Janesville Area
2015-2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Freight Section Executive Summary
DRAFT: February 26, 2016

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The movement of goods is vital to the everyday life of those who live in the MPO area and the businesses that operate here. Janesville is situated on I-39/90, the region's main freight corridor and serves as the regional hub for Rock County. In addition, the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) is served by three rail providers, which have access to Chicago, and points across Wisconsin and the Midwest. Figure 1 depicts the MPA's total freight network of railroads, highways, local truck routes, and multi-modal facilities. The extensive transportation infrastructure, high quality labor pool, and affordable housing market combine to make the Janesville/Milton area a prime business location.

The availability and quality of highway and rail infrastructure creates a competitive economic development advantage for Rock County. With significant basic infrastructure in place, maintenance and improvement to this investment is critical to the expansion of freight users and the attraction of new business. The quality of this resource directly impacts the creation of jobs, business investment and tax revenues for the incorporated areas of Rock County.

FAST Act focuses on improving condition and performance of the national freight network to provide a foundation for U.S. to compete in the global economy. FAST Act specifically established a national performance goal for freight movement:

- **Freight movement and economic vitality**—To improve the national freight network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development.

The purpose of this section of the plan is to provide an inventory of the goods movement industry and its growth potential; identify land areas for development and redevelopment to provide a portfolio for economic development; identify gaps in the system, identify congestion areas and conflict points where freight movement may be hindered due to design of the infrastructure and make recommendations for improvement which include a strategy for implementation. This section will also discuss data that may be used to measure performance of the freight system.

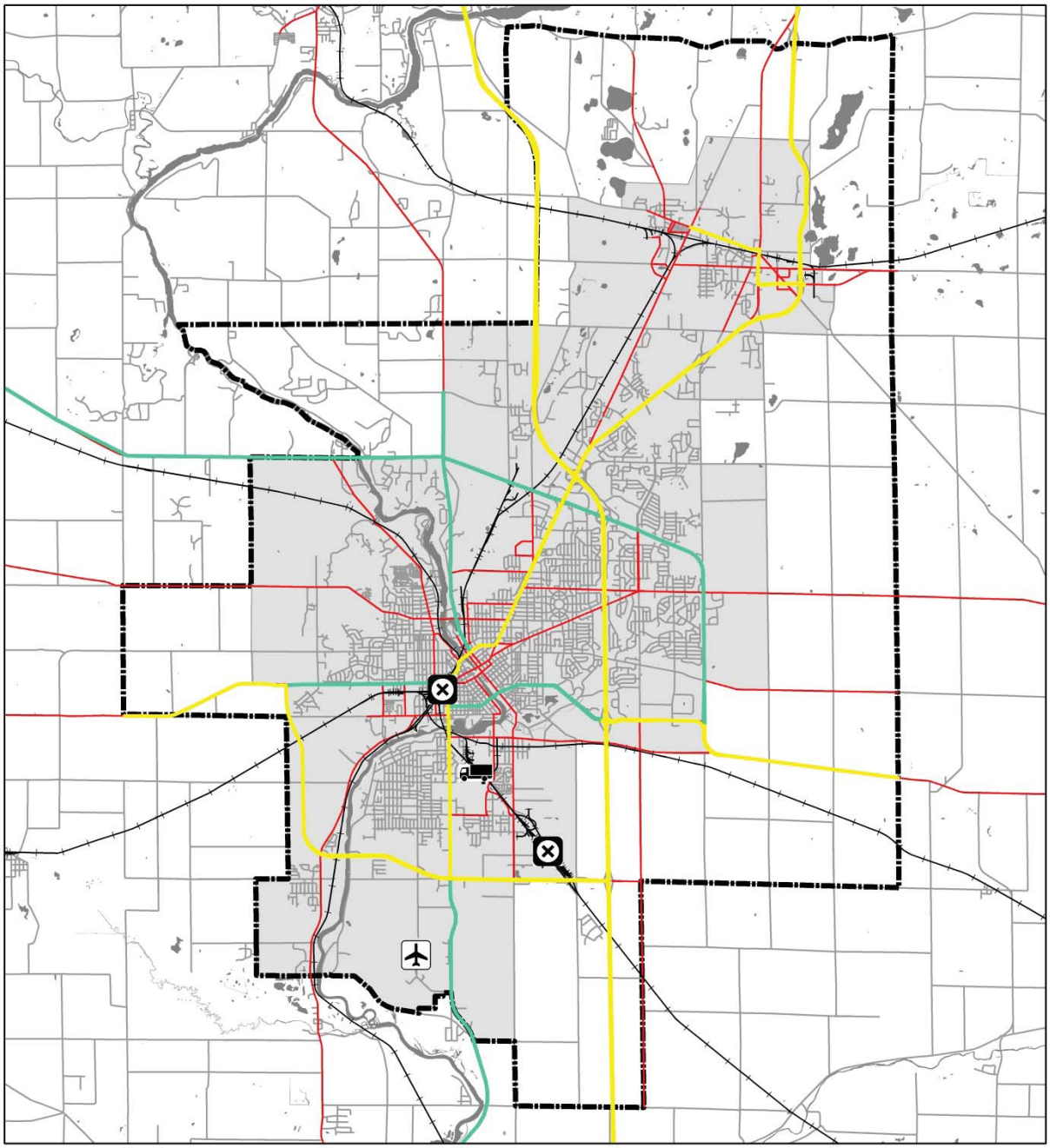
The role of the MPO is to execute a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process in order to coordinate transportation planning projects in the region. The MPO may assist and support freight and the freight industry by fostering interagency coordination, facilitating public input and feedback, performing technical analysis such as freight studies and scenario planning.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL: To develop and maintain an increasingly energy efficient transportation system which includes and integrates all modes of travel and provides for the safe and effective movement of goods within and through the region, while optimizing the financial resources of the communities.

