MPO Technical Committee Meeting

Thursday, April 17, 2025 – 10:00 am
Region 1 Planning Council
127 N. Wyman Street, Suite 100, Rockford, IL 61101

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Public Comment
4. Discussion Items
5. Action Items
    a. Approval of the March 20, 2025 Meeting Minutes
    b. Adoption of the 2024 IDOT Functional Classification (Resolution 2025-06)
    c. Adoption of the Parking Reimagined for the Rockford Region Plan (Resolution 2025-08)
    d. Approval of the FY 2025 MPO-Attributable Funds (Resolution 2025-07)
    e. Amendment to the FY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (Resolution 2025-09)
6. R1 Staff Reports
    a. June MPO Technical Committee Meeting Date Change: Wednesday June 18th 10am
7. Agency Reports
8. Other Business
9. Adjournment

Opportunities for public comment will be afforded on all agenda items.

Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact R1 Planning at 815-319-4180 at least two working days before the need for such services or accommodations.

MPO Technical Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 20, 2025
127 N. Wyman St. Suite 100, Rockford, IL 61101

1) Call to Order
The meeting was called to order by Tim Verbeke at 10:00am

2) Roll Call
Members Present: Justin Krohn, Boone County Highway Department; Josh Sage, Boone County Conservation District; Gina Delrose, City of Belvidere Planning Department; Brent Anderson, City of Belvidere, Public Works Department; Scott Capovilla, City of Rockford, Community Development; Jeremy Carter, City of Rockford, Public Works Department; Chris Baer, Four Rivers Sanitary District; Katie Smith, IDOT District 2; Mitch Hilden, Village of Machesney Park, Public Works; Troy Krup, Village of Roscoe; Karl Palmquist, Winnebago County, Community & Economic Development; Carlos Molina, Winnebago County Highway Department;

Members Absent: Boone County, Planning Department; City of Loves Park, Public Works Department; Chicago/Rockford International Airport; City of Loves Park, Community Development; City of Rockford, Community Developments; Forest Preserves of Winnebago County; Rockford Mass Transit District; Rockford Park District; Village of Winnebago; Winnebago County Soil & Water Conservation District.

Other Present: Doug DeLille, IDOT, Division of Urban Planning and Programming; Henry Guerriero, IL Tollway; Brandon Rucker, Eric Tison, Lauren Kleve, Nathan Larsen, Sarah Renicker, Tim Verbeke, Hailey Blanchard, Jackson Sitter and Chloe Barnes of Region 1 Planning Council.

3) Public Comment
No public comments were brought forward at this time.

4) Discussion Items:

a) **MPO-Attributable Funding-Updates-** Mr. Verbeke restated the sentiments of the previous MPO Technical Committee meeting where Mr. Dunn suggested revising the STBG funding cycle to be a two-year project cycle, as opposed to the current 5-year cycle. This is due to the shift in administrative priorities at the federal level, as well as a build-up of un-used funds from previous funding cycles. Mr. Verbeke outlined a 3 options: 1. Move forward with currently approved 25-26 projects; 2. Open a new call-for-projects for 26-27, or 3. Pause STBG for the year. Winnebago and Boone County representatives expressed concern over loosing funds, or expiring funds, with Winnebago County having 3 projects ready to go this year. Mr. DeLille, IDOT, informed the committee of an AMPO memo that described the redistribution of funding back to the state for certain funds unspent. Mr. Sage, Boone County Conservation District, suggested moving forward with the already approved projects. Mr. Molina also

indicated a preference to move forward with current STBG/TAP process. Mr. Carter, City of Rockford still recommends the current 5-year cycle and requested that be brought to the Policy committee, seconded by WCHD and BCHD. A robust discussion about the re-opening of the call-for-projects ensued with the requirement of new resolutions to be brought to the April MPO Technical Committee meeting, and then to the MPO Policy committee in May. Mr. Verbeke clarified that the 2-year change would effect STBG, TAP and CRP. Mr. DeLille indicated that there is some uncertainty concerning projects after FY25. Mr. Krohn asked if there is a possibility to return to the 5-year model later on down the road? Mr. Molina asked if TAP funds can be used for preliminary engineering, since there is a surplus. Mr. Krohn expressed concern about first funds, and last funds moving forward, will banked money go back to the state? Mr. DeLille indicated that non programmed funds left sitting does raise red flags, so with there's uncertainty with jumping too far ahead. Mr. Krohn asked if there would be new criteria based on current administrations priorities? Mr. Verbeke indicated any new criteria would be presented at the April MPO Technical Committee.

5) Action Items:

a.) Approval of the February 20, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Verbeke called for the approval of the 2/20/2025 meeting minutes. Mr. Sage, Boone County Conservation District, motioned, seconded by Mr. Krohn, Boone County Highway Department. Mr. Molina indicated a minor correction on the reported timing of the Owen Center project update in the minutes, corrections were recognized by recorder. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

b.) Adoption of the TIP Policy and Procedures (Resolution 2025-03)-Mr. Verbeke summarized the proposed changes to the TIP Policy and Procedures indicating the following: formalized terms and forms, group projects would be dis-allowed, align with Complete Streets, update of TIP activity types (projects will need to fall into specific categories), updated administrative processes, and streamline amendment process to three times per year instead of monthly. Motion called for a vote by Mr. Molina, Winnebago County Highway Department, and seconded by Mr. Carter, City of Rockford Public Works. Mr. Krohn, Boone County Highway Department clarified that if a project changes in between, amendments would be restricted to those three times per year. Mr. Verbeke, R1 confirmed. Vote was called. Motion passed unanimously.

c.) Adoption of Regional Traffic Safety Action Plan (Resolution 2025-04)-removed from the agenda

d.) Alternative Transportation Selection Committee (Resolution 2025-05)-Mr. Verbeke explained that the committee would make recommendations for the allocation of 5310 funds which address the needs of community members with limited mobility or have accessibility limitations. Mr. Krohn, Boone County Highway Department suggested adding Belvidere Park District, Ms. Delrose suggested adding a Boone County Transit Representative, and Jeremy Carter suggested adding a private firm that focuses on transportation. Mr. Molina asked if recommendations would require Policy Committee Approval, which Mr. Verbeke indicated was correct. Mr. Krohn, Boone County motioned for a vote, Mr. Carter, City of Rockford Public Works and Troy Krup, Village of Roscoe seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6) Staff Reports-

a.) Safe Streets for All- Mr. Verbeke reported that the document was under review with input from Winnebago County, Boone County and the City of Rockford, regarding the Regional plan. He also indicated that the project would be presented at a public meeting in Rockford in May.

b.) Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP)-Mr. Rucker, R1, reported that this federally required plan designed to assist seniors and disabled citizens would be wrapping up this year. It is currently in the third phase of development, which includes public engagement with a stakeholder meeting scheduled for April 9, a public comment period in May, before going before the MPO Technical and Policy Committees in June. A draft of the plan is available on the R1 website.

c.) Livable Communities Initiative (LCI)-Mr. Sitter, R1, reported that the Keith Creek project is entering its public engagement phase with a community meeting at a neighborhood church to solicit input from residents about the direction of the project. R1 is offering Technical Assistance this year, and will be assisting with implementation next year. Mr. Carter expressed concern about overlapping projects, and Mr. Verbeke explained that this would be coordinated with the City of Rockford to avoid that.

d.) State of the Trails-Mr. Larsen, R1, described the progress of the State of the Trails project, and reported that a data collecting e-bike has been purchased and that he is in the process of reaching out to local organizations and municipalities to gather information about locations to be assessed. He also clarified that they are focusing predominantly on shared-use paths.

e.) Resiliency Improvement Plan (RIP)- Ms. Kleve, R1, reported that there is currently a survey on Region 1's website regarding the RIP.

7) Agency Reports

a.) **Boone County Highway Department:** Preparing to resurface a significant area of roadway in Boone County requiring 37000 tons of asphalt. Letting scheduled for April 28.

b.) **Boone County Conservation District:** No Report

c.) **Chicago/Rockford International Airport:** No Report

d.) **City of Belvidere, Public Works:** n/a

e.) **Loves Park, Community Development:** n/a

f.) **Loves Park, Public Works Department:** No Report

g.) **City of Rockford Community Development:** Housing Strategy Plan established at 3/17 City Council Meeting.

h.) **City of Rockford, Public Works Department:** Whitman St. project is underway, the W. State is currently working on a right-of-way acquisition. Madison St. on track to start end of March or Early April.

i.) **Four Rivers Sanitary District** Mainline Sewer Lining and Sanitary Lining projects on track for service laterals in Rockford and parts of Machesney and Love Park for June-August.

j.) **IDOT, District 2**: No Report

k.) **Rockford Mass Transit District:** No Report

l.) **Machesney Park, Public Works Department:** No Report

m.) **Village of Roscoe:** Picking up design of residential roadways project near Hodges (near Elevator Rd. Will be in beginning process of developing a "long-overdue" Capital Improvement Plan, which should be read for the September Board meeting.

n.) **Winnebago County Community & Economic Development:** No Report

o.) **Winnebago County Highway Department:** Owen Center project open for bids, to close next month. Working with Cherry Valley on resurfacing of Mulford Rd from Blackhawk Rd to Linden, and Linden Rd from Mulford to Perryville Rd. Working with Village of New Milford on Water Main project and will be meeting with sanitation regarding project.

p.) **Winnebago County Soil & Water Conservation:** n/a

q.) **FHWA, IL Division**: No Report

r.) **IDOT, Division of Urban Planning and Programming:** There will be no external call for Statewide Planning Projects this year, all projects will need to be held for next year.

s.) **IL Tollway:** No Report

8) Other Business

No other business was discussed.

9) Adjournment

Mr. Verbeke entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Molina, Winnebago County Highway Department motioned; seconded by Mr. Carter, City of Rockford, Public Works. A unanimous vote to adjourn at 10:56 am

Meeting minutes prepare by: Sarah Renicker

Minutes approved by action of the Board: _____

REGION 1 PLANNING COUNCIL
MPO POLICY COMMITTEE

MPO RESOLUTION 2025-06

RE: **Adoption of the Illinois Department of Transportation Five-year Functional Classification Route Revisions/Region 1 Planning Council Functional Classification System**

WHEREAS the Federal Highway Act of 1962, as amended, and the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, as amended, provides for an urban transportation planning process; and

WHEREAS the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) currently authorizes funding to improve our nation's transportation system for highways, highway safety, public transit, alternative non-motorized forms of transportation, and freight; and

WHEREAS the IIJA and its predecessors, require a long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) as well as Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); and

WHEREAS the Region 1 Planning Council is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Rockford Metropolitan Area, and the MPO Policy Committee has the specific responsibility to direct and administer the continuing urban transportation planning process; and

WHEREAS a result of the 2020 Decennial Census and the development of a new Adjusted Urbanized Area (Adjusted UA) and Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) for the R1 Region, the Functional Classification system for roadways was re-examined; and

WHEREAS the Functional Classification System is a hierarchical system developed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in 1995, that took the place of the previous classification system of Federal Aid Primary (FAP), Federal Aid Secondary (FAS) and Federal Aid Urban (FAU); and

WHEREAS the Functional Classification system is used to indicate what roadways are eligible to receive federal funding and roadways are determined to be eligible for federal funding if they are classified as higher than a local road or street in the R1 region; and

WHEREAS development patterns change, new roads are built, upgraded or improved, and thus traffic patterns shift creating the need to update, change, or add roadways to the list of functionally classified roadways; and

WHEREAS the updated Functional Classification system is needed for the coordination and development of planning activities for the R1 Region within the Long-Range Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Plan and other MPO related documents as required by the United States Department of Transportation and Current Transportation Law; and

WHEREAS FHWA & IDOT last approved the Functional Classification System in February 2023; and

WHEREAS the Illinois Department of Transportation has proposed the 2024 Five-Year Functional Classification route revisions in Boone County, Ogle County, Winnebago County, and have asked R1 and local jurisdictions to review information on marked routes, and key route changes, length of roadway, map ID numbers, and justification for change; and

WHEREAS the full list of IDOT proposed updates to the Functional Classification system for Boone, Ogle, and Winnebago Counties, and accompanying Maps with reference numbers is depicted in **Exhibit A**; and

WHEREAS the R1 Technical Committee recommends the adoption of the IDOT proposed updated Five-Year Functional Classification system including the comments received by IDOT and outlined in Appendix A, as well as the full list as displayed in Appendix B, by the Division of Highways, Region 2, District 2, of the Illinois Department of Transportation and reviewed for accuracy by the Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The R1 Policy Committee adopts the IDOT Proposed Five-Year Functional Classification System Update (date 1/03/2025) reviewed by R1 staff and as outlined in the maps and tables provided; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

that R1 staff is instructed to transmit this Resolution to the appropriate local, State and Federal authorities; and

that the MPO Policy Committee directs the MPO, through the comprehensive, cooperative and continuing (3C) transportation planning process, to plan for and program projects that contribute to the accomplishment of said targets.

We hereby certify the foregoing has been approved by a majority of the MPO Policy Committee Members on this 2nd day of May 2025.

Chairman Joseph V. Chiarelli MPO Chair	Chairman Karl Johnson MPO Vice-Chair

Number of members authorized to vote _____

Ayes _____ Nays _____ Abstain_____

Attachment A

Illinois Department of Transportation

Winnebago County Functional Classification Update Submittal Form

Map #	Inventory Number	Begin	End	Len	Road Name	From-To Location	Cur. FC	Prop. FC	Justification	Jurisdiction	Maintenance
1	101 20517 506110	0.00	0.16	0.16	Walton Rd	From Bell School Road to Dead End	5 - Major Collector	7 - Local Road	Dead End, with 2014 FC change IDOT was informed by the local agencies the road would connect at both ends in next 3-years	Municipality	Municipality
2	101 70005 000000	0.00	0.57	0.57	Shirland Ave	From Frederick St to Townline Rd	7 - Local Road	5 - Major Collector	Continuity with Wisconsin	Township	Township
3	101 01000 005400	0.00	0.65	0.65	State Line Rd	From Manchester Road to E of Willow Brook Rd	7 - Local Road	4 - Minor Arterial	Continuity with Wisconsin	Municipality	Municipality
		0.65	0.69	0.04						Private	Private
4	101 20501 000000	2.36	3.26	0.90	IL-75	From I-90 NB Ramps to Wisconsin State Line	3 - Other Arterial	4 - Minor Arterial	AADT similar to other minor arterials in the area.	IDOT	IDOT
5	101 31041 000000	1.54	7.93	6.39	Meridian Rd	From IL-75 to IL-70	5 - Major Collector	4 - Minor Arterial	AADT similar to other minor arterials in the area.	County	County
6	101 30043 000000	0.00	5.52	5.52	Cunningham Rd	From Pecatonica Rd to Elida St	5 - Major Collector	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	County	County
	101 95200 000000	0.00	0.50	0.50							
7	101 04100 004965	0.21	0.44	0.23	Milford Av	From Logistics Pkwy to IL-251 West Frontage Rd	7 - Local Road	6 - Minor Collector	System Continuity	Municipality	Municipality
8	101 70035 000000	0.00	1.01	1.01	Rockton Road	From White School Rd to Boone County Line	7 - Local Road	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	Township	Township
9	004 70002 000000	2.60	4.62	2.02	County Line Rd	From Rockton Road to Elevator Rd	7 - Local Road	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	Township	Township
10	101 99889 000000	0.96	1.72	0.76	Mc Curry Rd	From IL-251 to Willow Brook Rd	5 - Major Collector	4 - Minor Arterial	AADT similar to other minor arterials in the area.	County	County
11	101 99888A000000	0.00	1.00	1.00	Willow Brook Rd	From Mc Curry Rd to Elevator Rd	4 - Minor Arterial	5 - Major Collector	AADT similar to other major collectors in the area.	Municipality	Municipality
12	101 95002 000000	0.00	1.16	1.16	Love Road	From Rockton Rd to Elevator Rd	5 - Major Collector	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	Municipality	Municipality
		1.16	1.23	0.07						Township	Township
		1.23	1.37	0.14						Municipality	Municipality
		1.37	2.18	0.81						Township	Township
13	101 50064 000000	0.00	3.07	3.07	Old River Rd	From Roscoe Rd to Latham Rd	7 - Local Road	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	County	County
14	101 95213 000000	0.00	0.76	0.76	Crockett Rd	From Elevator Rd to Atwood	5 - Major Collector	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	Township	Township
	101 95212 000000	2.51	2.76	0.25	Burr Oak						
15	101 95146 000000	0.00	1.40	1.40	Forest Hills Rd	From IL-251 to IL-173	5 - Major Collector	4 - Minor Arterial	AADT similar to other minor arterials in the area.	Municipality	Municipality
16	101 95139 000000	1.49	1.99	0.50	Elm Ave	From Windsor Rd to Clifford Ave	5 - Major Collector	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	Municipality	Municipality
17	101 95168 000000	0.00	0.50	0.50	Material Ave	From Windsor Rd to Riverside Blvd	5 - Major Collector	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	Municipality	Municipality

Illinois Department of Transportation

Winnebago County Functional Classification Update Submittal Form

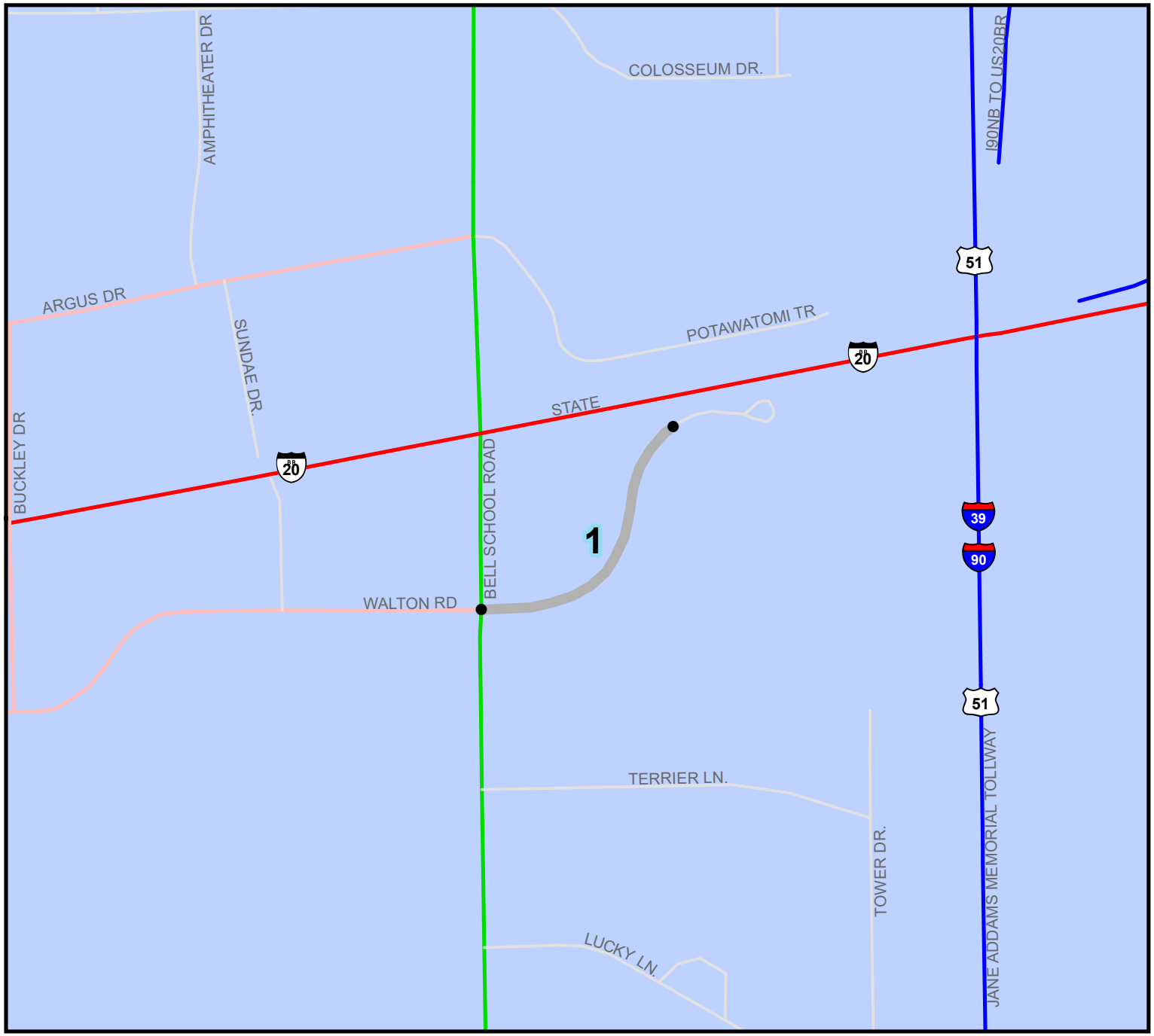
Map #	Inventory Number	Begin	End	Len	Road Name	From-To Location	Cur. FC	Prop. FC	Justification	Jurisdiction	Maintenance
18	101 95138 000000	0.00	0.49	0.49	Walker Ave	From Clifford Ave to River Ln	5 - Major Collector	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	Municipality	Municipality
19	101 95070 000000	0.69	2.52	1.83	Pepper Dr	From Alpine to Mulford Rd	5 - Major Collector	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	Municipality	Municipality
20	101 95060 000000	0.00	0.59	0.59	Rural	From IL-251 NB Ramp to Parkview Ave	4 - Minor Arterial	5 - Major Collector	AADT similar to other major collectors in the area.	Municipality	Municipality
	101 95058 000000	0.00	0.63	0.63	Guilford Rd						
21	101 95141 000000	0.00	0.56	0.56	Chelsea	From High Crest Rd to Guilford Rd	4 - Minor Arterial	5 - Major Collector	AADT similar to other major collectors in the area.	Municipality	Municipality
22	101 95136 000000	0.00	0.50	0.50	Welty Ave	From Rural to US-20 Bus	5 - Major Collector	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	Municipality	Municipality
23	101 95110 000000	0.00	0.65	0.65	Court St	From Whitman St to State Street	5 - Major Collector	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	Municipality	Municipality
24	101 02834A004965	0.47	1.48	1.01	Mulberry	From Johnston Ave to Avon St	5 - Major Collector	7 - Local Road	Route AADT too low to be classified.	Municipality	Municipality
25	101 95101 000000	0.00	0.80	0.80	Johnston Ave	From Auburn St to US-20 Bus	5 - Major Collector	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	Municipality	Municipality
26	101 95106 000000	5.38	5.74	0.36	IL-70	From Whitman St to Chestnut Ave Wye	4 - Minor Arterial	5 - Major Collector	AADT similar to other major collectors in the area.	IDOT	IDOT and Municipality
	101 20303 107260	1.39	1.54	0.15							
27	101 95158 000000	0.00	0.15	0.15	Ogilby Rd	From Montague Rd to Central Ave	5 - Major Collector	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	Township	Township
		0.15	0.24	0.09						Municipality	Municipality
		0.24	0.28	0.04						Township	Township
		0.28	0.87	0.59						Municipality	Municipality
28	101 95111 000000	1.42	2.18	0.76	Airport Dr	From Kishwaukee St to 11th St	5 - Major Collector	4 - Minor Arterial	AADT similar to other minor arterials in the area.	Municipality	Municipality
29	101 95128 502110	0.28	1.28	1.00	IL-251 West Frontage Rd	From Samuelson Rd to Blackhawk Rd	7 - Local Road	6 - Minor Collector	AADT similar to other minor collectors in the area.	IDOT	IDOT
30	101 09002 004965	0.00	0.54	0.54	Mercy Way	From Riverside Blvd to Spring Creek Rd	7 - Local Road	6 - Minor Collector	New construction for access to a new hospital.	Municipality	Municipality
	101 09002A004965	0.00	0.05	0.05							
	101 70212A000000	0.00	0.50	0.50	Lyford Rd					Township	Township
31	101 95111A000000	0.00	0.04	0.04	Airport Dr		7 - Local Road	4 - Minor Arterial	AADT similar to other minor arterials in the area.	Municipality	Municipality

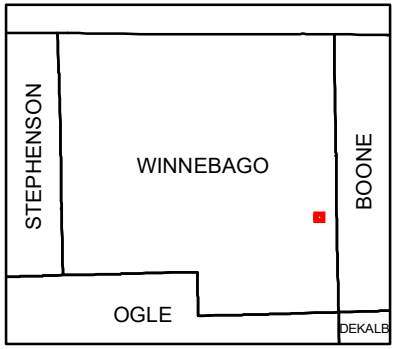
WINNEBAGO COUNTY - Functional Classification Updates

