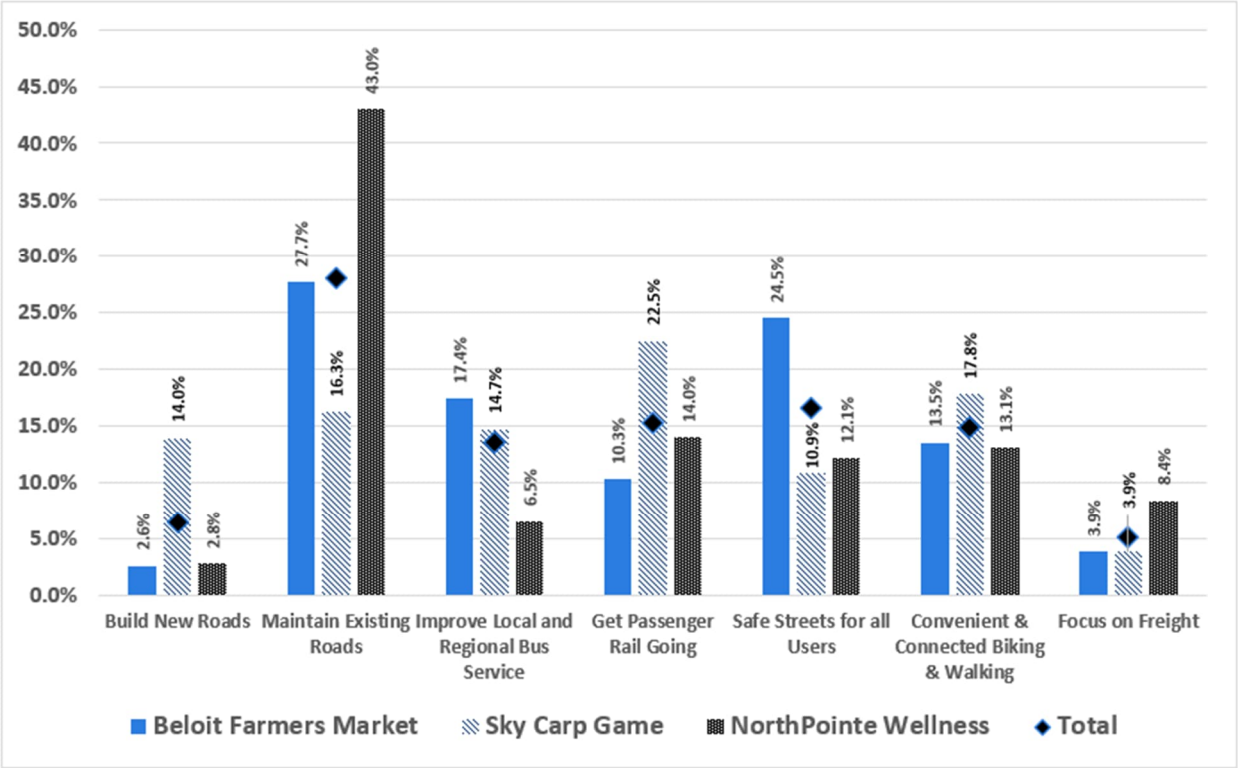
Across all events, maintaining existing roads emerged as the highest priority, receiving 110 votes (28.1 percent of all votes cast). Other frequently identified priorities included safe streets for all users (16.6 percent), passenger rail service (15.3 percent), connected biking and walking facilities (14.8 percent), and improved local and regional bus service (13.6 percent). Building new roads (6.4 percent) and freight-related improvements (5.1 percent) received comparatively lower levels of support.

TABLE 8. 'PUFF BALL' INVESTMENT RESULTS

	Beloit Farmers Market		Sky Carp Game		NorthPointe Wellness		Total	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1 Build New Roads	4	2.6%	18	14.0%	3	2.8%	25	6.4%
2 Maintain Existing Roads	43	27.7%	21	16.3%	46	43.0%	110	28.1%
3 Improve Local and Regional Bus Service	27	17.4%	19	14.7%	7	6.5%	53	13.6%
4 Get Passenger Rail Going	16	10.3%	29	22.5%	15	14.0%	60	15.3%
5 Safe Streets for all Users	38	24.5%	14	10.9%	13	12.1%	65	16.6%
6 Convenient & Connected Biking & Walking	21	13.5%	23	17.8%	14	13.1%	58	14.8%
7 Focus on Freight	6	3.9%	5	3.9%	9	8.4%	20	5.1%
	155		129		107		391	

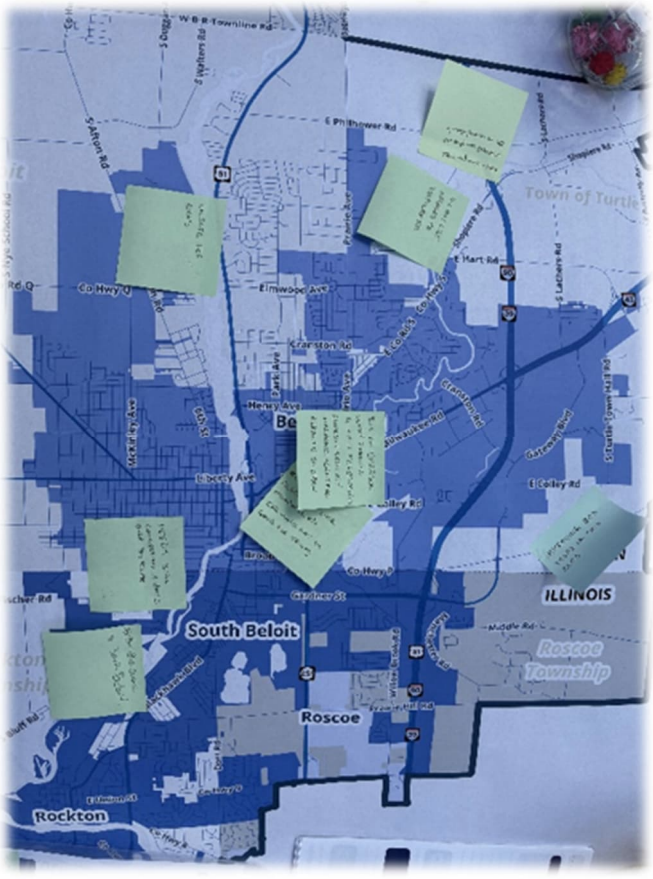
Source: June 2026 LRTP Pop-Up Events.

FIGURE 51. 'PUFF BALL' INVESTMENT RESULTS



Source: June 2026 LRTP Pop-Up Events.

While priorities varied somewhat by event location, several common themes emerged. Participants consistently emphasized the importance of maintaining and improving the existing transportation system, enhancing safety for all users, expanding transportation choices, and improving connectivity throughout the region. Strong interest in passenger rail service also reflected a desire for additional regional travel options and greater access to destinations within and beyond the SLATS MPA.



Collectively, these findings helped shape the development of the LRTP's key planning themes and guiding principles. The results reinforced the importance of system preservation, transportation safety, multimodal mobility, and regional connectivity. These themes were subsequently incorporated into the plan's goals, evaluation framework, and project identification process to help ensure that recommended investments align with community priorities and expectations for the future transportation system.

Stakeholder Discussion

Stakeholder discussions provided additional insight into transportation needs from the perspectives of local governments, school districts, economic development organizations, transportation providers, public safety professionals, developers, and community advocates. While each discussion focused on a different topic area, several common themes emerged, including transportation safety, regional connectivity, access to employment, transportation choice, and quality of life.

Transportation Safety



Participants consistently identified safety as one of the region's most important transportation needs. Discussion focused on conflicts between motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists, as well as emerging safety concerns related to e-bikes, scooters, and other micromobility devices. Stakeholders also cited distracted driving, speeding, and challenging intersections as issues requiring continued attention. Specific locations mentioned included the US 51/Elmwood Drive intersection, Milwaukee Road near White Avenue, truck turning movements in downtown Beloit, and pedestrian crossing challenges near Beloit College.

Stakeholders generally supported roadway design strategies that improve safety outcomes, including complete street approaches, roadway reconfigurations, enhanced crossings, and expanded off-road shared-use paths. Participants emphasized that roadway safety improvements should continue to focus on reducing crashes and conflicts for all users while also improving education and awareness efforts, particularly for younger riders and users of emerging mobility devices.

Housing, Land Use, and Mobility



Stakeholders involved in housing, development, and economic development discussions frequently identified transportation as a major factor influencing future growth opportunities. A recurring theme was the challenge of accessing I-39/90 from areas west of the Rock River. Participants noted that limited east-west connectivity affects workforce mobility, truck movement, and development potential, particularly on the west side of Beloit. Several stakeholders indicated that improving access to the interstate system could unlock additional development and redevelopment opportunities throughout the region, especially west of the Rock River.

Regional connectivity and access to employment were also identified as important issues. Participants expressed support for expanded transit service, additional evening service hours, improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments that strengthen downtown redevelopment efforts. Concerns regarding truck traffic through downtown Beloit and difficulty moving freight efficiently through the region were also discussed. Stakeholders emphasized that transportation investments should support both economic development and quality of life objectives.

School Transportation

School Transportation

School transportation stakeholders emphasized the importance of providing safe and reliable transportation options for students. Participants identified gaps in bicycle and pedestrian networks, concerns with traffic speeds around schools, and challenges associated with student drop-off and pick-up operations. Specific concerns were expressed regarding Milwaukee Road, Cranston Road, and other corridors where school-related traffic can create conflicts for students walking or bicycling to school. Stakeholders also noted that disconnected bicycle and pedestrian facilities remain a barrier to increased walking and biking among students.

Transit access was another recurring topic. Participants highlighted the value of recent transit service improvements but noted that limited evening service remains a barrier for students participating in after-school activities and other programs. Stakeholders expressed interest in further expanding transit access for students, increasing awareness of available services, and encouraging transportation habits that support lifelong transit use. Safe Routes to School initiatives, walking school buses, bicycle school buses, and expanded off-road trail connections were identified as opportunities to improve student mobility and safety.

Beloit Area Taskforce for Homelessness

A discussion with the Beloit Area Taskforce on Homelessness highlighted the close relationship between transportation, housing affordability, and access to opportunity. Stakeholders noted that rising housing and transportation costs can contribute to housing instability and create barriers to employment, healthcare, and essential services. Participants also discussed how some individuals experiencing housing insecurity, including those utilizing seasonal or temporary housing arrangements, often have limited access to personal vehicles and rely heavily on walking, bicycling, and public transportation.

BATFOH
BELOIT AREA TASK FORCE ON HOMELESSNESS

Stakeholders emphasized that reliable and affordable transportation is critical for connecting individuals to jobs, healthcare providers, social service agencies, educational opportunities, and other community resources. Transit services, in particular, were identified as an important mobility option for vulnerable populations, with participants discussing opportunities to improve service availability and strengthen connections to key destinations throughout the region. These discussions reinforced the importance of accessibility, transportation choice, and equitable access to services as key transportation priorities for the LRTP.

Major Employers

One-on-One Discussions with Major Employers

As part of the Beloit-Janesville Express (BJE) planning effort, the project team conducted outreach with major employers throughout the region. While these discussions primarily focused on transit usage and service needs, they also provided valuable insight into broader transportation challenges affecting workforce recruitment, retention, and regional mobility. The issues and opportunities identified by employers helped inform the LRTP's understanding of workforce mobility

needs and the role transportation plays in supporting economic competitiveness and access to employment.

Employers consistently identified transit service hours as a significant barrier for workers. Many businesses indicated that earlier morning service, later evening service, and weekend service would better align with employee schedules. Several employers emphasized the importance of transit access for second- and third-shift workers, including employees at manufacturing facilities, healthcare institutions, distribution centers, and the Ho-Chunk Casino and related businesses. Stakeholders noted that current BTS service ending around 6:00 p.m. limits the usefulness of transit for many workers and can make commuting by transit impractical.

Discussions also highlighted the increasingly regional nature of the workforce. Employers reported attracting workers from across the Stateline region and beyond, particularly from Janesville and Rockford. Several participants noted a growing number of employees commuting from the Rockford area, reinforcing the need for stronger regional transportation connections between employment centers and surrounding communities. These findings suggest that future transportation investments should continue to focus on expanding transportation options, improving regional mobility, and strengthening connections to major job centers. In the longer term, enhanced regional transit services and potential passenger rail connections could provide additional mobility options for both workers and employers while supporting continued economic growth throughout the region.

Key Themes from Public and Stakeholder Engagement

Public outreach and stakeholder engagement identified several consistent transportation priorities that helped guide the LRTP technical analysis. Across surveys, pop-up events, stakeholder discussions, and agency coordination efforts, participants emphasized the importance of maintaining existing infrastructure, improving safety, strengthening regional connectivity, expanding transportation options, and supporting economic growth and quality of life.

A recurring theme was the need to preserve and improve the existing transportation system while enhancing safety for all users. Respondents consistently prioritized roadway maintenance, infrastructure preservation, and transportation safety over major system expansion. Stakeholders also identified concerns related to speeding, distracted driving, pedestrian and bicycle safety, school access, truck movements, and several corridors and intersections where safety improvements may be warranted. There was broad recognition that investments in sidewalks, trails, bicycle facilities, crossing improvements, and roadway safety treatments can improve both safety and quality of life.

Participants also emphasized the importance of regional connectivity and transportation choice. Better east-west access between areas west of the Rock River and major employment centers near I-39/90 emerged as a common theme, as did the desire for expanded transit service, improved regional connections, enhanced walking and bicycling facilities, and future passenger rail opportunities. Collectively, these findings highlight a growing desire for a transportation system that provides safe, reliable, and multimodal access between homes, jobs, schools, healthcare facilities, and other key destinations throughout the Stateline region.

What the Data Shows: Technical Analysis

The technical analysis completed as part of the LRTP provided a data-driven assessment of the regional transportation system and largely reinforced the priorities identified through public outreach and stakeholder engagement. The analysis included a review of roadway safety, traffic operations, infrastructure conditions, demographic and development trends, active transportation, public transportation, freight movement, passenger rail, and findings from recent transportation planning efforts completed throughout the region.

Together, these analyses help identify where the transportation system is performing well, where challenges exist, and where future transportation investments may be needed. The following sections summarize the key findings from the technical analysis and their implications for the Stateline region through 2055.

Safety

Crash analysis confirmed that transportation safety remains a critical regional priority. Many of the region's highest-crash locations have either been addressed through recent improvements, are currently under study, or have safety enhancements planned for implementation. However, crashes continue to occur throughout the transportation system, reinforcing the need for ongoing investment in strategies that improve safety for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and freight operators. As a result, safety will continue to be a central consideration in future transportation planning and investment decisions throughout the SLATS region.

Several locations identified through the safety analysis correspond to corridors already receiving attention through local, county, and state transportation projects, including improvements near Milwaukee Road, the White Avenue corridor, Blackhawk Boulevard, and other higher-volume arterial roadways. In addition, roadway reconfiguration projects on Henry Avenue and Cranston Road demonstrated reductions in both total crashes and injury-related crashes, supporting continued evaluation of context-sensitive safety improvements where appropriate.

The analysis also identified continued opportunities to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety by addressing network gaps, improving crossings, and strengthening connections to schools, neighborhoods, parks, transit services, and commercial destinations.

System Preservation

The condition assessment highlighted the importance of maintaining and preserving the region's existing transportation assets. Consistent with public input, preserving existing infrastructure is one of the most cost-effective and widely supported transportation investments available to the region.

Several key corridors, including Prairie Avenue, Park Avenue, Gardner Street, and Willowbrook Road, will require continued maintenance and investment to preserve system performance and support future travel demand. The importance of Gardner Street and Willowbrook Road is expected to increase as development associated with the Ho-Chunk Casino and surrounding commercial areas occurs.

Traffic Operations and Travel Demand

The travel demand model indicates that the regional transportation system generally operates well today and is expected to continue operating at acceptable levels through 2055. However, the analysis also confirmed that localized congestion and operational challenges occur at several key corridors, intersections, and interchange areas.

Particular attention is warranted near the I-39/90 and Gardner Street interchange area, the Gardner Street and Willowbrook Road corridor, and intersections immediately east and west of the Rock River that serve critical east-west travel movements. Additional operational concerns were identified along portions of Liberty Avenue, 4th Street, Portland Avenue, and major intersections along Cranston Road where peak-period delays occur despite acceptable daily operating conditions.

Collectively, these findings suggest that future transportation needs are less related to widespread congestion and more focused on corridor operations, intersection performance, reliability, and localized bottlenecks.

Accessibility and Connectivity

The review of existing and future transportation conditions identified regional connectivity as one of the most significant long-term transportation needs facing the Stateline region. While the transportation system generally functions well, the analysis highlighted several locations where the efficiency of the broader network is influenced by a relatively small number of corridors, intersections, and river crossings that serve important regional travel movements.

East-west connectivity emerged as a recurring theme across multiple analyses. Travel between areas west of the Rock River and major employment centers, commercial destinations, and activity hubs near I-39/90, the Gateway area, and other portions of eastern Beloit relies heavily on a limited number of corridors and river crossings. The concentration of travel demand on these facilities underscores the importance of maintaining efficient east-west mobility through a combination of corridor improvements, intersection enhancements, operational strategies, and multimodal transportation investments.

The analysis also identified opportunities to strengthen connectivity in the northern portions of the MPA, where continued residential, commercial, and employment growth is anticipated. Enhanced roadway, transit, and multimodal connections in these areas can improve access to the interstate system and regional destinations while supporting future development patterns. In addition, a more connected transportation network can help distribute traffic more efficiently, improve travel reliability, and provide greater flexibility for both people and goods moving throughout the region.

Public Transportation

Unlike roadway investments, public transportation needs are driven as much by people and travel patterns as they are by infrastructure. The Transit Development Plan (TDP) identified several opportunities to improve service frequency, operating hours, regional coordination, and workforce mobility. However, many of the service enhancements identified through the planning process would require additional operating funding and long-term partnerships beyond currently available resources.

