WAUSAU MPO

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

2050

WAUSAU AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

MARATHON COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

January 2022

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/DISCLAIMER

The preparation of this report has been financed in part through grant[s] from the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, under the Metropolitan Planning Program, Section 104(f) of Title 23, U.S. Code. The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

TITLE VI ASSURANCES

The Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization hereby gives public notice that it is the organization's policy to assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. Title VI requires that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any Federal Aid Highway program or other activity for which the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization receives Federal financial assistance.

Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint with the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. Any such complaint must be in writing and filed with the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Title VI Coordinator within one hundred, eighty (180) days following the date the alleged discriminatory occurrence. Title VI Discrimination Complaint forms may be obtained from the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization office, on the website at WausauMPO.org at no cost to the complainant, by calling David Mack, MPO Director, at (715)261-6043, or by faxing to (715) 261-6016.

MARATHON COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

RESOLUTION # 1-22

RESOLUTION ADOPTING
THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN, 2050

WHEREAS, the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission was designated the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Wausau Urbanized Area; and

WHEREAS, in compliance with Metropolitan Transportation Planning Regulations by the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission has developed a Long Range Transportation Plan for the Wausau Metropolitan Area; and

WHEREAS, the Long Range Transportation Plan identifies the transportation planning needs and activities of the Metropolitan Planning Area for a period of more than 20 years; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the federal transportation bill, Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act was passed by the Federal Government which governs the Long Range Transportation Plan creation process;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission has, in compliance with the FAST Act regulations, developed the *Long Range Transportation Plan 2050*;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in accordance with 23 CFR 450.336, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Wausau, WI urbanized area hereby certifies that the metropolitan transportation planning process is addressing the major issues in the metropolitan planning area and is being conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements of:

1) 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303 and this subpart;

2) In non-attainment 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 USC 2000d-1) and 49 CFR part 21;

4) 49 USC 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity;

5) Section 1101(b) of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act)(Pub. L. 114-357) and 49 CFR Part 26 regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in the US 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 CRF 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 27 regarding discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission recommends that this document be submitted to the appropriate federal and state agencies for their review.

Dated this 11th day of January 2022

John Robinson, Chairman

David Mack, Director, Wausau Area
Metropolitan Planning Organization

WAUSAU METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)

MARATHON COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

Katie Rosenberg	Mayor, City of Wausau
Chris Voll	President, Village of Kronenwetter
Betty Hoenisch	President, Village of Maine
Steve Hagman	Chairman, Town of Mosinee
Allen Opall	Chairman, Town of Rib Mountain
Tim Buttke	Chairman, Town of Stettin
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George Peterson, Vice Chairman	President, Village of Rothschild
Mark Maloney	President, Village of Weston
Brent Jacobson	Mayor, City of Mosinee
Kregg Hoehn	Mayor, City of Schofield
John Robinson, Commission Chairman	Marathon Co. Infrastructure Committee
Ken Wickham	Director, WisDOT - North Central Region

MPO TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

David Mack, MPO Director/Secretary	Wausau MPO/Marathon County CPZ
Laurie Miskimins, Director	Marathon County Conservation, Planning, & Zoning
Andrew Lynch, Transportation Planner	Wausau MPO/Marathon County CPZ
Jim Griesbach, Commissioner	Marathon County Highway Department
Brian Grefe, Manager	Central Wisconsin Airport
Darryl Landeau	North Central Wisconsin RPC
David Eckmann	Wausau Area Chamber of Commerce
Gaylene Rhoden, Administrator	Town of Rib Mountain
Jared Wehner, Community Development Director	Town of Rib Mountain
Scott Turner, Street & Parks Superintendent	Town of Rib Mountain
Richard Downey, Administrator	Village of Kronenwetter
Austen Frederickson, Public Works Director	Village of Kronenwetter
Gary Olsen, Administrator	Village of Rothschild
Tim Vergara, Public Works Admin.	Village of Rothschild
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Jeff Gates, City Administrator	City of Mosinee
Mark Thuot, Public Works Admin.	City of Schofield
Eric Lindman, Public Works & Utilities Director	City of Wausau
Brad Lenz, City Planner	City of Wausau
Greg Seubert, Transit Director	Wausau Area Transit System
Dave Meurett	WisDOT – North Central Region
James Kuehn	WisDOT – Bureau of Planning
Brad Sipple	WisDOT – Bureau of Planning
Mitch Batuzich	FHWA – Ex Officio Member
Evan Gross	FTA – Ex Officio member

MARATHON COUNTY CONSERVATION, PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT STAFF

Marathon County Conservation, Planning and Zoning Department provide the staffing needs for the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission (Wausau MPO). The staff involved with MPO functions are as follows:

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ADRC – Aging and Disability Resource Center
CFR – Code of Federal Regulations
CMAQ – Congestion Mitigation Air Quality
DOJ – US Department of Justice
EJ – Environmental Justice
FAST – Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FHWA – Federal Highway Administration
FTA – Federal Transit Administration
GTA – State General Transportation Aids
HSIP – Highway Safety Improvement Program
HSTP – Human Services Transportation Plan
I – Interstate Highway
ISTEA – Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act
LEP – Limited English Proficiency
LRTP – Long Range Transportation Plan
LOS – Level of Service
MAP-21 – Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act
Metro Ride – Wausau Area Transit System
MCMPC – Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission
MPO – Metropolitan Planning Organization
NHS – National Highway System
PBPP – Performance -Based Planning and Programming
PPP- Public Participation Plan
PTASP – Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan
SAFETEA – LU – Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – a Legacy for Users
SMS – Safety Management System
STBG – Surface Transportation Program Block Grant
STP-Urban – Surface Transportation Program Urban Areas
STIP – State Transportation Improvement Program
STH – State Highway
TAC – Technical Advisory Committee
TAM – Transit Asset Management
TAP – Transportation Alternatives Programs
TCC – County Transportation Coordinating Committee
TDM – Travel Demand Model
TDM – Travel Demand Management
TDP – Transit Development Program
TIP – Transportation Improvement Program
TSM&O – Transportation Systems Management & Operations
USC – United States Code
USH – US Highway
UZA – Census Designated Urbanized Area
WisDOT – Wisconsin Department of Transportation
WisDNR - Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

This Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the Wausau Area has been prepared by the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission (MCMPC). The MCMPC is the federally recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the urbanized area consisting of the cities of Wausau, Mosinee, and Schofield; the villages of Kronenwetter, Maine, Rothschild, Weston, and the surrounding towns of Mosinee, Rib Mountain, Stettin, Wausau, and Weston in Marathon County, Wisconsin.

In 1980, the population of the Wausau urbanized area reached 50,000 and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) created the Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization. The Marathon County Planning Commission was subsequently designated as the agent for the Wausau area MPO in 1983. In May 1996, the Marathon County Planning Commission was reconstituted to the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission.

The MCMPC is composed of the chief elected officials of the communities within the Wausau urbanized area, as well as representatives of the agencies having jurisdiction over roadways within the urbanized area, Marathon County and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. This commission is the decision-making authority for the MPO. The MPO includes sub-committee, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which is composed of administrative, transportation, and planning professionals employed by the MPO representative communities. The TAC serves an advisory role to the Planning Commission. The TAC has its own advisory committee, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Sub-Committee, which addresses community issues that pertain specifically to bicycling and walking.

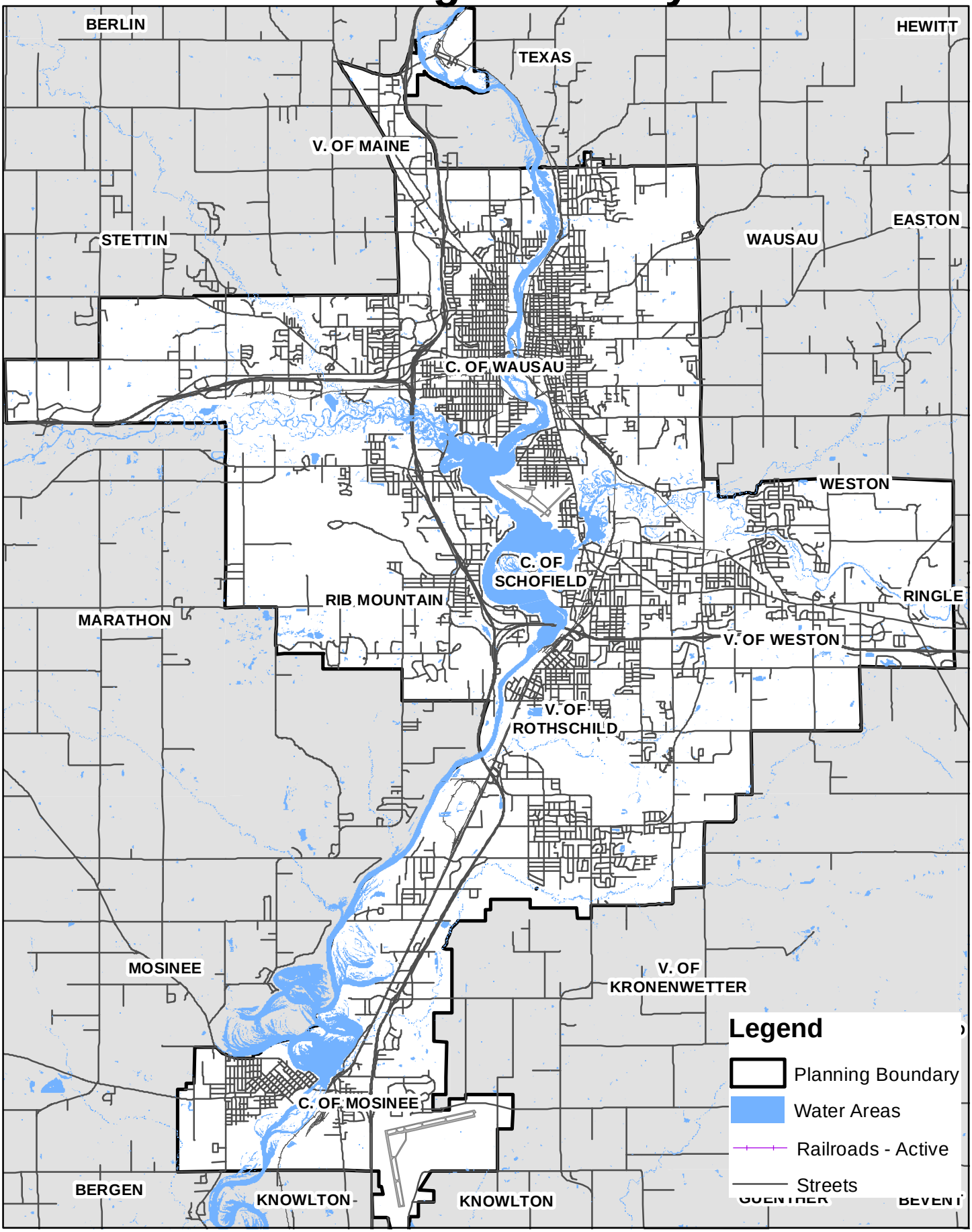
MPO PLANNING AREA

Working with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) the MPO has approved the adjusted urbanized area (UZA) based on the US Census Bureau's urbanized area criteria. The UZA is shown on Map 1-1. The MPO planning area is also shown in Map 1-1. This area encompasses all the urbanized area, developing areas, and areas related to the urbanized area that could potentially be considered urbanized by 2050. The MPO may expand the planning area to ensure that it adequately addresses anticipated growth impacting the metropolitan area.

The planning area includes all or part of the following communities:

City of Mosinee, City of Schofield, City of Wausau, Village of Kronenwetter, Village of Maine, Village of Rothschild, Village of Weston, Town of Mosinee, Town of Rib Mountain, Town of Stettin, Town of Wausau, and the Town of Weston.

Wausau Area MPO
Planning Boundary



Prepared by; Wausau MPO

Map 1-1 includes the locations of major roadways, railroads, and trails within the planning area. The LRTP addresses transportation in terms of the movement of people and goods, not just vehicles. While the plan analyzes specific transportation modes (i.e., roadways, public transportation, bicycles/pedestrians, and rail.), it stresses the interrelationships between modes and, when possible, encourages the integration of the various transportation components into a system that efficiently and cost-effectively meets the mobility needs of the area's citizens, businesses, industries, institutions, and the traveling public.

PLAN UPDATE

The plan was developed as an update to the previous 2016 Long Range Transportation Plan. The update concept for this plan was based on the availability of current census information and data and that information and data used to develop the area traffic model. When developing the plan and traffic model, the most current information was obtained from the 2010 Census. The demographic information was 10 years old and even though the communities created good household and employment data projections for their areas for the next 30 years, the baseline information was not indicative of the area today.

With that, all plans are works in progress, not a fixed or final product but intended to be flexible and capable of responding to new or changing conditions. Transportation studies are continuously being completed and/or updated, which may result in substantial changes to this plan. The plan must be updated at least every five years, and amendments may occur more frequently in response to the changing urban transportation system.

As an updated LRTP, the main emphasis areas were to develop Goals, Objectives and the Action steps. Utilizing the existing and newly developed plans created for the MPO along with the traffic model to analyze the community's roadway ideas to determine their effectiveness on the overall roadway network. The next plan will be completed in 2026 and be a plan with more data and information indicating the current state of the area.

The following plans and documents have been developed since the 2016 LRTP and are being used as the primary components of this plan to discuss additional goals and objectives, public engagement, project development, and financial feasibility:

2018 Transit Development Plan

The 2018 Transit Development Plan (TDP) was prepared for Wausau Metropolitan Area that is served by the Wausau Area Transit System, aka, Metro Ride. The TDP builds upon the previous TDPs completed in 1999, 2006, and 2012. The purpose of the TDP is to evaluate the current transit system in the Wausau Metropolitan Area after a challenging period for Metro Ride. Since 2012, the service area for Metro Ride has been reduced, reinstated, and reduced again. All with continuously challenging fiscal situations at the local level as well as reduced funding from state and federal sources, the future of transit in the Wausau metro area is unknown. The plan not only looks at the current and future Metro Ride system but through the planning process aimed to restart the conversation about transit in the Wausau Metropolitan Area. The TDP is

developed every 5 years to plan for and implement the transit system in the metro area. Currently the City of Wausau is the only community in the metro area served by transit.

2020 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Since 1991, federal regulations have required continuous, cooperative, and coordinated urban transportation planning for urban areas with populations in excess of 50,000 in order for those areas to receive federal transportation funding. One of the central requirements is an all-inclusive decision-making process requiring metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) to develop and utilize a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing public involvement in developing metropolitan Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs) and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs).

In addition, MPOs are required to develop and utilize "participation plans" that are developed in consultation with an expanded list of "interested parties." Here, the role of the public in the Public Participation Plan (PPP) process is expanded to include involvement in the development of the PPP — not just the review of the PPP after it has been drafted.

In 2014, the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Commission (Wausau MPO) adopted a PPP developed according to the federal requirements, with full participation of the public thru the public involvement plan identified in the document and the MPO TAC. The 2020 update of the Wausau MPO PPP refines and clarifies the Wausau MPO's public processes in light of our experiences since 2014 and an increased use of websites, social media, and now more than ever the use of virtual meetings and information dissemination.

2015 BIKE/PED PLAN AND 2021 AMENDED PLAN

This plan provides a coordinated, multi-jurisdictional strategy for enhancing conditions and providing inter-city links for bicycling and walking in support of the Wausau area's transportation, quality of life, and tourism goals. It does this by addressing all types of bicycling and walking trips—from a short walk across the street, to a longer bike trip to rural Marathon County or Rib Mountain or across the Wisconsin River.

Since 2009, the toolbox of engineering best practices to retrofit roadways to improve bicycling conditions has expanded significantly to include treatments such as shared lane markings, buffered bicycle lanes, green bike lanes, bicycle boxes, and bicycle boulevards, among others. As such, there is a need to conduct a thorough assessment of the 2009 network within the context of the existing and future transportation system.

The Wausau MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Sub-Committee, Marathon County staff, and a team of consultants specializing in bicycle and pedestrian planning developed this new plan, which has a broader reach and emphasizes pedestrian mobility and bicycling for transportation purposes. With this plan, the Wausau area is taking a holistic approach to community well-being and quality of life. This plan will reinforce these values and be designed to serve all users, including children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and those wishing to use non-motorized travel modes for commuting. To ensure implementation, the recommendations made by this plan provide details describing the type of improvement to be made, the method of implementation, and the probable cost of construction.

2021 TITLE VI ASSURANCES

The Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission, a WisDOT Subrecipient of FHWA funds assures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin or sex as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 162 (a) of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1973 (23 U.S.C. 324), and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P.L. 100.259) be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity. The Planning Commission further assures every effort will be made to ensure non-discrimination in whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not.

In other words, the Planning Commission has implemented procedures, policies and actions to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its programs and activities; and offers the signature of its highest official as a reasonable guarantee of compliance with all nondiscrimination laws and requirements.

2021 TRAFFIC MODEL UPDATE

Conclusion from the traffic model will be addressed in Chapter 4.

ANNUAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS (TIP)

Federal laws and regulations mandate that urbanized areas over 50,000 in population develop and maintain a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process to qualify for federal highway and transit monies. The planning process in these urbanized areas is administered by a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). MPOs are required to develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and LRTP for the area.

The 1980 Census indicated that the Wausau urbanized area population was 52,990, surpassing the 50,000 thresholds for urban transportation planning requirements. The Marathon County Planning Commission was designated as the agent for the Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization in 1983. In 1996, the Marathon County Planning Commission was renamed as the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission.

The MCMPC reviews and approves the planning activities of the MPO including the TIP and LRTP. The MCMPC is composed of the chief elected officials of the communities within the Wausau urbanized area and representatives of the agencies having jurisdiction over urban roadways within the urbanized area. Currently, the MCMPC includes representatives from the Cities of Schofield, Mosinee, and Wausau; the Villages of Kronenwetter, Maine, Rothschild, and Weston; and the Towns of Stettin, Rib Mountain, Wausau, Weston, and Mosinee; the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) – North Central Region, and the Marathon County Infrastructure Committee.

The federal highway bill, Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST Act), approved in December 2015 has regulations and guidance for highway, highway safety, and transit authorizations. The FAST Act continues to give the MPO the responsibility to develop a TIP and LRTP for the area. Map 1 shows the identified Planning Boundary and urbanized Area Boundary for the Wausau MPO area developed and approved in 2013.

The TIP lists the programmed projects in the MPO metropolitan area. The TIP must list all projects in the metropolitan area to be federally funded under Title 23 U.S.C. and 49 U.S.C. and may include projects to be funded entirely with state or local funds. New TIP development provisions in Section 134(j) (1)(A) indicate that:

1. Projects must be consistent with the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan,
2. The TIP reflects investment priorities established in the plan,
3. Once implemented, the TIP is designed to make progress toward achieving identified performance targets.

