

CHAPTER FOUR: TRANSPORTATION

This chapter includes background information to guide policies toward the future development and maintenance of various modes of transportation in the City of Janesville over the 20-year planning period that will be included in *Volume 2*. The chapter also compares the City’s transportation policies and programs to State and regional transportation plans.

At the time this *Plan* was prepared, the Janesville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) completed the *Janesville Area 2020-2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan*. The City of Janesville has good connections to the region through the existing roadway network; this will be enhanced by upcoming WisDOT projects. Other transportation, such as freight rail, airport service, and outstanding recreational trails are key transportation infrastructure in the City. Access is a key component of growth because it facilitates the flow of goods and people.

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The City is very well connected to the region through the existing roadway network. This section describes the City’s existing transportation facilities.

Roadways

Interstate (ISH) 39/90 serves as a regional controlled-access facility within Wisconsin, connecting northern Wisconsin with Madison and Chicago. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation Corridors 2030 Plan designated the Interstates as “Backbone” routes, connecting major population and economic centers. Selection of Backbone routes was based on seven criteria including multi-lane capacity needs, truck volume, service trade centers, manufacturing centers, recreation centers, etc. In 2014, average traffic volume on the ISH 39/90 midway through the City was 55,600 vehicles. Interstate 90 traffic volume has remained relatively stable since 2007.

In 2021, construction on ISH 39/90 was completed and includes three lanes in both directions. The project area was from Edgerton to Beloit. Through the Janesville area, four lanes of traffic were constructed in each direction from WIS 11/Avalon Road to WIS 26/Milton Avenue interchange to adjust for projected traffic increased.

United States Highway (USH) 51 extends north-south through Janesville. It serves as an arterial road in the City and connects with the City to Madison to the north and with Beloit to the south. Traffic volumes on USH 51 just north of Memorial Drive increased approximately 22 percent between 2010 and 2019, and traffic on USH 51 just south of downtown increased by about 9 percent over the same time frame.

Roadway Function Classification System

Throughout Wisconsin, all local, county, state and federal transportation routes are classified in categories under the “Roadway Functional Classification” system.

As identified by WisDOT, the functional classification system groups roads and highways according to the character of service they offer, ranging from rapid through access to local land access. The purpose of functional classification is to enhance overall travel efficiency and accommodate traffic patterns and land uses by designing streets to the standards suggested by their functional class. The three main rural roadway functional classes include:

- **Arterials** that provide primary access to and through an area (e.g., Center Avenue, Milton Avenue)
- **Collectors** that disperse traffic within an area (e.g., Wuthering Hills Drive, Oakhill Avenue)
- **Local** streets that provide access to individual properties (e.g., Pine Street, Shannon Drive)

United States Highway (USH) 14 runs diagonally northwest to southeast through the northern portion of the City. It also serves as an arterial road and connects Janesville with Oregon and Madison in Dane County to the north and Delavan to the east. Traffic volumes just east of the intersection with N. Wright Road increased by 5 percent between 2010 and 2019. In the same timeframe, USH 14 traffic at the intersection of STH 26 (Milton Avenue) has increased approximately 30 percent with an annual average daily traffic volume of 25,000.

State Highway (STH) 11 bypasses the City to the south and connects with Highway 14 east of Janesville. Traffic counts east of the Interstate tripled from 2010 to 2013, but decreased 19 percent from 2013 to 2019.

Between 2009 and 2018, WisDOT constructed a series of lane additions and community bypasses for STH 26 between Janesville and USH 151 near Waupun, including a Milton bypass. These improvements give Janesville a much more safe and convenient connection to the Fox Valley.

Truck Transportation

Due to its location on a major Interstate highway, Janesville experiences heavy semi-truck traffic. While there is an extensive network of designated truck routes, semi-truck volumes are heaviest along the Interstate, USH 14, and STH 11. Specific truck routes are also designated through the City.

Janesville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

The MPO is an area-wide transportation planning organization. It carries out federally-mandated planning and programming requirements in order for the City to remain eligible for federal highway, bicycle and transit funds. The MPO serves the City of Janesville, City of Milton and Towns of La Prairie, Harmony, Milton, Janesville, and Rock. The Janesville Department of Public Works coordinates the functions of the Janesville Area MPO.