Feedback from employers, transit providers, educational institutions, and community organizations highlighted the importance of expanding access to jobs, education, healthcare, and other essential

destinations. A recurring theme was the need for transit service that better aligns with modern workforce travel patterns, particularly for workers employed during evening, overnight, and weekend shifts.

The TDP also identified opportunities to strengthen regional mobility through improved coordination between transit providers, expanded service to key employment and activity centers, and mobility solutions such as microtransit. In addition, the plan reaffirmed a continuing need for enhanced north-south transit connections between Wisconsin and Illinois communities. While many of these improvements would require additional funding, they illustrate the important role public transportation can play in improving regional connectivity and expanding access to opportunity throughout the Stateline region.

Active Transportation

The Active Transportation Plan found that the Stateline region has a strong foundation of sidewalks, trails, shared-use paths, and bicycle facilities that support both transportation and recreational travel. However, many facilities function as individual segments rather than a connected regional network, limiting access between neighborhoods, schools, employment centers, parks, downtown districts, and other key destinations.

A recurring theme identified, also confirmed through public input, was the need to improve connectivity, comfort, and safety for people walking and bicycling. The Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress analysis found that many low-stress bicycling areas are separated by higher-volume roadways that are difficult to cross or navigate. As a result, many of the region's active transportation needs focus on closing network gaps, improving crossings, strengthening trail connections, and creating safer links between destinations.

Key opportunities identified in the Active Transportation Plan include expanding regionally significant trails, enhancing trail connections, improving bicycle and pedestrian crossings, and developing a more connected low-stress bicycle and pedestrian network. Together, these improvements can expand transportation choice, improve access to community destinations, and support broader goals related to public health, recreation, tourism, safety, and quality of life.

Freight and Economic Development

The freight analysis reinforced the importance of the Stateline region as a major freight gateway along the I-39/90 corridor. Truck volumes remain among the highest in the region along the interstate system, Gardner Street, and other freight corridors that support industrial, commercial, and logistics-related development.

The regional truck analysis found that most trucks traveling through the region remain on the interstate system, while truck traffic on local roadways is generally associated with destinations within the MPA. However, truck activity remains highly visible along several corridors and continues to create operational, safety, and quality-of-life concerns identified by residents and stakeholders.

The Gardner Street and Willowbrook Road corridor emerged as a particularly important focus area because of its role in freight movement, economic development, tourism activity, and access to the Ho-Chunk Casino and Resort, the Gateway Business District, and I-39/90. As development and travel

demand continue to evolve, maintaining efficient freight mobility and reliable corridor operations while balancing community needs will remain an important regional transportation priority. Additional analysis of transportation and land use conditions within this area may be warranted as development continues.

Passenger Rail

Recent passenger rail studies identified the Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford corridor as a potential long-term opportunity to expand transportation choice, strengthen regional connectivity, and support economic development.

The 2021 Passenger Rail Study identified ridership potential reaching approximately 2,150 daily passenger trips, while the 2025 Passenger Rail Impact Study identified significant opportunities related to economic development, redevelopment, accessibility, workforce mobility, and transit-oriented development. Although substantial investment, coordination, and additional planning would be required, the studies suggest the corridor warrants continued planning, corridor preservation, and regional coordination efforts to keep future passenger rail opportunities viable.

Key Themes from Technical Analysis

The transportation analyses completed as part of the 2055 LRTP generally reinforced the priorities identified through public outreach and stakeholder engagement while providing additional insight into how the region's transportation system is expected to function through 2055. A recurring finding was that the Stateline region benefits from a strong transportation foundation, but that continued investment will be needed to preserve existing infrastructure, improve safety, address localized operational concerns, and maintain reliable access to jobs, services, and economic activity centers.

Several themes emerged consistently across the analyses. Safety remains a critical consideration across all transportation modes, while preservation of existing transportation assets was identified as one of the most effective strategies for maintaining system performance over the long term. The analyses also highlighted the importance of improving east-west connectivity across the Rock River, maintaining efficient operations along key corridors such as Gardner Street and Willowbrook Road, and strengthening access between residential areas, employment centers, and major destinations throughout the region.

The analyses further demonstrated the importance of providing transportation options beyond the automobile. Public transportation, active transportation, and passenger rail studies each identified opportunities to improve mobility, accessibility, and regional connectivity for residents, workers, students, and visitors. At the same time, freight and economic development analyses reinforced the region's strategic location along the I-39/90 corridor and the importance of balancing freight mobility, economic competitiveness, safety, and quality of life. Collectively, these findings support continued investment in a safe, reliable, connected, and multimodal transportation system that can accommodate evolving travel patterns and support future growth throughout the Stateline region.

Summary of Regional Transportation Needs and Priorities

The public outreach, stakeholder engagement, and technical analyses completed as part of the 2055 LRTP revealed a number of consistent transportation themes across the Stateline region. While specific issues may vary by corridor, community, transportation mode, or user group, many of the underlying needs were interconnected and appeared repeatedly throughout the planning process.

The following transportation needs and priorities represent a synthesis of the key findings identified through the LRTP. Together, they reflect the region's most significant transportation challenges and opportunities and provide the foundation for the transportation projects, strategies, and recommendations that are presented in **Chapter 8**.

The major regional transportation needs identified through the SLATS 2055 LRTP planning process are:

- Preserve and maintain existing transportation assets
- Improve transportation safety for all users
- Expand transportation choice and improve regional connectivity
- Support economic development and freight mobility
- Position the region for future passenger rail opportunities

Preserve and Maintain Existing Transportation Assets

Preserving and maintaining the region's existing transportation system emerged as the highest priority identified throughout the planning process. Residents consistently emphasized the importance of maintaining roads, bridges, intersections, sidewalks, trails, and other transportation assets before pursuing major expansion projects. This priority reflects both public sentiment and the practical reality that maintaining existing infrastructure is often the most cost-effective way to preserve mobility, safety, reliability, and access throughout the region.

Resident Perspective: Preserve and Maintain
(from 2026 Statistically Valid Survey)

"Fix the roads we already have before building new ones. Potholes, pavement conditions, and aging bridges need long-term attention."

"Maintaining existing infrastructure should be the region's first priority."

As the transportation system continues to age, ongoing investment will be needed to maintain pavement conditions, roadway performance, bridge infrastructure, and multimodal facilities throughout the Stateline Area. Several important corridors, including Prairie Avenue, Park Avenue, Gardner Street, and Willowbrook Road, currently exhibit maintenance, rehabilitation, or operational needs due to their age, condition, and importance within the regional transportation network. Continued investment in these facilities will help preserve reliable travel conditions while protecting prior transportation investments.



The need for preservation is particularly important along the Gardner Street and Willowbrook Road corridors. These facilities serve as critical gateways to I-39/90, the Gateway Business District, downtown Beloit, South Beloit, and the Ho-Chunk Casino and Resort area. In addition to their regional mobility function, these corridors are expected to play an increasingly important role in supporting future economic development, tourism, and redevelopment opportunities. Gardner Street is especially important because it serves as one of the region's primary east-west connections and provides direct access to areas that may experience additional redevelopment and investment associated with continued growth around the casino and adjacent commercial districts.



Preservation is also a logical investment priority given the transportation conditions identified through the LRTP. While localized operational and safety concerns exist, the analysis did not identify widespread capacity deficiencies requiring major roadway expansion projects. As a result, maintaining and improving the performance of existing transportation assets offers an effective strategy for supporting future mobility needs while maximizing the value of existing infrastructure.

The region's role as a major freight gateway between Wisconsin and Illinois further reinforces the importance of system preservation. Heavy truck traffic contributes to pavement deterioration, bridge wear, and increased maintenance demands, particularly along key freight corridors and routes serving industrial and commercial areas. Continued investment in roadway and bridge preservation will help ensure the transportation system remains safe, reliable, and capable of supporting both local mobility and regional economic activity.

In addition to maintaining infrastructure, stakeholders identified a desire to address regional truck travel patterns and their impacts on local roadways. While freight movement is critical to the regional economy, additional evaluation may be warranted to determine whether opportunities exist to improve truck routing, reduce unnecessary truck traffic on certain corridors, and encourage greater use of designated freight routes and facilities where appropriate, including facilities outside the SLATS MPA. Such efforts could help reduce the amount of wear on local infrastructure while improving freight mobility and maintaining quality of life within surrounding communities.

Improve Transportation Safety

Transportation safety remains a fundamental priority for SLATS and its local, regional, and state transportation partners. Safety concerns were consistently identified through public outreach and stakeholder discussions, with recurring concerns related to speeding, distracted driving, challenging intersections, truck movements, pedestrian crossings, and conflicts between different roadway users. Stakeholders also identified emerging safety considerations associated with e-bikes, scooters, and other micromobility devices. Taken together, these findings reinforce the importance of continuing to

improve safety for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, freight operators, and all other users of the transportation system.



The LRTP planning process highlighted the significant efforts already underway throughout the region to improve transportation safety. Corridor studies, intersection improvements, roadway modernization projects, and other targeted investments have been implemented or are being advanced by local governments, WisDOT, IDOT, and other transportation partners to address identified safety concerns and improve overall system performance. Several locations identified as higher-crash locations have either been recently improved, are currently under study, or have improvements programmed for future implementation. While these efforts have contributed to improved safety performance, crashes continue to occur throughout the region, highlighting the need for continued investment in proven safety strategies and coordination among WisDOT, IDOT, local governments, law enforcement agencies, and other transportation partners. The Transportation System Performance Report included in **Appendix F** further demonstrates that the fiscally constrained projects included in this LRTP will help support regional efforts to achieve state and federal safety performance targets.

Safety needs also extend beyond roadway improvements. Public input and stakeholder discussions consistently highlighted concerns regarding walking and bicycling conditions, particularly along higher-volume roadways and at key crossing locations. The Active Transportation Plan identified opportunities to improve safety through enhanced crossings, sidewalk gap closure, improved trail connectivity, and development of a more connected low-stress bicycle and pedestrian network. Advancing major regional trail initiatives, including improvements that strengthen connections between the Peace Trail and Stone Bridge Trail systems and expand access to other regionally significant trails, would not only improve safety but also provide additional transportation and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. These improvements represent important investments that help support transportation choice, regional connectivity, tourism, and economic development.

Beyond corridor-wide improvements, several opportunities exist to improve safety and operations through targeted intersection and roadway enhancements. Stakeholder outreach, corridor studies, and project evaluations identified locations where operational improvements could help reduce conflict points, improve traffic flow, and enhance safety for all users. These types of improvements can often provide significant benefits without the cost or disruption associated with major roadway expansion projects.

Evaluations of roadway reconfiguration projects on Henry Avenue and Cranston Road demonstrated measurable reductions in both total crashes and injury-related crashes, illustrating the potential benefits of context-sensitive roadway design strategies. While opinions regarding roadway reconfigurations remain mixed, the results reinforce the importance of evaluating transportation investments based on measurable safety outcomes and corridor-specific needs. Similarly, several corridor studies completed throughout the region have identified opportunities for targeted

intersection improvements, signal optimization, access management strategies, roundabouts, and other proven safety countermeasures that can reduce conflict points, lessen crash severity, improve traffic operations, and support broader goals related to regional connectivity and mobility.

Improve Regional Connectivity and Expand Transportation Choice

Regional connectivity emerged as one of the most significant transportation needs identified throughout the planning process. Residents, employers, community organizations, and local governments consistently emphasized the importance of improving access between communities, employment centers, schools, healthcare facilities, commercial districts, recreational destinations, and other key activity centers. These connections support not only daily travel, but also workforce mobility, economic development, quality of life, and access to opportunity throughout the Stateline region.

One of the most persistent themes involved east-west mobility. The Rock River represents both a regional (natural) asset and a transportation constraint, with a limited number of crossings carrying much of the travel demand between communities west of the river and major employment centers along the I-39/90 corridor. Improving the efficiency, reliability, and connectivity of east-west travel will be important to supporting economic development, workforce mobility, freight movement, and daily travel throughout the region. This need was reinforced through discussions focused on housing, land use, and economic development, where stakeholders noted that continued development and redevelopment opportunities exist west of the river, but that improved access to major employment centers and the interstate system would help unlock additional investment potential.

Resident Perspective: Improve Regional Connectivity and Expand Transportation Choices
(from 2026 Statistically Valid Survey)

"We need better transportation connections between communities on both sides of the state line."

"More travel options would reduce dependence on cars and give people greater mobility and independence."

The importance of connectivity extends beyond vehicle travel. Many of the region's largest employment centers, industrial areas, and future growth areas are located near the interstate corridor, while a significant share of the population resides west of the Rock River. For some residents, particularly those without reliable access to a vehicle, transportation options for accessing jobs, education, healthcare, and other services remain limited. This challenge is especially important given that WisDOT's Interactive Non-Driver Tool estimates that approximately 20 to 40 percent of Rock County residents are non-drivers. Improving connections between housing, employment centers, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and other key destinations will be essential to supporting workforce mobility, economic competitiveness, and quality of life throughout the region.

The need for enhanced connectivity also extends to other parts of the MPA. Continued growth and development in the northern portion of the region highlight the importance of preserving opportunities for future roadway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and multimodal connections. Strategic improvements to the regional roadway network and functional classification system can help improve access to developing areas, distribute traffic more efficiently across the transportation network, and reduce pressure on existing corridors.

The planning process also demonstrated that connectivity and transportation choice are closely related. In many cases, improving connectivity is not solely a matter of building additional roadway capacity, but rather providing residents with more travel options and better connections between existing destinations. Throughout the planning process, employers, transit providers, educational institutions, and community organizations identified opportunities to strengthen transit service, improve regional transit connections, expand walking and bicycling facilities, and improve mobility for individuals who do not have reliable access to a personal vehicle.

Particular emphasis was placed on enhancing public transportation connections to employment centers. Employers noted that existing transit service hours do not always align with workforce schedules, especially for workers employed in manufacturing, healthcare, hospitality, distribution, tourism, and other industries that operate evenings, weekends, and multiple shifts. The Transit Development Plan identified opportunities to improve regional mobility through expanded service hours, enhanced regional connections, and innovative mobility solutions such as microtransit, particularly within the Gateway and Ho-Chunk Casino development areas. The plan also identified a continuing need for improved north-south regional transit connections between Wisconsin and Illinois communities, although many of these improvements would require additional funding beyond currently available resources.

Similarly, the Active Transportation Plan identified opportunities to strengthen connectivity through expanded trail connections, safer roadway crossings, improved sidewalk networks, and the development of a more connected low-stress bicycle and pedestrian network. Initiatives such as improving connections between the Peace Trail and Stone Bridge Trail systems, expanding access to regionally significant trails, and filling key gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian network can improve both transportation and recreational opportunities. Together, these investments can provide residents with additional travel choices while strengthening connections between neighborhoods, schools, employment centers, parks, transit services, and other important community destinations.

Support Economic Development and Freight Movement

Transportation investments play a critical role in supporting economic competitiveness, workforce development, tourism, redevelopment, and long-term growth throughout the Stateline region. Access to employment centers, industrial parks, commercial districts, educational institutions, tourism destinations, and regional markets depends on maintaining a safe, efficient, and reliable transportation system. As the region continues to evolve, transportation improvements will remain an important tool for supporting economic opportunity and ensuring businesses and residents can efficiently access jobs, services, and destinations throughout the region.

The region's strategic location along the I-39/90 corridor is one of its greatest economic advantages. Manufacturing, distribution, logistics, agriculture, and tourism-related businesses all depend on reliable freight movement and efficient access to regional transportation networks. Maintaining strong connections between industrial areas, freight corridors, interstate facilities, rail corridors, and major employment centers will remain essential to sustaining the region's economic base and supporting future growth opportunities.

The planning process also highlighted several corridors where transportation mobility, economic development, and land use planning are closely linked. In particular, the Gardner Street and Willowbrook Road corridors serve multiple functions, including interstate access, freight movement, local mobility, tourism access, and economic development. These corridors provide access to major employment centers, the Gateway Business District, downtown Beloit, South Beloit, and the Ho-Chunk Casino and Resort area. As development associated with the casino, Prairie Avenue redevelopment initiatives spurred by the TIF district, and other growth areas continue to occur, maintaining safe and efficient operations within these corridors will become increasingly important.

Resident Perspective: Support Economic Development and Freight
(from 2026 Statistically Valid Survey)

"Transportation investments should focus on connecting people to jobs and supporting economic growth."

"Better access between major roads, interstates, and industrial areas is important for the region's future."

The need to support economic development extends beyond freight mobility alone. Transportation investments can help unlock redevelopment opportunities, improve access to underutilized sites, strengthen connections between employers and the workforce, and support continued investment in key growth areas throughout the region. Stakeholder discussions consistently emphasized the importance of aligning transportation investments with economic development objectives to ensure the transportation system supports both existing businesses and future development and redevelopment opportunities.

At the same time, transportation planning must balance freight mobility and economic development goals with safety, multimodal accessibility, and community quality of life. Residents and stakeholders expressed concerns related to truck traffic, safety, neighborhood impacts, and conflicts between freight movement and other transportation users. While the regional truck analysis found that most truck traffic remains on the interstate system, truck activity remains highly visible along several local corridors and continues to influence how residents experience and/or perceive the transportation system.

As a result, there is an ongoing need to evaluate freight routing, access management, first- and last-mile freight connections, multimodal accommodations, and land use relationships to ensure that transportation investments support economic activity while maintaining safety and quality of life. Future corridor studies and planning efforts may provide opportunities to better integrate transportation, freight movement, economic development, tourism, redevelopment, housing and multimodal objectives within key growth areas of the region. Collectively, these efforts can help ensure the transportation system continues to support economic prosperity while serving the needs of residents, businesses, visitors, and freight operators alike.

Position the Region for Future Passenger Rail Opportunities

Recent passenger rail studies completed by SLATS have identified the Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford corridor as a potential long-term opportunity to expand transportation choices, strengthen regional connectivity, and support economic development. While passenger rail service would require

substantial investment, continued regional coordination, and additional planning, strong interest in the concept emerged throughout both the public outreach process and related planning studies.

