

EVALUATION

In order to better analyze the impacts of all projects identified in this plan, the proposed projects were mapped in relation to the minority and poverty environmental justice target areas, see Figure VI-3 A & B. In addition, a ¼-mile buffer around each target area was mapped to provide a visual boundary corresponding to a 5-minute walk, see Figure VI-2 A & B. The proposed projects should not adversely affect the connectivity of the target populations to major destinations, such as employment, health care, education recreation, or retail businesses.

Figure VI-2 A depicts the location of census block groups having a poverty level that is considered significant or greater than 12% of the population for that block group. Figure VI-2 B illustrates the location of census block groups with significant minority populations, 7.8% or more of the block group's population. The primary location of the target areas is in downtown Janesville, an area east of Milton Avenue and North of Black Bridge Road, and along North Washington Avenue north of Memorial Avenue. Each target area is within a ¼ mile of transportation opportunities providing access to retail, education, employment, and recreation services. Figures VI-3 A and 3 B clearly illustrates that the proposed transportation projects do not adversely affect the mobility of those living in the area.

Access

Low-income and minority persons should have equal access to medical centers, parks, retail centers, schools, and major employment centers. The target populations are likely to have a higher propensity for travel by public transit, so travel to the major centers of concern by bus should not be time prohibitive. The Janesville Transit Service (JTS) will stop at the regularly scheduled stops, as well as any requested stops along the route, facilitating easy access to all locations along the route. In most cases, recreation facilities within ¼ mile and employment opportunities within ½ mile can be traveled to on foot. Figures 2 A and 2 B illustrate the current access to significant points of interest within the community. The significant points of interest shown on the maps do not illustrate all such opportunities that exist within the MPO; they merely denote the major activity centers. First, an inventory of the existing conditions within each of the target areas will be given, and then the projects impacts on access will be evaluated.

The poverty population in block group 7.3 has two major retail opportunities, one being the Janesville Mall, one government center, the main branch of the US Post Office and an elementary school within their block group. All four of these locations provide numerous job opportunities to those living within the block group. The block group is not very large, along its longest edge it is approximately one mile. Should individuals need bus service within the area or to outside destinations, there are two routes that intersect the neighborhood. The East Milwaukee route will take people to the Mercy East medical center in 10 minutes. The older children within the block group will likely attend Marshall Middle School and Craig High School. The East Milwaukee route runs by these schools and can carry passengers to the middle school in less than 15 minutes and the high school in less than 20 minutes. The block group has three park areas within one ¼ of a mile of it. The Jefferson Elementary School is within the block group and provides additional recreation opportunities.

The poverty population within block group 5.2 has ample access to medical care, the Mercy Medical Mall, an elementary school, Washington Elementary School, and recreation opportunities. The neighborhood is located along the river and the bike trail runs through it. The medical mall and elementary school are within one-mile of most homes, both of which provide job opportunities to area

residents. The bus trip to an employer or service to the south, such as the GM plant, Kandu Industries, or Pick-N-Save, would take between 10 and 20 minutes. Parents and students wishing to take the bus to Parker High School and Franklin Middle School would have a 5 to 10 minute trip.

The poverty population within block group 4.1 also benefits from being located along the river, providing ample access recreation opportunities. The block group is also adjacent to two medical centers, Mercy Hospital and River View Clinic. It is a residential area, so there are few job and retail opportunities, within its boundary. The hub for both the bike trail and the transit system are within ¼ of a mile, providing numerous alternative transportation options throughout the city. Residents can utilize the West Court Street bus route to access the retail, and job opportunities along Court Street within less than 5 minutes. The same route will take them to the local schools within 10 minutes.

Block group 4.4 has several local gas stations, and local businesses that provide retail and job opportunities to those living in the area, in addition to those shown on the map. The poverty population also has access to several parks, the river, and the bike trail. As with block group 4.4, the West Court Street Route provides quick and easy access to the local schools along the route. The West State Street Route will take riders to Van Buren Elementary School in approximately 30 minutes.