Annual administrative activities conducted by the MPO to maintain eligibility for federal funding include the transportation work program and budget, the six-year *Transportation Improvement Program*, and quarterly financial/progress reports. Other planning activities include transit studies, parking studies, and various traffic studies.

In 2021 the Janesville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization completed the *2020-2050 Janesville Area Long-Range Transportation Plan*. The long range plan serves as an action plan for the construction of efficient highway and bicycle and pedestrian facilities and development of effective transit service throughout the Janesville metropolitan area. A fundamental component of the plan is the bicycle and pedestrian network, which incorporates a system of off-street trails and on-street routes designed for recreational and commuter use.

The work of the MPO is directed by a Policy Board which is advised by a Technical Advisory Committee. The Policy Board members are comprised of chief elected officials who include the Janesville City Council, Janesville City Manager, City of Milton Mayor, Chairpersons from the towns of Janesville, Harmony, La Prairie, Milton, and Rock (or his/her designee), a member of Rock County Board of Supervisors, and a representative from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation District 1 office. The Technical Advisory Committee consists of City of Janesville planning and engineering staff, Rock County planning, town representatives, state DOT, City of Milton, and federal transportation representatives.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Janesville’s trails are a significant asset to the City for transportation and recreation. These trails are connected by one central point or ‘hub’, with trails to the north, east and west radiating out from this point like spokes on a wheel.

This trailhead hub is located in the River bend area, just north of an old railroad bridge which spans the Rock River, at the east end of Riverside Street. Over 33 miles of trail span throughout the City.

The City completed a Trail User Count and Survey in 2019 which noted a 1.8% increase in trail usage since 2010 (or, an increase in 5,143 trips). Since 2010, the trails have experienced overall growing usage overall, but especially by senior citizens and by visitors (i.e., not residents) of the city of Janesville.



Bridges

There are 23 state-maintained bridges in the City of Janesville, located on the Interstates, Highway 51, Highway 11, and Memorial Drive. In addition, there are 20 bridges located on local roads that are maintained by the City of Janesville. There are also a number of railroad bridges that are maintained by railroad companies. The State maintains condition reports for all of these bridges.

According to the National Bridge Inventory, all bridges in the City of Janesville are either in “fair” or “good” condition, or are in poor condition but are programmed for upcoming reconstruction in the near term.

Airports

The Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport is located at 4004 South Oakhill Avenue at the southern edge of Janesville. This public airport has three multi-directional runways, each over 5,000 feet with an average of 143 flights per day.

Larger air carrier and passenger facilities are located approximately an hour’s drive to the north in Madison at the Dane County Regional Airport, to the south in Rockford at the Chicago Rockford International Airport, and to the northeast in Milwaukee at the General Mitchell International Airport. The Chicago-O’Hare International Airport is also relatively easily accessible to residents of the City.



Water Transportation

There is no waterborne freight movement in the City. The Rock River is best suited for recreational activities such as boating, canoeing, and fishing.

Rail

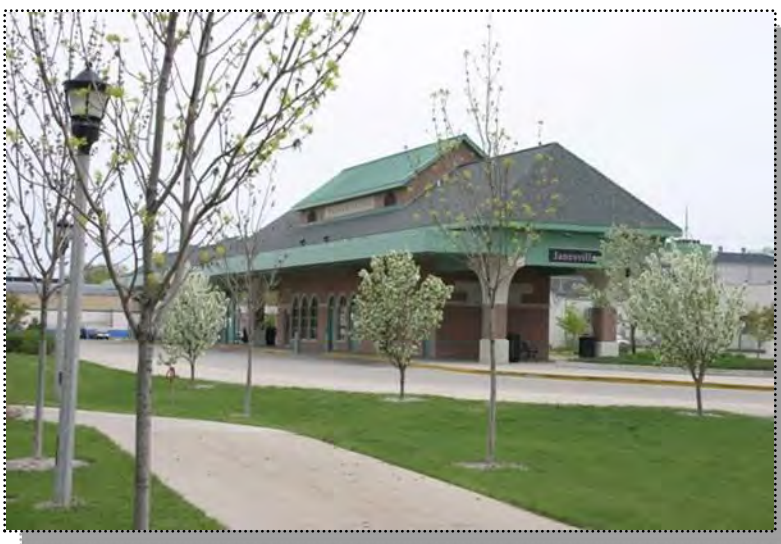
Janesville serves as a hub for several freight rail lines. The Wisconsin & Southern Railroad (WSOR) operates east-west and north-south lines; Union Pacific operates a southeast by northwest line; and the Iowa, Chicago, and Eastern Railroad operates some track in the middle of the city which extends south to Beloit. WSOR's locomotive maintenance center is in the City. Rail companies transport a variety of commodities including lumber, coal, liquid and dry fertilizers, corn, beans, plastic, aggregates, ethanol, and liquid petroleum. Although Janesville serves many freight rail lines, no passenger rail service is currently available in Janesville to Madison, Milwaukee, or Chicago.