The TIP must also be updated at least every two years, though the Wausau MPO has historically updated the TIP annually. The TIP must be consistent with the transportation plan for the area and include at a minimum:

1. A prioritized list of projects and project segments to be carried out within each four-year period after initial adoption of the TIP; and
2. A financial plan that demonstrates how the TIP can be implemented, indicates resources from public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be made available to carry out the TIP, and recommends any innovative financing techniques to finance needed projects and programs.

The TIP must be developed by the MPO in cooperation with the State, affected transit operators and local communities. Each community within the MPO is requested annually to submit a list of proposed transportation projects to be included in the TIP. The new Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) or the former Surface Transportation Program (STP)/Urban projects are prioritized by the Wausau MPO. *The Policy for Approval of Transportation Improvement Programs* assists the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission in approving the projects to be programmed with STBG funds.

WisDOT administers the other federal transportation programs in the state. The MCMPC locally approves the TIP and forwards it to state and federal agencies. The Secretary of WisDOT, acting for the Governor, also approves the TIP. The TIP is then made part of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

The Wausau MPO provides citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, other affected employee representatives, public and private providers of transportation, and other interested parties with an opportunity to comment on the draft TIP. The strategy to provide a public review and input process is described in the MPO's *Public Participation Plan for its Transportation Plans and Programs* and is available on the MPO Website, WausauMPO.org.

MARATHON COUNTY ELDERLY AND DISABLED TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Marathon County Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC) is responsible for the elderly and disabled transportation in the County. The TCC determined it wanted a better understanding of what the needs are for transportation for these groups across the County. The Needs Assessment was intended to compile information the TCC could use to make decisions as to whether they have, at least at the County level, the ability to meet some of the needs that are out there and do things where those needs might occur.

The primary elements of the study included the following:

- Review of existing related studies and plans,
- Demographics analysis,
- Trip demand analysis,
- Peer analysis,
- Public listening sessions,
- Stakeholder group listening sessions,
- Follow-up surveys (public exit and stakeholder),
- Rider survey, and
- Stakeholder interviews.

Extensive public outreach efforts were conducted to generate attendance in the listening sessions. These efforts included publication of notices in newspapers and shoppers around the County; posting of notices at ADRC, social services, healthcare center, and nursing homes; distribution of about 800 flyers the various meals-on-wheels routes; and over 100 churches across the County were asked to print the notice in their bulletins and/or posting to their bulletin board. It was also sent to municipal clerks for printing in community newsletters, and at least one community sent copies in the utility bills to every water customer.

Based on the review of available data and the input collected from the public and various stakeholders during this study, it was found that the need for rides, in terms of quantity - the number of rides provided by all service providers within Marathon County, is being met fairly well. Under the parameters of the program currently in place (trip purpose limited to medical, nutrition and employment and hours of operation), it appears that it is meeting the needs of the people that need a ride.

SUMMARY

Most importantly, the LRTP reflects the vision and direction of local officials, relevant agencies, stakeholders, and the general public. From the beginning of the plan development, the communities provided their ideas and visions to assure they has the opportunities for involvement in all phases of the planning process. They provide the valuable information needed to develop, maintain, and carry out an effective transportation plan. The public involvement processes also provided opportunity to educate the public about transportation planning which in turn leads to better planning and a better community.

CHAPTER 2 -
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following Goals, Objectives and Action Items were compiled by the MPO TAC and approved by the MPO Commission as part of the LRTP development. These goals seek to enhance or develop the following main concepts for the MPO area. Support Economic Health, minimize Social and Environmental Impacts, Maintain a Multi Modal System, optimizes Financial Resources, and Foster Cooperation and Coordination.

A number of the Action items listed with the objectives have performance measures associated with them. These measures will be used by the MPO staff, the TAC and the local communities to tract progress with achievements made towards the goals and objectives.

Carrying out the actions associated with the goals and objective also help achieve the Planning Factors when developing transportation plans and programs for the MPO area.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTION ITEMS

Goal # 1 Develop and maintain the Transportation System to support the Economic Health of the area

Objectives:

- Promote economic growth that efficiently utilizes existing infrastructure and minimizes the need for additional infrastructure.
    - Action: Monitor within the metro area
        - Measure: Track Population and Employment
    - Action: Monitor land use patterns.
        - Measure: Account for lane miles of new functionally classified roads built vs lane miles repaired.
- Provide transportation infrastructure and services that enhance the economic conditions in the area.
    - Action: Monitor amount of money spent on infrastructure and construction (TIP) projects
        - Measure: Produce report in LRTP
- Provide transportation systems to create a pattern of accessibility that match and support the comprehensive plans in the region.
    - Action: Maintain a list of the transportation projects in area communities' comprehensive plans/transportation plans/or long-range community plans
- Support the availability of multi-modal regional mobility services (e.g. intercity bus, air, highways).
    - Action: Work with WisDOT to detail the availability and coordination of services statewide that affects the Metro area.
        - Measure: List of services in LRTP

Goal # 2 Develop and maintain the Transportation System to minimize the Social and Environmental Impacts to the area

Objectives:

- Protect the area's significant natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas from negative transportation system impacts (e.g. salt, greenhouse gases).
    - Action: Support studies that review negative impacts and work with DNR to reviews projects that may impact the natural environment.
        - Measure: Review UW Student Salt Study
- Protect residential areas from negative transportation system impacts (e.g. noise pollution, greenhouse gases, pollution, speeding, safety concerns).
    - Action: Utilize the Scoring Methodology for providing STBG funding to community supported projects.
- Design roads to be context-sensitive with surrounding areas and be pedestrian, bicycle and transit friendly for all ages and abilities (complete streets).
    - Action: Utilize the Scoring Methodology for providing STBG funding to community supported projects.
- Ensure that social justice is considered in the planning and financing of MPO transportation project improvements.
    - Action: Utilize the Scoring Methodology for providing STBG funding to community supported projects.

Goal # 3 Develop and maintain a safe and efficient Multi-Modal Transportation System in the area

Objectives:

- Minimize the number and severity of vehicular crashes with emphasis on reducing vehicle-bicycle and vehicle-pedestrian conflicts and crashes.
    - Action: Adopt State PM# targets.
        - Measure: Collect crash data from the State TOPS lab to maintain the necessary Performance measures to adhere to federal requirements.
- Encourage state-of-the-practice facility design using innovative solutions for safety and mobility.
    - Action: Make educational opportunities available to communities' staff.
        - Measure: Maintain list of sessions and attendees.
- Support public transit options in MPO communities.
    - Action: Prepare/fund/assist with the quinquennial TDP.
        - Measure: Adoption of the TDP
    - Action: Staff attends the City of Wausau Transit Commission.
- Promote bicycle and pedestrian travel modes by linking systems throughout the region.
    - Action: Work of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee to develop and monitor projects that provide critical links in the system.
        - Measure: Yearly report to the MPO TAC

- Promote transportation system and land use coordination that reduces trip lengths and travel times for all modes of travel.
    - Action: Adopt State standard for trip length/travel time
- Provide safe and convenient freight access via truck, rail, and air transportation systems.
    - Action: Work with the WisDOT to create and support state freight and rail plans and initiatives.
        - Measure: Adopt State PM# for freight
    - Action: Utilize the Scoring Methodology for providing STBG funding to community supported projects.

Goal # 4 Develop and maintain the Transportation System that will optimize the Financial Resources in the area

Objectives:

- Prepare a fiscally constrained financing strategy.
    - Action: Develop the quinquennial Long Range Transportation Plan for the metro area.
- Leverage the use of non-local funds to increase the amount and/or effectiveness of federal and state funds available to the region.
    - Action: Monitor the projects with multiple funding sources. (local, fed, state)
        - Measure: List amount of funding awarded to area projects.
- Promote equitable balance of financial support from local communities.
    - Action: Monitor the STBG funding that supports community's interests.
        - Measure: Track STBG funding versus final project cost.
- Encourage the use of private sector financial resources for transportation improvements.
        - Action: Identify grants from private sources for MPO assisted projects and assist communities with application.
        - Measure: List private sector resources acquired.

Goal # 5 Foster Cooperation and Coordination among the Municipalities and Agencies through the Planning and Public Involvement Process

Objectives:

- Promote a functional hierarchy of roadways with appropriate jurisdictional responsibility.
    - Action: Determine the best candidate roadways to enter into discussions regarding ideal jurisdiction.
        - Measure: List roadways and any discussions regarding jurisdiction.
- Enhance intergovernmental coordination and cooperation for improving multimodal transportation.
    - Action: Utilize the Scoring Methodology for providing STBG and TAP funding to community supported projects.
    - Action: Support projects with multiple communities sharing common boundaries.
- Promote opportunities for municipal cooperation with environmental or land use issues related to transportation.
    - Action: Develop educational agenda items on relevant topics

        - Measure: List of agenda items
    - Action: Commission projects or studies on relevant topics
        - Measure: List of projects or studies and their results or adoption.
- Utilize and implement the recommendations of existing plans, ie., (Bike/Ped. Plan, TDP, Title VI plan, Public Participation Plan)
    - Action: Monitor recommendations from adopted completed MPO plans.
    - Action: Produce documents in English, Spanish, and Hmong for better public outreach.

PLANNING FACTORS

The Federal Transportation Bill, FAST Act, continues the metropolitan planning factors identified in previous bills to be considered by Metropolitan Planning Organizations when developing transportation plans and programs. These factors include:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
2. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
3. Increase the safety aspects of the transportation system for its motorized and non-motorized users.
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight.
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
7. Promote efficient system management and operations.
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.
9. Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation.
10. Enhance travel and tourism.

This Long Range Transportation Plan is being developed considering these ten metropolitan planning factors.

Table 2-1 illustrates the long range transportation goals and objectives and where they address the metropolitan planning factors.

Table 2-1
Fast Act Planning Factors Addressed by Plan Goals

	GOALS				
PLANNING FACTORS	Support Economic Development	Minimize Social and Environmental Impacts	Multi- Modal System	Optimize Financial Resources	Public Involvement Process
#1 – Economic Vitality	◇		◇	◇	◇
#2 – System Safety	◇	◇	◇		◇
#3 – System Security	◇	◇			◇
#4 – Mobility Options			◇		◇
#5 – Protect the Environment		◇			◇
#6 – System Connectivity			◇		◇
#7 – System Efficiency			◇	◇	◇
#8 – System Preservation		◇		◇	◇
#9 – Resiliency, Reliability and Stormwater		◇	◇		◇
#10 – Travel and Tourism	◇			◇	◇

CHAPTER 3 –
PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The federal transportation bills MAP-21 and FAST Act require incorporation of Performance-Base Planning and Programming (PBPP) in the development of the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP). The Final Rule on Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Transportation Planning and Metropolitan Transportation Planning further defined that the TIP shall include, to the maximum extent practicable, a description of the anticipated effect of the TIP toward achieving the 23 CFR 490 performance measures targets identified in the metropolitan transportation plan, linking investment priorities to those performance targets (23 CFR 450.326(d)). This plan utilizes the identified project types from the TIPs to help determine if the performance measure targets are being met.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES GOALS

The Wausau MPO has participated in performance-based planning and programming and will continue doing so under the pertinent rules, goals, and performance measure targets described here. The Wausau MPO webpage includes the MPO's LRTP and TIP that discusses these performance measures.

The broad national performance measure goals (23 USC 150) are listed here:

- Safety - To achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads
- Infrastructure Condition - To maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair
- Congestion Reduction - To achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System
- System Reliability - To improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system
- 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.
- Environmental Sustainability - To enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment
- Reduced Project Delivery Delays - To reduce project costs, promote jobs and the economy, and expedite the movement of people and goods by accelerating project completion through eliminating delays in the project development and delivery process, including reducing regulatory burdens and improving agencies' work practices.

These goals can be seen at: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tpm/about/goals.cfm

From these goals, the specific national performance measures, as established under MAP-21/FAST Act (49 USC 625 and 23 CFR 490) are as follows:

- PM1 – Safety
  - Number of fatalities
  - Fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled
  - Number of serious injuries
  - Serious injuries per 100 million vehicle miles traveled
  - Number of non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious injuries
- PM2 – Infrastructure
  - Percentage of pavements of the Interstate System in Good condition
  - Percentage of pavements of the Interstate System in Poor condition
  - Percentage of pavements of the non-Interstate NHS in Good condition
  - Percentage of pavements of the non-Interstate NHS in Poor condition
  - Percentage of NHS bridges classified as in Good condition
  - Percentage of NHS bridges classified as in Poor condition
- PM3 – System Performance on NHS
  - Interstate Travel Time Reliability Measure: Percent of person-miles traveled on the Interstate that are reliable
  - Non-Interstate Travel Time Reliability Measure: Percent of person-miles traveled on the non-Interstate NHS that are reliable
- PM3 – Freight Movement
  - Freight Reliability Measure: Truck Travel Time Reliability (TTTR) Index
- Transit
  - Rolling Stock: The percentage of revenue vehicles (by type) that exceed the useful life benchmark (ULB).
  - Equipment: The percentage of non-revenue service vehicles (by type) that exceed the ULB.
  - Facilities: The percentage of facilities (by group) that are rated less than 3.0 on the Transit Economic Requirements Model (TERM) Scale.
  - Infrastructure: The percentage of track segments (by mode) that have performance restrictions. Track segments are measured to the nearest 0.01 of a mile.

In the Wausau Metropolitan Area, the Transit goals are being tracked by the transit provider and are identified on page 3-5. The CMAQ goals do not apply in the Wausau area because the Wausau area is an attainment area for air pollution, based on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR).

SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURE TARGETS (PM1)

With this LRTP and the annual TIP documents, the Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization resolves to plan and program projects so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of the WisDOT's calendar year HSIP target(s) for the following performance measures:

- Number of fatalities,
- Rate of fatalities – per 100 million vehicle miles traveled,
- Number of serious injuries,

- Rate of serious injuries – per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, and
- Number of non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious injuries.

The MPO's Surface Transportation Block Grant-Urban (STBG-U) selection process uses criteria that include safety performance and improvements, including for multimodal enhancement. Decisions within the TIP development process are made with these targets being considered.

PAVEMENT AND BRIDGE CONDITION PERFORMANCE MEASURE TARGETS (PM2)

The Wausau MPO resolved to plan and program projects so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of the WisDOT's calendar years Pavement and Bridge Condition performance measures on the National Highway System (NHS).

WisDOT has provided the following comments about the calculations for the pavement condition performance measure:
The FHWA pavement rating metrics of "good", "fair", and "poor" allow national comparisons of NHS condition, using data all states can reasonably collect. While WisDOT understands the utility a simplified measure provides for broad national comparisons, the department cautions that these newly created measures provide only a rudimentary assessment that does not precisely correlate with the more comprehensive condition assessment measure used by the department for establishing condition of state highways. WisDOT uses the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) method to assess state highway conditions. PCI is an American Society of Testing and Materials standard (ASTM D6433-11) that has been widely accepted and used by transportation agencies since its development in the 1970s. PCI is a comprehensive pavement condition measure that involves the identification and measurement of unique distress types for developing accurate condition ratings. PCI provides key information about the causative factors creating the distresses defining pavement condition, and that information is essential to the development of cost-effective improvement plans. The WisDOT is using simplified measures for broad national comparisons. Details of the target calculation can be obtained from WisDOT.

The PM2 measures can be seen in Exhibits A and B:

Exhibit A		
WisDOT NHS Pavement Condition Targets		
	2-year Target	4-year Target
Measure	(2019)	(2021)
Interstate - Percentage of pavement in "Good" condition	N/A	> 45%
Interstate - Percentage of pavement in "Poor" condition	N/A	< 5%
Non - Interstate - Percentage of pavement in "Good" condition	> 20%	> 20%
Non - Interstate - Percentage of pavement in "Poor" condition	< 12 %	< 12%

Exhibit B		
WisDOT NHS Bridge Condition Targets		
	2-year Target	4-year Target
Measure	(2019)	(2021)
Percentage of NHS bridges by deck area in "Good" condition	> 50%	> 50%
Percentage of NHS bridges by deck area in "Poor" condition	< 3%	< 3%

FREIGHT MOVEMENT AND CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY PERFORMANCE MEASURE TARGETS (PM3)

The Wausau MPO resolved to plan and program projects so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of the WisDOT's calendar years Freight Movement and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality performance measures on the National Highway System (NHS). With the Wausau MPO being in an air quality non-attainment area, it is not necessary to consider performance measures for air quality and only the Freight and Travel Reliability performance measures will be determined.

The WisDOT is also using simplified measures for broad national comparisons for these targets as well. Pursuant to the regulations promulgated by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, the WisDOT has established statewide targets for the federal performance measures intended to assess performance of the National Highway System, freight movement on the Intestate System and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program. The 2019 and 2021 targets for the six performance measures are identified in Exhibit C. These are given as reference to what they entail and are reevaluated by WisDOT every 2 years.

FHWA PM3 Rule Calculations

WisDOT is supplying the data as required, but the department cautions its use. While the reliability measures may be useful for describing reliability of individual urban areas or individual states, these measures are not practical to use for inter-state comparisons. The following reliability metric calculations use the "normal" or 50th percentile travel time in the denominator. Comparisons should not be drawn between states with greater prevalence of recurring congestion with "normal" travel times that are significantly higher than free-flow travel times, and states with "normal" travel times that are close to the posted or free-flow speed.

The reliability measures are based on the following metrics:

- **Travel Reliability Metric**: $Level\ of\ Travel\ Time\ Reliability\ (LOTTR) = \frac{80th\ percentile\ travel\ time}{50th\ percentile\ travel\ time}$
- **Freight Reliability Metric**: $Truck\ Travel\ Time\ Reliability\ (TTTR) = \frac{95th\ percentile\ travel\ time}{50th\ percentile\ travel\ time}$

These reliability metrics do not allow for meaningful comparison between states because urbanized areas with higher levels of recurring congestion may have 50th percentile travel times well above the free-flow travel times, while other urbanized areas with lower levels of recurring congestion have 50th percentile speeds that are closer to the free-flow travel times. For example, it is difficult to compare two 10-mile freeway corridors with a posted speed of 60 mph, when one

route has an 80th and 50th percentile travel times of 20 minutes (30 mph) and 10 minutes (60 mph) respectively, while the other route with higher levels of recurring congestion has 80th and 50th percentile travel times of 30 minutes (20 mph) and 15 minutes (40 mph) respectively. While the reliability measures show that these two routes have the same reliability index, the route with the lower 50th percentile travel time has significantly better traffic flow and throughput. For these reasons, these reliability measures should not be used to make simple comparisons between states.