Legend

- 1 Interstate
- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
- 5 Major Collector
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 1





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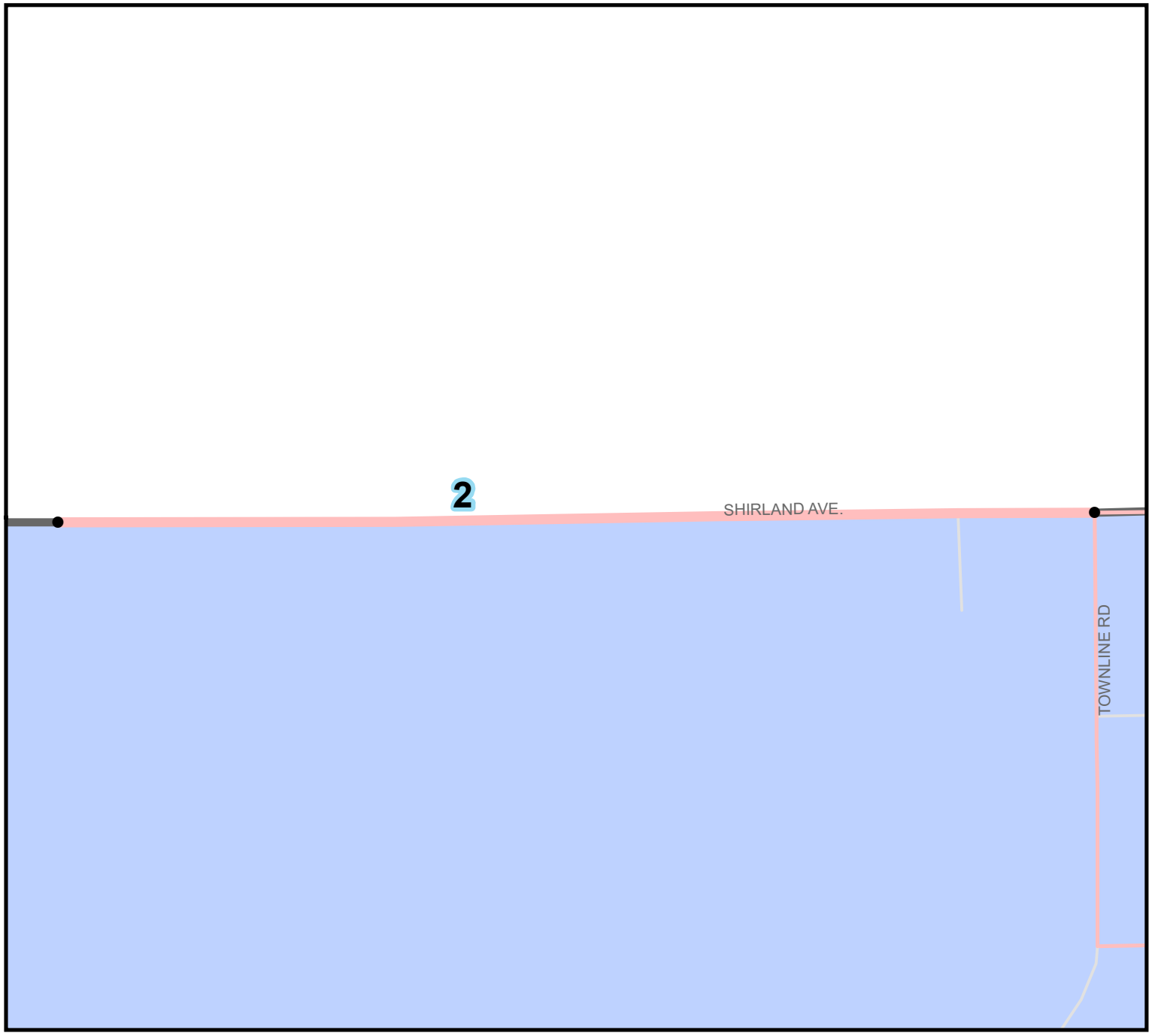
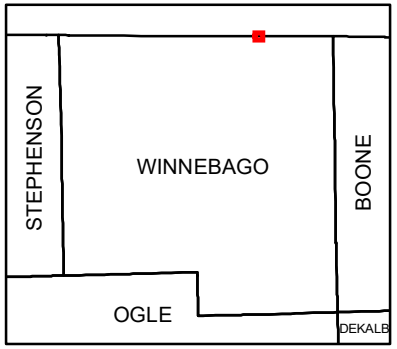
Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 2





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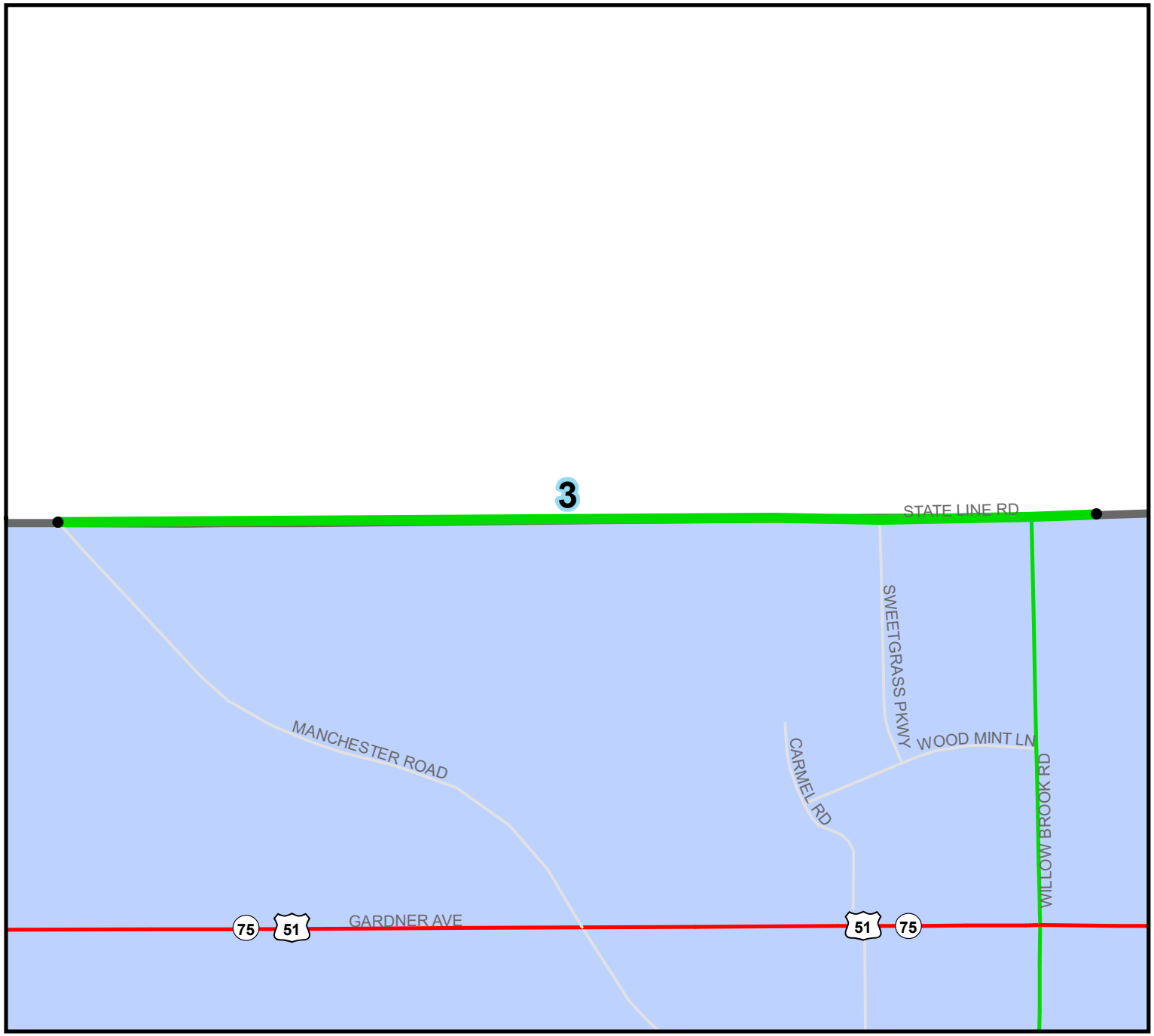
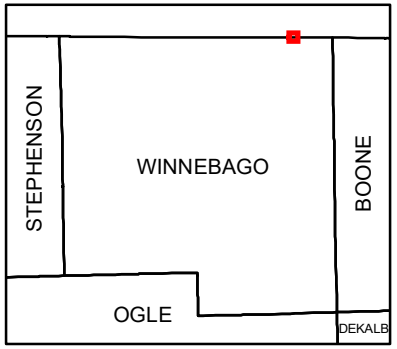
Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 3





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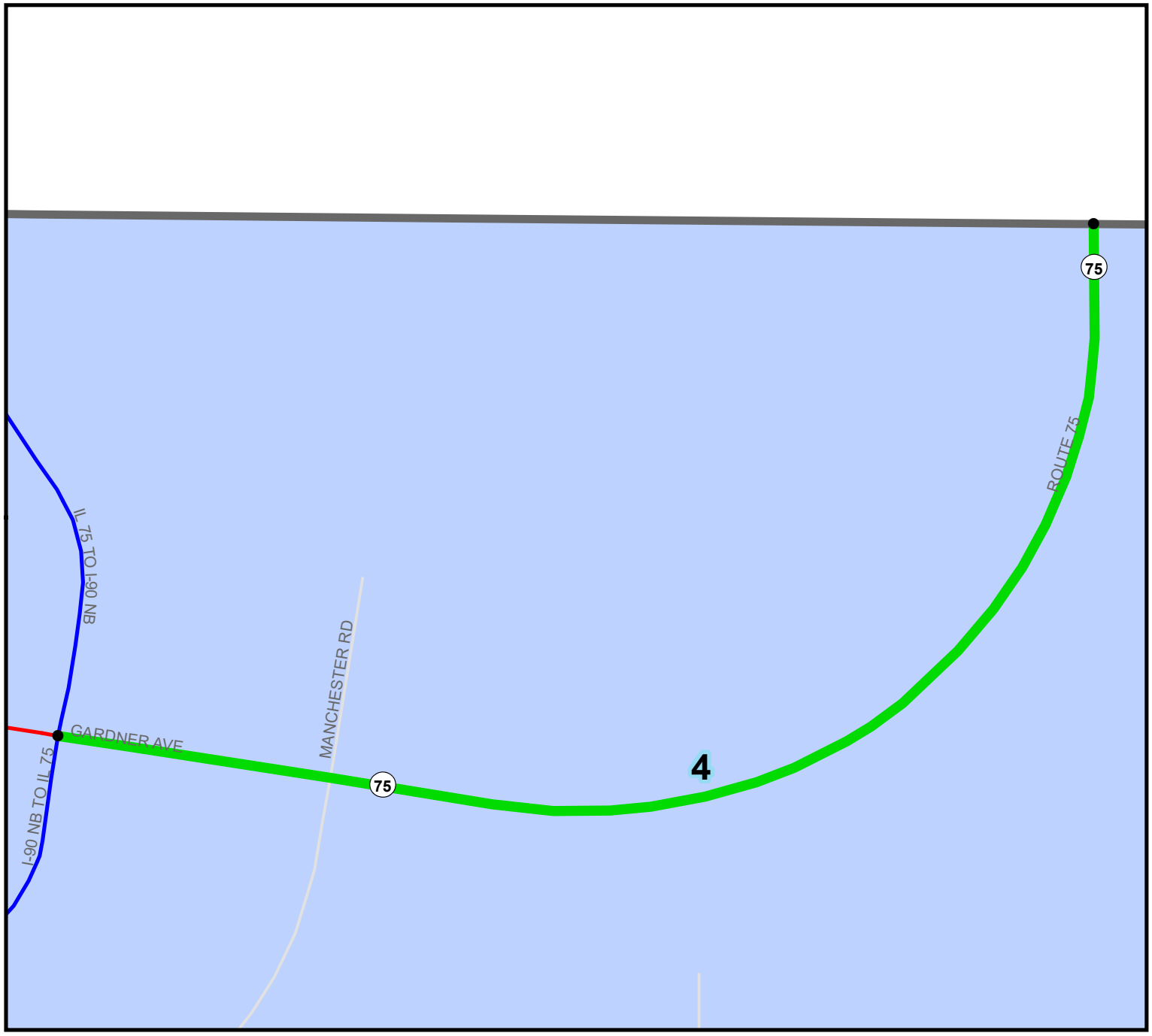
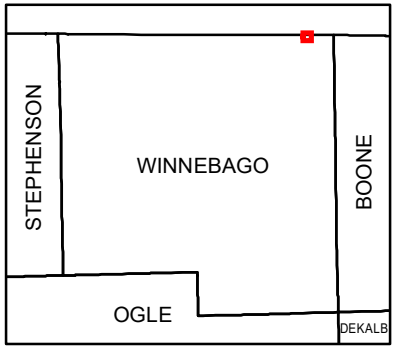
Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 4





Legend

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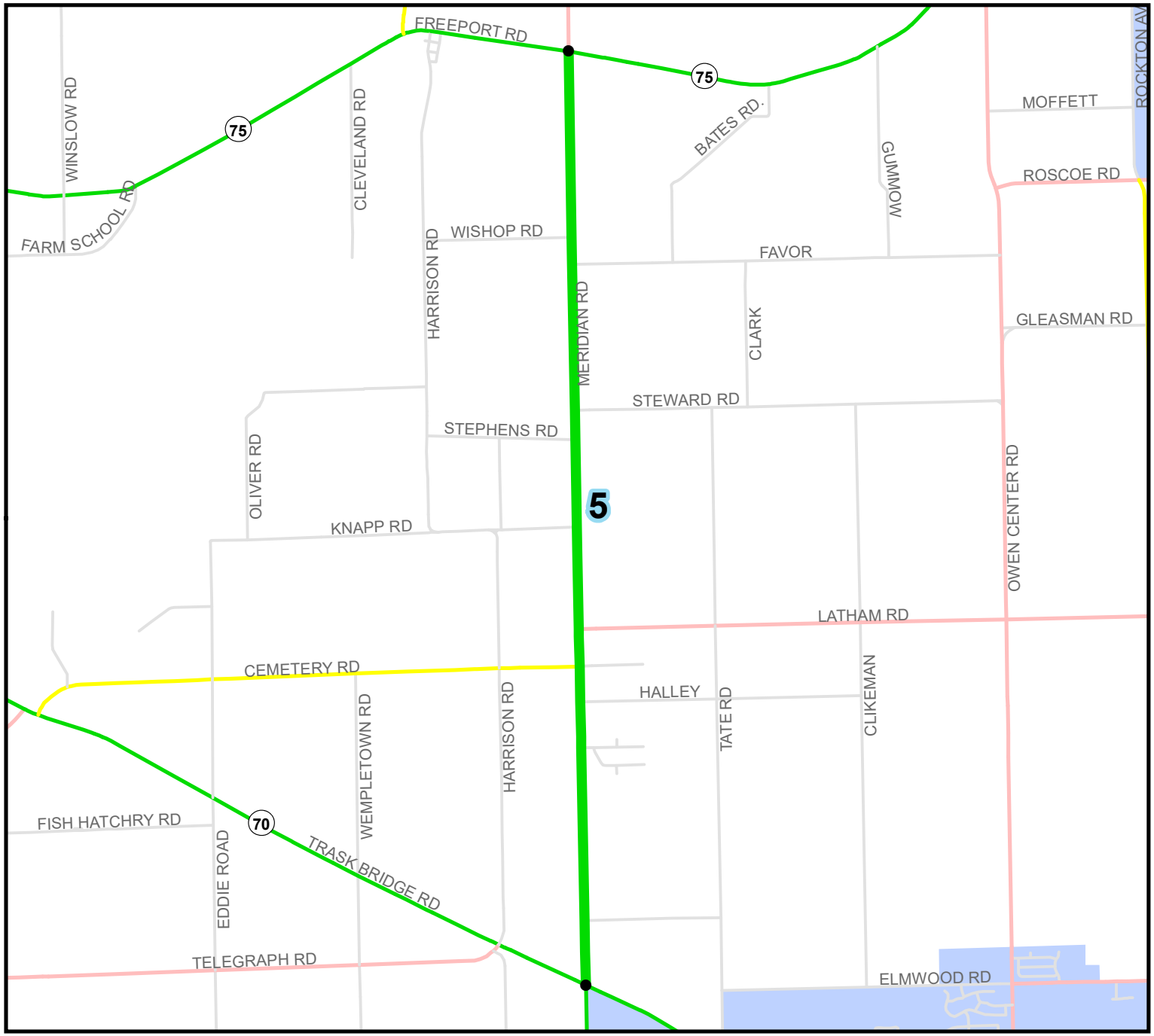
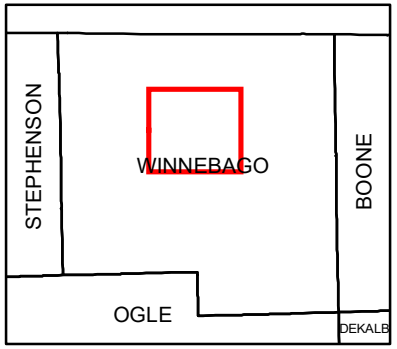
Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 5





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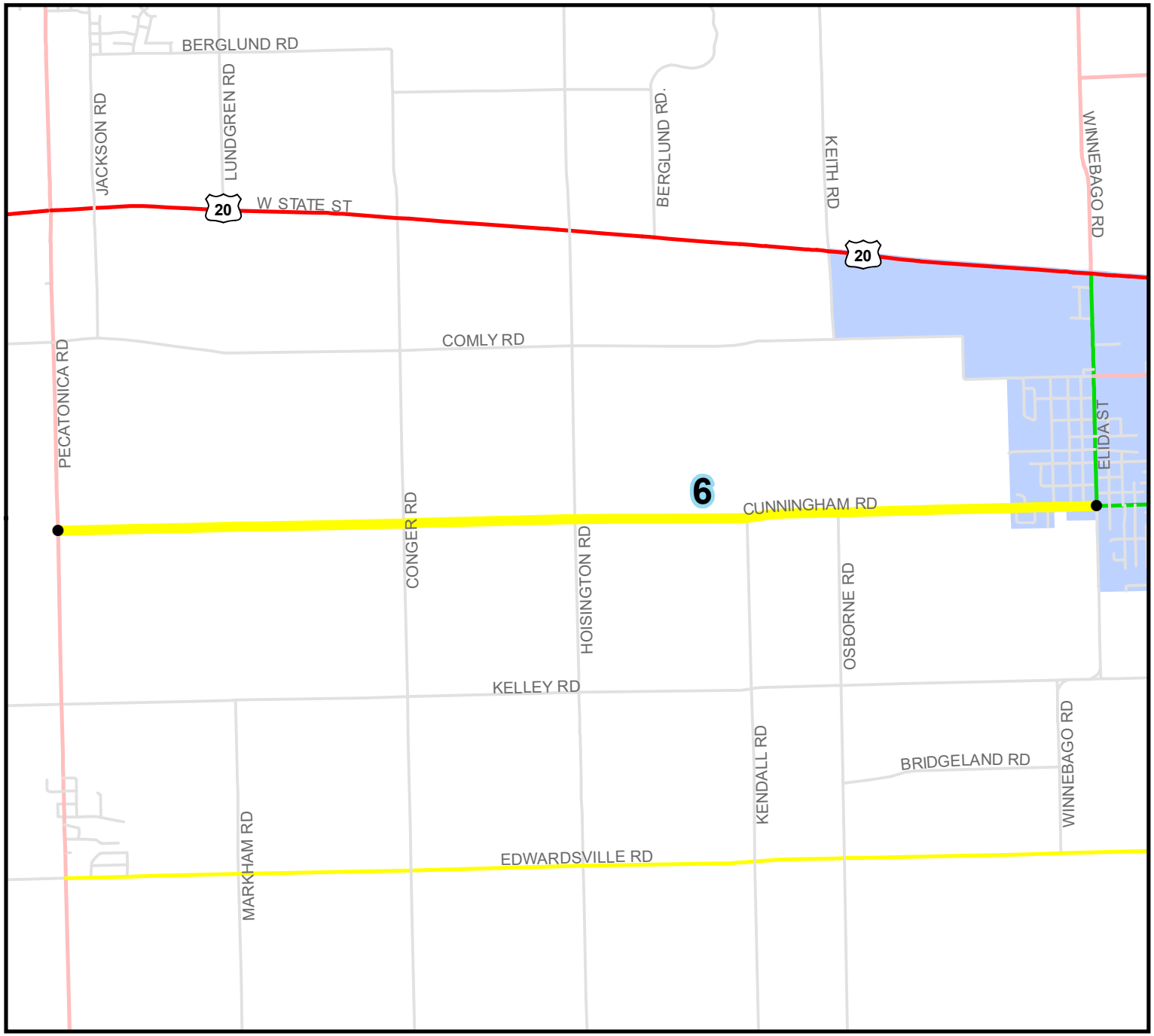
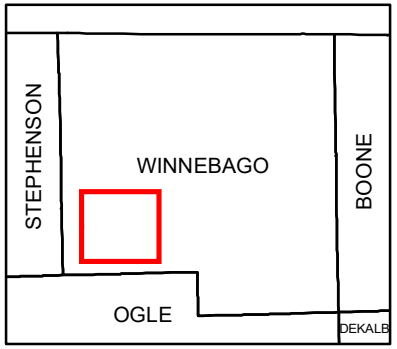
Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 6

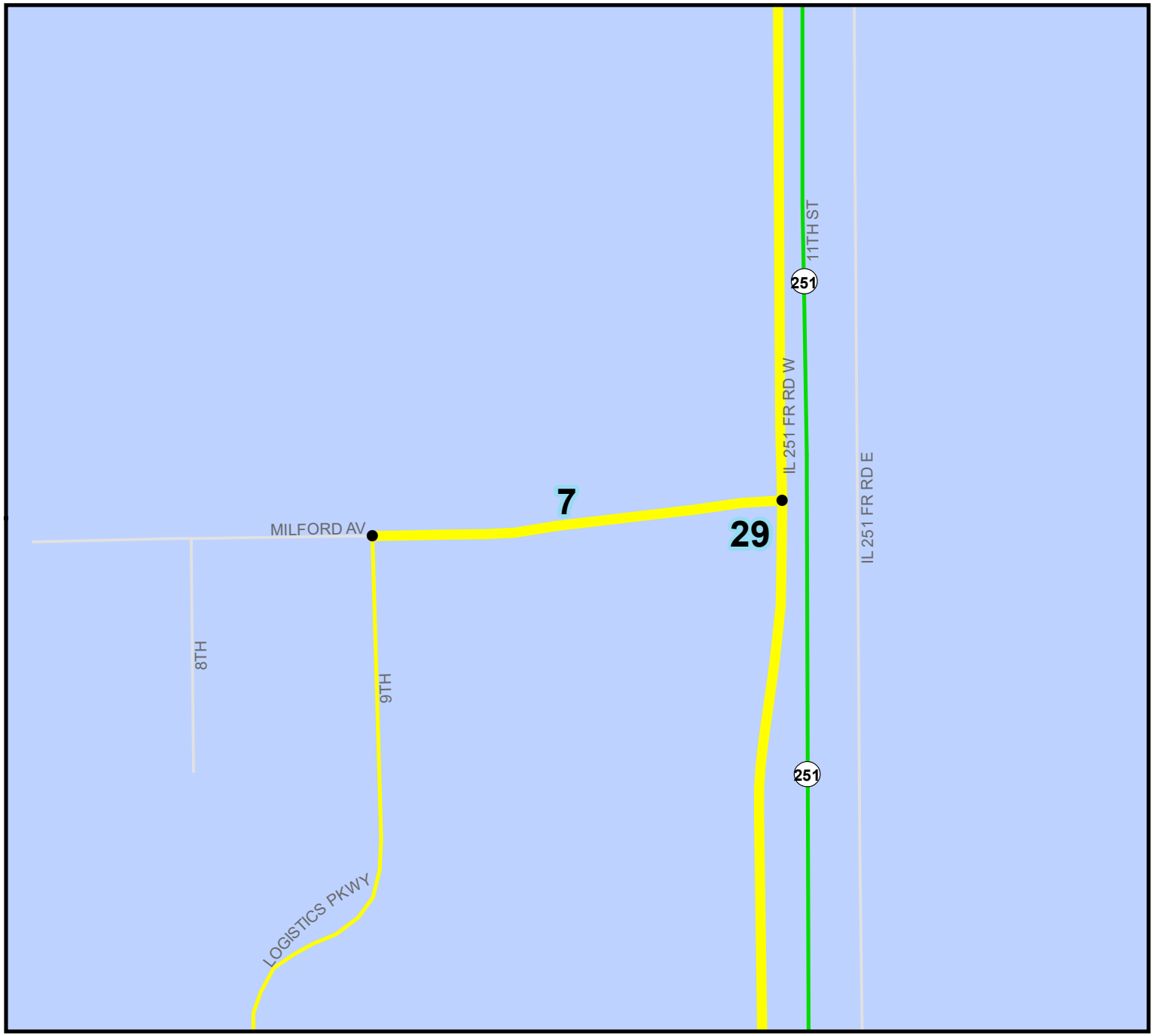


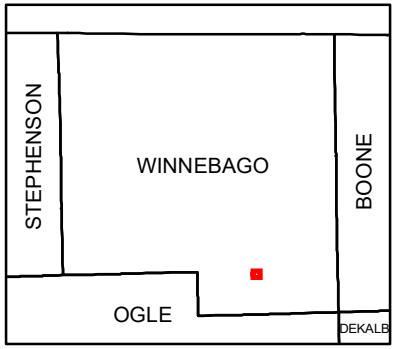


Legend

- 1 Interstate
- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
- 5 Major Collector
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 7