Passenger rail was consistently viewed as an opportunity to better connect the Stateline region with major employment, education, healthcare, and activity centers throughout southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois. The statistically valid survey results demonstrated strong support for future passenger rail service connecting the region with Madison, Rockford, and ultimately Chicago. Support was particularly strong among residents in the Illinois portion of the SLATS MPA, reflecting broader themes identified throughout the planning process regarding the need to strengthen north-south regional connectivity and expand transportation options between communities, employment centers, and major destinations on both sides of the Wisconsin-Illinois state line.

The need to preserve future passenger rail opportunities is also closely tied to the region's long-term economic development goals. The 2021 Passenger Rail Study identified ridership potential within the corridor, while the 2025 Passenger Rail Impact Study highlighted opportunities related to economic development, redevelopment, accessibility, workforce mobility, and transit-oriented development. Together, these studies suggest that passenger rail could provide benefits extending beyond transportation by supporting downtown revitalization, attracting private investment, expanding housing options, and enhancing the region's economic competitiveness.

Resident Perspective: Advance Passenger Rail
(from 2026 Statistically Valid Survey)

"A passenger rail connection between Madison and Rockford would create new opportunities for work and travel."

"Rail service would provide a convenient alternative to driving and help connect our region to larger destinations."

Although passenger rail remains a long-term opportunity, several recent developments have helped maintain momentum for additional planning and corridor preservation efforts. These include inclusion of the Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford corridor in the Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050, ongoing efforts to restore passenger rail service between Chicago and Rockford, station planning and redevelopment efforts in Rockford, continued discussions regarding passenger rail and station planning in the Madison area, and coordination through Rock County's ad hoc passenger rail committee. Collectively, these efforts underscore the importance of maintaining regional partnerships, preserving future corridor opportunities, and positioning the Stateline region to take advantage of future passenger rail planning and funding opportunities as they arise.

While implementation may be decades away, planning for passenger rail today can help ensure that future opportunities remain available as the region continues to grow and evolve. Continued coordination, corridor preservation, and participation in state and regional passenger rail initiatives represent relatively low-cost actions that can keep future options open while supporting the region's broader goals related to mobility, economic development, workforce access, and regional connectivity.

Chapter 8. Recommended Plan

This chapter describes the process used to identify, evaluate, and prioritize transportation investments for inclusion in the SLATS 2055 LRTP. Building upon the existing and future transportation conditions presented in **Chapter 6** and the regional transportation needs identified in **Chapter 7**, this chapter presents the fiscally constrained transportation program, identifies illustrative projects and long-term opportunities, and summarizes recommended projects, policies, and strategies for all modes. Collectively, these recommendations are intended to establish a balanced, multimodal transportation network that addresses current and future regional transportation needs while advancing the vision and achieving the goals and objectives outlined in the SLATS 2055 LRTP.

Project Identification

Project identification was informed by a variety of sources to ensure that transportation needs and opportunities throughout the SLATS region were comprehensively represented. As discussed in previous chapters, these sources included public input, stakeholder engagement, coordination with local, regional, state, and federal agencies, existing plans and studies, projects included in the current TIP, and technical analyses of existing and future transportation conditions.

Recent transportation improvements completed since adoption of the 2045 LRTP were reviewed to establish a baseline understanding of investments already made within the region. In addition, the current SLATS TIP was evaluated to identify programmed projects expected to be implemented in the near term and to ensure consistency between short-range and long-range planning efforts in the 2055 LRTP.

Beyond currently funded improvements, the 2055 LRTP planning process identified a range of transportation needs related to system preservation, safety, regional connectivity, transportation choice, freight mobility, and economic development. Particular focus was given to corridors and locations identified through public outreach, stakeholder engagement, modal planning efforts, and technical analyses, including key east-west connections, major employment centers, freight corridors, active transportation facilities, transit services, and areas experiencing continued development and redevelopment activity.

Together, these efforts resulted in a broad universe of candidate transportation improvements for evaluation and consideration in the LRTP development process. The resulting recommendations seek to address the LRTP goals and objectives and provide a flexible framework for accommodating future growth and changing transportation needs through 2055.

Potential 2055 LRTP Projects and Concepts

In addition to projects currently programmed in the SLATS TIP, a broad range of potential transportation improvements and concepts were identified through the 2055 LRTP planning process. These candidate projects were developed in response to the transportation needs, opportunities, and

priorities identified through public and stakeholder engagement, technical analyses, agency coordination, and previous planning efforts completed throughout the Stateline region.

The candidate projects reflect the major themes identified in **Chapters 6** and **7**, including preserving and maintaining existing transportation assets, improving safety, enhancing regional connectivity, expanding transportation choice, supporting economic development and freight mobility, and positioning the region for future growth. Particular attention was given to corridors and locations where existing conditions, projected travel patterns, development trends, stakeholder input, or previous studies identified transportation challenges or opportunities.

As shown in **Figure 52** and summarized in **Table 9**, the potential projects include a diverse range of roadway, freight, transit, bicycle and pedestrian, operational, safety, preservation, and corridor planning improvements. Candidate projects range from short-term operational and safety enhancements to major corridor improvements, multimodal investments, new roadway connections, and future planning studies. Together, these projects and planning concepts represent a comprehensive inventory of potential transportation strategies aimed at addressing regional needs and advancing the long-term vision of the SLATS 2055 LRTP.

It is important to note that the projects and concepts shown in the figure and table represent potential transportation improvements identified through the LRTP planning process. Inclusion in this list does not constitute a recommendation, priority ranking, or funding commitment. Instead, these projects provide a range of potential solutions that were then evaluated based on transportation need, potential benefits, and their ability to address key transportation priorities. The following sections describe the evaluation process and identify the projects and strategies that comprise the fiscally constrained and illustrative elements of the 2055 LRTP. **Appendix F** provides additional details regarding the project identification.

Figure 52. Potential Transportation Projects and Planning Concepts

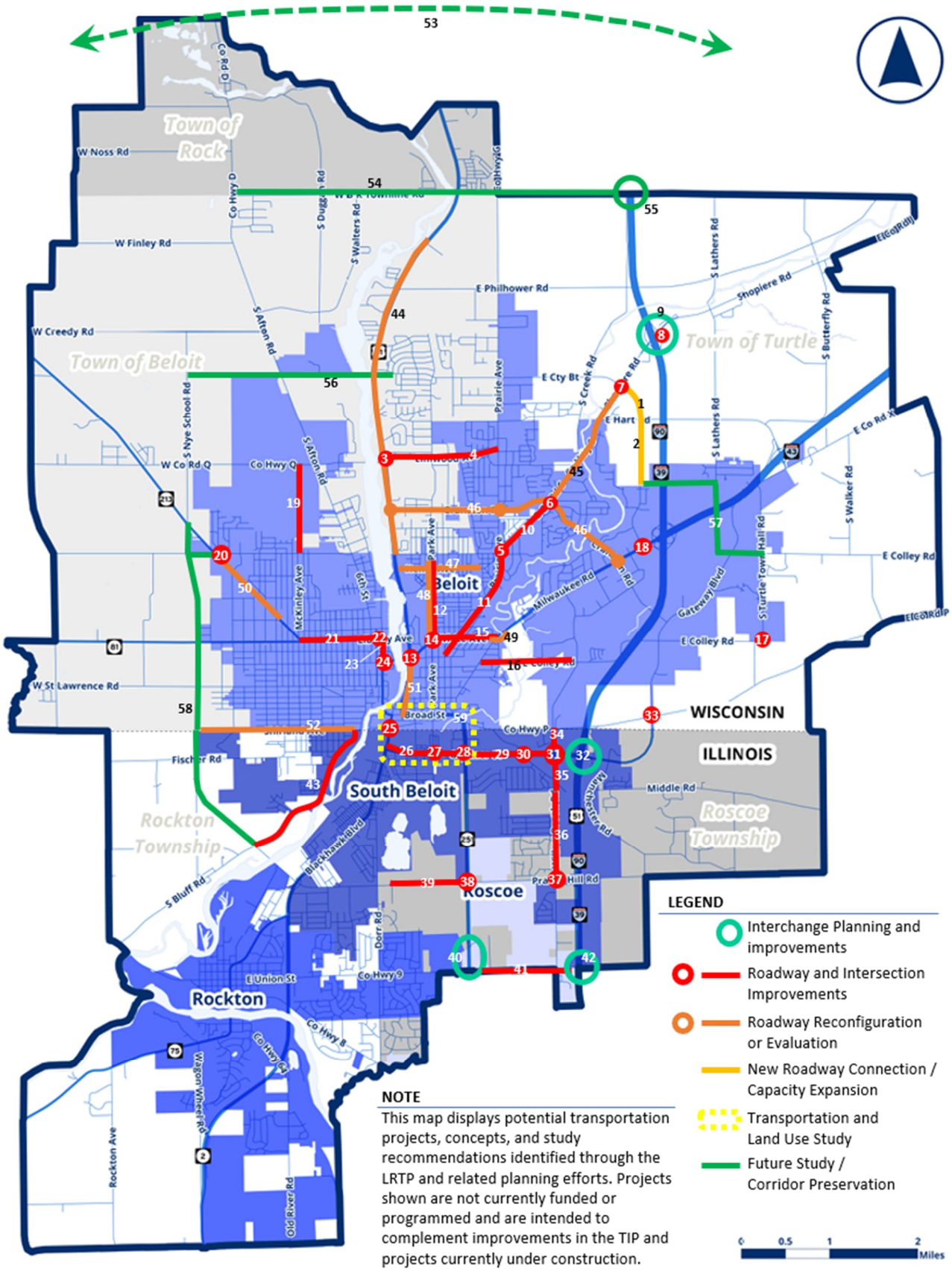


Table 9. Description of Potential Transportation Projects and Planning Concepts

BT Extension
1. Shopiere to Hart – new roadway connection; improve network connectivity and access
2. Hart to Milwaukee, via Winchester Drive – new roadway connection; improve connectivity and access

Elmwood Avenue
3. US 51 / Newark intersection – realign/reconfigure to improve access and network connectivity
4. Riverside and Park – reconfiguration with continuous cross-section

Shopiere Road
5. Prairie Ave / Bayliss Ave / Moccasin Trail – operational improvements; potential roundabout
6. Cranston Road intersection – geometric and operational improvements
7. Inman Parkway intersection – operational improvements; evaluate future signal or roundabout
8. I-39/90 northbound interchange ramp – roundabout and operational improvements
9. I-39/90 interchange – long-term geometric and capacity improvements
10. Prairie to Cranston – 3-lane cross-section conversion to improve safety and operations

Prairie Avenue
11. Shopiere to Woodward – rehabilitation and operational improvements

Park Avenue
12. Bayliss to White – rehabilitation and operational improvements

White Avenue (WIS 81)
13. US 51 intersection – operational improvements and access management; Woodward intersection – access management
14. Park Avenue – roundabout to improve safety and operations
15. Park to Milwaukee – 3-lane cross-section conversion to improve safety and operations

Colley Road
16. Milwaukee to Willowbrook – capacity and connectivity improvements
17. Turtle Town Hall Road – intersection realignment

Milwaukee Road
18. Freeman Parkway intersection – geometric, operational, and capacity improvements

McKinley Avenue
19. Burton to Beloit Newark (County Q) – connectivity and operational improvements

Madison Road
20. Burton Road intersection – geometric and operational improvements; intersection realignment (potential roundabout)

Liberty Avenue (WIS 81)
21. Madison to 4th – 3-lane cross-section conversion to improve safety and operations
22. 4th, 5th and 6th Streets – geometric and operational improvements; intersection realignment and signal modifications

4th Street
23. Liberty Avenue to Portland Avenue – 3-lane cross-section conversion to improve safety and operations
24. Portland Avenue intersection – operational improvements (potential roundabout)

State Street
25. Shirland / Colby – intersection realignment to improve connectivity and operations

Gardner Street (IL 75)
26. IL 2 to IL 251 – rehabilitation, operational improvements, and access management
27. Park Avenue intersection – geometric improvements to improve truck movements and safety
28. IL-251 intersection – operational improvements; potential roundabout
29. IL 251 to I-39/90 – rehabilitation, operational improvements, and access management
30. Manchester Road intersection – realignment with geometric, safety, and operational improvements
31. Willowbrook Road intersection – geometric improvements for safety and operations
32. I-39/90 interchange – short-term operational improvements; evaluate long-term modifications
33. Gateway Boulevard and Beloit Road intersection – geometric/traffic control improvements

Willowbrook Road
34. Stateline to Gardner – capacity and operational improvements coordinated with WI improvements
35. Gardner to Bastian – rehabilitation including pavement and shoulder improvements
36. Bastian to Prairie Hill – rehabilitation including pavement and shoulder improvements

Prairie Hill Road
37. Willowbrook intersection – operational improvements; potential roundabout
38. N. 2nd Street (IL 251) intersection – geometric improvements and access management
39. Fulmar Drive to IL 251 – roadway upgrades and potential capacity improvements

Rockton Road
40. IL 251 interchange – interchange improvements to enhance safety, capacity, and operations
41. IL 251 to Willowbrook – roadway upgrades and potential capacity improvements
42. I-39/90 interchange – monitor traffic operations; potential geometric and operational improvements

Bluff Street
43. Prairie Hill to Shirland – geometric and safety improvements

Roadway Configuration Improvement / Study
44. US 51 (Henry to north of Philhower) – evaluate corridor reconfiguration performance and identify potential operational enhancements
45. Shopiere Road (Cranston to Inman) – evaluate corridor reconfiguration performance and identify potential operational enhancements
46. Cranston Road (Riverside to Milwaukee) – evaluate corridor reconfiguration performance and identify potential operational and safety enhancements
47. Henry Avenue (Riverside to Royce) – evaluate corridor reconfiguration performance and identify potential operational and safety enhancements
48. Park Avenue (Bayliss to White) – evaluate corridor reconfiguration performance and identify potential operational enhancements
49. Milwaukee Avenue (White to Turtle Creek) – evaluate corridor reconfiguration performance and identify potential operational enhancements
50. Madison Avenue (Burton to Townline) – evaluate feasibility and benefits of a road reconfiguration
51. Pleasant Street (Broad to White) – implement road reconfiguration to enhance safety
52. Shirland Avenue (Prairie Hill extension to Bluff) – evaluate feasibility and benefits of a road reconfiguration

Future Studies / Perseveration
53. Regional Truck Corridor Optimization Study – evaluate transportation strategies to reduce pass-through truck traffic within the SLATS MPA and improve freight movement along US 14/WIS 11
54. Townline Road (County Hwy D to I-39/90) – evaluate long-term corridor improvements and connectivity needs
55. Townline Road (at I-39/90 interchange) – evaluate long-term need/feasibility of a new interchange
56. Inman Road (Hillside Avenue to Nye School Road) – evaluate the feasibility and benefits of a new river crossing to improve east-west network connectivity
57. Eastside roadway network – evaluate the feasibility of enhancing the roadway connectivity to support future growth and development
58. Prairie Hill Road (Bluff Road to Nye School Road) – evaluate a future north-south corridor connection and preservation needs
59. Broad / Gardner / Dearborn (US 51) / Blackhawk area – transportation and land use study to support redevelopment, enhance multimodal connections, and advance transportation and future land use planning goals

Project Evaluation

Following identification of potential transportation improvements, projects and long-term concepts were evaluated to determine their ability to address regional transportation needs, advance the goals and objectives of the SLATS 2055 LRTP, and be reasonably implemented within anticipated funding levels. The evaluation process considered information from the technical analyses, public and stakeholder engagement, previous planning studies, agency coordination efforts, and professional judgment regarding future transportation needs and opportunities.

The purpose of the evaluation process was not only to identify projects that address current transportation challenges, but also to ensure that future investments support the long-term vision for the entire SLATS MPA. Particular consideration was given to projects that improve safety, preserve existing infrastructure, strengthen regional connectivity, support economic development, enhance transportation choice, and improve access to jobs, services, and community destinations. The evaluation process also considered project readiness, consistency with local and regional plans, potential implementation constraints, and anticipated benefits relative to cost. Projects advancing through the evaluation process formed the basis for development of the fiscally constrained transportation plan.

Evaluation Criteria

Projects and strategies were evaluated using criteria designed to reflect the goals, objectives, and identified transportation needs of the SLATS 2055 Long Range Transportation Plan. The evaluation framework provided a consistent method for considering how individual projects contribute to the broader transportation system and help address the opportunities and challenges identified throughout the planning process. The evaluation measures, summarized in **Table 10**, considered each project's potential to:

- Improve transportation safety and security for all users, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and freight operators.
- Preserve and maintain existing transportation infrastructure while improving system performance, resilience, and operational efficiency.
- Enhance regional mobility, accessibility, connectivity, and travel reliability through strategic transportation investments.
- Support economic vitality by improving access to jobs, employment centers, freight networks, commercial areas, and tourism destinations.
- Expand transportation choice by supporting transit, walking, biking, and other multimodal travel options where appropriate.
- Improve access to community destinations, including employment, education, healthcare, parks, shopping, and public services.
- Support planned growth, redevelopment, neighborhood vitality, and land use objectives while minimizing adverse environmental impacts.
- Promote efficient use of transportation funding by prioritizing projects that address identified needs and provide long-term public benefits.
- Enhance community quality of life through transportation investments that support healthy, connected, and livable neighborhoods.

- Advance projects that can reasonably be implemented within the planning horizon based on anticipated funding, partnerships, and agency responsibilities.