The PM3 measures can be seen in Exhibit C:

Exhibit C			
WisDOT NHS Travel and Freight Reliability Targets			
	2017	2-year Target	4-year Target
Measure	Results	(2019)	(2021)
Travel Reliability			
1) Percent of person-miles traveled that are reliable on the Interstate	97.90%	94%	90%
2) Percent of person-miles traveled that are reliable on Non-Interstate	93.90%	N/A	86%
Freight Reliability			
3) Truck Travel Time Reliability Index on the Interstate	1.16	1.4	1.6

TRANSIT STATE OF GOOD REPAIR AND TRANSIT ASSET MANAGEMENT (TRANSIT)

The U.S. Department of Transportation requires the establishment of state of good repair and transit asset management (TAM) performance targets by public transit providers that receive federal funds.
Wausau Area Transit System (Metro Ride) is the recipient of the following public transportation programs in the Wausau Metro area:

- Section 5307 Transit Formula Grant
- Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Grant

Metro Ride has agreed with WisDOT to be a part of and support the WisDOT TAM statewide group plan. Metro Ride provides WisDOT with information pertaining to its fleet and the fleet's condition. Metro Ride appoints an account executive to execute the WisDOT TAM plan. Metro Ride plans and develops programs that adhere to the goals established and assist WisDOT in achieving the performance targets develop in the WisDOT TAM plan.

The Wausau MPO has submitted to WisDOT that in its Long Range Transportation Planning process they will plan and program projects that contribute to meeting the goals and TAM performance targets established by WisDOT TAM statewide group plan that is endorsed by Metro Ride.

In the latest targets, for 2021, the WisDOT determined the performance measure targets for the TAM plan statewide group. WisDOT has also determined the performance measure targets for 2021 were the same as the previous year with the exception of School Buses that should have been 0% instead of 100%. This target was to indicate that 100% of the vehicles should be below their useful life. Below is the 2020 Transit Asset Management targets and these targets will be evaluated every year throughout the life of the LRTP.

WISDOT TRANSIT ASSET MANAGEMENT (TAM) TARGETS

Performance Measure	Useful Life (years)	2019 Target %	2020 Target %
Articulated Bus	n/a	n/a	n/a
Automobile	4	77	77
Over-the-Road Bus	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bus	12	44	44
Cutaway	7	47	47
Double Decker Bus	n/a	n/a	n/a
Minivan	4	51	51
Other	n/a	n/a	n/a
School Bus	12	100	100
SUV	n/a	n/a	n/a
Van	4	27	27

Equipment - Service Vehicles Percent of Non-revenue vehicles that have meet or exceeded the useful life benchmarks

Performance Measure	Useful Life (years)	2019 Target %	2020 Target %
Automobiles	4	33	33
Trucks or other Rubber Tired Vehicles	4	29	29
Steel Wheeled Vehicles	n/a	n/a	n/a

Facilities - Percent of Facilities Rated Below a 3 on the Condition Scale

Performance Measure	2019 Target %	2020 Target %
Passenger/Parking Facilities	n/a	n/a
Administrative/ Maintenance Facilities	10	10

PTSAP PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act grants the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) the authority to establish and enforce a comprehensive regulatory framework to oversee the safety of public transportation throughout the United States. As a component of this safety oversight framework, MAP-21 requires certain recipients of FTA Chapter 53 funding to develop and implement a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP).

Safety Performance Targets

Targets are based on review of the previous 5 years of Metro Rides safety performance data

Mode of Transit Service	Vehicle Miles (VM)	Fatalities (total)	Fatalities (per 100k VM)	Injuries (total)	Injuries (per 100k VM)	Safety Events (total)	Safety Events (per 100k VM)	System Reliability (VM/Failure)
Fixed-Route Bus	403,720	0	0	0	0	7	27	16,467
Mode of Transit Service	Vehicle Miles (VM)	Fatalities (total)	Fatalities (per 10k VM)	Injuries (total)	Injuries (per 10k VM)	Safety Events (total)	Safety Events (per 10k VM)	System Reliability (VM/Failure)
Paratransit	19,979	0	0	0	0	0	0.10	19,979

In addition to greater safety oversight responsibilities, MAP-21's grant of expanded regulatory authority puts FTA in a position to provide guidance to transit agencies that strengthens the use of safety data to support management decisions, improves the commitment of transit leadership to safety, and fosters a culture of safety that promotes awareness and responsiveness to safety risks. The framework to this approach is called a safety management system (SMS), which moves the transit industry towards a more holistic, performance-based approach to safety. The SMS framework has been adopted by FTA in its National Public Transportation Safety Plan ("national safety plan").

The PTASP for Metro Ride supports and is consistent with an SMS approach to safety risk management. SMS is an integrated collection of policies, processes, and behaviors meant to ensure a formalized, proactive, and data-driven approach to safety risk management. The aim of an SMS is to increase the safety performance of transit systems by proactively identifying, assessing, and controlling safety risks.

The approach is meant to be flexible and scalable, so that transit agencies of all types and sizes can efficiently meet the basic requirements of MAP-21. This PTASP addresses all applicable requirements and standards as set forth in the FTA's Public Transportation Safety Program and the National Public Transportation Safety Plan.

Safety Performance Target Coordination

Metro Ride's Accountable Executive will share the PTASP, including safety performance targets, with the Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) each year, after formal adoption by the Transit Commission. Metro Ride's Accountable Executive will also provide a copy of our formally adopted plan to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). Metro Ride personnel will be available to coordinate with WisDOT and the MPO in the selection safety performance targets upon request.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Wausau MPO TIP utilizes safety funded projects by the federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). These include example like, railroad crossings, skid-resistance surface, and an intersection reconstruction projects.

Additionally, there are projects that receive funding from the STBG-U program that will improve safety with improvements like total reconstructions, pavement replacement, additional bike lanes, or wider shoulders.

The list of criteria for the selection of STBG-U projects include safety and crashes. The STBG-U selection and funding process is the only project selection role that the MPO has. The following are the components of the funding criteria for STBG-Urban funding:

Wausau MPO Project Prioritization for STBG-Urban Funding

1. Key Component of the Transportation System
2. System Condition
3. Project Coordination
4. Safety
5. Congestion
6. Freight
7. Multimodalism
8. Environmental Justice

CHAPTER 4 – DEMOGRAPHICS

DEMOGRAPHIC AND ROADWAY DATA

Demographic data helps paint the picture of the health and direction of the planning area. Not only is it an important element in the formation of a traffic model, but it helps describe change over time which can assist local governments in crafting policy. Understanding the past and future trends also helps effectively guide transportation dollars to areas of growth and need.

Population

The U.S. Census Bureau has a constitutionally mandated directive to perform a count of the population every 10 years. These counts are used to apportion federal representatives and used in funding models. At the time of this plan, much of the data from the 2020 Census was not available. The Wausau Metro Area has grown steadily since the 2016 LRTP and since the previous census in 2010. Over 10 years the growth rate has been approximately 5% over the MPO communities. While the communities listed may not be wholly in the MPO planning area, most of the population, by design, is included.

Table 4-1: Metro Area Population

Wausau Metro Area Population					
	Community	2000	2010	2020	% Change 2010-2020
TOWN	RIB MOUNTAIN	7,556	6,825	7,313	7%
TOWN	STETTIN	2,191	2,554	2,576	1%
CITY	MOSINEE	2,146	3,986	4,452	12%
TOWN	MOSINEE	2,146	2,174	2,216	2%
VILLAGE	MAINE	2,407	2,338	2,613	12%
VILLAGE	ROTHSCHILD	4,970	5,269	5,567	6%
VILLAGE	KRONENWETTER	5,369	7,210	8,353	16%
TOWN	WAUSAU	2,214	2,229	2,161	-3%
CITY	WAUSAU	38,426	39,106	39,998	2%
TOWN	WESTON	514	639	657	3%
VILLAGE	WESTON	12,079	14,868	15,723	6%
CITY	SCHOFIELD	2,117	2,169	2,157	-1%
	TOTAL	82,135	89,367	93,786	5%

Source: US Census Bureau

The largest percent change in population is in the outer communities of the planning area. Village of Kronenwetter, Village of Maine, and City of Mosinee. Kronenwetter and Mosinee are experiencing rapid expansion of residential building on greenfield development. The Village of Maine was incorporated to absorb the Village of Brokaw and its residents. Map 2-1 indicates the population densities for the MPO communities.

Households

Households or dwelling units are typically used as one of the variables for calculating travel trips based on corresponding trip generation rates. The number of households generally corresponds with population. However, there are subtle differences depending on land use and housing types. For example, areas with primarily single-family detached housing may have larger households, whereas apartments and townhouses are likely to have smaller households. Not surprisingly, larger households tend to generate more travel trips than do smaller households. The 2020 Census Household numbers were not available at the time of this plan. Marathon County household numbers are available from the Wisconsin Department of Administration.

Table 4-2: Households

Marathon County Households			
2010 - Census	2020 - DOA Estimate	Change	% Change
57,734	60,749	3,015	5.22

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Wisconsin Dept of Administration

Employment

Employment data by type of establishment is a required input for the Traffic Model. The US Census Bureau does not provide employment data by Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) through the Census of Transportation Planning Package (CTPP). The employment data (Map 2-2) used for the travel demand model base year was from Woods & Poole Economic, Inc., a private firm that collects and projects economic and demographic data. MPO staff also meet with each community to discuss the traffic model and collected future employment estimates.

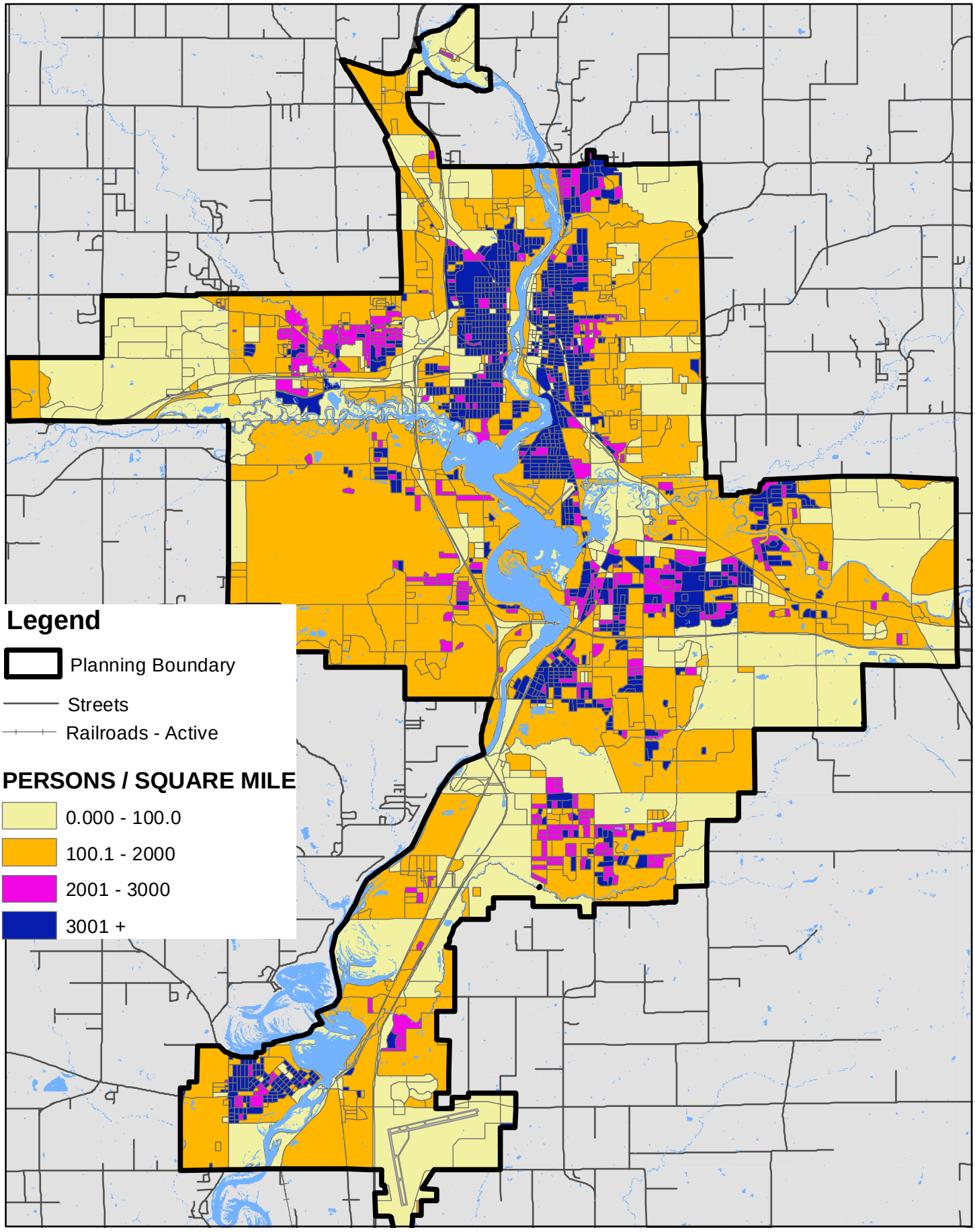
Minority Population

The minority population of the planning area shows concentrations in the urbanized area, most notably in and near downtown Wausau (Map 2-3). The Title VI plan, which is publicly available on the Wausau MPO website, address requirements of Executive Order 12898 and the WisDOT and FHWA Orders on Environmental Justice for persons belonging to any of the following groups: Black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian and Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. The total MPA minority population is about 11 percent (11%) which is an increase of half of one percent (.5%) since 2015.

Low Income Populations

Low-income population is defined as a person whose household income (or in the case of a community or group, whose median household income) is at or below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. A low-income population is more likely to need alternate transportation options such as transit, paratransit, and non-motorized access. Map 2-4 shows concentrations of wealth in the suburban and outer reaches of the planning area but is using older data from the American Community Survey due to the slow release of the 2020 Census information.