OBJECTIVES:

- Utilize existing transportation facilities and services to their full potential.
- Support state, regional, and local efforts to preserve and enhance rail corridors for future transportation purposes.
- Provide adequate intermodal connections with transportation systems.
- Provide adequate local street connections between highways and freight origins and destinations.
- Contribute to a transportation system that provides for the effective and safe movement of goods to and from major commercial and employment centers and intermodal facilities.
- Minimize and/or mitigate negative impacts of trucks on adjacent residential areas.



Total Freight Network
- NHS
- Local Routes
- Railroad
- NHS MAP-21
- Multi-modal Facility
- Rail yard
- Airport

Boundaries
- MPO Planning Boundary
- MPO Adjusted Urbanized Boundary

2015-2050 Janesville Area Long Range Transportation Plan	1	**Total Freight Network**	JANESVILLE AREA Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)	N

ISSUES SPECIFIC TO THE JANESVILLE AREA

Highway

The Janesville MPA boasts a strong multi-modal transportation network that has been critical to the area's economic success. The Priority Multi-modal Freight Network described in the previous section identifies I-39/90 as a freight highway of the Highest class of importance. USH 51 from Stoughton to Beloit and USH 14 from Janesville to Delavan are classified as High Medium; STH 26 is classified as Medium, and USH 14 Janesville to Evansville and USH 11 west to Green County are Low Medium.

Recent, committed, and ongoing improvements to the highway system have or will address many of the issues facing freight highway movements in the Janesville area. The greatest hindrance to efficient movement of freight along highways in the Janesville area is congestion and outdated design elements of Interstate 39/90. Input from stakeholders consistently described congestion along the interstate corridor in Wisconsin and Illinois as an issue. The interchange at the USH 11 bypass and I-39/90 (Avalon Rd. interchange) is also an issue for truck traffic turning movements and queuing. Stakeholders universally supported the reconstruction and expansion of I-39/90 from the stateline to Madison.

Rail

The most serious issue facing rail in the Janesville area is the loss of manufacturing and subsequent reduction of rail freight. Of particular concern is the existing privately-owned Union Pacific line between Evansville and Harvard, IL, which provides the only relatively high speed (FRA Class 3-4) rail access to the region, but suffered a great loss of traffic with the closure of the Janesville General Motors plant in 2009. The segments are labelled 2, 3, and 6 in Table 6: Rail Links by Usage. Union Pacific maintains a large terminal and freight yard in Janesville which is now underutilized with the loss of GM traffic. The closing of this terminal, or the downgrading or abandonment of this line by the UP would be a serious blow to the area economy which would require a response in line with the adopted policy of the MPO to preserve railroad corridors.

Also of concern is the Iowa, Chicago and Eastern line owned by the Canadian Pacific Railway between Janesville and South Beloit, IL. The line sees minimal traffic and is a slow speed (FRA Class 1) line, but provides the only direct north-south rail access between Janesville and Beloit and to the Rockford area and points south from the region. Again, any proposed abandonment of this line would require a response under the adopted policy of the MPO to maintain this unique transportation corridor.