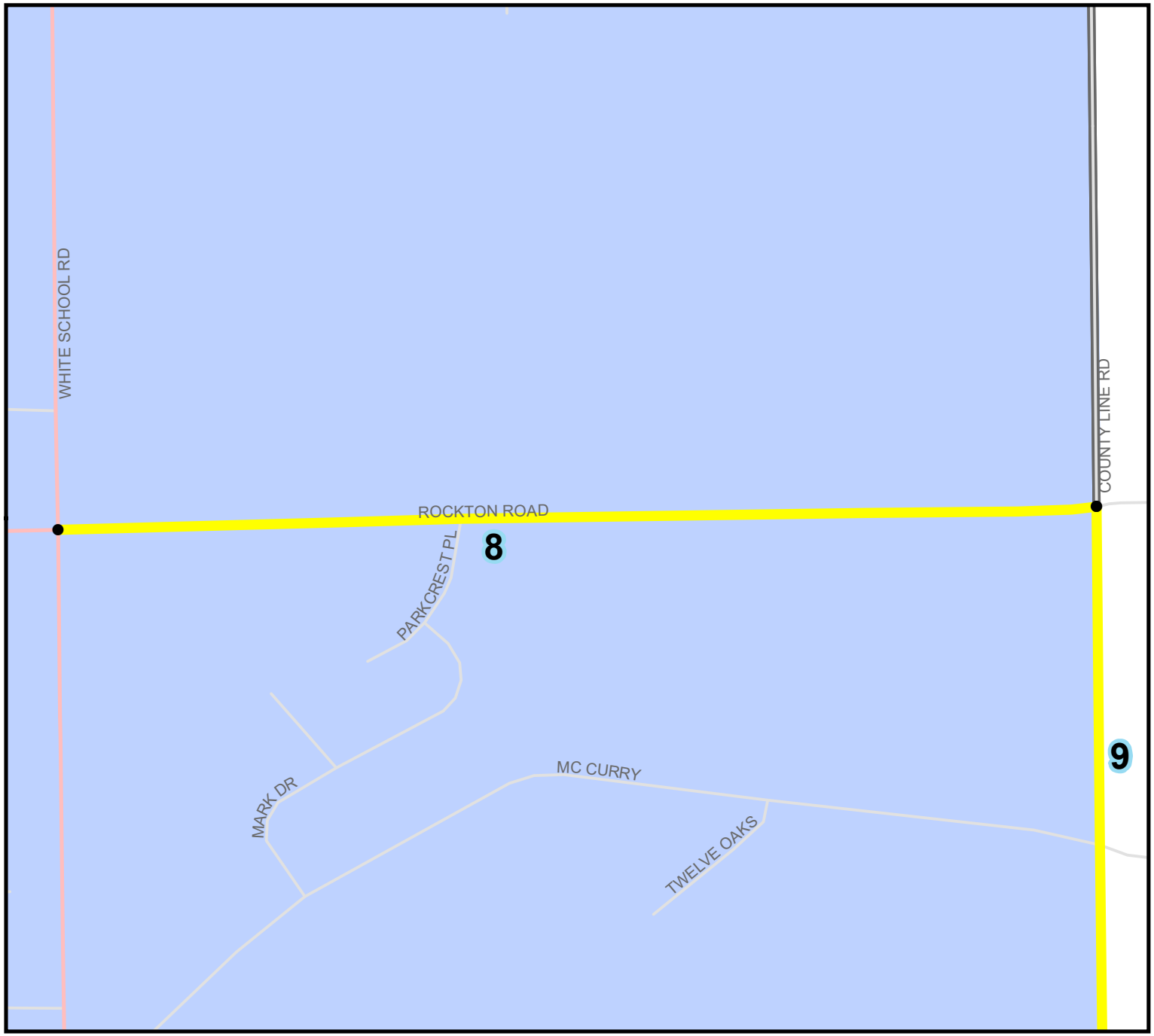


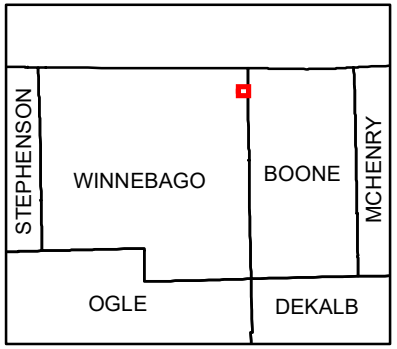


Legend

- 1 Interstate
- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
- 5 Major Collector
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 8

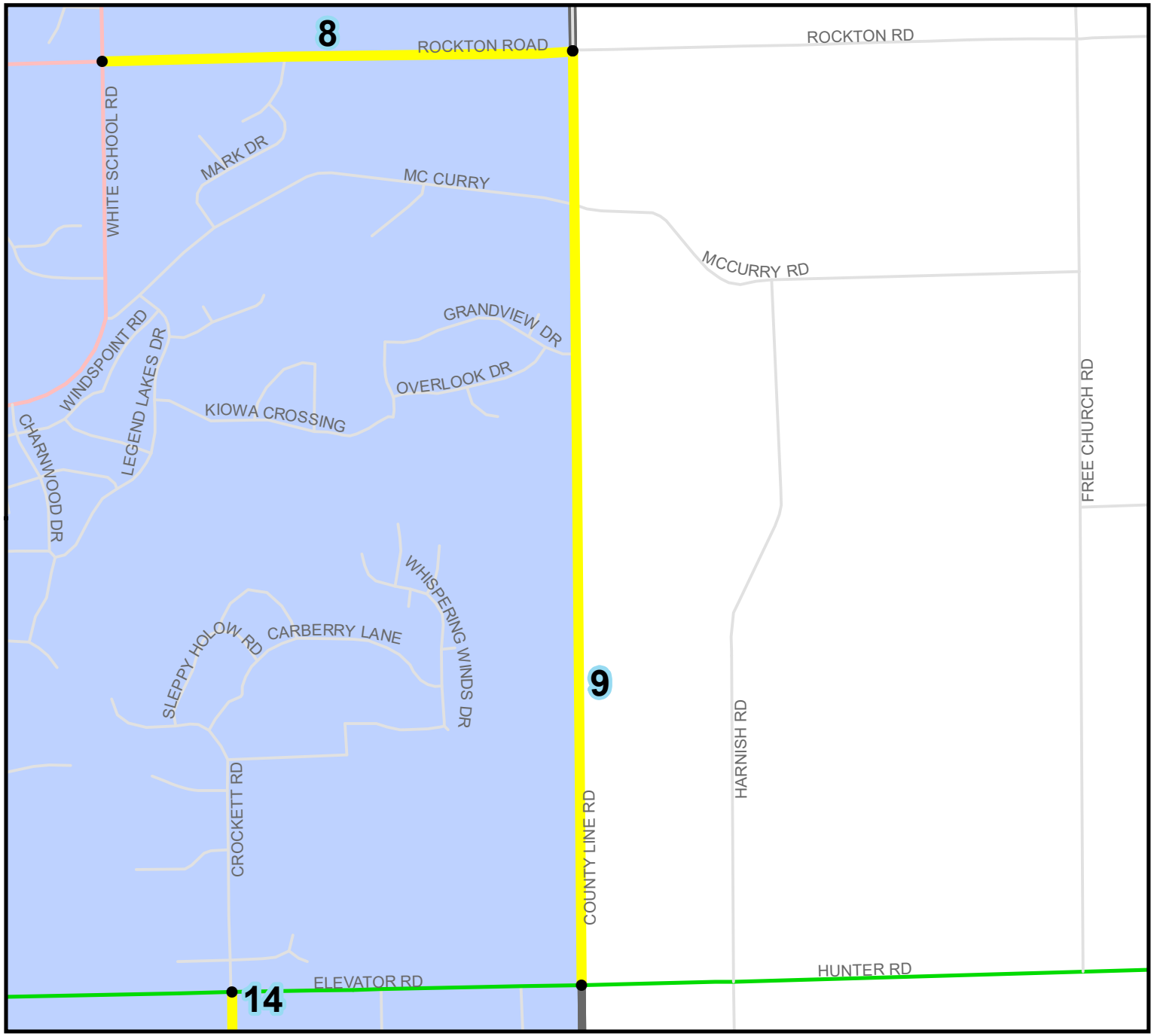


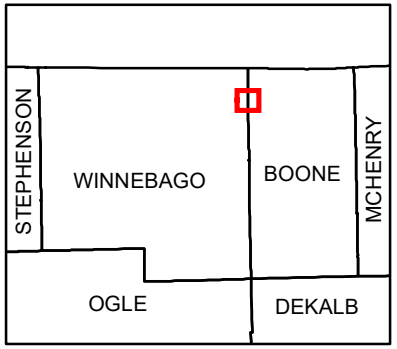


Legend

- 1 Interstate
- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
- 5 Major Collector
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 9

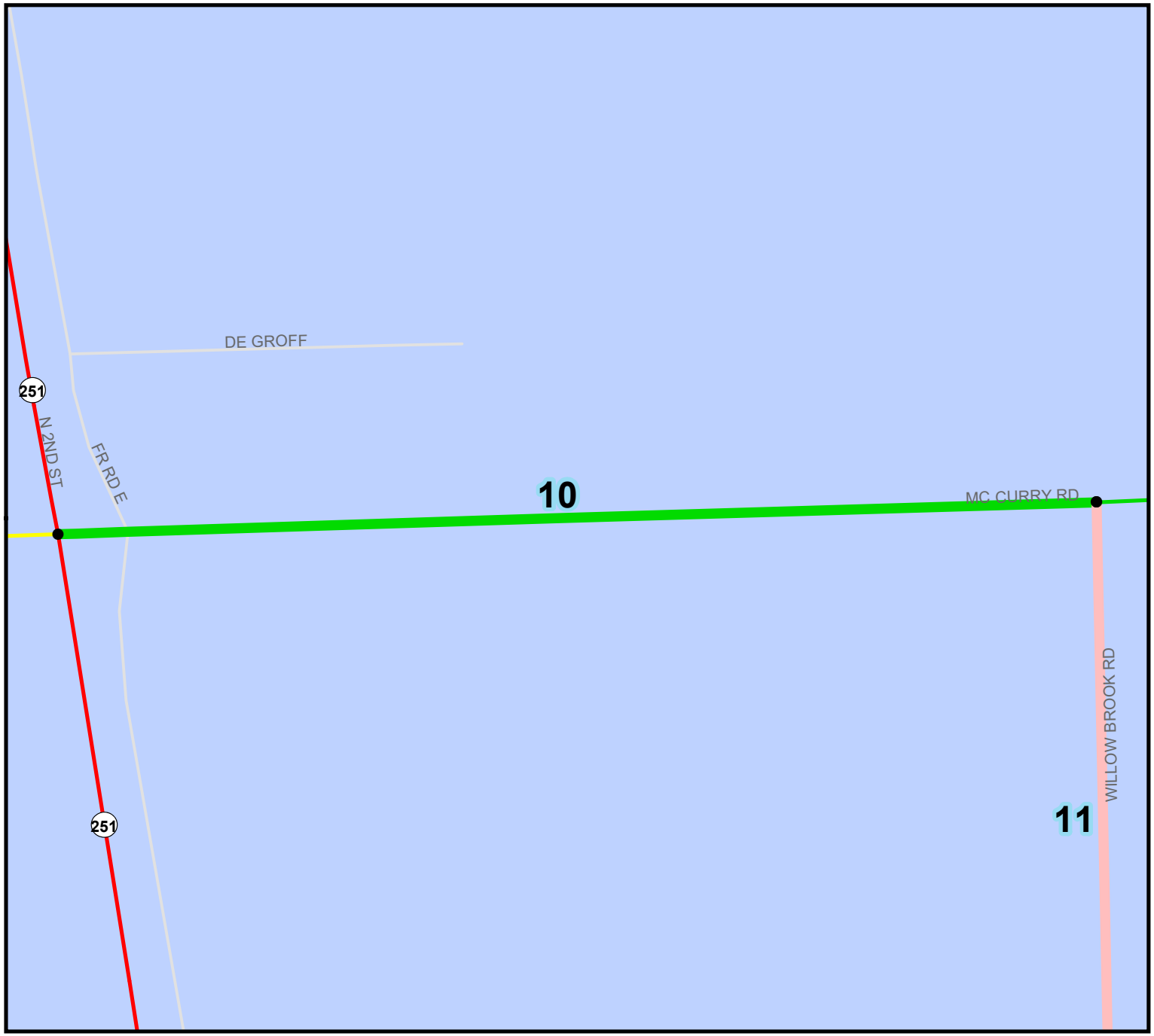


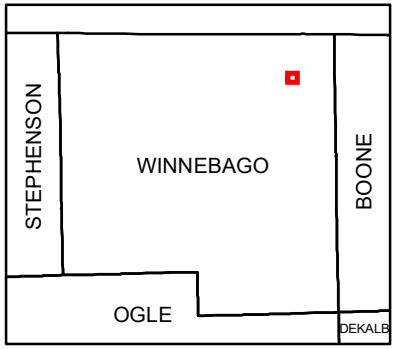


Legend

- 1 Interstate
- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
- 5 Major Collector
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 10





Legend

- 1 Interstate
- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
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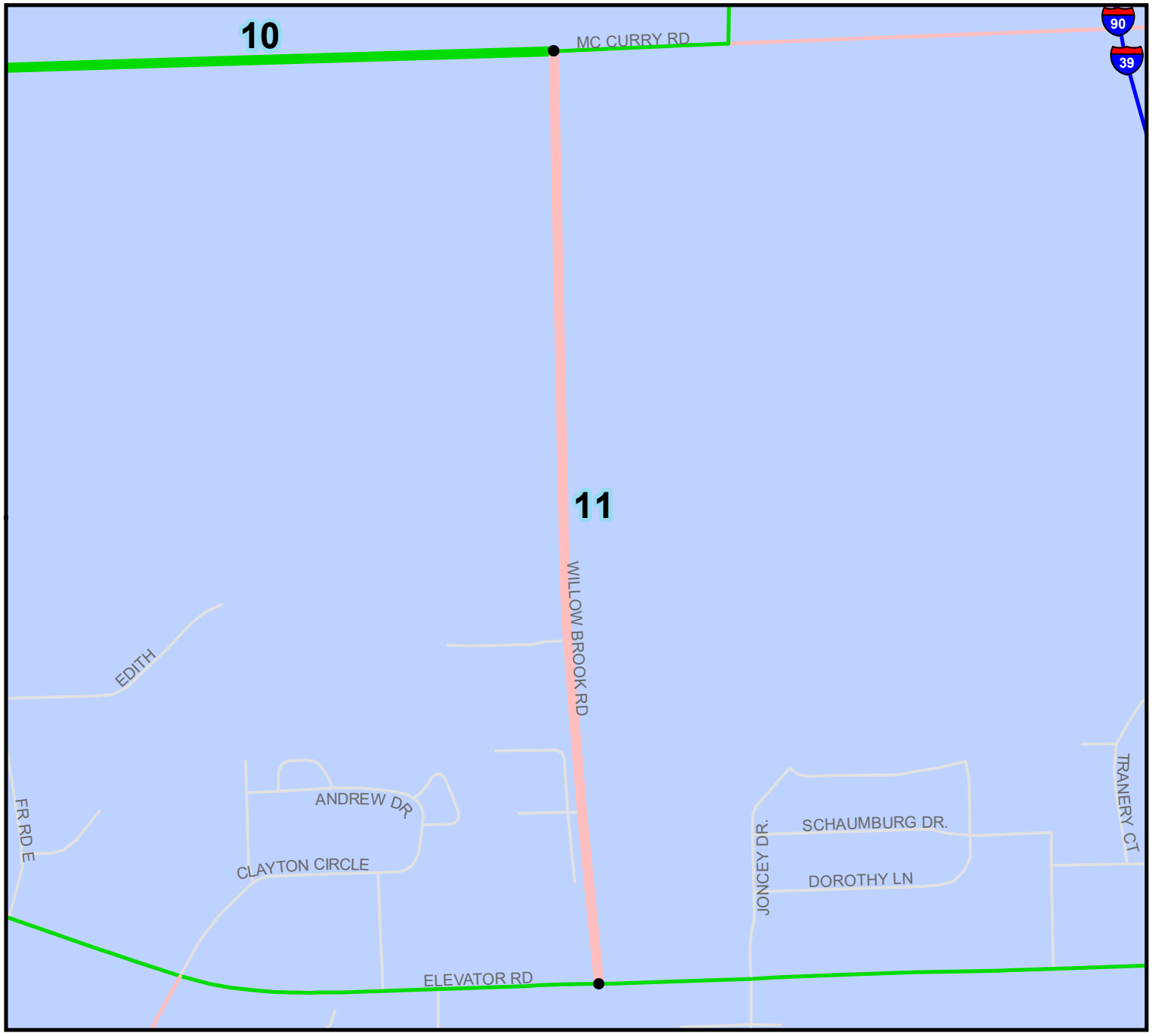
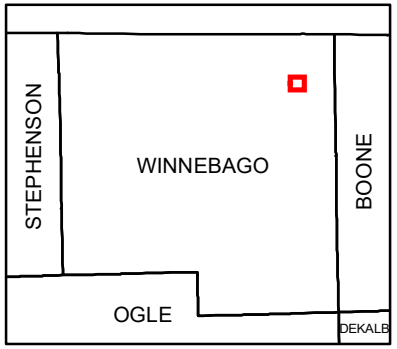
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 11





Legend

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- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
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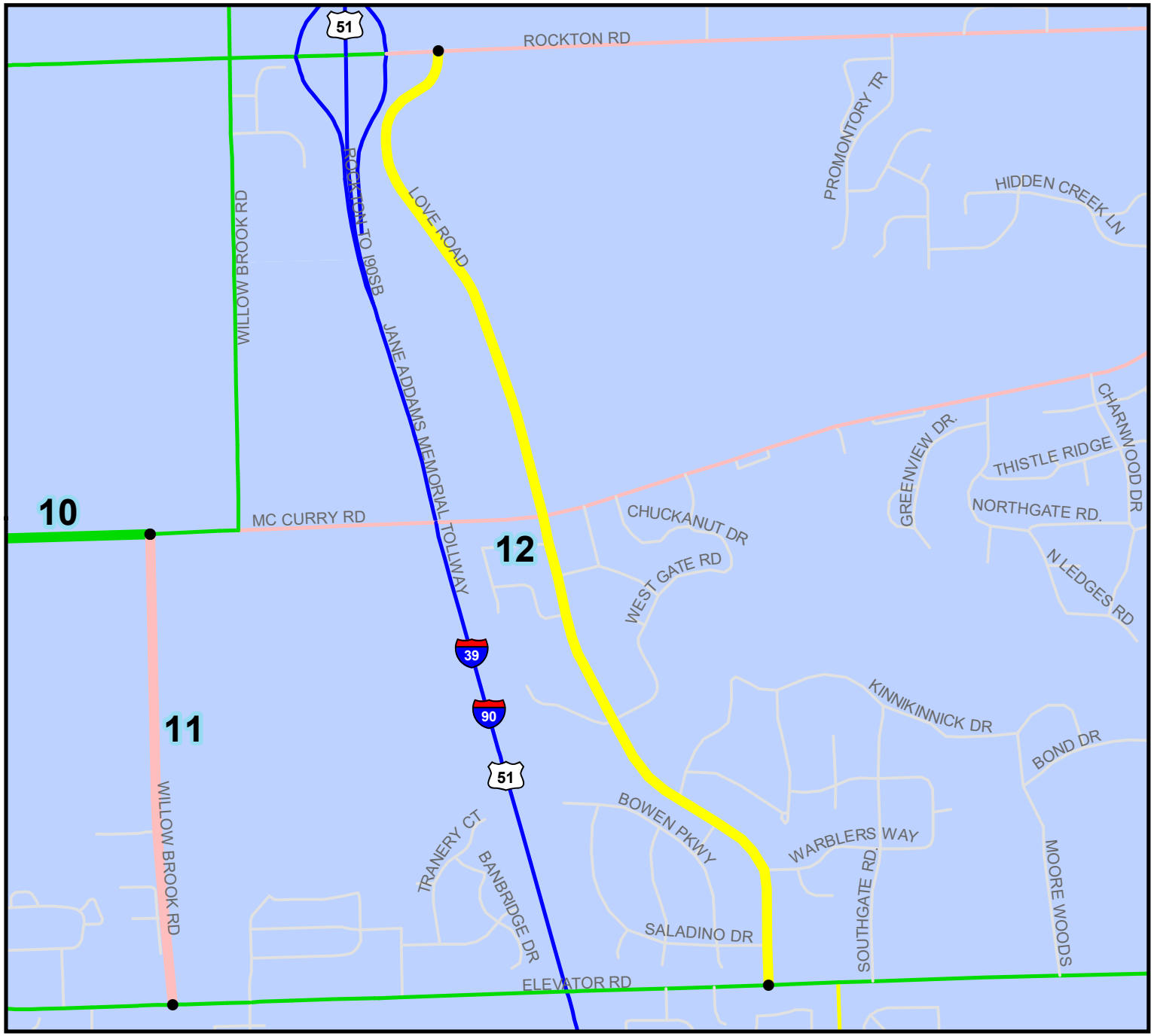
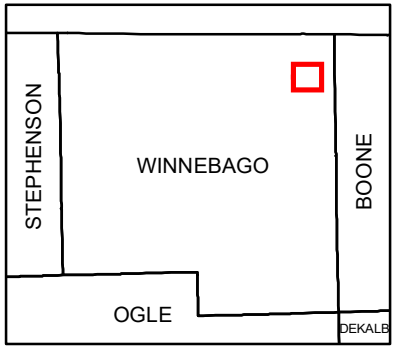
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 12