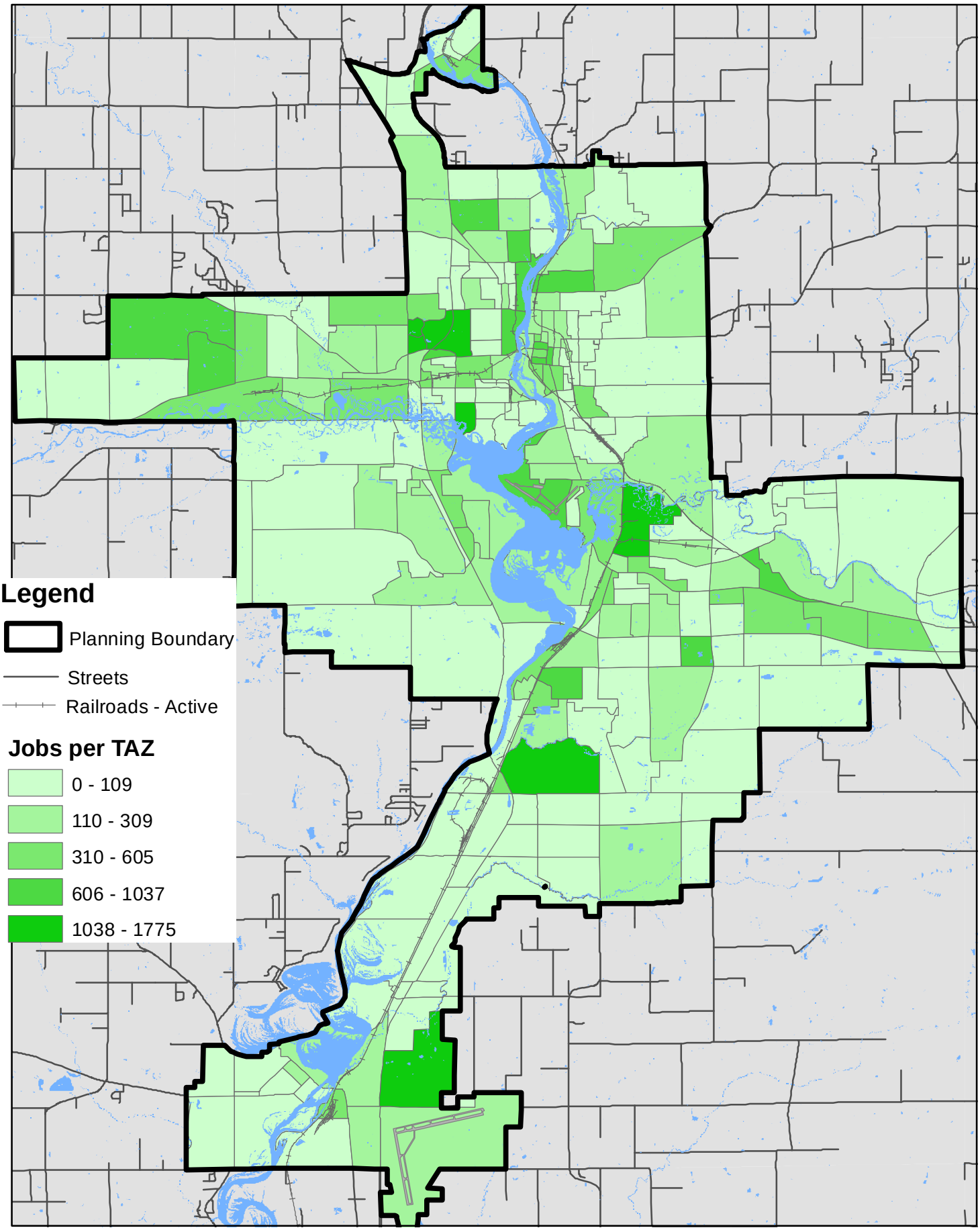
Population by Census Block 2020



Prepared by; Wausau MPO

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020

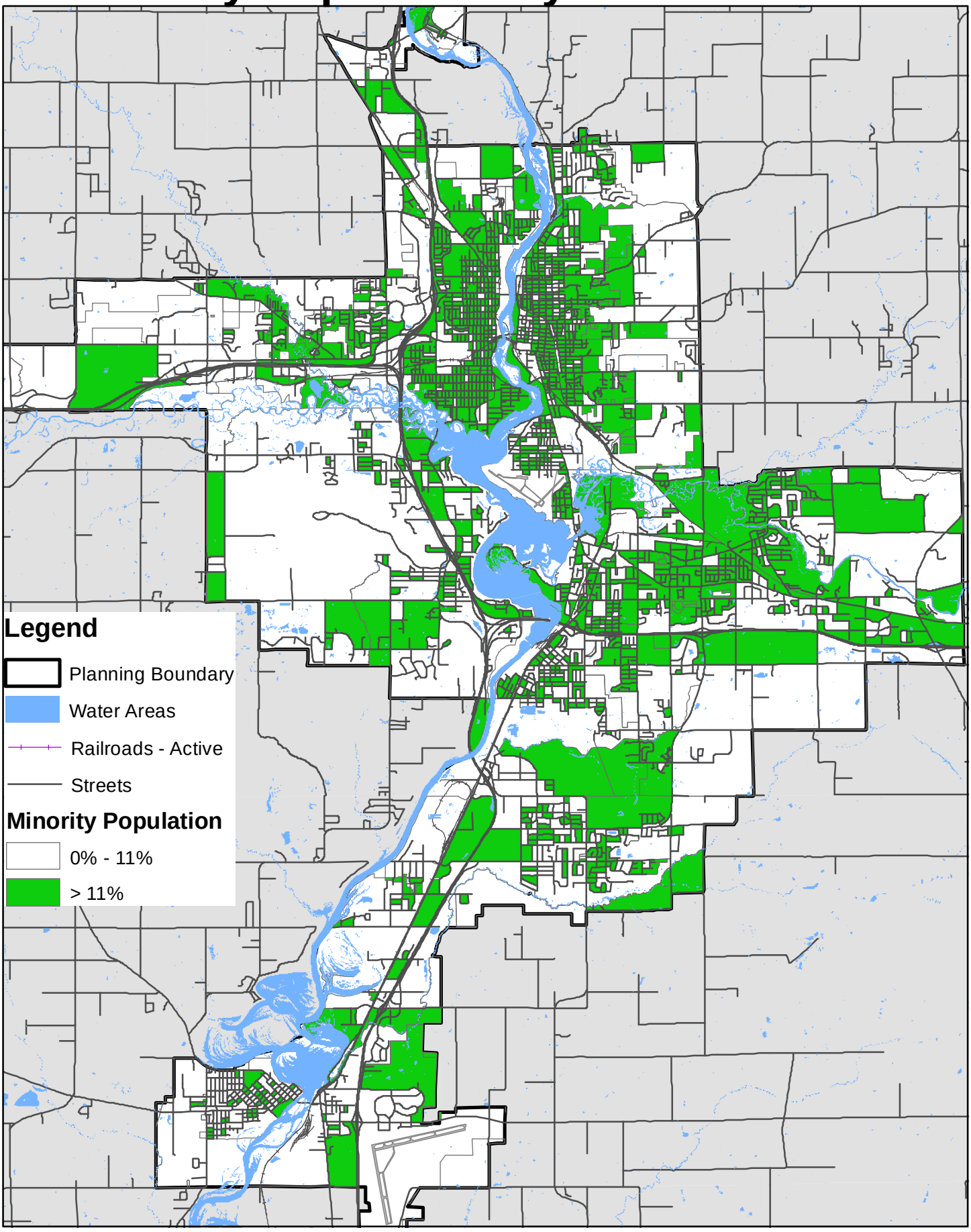
Employment by TAZ - 2010



Prepared by; Wausau MPO

Source: WisDOT, 2020

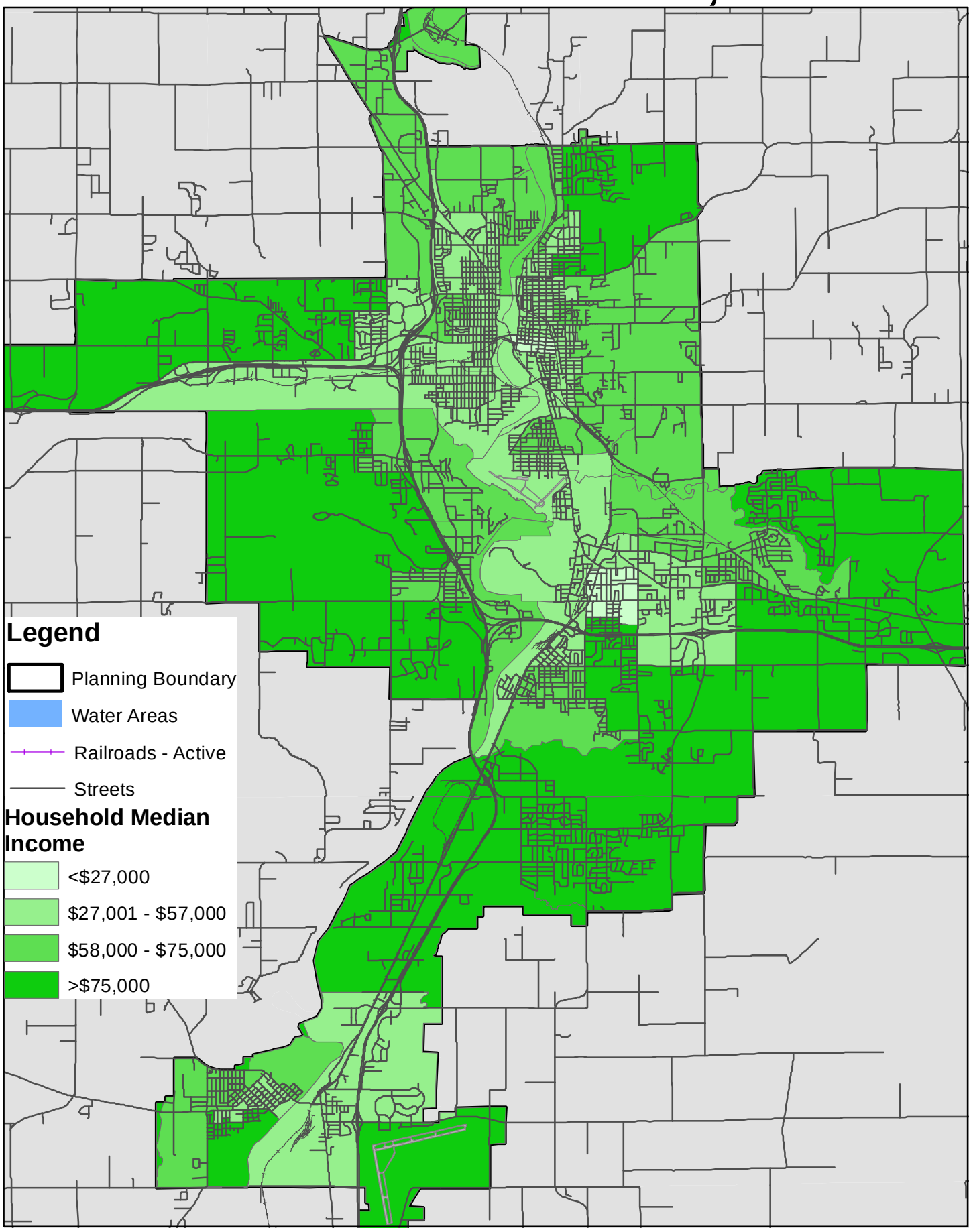
Wausau Area MPO
Minority Population by Census Block



Prepared by; Wausau MPO

Source: US Cenus Bureau, 2021

Wausau Area MPO
Household Median Income, 2019



Prepared by; Wausau MPO

Source: US Cenus Bureau, 2019

LAND USE TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE RELATIONSHIP

The organization of daily life has created a demand for travel. The demand for public transportation connections between geographic locations grew into a desire for faster and more comfortable travel. Not long ago, walking distances defined the geographic relationship between daily activities. This relationship expanded with the advent of the bicycle, transit, and then the automobile. With each new transportation technology, the time allowed for travel remained relatively the same while the distance covered increased. Households still make travel decisions based on time. However, the development of the automobiles and structuring of transportation networks around that mode has made it possible to travel much greater distances within an allotted time. This has allowed for daily activities to be located much further from one's home.

Transportation and Development Cycle

Just as the transportation system impacts location and destination decisions, the location, mix, and design of destinations greatly impact the demand for the transportation system. Improved transportation systems allow greater accessibility between dispersed land uses. In turn, dispersed land uses require more travel and thus more demand for transportation infrastructure. The importance of the relationship between land use and transportation should not be underestimated. Land use patterns and development decisions are often seen as controlled solely by market forces, leaving public agencies to respond to the transportation demand created in their wake. However, public land use policies directly affect private land use decisions such as zoning regulations and minimum parking requirements.

Therefore, land use policies need to be considered in relation to the impact of transportation just as transportation policies need to be considered in relation to land use. Transportation systems and land use patterns have a well-documented reciprocal relationship. As communities have grown, the demands for transportation system improvements have also grown. However, these transportation improvements have also provided more convenient access to land farther out, thus spurring further growth. More than any other transportation system, it has been the road network and the prevalence of the automobile that has impacted land use patterns over the past half-century.

Existing Land Use

Land cover was used as a proxy for existing land use. This was done to achieve consistency in describing existing land uses throughout the area, since some communities have adopted land use plans that use slightly different categories to describe land uses. Noteworthy land use patterns or issues include:

- Rivers divide the urbanized area between east and west and to a lesser extent from north to south.
- Development is not contiguous; in general, jurisdictions have their distinct areas of both residential and commercial development. In many cases, water, or undeveloped land separates communities from their neighboring community.
- Development corresponds to the freeway system.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

The Wausau Metropolitan area consists primarily of a grid pattern street system that is altered by the area's waterways and lakes. There are relatively few curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs except where required due to topography. Within Marathon County, there are eight bridges that cross the Wisconsin River dividing the County between east and west. Seven of these crossings are within the Wausau Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), three of which are within the city of Wausau (Map 2-5). The Wausau urbanized area is connected to the surrounding rural areas by a system of State and County highways. I-39/USH 51 provides the primary north south route through the County. STH 29 is a mixed freeway/expressway facility that runs west to I-94 near Eau Claire and east to Green Bay. I-39/USH 51 and STH 29 are the main routes through the MPA and provide the main regional connection to other large, urbanized areas. Most major traffic generators in Marathon County are located within the Wausau metropolitan area, although there is a significant amount of through-traffic. Much of the remainder of the County consists of rural agricultural lands and small villages generally served by two-lane State and County highways and local roadways.

Functional Classification

A functionally classified road system is one in which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they provide, ranging from a high degree of travel mobility to primarily a land access function. At the upper limit of the system (e.g., principal arterials) are those facilities that emphasize traffic mobility (long, uninterrupted travel), whereas facilities at the lower limits (e.g., local streets) are designed for land access (Map 2-6).

EMERGING TECHNOLOGY AND TRENDS

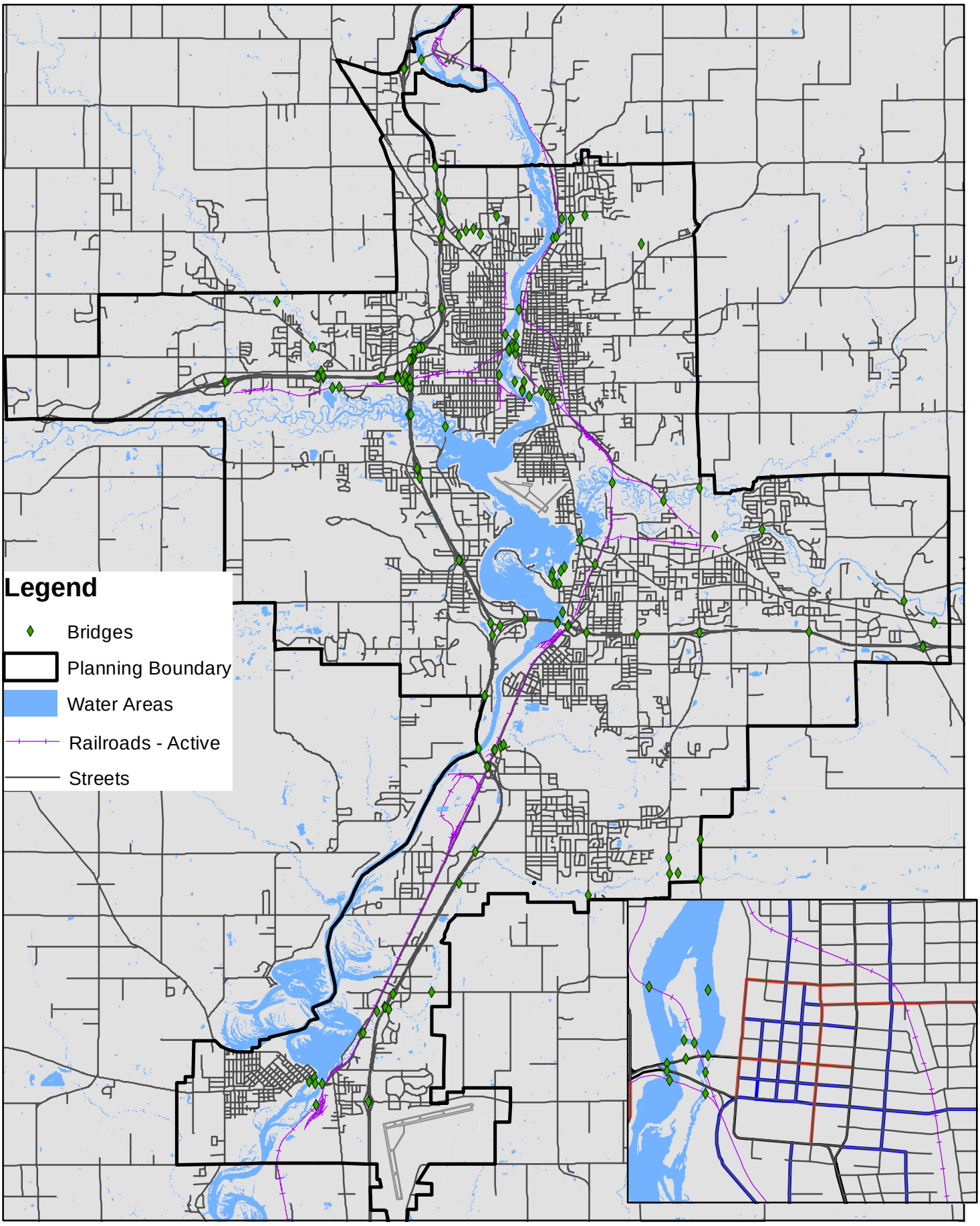
Autonomous Vehicles

In the previous few years there has been a steady integration of driver assist or partially autonomous vehicle features into personal cars and trucks. It is too soon to determine if data supports the safer operation of vehicles due to these features. Further integration across vehicle types and price points will take many more years and fully autonomous operation, which may or may not be legal, will first be available on specialty or luxury vehicles. Commercial vehicle automation or assist may help alleviate shortages in drivers and supply chain chokepoints.

Electric Vehicles

The further adoption of electric vehicles is likely to increase as battery technology improves and prices of vehicles fall. This calls for a new method of collecting tax revenue that does not rely upon sales of fossil fuels.

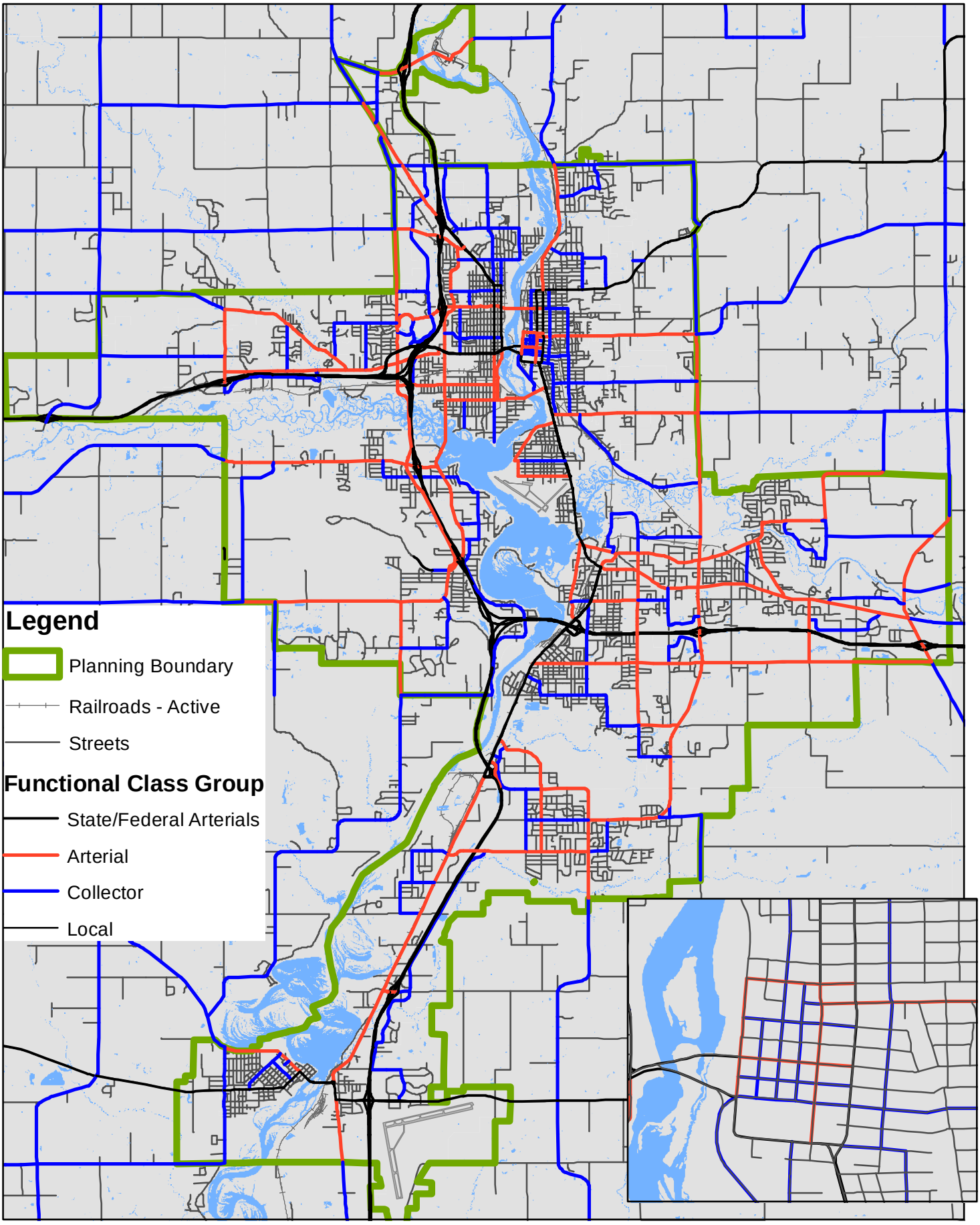
Transportation Infrastructure



Prepared by; Wausau MPO

Source: WisDOT, 2020

Functional Class Road System - 2020



Prepared by; Wausau MPO

Source: WisDOT, 2020

Climate Change

Changes to the Earth's climate as a result of the burning of fossil fuels will be one of the major challenges in the next 30 years. While the Wausau area is geographically well positioned to potentially have minimal shift in average temperature, much about this is unknown. This could affect local economies and provide further strains on government services. The Wausau area could be able to absorb an influx of 'climate refugees', or people leaving their homes due to climate change. Building resilience into transportation systems has moved beyond a talking point with inclusion in the recent Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021.

CHAPTER 5 - TRAFFIC MODEL

The traffic model provides an examination of the current system of functionally classified roads as well as a look into the future to help plan for difficulties that come with growth. The traffic model data includes number of households, employment data broken into job type, and number of school age children. These are divided into defined areas called Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) and the model will calculate the number and type of trips between each zone. By applying those numbers to the road network an estimate of the volume is made and referenced against the road type (2-lane, turn lanes, stop signs, etc.) the Level of Service is estimated. This model measures the delay in travel time as a function of the roadway performance called Level of Service (LOS). This was first used by the 2016 LRTP to replace the previous capacity model. LOS calculates how well the roadway design moves traffic through the given infrastructure. It should be noted that no predictive model is perfect or definite but rather provide a glimpse at a possible future. The model runs are performed by WisDOT in concert with the Wausau MPO staff.