TABLE 10. EVALUATION MEASURES

LRTP Goals	Evaluation Measures	Rating 2	Rating 1	Rating 0
Economic Vitality	**Improves access to employment / Supports tourism**	Direct and positive effect on planned or existing economic development activity, or discernibly increases the region's economic competitiveness to significantly attract new development, jobs and/or increase tourism. Directly improves employment access (including multimodal access).	Indirect and positive effect on planned or existing economic development activity, but no discernably increase to the region's economic competitiveness to significantly attract new development, jobs and/or increase tourism. Minor or no improvement to employment access.	No direct/indirect effect or has a negative effect on planned or existing economic development activity.
System Preservation	**Maintains existing infrastructure / Utilizes technology to enhance operation efficiency / Supports redevelopment on existing transportation network**	Directly addresses a critical or high priority existing infrastructure need (e.g. SO/SD bridge or pavement with a poor or lesser rating), or is a targeted investment to enhance system performance and resiliency, and directly supports reinvestment in existing transportation assets, especially in the Adjusted Urbanized Area (AUA).	Indirectly or minimally addresses an infrastructure need (e.g. pavement with a fair or better rating), or limited enhancements to system performance and resiliency.	Does not support system preservation, or does not enhance system performance. The construction of a new roadway facility would be scored a '0' for this category.
Mobility and Accessibility	**Strengthens alternative transportation modes / Reduces congestion / Enhances network connectivity / Improves freight movements**	Includes project-wide transit*, biking, and walking accommodations that meet or exceed facility design standards (national/federal/state), and targets improvements** to address corridors or intersections that are determined to be at or over-capacity, and (if applicable) targets improvements to more efficiently accommodate freight within the region. *If on an existing, planned or potential transit route. **Includes new or significantly improved corridor connections meeting all other requirements above.	Includes project-wide transit*, biking, and walking accommodations that meet or exceed facility design standards (national/federal/state), and reduces existing or projected future year travel delay/congestion or maintains baseline conditions, and (if applicable) indirectly enhances the movement of freight within the region. *If on an existing, planned or potential transit route. **Includes new or significantly improved corridor connections meeting all other requirements above.	Does not Include project-wide transit*, biking, and walking accommodations. Does not address an existing or projected future year congestion or travel delay concern. Has no discernable benefit to the movement of freight. *If on an existing, planned or potential transit route.
Safety and Security	**Potential to reduce crashes / Enhances safety for all transportation users**	Directly targets a high crash location, or identified safety concern (including excessive motor vehicle speeds) in the LRTP, County or State HSP, ICE, corridor, TIA or similar study/data analysis. Crash Mitigation Factors (CMF) may also be used to inform appropriate solutions. Improvement also increases safety for transit users*, bicyclists and pedestrians. * If on an existing, planned or potential transit route.	Indirectly benefits a high crash location, or identified safety concern, or generally improves safety through implementation of current facility design standards. Potential safety benefits for transit users*, bicyclists, and pedestrians. * If on an existing, planned or potential transit route.	Does not specifically address a specific safety concern.
Environmentally Friendly / Healthy Neighborhoods / Land Use / Housing Integration	**Minimizes negative impacts to existing land uses / Supports mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods, particularly access to parks and recreation / Consistent with growth and land use plans**	No known environmental issues or avoids/significantly reduces negative environmental impacts. Project directly benefits neighborhood walkability/bikeability (enhanced connection to jobs, schools, services, parks). Project is consistent with local land use and/or economic development plans, and planned future growth patterns.	Minimizes or mitigates negative environmental impacts. Project indirectly benefits area neighborhoods. Project is consistent with local land use and/or economic development plans, and planned future growth patterns.	Negative impacts to the environment are known, or are likely to occur. Adversely impacts area neighborhoods, or makes them less bikeable/walkable. Project is inconsistent with local land use and/or economic development plans, and/or contradicts planned future growth patterns. Project may also potentially prevent future projects from occurring.
Access and Opportunity	**Enhances access to community destinations and improves quality of life**	Directly improves access to community destinations, services, parks, schools, healthcare, employment, or public facilities. Provides substantial benefits for residents through improved accessibility, connectivity, or ease of travel.	Indirectly improves access to community destinations or provides moderate community benefits through improved transportation options, connectivity, or mobility.	Has little or no discernible community accessibility benefit, or may create potential barriers to access for nearby residents or destinations.

The evaluation process was intended to provide a structured means of comparing projects with different purposes, scales, and implementation requirements. The results were used to help inform how individual projects advance LRTP goals and respond to documented transportation needs related to safety, infrastructure condition, mobility, accessibility, economic development, connectivity, and quality of life. Consideration was also given to factors such as project readiness and coordination with local and regional planning efforts.

The evaluation process also recognizes that no single project will address all regional transportation needs. Consequently, the fiscally constrained plan was developed as a balanced portfolio of investments that collectively helps to address and advance the SLATS 2055 LRTP goals and objectives.

Fiscal Constraint Analysis

Federal transportation planning regulations require metropolitan long-range transportation plans to demonstrate fiscal constraint. Fiscal constraint ensures that transportation projects and programs included in the LRTP can reasonably be implemented using revenues that are expected to be available during the planning horizon. The purpose of this requirement is to produce a realistic and achievable transportation plan that balances transportation needs with anticipated funding resources.

The fiscal constraint analysis compares estimated transportation revenues expected to be available through 2055 with the anticipated costs of implementing transportation improvements included in the LRTP. Consistent with federal guidance, only revenues that can reasonably be expected to be available based on current funding programs, historical trends, and anticipated funding sources were considered in the development of the fiscally constrained plan.

While many additional transportation needs and opportunities were identified throughout the planning process, not all can be included in the fiscally constrained program. As a result, a select number of projects and concepts are identified as illustrative projects that might be pursued should additional funding become available in the future.

Revenue Assumptions

Development of the fiscally constrained plan required estimating transportation revenues reasonably expected to be available between 2027 and 2055. Revenue assumptions were based on historical transportation funding trends, current federal and state transportation programs, and anticipated local funding commitments.

Consistent with previous LRTP updates, future revenues were estimated using available funding information from federal, state, regional, and local transportation programs. These assumptions recognize that transportation revenues will likely fluctuate over time due to legislative actions, economic conditions, inflation, and changes in transportation policy. That said, the assumptions provide a reasonable basis for identifying transportation investments that can be expected to advance during the planning horizon.

Based on information provided by WisDOT and IDOT, the estimated annual STP-U allocation is $1,010,121 from WisDOT and $316,866 from IDOT. The IDOT portion includes previously programmed carryover funds, resulting in an initial available balance of $709,379, which includes the current annual allocation.

Consistent with prior SLATS LRTP planning efforts, a 2 percent annual revenue growth factor was applied to future revenue projections. This assumption reflects the expectation that transportation funding programs will experience modest growth over the planning horizon while remaining fiscally conservative. The 2 percent growth rate is generally consistent with long-range transportation planning practice and is supported by historical trends which typically reflect gradual increases in federal, state, and local transportation funding over time. Applying a modest growth factor also provides a more realistic representation of future funding availability than assuming revenues remain flat throughout the planning period. While projected project costs are expected to increase at a faster rate than revenues, the 2 percent annual growth assumption recognizes that some increase in transportation funding is likely to occur over the life of the plan.

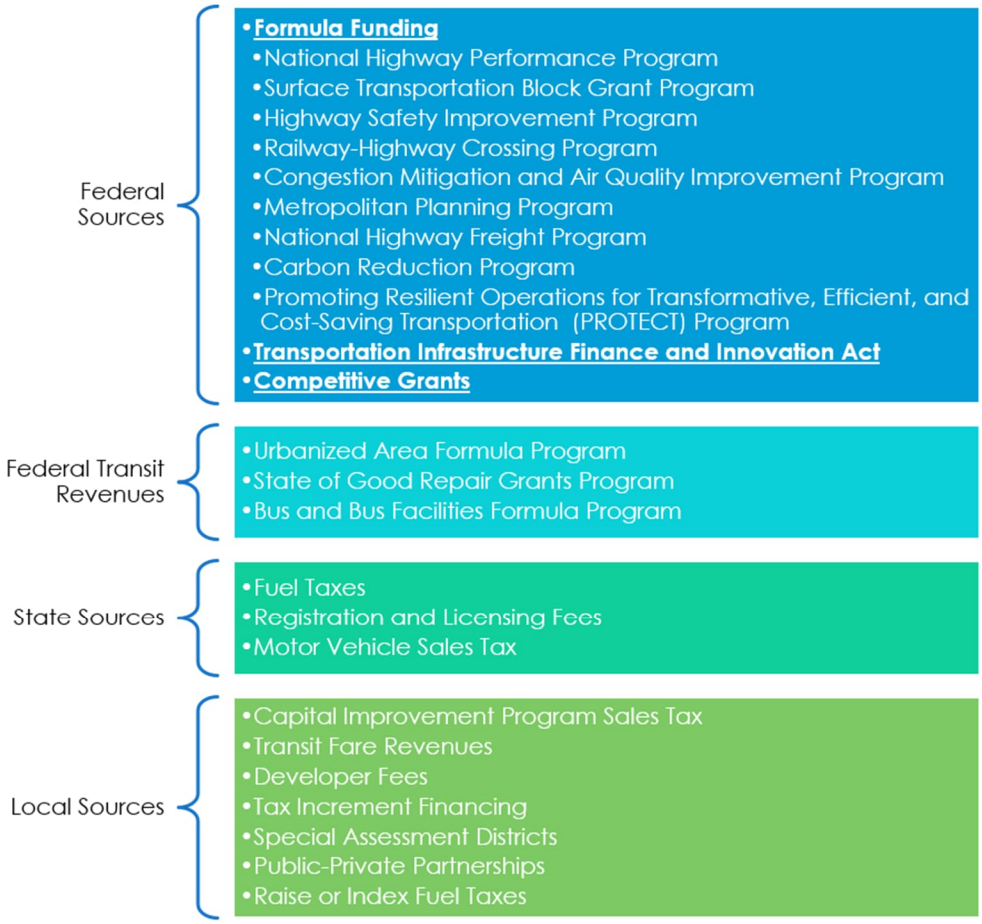
Based on the revenue assumptions described above, approximately $49.1 million in STP-U transportation funding resources is projected to be available within the SLATS Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) between 2027 and 2055. This estimate reflects current annual funding allocations and the application of a conservative 2 percent annual revenue growth factor over the planning horizon. Of the total projected funding, approximately $36.4 million is anticipated from WisDOT-administered STP-U funds and approximately $12.7 million from IDOT-administered STP-U funds, including available

carryover balances. These revenue projections provide the basis for establishing a fiscally constrained transportation program and evaluating the long-term feasibility of recommended transportation investments within the SLATS region. It should be noted that STP-U funding is only one component of the region's overall transportation investment strategy. WisDOT, IDOT, local governments, transit providers, and other transportation agencies will continue to invest significant additional resources in transportation infrastructure, preservation, operations, maintenance, and safety improvements throughout the planning horizon.

Funding Sources

Transportation improvements within the SLATS MPA are funded through a combination of federal, state, regional, local, and private-sector sources. Typical funding programs are summarized in **Figure 53**. Additional funding may also become available through competitive state and federal programs supporting safety improvements, freight projects, bridge rehabilitation, active transportation facilities, public transportation investments, passenger rail development, and economic development initiatives. A detailed summary of potential transportation funding sources is provided in **Appendix F**.

FIGURE 53. COMMON FUNDING SOURCES AND PROGRAMS



Fiscally Constrained Roadway/Freight Improvements

Roadway and freight investments represent a significant component of the recommended fiscally constrained plan and are intended to preserve the safety, functionality, and efficiency of the regional transportation system through 2055. The recommended program includes a combination of infrastructure preservation, operational improvements, safety enhancements, corridor upgrades, and targeted capacity improvements that respond to identified transportation needs throughout the SLATS MPA.

The roadway and freight program is designed to maintain and enhance regional mobility while supporting economic development, freight movement, and access to major employment, industrial, commercial, and community destinations. The recommended projects improve regional connectivity, strengthen access to key freight corridors and economic centers, and address operational and safety needs identified through technical analyses, stakeholder input, and previous planning efforts. Together, these investments support a safe, reliable, and resilient transportation network that will help accommodate future growth and economic activity across the Stateline region. The fiscally constrained plan also assumes that SLATS and its local, regional, and state transportation partners will continue to fund the ongoing operation, maintenance, preservation, and rehabilitation of existing transportation facilities, ensuring that current infrastructure assets remain in a state of good repair while supporting the long-term performance of the regional transportation system. **Figure 54** and **Table 12** summarize the fiscally constrained roadway and freight projects.

Cost Assumptions

Project costs used for fiscal constraint analysis were developed using planning-level estimates from recent studies, historical construction costs, agency cost information, and professional judgment. When possible, planning-level costs from the 2045 LRTP were updated and escalated to current-year dollars to reflect changes in construction costs and market conditions.

Because project concepts remain at varying stages of development, cost estimates should be considered planning-level approximations rather than detailed engineering estimates. Actual implementation costs will vary depending on final project scope, design requirements, right-of-way acquisition needs, utility relocation requirements, environmental considerations, and future construction market conditions. Project costs should be refined and updated as needed to inform future updates to the LRTP and the TIP.

Year of Expenditure Costs

Project costs are expressed in Year of Expenditure (YOE) dollars, which reflect the anticipated cost of a project in the year it is expected to be programmed or constructed. The use of YOE costs is consistent with federal transportation planning requirements and provides a more realistic estimate of future investment needs than current-year cost estimates alone. YOE estimates recognize that construction costs are likely to increase over time due to inflation, fluctuations in material and labor costs, equipment expenses, supply chain conditions, and broader economic factors.

Consistent with recent WisDOT guidance for the development of TIP and LRTPs, project costs were adjusted using inflation factors derived from long-range transportation construction cost forecasts. These factors are based on the 30-year trend forecast developed by S&P Global and documented in the Wisconsin Transportation Projects Commission Report. **Table 11** summarizes the YOE inflation factors applied in the development of the SLATS 2055 LRTP.

TABLE 11. YEAR OF EXPENDITURE INFLATION FACTORS

Year	Annual Inflation Rate
2027	0.00%
2028	2.93%
2029	2.79%
2030	3.01%
2031	3.20%
2032 - 2055	3.20%

Source: WisDOT MPO Guidance Memorandum, "Year of Expenditure (YOE) Estimates and Inflation Rates," July 10, 2026.

For projects without detailed engineering cost estimates, planning-level costs were developed in current-year (2027) dollars and then escalated to the anticipated year of implementation using the applicable YOE inflation factors. While actual project costs will vary depending on final scope, design requirements, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, environmental mitigation measures, and future construction market conditions, the use of YOE costs provides a reasonable and consistent methodology for estimating future project costs and demonstrating fiscal constraint within the LRTP.

Additionally, the program years assigned to fiscally constrained projects, as shown in **Table 12**, are planning assumptions used to demonstrate fiscal constraint and the application of YOE costs throughout the 2055 planning horizon. These program years do not establish or imply a specific project implementation sequence. Rather, they provide a reasonable framework for estimating future project costs and demonstrating that recommended transportation investments can be accommodated within anticipated revenues over the life of the plan.

As funding availability, project readiness, grant opportunities, agency priorities, and regional transportation needs evolve, the SLATS Policy Board and partner agencies may advance, delay, modify, or otherwise reprioritize projects through future programming and implementation decisions. Accordingly, any fiscally constrained project identified in this LRTP may be programmed as opportunities and priorities warrant, provided the plan remains fiscally constrained.

Finally, it is important to note that the LRTP is updated on a five-year cycle, providing regular opportunities to reevaluate project priorities, costs, revenues, and implementation assumptions. During each plan update, projects and their anticipated implementation timeframes will be reviewed to ensure continued consistency with regional transportation needs, available funding, and SLATS goals and objectives. SLATS will continue to monitor project costs, revenues, schedules, and implementation priorities through future LRTP and TIP updates to maintain fiscal constraint and ensure compliance with federal metropolitan transportation planning requirements.