Legend

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- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
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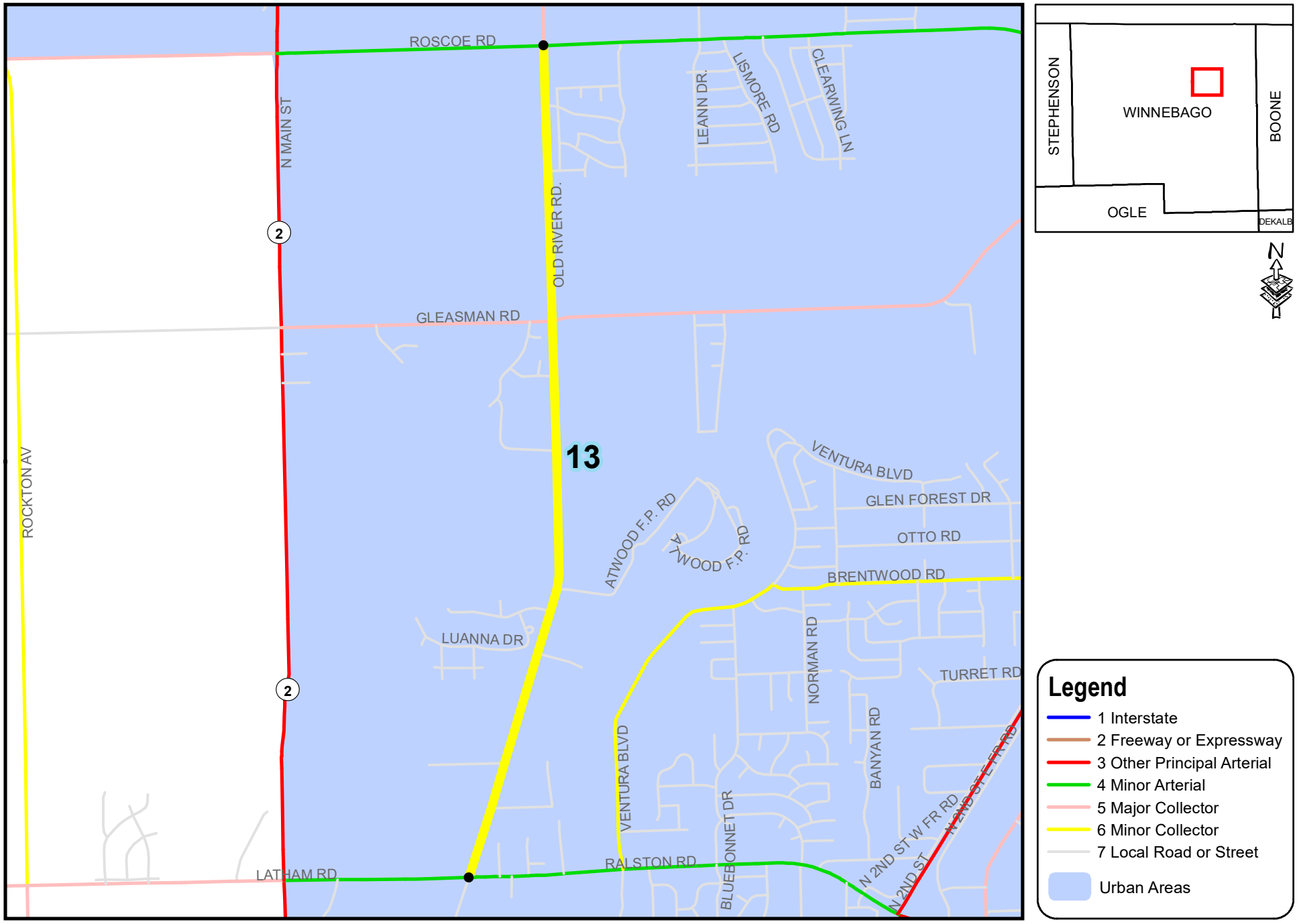
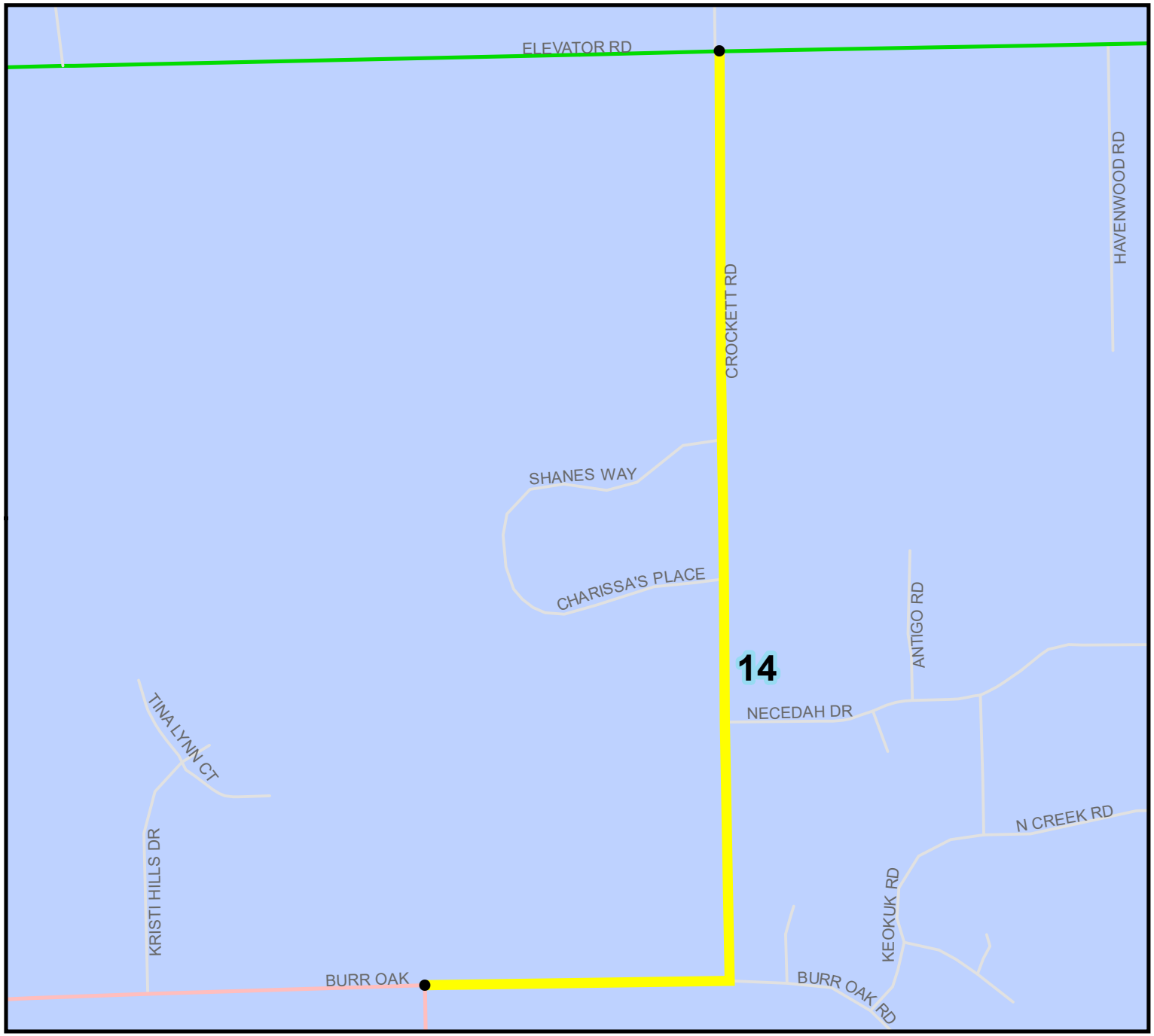
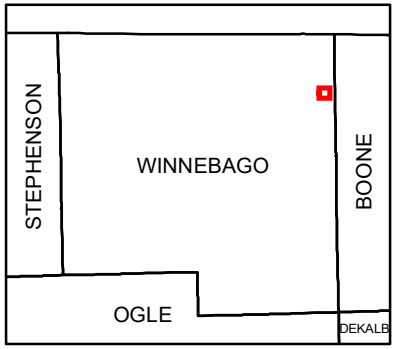
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 13



Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 14





Legend

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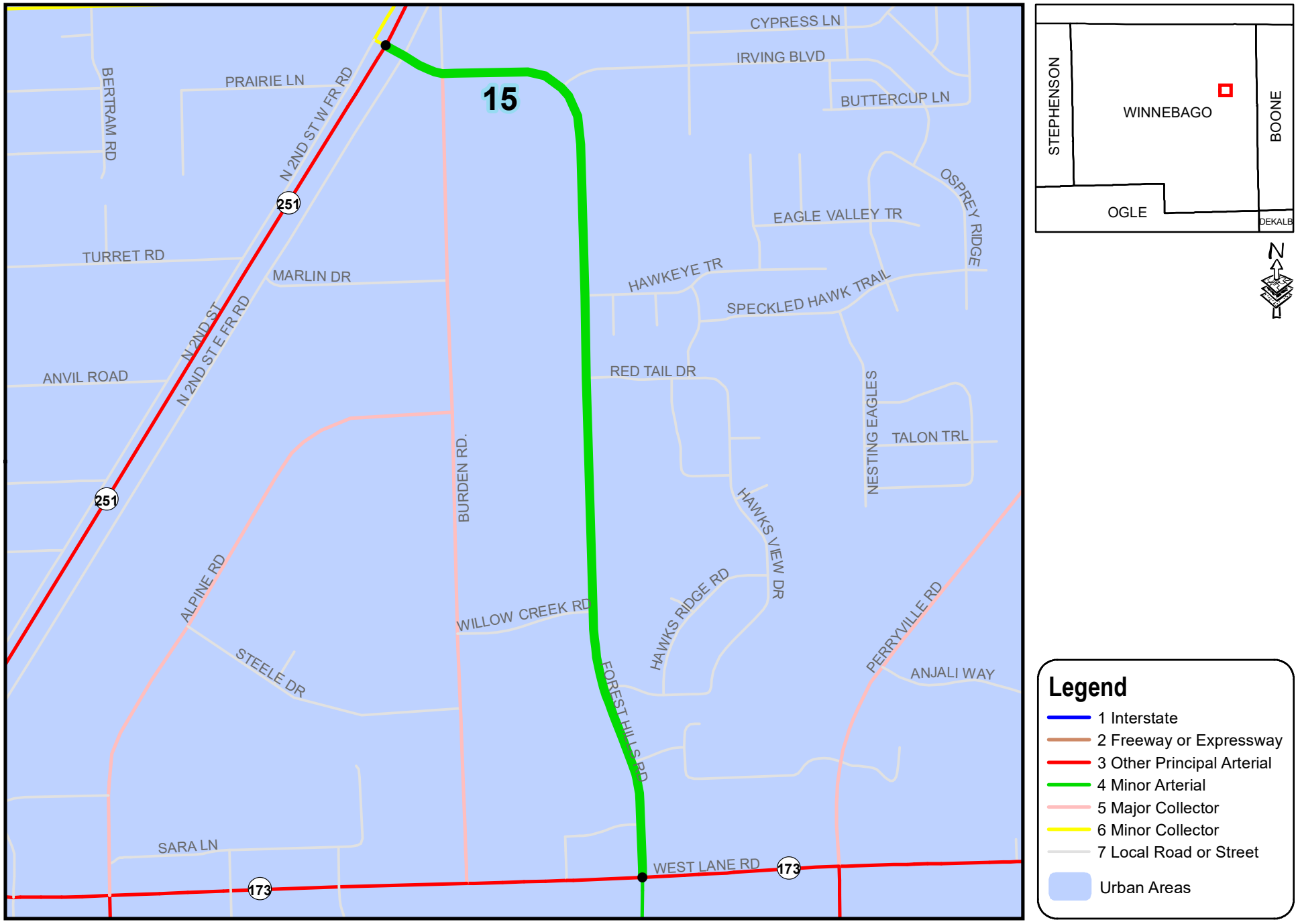
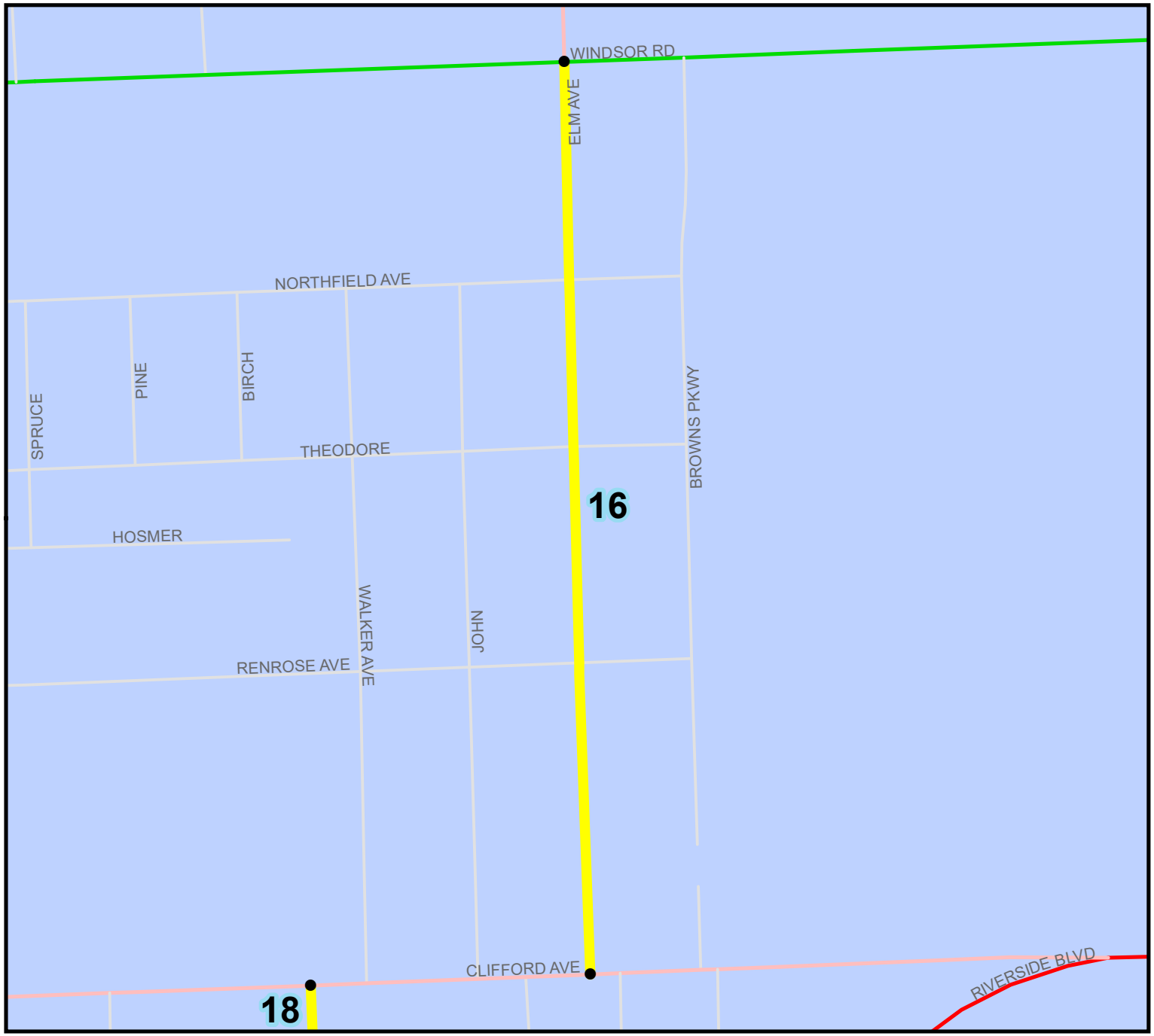
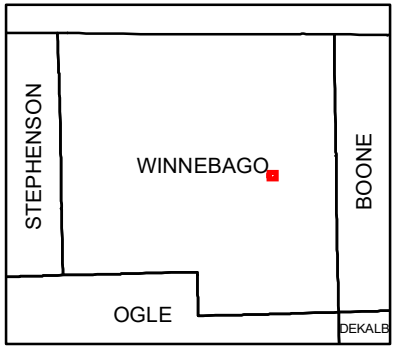
- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
- 5 Major Collector
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 15



Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 16



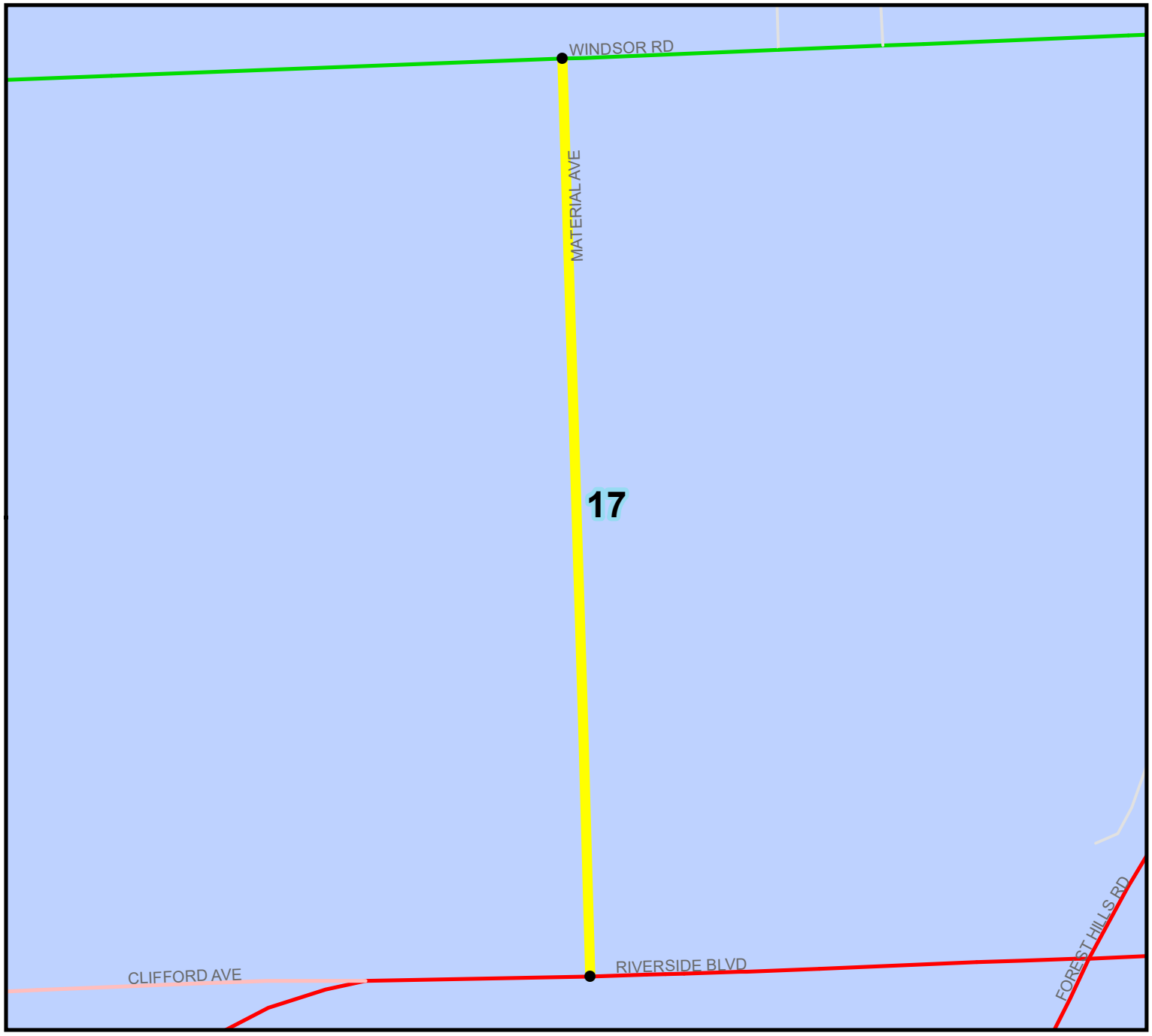


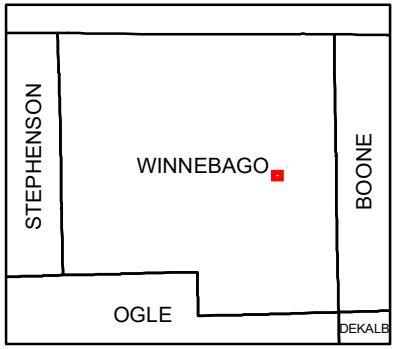
N

Legend

- 1 Interstate
- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
- 5 Major Collector
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 17





Legend

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- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
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- 6 Minor Collector
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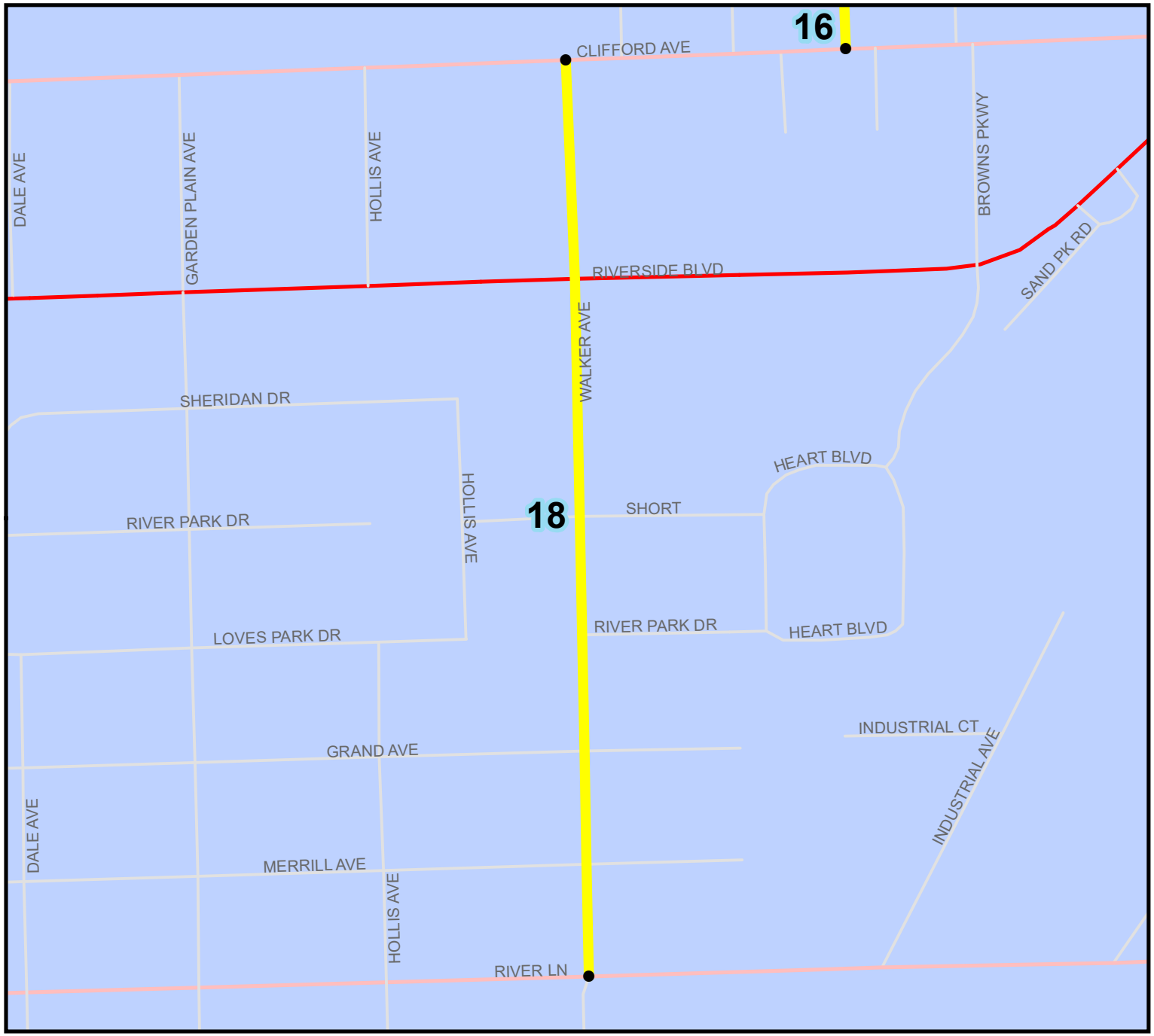
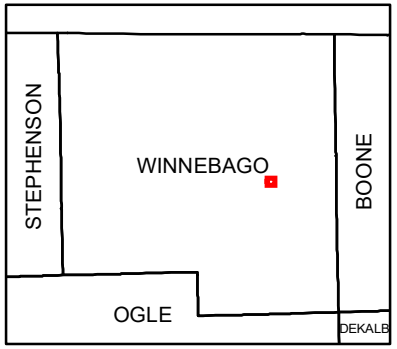
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 18