Base Year Model

The base year model uses 2010 census data and the corresponding job and household estimates. Full 2020 census information was not available in time for this model run and plan approval. Some minor changes, removal of projects that did materialize and adjustment of jobs numbers, to the base year information were made. See Map 5-1.

Areas of interest

The only area shown as a concern with this model is in the City of Wausau on Grand Avenue between Weston Ave and Sturgeon Eddy Road. This may be due to the high number of access points onto Grand Avenue or the light timing at Sturgeon Eddy Road. While there is no clear-cut answer, as one of the most traveled roads in the region, it bears consideration during design for any future projects in that area.

Future Year Model

The future year model is a 30-year projection which is best used to try and anticipate any large projects that may be needed due to changes in housing or industry. MPO staff met with each community to update the jobs and household numbers for the future traffic model Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ). The model results were then reviewed by the MPO Technical Advisory Committee. See Map 5-2.

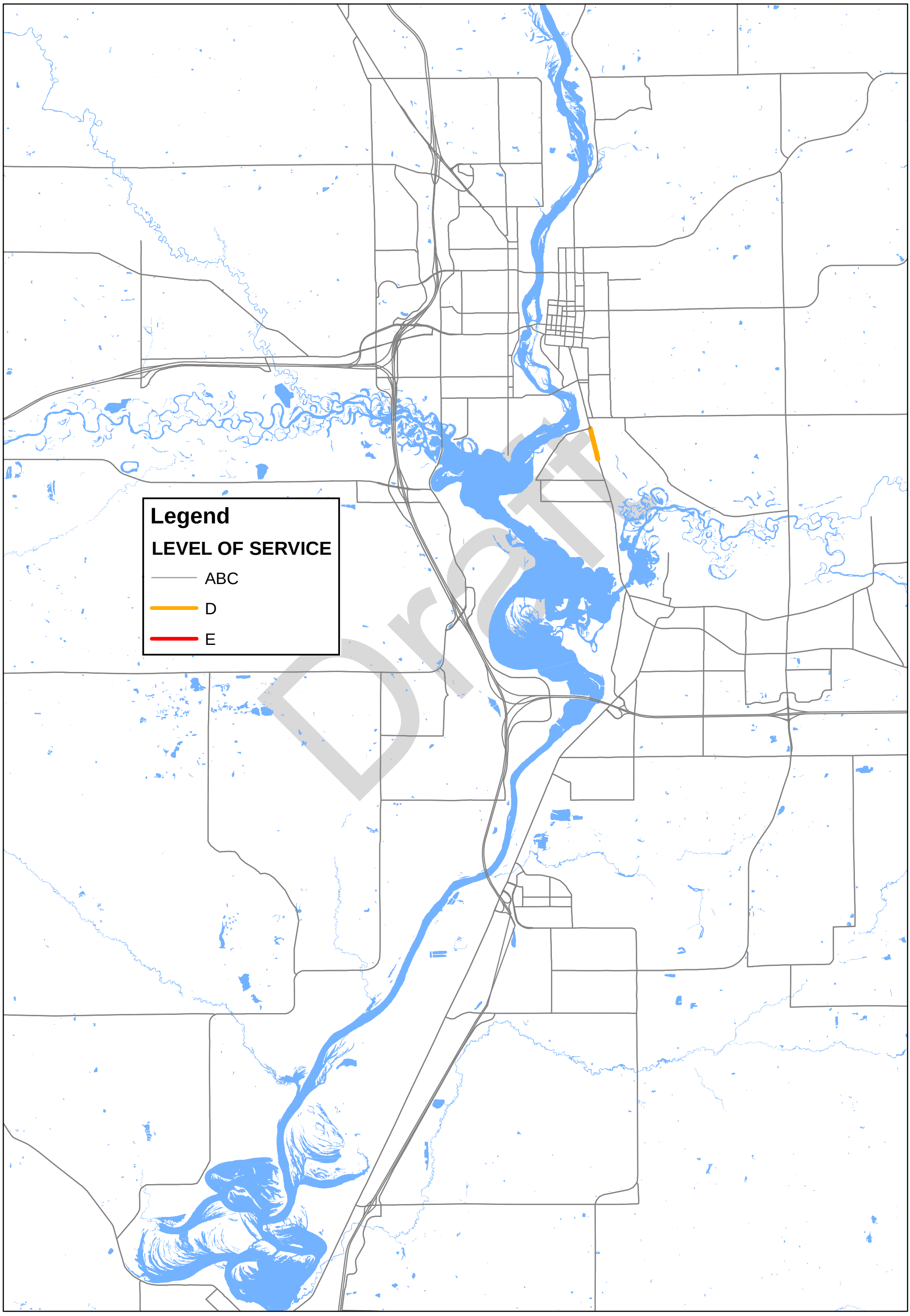
Areas of interest

Bridge Street between 1st Ave and 2nd St, City of Wausau. This is calculated at a LOS D. Issues with this segment may be resolved by addressing the intersections on either end of the segment.

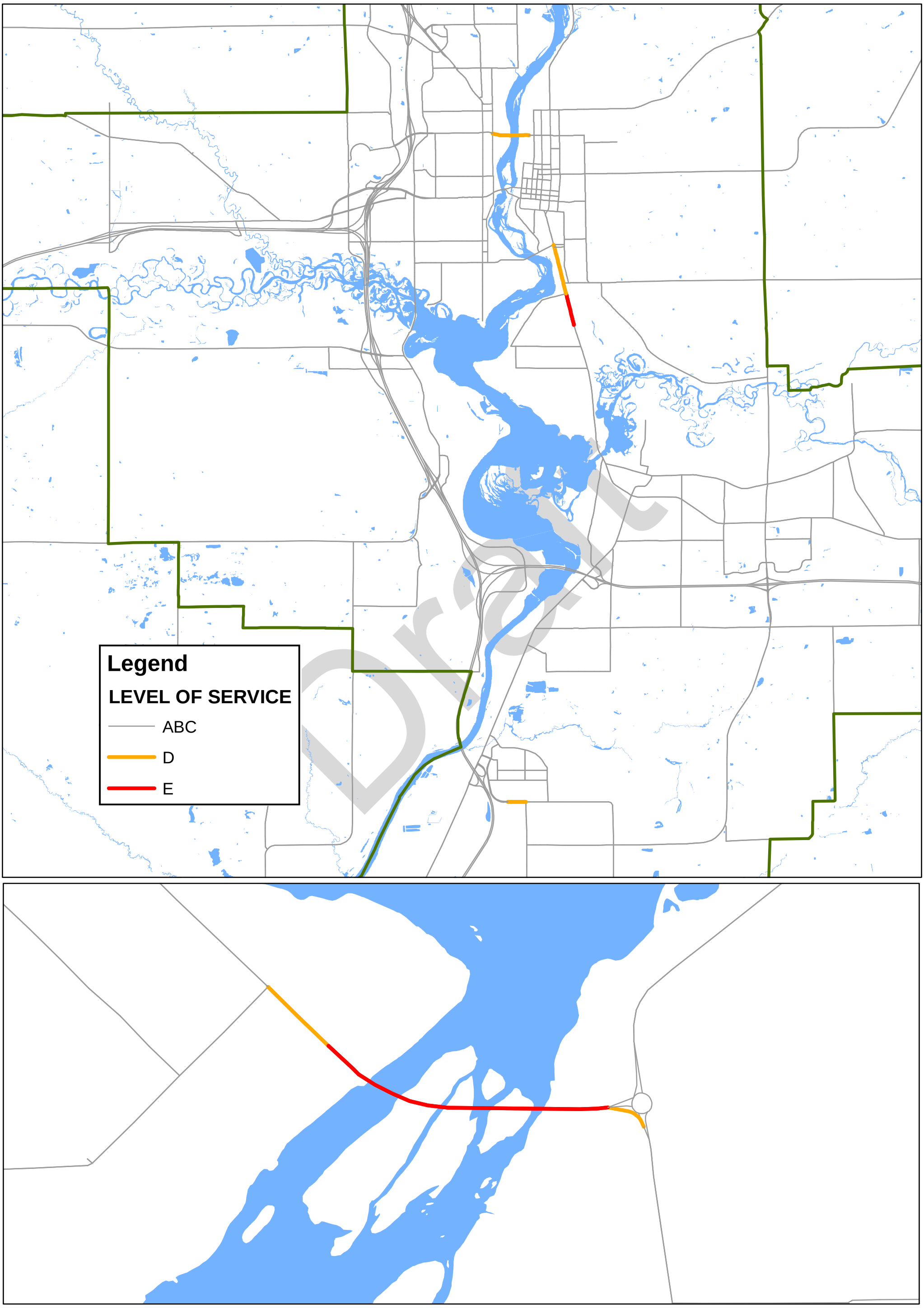
Grand Ave between Thomas Ave and Sturgeon Eddy Road, City of Wausau. This is calculated at a LOS D.

Grand Ave between Sturgeon Eddy Rd and Weston Ave, City of Wausau. This is calculated at a LOS E. Both Grand Ave segments present a challenge as Grand Ave is one of the busiest roads

Wausau MPO -- Traffic Model
Base Year -- (Draft August 2021)



Wausau MPO -- Traffic Model
Future Projection -- (Draft August 2021)



in the metro area and has a constrained right-of-way. Thomas Ave is the first opportunity for traffic from the southeast metro area to cross the river north of Hwy 29 in Rothschild.

County Highway XX, west of Tower Road, Village of Kronenwetter. This is calculated at a LOS D. This is a section of 2-lane road that transitions to 4-lanes as it flows into the Cedar Creek retail area. Kronenwetter is expected to continue having residential growth and the use of CTH XX is the most direct way to access the interchange with I-39.

State Highway 153 between Old Hwy 51 and 4th Street, City of Mosinee. This is calculated at a LOS D and E. This is a section of road that requires further study. With the combination of a State Highway, the only local bridge in the southern metro area, and moving through a small city downtown there are many factors that would contribute to the underperformance of this segment.

FUTURE MAJOR PROJECTS

Early in 2020, MPO staff began a project to investigate any future major projects in the metro area. This involved meeting with staff and elected officials from each community to discuss future growth and current problems. Originally conceived as a stand-alone report, it was delayed due to the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and the decision was made to incorporate this report into the Long Range Transportation Plan.

Projects of regional significance were selected and MPO staff worked with WisDOT modeling staff to create scenarios for each project (Map 5-3). The project details are described below. None of the projects modeled were found to have any negative impacts on the surrounding network. Those projects are included in this plan as illustrative. Two projects that have potential impact on issues from the future model are detailed below.

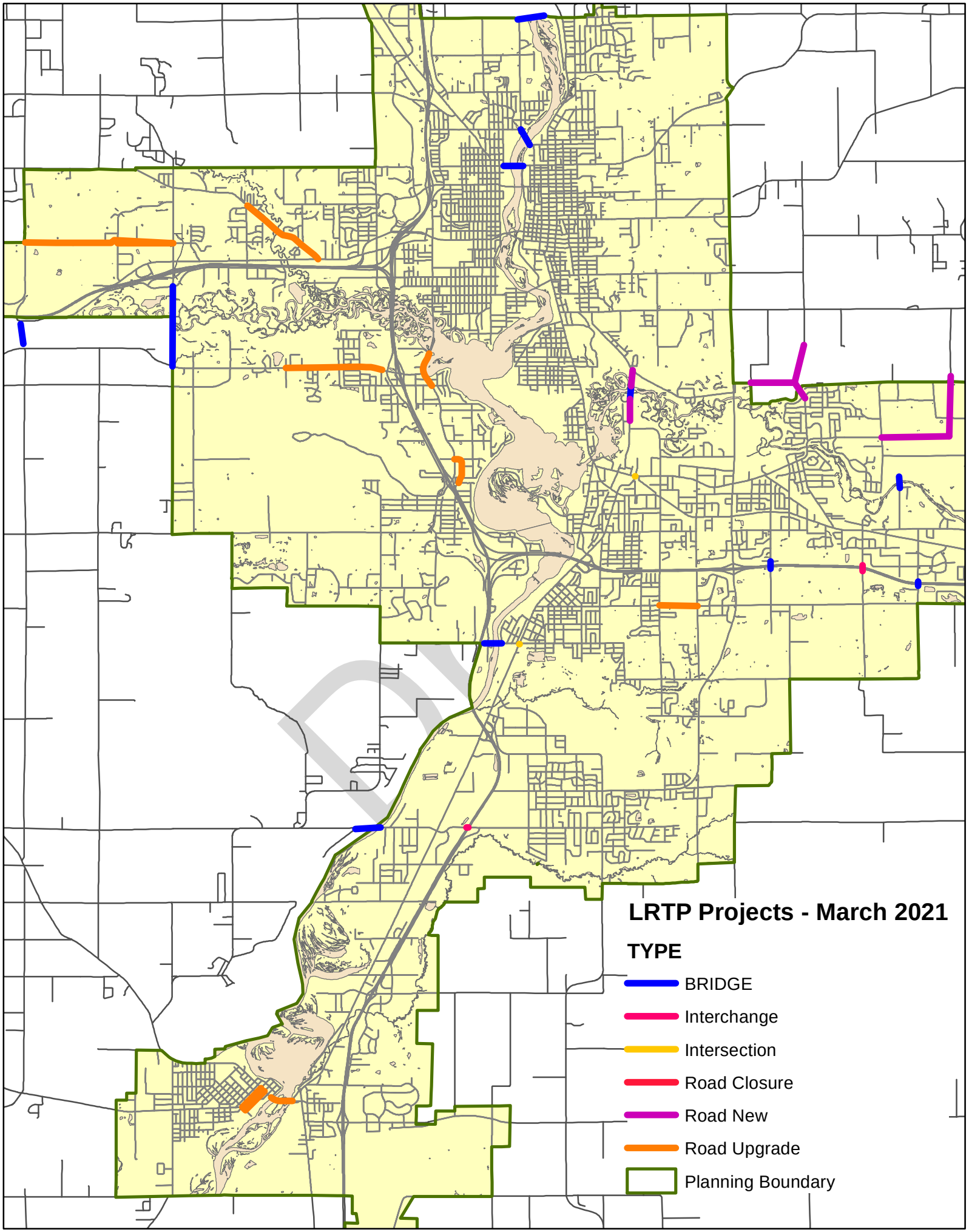
Scenario results

1. Bridge at Wausau Ave in City of Wausau.

Wausau Ave is the most likely crossing of the Wisconsin River still in the City of Wausau. It does show some relief to the bridge on Bridge Street and improves that LOS to a C. The model does not optimize all the streets on either side of the river and growth patterns may change so there are many variables that could further influence these results.

2. Kowalski Interchange in Village of Kowalski.

The long-desired interchange with Interstate 39 at Kowalski Road in Kronenwetter was modeled and it showed a dramatic decrease in volume on the section of CTH XX west of Tower Road. This is likely due to the easier access at Kowalski Rd to I-39.


LRTP Projects - March 2021
TYPE
BRIDGE
Interchange
Intersection
Road Closure
Road New
Road Upgrade
Planning Boundary

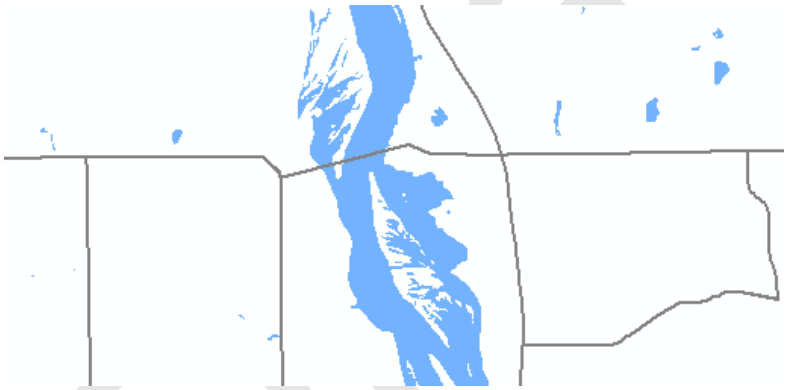
TRAFFIC MODEL SCENARIOS - FUTURE MAJOR PROJECTS

MPO staff, in consultation with MPO communities, developed several major projects to model for the Long Range Transportation Plan. These results of the modeling provide a glimpse into the feasibility of the idea. Any further work on a project would require a more detailed analysis. Project scenarios were compared against the MPO area future model with the projected traffic volume. All Level of Service (LOS) ratings are ABC unless noted. None of the scenarios produced a change to the previously noted problem areas in the future model. None of the scenarios had an adverse impact in the immediate surrounding area.

BRIDGES

1. Evergreen/Decatur:

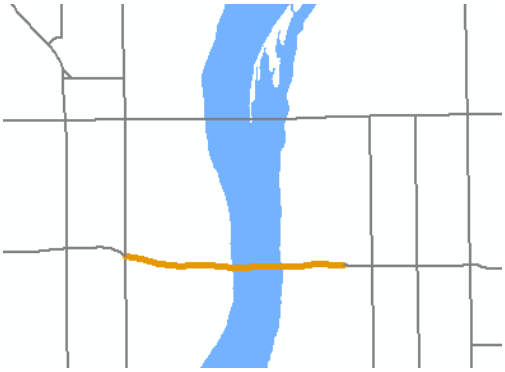
Bridge crossing the Wisconsin River in the City of Wausau and Village of Maine at Evergreen and Decatur. This project was long envisioned as an alternative to CTH WW and Bridge St while serving the regional circulation system as outlined in the Local Arterial Circulation Plan (2000).



Project #			Base Vol	LOS	Future Vol	LOS	Scenario Vol	LOS
1	Bridge	Evergreen/Decatur					2720	ABC
		Bridge St Bridge	22124	ABC	25747	D	24545	D

2. Wausau Ave:

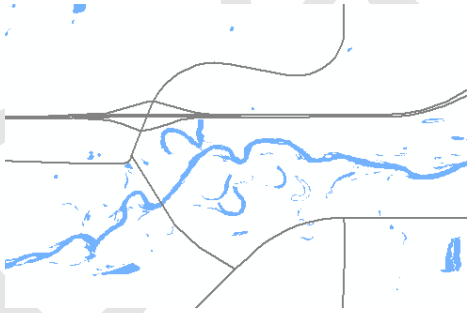
Bridge crossing the Wisconsin River in the City of Wausau at Wausau Avenue. One of a few possible crossings between Bridge St and Evergreen that could relieve traffic volumes on Bridge Street. It should be noted that this model did not optimize the road network on either side of the bridge. A more detailed analysis would likely extend from 6th Street to 3rd Ave.



Project #			Base Vol	LOS	Future Vol	LOS	Scenario Vol	LOS
2	Bridge	Wausau Ave					4217	ABC
		Bridge St Bridge	22124	ABC	25747	D	22124	ABC

3. County Highway O:

This project would extend the southern end of the CTH O interchange across the Rib River and intersect with CTH NN. This was designed to examine the effectiveness of a bridge between Marathon City and CTH R. Although the model shows an access road along Hwy 29, this link carried no traffic volume and had no impact on the results.