FIGURE 54. SLATS 2055 FISCALLY CONSTRAINED ROADWAY/FREIGHT IMPROVEMENTS

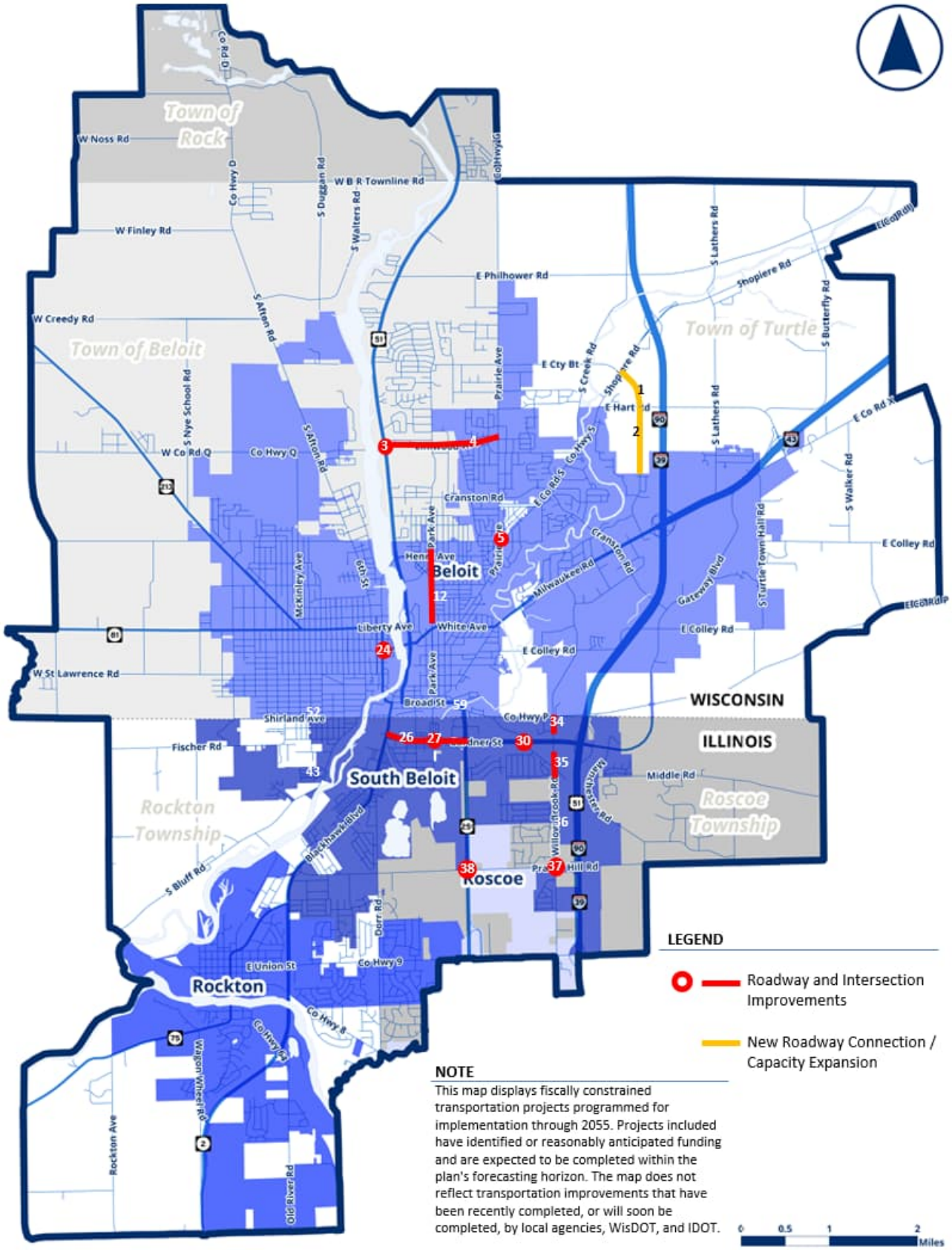


TABLE 12. SLATS 2055 FISCALLY CONSTRAINED ROADWAY/FREIGHT IMPROVEMENTS

Wisconsin portion of the SLATS MPA			
Project ID	Project Description	Program Year [2]	Estimated 2027 Cost
5	Shopiere Road (Prairie Ave / Bayliss Ave / Moccasin Trail) - construct roundabout; improve access and operations by closing Bayliss and realigning Moccasin.	2033	$ 4,750,000
3	US 51 / Newark intersection (Elmwood Avenue Phase 1) – realign/reconfigure to improve access and network connectivity	2035	$ 2,800,000
24	4th Street / Portland Avenue intersection – construct roundabout	2038	$ 3,500,000
1	BT Extension (Shopiere to Hart) Phase 1 – new roadway connection to improve network connectivity and access	2041	$ 3,200,000
12	Park Avenue (Bayliss to White) – rehabilitation and operational improvements; construct bicycle facility consistent with the Active Transportation Plan	2043	$ 2,000,000
2	BT Extension (Hart to Milwaukee, via Winchester Drive) Phase 2 – new roadway connection to improve connectivity and access	2046	$ 2,500,000
4A	Elmwood Avenue (Riverside and Park) Phase 2 – reconfiguration with continuous cross-section	2048	$ 2,500,000
4B	Elmwood Avenue (Park and Prairie) Phase 3 – reconfiguration with continuous cross-section	2052	$ 3,500,000
Illinois portion of the SLATS MPA			
Project ID	Project Description	Program Year [2]	Estimated 2027 Cost
34	Willowbrook Road (Stateline to Gardner) – capacity and operational improvements coordinated with WI improvements	2031	$ 1,800,000
35	Willowbrook Road (Gardner to Bastian) – rehabilitation including pavement and shoulder improvements	2034	$ 2,400,000
27	Gardner Street (IL 75) Park Avenue intersection – geometric improvements to improve truck movements and safety	2041	$ 1,200,000
30	Gardner Street (IL 75) Manchester Road intersection – realignment with geometric, safety, and operational improvements	2045	$ 1,200,000
37	Prairie Hill Road (IL-251 intersection) – operational improvements; potential roundabout	2051	$ 2,000,000
38	Prairie Hill Road (N. 2nd Street (IL 251) intersection) – geometric improvements and access management	2055	$ 1,000,000

NOTES 1) Project 26 is a planned reconstruction of IL 75 (IL 2 to IL 251) by IDOT in FY 2036; estimated cost is $30,000,000.

2) The program years reflect planning assumptions used to demonstrate fiscal constraint and estimate year-of-expenditure costs. They do not establish a required implementation order. As funding availability, project readiness, grant opportunities, and regional priorities change over time, SLATS and its partner agencies may revise project sequencing through future programming and implementation decisions. Any changes to project timing or sequencing will continue to be evaluated to ensure that the LRTP and TIP remain fiscally constrained.

Description of Fiscally Constrained Projects

The fiscally constrained roadway projects represent a balanced investment strategy that emphasizes system preservation, safety, operational efficiency, freight movement, and targeted capacity enhancements. Consistent with public and stakeholder feedback, most of the projects focus on "fix-it-first" investments that improve the performance of existing facilities before constructing new roadway

capacity. Together, these projects address key regional transportation needs, including improving east-west connectivity, supporting economic development, reducing congestion and crash potential, enhancing freight mobility, and accommodating anticipated growth throughout the SLATS MPA.

The projects described below represent planning-level concepts intended to guide future transportation investment decisions through the year 2055. As projects advance through corridor studies, preliminary engineering, environmental review, and final design, project limits, scope, right-of-way needs, and cost estimates should be refined to reflect evolving transportation needs, development patterns, funding availability, and stakeholder input. All cost estimates presented in the fiscally constrained plan are expressed in YOE dollars and utilize WisDOT inflation guidance, which assumes annual inflation of 3.20 percent beginning in 2031 and continuing through the plan horizon year of 2055. For planning purposes, projects are assumed to utilize a typical federal-aid funding split of approximately 80 percent federal participation and 20 percent local match; however, actual funding arrangements may vary based on program eligibility, grant opportunities, and future funding decisions.

Shopiere Road Corridor Improvement

Project 5. Prairie Avenue/Bayliss Avenue/Moccasin Trail Intersection Improvements (2033)

The Shopiere Road corridor serves as an important transportation facility in northeastern Beloit and the Town of Turtle. Continued residential, commercial, and industrial growth throughout this portion of the MPA has increased travel demand and highlighted the need for targeted operational improvements. Public outreach completed as part of the LRTP consistently identified traffic operations, intersection safety, and preservation of the existing roadway network as priorities. This project directly responds to those needs while advancing recommendations identified in the Shopiere Road Corridor Study.

The project would reconstruct the intersection area where Prairie Avenue, Bayliss Avenue, and Moccasin Trail converge as a roundabout. The existing configuration includes closely spaced access points, offset alignments, and numerous vehicular conflict points that contribute to operational and safety concerns. Construction of the roundabout would simplify traffic movements, reduce conflict points, improve traffic flow, and enhance safety for all users. The project would also support redevelopment opportunities near the southern portion of the Prairie Avenue TIF District while accommodating anticipated growth in the surrounding area.

The roundabout represents a key recommendation of the Shopiere Road Corridor Study and supports the long-term vision for improving operations and safety along the corridor. Although additional corridor improvements are not included in the fiscally constrained project list, this investment would address a significant operational need while preserving flexibility for future corridor enhancements consistent with the corridor study recommendations. By improving traffic operations, safety, and system reliability, the project supports continued growth while advancing LRTP goals related to safety, infrastructure preservation, economic vitality, congestion management, and coordinated transportation investment.

Elmwood Avenue Corridor Improvements

Project 3. US 51/Newark Road Intersection Realignment – Phase 1 (2035)

Project 4A. Elmwood Avenue Reconfiguration – Phase 2 (Riverside Drive to Park Avenue) (2048)

Project 4B. Elmwood Avenue Reconfiguration – Phase 3 (Park Avenue to Prairie Avenue) (2052)

Elmwood Avenue and Newark Road form a potential east-west transportation corridor in the northern portion of the SLATS MPA, providing connections between neighborhoods, businesses, schools, employment centers, and regional transportation facilities. The corridor also connects to Newark Road/CTH Q, which serves as an important Rock River crossing within the region. However, the existing roadway configuration, including the offset intersection at US 51 and varying roadway cross sections along Elmwood Avenue, limits the corridor's overall effectiveness and continuity. Throughout development of previous LRTPs, improving east-west travel has consistently been identified as a regional transportation priority due to the limited number of continuous east-west travel routes available within the MPA. These three projects represent a comprehensive corridor improvement strategy intended to strengthen connectivity, improve safety, and enhance overall transportation system performance.

The first phase of implementation focuses on the US 51/Newark Road intersection. The existing offset alignment creates operational challenges and can complicate turning movements for motorists traveling through the corridor. This project would realign and reconfigure the intersection to create a more direct connection while improving safety and traffic operations. Potential improvements may include revised intersection geometry, turn-lane additions, signal modifications, and other operational enhancements designed to improve traffic flow and accommodate future travel demand. Addressing the intersection first establishes a stronger foundation for future corridor improvements.

Following the intersection improvements, Phase 3 would improve Elmwood Avenue between Riverside Drive and Park Avenue to provide a more consistent roadway cross section and address operational and safety concerns identified through previous planning efforts. The project would evaluate opportunities to improve corridor continuity, simplify traffic movements, and enhance pedestrian accommodations as part of future reconstruction activities. Phase 2 would extend these improvements eastward from Park Avenue to Prairie Avenue, completing a more continuous corridor and providing a consistent approach to roadway design, access management, and intersection operations throughout the project area.

Together, these projects would create a more cohesive east-west transportation corridor serving northern Beloit and the Town of Beloit. By phasing implementation across three coordinated phases, the improvements build upon one another to enhance corridor functionality, improve travel reliability, support freight and local traffic movements, and accommodate future growth. The corridor-wide approach advances LRTP goals related to connectivity, safety, accessibility, mobility, economic development, and coordinated transportation investment. Additionally, the project helps address east-west travel where alternative routes are limited.

4th Street Improvement

Project 24. Portland Avenue Intersection Roundabout (2038)

The Portland Avenue and 4th Street intersection serves as an important connection point within the regional transportation network, carrying significant volumes of local and regional traffic between the east and west sides of the SLATS MPA. As one of the key intersections along the 4th Street corridor, the

location accommodates a variety of travel movements serving residential neighborhoods, employment centers, commercial areas, and regional destinations. Improving east-west mobility was a recurring theme identified through public outreach and previous planning efforts, reflecting the limited number of continuous east-west travel corridors available within the metropolitan area.

This project would construct a roundabout at the Portland Avenue and 4th Street intersection to address identified operational and safety concerns. Consistent with the technical analysis in the Pleasant Street Reconfiguration Study, a roundabout could improve traffic flow by reducing vehicle delay while also decreasing the frequency and severity of crashes commonly associated with traditional signalized intersections. The improvement would provide a long-term operational solution capable of accommodating future traffic growth while improving travel reliability along the corridor.

The project has broader regional significance because opportunities to improve east-west travel are limited by the existing transportation network, river crossings, and other physical barriers. As a result, improving operations at key intersections along this corridor is critical to maintaining overall system performance. The roundabout would improve traffic operations, reduce congestion during peak travel periods, better accommodate freight movements, and enhance safety for all users. The project directly supports LRTP goals related to safety, mobility, operational efficiency, and system resiliency.

BT Extension Corridor

Phase 1: Shopiere Road to Hart Road (2041)
Phase 2: Hart Road to Milwaukee Road via Winchester Drive (2046)

The BT Extension would establish a new roadway connection linking Shopiere Road, Hart Road, and Milwaukee Road through the Winchester Drive corridor. The project addresses a network connectivity gap in the roadway network within northeastern Beloit and the Town of Turtle, an area that has experienced continued residential and commercial growth. As additional development occurs, the corridor would provide an important alternative route and improve overall network connectivity in an area currently served by a limited number of continuous east-west roadway connections.

Phase 1 would construct the roadway segment between Shopiere Road and Hart Road, while Phase 2 would extend the corridor to Milwaukee Road utilizing the Winchester Drive corridor. Together, the two phases would complete a transportation link that has long been identified in local planning documents and the City of Beloit's official mapping as part of the future roadway network. Completion of both phases would create a new connection between existing arterial and collector roadways while improving access to developing areas.

The completed corridor would strengthen connections between residential neighborhoods, employment centers, commercial development, and the regional highway system, including I-39/90 and I-43. The new roadway would provide additional route options for local traffic, help distribute traffic more efficiently across the transportation network, and reduce reliance on a limited number of existing corridors as development continues throughout the area.

By improving network connectivity and providing additional transportation capacity where future growth is anticipated, the BT Extension would support economic development and increase overall transportation system resiliency. The project advances LRTP goals related to mobility, connectivity,

coordinated transportation and land use planning, economic competitiveness, and long-term system performance. It also directly helps to address the east-west connectivity issue within MPA.

Park Avenue Corridor Rehabilitation and Reconfiguration

Project 12. Bayliss Avenue to White Avenue Rehabilitation and Operational Improvements (2043)

Park Avenue serves as a major north-south transportation corridor through central Beloit, providing access to residential neighborhoods, businesses, schools, parks, and community facilities. As one of the community's principal arterial roadways, the corridor plays an important role in local and regional mobility. Existing pavement conditions, aging infrastructure, and evolving transportation needs create an opportunity to reinvest in the corridor while enhancing safety and overall transportation system performance.

This project would include roadway rehabilitation and operational improvements intended to preserve the corridor's long-term functionality while addressing identified deficiencies. Anticipated improvements would focus on pavement reconstruction, but could include additional improvements to curb and gutter, intersection upgrades, ADA-compliant pedestrian accommodations, bicycle accommodation consistent with the Active Transportation Plan, and targeted safety enhancements. In addition to traditional rehabilitation activities, the project would reevaluate previous roadway reconfiguration efforts to identify opportunities to improve corridor operations, better accommodate all users, and balance mobility, access, and safety along the corridor.

The project reflects the LRTP's emphasis on preserving and improving existing transportation infrastructure before significant capacity expansion. By extending the useful life of a critical arterial roadway while enhancing operational efficiency and safety, the investment would support reliable transportation service, strengthen connectivity between neighborhoods and destinations, and contribute to the overall quality of life within the community. The project advances LRTP goals related to infrastructure preservation, safety, accessibility, and efficient system performance.

Willowbrook Road Corridor Improvements

Project 34. Willowbrook Road (Stateline Road to Gardner Street) Capacity Improvements (2031)
Project 35. Willowbrook Road (Gardner Street to Bastian Road) Rehabilitation (2034)

Willowbrook Road serves as an important north-south corridor connecting Illinois and Wisconsin while providing access to residential neighborhoods, commercial development, industrial employment centers, and emerging growth areas. The corridor plays a key role in regional mobility and interstate connectivity, particularly near the state line where new development is expected to generate additional travel demand over the planning period.

The first project would focus on capacity and operational improvements between Stateline Road and Gardner Street. Potential improvements could include roadway widening, turn-lane additions, access management measures, intersection enhancements, and other operational treatments intended to improve traffic flow, reliability, and safety. Coordination with improvements along the Wisconsin side of the corridor will be important to maximize system performance and to provide a consistent roadway cross section.

This segment is particularly important because it will serve as a primary access route to the expanding Ho-Chunk casino and entertainment development area. As visitor activity increases, maintaining efficient corridor operations will be critical to accommodating additional traffic while preserving mobility for existing residents, businesses, and freight movements. Improvements along this section would enhance regional access, support economic development, and strengthen one of the area's most significant growth corridors.

The second project would focus on rehabilitating the corridor between Gardner Street and Bastian Road. While preservation of pavement and shoulder infrastructure remains a primary objective, the project would also evaluate opportunities to address localized operational and safety concerns. Together, these projects balance capacity improvements with infrastructure preservation while creating opportunities to enhance pedestrian and bicycle connectivity along the corridor, including implementation of a side path and other multimodal accommodations where feasible. The corridor-wide investment would support long-term growth, interstate connectivity, system reliability, and expanded transportation options for all users.

Gardner Street Freight and Gateway Improvements

Project 27. Park Avenue Intersection Improvements (2041)
Project 30. Manchester Road Realignment (2045)

Gardner Street (IL 75) functions as an important east-west transportation corridor in South Beloit and serves as a primary gateway into both South Beloit and Beloit. The corridor supports significant passenger and freight traffic while providing access to commercial, industrial, and redevelopment areas. IDOT freight plans have identified a portion of the corridor as a freight bottleneck, highlighting the importance of targeted investments that improve traffic operations and support economic activity. The corridor is also expected to play an increasingly important role as development associated with the Ho-Chunk casino and related commercial growth continues to expand throughout the area.

The first project would improve the Gardner Street and Park Avenue intersection through geometric enhancements designed to better accommodate truck turning movements while reducing conflicts between vehicles. Potential improvements could include revised curb radii, lane modifications, signal upgrades, and other design features intended to improve safety and operational performance. The second project would focus on realignment and geometric improvements at the Gardner Street and Manchester Road intersection. The existing intersection configuration presents opportunities to improve traffic flow and reduce operational challenges associated with freight traffic, local circulation, and future development. Together, these projects would improve key intersections along the corridor while enhancing overall traffic operations and safety.

Given the limited funding available for capacity and operational improvements within the Illinois portion of the SLATS MPA, strategically targeted intersection projects represent a practical approach to advancing corridor improvements over time. These projects are intended to complement larger investments planned by IDOT, including a programmed designed overlay of IL 75 from east of IL 251 to Finley Way in FY 2033 (approximately $1.25 million) and a major reconstruction project along IL 75 from IL 2 to east of IL 251 in FY 2036 (approximately $30 million). By focusing local and regional resources on

operational improvements at key intersections, the SLATS LRTP supports a coordinated approach that builds upon these larger state investments while addressing localized transportation needs.

The LRTP recognizes the long-term importance of the Gardner Street corridor as both a freight route and an economic development corridor. Continued growth associated with the casino, redevelopment opportunities, and additional commercial investment is expected to increase transportation demands throughout the area. As such, the LRTP recommends a future transportation and land use study of the Gardner Street corridor extending from IL 2 (Blackhawk Boulevard) east to IL 251 and north to Broad Street in Beloit. Such a study would help identify long-term multimodal transportation improvements, support coordinated land use planning, and establish a comprehensive vision for one of the region's most important gateway corridors. Together, the intersection improvements advance LRTP goals related to freight mobility, economic competitiveness, safety, regional connectivity, and coordinated transportation investment.