Public Transportation and Paratransit

The Janesville Transit System (JTS) provides bus service to Janesville residents six days a week on five fixed routes and an additional intercity express bus to Beloit. Extended service is provided on three "Nightside" routes and extra service routes are available during peak travel times. All buses are wheelchair accessible, and are equipped with bike racks.

The JTS Downtown Transfer Center, located at 123 S. River Street, provides riders increased connectivity, convenience, and comfort. All local JTS routes run through the Transfer Center allowing a rider to connect to nearly any part of Janesville and even Beloit on the Beloit-Janesville Express.

Rock County provides specialized transportation services which are designed for use by elderly or disabled persons. To be eligible for specialized transit services, an individual must be at least 55 years of age or be disabled. Transportation services are provided to all areas within Rock County in wheelchair-accessible vans.



REVIEW OF STATE AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS

The following are State and regional transportation plans and studies relevant to this *Plan*.

Janesville Area 2020-2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The MPO's *Janesville Area 2020 – 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan* has an overall transportation goal of developing and maintaining an increasingly energy efficient transportation system which integrates all modes of travel and provides for the safe and effective movement of people and goods, while optimizing the financial resources of the communities. The recommendations focus on promoting the role of the transit system, increasing opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian travel, and alleviating existing and projected street congestion through a combination of reconstruction, new construction, and rehabilitation projects. As the primary guiding document for transportation

planning in the region, transportation recommendations made in *Volume 2* are consistent with the recommendations made in the LRTP.

Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport Plan

Rock County is preparing the Rock County Airport Master Plan Update with consultant assistance.

Connections 2030

This plan sets precedents to help maintain and modernize Wisconsin's transportation system and realize the state's transportation vision. A specific emphasis is put on enhancing the current transportation system to support multimodal mobility and growth. The plan outlines three system-level priority corridors that relate to Janesville: Rock River corridor connecting Janesville to Oshkosh along State Highway 26; South Central Connection with I-90 from Madison to Beloit; Southern Tier corridor extending from Janesville to Kenosha/Racine along US Highway 14/State Highway 11/I-43.

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

This plan presents a blueprint for improving conditions for bicycling, clarifies the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's role in bicycle transportation, and establishes policies for further integrating bicycling into the current transportation system. The plan reports that, according to a University of Wisconsin survey conducted in August of 1998, more than one-third of all Wisconsin households included someone who took at least one bike trip in the previous week. There are no recommendations specific to the City.

Wisconsin Pedestrian Plan 2020

This plan outlines Statewide and local measures to increase walking and to promote pedestrian comfort and safety. The plan provides a policy framework addressing pedestrian issues and clarifies WisDOT's role in meeting pedestrian needs. Pedestrian facilities include sidewalks, walkways, streetscapes, crosswalks, traffic controls signals, overpasses and underpasses, bridges, multi-use paths, curb cuts and ramps, transit stops, and paved shoulders. Many of these types of facilities are found in the City.

Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030

This plan contains an inventory and assessment of the Wisconsin Airport System's airports and steps to meet objectives and goals of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation Bureau of Aeronautics. Important aspects of this plan include the production of a Geographic Informational System database of the airport system and strategic investment recommendations. There is a report card and investment recommendations provided for the Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport. The report card identifies 3 areas that the airport fails at: lack of ramp space (number of tiedowns), a stormwater management plan, and fee/easement ownership of existing runway protection zones. In addition to resolving these issues, the report recommends investment in runway safety areas, clearing approaches, weather reporting, environmental assessment, and an airport layout plan and approach survey. The total estimated cost of these investment recommendations is \$1,364,200.

State Freight Plan

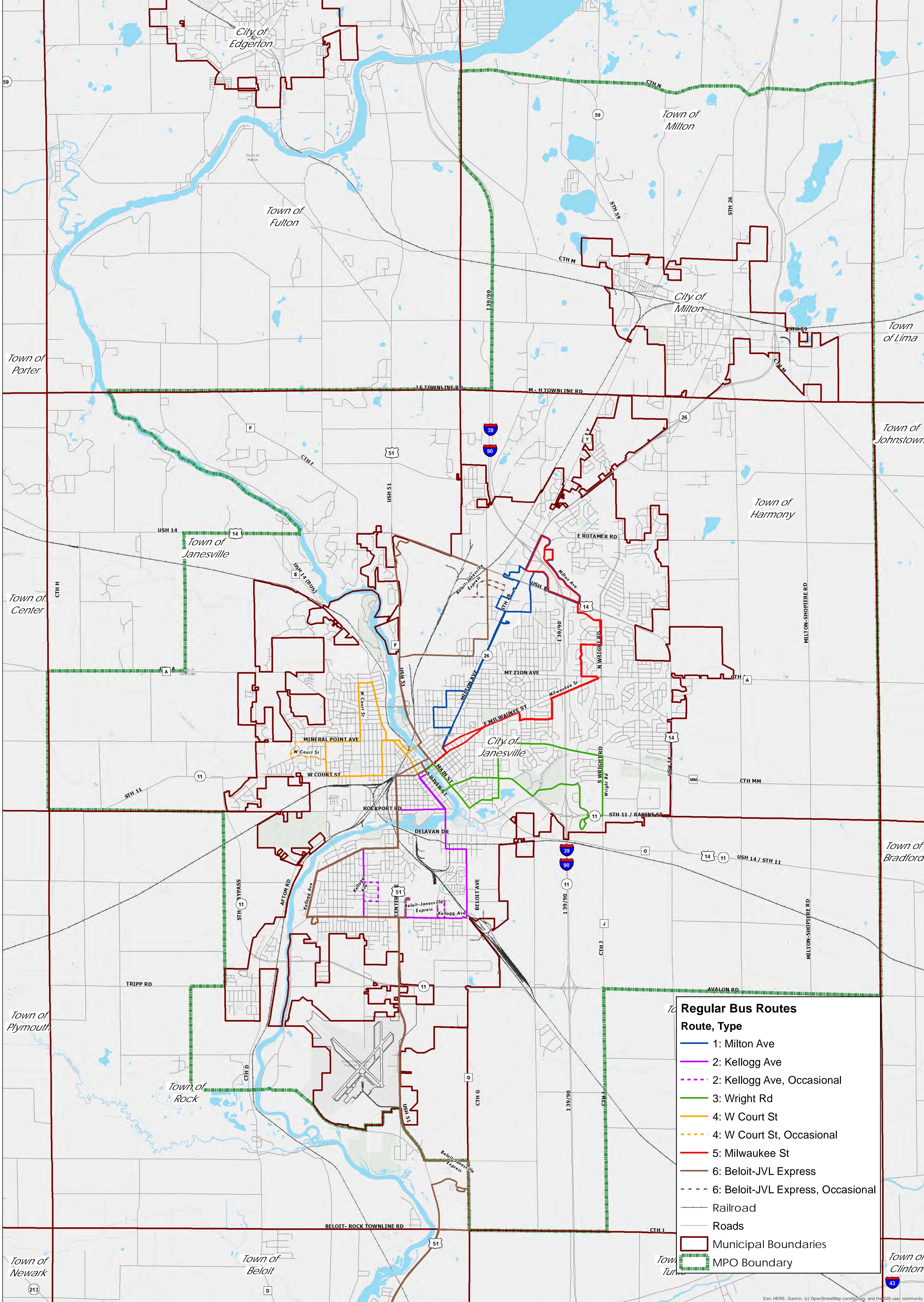
The Wisconsin *State Freight Plan* links transportation investments to economic development activities, and provides performance measures and management to place freight in Wisconsin in a national and global context. The U.S. Department of Transportation approved the Plan in 2018. Of relevance to Janesville, the plan confirms that Rock County is expected to experience some of the largest growth in terminating tonnage (freight arriving to the County) in the next 20 years. Additionally, much of USH 14 is classified as a "Bottleneck," an area of over-congested freight traffic.