Project #			Base Vol	LOS	Future Vol	LOS	Scenario Vol	LOS
3	Bridge	CTH O Bridge					676	ABC
		CTH NN east			401		832	
		CTH NN west			401		233	
		STH 107 Overpass			5348		5259	
		CTH R Bridge			782		765	
		CTH O north			2081		2201	ABC

4. Grossman Bridge:

This project would extend Grossman Drive north from the Schofield industrial park, across the Eau Claire River and connect with Northwestern Ave. This was designed to serve as an alternative to Grand Ave/Bus 51. It should be noted the streets in the industrial park connecting to Metro Dr were slightly altered in the model however a more significant change is likely needed for a more detailed analysis.

Project #			Base Vol	LOS	Future Vol	LOS	Scenario Vol	LOS
4	Bridge	Grossman Dr					3218	ABC
		BUS 51 Bridge	19553		23866		22535	ABC
		Northwestern Ave east	679		834		3081	ABC
		Metro Dr	1577		2248		2217	ABC

5. Military Road:

This project extends Military Road to the west, across the Wisconsin River, into Foxglove Road. This bridge could be an alternate to Hwy 29 between Rothschild and Rib Mountain. This scenario only reflects the addition of a bridge, further changes are modeled in scenario #11.

Project #			Base Vol	LOS	Future Vol	LOS	Scenario Vol	LOS
5	Bridge	Military Rd Bridge					3074	ABC
		Military Rd east Bus 51			4080		4554	
		Foxglove Rd	134		161		2287	
		Hwy 29 WB on ramp	6980		9710		9372	
		Bus 51 South	8060		11719		11819	

6. Gardner Park Road:

This project is another likely crossing point of the Wisconsin River in the southern MPO area. This would provide an alternate to STH 153 in Mosinee or possibly use of I-39. This scenario only reflects the addition of a bridge, further changes are modeled in scenario #12.

Project #			Base Vol	LOS	Future Vol	LOS	Scenario Vol	LOS
6	Bridge	Gardner Park					2631	
		CTH KK	1865		2313		3163	
		Kowalski	1820		3528		4005	
		Old 51 south	1004		3050		3531	
		Old 51 north	1723		3014		4167	
		STH 153 Bridge - Mosinee			17227	E	16787	E

7. Included in scenario #11.

ROADS

8. Northwestern Ave extension:

This project extends Northwestern Ave in Weston to the east from CTH X to Sandy Lane. This road would cross the Eau Claire River and provide an alternate to Ross Ave for the residential neighborhood.

Project #			Base Vol	LOS	Future Vol	LOS	Scenario Vol	LOS
8	Road	Northwestern Ave East					2520	
		Ross Ave south of round	5905		7089		6669	
		Camp Phillips north of Ross	5101		7533		6384	
		Northwestern Ave west of Camp Phillips	1190		1994		2731	

INTERCHANGE

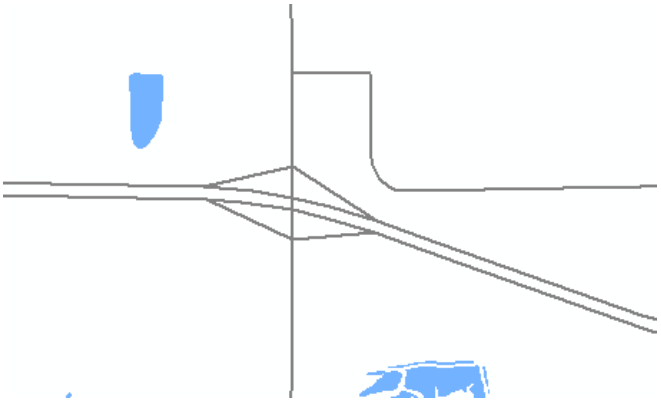
9. Kowalski Interchange:

This project would provide access to and from I-39 to Kowalski Road in the Village of Kronenwetter. Although modeled as a standard diamond interchange it is likely the ramps would have a different configuration.

Project #		Base Vol	LOS	Future Vol	LOS	Scenario Vol	LOS
9	Kowalski Interchange						
	Ramps					2700-3000	
	Kowalski & Tower Dr	1820		3528		8641	ABC
	Old 51 south	1004		3050		2698	
	Old 51 north	1723		3014		1178	
	CTH XX			12110		7604	
	CTH X			5295		5156	

10. Ryan Street Interchange with Hwy 29:

This project adds a diamond interchange at Ryan Street in Weston. This would provide more immediate access to the industrial park and future developments south of Hwy 29. This model was developed before the release of the Weston Ave Corridor Plan.

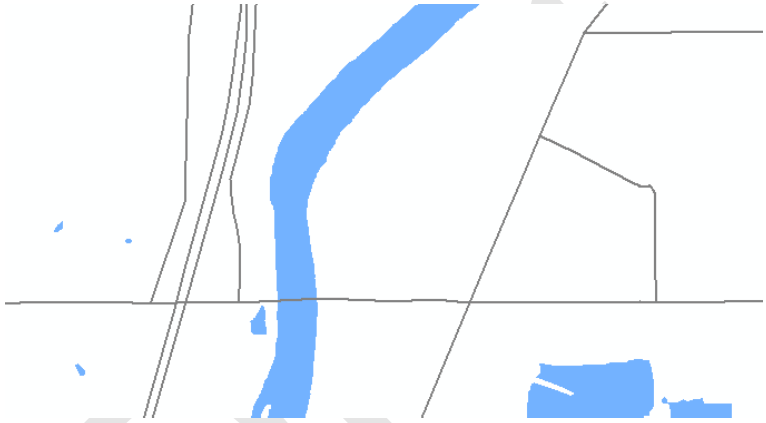


Project #		Base Vol	LOS	Future Vol	LOS	Scenario Vol	LOS
10	Ryan St Interchange						
	East off ramp					2441	
	West on ramp					2652	
	Ryan St south			2024		2147	
	Ryan St north			2024		5527	

COMBINED

11. Military Road and Trillium Extension:

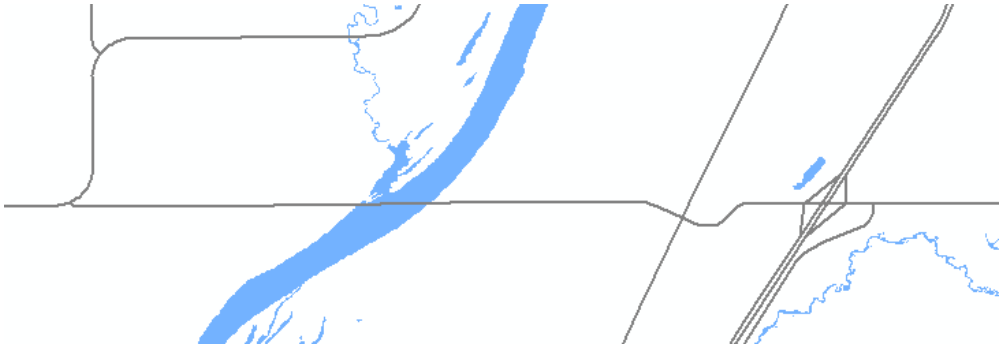
This scenario is designed to measure the effect of creating a more direct route from Rothschild to Rib Mountain Drive by extending Trillium Lane in the path of the current multi-use trail.



		Base Vol	LOS	Future Vol	LOS	Bridge only	Bridge and Trillium
11	Military Bridge and Trillium Lane						
	Military Bridge					3074	3940
	Military east of Bus 51			4080		4554	4667
	Foxglove Rd	134		161		2287	1607
	Hwy 29 WB on ramp	6980		9710		9372	9208
	Bus 51 South	8060		11719		11819	11953
	Trillium Lane						1764

12. Gardner Park Bridge and Kowalski Interchange:

This scenario is designed to measure the effect of both the I-39 interchange and a bridge over the Wisconsin River.



		Future Vol	LOS	Bridge only	LOS	Bridge and Interchange	LOS
12	Gardner Bridge and Interchange						
	Ramps					3100-3300	
	Kowalski & Tower Dr	3528		4005		8993	
	Old 51 south	3050		3531		2796	
	Old 51 north	3014		4167		1834	
	CTH XX	12110		11932		7522	
	CTH X	5295		5309		5166	
	Mosinee Bridge	17227	E	16787	E	16828	E
	CTH KK north	2313		1169		881	
	CTH KK south	2313		3163		3157	

CHAPTER 6 – RECOMMENDATIONS

PURPOSE / INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the roadway projects that were considered and analyzed as potential recommendations in the Transportation Plan. These projects were evaluated on how best they would:

- Achieve the stated Goals and Objectives identified in Chapter 2, and
- Reduce the forecasted Level of Service deficiencies identified in Chapter 5.

Throughout the past 30 years, the Wausau Area has seen many roadway and highway projects that have greatly shaped the way people and goods move through the area. The WisDOT has dedicated a lot of financial resources to creating a freeway system that has the capacity to carry the projected traffic well into the future as well as creating a safer travel environment. With these investments, the local communities have also identified the need to provide for the local roadway system that will allow the area to grow and develop to their desired outcomes.

The area communities are now at a time where maintenance and preservation efforts will be the primary focus for them instead of the capacity expansion and development of new roadways.

This plan's recommendations are mainly established and articulated in the recommendations provided in the previously identified plans and studies. Each has their own goals and objectives and identify recommendation that are pertinent to that study area. Please review those documents for a more detailed review of recommendation for the area.

In addition to the other plan, the following areas of where transportation is being provided will continue to be a focus of the MPO communities into the future.

It is understood, given the recent passage of the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, that changes to MPO programs, policies, grants, and opportunities will be forthcoming. For example, requirements for Complete Streets policies, integration of resilience in system design, and enhanced bicycle and pedestrian funding. These are just a few of the many changes that will continue to have a major impact on MPO function and area transportation systems for many years to come.

ROADWAY SYSTEM

Transportation System Management

Some of the Transportation System Management measures to be taken to improve how traffic flows at certain locations to increase safety and efficiency are list below:

- Traffic Signals
- Roundabouts
- One-way conversions
- Two-way conversions
- Removal of on-street parking
- Road Diets
- Traffic and turn movement restrictions

Transportation Demand Management

Some of the Transportation Demand Management measures to be taken to reduce the traffic volumes at specific times or periods of the day are:

- Ridesharing
- Flexible employee work hours
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Restricted vehicle areas

TRANSIT SYSTEM

Metro Ride, the area transit system, has been under the strain of determining the service area for about the past 10 years. With communities withdrawing from providing service, currently the transit system is only available within the City of Wausau.

Over the last few years, the transit system has had an overall decrease in ridership but at a steady level with the loss of ridership from the other three communities. The viability of the transit system to the people of the metro area will be put to the test in the next few years.

The 2018 TDP focused on the results of a public survey that indicated the majority of citizens of the Villages of Weston and Rothschild, the City of Schofield and the Town of Rib Mountain were in favor of developing transit routes in their communities. The Plan also indicated the needs for services overall and the viability of the system in general, even if it only provides service in the City of Wausau. For transit to be a regional service, it means making and improving the connections with the neighboring communities, most specifically, the Villages of Weston and Rothschild, City of Schofield, and the Town of Rib Mountain. In order for those communities to agree to provide transit service in the future a new and stable funding source needs to be established.

The creation of a Regional Transit Authority (RTA) has been discussed frequently in the past few years and would be an excellent organizational strategy for developing a stable funding source. Formation of an RTA requires state legislation and has been a political and highly contentious issue in Wisconsin but offers the best solution for developing both a sustainable plan as well as a truly regional system. The RTA would create the ability to have new funding streams and then a financially solid regional transit system. The success of an RTA could only happen if there is a great deal of planning and discussion amongst the area communities and those who are dependent on the bus service as their sole means of mobility.

ELDERLY AND DISABLED SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION

Marathon County administers the program funded mostly with the 85.21 Grant program from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. In Marathon County, the 85.21 program provides rides to those that are aged 65 and over and disabled individuals at any age, and can only be used for medical, nutrition, and employment purposes. The elderly and disabled transportation program has seen a reduction in ridership over the past few years.

Currently, Metro Ride provides ADA compatible rides to all that qualify, only in the City of Wausau. The lack of a true metro transit system or services is influencing the number of users. North Central Health Care (NCHC) provides rides throughout the whole county, but ridership is declining. Only having fixed-route transit service in the City of Wausau and not the entire metropolitan area has hurt Metro Ride's chances in developing this program to its full potential.

Coordinating the funding programs with the fixed route transit provider and the human services transportation providers could begin the process of determining which entity should be providing rides to clients.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM

This plan supports the recommendations of the current Bicycle and Pedestrian plan. That plan was updated within the past year and has had little opportunity to implement most of the identified projects. The plan identifies a number of common and practical strategies that can be used to implement the plan. The following strategies are:

1. Modify roadways to utilize existing pavement. These may be in the form of striping existing pavement, reconfiguring on-street parking, and lane road diets.
2. Regulatory and wayfinding signs.
3. Coordinate path and sidewalk projects with roadway projects.
4. Prioritize stand-alone projects that provide high-value connections.

The bicycle network has its own list of recommendations based on the concept of Near-Term and Build-Out situations. The Near-Term projects are relatively easy to implement right away over the next few years. The Build-Out projects are typically more challenging and may have to wait until the roadway is scheduled for a complete reconstruction.

For a complete list of specific bicycle and pedestrian projects, refer to the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization, 2015*.

FREIGHT – RAIL

There are two areas of concern for rail freight movement in the Wausau metro area. The first issue revolves around at grade crossings and the need for signalization or other measures at those crossings. The second issue is that of rail shipment volumes in the area.

Safety and operational efficiencies of both the rail lines and the roadway network are the key factors in determining the impacts of at-grade crossings. The signalization or elimination of at-grade crossings and providing grade separation facilities can create differing impact in a community. A closer look at crash statistics indicate that crashes continue to occur even with warning devices and signals. Creating grade separations can eliminate the crash rates at intersections but have a profound effect on the community by dividing neighborhoods and forcing other modes of travel to take and create lengthy and time-consuming routes to navigate around the rail facilities. This can also affect how emergency services are delivered in the community if the most optimal routes are blocked by rail facilities. Rail facilities and the associated land uses need to be protected because of their importance to the business community but not at the expense of access for the rest of the community. Monitoring the rail crossings crash "hotspots" needs to be done on a continual basis. If locations indicate a problem, more investigation may be needed to determine a course of action.

The volume of rail traffic in the metro area has not changed much in the past few years. Coal going to the Weston Electric Power Generation Facility in the Village of Kronenwetter is the major cargo moved by rail freight. The remainder of the usage is from a hand full of companies the move only a few rail cars around the area on a daily basis. Any new development that is being planned in the area that may require rail access should be established on or near existing rail lines to minimize the need to extend or create new lines thus disrupting the road network with additional rail crossings and potential conflict points.

FREIGHT – TRUCK

Truck transportation in the freight industry has not changed much in the Wausau metro area. With good access to the interstate and state highway systems, trucking operations and manufacturing and industrial businesses that rely on good access to the freeway systems are doing well in the Wausau area. The "Last Mile" concept in the truck freight industry is well accommodated in the area. Most industrial parks and larger commercial companies that have truck freight needs are located with the first mile or two of the freeway systems.

Only a few isolated locations need to be studied to address the needs and concerns of truck traffic on the local street network. These include:

- Wausau Industrial Park connection from STH 29 to Stewart Avenue at 72nd Avenue
- Camp Phillips Road connection to the Schofield and Weston Industrial Park off of Ross Avenue
- Turn movements and traffic volumes near the Weston Elementary School.
- Trucks using Thomas Street from the 3M Corporation and Kolbe & Kolbe Corp.

Another truck freight issue in the area is the potential creation of an intermodal rail to truck transfer location. This transfer location could provide the area with a rail connection to the entire U.S. that could potentially open doors of opportunity in the commercial and industrial sectors of the area economy.

In the coming years the need for "Over-The-Road" drivers will also be an issue if the number of drivers continues to diminish at the current rates. The future reduction of qualified drivers will have an impact on the merchandise delivery systems that are now in place to get products to people in the shortest amount of time. The adaptation of autonomous vehicles, mentioned in Chapter 4, in the trucking industry would play an ever-expanding role in the future.

LAND USE

Transportation and land use have always been connected by the influence each has on the other. Both transportation and the land uses can be the primer of how and what type of development occurs. Uncoordinated or uncontrolled land use growth can have a negative impact on the area community's ability to keep pace with the transportation system, especially those of bicycle/pedestrian and transit. Typically, transit is developed in response to the land uses and the development that occurs. Bicycle and pedestrian accommodations should be looked at when the roadways are reconstructed to minimize the impact retrofitting accommodations have on the existing roadway footprint.

Land use impacts transportation systems in a number of ways but more efficient, effective public transportation and roadway networks can be established to provide services inside the urban area by minimizing sprawl development, providing cost efficient services, providing more opportunities for disadvantaged (social justice), and providing for public safety.

Area communities will need to have discussions regarding land use decisions to minimize the conflicts that arise between transportation and land use: the conflict between high volume traffic and bicycle and pedestrian traffic; road construction projects that create barriers to bicycle and pedestrian users and with the neighborhoods thus cutting neighborhoods into pieces; and intersections that have high crash rates and congestion.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE STRATEGIES

Building new roads and adding capacity to existing roadways is very costly for communities. To make the most of limited transportation funding, communities are using travel demand

management (TDM) and transportation system management & operations (TSM&O) strategies to increase the capacity and efficiency of existing roadways.

The following are best practices that could be considered for the Wausau area. While the MPO is not directly responsible for the implementation of transportation improvements, they work closely with the member communities towards increasing efficiency and performance of the existing transportation system.

Travel Demand Management

Travel Demand Management strategies seek to either reduce the number of cars on roadways through

1. encouraging the use of transit, walking, biking, or employer-based activities
2. increasing the number of people traveling in each vehicle, or
3. redistributing demand away from congested areas and peak travel times through methods like use restrictions, ramp metering, or other methods.

Transportation System Management & Operations

Strategies concerned with the management and operation of the transportation system are designed to improve the performance of existing roadways through increased efficiency and throughput. Poor system performance is caused by a variety of factors, i.e., poor signal timing, bad weather, geometric bottlenecks, etc.

Unlike adding a roadway or additional travel lane, TSM&O strategies offer lower cost alternatives and require a shorter time to get started. The TSM&O approach integrates planning and programming, systems and technology, performance monitoring, technical understanding and leadership, organization and workforce development, and collaboration and partnerships. TSM&O activities focus on traffic signal timing, access management, special event or incident management, traveler information, and others to improve the efficiency and reliability of the transportation network.

Best Practices in Transportation System Management & Operations

Additional TSM&O activities could be considered for implementation in the Wausau area, as they have proven useful in similar-sized areas.

Traffic Signal and Intersection Improvements

Traffic control signage and intersection signals are everywhere, and while they provide traffic control and improve safety at intersections, they can also be a significant source of delay. Improving intersection traffic control is a cost-effective way to facilitate improved traffic flow.