Prairie Hill Road and IL 251 Access Improvements

Project 37. Willowbrook Road Intersection Improvements (2051)
Project 38. North 2nd Street (IL 251) Intersection Improvements (2055)

The Prairie Hill Road corridor serves a mixture of local, regional, commercial, and residential traffic within northern Winnebago County. The corridor functions as an important east-west connection between South Beloit, Roscoe, and surrounding communities while also providing access to I-90, Willowbrook Middle School, nearby residential neighborhoods, and developing commercial areas. As development continues throughout the area, including growth associated with the casino and related commercial investment, maintaining safe and efficient traffic operations along the corridor will become increasingly important.

The first project focuses on operational and geometric improvements at the Prairie Hill Road and Willowbrook Road intersection. As traffic volumes continue to increase, this intersection is expected to serve a growing number of local, regional, school-related, and visitor trips. Potential improvements could include turn-lane additions, intersection geometric modifications, traffic control enhancements, or construction of a roundabout. A roundabout may provide a particularly effective long-term solution by improving traffic flow, reducing vehicle delay, and enhancing safety while accommodating future growth in travel demand. The project would also complement planned improvements along the Willowbrook Road corridor and support continued economic development in the area.

The second project would implement targeted improvements at the Prairie Hill Road and North 2nd Street (IL 251) intersection. The presence of closely spaced frontage roads and multiple access points near the intersection can create operational and safety challenges for motorists. Improvements may include geometric modifications, turn-lane additions, access management measures, traffic control enhancements, and other operational upgrades designed to improve safety and accommodate future traffic demand. These improvements would help maintain the functionality of IL 251 while improving traffic operations for east-west movements along Prairie Hill Road.

Together, these projects would improve corridor safety, enhance travel reliability, and support continued economic growth within the SLATS MPA. The investments would also strengthen east-west connectivity, improve access to schools, neighborhoods, and developing commercial areas, and help

accommodate increasing traffic associated with future growth. The projects advance LRTP objectives related to safety, accessibility, congestion management, economic development, and preservation of critical regional transportation corridors.

Community Impact Analysis

SLATS conducted a review of the fiscally constrained projects identified in the 2055 LRTP (see **Appendix H**) to evaluate potential community impacts and ensure that planned investments support the goals and objectives of the regional transportation system. At the long-range planning level, the projects included in the fiscally constrained plan are intended to improve safety, mobility, accessibility, connectivity, and system reliability for residents, businesses, and visitors throughout the SLATS MPA. Collectively, the planned investments support access to employment, education, healthcare, commercial centers, and other key community destinations while helping maintain and improve the region's transportation infrastructure.

Because many projects included in the LRTP are conceptual in nature, community impacts were evaluated at a broad planning level. As projects advance through subsequent planning, environmental review, design, and implementation phases, additional analysis will be conducted to better understand project-specific benefits and potential impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, businesses, institutions, and transportation users. Public and stakeholder input will continue to play an important role in identifying community concerns and opportunities throughout project development.

The LRTP establishes the long-term vision for transportation investments within the region, while the TIP identifies the projects advancing toward implementation. Together, these planning processes provide ongoing opportunities to evaluate potential community impacts, improve transportation system performance, and ensure investments are responsive to regional needs and priorities. As such, consideration of community impacts is an ongoing component of the transportation planning process and remains an important part of SLATS commitment to inclusive, transparent, and data-driven decision-making.

Environmental Mitigation Analysis

SLATS conducted a planning-level review of the fiscally constrained projects identified in the 2055 LRTP (see **Appendix I**) to evaluate potential environmental considerations and opportunities for avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of impacts. Because many projects included in the LRTP are conceptual in nature, the analysis focused on identifying known environmental resources and constraints that may warrant additional study as projects advance through planning, environmental review, design, and implementation.

The environmental mitigation analysis found that most fiscally constrained projects involve preservation, operational, safety, or modernization improvements within or adjacent to existing transportation corridors. As a result, these projects are generally expected to have fewer potential environmental impacts than projects involving significant new roadway construction or major capacity expansions. For projects that may require new right-of-way or occur near sensitive environmental resources, additional environmental review and coordination with appropriate resource agencies will be conducted during subsequent project development phases.

SLATS supports a context-sensitive approach to transportation planning that seeks to balance mobility, safety, economic development, community needs, and environmental stewardship. Consistent with regional policies, transportation projects will continue to consider opportunities to incorporate Complete Streets principles, improve access for pedestrians and bicyclists, and enhance connectivity among transportation modes where appropriate.

SLATS monitored and reviewed the ongoing Rock County Farmland Preservation Plan update during development of the LRTP to help maintain consistency between regional transportation planning and broader land use and agricultural preservation initiatives. Continued implementation of the SLATS Active Transportation Plan, along with investments in local and regional transit, and transportation system management strategies, can expand travel options, improve public health, reduce transportation-related emissions, and enhance quality of life throughout the SLATS MPA. Environmental mitigation and stewardship will remain ongoing considerations as projects advance from long-range planning into project-specific evaluation, design, and implementation.

Environmental Agency Consultation

As part of the environmental mitigation analysis, SLATS provided the draft 2055 LRTP and Environmental Mitigation Analysis (**Appendix I**) to federal, state, and local resource agencies for review and comment. Agencies were invited to review the documents between September 4 and September 25, 2026, and provide feedback regarding environmental resources, mitigation opportunities, and relevant planning efforts that should be considered as transportation projects advance. In total, 35 agencies/stakeholders were provided the opportunity to review the draft documents.

Comments were received from the Winnebago County Soil & Water Conservation District and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Illinois-Iowa Field Office). Both agencies acknowledged the thoroughness of the environmental review and the plan's consideration of environmentally sensitive resources. The Winnebago County Soil & Water Conservation District noted the inclusion of the Rock River, Turtle Creek, and Dry Run Creek corridors and recommended consideration of the Winnebago County Greenways Plan, which is currently being updated. The project team responded to indicate that the Greenways Plan is consistent with the SLATS Active Transportation Plan, and that as projects advance, SLATS will coordinate with the agency regarding potential improvements.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicated that coordination regarding federally listed species and critical habitat should continue during future project development, consistent with established environmental review requirements. No concerns or objections were raised regarding the LRTP, the fiscally constrained project list, or the Environmental Mitigation Analysis. The comments received supported the continued coordination with resource agencies during project-level planning, environmental review, design, and implementation activities.

Supporting Studies and Planning Initiatives

Consistent with the LRTP's emphasis on safety, the City of Beloit is developing a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan through the USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program. The plan will identify transportation safety priorities and potential countermeasures for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users while helping establish a data-driven framework for future safety investments throughout the community. Recommendations emerging from the Safety Action Plan should be

considered during future transportation planning efforts, corridor studies, and project development activities within the SLATS MPA.

Winnebago County, Illinois, recently completed a Traffic Safety Action Plan through the SS4A program in partnership with the Region 1 Planning Council. The plan identifies high-risk roadway locations, establishes safety emphasis areas, and recommends strategies to reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries through a data-driven approach to transportation safety. The plan's findings and recommendations should be considered, as appropriate, during future corridor studies, project development activities, and coordinated regional transportation planning efforts.

As projects identified in this LRTP advance through preliminary engineering and design, they should be reviewed and refined, as appropriate, to reflect applicable findings and recommendations from the City of Beloit Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, the Winnebago County Traffic Safety Action Plan, and other relevant safety planning initiatives. This may result in modifications to project scope, design elements, multimodal accommodations, implementation priorities, and cost estimates. Integrating the results of these safety planning efforts into future project development will help ensure transportation investments continue to advance regional safety goals while addressing the needs of all roadway users.

Illustrative Projects

In addition to the fiscally constrained transportation improvements identified in this LRTP, the SLATS region has identified a series of illustrative projects that represent a longer-term vision for the transportation system. As shown in **Figure 55** and summarized in **Table 13**, these projects are not currently programmed for funding and may require additional study, partnership development, or future funding opportunities before implementation. Some projects may address anticipated long-term growth and mobility needs that are not expected to occur within the timeframe of currently available revenues.

Although illustrative projects are not included in the fiscally constrained project list, they remain an important component of the LRTP because they help communicate the region's future transportation vision and preserve opportunities for strategic transportation investments. These projects may become priorities as travel patterns evolve, development occurs, and new funding sources become available.

TABLE 13. SLATS 2055 ILLUSTRATIVE ROADWAY/FREIGHT IMPROVEMENTS

Shopiere Road
6. Cranston Road intersection – geometric and operational improvements
9. I-39/90 interchange – long-term geometric and capacity improvements
10. Prairie to Cranston – 3-lane cross-section conversion to improve safety and operations

Prairie Avenue
11. Shopiere to Woodward – rehabilitation and operational improvements

White Avenue (WIS 81)
13. US 51 intersection – operational improvements and access management; Woodward intersection – access management
14. Park Avenue – roundabout to improve safety and operations
15. Park to Milwaukee – 3-lane cross-section conversion to improve safety and operations

Colley Road
16. Milwaukee to Willowbrook – capacity and connectivity improvements

Madison Road
20. Burton Road intersection – geometric and operational improvements; intersection realignment (potential roundabout)

Liberty Avenue (WIS 81)
21. Madison to 4th – 3-lane cross-section conversion to improve safety and operations
22. 4th, 5th and 6th Streets – geometric and operational improvements; intersection realignment and signal modifications

4th Street
23. Liberty Avenue to Portland Avenue – 3-lane cross-section conversion to improve safety and operations

State Street
25. Shirland / Colby – intersection realignment to improve connectivity and operations

Gardner Street (IL 75)
28. IL-251 intersection – operational improvements; potential roundabout
29. IL 251 to I-39/90 – rehabilitation, operational improvements, and access management
31. Willowbrook Road intersection – geometric improvements for safety and operations
32. I-39/90 interchange – short-term operational improvements; evaluate long-term modifications

Willowbrook Road
36. Bastian to Prairie Hill – rehabilitation including pavement and shoulder improvements

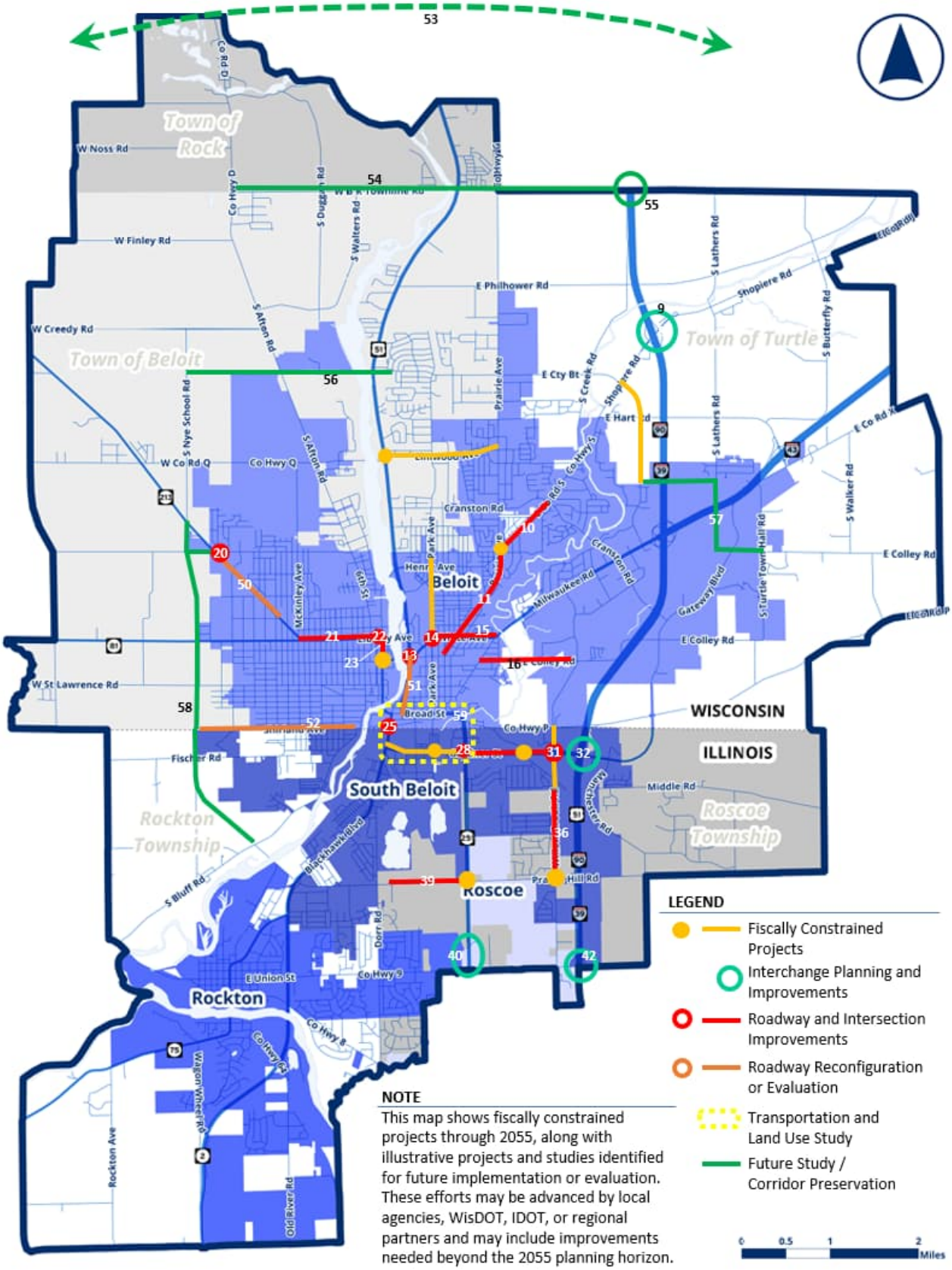
Prairie Hill Road
39. Fulmar Drive to IL 251 – roadway upgrades and potential capacity improvements

Rockton Road
40. IL 251 interchange – interchange improvements to enhance safety, capacity, and operations
42. I-39/90 interchange – monitor traffic operations; potential geometric and operational improvements

Roadway Configuration Improvement / Study
50. Madison Avenue (Burton to Townline) – evaluate feasibility and benefits of a road reconfiguration
51. Pleasant Street (Broad to White) – implement road reconfiguration to enhance safety
52. Shirland Avenue (Prairie Hill extension to Bluff) – evaluate feasibility and benefits of a road reconfiguration

Future Studies / Perseveration
53. Regional Truck Corridor Optimization Study – evaluate transportation strategies to reduce pass-through truck traffic within the SLATS MPA and improve freight movement along US 14/WIS 11
54. Townline Road (County Hwy D to I-39/90) – evaluate long-term corridor improvements and connectivity needs
55. Townline Road (at I-39/90 interchange) – evaluate long-term need/feasibility of a new interchange
56. Inman Road (Hillside Avenue to Nye School Road) – evaluate the feasibility and benefits of a new river crossing to improve east-west network connectivity
57. Eastside roadway network – evaluate the feasibility of enhancing the roadway connectivity to support future growth and development
58. Prairie Hill Road (Bluff Road to Nye School Road) – evaluate a future north-south corridor connection and preservation needs
59. Broad / Gardner / Dearborn (US 51) / Blackhawk area – transportation and land use study to support redevelopment, enhance multimodal connections, and advance transportation and future land use planning goals

FIGURE 55. SLATS 2055 ILLUSTRATIVE ROADWAY/FREIGHT IMPROVEMENTS



Modal Transportation Strategies and Investments

The SLATS 2055 LRTP supports a multimodal transportation system that provides residents, businesses, and visitors with a range of travel options while improving access to jobs, education, healthcare, recreation, and other key destinations. Consistent with the transportation needs previously documented, the LRTP recognizes that roadway investments alone cannot address all mobility needs and that public transportation, active transportation, and passenger rail each play an important role in advancing regional mobility, connectivity, accessibility, economic development, and quality of life.

Many of the recommendations for these transportation modes have already been developed through recent mode-specific planning efforts, including the SLATS Transit Development Plan (TDP), SLATS Active Transportation Plan, and recent Passenger Rail Studies. These plans contain detailed analyses, project recommendations, implementation strategies, and supporting technical documentation. As a result, the LRTP does not duplicate these efforts, but instead incorporates their key findings and recommendations into the region's broader long-range transportation vision.

The following sections summarize the major priorities, strategies, and investment recommendations identified through these modal planning efforts. Additional detail regarding specific projects, implementation priorities, service recommendations, and corridor evaluations can be found in the respective modal plans. Collectively, these recommendations support a balanced and integrated multimodal transportation system that advances the goals and objectives of the SLATS 2055 LRTP..

Public Transportation

The **SLATS 2026 Transit Development Plan (TDP)** provides a framework for maintaining and enhancing public transportation services throughout the Stateline region. The plan evaluates existing transit services operated by BTS and SMTD and identifies strategies to improve mobility, accessibility, and connections to employment, education, healthcare, shopping, and other essential destinations. The TDP recognizes that public transportation plays an important role in expanding transportation choice, supporting economic development, and improving access to opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities.

The TDP organizes future transit improvements into a series of implementation scenarios that range from near-term service refinements to longer-term investments and regional service coordination. Recommendations include improving route efficiency and reliability, increasing service frequency, expanding service hours and coverage, enhancing passenger amenities and technology, and strengthening regional connections between transit providers. Together, these strategies support the LRTP goals of improving mobility, expanding transportation options, increasing accessibility, and fostering a more connected and resilient transportation network. Additional information regarding transit needs, service alternatives, and implementation strategies is available in the TDP.