Legend

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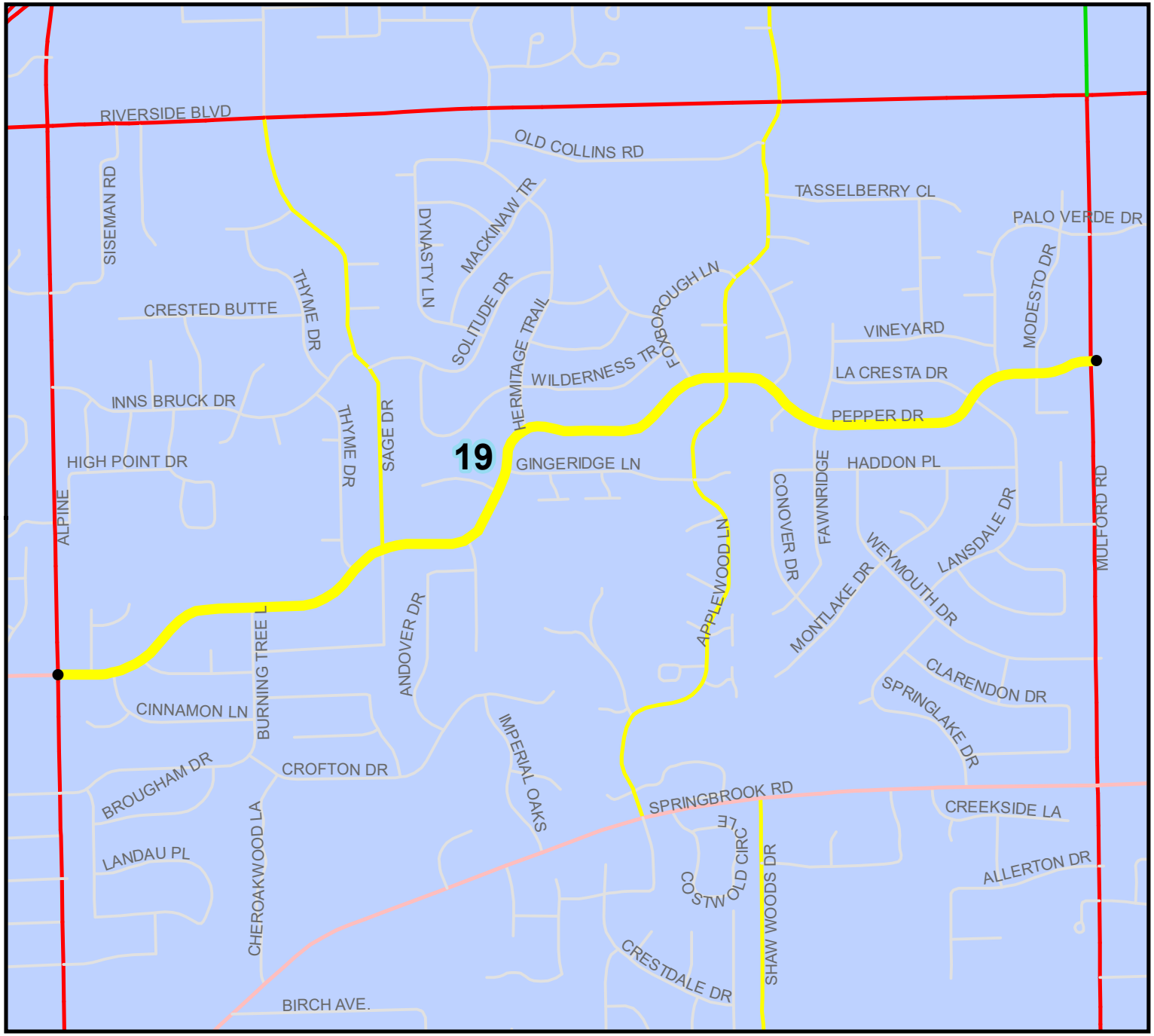
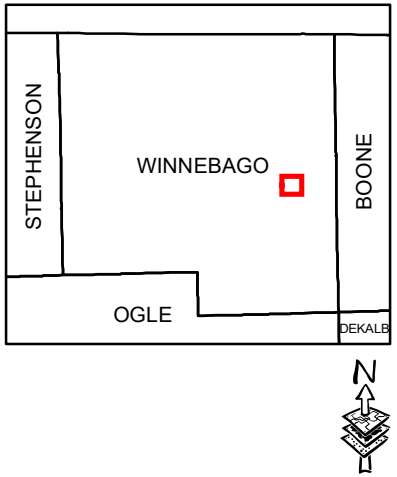
- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
- 5 Major Collector
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 19





Legend

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- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
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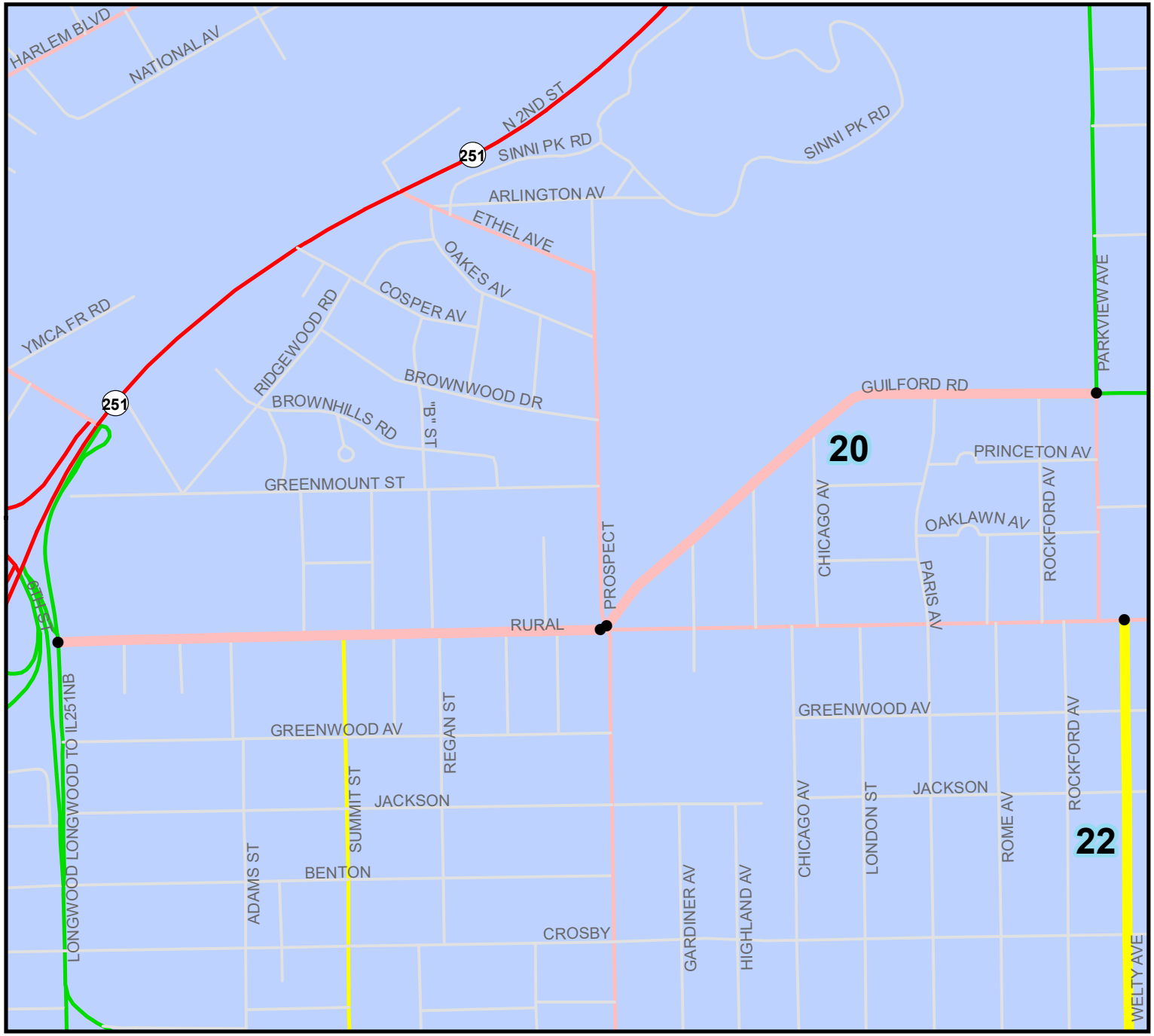
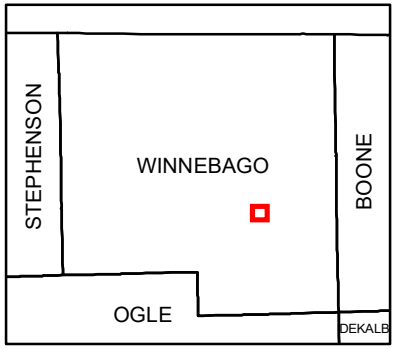
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 20





Legend

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- 2 Freeway or Expressway
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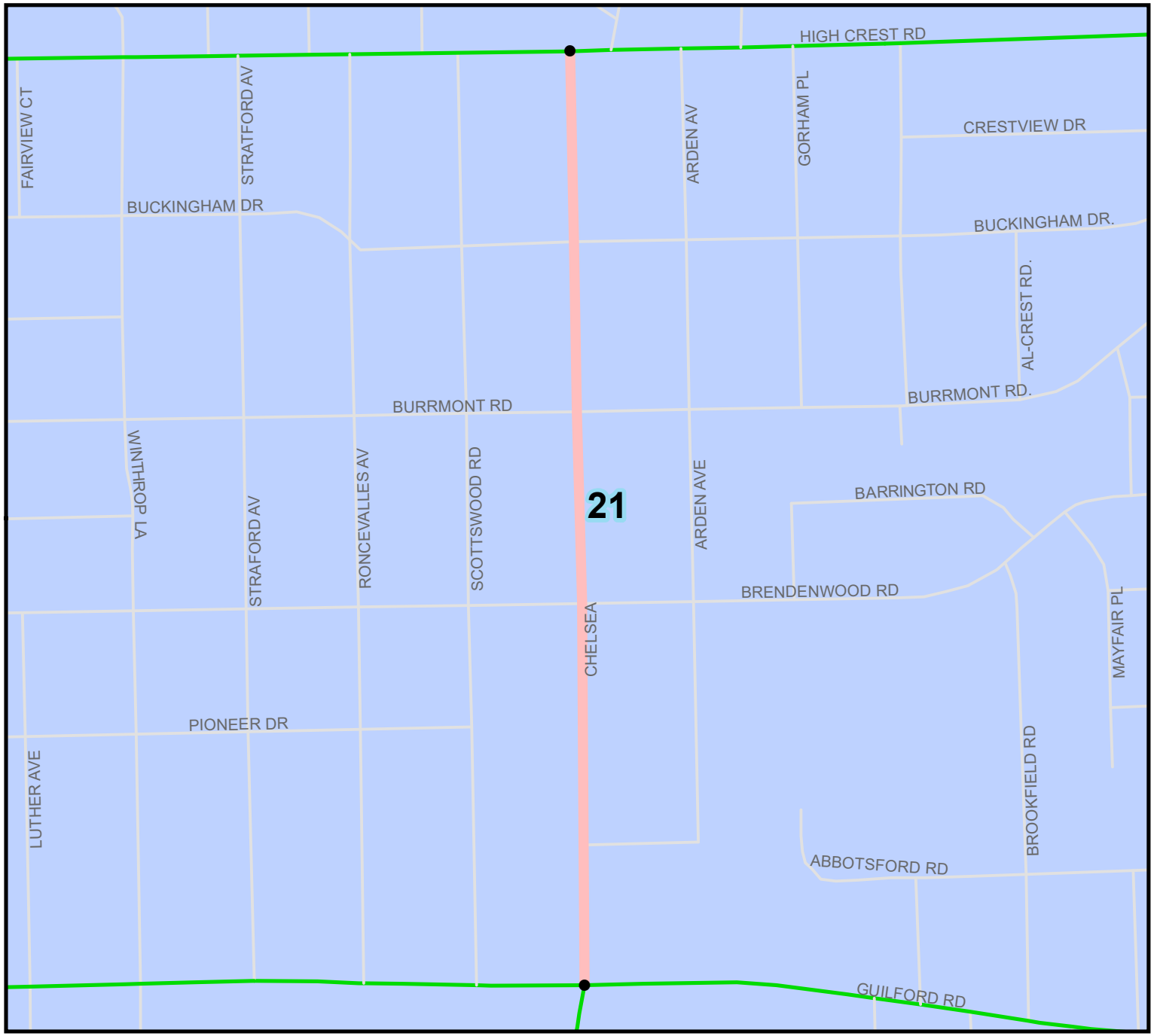
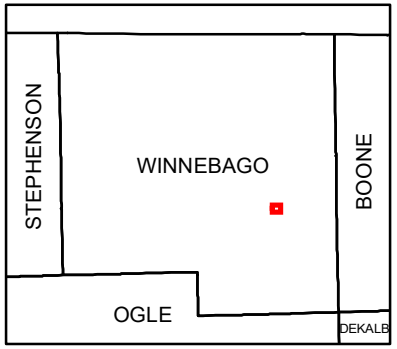
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 21

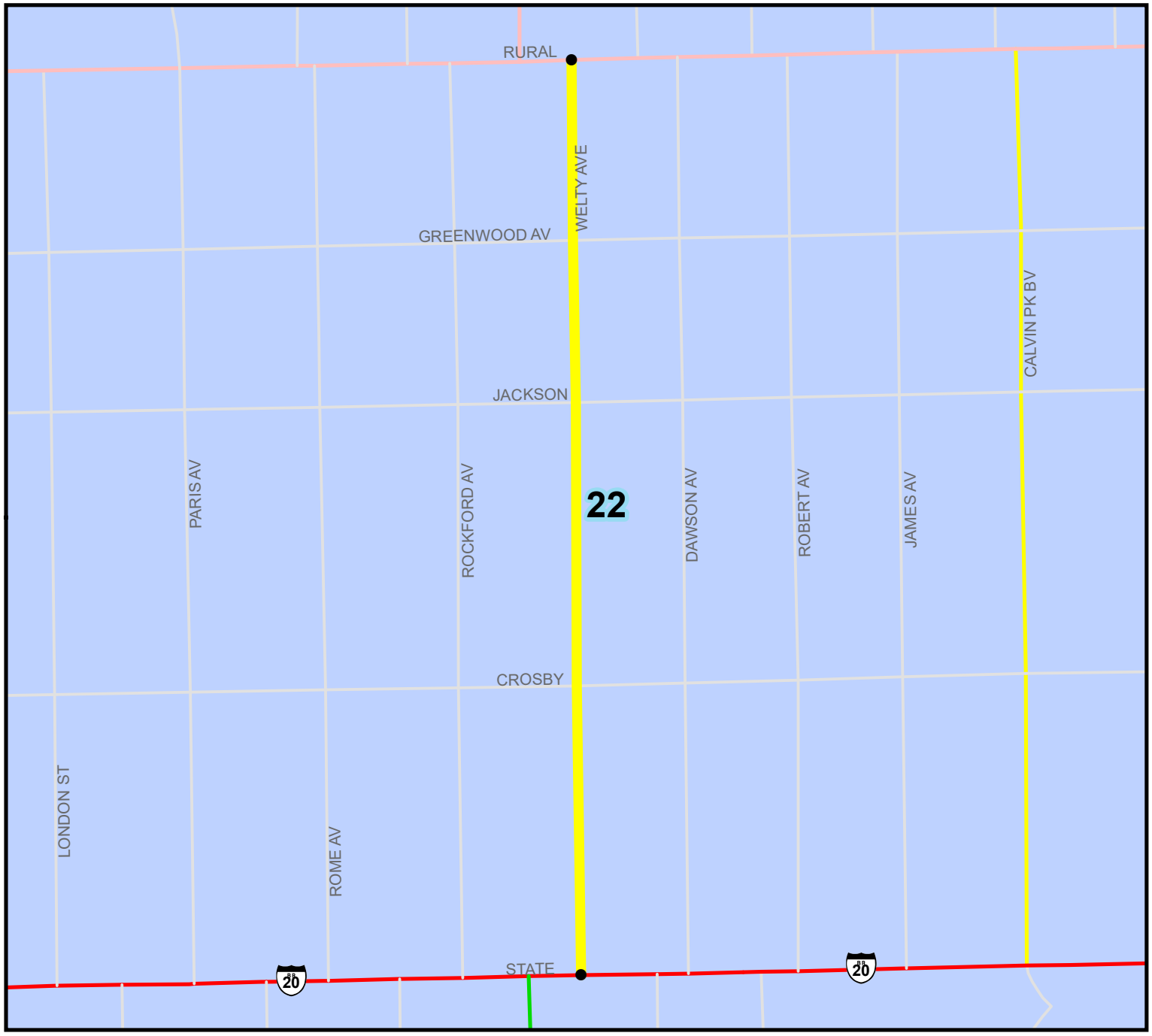


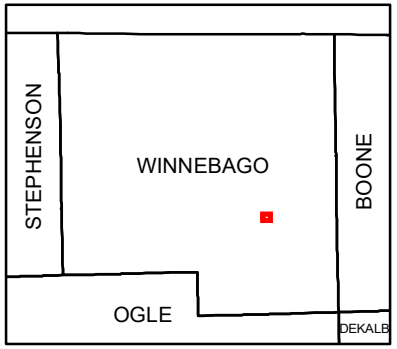


Legend

- 1 Interstate
- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
- 5 Major Collector
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 22





Legend

- 1 Interstate
- 2 Freeway or Expressway
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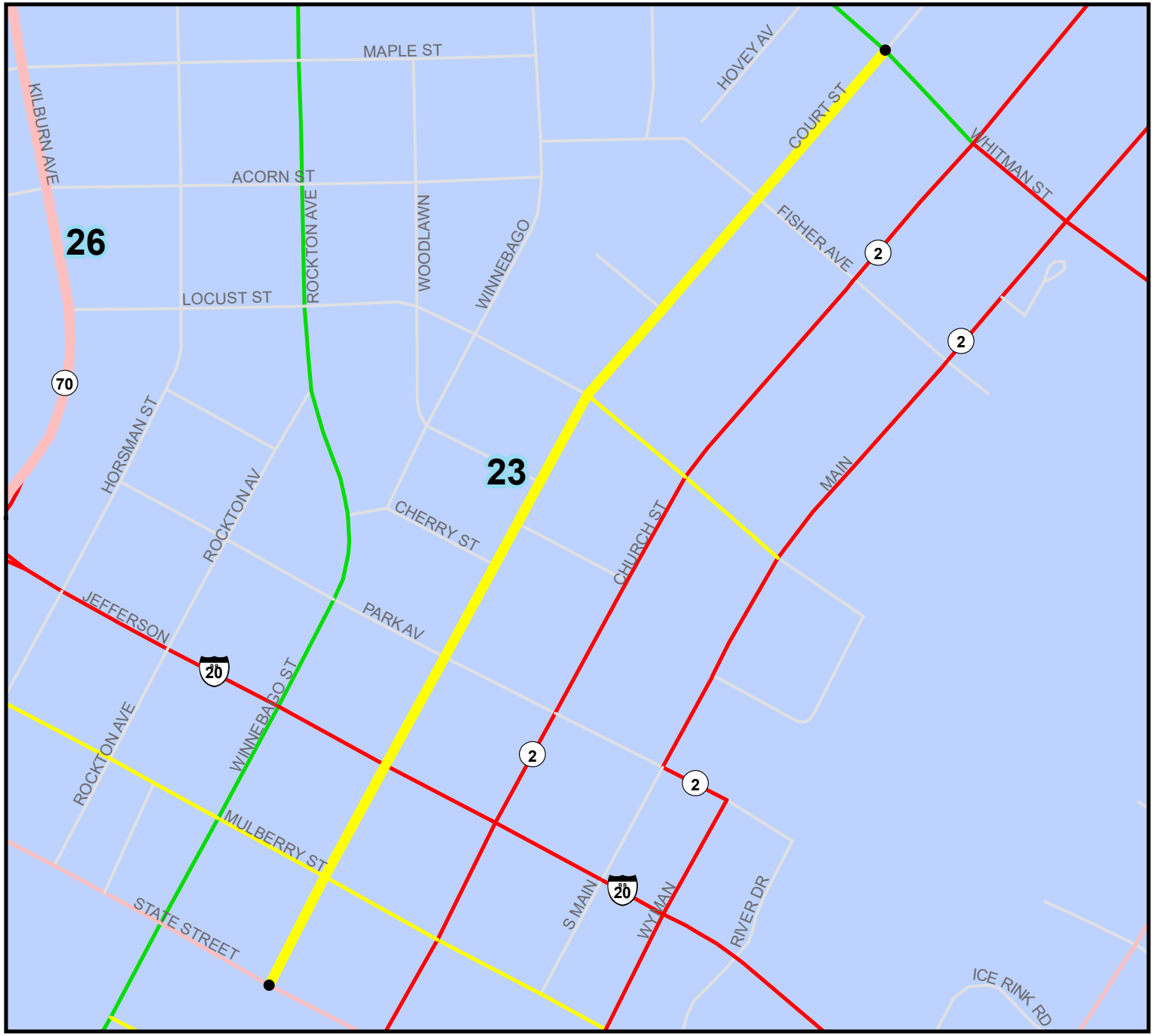
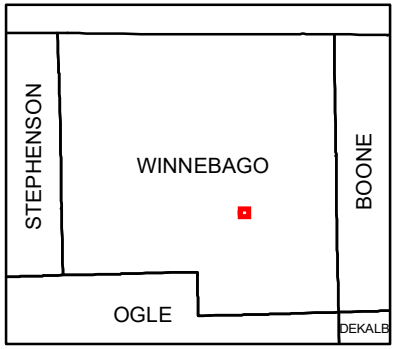
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 23





Legend

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- 4 Minor Arterial
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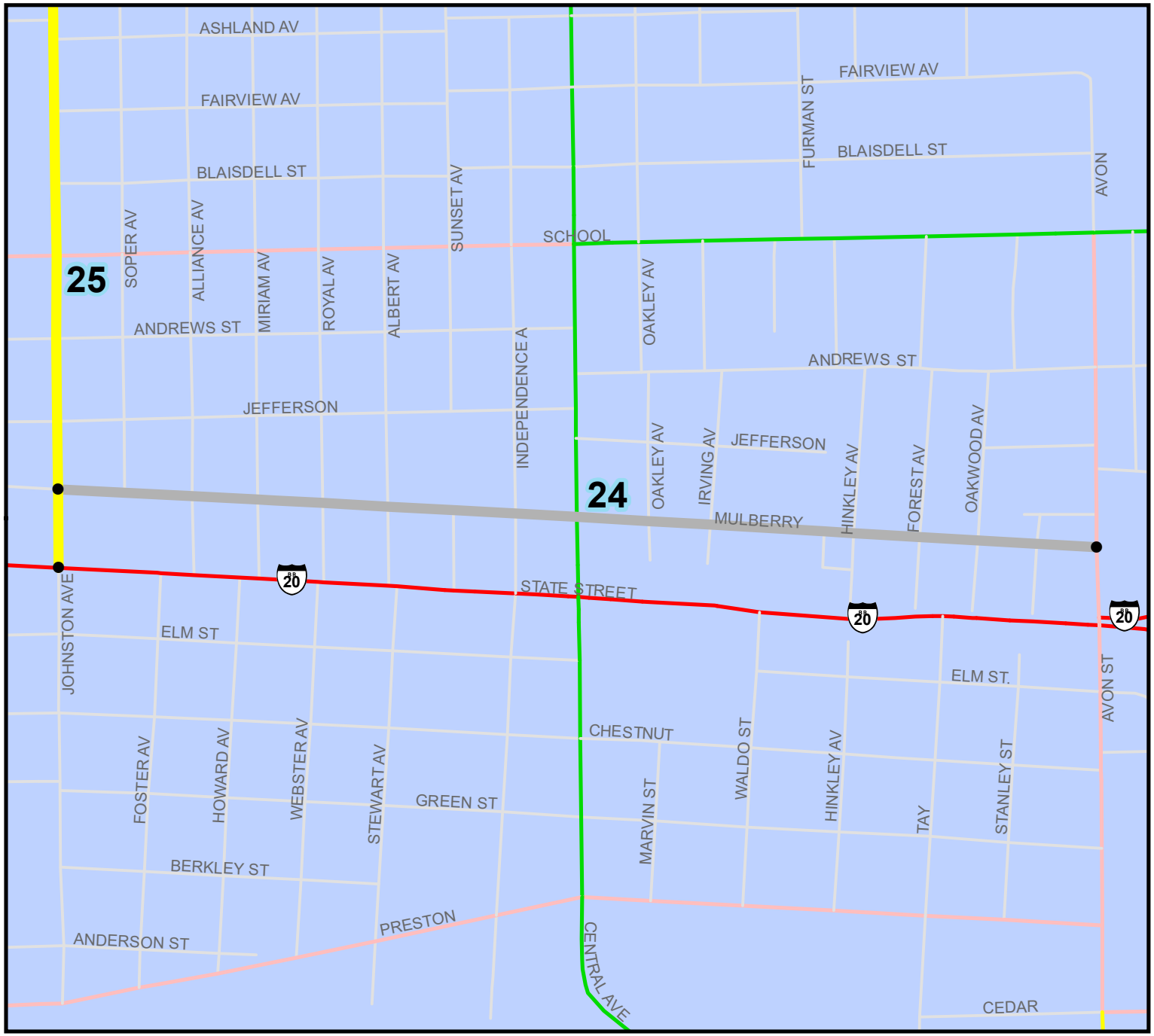
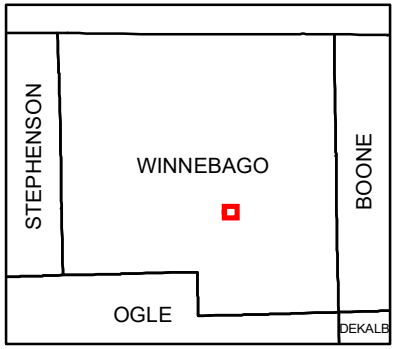
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 24