All other rail lines in the region are state-owned by one of two Regional Rail Transit Commissions and operated by their contracted operator, WSOR, which maintains a terminal facility and freight yard in Janesville. The state owned lines connect Janesville with Madison, Baraboo and Reedsburg to the north and the greater Milwaukee area to the east; with extensions to the Mississippi River at Prairie du Chien and the Fox Valley at Oshkosh. The state and the WSOR, with both state and private funding, have engaged in an on-going systematic effort to maintain and upgrade these lines to improve safety, increase train speeds and increase the capacity of the tracks to accommodate current and future standard railcars up to 315,000 pounds. This will be an on-going effort requiring

continued major capital expenditures for as long as the railroad remains in operation; which in turn will require repeated state appropriations (and federal capital grants if available in the future) to continue to ensure the viability of this regional rail system.

There are several concerns related to infrastructure operated by WSOR. A major concern is the rail yard in Janesville is insufficient in size to accommodate current and projected rail traffic. Capacity constraints in the yard cause backups of trains that block street intersections, as well as force the rail company to conduct switching across side streets. The Crosby Street Bridge also lacks sufficient capacity to handle train traffic. Additionally, the close proximity of the roundhouse to Pearl Street is a safety issue due to poor visibility between the railroad and motorized and non-motorized traffic on the street and sidewalk.

At-grade crossings present a major safety hazard when train movements conflict with other motorized and non-motorized traffic. This is especially true when trains block street crossings for an extended period of time and therefore increase the potential to delay the response time of emergency services. In Janesville, at-grade crossing are located along major arterial streets such as West Court Street (Five Points), Delavan Drive, Beloit Avenue, South Jackson Street, and USH 14.

In Milton, the WSOR rail line runs roughly east west, bisecting the city and crossing major arterial streets such as Janesville Street (former STH 26), and John Paul Road/CTH Y. The City of Milton does not have any local grade separated crossings. This is a major concern for emergency service access when a train is present.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Highway

- Identify priority freight connections at the local level in order to establish investment priorities.
- Provide truck traffic routes and access to industrial sites that do not disrupt residential areas.
- Monitor congestion along local truck routes and implement congestion relief measures.
- Study opportunities for improved rail-highway intermodal connections in the metropolitan planning area.

Rail

- Support upgrading and maintenance of trackage within and contiguous to the MPO area identified by WSOR's long term capital plan.
- Support agencies and organizations seeking rail funding, including Freight Rail Loan Repayments (FRIIP Program), Freight Rail Preservation Program (FRPP), Rail service assistance, and other funding sources.
- Evaluate future requests for potential commuter rail service within the Planning area and connections to destinations outside the planning area for impacts on existing freight rail service, and necessary improvements to allow both modes to operate in shared corridors.

- Assess safety of at-grade railroad crossings and consider feasibility of closing crossings and/or feasibility of creating grade separated crossings as appropriate.
- Evaluate opportunities to assist in capacity expansion of Pearl Street rail yard.
- The following recommendations from the Janesville Comprehensive Plan, adopted March 9, 2009, are incorporated in this Plan:
  - Encourage continued maintenance, preservation, and expansion of freight rail lines to serve existing and potential future industry in the City.
  - Reserve key redevelopment and new development sites with excellent rail access or potential access for rail-oriented land uses.

Air

- Maintain and ensure continued access to South Central Wisconsin Regional Airport.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Establishing performance measures for freight is difficult due to the lack of freight data for the Janesville MPA. Most tonnage data is only available at the County level with the exception of data provided by the Southern WI Regional Airport and WSOR described earlier in this section. The Commodity Flow Survey (CFS) is the primary source of national and state-level data on domestic freight shipments in select industries. Data are provided on types, origins, and destinations. The CFS is conducted every five years, most recently in 2012. CFS data will be incorporated into the Plan when the final data is released in late 2014. WisDOT developed a profile of commodity flow for the SW Region using its database called TRANSEARCH. A summary of this data may be integrated into the final Plan.

The MPO collects data on safety, condition, and performance of the transportation system. Some of these factors directly or indirectly relate to freight. These are:

Goal Areas	Indicators	Data	Data Source	Data Frequency	Collected to Date
Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight	Freight Level of Service for designated truck routes and NHS routes Truck Counts Truck Speeds Miles of active rail	Traffic Counts Truck ADTS	WisDOT and local agencies American Transportation Research	3 years Annual classification	Truck speeds-2008-2010 only Rail miles: 2011, 2013
Integration & connectivity of the system, across and between modes, for people and freight	Freight tonnage by mode	Commodity flow survey SW Region profile	U.S. Census WisDOT	5 years	2007, 2011 SW region profile

Efficient management and operations (System Operation and Usage)	Streets & Highway • Traffic Volume • Travel Speed • Travel Time • Hours of congested travel • Travel Time Reliability		• WisDOT Travel demand model	Varies	