Framework for Future Transit Investments

The TDP evaluated a range of strategies to improve public transportation throughout the Stateline region. To help guide future investment decisions, the plan organized potential improvements into three implementation scenarios representing varying levels of investment, service expansion, and regional coordination. As displayed in **Figure 56**, the scenarios provide a phased framework for

advancing public transportation improvements, ranging from near-term operational enhancements that can be implemented within existing resources to longer-term service expansions and regional coordination initiatives. While expanded transit service can provide significant mobility and accessibility benefits, many improvements require additional operating and capital resources. As a result, near-term recommendations focus on cost-neutral operational improvements, while longer-term enhancements would depend on future funding opportunities, partnerships, and regional priorities.

Scenario 1: Near-Term Service Improvements (Cost-Neutral)

Scenario 1 focuses on improving transit service within existing resources through operational refinements to BTS and SMTD services. Strategies include route adjustments, improved reliability, enhanced connections between destinations, and other service modifications designed to improve the rider experience while maximizing the effectiveness of existing investments. Some of these improvements have already been implemented.

Scenario 2: Future Service Enhancements (Additional Investment)

Scenario 2 builds upon near-term improvements by introducing service enhancements that would require additional funding. Potential investments include increased service frequency, expanded service hours, microtransit services, and improvements to passenger amenities and technology. These enhancements are intended to improve transit accessibility, convenience, and connectivity while supporting future ridership growth.

Scenario 3: Long-Term Regional Coordination

Scenario 3 establishes a long-term vision for a more integrated regional transit network through expanded coordination among BTS, SMTD, and regional partners. Strategies include improved regional connections, coordinated schedules and transfers, shared customer information, and other initiatives that support more seamless travel across community and state boundaries.

Public Transportation: From Planning to Implementation

Improving public transportation throughout the Stateline region will require coordinated investments, service enhancements, and ongoing partnerships among transit providers, local governments, and regional stakeholders. The *SLATS 2026 Transit Development Plan* identifies implementation priorities to strengthen mobility, expand transportation choices, and improve regional connectivity through a combination of service improvements, sustainable investment, regional coordination, and innovative mobility solutions..

Service Improvements

Evaluate opportunities to improve service reliability, efficiency, and the customer experience, including enhanced east-west connectivity between key destinations such as the Gateway area, Ho-Chunk Casino, and communities west of the Rock River.

Sustainable Investment

Pursue funding opportunities that support increased service frequency, longer operating hours, weekend service, expanded coverage, and improved passenger amenities. Continue to grow Beloit-Janesville Express (BJE) consortium membership to support the long-term sustainability of this valuable intercity service.

Regional Coordination

Continue exploring opportunities to strengthen coordination between BTS, SMTD, and regional partners to improve north-south connectivity. Evaluate opportunities for express service connecting Rockford, Beloit, and Janesville, which could also help build support for future passenger rail investments.

Customer Experience

Improve passenger information, wayfinding, bus stop amenities, and first- and last-mile connections to walking and bicycling networks.

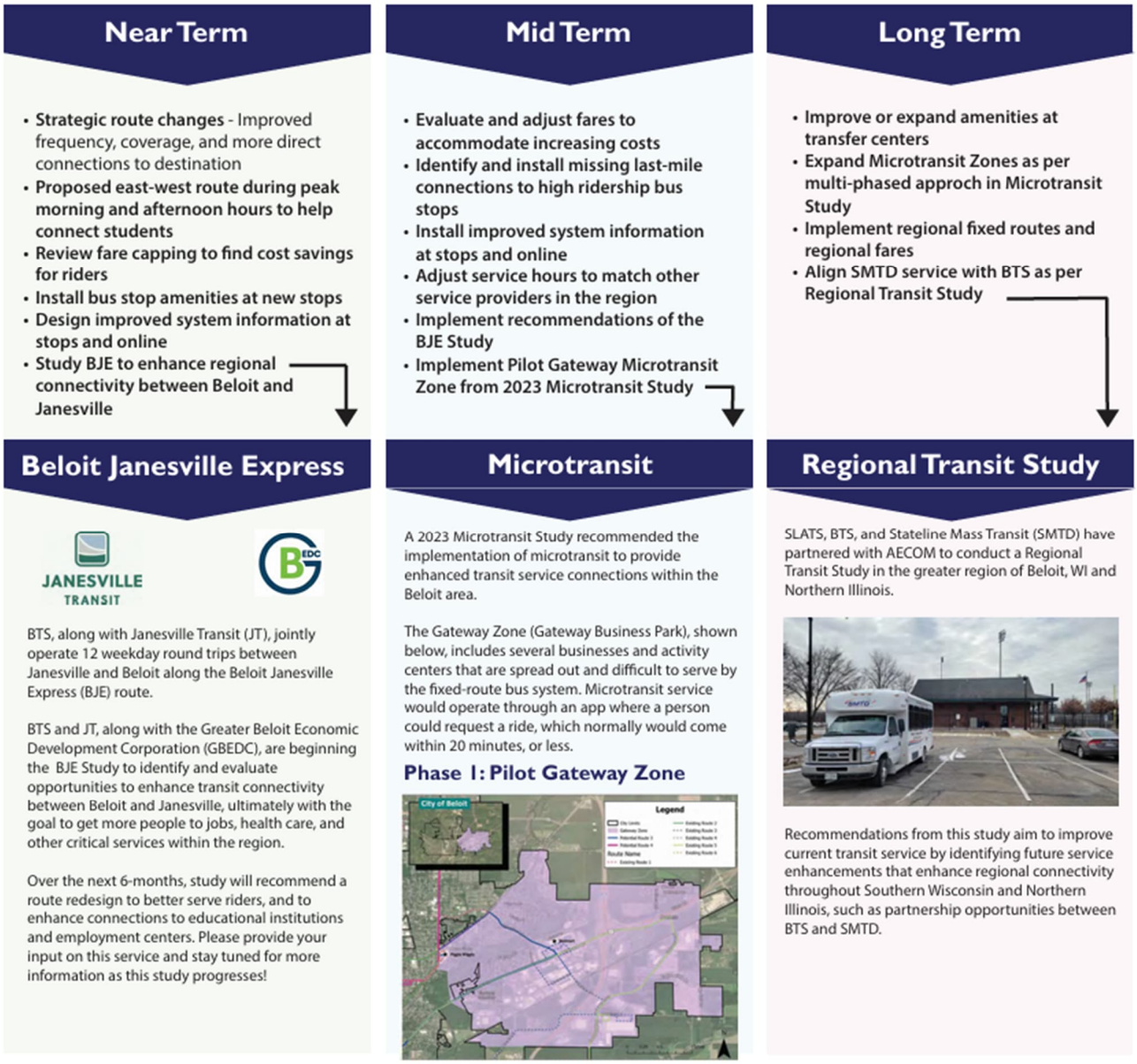
Future Mobility Options

Advance microtransit service in the Gateway area, and other emerging mobility strategies that improve access to employment, education, healthcare, and community destinations.

Fiscal Constraint Analysis

The fiscally constrained transit program is based on annual reviews of operating and capital funding levels, service performance, and anticipated transportation needs. Financial sustainability is maintained through ongoing evaluation of revenues and expenditures, with service adjustments, operational efficiencies, or service reductions implemented as necessary to maintain fiscal balance. A detailed discussion of the transit fiscal constraint analysis is provided in **Appendix F**.

FIGURE 56. RECOMMENDED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SCENARIOS



Active Transportation

The SLATS 2026 Active Transportation Plan (ATP) provides a framework for improving walking, bicycling, and trail connectivity throughout the Stateline region. The plan establishes a coordinated vision for developing a safer, more connected, and more accessible active transportation network that supports both transportation and recreational travel. Recommendations focus on improving access to destinations within and between communities while enhancing safety, connectivity, comfort, and mobility for users of all ages and abilities.

The ATP recognizes that active transportation facilities support a broad range of community goals, including transportation choice, public health, recreation, tourism, economic development, and quality of life. Together, the plan's recommendations advance the LRTP goals of improving transportation choice, enhancing safety, expanding system connectivity, and creating a more balanced and multimodal

transportation system. Additional information regarding active transportation needs, recommended projects, and implementation strategies is provided in the SLATS 2026 Active Transportation Plan.

Framework for Future Active Transportation Investments

The ATP establishes a long-term vision for improving walking, bicycling, and trail connectivity throughout the Stateline region. The plan recognizes that active transportation is an important component of the regional transportation system and can support transportation choice, safety, public health, recreation, tourism, economic development, and overall quality of life. The ATP's recommendations are intended to create a more connected and accessible network that better links residents to schools, employment centers, parks, commercial districts, transit services, and other key destinations.

A primary focus of the ATP is improving connectivity. Public engagement, existing conditions analyses, and Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress evaluations all identified a need to better connect existing facilities and reduce barriers created by higher-volume roadways. Rather than focusing solely on constructing new facilities, many recommendations emphasize closing network gaps, improving crossings, strengthening trail connections, and creating a more comfortable and accessible environment for people of all ages and abilities. The ATP also recognizes that implementation will occur incrementally through roadway projects, redevelopment activities, trail projects, and other transportation investments completed over time.

Recommended Bicycle and Pedestrian Networks

As illustrated in **Figure 57** and **Figure 58**, the ATP establishes recommended bicycle and pedestrian networks that provide a framework for future active transportation investments throughout the region. The bicycle network focuses on developing a connected system of shared-use paths, low-stress bicycle facilities, and regional trail connections that improve access between communities and major destinations. Likewise, the pedestrian network emphasizes completing sidewalk gaps, improving crossings, and enhancing access to schools, parks, downtown areas, transit services, employment centers, and other activity hubs.

A key theme of both networks is connectivity. The ATP recognizes that the value of an active transportation network is derived not only from individual facilities, but from how well those facilities connect people to destinations. Accordingly, future roadway projects, redevelopment activities, and infrastructure investments should incorporate opportunities to advance the recommended bicycle and pedestrian networks whenever feasible. Additional corridor-level recommendations, facility guidance, and implementation strategies are provided in the SLATS 2026 Active Transportation Plan.

FIGURE 57. RECOMMENDED PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

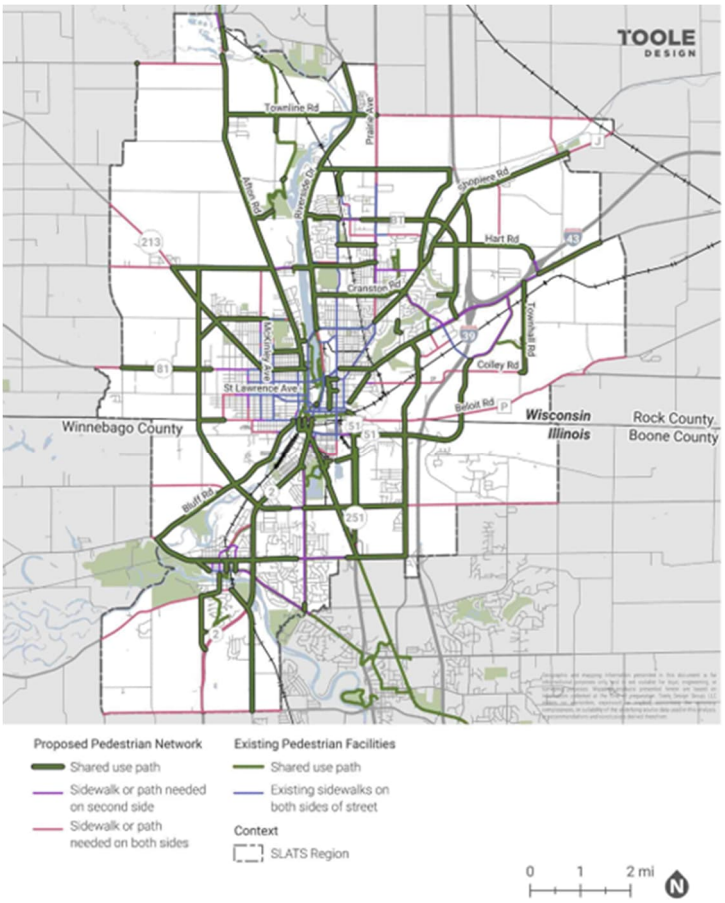
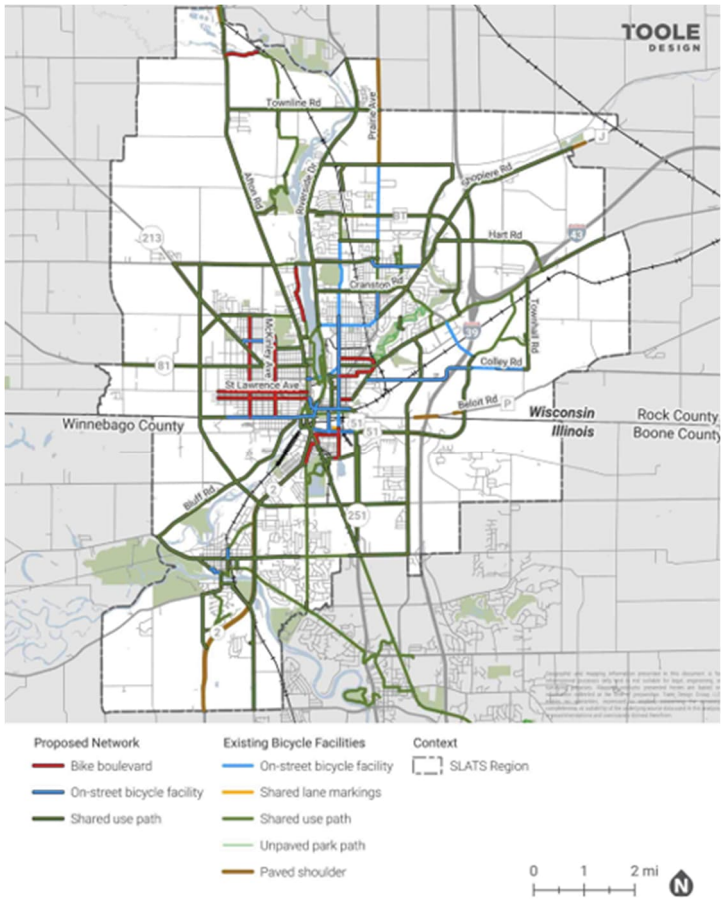


FIGURE 58. RECOMMENDED BICYCLE FACILITIES



Priority Project Network

Given the size of the recommended networks and the realities of available funding, the ATP identified a Priority Project Network to help guide near- and mid-term implementation efforts. As shown in **Figure 59**, the priority network focuses on high-impact projects that strengthen east-west and north-south connectivity, connect communities within the region, and improve access to existing and planned active transportation facilities. The priority projects are intended to serve as the backbone of the region's future active transportation system and represent locations where proactive implementation efforts should be focused.

One of the most significant long-term opportunities identified in the ATP is the completion of a trail-to-trail connection between the Peace Trail and the Stone Bridge Trail systems. The Stateline region currently represents a gap between these major regional trail corridors, creating an opportunity to improve regional mobility, expand recreational opportunities, support tourism, and better connect communities in Wisconsin and Illinois. While a direct connection may require a phased approach and long-term coordination, the ATP identifies opportunities to build on existing facilities, close critical gaps, and establish wayfinding improvements that can begin creating this connection in the near term.

Planning-level cost estimates for the Priority Project Network are provided in **Table 13** to assist with long-term implementation planning and project development. The estimates, which are based on facility type and project length, provide an order-of-magnitude understanding of the potential costs

associated with advancing key active transportation improvements throughout the region. As noted in the ATP, actual project costs will vary based on final design, right-of-way needs, site conditions, and construction methods, but the estimates provide a useful framework for evaluating and prioritizing future investment opportunities