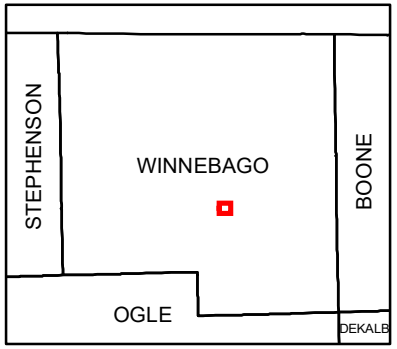




Legend

- 1 Interstate
- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
- 5 Major Collector
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 25



Legend

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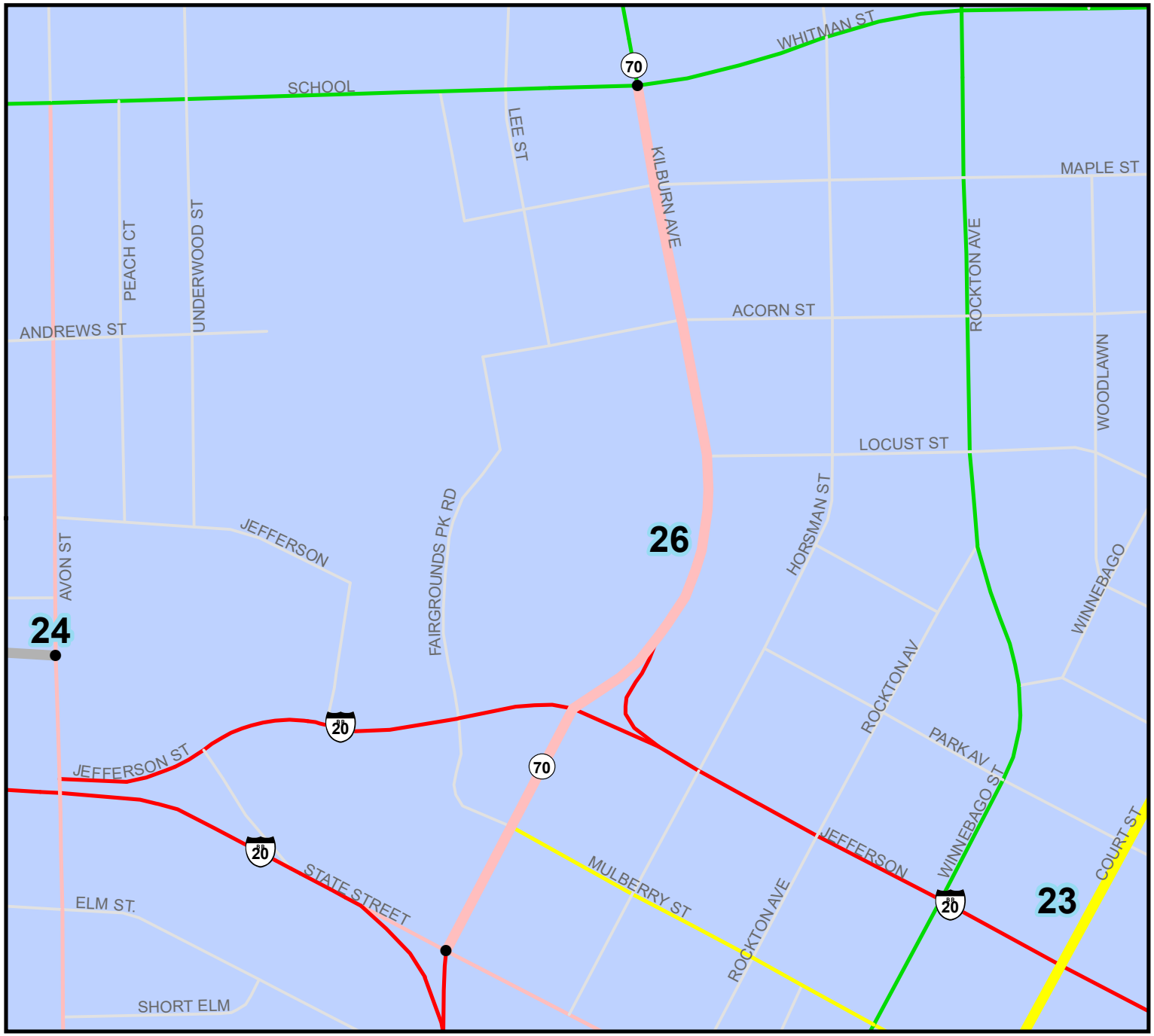
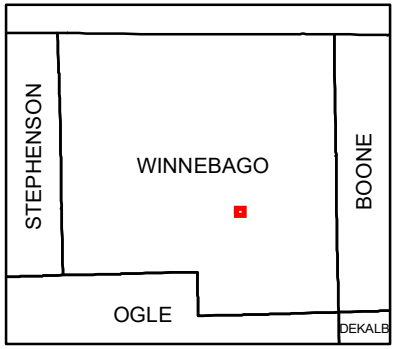
- 2 Freeway or Expressway
- 3 Other Principal Arterial
- 4 Minor Arterial
- 5 Major Collector
- 6 Minor Collector
- 7 Local Road or Street
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 26





Legend

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- 4 Minor Arterial
- 5 Major Collector
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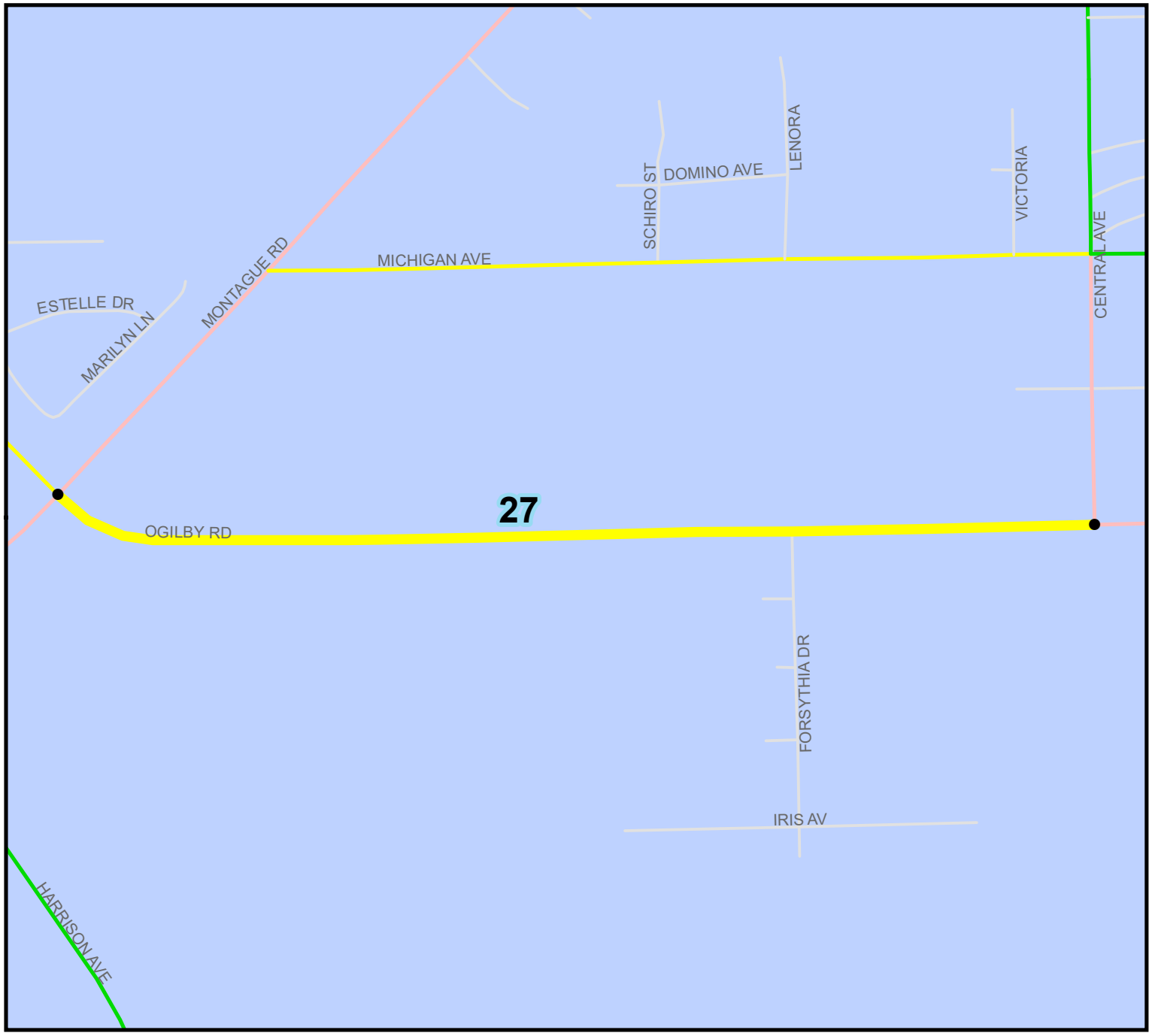
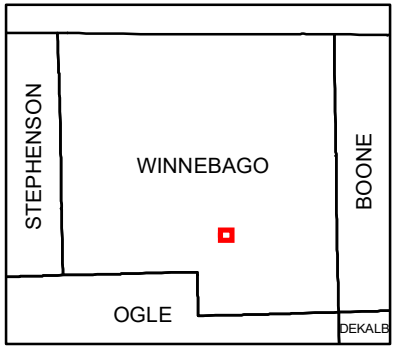
- Urban Areas

Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 27





Legend

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- 4 Minor Arterial
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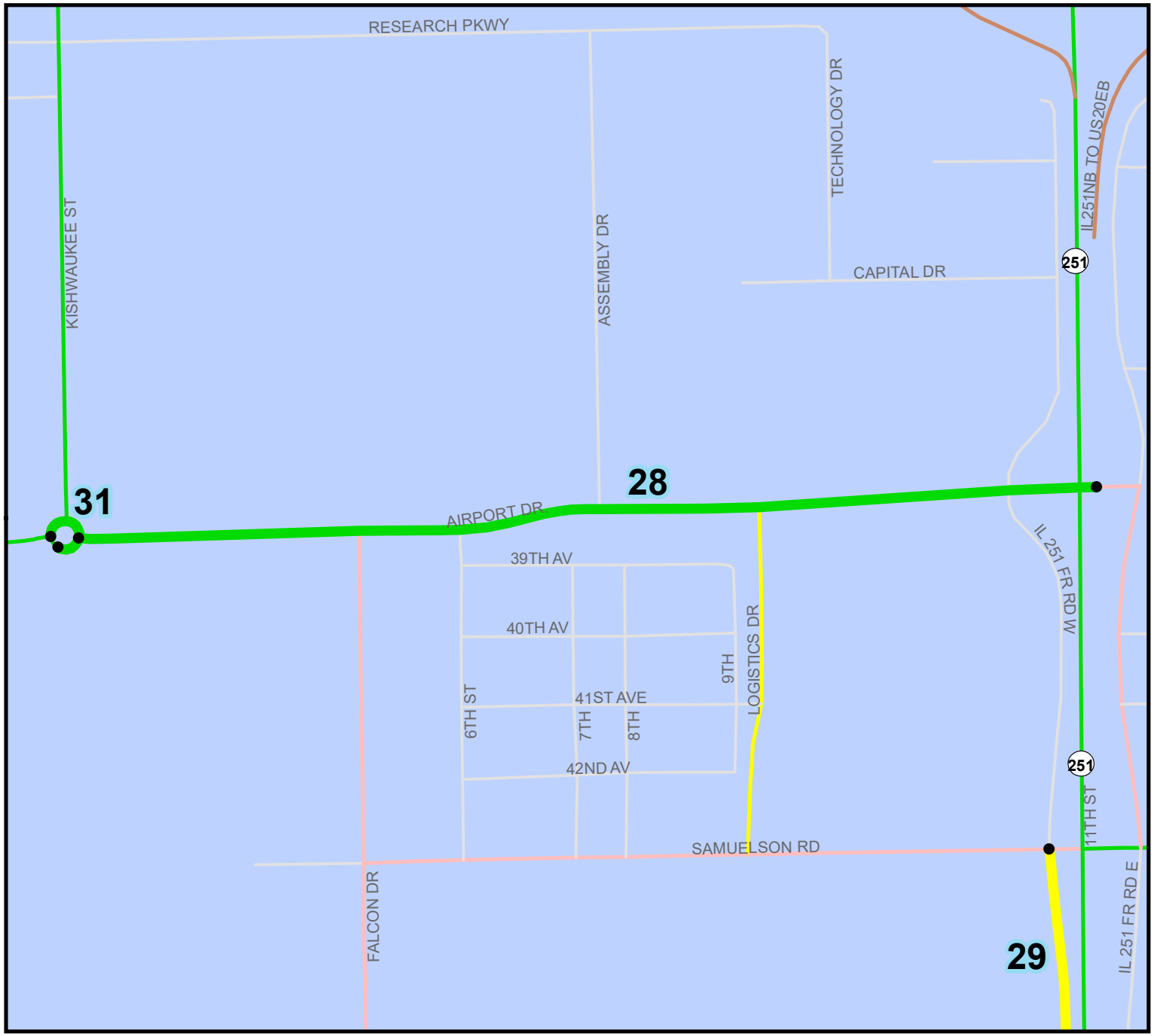
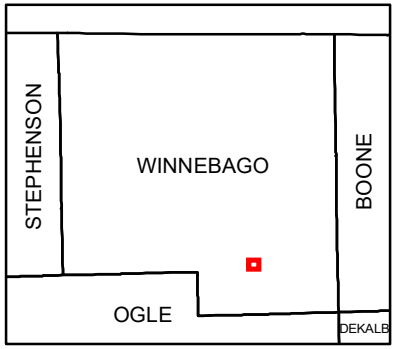
Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 28





Legend

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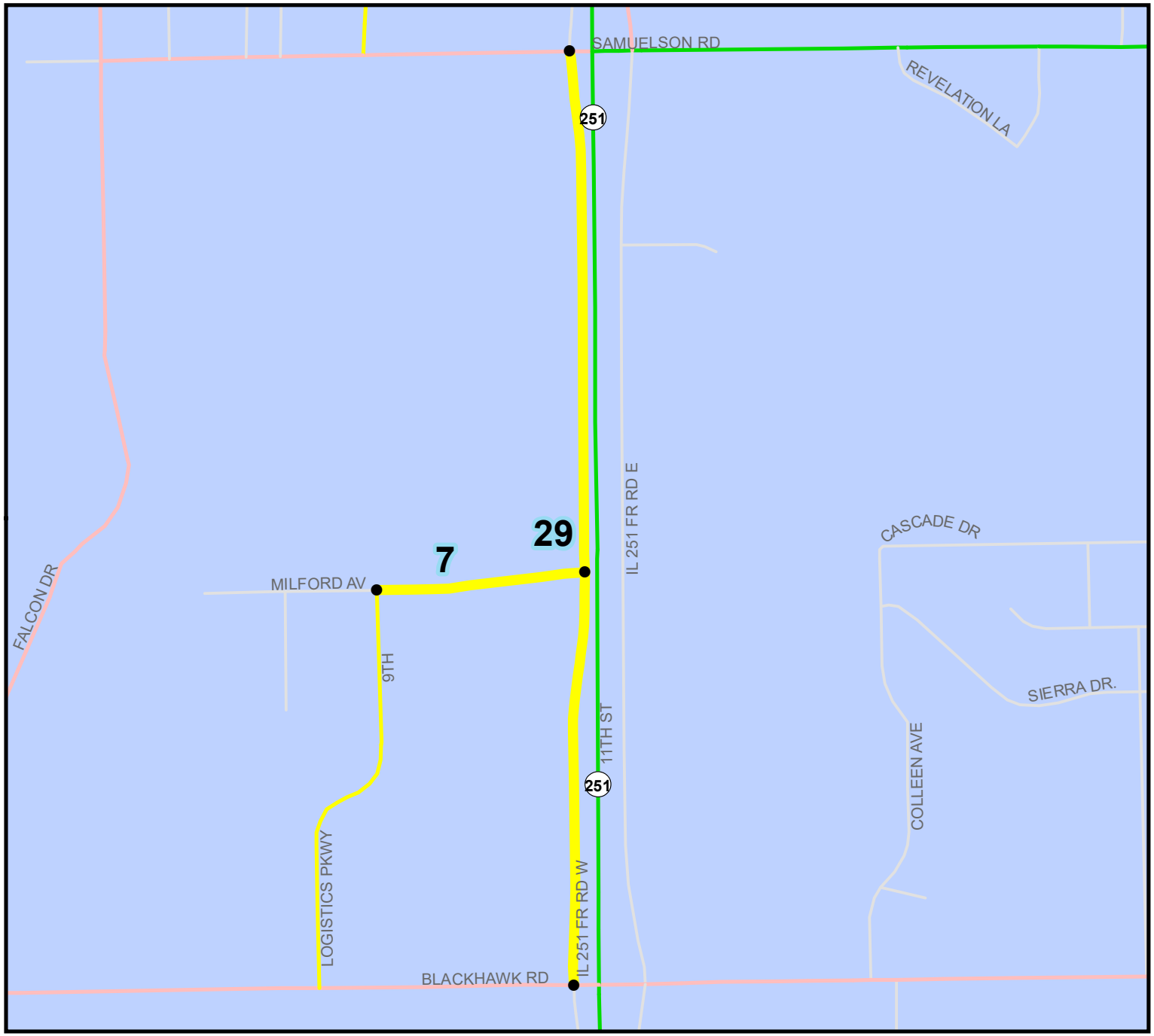
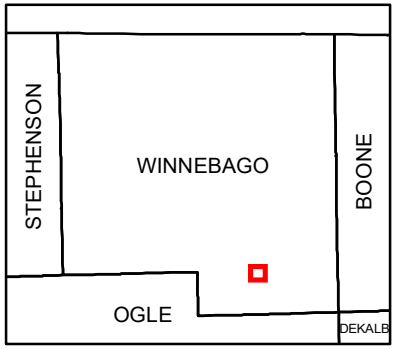
Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 29





Legend

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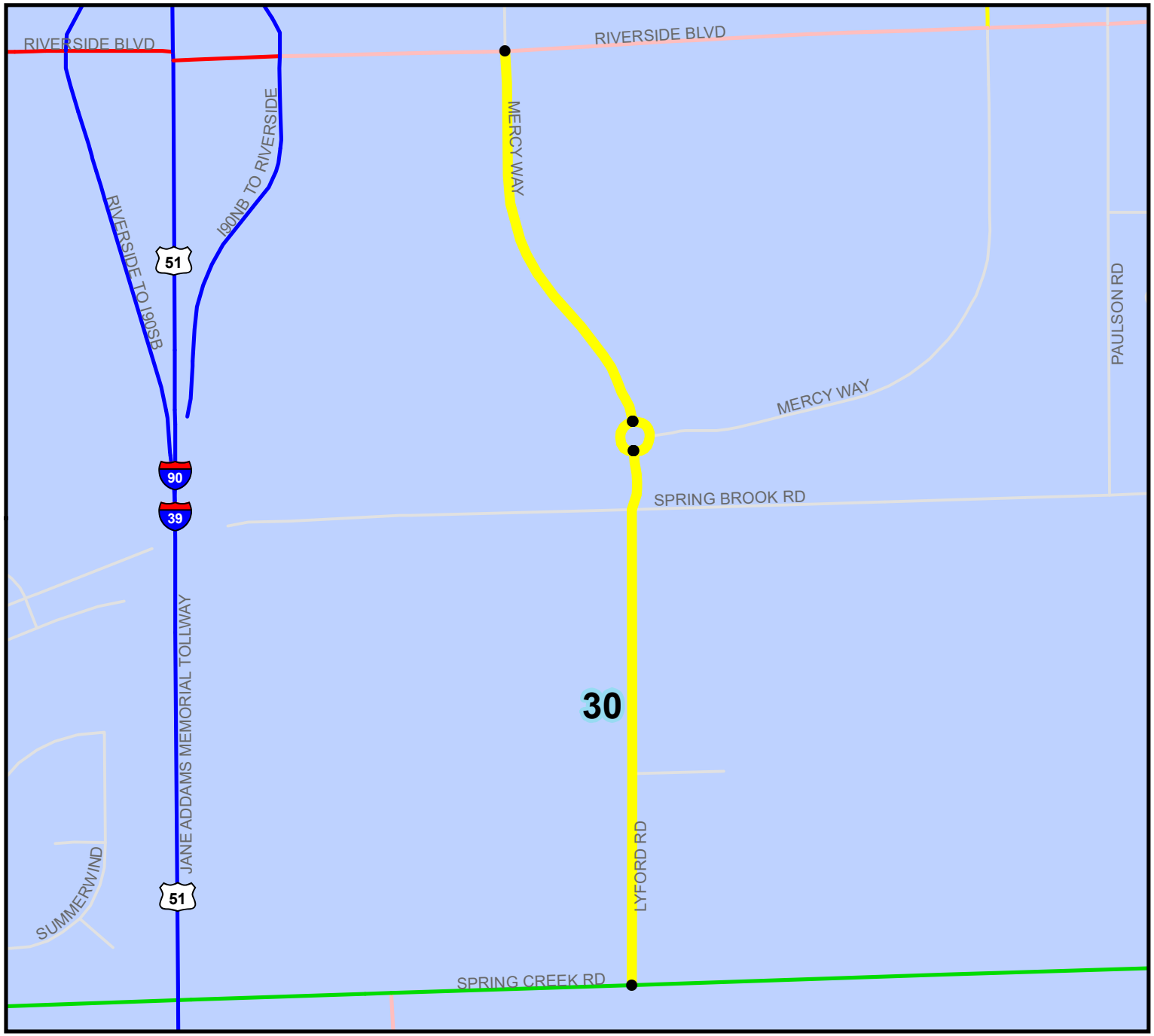
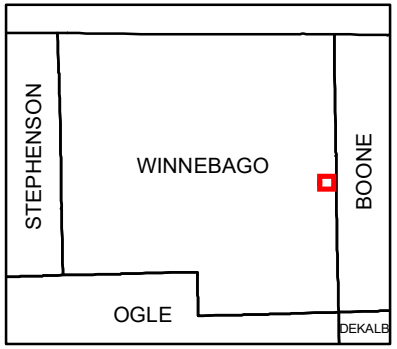
Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 30