The total population living within block group 12.5 is low compared to the rest of the MPO's block groups, which corresponds to the areas low level of residential development. The minority population in the block group benefits from the retail and corresponding job opportunities along Milton Avenue and Highway 14. The block group also has several major retail and job opportunities of their own, Wal-Mart, Target and other shopping and dining outlets, Lemans Corporation (a major employer) and an entertainment facility in the form of a movie theater. The Janesville Sand and Gravel Company is also located in the block group. They provide additional job opportunities and take up most of the non-residential land. The residential area is well served by transit. The students most likely attend Jefferson or Monroe Elementary School, Franklin Middle School and Parker High School. The secondary schools are to the west, and the elementary schools are to the east of Milton Avenue. At the Highway 14, Lodge Drive, Holiday Drive, Reset Drive, and Black Bridge Road intersections there are signalized crosswalks to facilitate safe access to the east side of Milton Avenue. In 5 to 20 minutes, the East Milwaukee Street bus route will take residents to Jefferson Elementary, Monroe Elementary, the Mercy East Medical Center and retail centers. The area has several parks.

The greenbelt that bisects block group 13.01.2 provides abundant open space for the residents, and the bike trail is within ¼ mile. The area has several locally owned businesses that provide services and job opportunities to area residents, and there is a large commercial center on the neighborhoods northwest corner. The children most likely attend Kennedy Elementary School, Marshall Middle School, and Craig High School. In addition to further shopping opportunities and the medical mall, the East Milwaukee Street route provides quick access to both the high school and middle school, and will take residents within ¼ mile of the elementary school.

Block group 11.3 is a residential area with two neighborhood parks within ¼ mile and the river and bike trail within ½ mile. Lincoln Elementary School provides additional recreation space. A transit route runs through the area, and several run along its boundaries, providing quick access to Mercy Health South, and other areas. The health center is just over ½ mile from the neighborhood, and the Beloit-Janesville Express (BJE) will take residents there in less than 5 minutes. They could also choose to take the Kellogg Avenue route to Mercy South, the trip would take approximately 25 minutes. The businesses along Center Avenue, ½ mile away, provide employment opportunities. In addition, the BJE will take residents to retail and employment opportunities on and near Kellogg

Avenue, such as Pick-N-Save, Simmons, Kandu Industries, Allied, the Black Hawk Shopping Center, and the Rock County Job Center in less than 10 minutes. Children in the neighborhood will attend Lincoln Elementary School, Edison Middle School, and Parker High School. The elementary school is within the block group, and the middle school is within ¼ mile. Many parents and students will be able to walk to these destinations. Those who wish to shorten the foot trip could utilize the bus. The bus ride to Parker High School would take approximately 30 minutes.

The southern half of block group 14.2 is in low intensity uses, while the northern half has been developed residentially. The parks and bike trail within the neighborhood provide the residents, specifically the minority population with numerous recreation opportunities and alternative transportation options. Mercy Health South is on the neighborhoods northwest side, and is directly served by the transit route that runs along the areas northern boundary. The majority of the residents are within ¼ mile of the transit route, providing them with easy access to the entire system. The students in the neighborhood attend Jackson Elementary, Edison Middle, and Craig High School. Jackson is within ¼ mile of most of the residential areas. Edison is within ½ mile of the neighborhood. Residents can take the Kellogg Avenue transit route and reach the middle school in approximately 15 minutes. It would take approximately 25 minutes to reach Craig High School by bus. Within ¼ mile of the neighborhood, there are several major employers and retail opportunities: Kandu Industries, Seneca Foods, Simmons Company, Allied Systems, Pick-N-Save, the Black Hawk Shopping Center, and the Rock County Job Center.

Block group 1.3 and census tract 3 are located in the City of Janesville's downtown and have a high proportion of both minority and low-income people. The City's downtown shopping and employment opportunities serve the area. In addition, it contains the hub for both the bike trail and transit system, which provide multiple transportation opportunities. The neighborhood benefits from having the river run along two of its sides, providing recreation opportunities, and open space. The extensive transit system that runs through the areas allow the residents to quickly access many of the other services and job opportunities in the larger community. By bus, residents can reach Mercy South in 10 minutes, and Mercy East is approximately 40 minutes. In addition to being in walking distance of the neighborhood, transit serves Mercy Hospital and the River View Clinic. Students will go to Wilson Elementary, located within the block group, either Franklin or Marshall Middle School, and Parker or Craig High School. The trip to Franklin or Parker by bus would take approximately 10 and 15 minutes. The trip to Marshall and Craig would take approximately 5 and 10 minutes.