- Replace older traffic signal **control technologies** with newer options, phasing out in-pavement magnetic loops in favor of video detection; automatic detection devices for pedestrians and bicycles have also become available.

- Review **timing and phasing** of signalized intersections periodically and optimize signals to decrease congestion, improve flow, and reduce queue length.
- **Coordinate signals** along designated high priority corridors to increase the throughput volume of critical thoroughfares.
- Review **intersection design** and traffic movements to determine the need for channelization changes or protected left-turns.

Access Management

Effective access management improves mobility, accessibility, and safety by reducing crashes, increasing capacity, reducing travel time and delay. Access management regulates the number of access points between land parcels and the adjacent roadways, addressing the number of driveway/curb cuts, placement of medians, and function of service roads. Access management strategies can be used for only certain locations or as part of an integrated corridor access management program.

- **Median's** control turning movements to decrease the potential for accidents: they also provide a refuge area for pedestrians or turning vehicles and reduce mid-block accidents. Medians at critical intersections can have a low curb to ensure access for emergency response.

  • Design large parcels with major roadway frontage, but access only from the **frontage road** to decrease the number of driveways along thoroughfares. Design residential driveways to have a **shared access** point to the major roadway.
- Monitor **number of driveways** and encourage proper spacing to provide safe and reasonable access to sites; consult adjacent landowners to avoid conflicting designs.

Traffic Calming

Traffic calming improvements are self-enforcing devices that can assist law enforcement in influencing driver behavior. Traffic calming is often applied to residential streets with lower speeds and discourage through traffic. Designed to slow all vehicles, traffic calming can impact access and response times for emergency response.

- Impose designated movement of traffic at an intersection through **forced turn** islands.
- Require entering traffic to yield to vehicles already in the intersection through construction of **roundabouts**, which have proven effective in reducing intersection speed and severity of crashes, without compromising throughput.
- Consider **speed humps** to reduce travel speeds, caused by driver discomfort when traversed at speeds higher than the posted speed limit.

Additional Management Strategies

The following sections briefly touch on additional strategies that could be explored for implementation in the Wausau area.

- Regional Traffic Incident Management -
  Detecting, responding to, and clearing traffic incidents to restore normal traffic flow as safely and quickly as possible is the main function of traffic incident management (TIM) strategies. Effective TIM involves coordination among public and private stakeholders,

including law enforcement, fire departments, emergency medical services, traffic control, towing and recovery, hazardous material contractors, and the media.

- Traveler Information Systems -
  Using technology to detect, analyze, and disseminate traffic and transit conditions helps travelers choose the best mode and route to reach their destination based on current conditions. Traveler information can include data on next bus arrival, emergency alerts, traffic delays, alternate routes, work zones, planned special events, tourism, and parking management, etc.
- Targeted Traffic Enforcement -
  In areas with complaints about speeding and reckless drivers, targeted speed and law enforcement can be employed to discourage unlawful and dangerous driver behavior. Local law enforcement can assist with the identification of hotspots in order to maximize the impact of enforcement activities.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND SECURITY

Introduction

The Wausau MPO assists communities in addressing safety and security through the programming of transportation improvements, and although the MPO's role in the implementation of safety and security measures may be limited, the MPO plays a key role in the coordination among various federal, state, local agencies, all of which have a stake in safety and security in the area. By integrating the safety and security goals and objectives of various agencies into the transportation planning process, the MPO helps ensure that its 2050 Plan and identified programs and studies are consistent with, and help support, regional safety and security planning.

Safety

Safety usually refers to crashes for all modes of transportation and other unintentional events, which result in loss of property, injuries, or fatalities. Safety planning focuses on improving the operational efficiency of the transportation network as well as influencing individual behavior to reduce the number of crashes. Safety is one of the seven national goals established under MAP-21 as part of the comprehensive approach to manage the performance of the transportation system. The national safety goal calls for significant reduction in serious injuries and fatalities on all public roadways.

Security

Security typically refers to harm inflicted by people, such as terrorist acts and other criminal activities, as well as harm caused by natural disasters, such as flooding, or severe weather events. Security planning is carried out by various agencies at multiple levels of government, and involves the four phases of emergency management:

- Preparedness
- Response
- Recovery
- Mitigation

State, county, and local jurisdictions follow the six components of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as a framework for facilitating operations during emergencies:

- Command and management
- Preparedness
- Resource management
- Communications and information management
- Supporting technologies
- Ongoing management and maintenance

During a time of emergency, coordination of efforts across various jurisdictions is a top priority, especially to meet transportation needs.

Safety and Security Recommendations

The success of improving safety depends on local participation. A data driven approach should be utilized to assist with prioritizing programs and projects, as it is important to understand which factors are contributing to the most fatalities and serious injuries locally. This vision can be more effectively achieved through the implementation of the following recommendations:

- Encourage communities to identify and implement relevant Highway Safety Plan strategies.
- Consider giving funding preference to projects that incorporate safety improvements.

AREA NEEDS SUMMARY

Level of Service Needs

It is important to note that the traffic model is designed to estimate traffic Levels of Service on main line roads and highways. The modeled LOS deficiencies should not be taken at face value but should be reviewed with respect to individual roadway geometric and operational characteristics that would impact service levels.

If the traffic model indicates a road segment has a low level of service and additional evidence supports these findings, the roadway should be studied from an operational/traffic engineering perspective, utilizing small area traffic level of service analyses and/or traffic simulation software. Some smaller improvement projects, like geometric changes and traffic signal modifications to the intersections can improve traffic flow along a roadway without having to do a major capacity expansion project. The results of the 2021 traffic model indicated several LOS deficiency problem areas. The corridors identified range from levels A to F and were discussed in Chapter 5.

A list of transportation improvement alternatives based on the traffic models and local knowledge has been established for this plan. These locations focused on providing a level of service that has been identified in Chapter 5 as D, E, or F. All other roadways are identified as be at a level of A, B, or C. The D, E, F locations are located on Map 6-1 and are described below:

Level D Slightly Congested:

- CTH WW, Village of Brokaw from USH 51 to N 32nd Avenue

- Bridge Street, City of Wausau from 3rd Street to 1st Avenue
- Grand Avenue, City of Schofield from Lake View Boulevard to East Grand Avenue
- STH 153, City of Mosinee, east/south bound leg of the roundabout

Level E Moderately Congested:

- Grand Avenue, City of Wausau from Townline Road to Sumner Street
- Grand Avenue, City of Wausau from Kent Street to Sturgeon Eddy Road

Level F – Severely Congested:

- Grand Avenue, City of Wausau from Sumner Street to Thomas Street

ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS RECOMMENDATIONS

The area Traffic Model was used to evaluate the level of service for specifically identified road projects in the Metro Area as described in Chapter 5. Of all the projects being evaluated, none of them specifically impact an area determined to have a lower level of service. With that, this plan does not recommend any specific road projects for communities to undertake to mitigate the lower levels of service. When this plan is updated in the next 5-year cycle, the use of more recent or current data will allow the MPO communities to review the illustrative projects list and the more up to date traffic model to create a new list of recommended projects going forward.

ILLUSTRATIVE ROADWAY PROJECTS

The following are projects that have been identified by the communities or by MPO staff as potentially needing to be evaluated or studied to indicate the benefits to the metropolitan area or community road networks. Map 6-1 shows the locations of these projects.

Village of Kronenwetter:

- Extend Kowalski Road easterly to connect with Martin Road.
- Evaluate the ability to construct an interchange at I39 and Kowalski Road.
- Expand to a 4-lane roadway, County Highway X from County Highway XX to Howland Road.
- Develop the northeast quadrant of the Maple Ridge Road interchange as a Commercial/ Business Park

City of Mosinee:

- STH 153 Bridge Expansion and 4-lane roadway through the central business district.

Town of Rib Mountain:

- Construct a bridge crossing the Rib River at the County Highway O and STH 29 interchange.

Village of Rothschild:

- Expansion and 4-lane roadway of Business US Highway 51 from Eagle's Nest Blvd. to Military Road.

City of Schofield:

- Reconstruct Business US Highway 51/Grand Avenue from Metro Drive to the Eau Claire River Bridge.

City of Wausau:

- Reconstruct Grand Avenue from Kent Street to Thomas Avenue. Provide adequate turn lanes at Sturgeon Eddy Road, Townline Road, and Thomas Street, as well as create the appropriate bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.
- Evaluate the need for capacity expansion on 72nd Avenue from Packer Drive to Stewart Avenue at the entrance to the Industrial Park.
- Investigate the need for a bicycle and pedestrian bridge over the Wisconsin River.
- Evaluate the need for expansion of the Bridge Street Bridge over the Wisconsin River.
- Evaluate the need for a new bridge over the Wisconsin River north of Bridge Street and South of the Village of Brokaw.

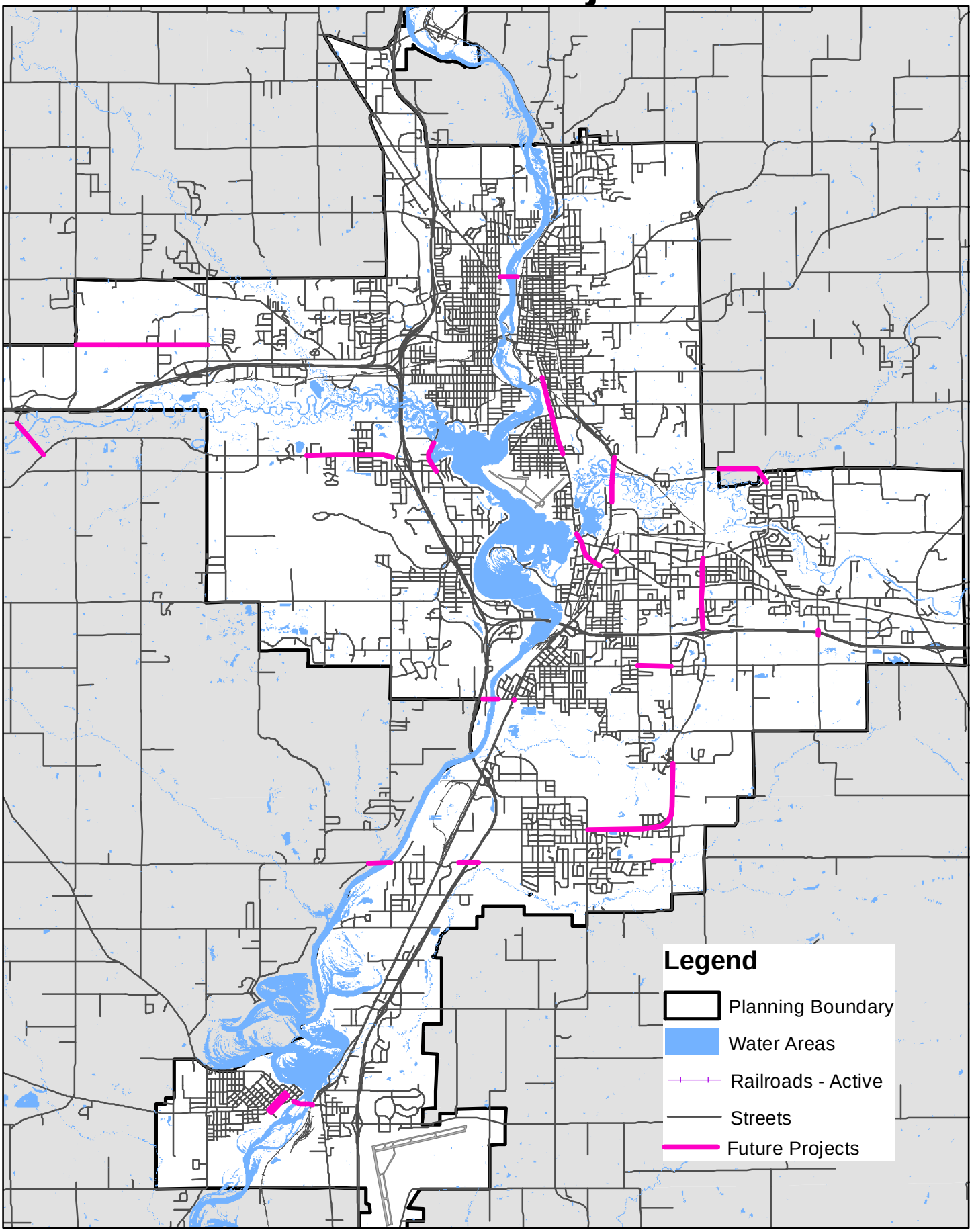
Village of Weston:

- Redevelop the Camp Phillips Road Corridor from Weston Avenue to Ross Avenue with the initial emphasis on the Weston Avenue to STH 29 interchange to accommodate the mixed-use development in the southeast quadrant of the interchange. Subsequent project would be commercial development along the corridor from STH 29 to Schofield Avenue with intersection improvements, and additional improvements from Schofield Avenue to Ross Avenue to accommodate the needs of the industrial park and the elementary school.
- Investigate the need for a new full interchange at Ryan Road and STH 29.
- Investigate intersection enhancements at key intersections on Schofield Avenue.

Region-wide:

- Investigate the need to new bridge crossings of the Rib, Wisconsin and Eau Claire Rivers in the metro area.
- Investigate the need for jurisdictional transfers of roadways to different municipalities.
- Full buildout of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the Metro area.

Wausau Area MPO
Illustrative Projects



Prepared by; Wausau MPO

CHAPTER 7 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

In 1994, Federal Executive Order 12898 directed every federal agency to make environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing the effects of all programs, policies and activities on "minority populations and low-income populations." The order reads: "Each federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies and activities on minority populations and low-income populations."

Since the Executive Order was issued, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have worked with their state and local transportation partners to make sure that the principles of environmental justice have been integrated into every aspect of their mission. The three fundamental environmental justice principles include:

- To avoid, minimize or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority and low-income populations.
- To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.
- To prevent the denial of, reduction of or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

PURPOSE FOR UPDATE

One of the central requirements is an all-inclusive decision-making process requiring metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) to develop and utilize a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing public involvement in developing metropolitan long range transportation plans (LRTPs) and transportation improvement programs (TIPs).

In addition, MPOs are required to develop and utilize "participation plans" that are developed in consultation with an expanded list of "interested parties." Here, the role of the public in the public participation plan (PPP) process is expanded to include involvement in the development of the PPP — not just the review of the PPP after it has been drafted. In 2007, the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Commission (Wausau MPO) adopted its first Public Participation Plan according to the federal requirements, with full participation of the public thru the public involvement plan identified in the document and the MPO TAC.

The 2020 update of the Wausau MPO Public Participation Plan refined and clarified previous version of the Wausau MPO's public processes in light of our experiences since then including an

increased use of websites, social media, and now more than ever the use of virtual meetings and information dissemination.

FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

Beginning with the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) have been required to "develop and utilize a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing MTPs (metropolitan transportation plans) and TIPs (transportation improvement programs)."

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005 and the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) of 2012 expanded on the provisions to require extensive stakeholder participation above and beyond public involvement. The public participation plan provision expressed in the current Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act signed into law in 2015 is codified in Title 23 Part 450 of the Code of Federal Regulations (23 CFR 450) and in 49 CFR 613. Section 450.316, Interested Parties, Participation, and Consultation, requires MPOs to develop a participation plan in consultation with all interested parties and describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:

- Providing adequate public notice;
- Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information;
- Employing visualization techniques to describe plans and programs;
- Making public information available in electronically accessible formats;
- Holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
- Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input;
- Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems;
- Providing an additional opportunity for public comment if the final metropolitan transportation plan (MTP) or transportation improvement program (TIP) differs significantly from the version made available for public comment;
- Coordinating with statewide processes; and,
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the participation plan.

NEED FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public participation in the transportation planning process allows the public the opportunity to voice concerns and offer suggestions about transportation-related issues, while it also helps to educate the public about the technical aspects of transportation planning. Also, transportation professionals and decision-makers are afforded the opportunity to see sides of an issue that may be missed when considering a project from a purely technical or political point of view. Meaningful dialog among technical professionals, local decision makers, and general stakeholders is the key to achieving consensus, which is desired before moving a project forward. Other benefits of public participation include:

- Fostering a sense of community and ownership;
- Identifying issues and concerns that matter most to the citizenry;
- Fostering trust in our decision-makers;
- Promoting accountability;
- Encouraging cooperation and compromise;
- Preventing and/or mitigating future conflicts;
- Transparency; and
- Reasonable access to information.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The Wausau MPO strives for an all-inclusive public process consistent with the provisions of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations Part 450 (23 CFR 450) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 49 CFR 613 as retained and amended by MAP-21. While retaining the requirement authorized by ISTEA that "MPOs develop and utilize a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing LRTPs and TIPs", SAFETEA-LU expanded those provisions to require "extensive stakeholder participation above and beyond public involvement."

The following policy statements to "ensure early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and TIPs" were derived from existing language in 23 CFR 450 and 49 CFR 613.

Coordination and Consultation -

- Consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the planning area that are affected by transportation in the development of LRTPs and TIPs, including Indian Tribal governments and Federal Land Management agencies, if applicable.
- Coordinate with the public involvement and consultation processes for statewide transportation planning.

Accessibility and Information -

- Hold public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times.
- Make public information available in electronically-accessible format.
- Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans and programs.
- Employ visualization techniques to describe LRTPs and TIPs.

Timeliness –

- Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to all concerned stakeholders, including affected public agencies, private providers of transportation, and other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs, and projects.
- Provide adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment.

Public Comment -

- Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the LRTP and TIP.
- Provide a comment period of at least 45 day.
- Provide an additional opportunity for public comment if the final LRTP or TIP differs significantly from the version that was initially made available for comment.
- Include as part of the final plan or program a report or summary on the disposition of significant written or oral comments received on draft plans and programs.

Social (includes Environmental) Justice -

- Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, including low-income and minority households, persons with disabilities, and the elderly.

Evaluation -

- Review the effectiveness of the public participation plan so as to ensure a full and open participation process.

Updates & Amendments -

- The public participation process outlined in the PPP will be evaluated and amended at least every five years. An amendment to the PPP may also occur if a federal or state regulation regarding public participation or environmental justice has been created or modified. In all cases, the public will be invited to provide comment. Inclusive Public participation is encouraged throughout the update process at the Wausau MPO and technical committee meetings, through comments received at the Wausau MPO office, and at outreach events.

MPO ROLE

As the primary forum where state DOTs, transit providers, local agencies, and the public develop metropolitan area transportation plans and programs, MPOs can help local public officials understand how public engagement through Title VI and environmental justice requirements improve planning and decision-making. To certify compliance with Title VI and address environmental justice, MPOs need to:

- Enhance their analytical capabilities to ensure that the long-range transportation plan and the transportation improvement program (TIP) comply with Title VI.
- Identify residential, employment, and transportation patterns of low-income and minority populations so that their needs can be identified and addressed, and the benefits and burdens of transportation investments can be fairly distributed.
- Evaluate and, where necessary, improve their public involvement processes to eliminate participation barriers and engage minority and low-income populations in transportation decision making.