Legend

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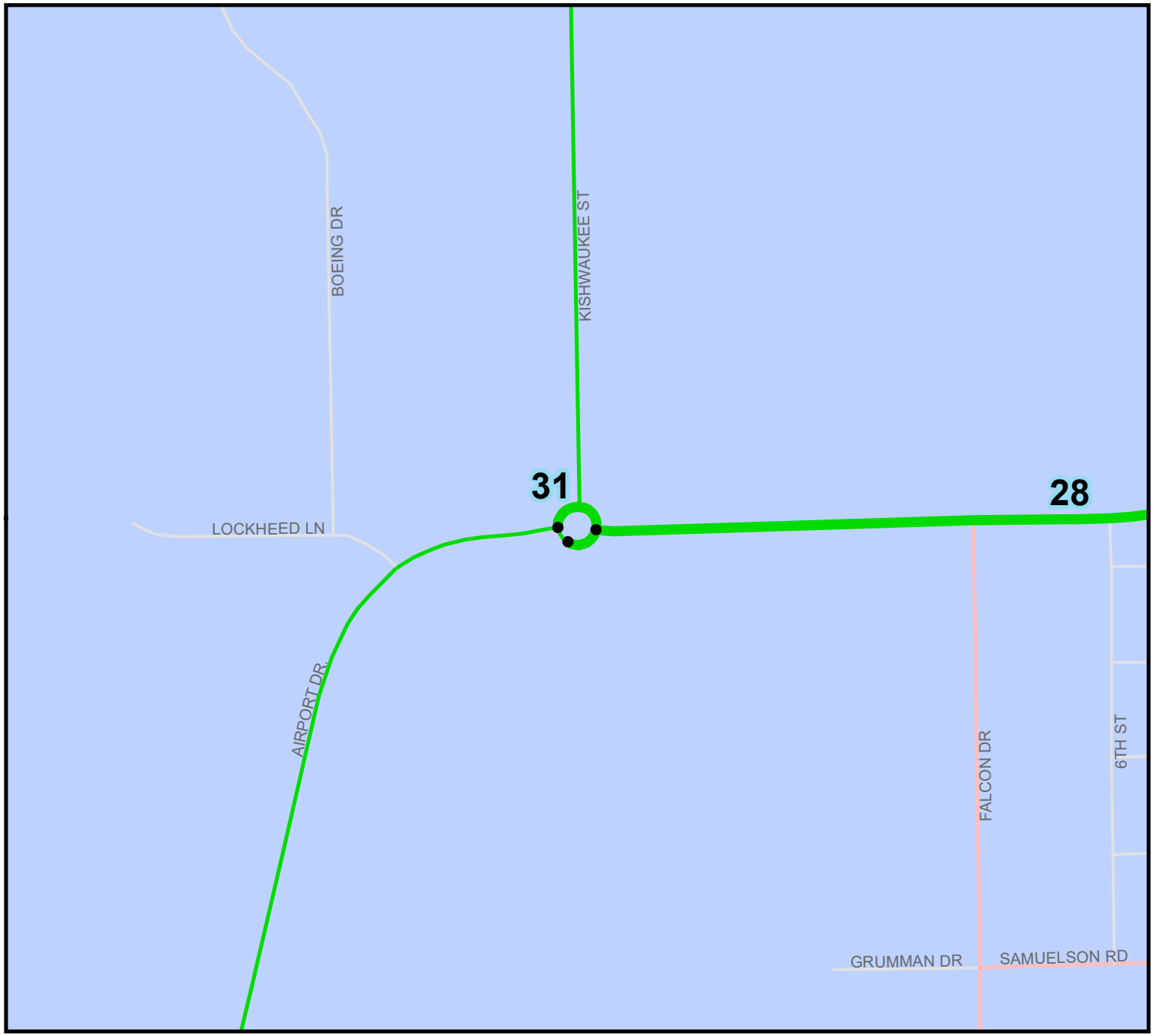
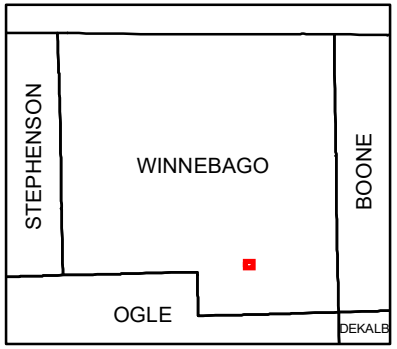
Winnebago County Functional Classification Updates - Map 31





Legend

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Region 1 Planning Council
MPO Policy Committee
MPO RESOLUTION 2025-08

RE: **Adoption of the Parking Reimagined for the Rockford Region Plan**

WHEREAS the Federal Highway Act of 1962, as amended, and the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, as amended, provide for an urban transportation planning process; and

WHEREAS Region 1 Planning Council is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Rockford Urban and Metropolitan Area, and the MPO Policy Committee has the specific responsibility to direct and administer the continuing urban transportation planning process; and

WHEREAS the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) currently authorizes funding to improve our nation's transportation system for highways, highway safety, public transit, alternative non-motorized forms of transportation, and freight; and

WHEREAS the "Parking Reimagined for the Rockford Region Plan" (dated March 12, 2025) is a plan sponsored by Region 1 Planning Council in collaboration with its member agencies, partnership organizations, and local stakeholders, to reimagine parking allocation and availability in the Rockford Region; and

WHEREAS the purpose of a Parking Reimagined Plan is not to replace parking; it is to transform and improve parking infrastructure and practices to better environmental, economic, transportation, and social systems. This plan summarizes the findings of an in-depth analysis of current parking practices in the Rockford Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), and proposes recommendations for improving existing parking infrastructure, policies, and practices; and

WHEREAS the public comment and review period for draft of the Parking Reimagined for the Rockford Region Plan was from March 12, 2025 through April 11, 2025 and the draft Parking Reimagined for the Rockford Region Plan was made available for review via the MPO website (posted March 12, 2025) as well as through contacting the MPO offices.

WHEREAS the MPO Technical Committee has reviewed MPO Resolution 2025-08 and has recommended that the Parking Reimagined for the Rockford Region Plan to be adopted by the MPO Policy Committee; and

WHEREAS MPO encourages its partner agencies to also adopt the Parking Reimagined for the Rockford Region Plan and to incorporate the plan in future transportation/parking plans within the region; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT

The MPO Policy Committee adopts the March 12, 2025 version of the Parking Reimagined for the Rockford Region Plan along with the changes, if any, as to be documented in the minutes of this April 17, 2025 meeting.

We hereby certify the foregoing has been approved by a majority of the MPO Policy Committee Members on this 2nd day of May 2025.

Chairman Joseph V. Chiarelli MPO Chair	Chairman Karl Johnson MPO Vice-Chair

Number of members authorized to vote _____

Ayes _____ Nays _____ Abstain _____

Parking Reimagined

for the Rockford Region

Draft Report - March 2025

Parking Reimagined for the Rockford Region

Draft 3.12.2025

This document has been prepared by Region 1 Planning Council in collaboration with its member agencies, partnership organizations, and local stakeholders.

This report was prepared in cooperation with the following:

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration
Illinois Department of Transportation

The contents, views, policies, and conclusions expressed in this report are not necessarily those of the above agencies.

AN ENGINE FOR COLLABORATION IN NORTHERN ILLINOIS

Region 1 Planning Council
127 N. Wyman St., Ste. 100
Rockford, IL, 61101
(815) 319-4180 | info@r1planning.org | r1planning.org

For complaints, questions, or concerns about civil rights or nondiscrimination; or for special requests under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact:
Clara Romeo, Sustainability Principal at (815) 319-4180 or CRomeo@r1planning.org

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Parking is an essential component of the transportation system and significantly influences the quality of everyday life. Parking decisions and policies impact transportation choices, the cost of goods and services, environmental integrity, and public safety. This project aims to improve existing parking infrastructure and reform parking practices to improve residents' quality of life. The following plan will demonstrate how parking in the Rockford Region can be transformed over the next five to 10 years.

Background & Purpose

What is a Parking Reimagined Plan?

The purpose of a Parking Reimagined Plan is not to replace parking; it is to transform and improve parking infrastructure and practices to better environmental, economic, transportation, and social systems. This report summarizes the findings of an in-depth analysis of current parking practices in the Rockford Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), also referred to as the Rockford Region, and proposes recommendations for improving existing parking infrastructure, policies, and practices. The plan incorporates a review of 3,806 parking spaces across the MPA to evaluate current conditions of parking lots and on-street parking spaces. This evaluation aims to understand the quality of the infrastructure, amount of land dedicated to parking, usage of the parking lots, and parking regulations.

The plan analyzes various aspects of parking and mobility in order to develop comprehensive recommendations. These recommendations aim to alleviate the burdens of current parking conditions and transform the MPA's parking infrastructure. The goals of this plan are to:

- Identify current and future trends affecting parking and mobility,
- Develop strategies for more effective utilization of parking resources,
- Promote sustainable and equitable approaches to parking and mobility,
- Enhance transportation mode choice, and
- Improve the safety and efficiency of the transportation system.

The plan balances the need for automobile space while supporting equity, affordability, environment stewardship, community design, and economic development.

On- and Off-Street Parking

The Parking Reimagined Plan for the Rockford Region explores on- and off-street municipal-owned parking within the MPA. On-street parking refers to parking located on the side of a public road or street. Off-street parking refers to parking located away from roads in an area designated specially for parking. On-street parking utilizes space in the right-of-way, whereas off-street parking requires the use of land that could be otherwise designated for non-transportation purposes.

Image Source: Park Rockford

In order for this plan to have an effective influence on existing parking practices in the region, it must consider what is most feasible to implement. This plan focuses on municipally owned parking facilities because public parking policies and practices can more easily be modified as opposed to private parking. This is because a municipality has the opportunity to update existing policies or adopt new policies as needed. Local municipalities can look to this plan for recommendations on how to best utilize their on- and off-street parking facilities.

Why is this Important?

The United States is estimated to have anywhere between 105 million and two billion parking spaces; surface parking lots alone account for more than five percent of urban land coverage nationally.[i] This equates to about eight parking

spots for every car. Traditional parking lots contribute to higher public infrastructure costs, increases in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and exacerbating impacts of climate change.

As mobility, land use, and climate patterns change and new transportation technologies emerge, regions must begin to examine current parking trends, reimagine future parking, and prioritize quality of life. Parking can be transformed and improved through examination and adjustments to local zoning policy, existing lots and spaces, curb management, green infrastructure, and multimodal strategies. Parking trends show that parking across the nation is being transformed to promote sustainability, enhance public safety, promote active transportation, expand mobility options, improve the attractiveness of places, promote economic opportunity, and reduce parking demand. Examples of parking transformations include adding shade trees to outdoor parking lots, increasing the amount of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, and establishing parking maximum policies to reduce the amount of land dedicated to parking.

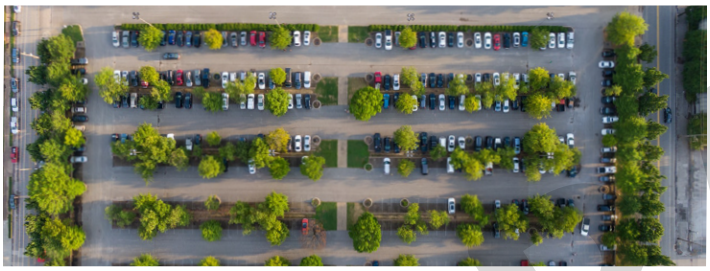


Image Source: K & E FLatwork

Perceptions of Parking

The factors that drive public perceptions towards parking are complex. Vehicle users desire the convenience of available, affordable parking at an appropriate distance from their destination. Drivers consider various factors when deciding where to park, such as cost, proximity to their destination, safety, and the size of the parking space. A survey to gain insights into regional public perceptions of parking was conducted to inform this plan. The survey results, shown in Appendix B, indicate that limited parking hours, parking costs, and availability of parking spaces are perceived as the most common barriers to parking in the region. Although a lack of available parking spaces is a common negative perception, this is typically only relevant in dense, high-traffic areas during peak times, such as downtown Rockford parking during an event.

Implementation of parking alterations allows the public to see the direct impact and benefit of transforming parking. Parking transformations, such as adding EV charging stations or more trees to a parking lot, are examples of feasible strategies that directly benefit quality of life, environment, and economy. Improving public perceptions of parking reform and management is essential for securing community support and raising awareness of its advantages. This can be achieved by effectively communicating the societal benefits of transforming parking and implementing fair, consistent, and transparent parking management practices. This plan is the region's first step in increasing public awareness of parking reform and enhancing transparency around parking-related changes that may take place over the next 5 to ten years.

Balanced Development

Parking is a necessary component of the modern built environment, offering convenience and accessibility for residents and visitors. However, parking also contributes to urban sprawl, resulting in negative environmental consequences and demanding significant portions of urban land. This plan recognizes the negative impacts associated with current parking infrastructure development practices while acknowledging that the region is on the cusp of an economic growth that necessitates development. To address these challenges, the plan embraces a balanced development approach that aligns with smart growth principles to harmonize economic growth with environmental sustainability and efficient land use.[ii] Balancing these aspects, the plan aims to integrate sustainable parking practices to improve human and environmental health and make communities more attractive, economically stronger, and resilient to climate change.

Existing and future parking development that upholds smart growth principles can improve quality of life, support economic development, and help mitigate climate change. This Parking Reimagined Plan provides recommended strategies for parking transformations and improvements that support balanced development.

Smart growth is guided by 10 basic principles for development:

1. Mix land uses,
2. Take advantage of compact building design,
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices,
4. Create walkable neighborhoods,
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place,
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas,
7. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities,
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices,
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective, and
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.[iii]

Key Focus Areas

Environment

Conventional parking practices and infrastructure have a significant negative impact on the environment. Because of this, a focus of the Parking Reimagined Plan is to reimagine parking to better support the environment and natural systems. Environmental impacts of parking include the acquisition of land that could otherwise support ecological functions; parking lots can lead to habitat loss and fragmentation, disruption of natural ecosystems, biodiversity loss, reductions in greenspace, and degraded soil health. Additionally, parking lots are typically built using impervious surfaces, which do not allow water to drain through them into the ground, leading to flooding and stormwater runoff concerns. The dark asphalt used for parking replaces natural land with man-made surfaces that retain and absorb heat, increasing local temperatures. This plan analyzes the environmental benefits and burdens of parking lots, identifies environmental parking trends, and provides recommended strategies to improve parking lots for environmental prosperity.

Policy

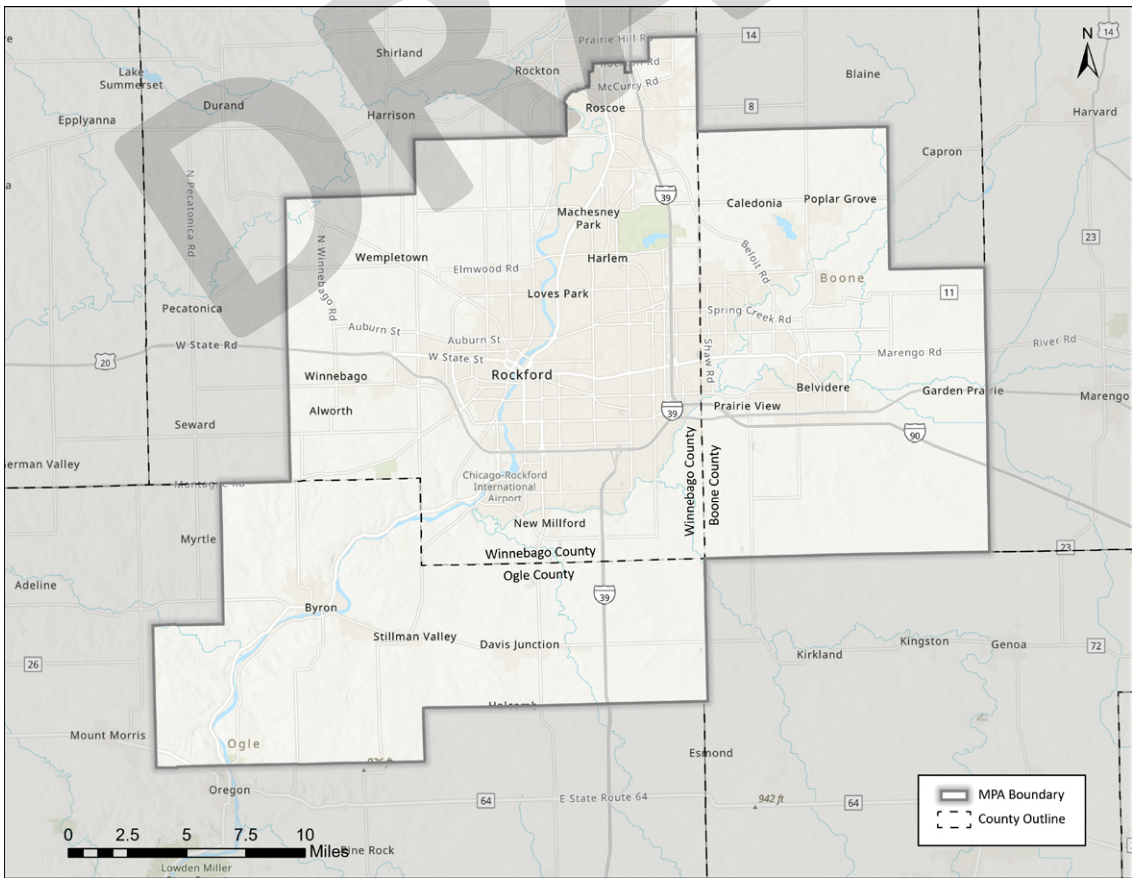
Parking policies, parking fees, green space requirements, zoning regulations, and accessibility standards, dictate how parking lots must be developed. These policies determine the number of spaces needed per building type and capacity, the number of trees required per lot, the allocation of handicapped spaces, and the overall development process. Parking policies can be reformed to support balanced development, environmental systems, and residential well-being. This plan analyzes current parking policies in the MPA and provides recommendations for adapting these policies or creating new policies to promote a better quality of life, economic prosperity, and environmental health.

Study Area

The study area for this plan is the planning jurisdiction of the Rockford Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which is known as the MPA. The MPA boundary is created using the U.S. Census Bureau's defined Urbanized Area (UZA), the adjusted Urbanized Area that is determined by the MPO and its partner agencies, and any other contiguous area anticipated to be urbanized in the next 20 years.

As shown in Figure 1-1, the MPA is smaller than the boundaries of Boone, Ogle, and Winnebago Counties and covers approximately 682 square miles. To understand more about the MPO and the region's makeup, refer to Part 2: About the Rockford Region.

Figure 1-1: Map of MPA Boundary Area



Source: WinGIS

Planning Process

The Parking Reimagined Plan for the MPA was developed from January 2024 to June 2025 using a phased approach that included three rounds of public engagement.

Phase 0. Project Development

The initial project development involved identifying the project justification, scope, final deliverable, budget, timeframe, public engagement, and project team.

Phase 1. Research

Based on the identified project justification, scope, and final deliverables, a comprehensive overview of parking was conducted. Research efforts included a thorough examination of the history of current parking practices, the benefits and burdens of parking policies and infrastructure, current and future parking trends, and project spotlights of successful parking transformations.

Phase 2. Inventory & Analysis

Policy Inventory

A policy inventory was conducted for parking policies, including parking minimums, permits, and fees by municipality within the MPA.

Demand Analysis

The demand analysis involved using geographic information systems (GIS) to determine the amount of parking within the MPA and comparing the results to population and vehicle registration trends.

Asset Inventory

An asset inventory of all municipal owned on-street and off-street parking within the MPA boundaries was completed in order to quantify the amount of public parking spaces in the region and understand the current conditions of these parking facilities.

Phase 3. Plan Development

The plan development phase involved drafting the final Parking Reimagined Plan as well as formulating strategies and recommendations.

Phase 4. Public Engagement

The development of the Parking Reimagined Plan included three rounds of public engagement, including perceptions, recommended strategies, and a public comment period. The goal of each round was to gather input and feedback from the community to shape and refine the plan.

Round 1: Perceptions

The first round of engagement included the collection of public and partner surveys to understand perceptions of current parking infrastructure, policies, practices, and daily habits. The survey was used to identify parking needs, barriers to current parking infrastructure, and potential locations for improvements. During this round of engagement, stakeholder interviews were also conducted to ascertain parking views and recommendations from a range of community institutions.

Round 2: Strategies

The second round of public engagement consisted of distributing surveys with the public to gather feedback on the potential parking scenarios, strategies, and recommendations for reimagining parking in the Rockford Region.

Round 3: Public Comment

During the final round of public engagement, the draft plan was released for a 30-day public comment period to verify the accuracy of all information and to give the community an opportunity to offer further feedback.

Phase 5. Project Wrap-up

The final phase of the plan development involved incorporating feedback from the public comment period. After the formal comment period, the document was presented to the MPO Technical and Policy Committees for recommendation and adoption, respectively.

PART 7: STRATEGIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

Part 7: Strategies & Recommendation details the goals and strategies outlined to transform parking in the Rockford Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), also referred to as the Rockford Region, over the next five to 10 years. The Parking Reimagined goals are organized in the order of recommended implementation and prioritization, as determined through public and stakeholder engagement undertaken for the development of this plan.

A large component of public engagement for the Parking Reimagined Plan centered on the goals and strategies. Regional stakeholders and members of the public were tasked with providing feedback on the plan's drafted goals and strategies. This feedback directly informed the contents of this portion of the plan. Further details on public engagement can be found in Appendix B.

Figure 7-1: Parking Reimagined Public Engagement Card

Image Source: Region 1 Planning Council

Each goal is accompanied by a series of strategies, performance measures, and key considerations. The strategies are based on national trends and regional needs, established in Part 4: Benefits & Burdens and Part 5: Current & Future Trends. Many of the strategies encompass elements beyond parking that may influence or be influenced by the economy, environment, equity, land use, transportation system, and quality of life.

The strategies are detailed below and complemented by the following elements:

- **Description & Need:** Establishes the foundation and intent of the strategy, including its relationship to elements in Part 4: Benefits & Burdens and Part 5: Current & Future Trends.
- **Key Considerations:** Encompasses elements that may need to be explored prior to implementation or other factors that may arise during implementation of the strategy.
- **Metrics to Evaluate Success:** Describes metrics that will be measured over time to evaluate progress.
- **Implementation Timeframe:** Describes the period of time in which the strategy may occur or is planned to take place. For the purposes of the Parking Reimagined Plan, the timeframes are identified as short term (within 1 year), midterm (1-5 years), long term (6-10 years), and ongoing.
- **Potential Partners:** Identifies organizations and entities that may be best suited to assist in the successful implementation of the strategy.
- **Costs:** Details potential development, construction, and maintenance costs to implement the strategy. To account for inflation, costs have been adjusted to October 2024 dollars.

Mobility

Goal 1:

Improve transportation infrastructure, access, and connectivity throughout the region to decrease vehicle congestion and demand for parking.

In order to decrease the demand for parking, alternative modes of transportation must be available and reliable for residents, workers, and visitors of the region. Other than operating a personal vehicle, additional forms of transportation can include walking, biking, and public transit. Current active transportation infrastructure and public transit options in the Rockford Region are limited and do not operate seamlessly throughout the region. This often leaves travelers unaware of available mobility options or reluctant to choose alternative mobility solutions due to reliability or safety concerns.

Understanding travel preferences and barriers to transportation is vital to developing a strategic plan for overall mobility in the region. Public feedback for this plan identified a need for increased bicycle infrastructure, including bicycle parking within parking facilities. Additionally, the public consistently indicated parking in Downtown Rockford can be limited during events and busy weekend hours.

This public input signifies a need for enhanced mobility options to reduce parking demand downtown during peak hours, reduce overall traffic and congestion on roads, and lessen transportation-related emissions. Public infrastructure that supports multiple forms of transportation results in fewer vehicles on the road and therefore increases the amount of parking available. Identified by public input and regional analysis, this goal highlights strategies for improving mobility options and connectivity in the Rockford Region.

The following strategies address regional needs to increase mobility and reduce parking demand:

- **Strategy 1.1:** Address sidewalk, shared use path, and bicycle network gaps that impact connectivity.
- **Strategy 1.2:** Incorporate bicycle parking into public parking facilities.
- **Strategy 1.3:** Examine the feasibility of procuring a regional car-sharing service.
- **Strategy 1.4:** Increase the frequency and range of shuttle services to designated park-and-ride lots during highly attended events and busy downtown hours.
- **Strategy 1.5:** Pilot a regional mobility hubs program.
- **Strategy 1.6:** Conduct a public education campaign to improve the perception of public transit and active forms of transportation.

Strategy 1.1: Address sidewalk, shared use path, and bicycle network gaps that impact connectivity.

Multimodal connectivity ensures all residents, workers, and visitors are able to get to their destination easily and safely through their chosen mode of transportation. This is particularly important for individuals who do not drive or lack access to a vehicle. In the Rockford Region, significant effort has been made to improve the multimodal network by increasing the number of on-street bicycle facilities, filling in sidewalk gaps, transit access, and monitoring shared-use path quality. However, there are still significant gaps in the network.

The Rockford Region currently has 1,233 miles of existing sidewalks and 45.5 miles of on-street bicycle facilities. In order to support active transportation as a viable mode choice in the region, the pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and network gaps must be addressed so users can easily travel to a range of destinations. The Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan for the Rockford Region provides a detailed analysis of current active transportation infrastructure and recommendations for improvements.