FIGURE 59. PRIORITY PROJECT NETWORK

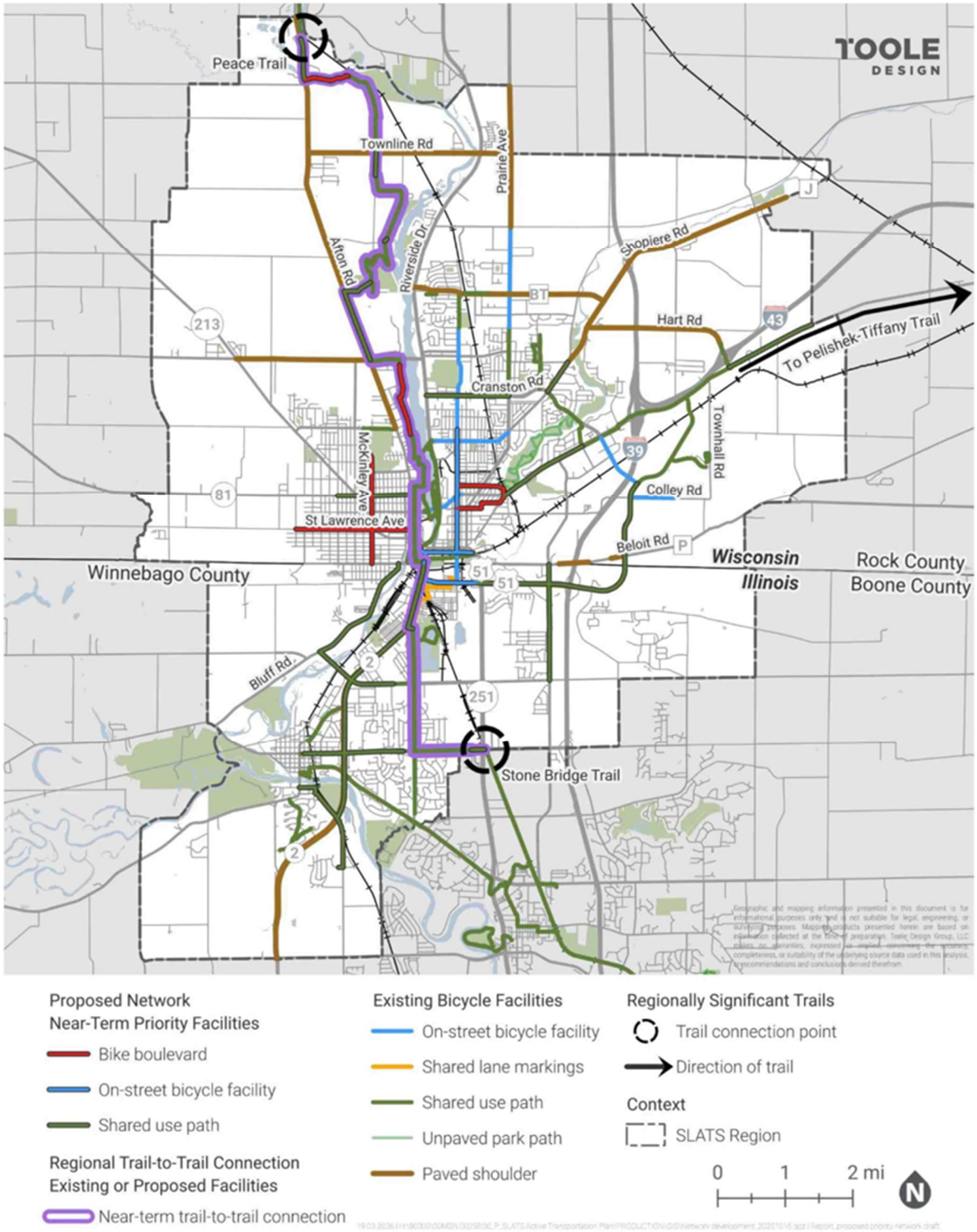


TABLE 14. PLANNING LEVEL COST OPINIONS FOR PRIORITY NETWORK PROJECTS

Project Name	Facility	Project Extent	Project Length	Construction Cost Opinion
Hackett St	Bike Boulevard*	House St to Shirland Ave	1.8 miles	$400,000
St. Lawrence Ave	Bike Boulevard*	Masters St to 4th St	1.8 miles	$400,000
Liberty Ave	Shared Use Path	Madison Road to 5th St	0.8 miles	$1.1 million
Blackhawk Blvd	Shared Use Path	Shirland Ave to Prairie Hill Road	2.1 miles	$2.9 million
E Union St / Rockton Rd	Shared Use Path	N Blackhawk Blvd to Old Meadow Ln	1.5 miles	$2.1 million
Rockton Rd	Shared Use Path	Quail Trail to Stone Bridge Trail	0.2 miles	$300,000
4th St/Broad St	Protected Bike Lane	5th Street Trail Connection at Grand Ave, then along Broad Street to Grand Ave/Turtle Creek Park trail connection	1 mile	Flexposts: $500,000 Concrete: $1.6 million
Park Ave	Bike Lane or Protected Bike Lane	Bayliss Ave to Broad St	1.8 miles	Flexposts: $1 million Concrete: $2.8 million
Strong Ave/Woodward	Bike Boulevard*	Park Ave to Milwaukee Rd	0.8 miles	$200,000
Keeler Ave	Bike Boulevard*	Park Ave to Evergreen Ave	0.8 miles	$200,000
Milwaukee Rd	Shared Use Path	La Salle to Lee Ln	1.5 miles	$2.0 million
S Afton Rd	Shared Use Path	W Big Hill Rd to Newark Rd	1.1 miles	$1.5 million
S Duggan Rd	Shared Use Path	Townline Rd	0.4 miles	$500,000
W Bass Creek Rd	Bike Boulevard*	S County Rd D to W Bass Creek Rd	0.7 miles	$200,000
S County Rd D	Shared Use Path	Pitt Road or Peace Trail to W Bass Creek Rd	0.6 miles	$800,000

*Bicycle Boulevard cost opinions do not include intersection treatments. Specifically, the bicycle boulevard cost opinions are based on painting bicycle boulevard markings and installing traffic calming elements, such as speed cushions, approximately every 300 feet.

Supporting Policies and Other Priority Projects

The ATP recognizes that creating a more walkable and bicycle-friendly region will require more than infrastructure investments alone. Continued progress will depend on supportive policies, funding strategies, partnerships, education, and ongoing coordination among local governments, transportation agencies, schools, businesses, and community organizations.

In addition to the recommended bicycle and pedestrian networks, the ATP identifies several priority initiatives that can improve safety and network performance. These include evaluating high-crash and multilane corridors for pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements, implementing intersection treatments that reduce crossing distances and improve pedestrian visibility, establishing a consistent regional wayfinding system, and incorporating trailheads and access points as the regional trail system expands. Many of these recommendations align closely with the safety, connectivity, and quality-of-life priorities identified through the LRTP planning process.

The ATP also recommends advancing regional policies and programs such as Complete Streets implementation, enhanced project evaluation criteria, Safe Routes to School initiatives, bicycle and pedestrian education programs, community walk and bike events, active transportation data collection efforts, and development of a more coordinated regional approach to active transportation planning. Together, these actions help maximize the effectiveness of infrastructure investments while supporting the long-term vision of a safer, more connected, and more accessible active transportation network throughout the Stateline region

SLATS Active Transportation Plan: From Plan to Action

Creating a safer, more connected active transportation system will require coordinated investments, supportive policies, and ongoing partnerships throughout the Stateline region. The *SLATS 2026 Active Transportation Plan* identifies policy and program recommendations organized around four implementation focus areas:

Projects Funded Through SLATS

Integrate active transportation priorities into project selection, design, and funding decisions.

Working Together as a Region

Strengthen coordination among communities to advance regional connectivity and shared transportation goals.

SLATS as a Leader

Provide guidance, technical assistance, and model policies that support implementation throughout the Stateline region.

Education and Encouragement

Build awareness, knowledge, and community support for walking, bicycling, and active transportation initiatives.

Passenger Rail

Building upon prior planning efforts, including the **SLATS Passenger Rail Study (2021)** and the **SLATS Passenger Rail Impact Study (2025)**, SLATS continues to support the long-term vision of restoring passenger rail service to the Stateline region. These studies examined opportunities to strengthen connections between Beloit, Janesville, Rockford, Madison, Chicago, and other regional destinations while improving mobility, supporting economic development, and expanding transportation choice. Consistent with the **Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050**, passenger rail is recognized as a potential component of a broader multimodal transportation system that can improve regional accessibility, expand travel options, and support long-term economic competitiveness.

Federal Railroad Administration Corridor ID Program: Potential Funding Opportunity

The **FRA Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID) Program** provides a pathway for advancing new intercity passenger rail corridors from concept through planning, development, and implementation. For emerging corridors such as the Madison-Rockford corridor, important steps in the corridor development process include:

- ✓ Establishing a corridor sponsor and regional partnership
- ✓ Demonstrating support from local, regional, and state agencies
- ✓ Defining the corridor vision, purpose, and travel markets
- ✓ Identifying potential station locations and service concepts
- ✓ Evaluating ridership potential, infrastructure needs, and operating considerations
- ✓ Coordinating with host railroads and transportation agencies
- ✓ Positioning the corridor for future Service Development Plan (SDP) funding and project advancement.

The studies found that the greatest opportunity for passenger rail service in the Stateline region is as part of a broader **Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford-Chicago corridor**. Ridership forecasts, economic impact analyses, and station area evaluations all suggest that passenger rail could provide benefits extending beyond transportation, including enhanced access to employment, education, healthcare, and other key destinations, as well as opportunities for downtown revitalization, redevelopment, and transit-oriented development. While implementation would require substantial investment, continued coordination among multiple states, transportation agencies, railroad operators, and local partners remains essential to advancing future service opportunities.

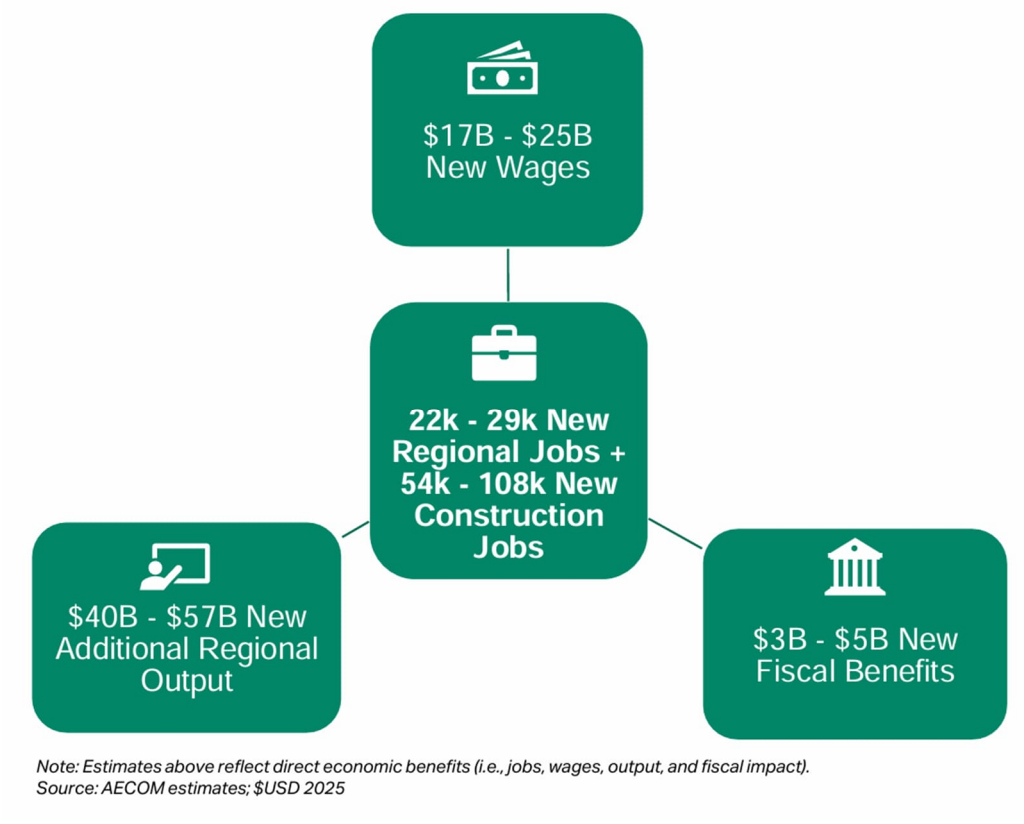
Economic Development and Regional Opportunity

The SLATS Passenger Rail Impact Study (2025) found that the long-term benefits of passenger rail extend beyond transportation and mobility. The study concluded that passenger rail has the potential to strengthen regional economic competitiveness, support new housing and employment opportunities, and enhance access to major population and economic centers throughout southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois. By improving connections between Madison, Janesville, Beloit, Rockford, and the Chicago region, passenger rail could expand access to jobs, education, healthcare, and other destinations while supporting more compact, walkable, and transit-oriented development patterns around future station areas. The analysis also found that communities in Rock and Winnebago Counties may be particularly well positioned to accommodate future residential and employment growth due to the availability of developable land, redevelopment opportunities, and relatively affordable housing compared to larger metropolitan areas.

As summarized in **Figure 60**, the Passenger Rail Impact Study estimated that a Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford passenger rail corridor could generate substantial long-term economic benefits for the broader region. Depending on future development patterns and market conditions, the study estimated the corridor could support approximately 22,000 to 29,000 new regional jobs, 54,000 to 108,000 construction-related jobs, and generate between $40 billion and $57 billion in new regional economic output over a 30-year period. The analysis also identified potential fiscal benefits ranging

from $3 billion to $5 billion through increased economic activity, redevelopment, and transit-oriented development. While these estimates are illustrative and dependent on future investment, coordination, and implementation decisions, they demonstrate the significant regional opportunities that could be associated with restoring passenger rail service to the Stateline region.

FIGURE 60. PRIORITY PROJECT NETWORK



Note: Estimates above reflect direct economic benefits (i.e., jobs, wages, output, and fiscal impact).
Source: AECOM estimates; $USD 2025

Capital Cost Considerations

The SLATS Passenger Rail Impact Study (2025) found that restoring passenger rail service within the Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford corridor would require a substantial long-term capital investment. Using a combination of updated cost estimates from previous Wisconsin passenger rail studies and comparisons to peer passenger rail systems operating elsewhere in the United States, the study estimated that implementation of an approximately 75-mile corridor would likely require an investment in excess of $1 billion. Depending on the service concept, infrastructure requirements, and corridor conditions, total capital costs were estimated to range from approximately $1.2 billion to $1.6 billion in 2024 dollars, with per-mile costs generally ranging from $16 million to $21 million per route mile. These estimates include major infrastructure improvements necessary to support passenger rail operations but do not represent final engineering or project-level cost estimates. As a result, implementation of passenger rail service would require a phased, multi-jurisdictional approach involving substantial state, federal, and potentially private-sector investment. Despite these costs, the Passenger Rail Impact Study concluded that the long-term transportation, economic development, and fiscal benefits associated with corridor development have the potential to outweigh the initial capital investment over time.

Passenger Rail Recommendations

Passenger rail remains a long-term opportunity rather than a near-term transportation investment. As illustrated through previous SLATS studies, successful implementation will require corridor-level planning, infrastructure investments, operating agreements, funding commitments, and continued interagency coordination. Accordingly, the primary focus of the LRTP is not the immediate implementation of passenger rail service, but rather preserving opportunities that support future corridor development.

During the planning horizon of this LRTP, SLATS should continue to coordinate with WisDOT, IDOT, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), neighboring MPOs, rail operators, local governments, and the Rock County Ad Hoc Committee on passenger rail development to advance a shared regional vision for passenger rail. Key actions include supporting corridor preservation, monitoring related planning efforts in Wisconsin and Illinois, evaluating potential station area opportunities, and participating in regional studies that advance the Madison-Rockford corridor.

A priority action for SLATS is to help position the Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford corridor for future participation in the FRA's Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID) Program. Continued collaboration among regional partners can help establish corridor sponsorship, demonstrate local and state support, evaluate future service concepts and infrastructure needs, and position the corridor to compete for future state and federal funding opportunities. Additional information regarding passenger rail alternatives, ridership forecasts, station area opportunities, and economic impacts is provided in the SLATS Passenger Rail Study (2021) and SLATS Passenger Rail Impact Study (2025).

Regional Passenger Rail: From Vision to Implementation

Passenger rail remains a long-term opportunity to strengthen connections between the Stateline region, Madison, Rockford, and Chicago. While implementation will require significant investment and coordination, several actions can be advanced during the LRTP planning horizon.

Regional Coordination

Continue coordination with regional partners, including WisDOT, IDOT, neighboring MPOs, rail operators, and the Rock County Ad Hoc Committee on Passenger Rail Development, to advance a shared vision for the corridor.

Corridor Preservation

Support preservation of potential rail corridors, station locations, and right-of-way opportunities that could accommodate future passenger rail service.

Advance Corridor Planning

Monitor and pursue state and federal funding opportunities to support future corridor planning and evaluation.

Future Studies

Support additional analysis of ridership, operations, infrastructure needs, station planning, and implementation strategies.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

Coordinate local land use and station area planning to preserve opportunities for future economic development and TOD around potential station locations.

Implementation and Monitoring

Successful implementation of the SLATS 2055 LRTP will require ongoing coordination between regional partners, continued project development, and regular evaluation of system performance. The LRTP set forth the long-term vision for the region's transportation system, while the TIP serves as the primary short-range implementation tool by identifying federally funded transportation projects programmed for development and construction. Projects included in the TIP are generally expected to be consistent with the goals, objectives, and recommendations contained in this LRTP, helping ensure that near-term investments advance the region's long-range transportation vision.

SLATS will continue to monitor transportation system performance and support state and federal performance-based planning requirements. This includes coordinating with the WisDOT and IDOT in supporting established performance targets related to safety, infrastructure condition, system reliability, freight movement, and transit performance, as applicable. Performance monitoring will help inform future planning efforts, identify emerging transportation needs, and guide investment priorities over time.

Additionally, the LRTP is intended to be a living document that can be amended as transportation needs, funding opportunities, or regional priorities evolve. As of the publication date, Federal regulations require the next comprehensive update anticipated by September 2031. Between updates, additional studies and planning efforts may be undertaken, including corridor studies, transit planning, active transportation planning, freight studies, passenger rail planning, safety initiatives, and local transportation plans. Findings and recommendations from these efforts will help inform future LRTP updates.

Implementation of the LRTP will also depend upon continued coordination with local governments, counties, neighboring metropolitan planning organizations, transit providers, state agencies, and other stakeholders. The plan is intended to complement local comprehensive plans, county and regional transportation plans, economic development initiatives, and land use policies throughout the Stateline region. Maintaining strong partnerships and aligning transportation investments with local and regional planning efforts will help ensure that the transportation system continues to support community goals, economic development, quality of life, and long-term growth.

Conclusion

The SLATS 2055 LRTP establishes a framework for guiding transportation investments over the next 30 years to support regional goals related to mobility, economic development, freight movement, transportation safety, system reliability, environmental stewardship, and quality of life. The plan recognizes the importance of maintaining and enhancing a multimodal transportation system that provides safe and efficient travel options for residents, businesses, visitors, and freight carriers while supporting the continued vitality of the Stateline region.

This LRTP is intended to serve as a strategic guide rather than a fixed blueprint. Transportation needs, development patterns, travel behavior, funding opportunities, and public priorities will continue to evolve throughout the planning horizon. As a result, the plan should be regularly monitored, updated, and amended as necessary to respond to changing conditions and emerging opportunities. Continued

coordination among SLATS, local governments, state and federal transportation agencies, transit providers, freight stakeholders, and the public will be essential to ensuring that transportation investments remain consistent with regional goals and community needs.

The transportation sector is also undergoing significant change due to advancements in technology, evolving freight and supply chain practices, changing travel preferences, and increased attention to system resilience. At the same time, there is growing uncertainty regarding future federal transportation funding levels, reauthorization legislation, program requirements, and national transportation priorities. These factors may influence project eligibility, funding availability, performance expectations, and implementation timelines over the life of this plan. Consequently, maintaining flexibility and adaptability in the transportation planning process will be critical to positioning the region for future success.

Completion of the 2055 LRTP does not represent the end of the transportation planning process. Rather, it marks the continuation of SLATS' commitment to a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing (3-C) planning process that evaluates system needs, monitors changing conditions, engages stakeholders and the public, and advances transportation investments that support the long-term vision for the Stateline Area.