Additionally, a freight train bottleneck is documented in Janesville, as the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad must often utilize Union Pacific-owned track in order to reach other destinations when traversing the City.

KEY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following are some of the key issues and opportunities for the City identified in this Chapter and through public input that will be considered in preparation of recommendations in *Volume 2* of this *Comprehensive Plan*.

- The development of the West Bypass – USH 11 from Court Street to USH 14 - and a potential for future expansion of 14 north to Madison could result in a number of growth opportunities.
- A STH 11 (Humes Road) upgrade to I-43 could bolster a stronger linkage to Metro Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha.
- Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport provides potential economic development benefits to the City and Rock County.
- Transit opportunities include the expansion of bus services and possibly passenger rail to serve a growing and changing population.
- Traffic issues associated with the Five-Points intersection, and other locations with road and rail issues result in safety and functionality concerns need to be addressed.
- Traffic on Milton Avenue is a challenging issue. The City can work to avoid creating similar problems on Highway 26 north of the Interstate, Highway 14 as it goes further east; and on bypass routes.
- The City should continue to monitor parking occupancy in the downtown area.
- Expansion of the bicycle and pedestrian path network is an opportunity to address existing “missing links” in the system, as well as in future growth areas.

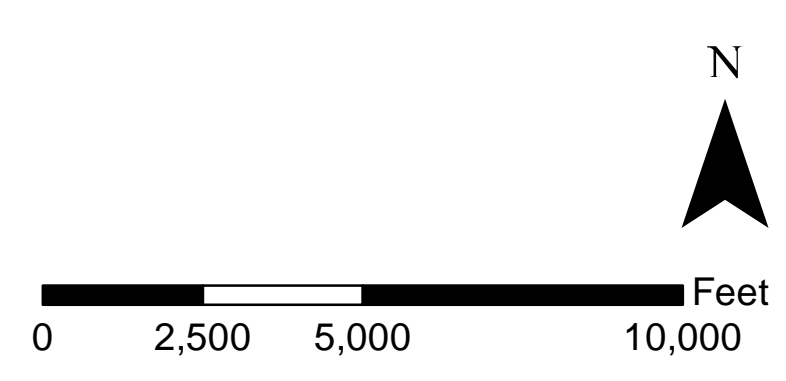


Regular Bus Routes

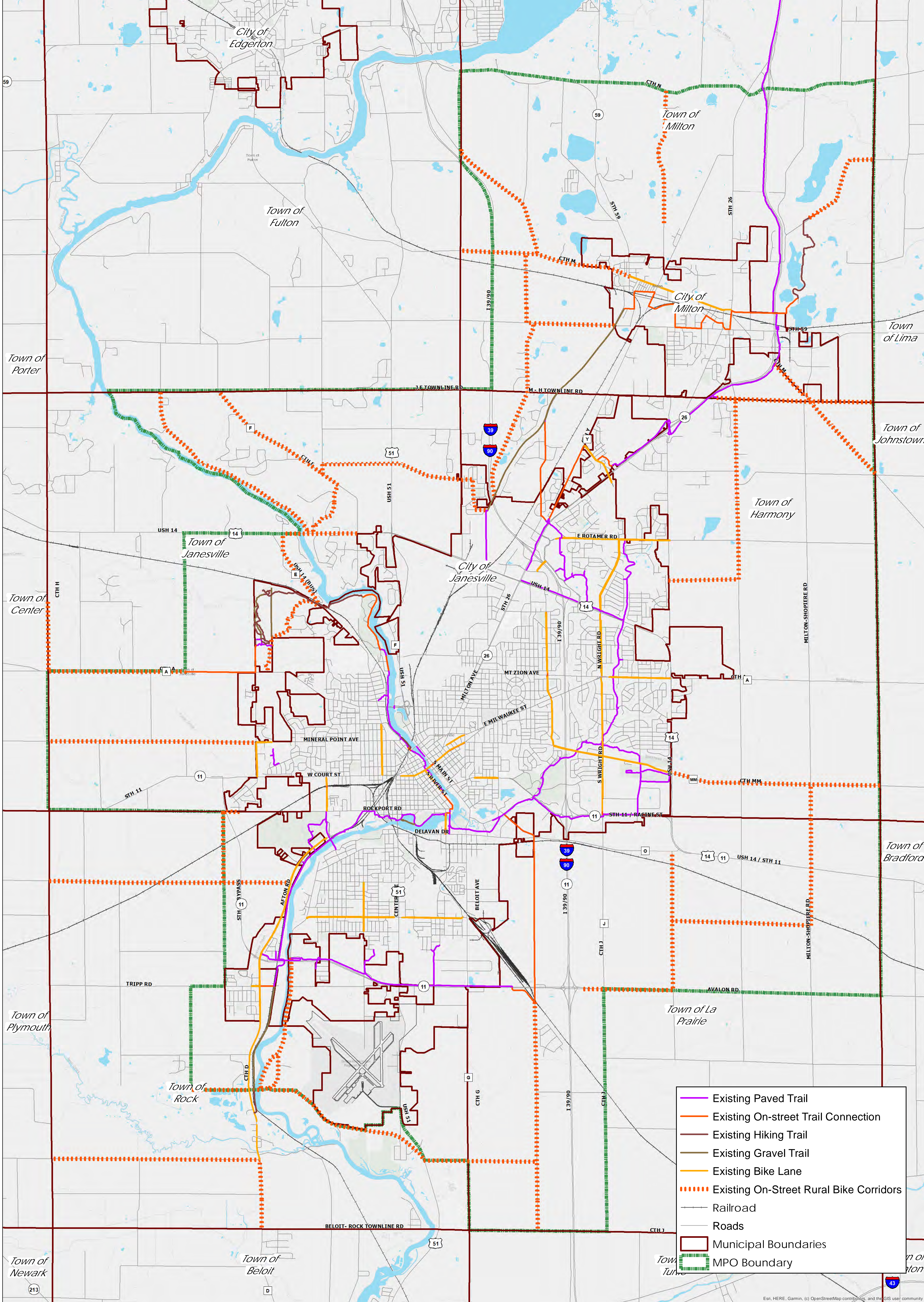
Route, Type

- 1: Milton Ave
- 2: Kellogg Ave
- 2: Kellogg Ave, Occasional
- 3: Wright Rd
- 4: W Court St
- 4: W Court St, Occasional
- 5: Milwaukee St
- 6: Beloit-JVL Express
- 6: Beloit-JVL Express, Occasional
- Railroad
- Roads
- Municipal Boundaries
- MPO Boundary

6a. Existing Roadways, Railroads, and Public Transit Routes

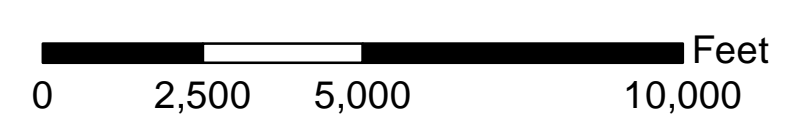


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- Existing Paved Trail
- Existing On-street Trail Connection
- Existing Hiking Trail
- Existing Gravel Trail
- Existing Bike Lane
- - - Existing On-Street Rural Bike Corridors
- Railroad
- Roads
- Municipal Boundaries
- MPO Boundary

6a. Existing Bicycle Facilities Network



Esri, HERE, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community

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3/14/2022; Z. Peacock, Engineering Division
S:\Projects\MPO\11P\2021 Map 06 Existing Bicycle Network.mxd