Figures VI-3 A and 3 B illustrate the location of the recommended street projects in relation to the target areas. The maps also show the location of future trail segments. The modeling results, discussed in the Streets and Highways Element, indicate that the recommended projects have the ability to minimize future congestion throughout the urbanized area, benefiting the entire population. The street projects planned for the downtown area, where there is the largest concentration of minority and low-income people are preservation projects intended to remove potholes and other poor roadway conditions, improving safety and economic conditions. The alignment for the new roadway project recommended within block group 14.2 has not been finalized, but is within an existing and planned commercial and industrial area. The project will provide an east to west connection between Center Avenue and Beloit Avenue and will not disturb the existing residential development in the block group.

The large minority population shown in block group 12.1 is most likely due to the county jail located at Highway 14 and Highway 51. The residential population is similar to Janesville's general

population, without the jail population the area would probably not qualify as a target area. Therefore, the projects shown are not affecting a true target population.

The planned expansion project shown in block group 12.5 would need to be studied before the project is approved. The project would require that people in the neighborhood cross additional lanes to reach one of the current major destinations within their block group. The roadway is currently equipped with crosswalks and they would be improved should the project be completed, facilitating the journey across it. The study evaluating the projects merit, would involve identifying and then weighing all the impacts against the benefits. The project would not affect the children's journey to school, or the current access to parks and open space.

The expansion of I-39 runs along the edge of block group 13.01.2.. To counteract the significant noise caused by the expanded interstate sound walls are to be included as part of the project. The USH 14 expansion project along the northern edge of the block group would need to be studied before it is approved. The project would not affect children's journey to school or prohibit people from reaching their places of employment.

Economic, Social, Community and Neighborhood Impacts

The transportation plan has the potential to affect the economic well being of all who live and work in the MPO planning area. Levels-of-service on roadways, multimodal opportunities, and accessibility to businesses are all issues to be considered. If levels of service decline during the planning period, trip times are likely to increase. Businesses would incur higher transport costs, and individuals would face similar costs in the form of time lost. As congestion and trip times increase the distance from home that people are willing to travel to work decreases, shrinking their job opportunities. For example, if a person was willing to travel 30 minutes to work every day, they would probably have the ability to search for, and work at jobs within 15-20 miles of their home. If congestion increased, and length of the same trip doubled, they would only be able to look for, and maintain jobs within 8-10 miles of their home, while still having a 30-minute trip. Their other option would be to increase their trip time to one hour and keep their current trip length in miles, or job option range. Increasing trip times detract from the time available for other activities, negatively impacting quality of life. Congestion can also influence quality of life through effecting life expectancy. Areas with high congestion tend to have higher than average accident rates.

The long range transportation plan also strives to make the MPO attractive to residents as well as businesses. The transportation investments recommended in the plan will directly impact the ability of residents to travel to and from work, school, places of worship, and other important destination within and around the community. Extensive multimodal planning is intended to provide alternatives to automobile travel. The aim is to give those without a personal vehicle greater independence of movement throughout the community, in addition to providing alternatives to those with cars. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Element illustrates the location of existing sidewalks, and the recommended on street bike network, providing further mobility options to those lacking a personal vehicle. The MPO has an abundance of natural resources in the form of the Rock River, parklands, and trails. The plan includes recommendations and policies for expanding upon the current trail system, implementing a network of on-street bike lanes, and encouraging the full utilization of the recreation and multimodal opportunities within the area.

To be successful, businesses require a functioning road network and a strong work force. Preservation is the most cost effective method of maintaining our existing infrastructure so that goods and services can travel quickly and efficiently between their destinations. Expanding the multimodal network and providing greater connectivity is intended to increase the mobility of residents and the economic vitality of the MPO.

The plan supports the development of a transportation system that is compatible with existing and future development patterns and encourages the development of a comprehensive, community wide trail system. When developing the projects recommended in the plan the existing land uses were considered, ensuring that the projects do not inadvertently cut off a neighborhood's access to a specific type of service. The plan has a long term vision of developing an efficient transportation system that provides for the long term connectivity needs of the MPO and region.

Noise Impacts: It is the MPO's policy that transportation facilities do not expose residential areas, schools, and other areas with high concentration of people to harmful level of noise. The expansion of I-39 to 6 lanes is expected to create an unacceptable level of noise in Janesville. To mitigate this, noise barriers are planned through the residential area .

Visual Impacts: In an effort to create attractive communities, the MPO supports developing aesthetically pleasing transportation facilities that preserve the existing natural features.

Air Quality: The Janesville Area MPO is currently an attainment area. To remain so, the plan supports efficient traffic control measures and the encouragement of transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Air quality should be monitored to ensure that motor vehicles do not exceed the exhaust emission standards established by the EPA.