TITLE VI NON-DISCRIMINATION PROGRAM/LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

As a sub-recipient of federal funds administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and/or the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) from the state of Wisconsin, the Wausau MPO is required to comply with *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987*, and all related regulations and statutes.

In addition, the Wausau MPO is required to comply with *Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, U.S. Department of Transportation, Subtitle A, Office of the Secretary, Part 21, Nondiscrimination in Federally-assisted Programs of the U.S. Department of Transportation.*

The purpose of these regulations is to assure that no person or groups of persons shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any and all programs, services, or activities administered by the Wausau MPO, regardless of whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not.

In addition, Executive Order 13166, *Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency*, was issued in 2000. This order requires that any agency that receives federal funds to establish a means of including Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons in the planning process. The Attorney General for Civil Rights subsequently issued the guidance document, *Enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964—National Origin Discrimination Against Persons with Limited English Proficiency* [Department of Justice (DOJ) LEP Guidance], to assist agencies in "taking reasonable steps to ensure 'meaningful' access to the information and services they provide."

According to the DOJ LEP Guidance, "reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access" depend on a number of factors:

- The number or proportion of LEP persons that may be impacted by a project or program;
- The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with the project or program;
- The importance of the service provided by the project or program; and
- The resources available to the receiving agency.

Currently the MPO policy is to provide anyone in need of interpretive services with reasonable measures on a one-on-one basis. Contacting the MPO office for specific information is the current procedure.

IDENTIFYING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE POPULATIONS

This document is being developed at the end of the decennial census cycle with the newest national census having been completed in 2020. The US Census Bureau has not processed and released the data resulting from that 2020 census. With only the 2010 census information and the American Community Survey to use, none of the analysis and population determinations will change. The following information is taken from the 2016 LRTP because it is the most current.

The first step in the analysis looked at the MPO planning area as a whole to evaluate whether the minority and low-income populations were greater than the rest of the state. A minority or low-income population higher than the state would indicate that the MPO planning area has a concentration, which would mean that the target populations in general would carry a greater portion of the recommended projects collective impacts than the rest of the population. In the Wausau area, the minority population makes up 16.3 percent of the population, in Wisconsin 12.2 percent of the population is minority. The US Census Bureau considers 20.2 percent of the families within the Wausau area to be below the poverty level, compared to 13.2 percent of Wisconsin's families. The initial analysis indicates that the MPO does not have a disproportionate number of minority or low income persons but there are certain areas within the MPO that do reflect higher percentages then the rest.

Maps 7-? and 7-? illustrate the locations of the aforementioned areas within the MPA. The map indicates block groups with higher than the MPA average of minority populations and low-income populations. The areas with high concentrations of minority or low-income populations determine the environmental justice areas of concern for evaluation purposes. The majority of the environmental justice target areas are located within the City of Wausau.

CONCLUSION

Of the recommended transportation improvements listed in the 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program, the Thomas St., and Bridge St. corridors in the City of Wausau; Fuller Avenue, in the Village of Weston; and Rib Mountain Drive in the Town of Rib Mountain all have the most direct impact on an identified EJ population. Through the planning and implementation process, environmental justice issues for these projects and others will require additional analysis for identifying potential impacts and developing appropriate measures for mitigating these impacts.

CHAPTER 8 – FINANCIAL PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the financial analysis of potential transportation investments. Estimated revenue from existing and proposed funding sources is compared with estimated project costs of constructing, maintaining, and operating the existing and planned transportation system to the year 2050.

The regulations in the two Federal Highway Bills, Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and the Transportation Efficiency Act (TEA-21) brought about changes that required MPOs to consider the financial implications of their planning efforts. To this end, the federal planning regulations put in place the requirement for financial constraint of these documents included in the 2015 FAST Act.

The LRTP is required to be fiscally constrained or based on reasonable future financial assumptions. The recommendations are based on projections of available federal, state and local revenue. There is not an assumption that significant additional funding will be available beyond current funding levels.

All highway bills since the 1990s have retained the requirements for a fiscally constrained long-range transportation plan and the metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Funding for the Wausau area transportation maintenance and improvement projects comes from a variety of federal, state, local and private sources. The federal government is the primary source of funding for transportation systems in the area. These funds come predominantly from federally assessed user fees and fuel taxes, and are apportioned back to the states on a formula basis. The primary source of revenue at the state level includes motor fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees. Finances at the county and municipal levels are primarily based on property taxes, sales taxes, and special assessments. At times, the private sector, such as developers and business associations, support transportation projects through impact fees, right-of-way donations, and cost sharing.

The cost of maintaining the existing transportation infrastructure is continually increasing as facilities age. The challenge the Wausau area faces in the future is to balance the preservation of the existing transportation infrastructure while at the same time identifying adequate funding for the construction of new transportation facilities. With this plan, there is currently no need for new construction and more of an emphasis on the preservation of the existing infrastructure, growth and traffic patterns will change enough over the next 25 year to warrant new construction again.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FUNDING

A review of Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding from the years 2014 through 2021 indicates transportation funding levels of recently completed or scheduled to be completed transportation projects.

Table 8-1 lists federal, state, and local funds allocated for transportation projects included in the 2014 to 2021 Transportation Improvement Programs. Between 2014 and 2021, just under $66 million of federal funding has been spent or is committed to area roadway projects. Federal funding has accounted for only 45 percent of all allocated funding during this eight year time period. The state has spent or has allocated an approximate total of just under $25 million towards area roadway improvement projects during this time period.

Table 8-1: 2014-2021 Federal, State and Local Funds Committed to Roadway Projects

Year	Federal	State	Local	Total
2014	$34,426,429	$10,790,689	$1,333,098	$46,550,216
2015	$3,553,415	$1,954,250	$3,589,154	$9,096,819
2016	$7,423,217	$1,884,621	$6,912,382	$16,220,220
2017	$3,213,034	$2,334,912	$6,351,070	$11,899,016
2018	$1,580,537	$2,322,376	$11,663,842	$15,566,755
2019	$7,212,239	$2,412,611	$16,382,224	$26,007,074
2020	$7,065,021	$1,629,370	$5,546,927	$14,241,318
2021	$1,322,738	$1,279,747	$3,136,517	$5,739,002
Total	**$65,796,630**	**$24,608,576**	**$54,915,214**	**$145,320,420**

Source: Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Improvement Program; 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021.

Funding that has been committed to system expansion and system preservation projects within the TIPs between 2014 and 2021. Only about 17 percent of dollars allocated over this period have or will go toward system expansion projects.

Federal revenues accounted for just under $66 million (56%) of the $118 million allocated for preservation projects between 2014 and 2021. State dollars included in the 2014 to 2021 TIPs accounted for almost $25 million (17%) of preservation dollars.

Revenues dedicated to system preservation between 2014 and 2021 average to about $15 million annually.

2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program Funding

Programmed expenditures and estimated available funding for the current TIP period are listed in Table 8-2. The figure of particular interest to the MPO is the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds or STP-Urban funds, which the MPO has direct impact on how these revenues are allocated. These federal dollars are estimated to provide about $679,000 annually for transportation improvement projects, which totals just about $20 million over the life of the plan.

Table 8-2: 2021 – 2024 Transportation Improvement Program Project Funding and Sources

Note: The Wausau MPO received $3,193,326 in STP-Urban funds (STBG) for its Local Road Program entitlement.

Assessment of Available Funding for the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program

Funding Source		Programmed Expenditures				Estimated Available Funding			
Agency	Program	2021	2022	2023	2024	2021	2022	2023	2024
Federal Highway	NHPP	$9,624,800	$2,248,816	$7,155,840	$3,131,584	$9,624,800	$2,248,816	$7,155,840	$3,131,584
Administration	STBG	$70,400	$1,676,518	$3,186,865	$3,126,343	$70,400	$1,676,518	$3,186,865	$3,126,343
	HSIP	$180,000	$180,000	$324,000	$180,000	$180,000	$180,000	$324,000	$180,000
	OCR	$144,430	$144,430	$0	$0	$144,430	$144,430	$0	$0
Totals		$10,019,630	$4,249,764	$10,666,705	$6,437,927	$10,019,630	$4,249,764	$10,666,705	$6,437,927
Totals	Inflated by 1.78% Annually	$10,019,630	$4,325,410	$11,046,440	$6,781,712	$10,019,630	$4,325,410	$11,046,440	$6,781,712
Federal Transit Administration	Section 5307 -- Wausau Urbanized Area	$1,525,439	$1,482,495	$1,166,470	$1,201,464	$1,525,439	$1,482,495	$1,166,470	$1,201,464
	Section 5339	$0	$0	$0	$3,703,905	$0	$0	$0	$3,703,905
	Section 5307 - Other	$741,972	$107,530	$109,681	$111,875	$741,972	$107,530	$109,681	$111,875
Totals		$2,267,411	$1,590,025	$1,276,151	$5,017,244	$2,267,411	$1,590,025	$1,276,151	$5,017,244
Totals	Inflated by 1.78% Annually	$2,267,411	$1,618,327	$1,321,582	$5,285,165	$2,267,411	$1,618,327	$1,321,582	$5,285,165

LOCAL REVENUE FORECASTS

A critical element of securing federal transportation funding is being able to provide the local match requirements. The Federal Highway Bill SAFETEA-LU requirement that local jurisdictions must provide for 20 percent, at a minimum, of project costs to receive federal funds equates to having federal funds cover up to 80 percent of project costs.

The ability of local communities to secure these matching dollars has been problematic for some. However, it is essential for securing STBG program funding. It is important for communities to show the resources available to provide matching funds for construction projects after accounting for needed regular operations and maintenance costs.

WisDOT allocates General Transportation Aids (GTA) as a proportion to the community's local transportation expenditures (approximately one dollar for every four local dollars spent on transportation). WisDOT projected that the entire Wausau area would receive approximately $4.6 million annually in GTA (see Table 8-3). This projection is based on current GTA allocations, which are based on current local transportation expenditures. Wausau area communities have to spend about $27.6 million annually on their transportation system to qualify for an annual $4.6 million in state GTA funds.

Table 10-3: State and Federal Transportation Revenue Projections

STH Preservation, Maintenance and Operation	Annual Revenues	2022-2050
Combined Backbone and non-Backbone	$8,244,567	$239,092,443
STH "Low Cost" Bridges	$733,000	$21,257,000
STH Maintenance and Operations	$3,624,000	$105,096,000
Subtotal	**$12,601,567**	**$365,445,443**
Local Road Expansion and Preservation		
STBG	$628,672	$18,231,488
General Transportation Aids	$4,653,607	$134,954,603
Connecting Highway Aids	$2,460,867	$71,365,143
Municipal Streets Portion of LRIP	$85,035	$2,466,015
Federal Safety Programs	$154,207	$4,472,003
Local Bridges	$220,000	$6,380,000
Transportation Alternatives Program	$25,697	$745,213
Subtotal	**$8,228,085**	**$238,614,465**
Total	**$20,829,652**	**$604,059,908**

Wausau area municipal transportation expenditures data was provided by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (see Table 8-4). The average funding for the years provided are consistent with GTA revenue forecasts.

Table 8-4: Municipal Transportation Funding 2019

Operations & Maintenance	$16,980,100
Construction	$17,055,100
Total	**$34,035,200**

Source: Wisconsin Departments of Revenue and Transportation

Based on the municipal transportation funding information, on average, municipalities spent 50 percent of their transportation revenues on operations and maintenance and 50 percent on construction projects. Assuming this ratio remains constant, about $17 million would be available annually for construction projects, which translates to a total of $493 million between 2022 and 2050.

The Wausau MPO is anticipated to qualify for about $628,672 in STBG funds annually. The minimum local match required for these funds is 20%, which translates to about $125,734 annually.

The Wausau MPO has established that the federal share of STBG projects to be at seventy percent (70%). The balance of the project costs, thirty percent (30%), is the responsibility of the sponsoring local government. Depending on funding levels the percent split between the federal share and local share could go as high as 80% - 20% or as low as 55% - 45%.

If local communities were to match federal funding dollar for dollar (i.e. 50% match), which has been the norm for over 20 years, they would need to allocate 2.8 percent of construction revenues.

Table 8-5 indicates the entire projected revenues for local, state, and federal fund over the entire planning period.

Table 8-5: Local, State and Federal Transportation Revenue Projections

	Annual Revenues	**2021-2050 Revenues**
Expansion and Preservation to Local Roads	**$8,228,085**	**$238,614,465**
Local Transportation Revenues		
Operations & Maintenance	$16,980,100	$492,422,900
Construction	$17,055,100	$494,597,900
Sub Total	**$34,035,200**	**$987,020,800**
Total Federal, State, and Local Roadway	**$42,263,285**	**$1,225,635,000**

Even though the Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP) are subject to change, particularly for out years, TIPs should provide a reasonable assessment of what was spent in the TIP's most current year. A review of the 2021 TIP indicated that about $51 million in local funding will be allocated to providing the local match between 2022 and 2025; this figure averages to about $12.75 million annually (Table 8-6).

The MPO's ability to identify and allocate local resources to match federal dollars during this time period suggests a capacity to meet local match funding obligations of the STBG fund program. If past experience is a reasonable indication of what can be expected in the future, then by looking at local matches contributed for past projects should suggest future local match capabilities.

Table 8-6: 2022-2025 TIP Funding

2016-2019 TABLE 1
TIP PROJECT LISTING ($)

		FEDERAL	STATE	LOCAL	TOTAL
2016	SYSTEM PRESERVATION =	$ 7,099,633	$ 1,884,621	$ 3,831,486	$ 12,815,740
	SYSTEM EXPANSION =	$ 736,348	$ -	$ 3,184,087	$ 3,920,435
	TOTALS =	$ 7,835,981	$ 1,884,621	$ 7,015,573	$ 16,736,175
2017 *	SYSTEM PRESERVATION =	$ 7,880,964	$ 2,575,147	$ 5,932,275	$ 16,388,385
	SYSTEM EXPANSION =	$ 395,040	$ -	$ 10,086,252	$ 10,481,292
	TOTALS =	$ 8,276,004	$ 2,575,147	$ 16,018,527	$ 26,869,677
2018 *	SYSTEM PRESERVATION =	$ 6,268,569	$ 3,401,885	$ 6,095,668	$ 15,766,122
	SYSTEM EXPANSION =	$ -	$ -	$ 8,574,120	$ 8,574,120
	TOTALS =	$ 6,268,569	$ 3,401,885	$ 14,669,787	$ 24,340,241
2019 *	SYSTEM PRESERVATION =	$ 192,420	$ 1,036,930	$ 22,082,049	$ 23,311,399
	SYSTEM EXPANSION =	$ -	$ -	$ 17,308,553	$ 17,308,553
	TOTALS =	$ 192,420	$ 1,036,930	$ 39,390,602	$ 40,619,952
TOTALS:	SYSTEM PRESERVATION =	$ 21,441,586	$ 8,898,583	$ 37,941,477	$ 68,281,646
	SYSTEM EXPANSION =	$ 1,131,388	$ -	$ 39,153,012	$ 40,284,400
	TOTALS =	$ 22,572,974	$ 8,898,583	$ 77,094,489	$ 108,566,046

* Amounts show a 2.3% Annual increase to reflect Year of Expenditure Dollars

Source: Wausau MPO

TRANSPORTATION COST ESTIMATES

The operating and maintenance costs for the entire metro area road system are projected for the period 2022-2050. This cost has to be added to the implementation costs to assess the financial feasibility of the anticipated work on the roadways.

State Expenditure on State Facilities

State preservation expenditures were projected by WisDOT on a project by project basis and are listed in Table 8-7.

Table 8-7: WisDOT's Planned Preservation Projects and Projected Costs, 2022-2026

Highway	Location	Year	Type of Improvement	Cost
USH 153	C Mosinee	2022	Pavement Replacement	$2,000,000
STH 153	Western Ave. Mosinee	2022	Pavement Replacement	$250,000
STH 153	C Mosinee	2022	Resurface	$500,000
USH 51	Wausau – Merrill	2022	Bridge Preventative	$1,000,000
STH 29	Wausau - Wittenberg	2023	Resurface	$2,000,000
USH 51	Wausau – Merrill	2023	Resurface	$7,000,000
STH 29	Abbotsford – Wausau	2024	Pavement Replacement	$13,000,000
IH 39	Stevens Point – Wausau	2024	Resurface	$4,000,000
IH 39	Stevens Point – Wausau	2025	Resurface	$2,000,000
IH 39	Stevens Point – Wausau	2025	Resurface	$2,000,000
BUS 51	Rothschild – Schofield	2025	Pavement Replacement	$3,000,000
BUS 51	Rothschild – Schofield	2025	Pavement Replacement	$3,000,000
IH 39	Stevens Point – Wausau	2025	Resurface	$4,000,000
Total				**$43,750,000**
Total between 2027-2050				**$1,050,000,000**
Total Cost with 2% annual inflation rate				**$1,071,000,000**

Source: Wisconsin DOT 2021-2026 Six-Year Highway Improvement Program and Wisconsin Department of Transportation North Central Region.

Other Preservation and Operation projects will be programmed on State Highways based upon pavement conditions, traffic needs, and other documented deficiencies on the system.

The assumptions used were rough road construction cost estimates, which are identified in Table 8-8. These costs were applied to the miles of local road miles by surface type based on the preservation sequences identified above. Road preservation cost estimates for each of the five year increments for a 50 year period were summed and divided by 50 to provide annual road preservation cost estimates.

Table 8-8: Local Road Preservation per Mile Cost Estimates

Functionally Classified Roads	Urban	Rural
Seal	$30,000	$20,000
Resurface	$650,000	$300,000
Reconstruction	$3,000,000	$1,750,000

Local Roads	Urban	Rural
Seal	$30,000	$20,000
Resurface	$325,000	$150,000
Reconstruction	$1,500,000	$850,000

Note: Includes 20% estimated design engineering cost; typically15% to 20% of construction costs and state design review costs typically 20% of design engineering cost.

Based on the aforementioned assumptions, the following annual road preservation cost estimates were developed and shown on Table 8-9 below.

Table 8-9: Total Local System Preservation Costs

- Functionally Classified Roads: $119,879,500
- Local Roads: $154,518,000
- Totals ..... **. $274,397,500**
- Total Annual Preservation Costs..... . $10,162,870

- **Total Cost with 2% Annual Inflation Rate $279,885,450**

CONCLUSIONS

Given the projection assumptions, roadway preservation projects at the local and state level indicate a projected surplus of revenues available. This projected surplus could be misleading, however as this plan has identified a number of studies of corridors, interchanges, and bridges that could result in the need to program several high cost highway projects. This plan has identified a few intersection improvement projects. Intersection improvement projects are often needed as the result of peaking characteristics of local traffic due to the specific land uses in the corridor. When the DOT scopes projects for the last two years of the next six year program it is likely that intersection improvements will be identified; these projects will be documented either in amendments to this plan or in future plan updates. These projects, along with a few potential capacity upgrade projects on studied interchanges, bridges, and corridors, will likely create a very tight budget for state preservation projects during the planning period.