Image Source: City of Minneapolis

Key Considerations

- Safety features can be incorporated into pedestrian and bicycle facilities, such as protected bike lanes, to increase safety and comfortability using active transportation infrastructure.
- Bicycle Level of Stress is a planning tool that can help determine placement and prioritization of bicycle infrastructure improvements. The tool measures and quantifies the suitability of a given stretch of roadway for bicycling while recognizing varying levels of tolerance for riding bicycles next to a motor vehicle.

Implementation Timeframe

- Ongoing

Costs

Costs vary based on the type of multi-modal facility and materials used.

- A four-inch thick and five-foot wise concrete sidewalk slab costs approximately $130.93 per square yard to install[ccxii], and each material defect costs approximately $376.94 to address via maintenance.[ccxiii]
- Snow removal, a form of sidewalk maintenance, costs between $66.22 and $2,781.26 per mile of sidewalk.[ccxiv]
- The asphalt used to pave a 10-foot-wide shared use path costs approximately $115.17 per square foot.[ccxv] A 10-foot-wide shared used path made of crushed stone costs approximately $72.74 per square foot.[ccxvi] Shared use path maintenance costs between $3,088.11 and $7,411.46 per mile.[ccxvii]
- A new curb ramp, five feet deep and 15 feet wide, costs $1,454.74 to install.[ccxviii]
- Four-inch-wide white thermoplastic paint, used for striping bicycle lanes, costs approximately $1.21 per lateral foot.[ccxix]
- The green thermoplastic paint used to paint a four-foot wide and 50-foot-long colored bicycle lane costs approximately $2.42 per square foot.[ccxx]

Partner Agencies

- Planning and Zoning departments, Public Works departments, bicycle advocacy groups, engineers, and neighborhood associations.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Miles of added or improved bicycle lines and sidewalks.
- Person-miles traveled on bicycle lanes and sidewalks that are reliable.

Strategy 1.2: Incorporate bicycle parking into public parking facilities.

Providing dedicated space for bicycle parking within public parking facilities supports a broader range of users and better serves the needs of a community. When bicycles are chosen over vehicles, the demand for car parking spaces decreases, but adequate infrastructure must be in place to support this choice. Bicycle parking accommodates and encourages cycling while offering security and convenience for cyclists.

As cities continue to grow and climate-friendly transportation choices become more popular, an increasing number of people opt for bikes as their mode of transportation. If bicycle parking is not available at a destination, it can discourage cyclists who wish to have a secure place to store their bicycles. Supporting and encouraging bicycle behaviors through available and accessible bicycle parking can increase community well-being and satisfaction.

This strategy identifies the need for increased bicycle parking throughout the region and recommends incorporating bicycle infrastructure within parking facilities. Bicycle parking infrastructure can include designated bicycle parking zones, bicycle racks, sheltered bicycle parking, and clearly marked bicycle paths and access points.

Image Source: Madrax

Key Considerations

- Sheltered bicycle parking may receive greater support from cyclists as it protects both the user and bicycle from weather conditions.
- Some local zoning codes mandate bicycle parking in specific parking lots, but there is room to broaden and refine these regulations to more effectively spread bicycle infrastructure across the region.
- Bicycle parking can be designed artistically while also serving functional purposes of storing bicycles.

Implementation Timeframe

- Midterm (1-5 years)

Costs

The costs of bicycle parking facilities vary based on the amount of bicycles accommodated, and the presence of other amenities.

- A bicycle rack that holds two bicycles costs between $145.47 and $363.68 to procure and install.[ccxxi]
- A bicycle locker that holds two bicycles costs between $1818.42 and $3,636.85 to procure and install.[ccxxii]
- A shelter that covers between eight and twelve bicycles costs between $1,212.28 and $3,636.85 to procure and install.[ccxxiii]
- A bicycle corral that holds 10 bicycles costs Chicago Department of Transportation $3,300 for procurement, installation, permitting, and delineator posts.[ccxxiv]
- The asphalt used to pave a 10-foot-wide shared use path costs approximately $115.17 per square foot.[ccxxv] A 10-foot-wide shared use path made of crushed stone costs approximately $72.74 per square foot.[ccxxvi] Shared use path maintenance costs between $3,088.11 and $7,411.46 per mile.[ccxxvii]
- A new curb ramp, five feet deep and 15 feet wide, costs $1,454.74 to install.[ccxxviii]
- Four-inch-wide white thermoplastic paint, used for striping bicycle lanes, costs approximately $1.21 per lateral foot.[ccxxix]
- The green thermoplastic paint used to paint a four-foot wide and 50-foot-long colored bicycle lane costs approximately $2.42 per square foot.[ccxxx]

Partner Agencies

- Planning and Zoning departments, Public Works departments, and bicycle advocacy groups.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Number of bicycle racks installed within parking facilities.

Strategy 1.3: Examine the feasibility of procuring a regional car-sharing service.

Car-sharing refers to the short-term use of a vehicle for which compensation is exchanged through a membership-based organization.[ccxxxi] Car-sharing provides an option for those without access to a vehicle or for individuals who prefer not to own a car but still need one occasionally. Services offered through car-sharing reduce the number of vehicles in an urban area, with studies estimating that one car-sharing vehicle can replace up to 25 personal vehicles.[ccxxxii] This, in turn, reduces the number of parking spaces needed to store vehicles in an area.

The benefits of a car-sharing service include increased connectivity resulting in fewer vehicles on the road, reduced demand for parking, lower emissions, and improved congestion. The purpose of this strategy is to analyze the possibility of establishing or procuring a local car-sharing service in the Rockford Region. Many factors determine if a region is suitable for a car-sharing service, such as vehicle ownership, population density, and the location of essential services.

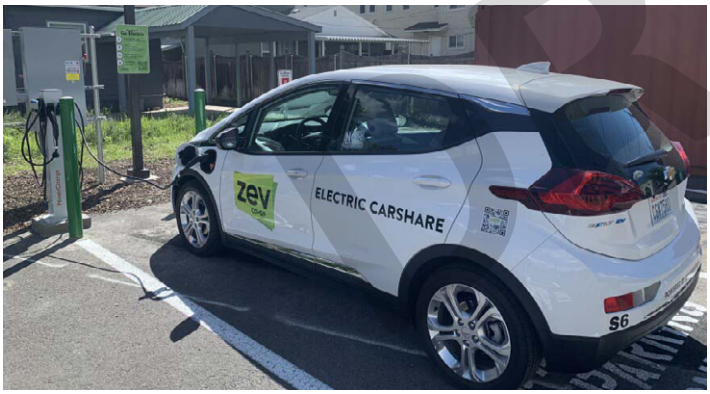


Image Source: Caleb Yoder

Key Considerations

- Demand for a car-sharing service must be significant for a car-sharing company to establish itself in the Rockford Region.
- To access a car-sharing service, users require access to an internet-connected device; this may present equity issues.
- Selected car-sharing services require space to be allocated for their company's car-sharing vehicle; the vehicles are often located in central areas to be easily accessible for users.

Implementation Timeframe

- Long term (6-10 years)

Costs

The costs associated with a car-sharing service will vary between different service providers, as business models vary.

- There is no direct cost, outside of personnel time, to a public entity establishing a contract with a popular membership-based car-sharing service provider.[ccxxxiii]
- Individual users of a popular membership-based car-sharing service can expect to pay approximately either $9 monthly or $90 annually for a membership.[ccxxxiv] In addition to this membership, driving rates cost approximately $10 per hour or $83 per day.[ccxxxv]
- Users of a popular user-owned car-sharing service can expect to pay between $30 and $500 per day to use a vehicle, depending on the type of vehicle borrowed.[ccxxxvi]

Partner Agencies

- Local governments and private car-sharing providers.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Completion of a car-sharing service feasibility assessment.

Strategy 1.4: Increase the frequency and range of shuttle services to designated park-and-ride lots during highly attended events and busy downtown hours.

As consistently mentioned during public outreach, the demand for parking spaces in Downtown Rockford often exceeds capacity during events and busy hours. Expanded shuttle services to park-and-ride lots can improve the overall parking experience, decrease parking demand during events and peak downtown hours, and make travel more efficient and enjoyable.

Shuttle buses relieve stress of driving in crowded areas and searching for parking by providing direct transportation to popular destinations. For large events, shuttle routes can be created to deliver users directly to the venue. This minimizes congestion in high-demand areas, making it easier for drivers who need to park closer to their destinations, such as those with mobility needs, to find available spots. Shuttle services can also reduce the likelihood of traffic and pedestrian incidents by reducing the number of cars that have to navigate crowded streets.

Shuttle services already exist in the Rockford Region, but services are limited. This strategy aims to increase the frequency and range of shuttles offered in the region to reduce parking demand in downtown areas, improve parking experiences for users, and increase safety.

Image Source: GoRockford

Key Considerations

- Ideal park-and-ride lot placements can be determined by analyzing current land uses, travel routes, and reoccurring events in the region.
- Successful implementation of increased shuttle services requires public outreach to spread awareness and increase users' comfortability.

Implementation Timeframe

- Midterm (1-5 years)

Costs

The costs described below are based on shuttle services provided by Rockford Mass Transit District (RMTD) shuttle services provided in 2024.

- RMTD provided shuttle services for 20 separate occurrences of City Market in Downtown Rockford in 2024. Services were provided by one trolley across 140 hours, with a total cost of $23,160.
- RMTD are provided 100 hours worth of services for Stroll on State in Downtown Rockford for a total cost of $16,543. Ten vehicles were utilized by RMTD on the day of the event.

Partner Agencies

- Transit agencies, event organizers, and local governments.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Number of shuttle bus services provided.
- Frequency of shuttle bus services provided.

Mobility

Strategy 1.5: Pilot a regional mobility hubs program.

Mobility hubs use existing transportation infrastructure to create walkable, sustainable, and equitable communities by providing more options to reach destinations. Mobility hubs refer to central locations connecting people to their destinations through different modes of transportation, including active transportation, micro-mobility, public transportation, and shared mobility. This provides dependable access to various transportation modes, providing ease to reach desired destinations and reducing the number of vehicles on the road.

This strategy aims to provide various reliable, equitable, and safe transportation options to reduce vehicle congestion and parking demand. A mobility hubs program could address these concerns in the Rockford Region; however, the feasibility and potential success of such hubs need to be tested through a pilot program. Ideal locations for the mobility hub pilot program and further considerations for implementing mobility hubs in the Rockford Region can be found in the Mobility Hubs Study for the Rockford Region.

Key Considerations

- Due to the unique nature of mobility hub projects, a one-size-fits-all funding model is not possible; a variety of funding sources are required to support each element of the hub.
- Significant consideration is placed on determining the ownership model for the highest rate of success for the mobility hub; mobility hubs can be publicly, privately, or cooperatively owned through a public-private partnership.
- Effective zoning regulations are capable of ensuring mobility hub sites are in the best-suited areas and compatible with surrounding land uses.

Image Source: ms consultants, inc.

Implementation Timeframe

- Long term (6-10 years)

Costs

The costs of a mobility hub vary greatly; they are dependent on the size of the hub's area and the amenities included within it.

- Deployment and operations costs for a mobility hub in Columbus, Ohio cost $1,333,311 over a 13-month period.[ccxxxvii]
- A large multi-block mobility hub in Downtown Fort Lauderdale, Florida cost $4,241,590.33 to deploy.[ccxxxviii]
- The Metropolitan Transportation Commission, located in San Francisco, estimates that the planning, design, implementation, installation, and turnkey costs per hub will cost between $301,687.42 and $2,413,499.40, depending on the size and scope of the hub.[ccxxxix]

Partner Agencies

- Planning and Zoning departments, transit agencies, consultants, and private entities.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Establishment of a regional mobility hub pilot program.

Strategy 1.6: Conduct a public education campaign to improve the perception of public transit and active forms of transportation.

Public transportation plays a vital role in a safe and efficient transportation system. Not only does it provide access to opportunities for people from all walks of life, but it also supports the reliability and efficiency of the transportation system and reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Similar to most mid-sized metropolitan areas, the Rockford Region's public transportation struggles with its public perception, with most residents opting to drive over taking the bus. This is a result of many factors, including safety concerns, lack of public awareness, and the current public transit system falling short of meeting the needs and demands of the population due to limited funding and resources.

Increasing public support, perception, and comfortability with public transit can help increase ridership rates, reduce the demand for parking, and mitigate transportation-related emissions. This strategy aims to improve the public perception of public transit and other forms of transportation through a public education campaign that targets residents of all abilities and geographies.

Image Source: Region 1 Planning Council

Key Considerations

- Interactive, widespread, and tailored engagement to individual groups often yields increased awareness of public transit options and grows ridership rates.
- After outreach is conducted and barriers to public and active transportation are identified, assessments can identify and address transportation connectivity concerns in communities.

Implementation Timeframe

- Short term (Within 1 year)

Costs

- A service area-wide campaign for a public transit agency can cost between $15,000 and $50,000, depending on the intensity of the outreach efforts.[ccxl]

Partner Agencies

- Transit providers, local governments, school districts, and park districts.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Types of outreach methods conducted.
- Number of communities contacted through outreach.
- Number of public engagement events.

Placemaking

Goal 2:

Improve quality of life by fostering active, engaging, and safe public parking facilities that encourage people to connect with their surroundings.

As their sole purpose is to store vehicles, parking facilities by design do not support quality of life and can often appear unwelcoming and unsafe. This can be a result of many factors, such as minimal security monitoring, insufficiently lit areas, lack of clear signage and demarcation lines, and the distance of a parking space from the destination.

The Parking Reimagined Plan's inventory analysis identified deficiencies in maintenance, safety features, pedestrian access, and aesthetics. The plan's public outreach efforts confirmed several of these findings, with participants acknowledging parking facilities can feel unsafe due to limited lighting and a lack of pedestrian infrastructure. Parking can be reimagined to support quality of life by increasing safety measures, aesthetics, and user-friendliness of facilities. Parking lots with public art, clear signage, pedestrian infrastructure, and good lighting are more attractive to drivers and increase a community's aesthetics and well-being.

The objective of this goal is to use ideals of placemaking to improve parking facilities for community well-being. Placemaking is a collaborative process that involves designing and maintaining public spaces to improve quality of life.[ccxli] The purpose of placemaking is to create beautiful, meaningful, and functional community spaces. This goal focuses on improving parking through aesthetics, safety, and user-friendliness.

Aesthetics. Parking lots directly impact the overall attractiveness of a community. A visually appealing parking lot complements surrounding architecture, greenspaces, and public areas to create a harmonious environment. Improving the aesthetics of parking areas through efforts such as public art installations can instill a greater sense of community pride and increase property values, benefiting residents and local businesses.

Safety. Parking facilities have a reputation for feeling unsafe for many users. When not designed with safety in mind, parking facilities can be dangerous for pedestrians and drivers alike and result in pedestrian/driver collisions and crime. These safety threats can be mitigated by incorporating increased safety measures into parking lots such as lighting, cameras, patrolling, pedestrian infrastructure, and clear signage.[ccxlii]

User Friendliness. A user-friendly parking facility is easier to navigate and reduces stress for drivers, improves pedestrian safety, and benefits the local economy. [ccxliii] Accessible parking design includes clear signage, well-marked lanes and spaces, and infrastructure that supports people of all abilities and transportation mode choices to enhance inclusivity and usability.

Thoughtfully designed and maintained parking facilities contribute to a more inviting and user-friendly experience, enhancing driver satisfaction, improving public safety, and promoting overall community well-being. The following strategies aim to achieve this goal:

- **Strategy 2.1:** Improve and increase parking facility lighting, signage, and security measures.
- **Strategy 2.2:** Increase pedestrian access into and out of parking facilities with pedestrian-friendly infrastructure.
- **Strategy 2.3:** Increase beautification of parking facilities through art installations.
- **Strategy 2.4:** Increase wayfinding signage to aid navigation to parking facilities and nearby destinations.

Placemaking

Strategy 2.1: Improve and increase parking facility lighting, signage, and security measures.

As discussed in Part 4: Benefits & Burdens, when parking facilities are not designed thoughtfully, they present a threat to community safety and public health. The main safety concerns within parking facilities include crime and vehicle collisions with pedestrians and bicyclists. Parking facilities that do not include clear signage and pedestrian infrastructure are more likely to result in traffic safety concerns.[ccxliv] Additionally, parking lots are common sites for violent crime, theft, and vandalism.[ccxlv]

Improving and increasing safety measures in parking facilities through design and implementation of increased lighting, clear signage and demarcation lines, and security measures, such as patrolling and cameras, can improve user's comfortability in parking lots. During public engagement, the main safety concern was a lack of sufficient lighting in parking facilities. Well-lit areas deter criminal activity and reduce the risk of accidents by increasing visibility for both drivers and pedestrians.[ccxlvi]

This strategy aims to increase public safety and a sense of security in communities throughout the region by improving safety measures in parking lots.

Image Source: Hardcore Electric

Key Considerations

- Community outreach can be utilized to determine top safety concerns of parking facilities and priority locations for public safety improvements.
- Public safety improvements are more feasible within parking facilities owned by municipalities compared to privately owned lots. However, this requires additional municipal resources to be allocated to parking lot improvements.

Implementation Timeframe

- Short term (Within 1 year)

Costs

- Parking lot light pole installation costs on average $1,065.[ccxlvii]
- The cost to install a sign in a parking lot can range from $20 to $100.[ccxlviii]
- Security cameras can cost anywhere from $100 to $2,000 with installation labor costs adding $100 to $200 per camera.[ccxlix] [ccl]

Partner Agencies

- Public Works departments, law enforcement, and private lot owners.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Number of newly and updated light fixtures installed within parking facilities.
- Number of additional parking facility signage added to facilities.
- Number of installed security cameras within parking facilities.
- Frequency of parking facility patrolling.

Strategy 2.2: Increase pedestrian access into and out of parking facilities with pedestrian-friendly infrastructure.

Parking lots can be dangerous environments for pedestrians due to cars moving in multiple directions, low visibility, and limited separation between vehicles and pedestrians. As detailed in Part 4: Benefits & Burdens, the trip that a pedestrian makes through a parking lot from their car to their destination is often dangerous and uncomfortable, leading to many collisions and injuries.

By incorporating pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, such as marked walkways, crosswalks, protective barriers, and dedicated pedestrian zones, parking facilities can clearly define spaces for pedestrians to mitigate the amount of collisions and improve pedestrian comfortability. This improves sightlines between drivers and pedestrians while reducing blind spots and improving overall safety.

Parking lots that consider pedestrians in their design invite users to linger, enjoy the environment, and explore nearby destinations on foot. This is particularly beneficial in urban areas with shopping districts, restaurants, and public spaces where pedestrian-friendly design can increase foot traffic and foster a livelier atmosphere.

Image Source: Streetsblog SF

Key Considerations

- Pedestrian infrastructure in parking facilities must be designed to meet existing parking requirements.
- Pedestrian infrastructure in parking facilities needs to consider the needs and abilities of all potential users, including those with disabilities.
- Incentives or disincentives for private lot owners may be needed to increase the presence of pedestrian infrastructure in parking facilities.
- Installing pedestrian access in shared parking facilities can support access to multiple destinations.

Implementation Timeframe

- Midterm (1-5 years)

Costs

- Pedestrian crosswalk paint and labor cost on average $1.94 to $4.86 per square foot to install.[ccli]
- Pedestrian pavement markings cost on average $1.94 to $4.86 per square foot to install including paint and labor costs.[cclii]
- Rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) can cost between $12,145 to $18,215 for installation and labor.[ccliii]

Partner Agencies

- Public Works departments, Planning and Zoning departments, and private lot owners.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Number of pedestrian facilities installed and updated within parking facilities.

Placemaking

Strategy 2.3: Increase beautification of parking facilities through art installations.

The aesthetics of parking facilities affect more than just appearance; they impact the local economy, public safety, and community well-being. Thoughtfully designed parking lots with appealing aesthetics create a positive first impression for drivers and enhance community appeal. Design elements such as murals, sculptures, landscaped greenery, pavement art, bicycle racks, and benches can improve the lot's visual appeal to make users feel comfortable and welcome.

Well-maintained, beautified parking facilities have a positive effect on surrounding property values by elevating the overall appearance of an area, making it more attractive to both residents and visitors. Art improves the appearance of parking facilities, which can increase the safety of the facility as crimes are less likely to be committed in well-maintained areas.[cciv] Additionally, public art installations create opportunities for local artists to share their work, helping connect the community to its own culture and talent.

This strategy aims to transform parking facilities, through beautification techniques, into assets that support a vibrant, safe, and inviting community. Public art competitions for parking lot murals, bench art, or sculptures can be used to beautify parking facilities and increase a sense of community pride by uplifting local artists.

Image Source: Rock River Current

Key Considerations

- Areas needing revitalization efforts or undergoing development are priority locations for art installations to help strengthen the identity of those neighborhoods.
- Parking lot art installations can be an opportunity for community bonding by allowing community members to vote on the type of art incorporated within their community.

Implementation Timeframe

- Midterm (1-5 years)

Costs

- Artists charge an average of $10 to $40 per square foot of a mural.[cclv]
- Other art installations, such as sculptures or aesthetically designed bicycle racks, are difficult to price as it is up to the individual artist and art type.

Partner Agencies

- Public Works departments, community-based organizations, art councils, and neighborhood associations.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Number of art installations added to parking facilities.
- Percentage of parking facilities with art installations.

Placemaking

Strategy 2.4: Increase wayfinding signage to aid navigation to parking facilities and nearby destinations.

Wayfinding is a systematic network of directional signs to guide the traveling public to key civic, cultural, regional, and commercial destinations. It can be used to guide drivers to parking destinations which improves congestion and traffic. Clear signage reduces confusion and aids drivers' navigation to their desired destinations.

Improving navigation toward parking lots can reduce the amount of congestion and traffic on roads because drivers are confident in their route. Streamlining navigation and reducing congestion on roads can also reduce the amount of transportation-related emissions released into the air and improve local air quality. Wayfinding also presents benefits to the tourism industry as it clearly highlights popular destinations and routes for visitors unfamiliar with the area.

This strategy aims to increase wayfinding signage and mapping in the region to support traffic flow improvements and reduce GHG emissions. Actions that can be taken to increase wayfinding include identifying where there is a need for wayfinding signage and allocating resources to this effort.

Image Source: Towns of Estes Park

Key Considerations

- ADA accessible wayfinding signage ensures that individuals with disabilities can navigate public spaces independently and safely. Wayfinding signage can be ADA accessible by incorporating tactile lettering, Braille, high-contrast colors, easily legible fonts, and appropriate placement at heights and locations for those with mobility aids, ensuring clear visibility and ease of navigation.

Implementation Timeframe

- Short term (Within 1 year)

Costs

- Wayfinding signage can cost anywhere from $70 to $400, with additional installation costs including the pole, footing, and labor can bring the total sign cost from $70 up to $1,120.[cclvi] [cclvii] Costs are dependent on the design and manufacture.

Partner Agencies

- Public Works departments, Planning and Zoning departments, and visitor's bureau.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Number of wayfinding signs placed throughout the region.
- Number of wayfinding maps placed within parking facilities.

Parking Retrofits

Goal 3:

Encourage multifunctional uses of parking facilities and repurpose underutilized parking into spaces to better serve the community.

The majority of parking facilities in the region serve a single function: vehicle storage. However, these facilities have the potential to be transformed to serve multiple purposes and increase the utility of this vital urban land. In this plan, parking retrofits refer to the temporary or permanent transformation of a parking facility to accommodate alternative use or additional uses.

As discussed in Part 4: Benefits & Burdens, land allocated to parking can only serve the purpose of storing vehicles, instead of the land used as a destination, such as a restaurant, office, or store. Parking facilities typically result in lower contributions to the local economy compared to other land uses and contribute to environmental consequences, such as flooding, increased temperatures, and biodiversity loss.

Repurposing vacant or underutilized parking facilities can mitigate the effects and expansion of urban sprawl, reduce environmental burdens, and increase the region's economic development. Additionally, temporary conversions of parking facilities for outdoor seating, sports courts, and event spaces can generate revenue and cultivate a deeper sense of community. Refer to Part 5: Current & Future Trends for a detailed discussion of repurposing parking facilities into greenspaces, infill development, and temporary conversions.

This goal aims to identify the benefits of converting underutilized and vacant parking facilities into spaces that can better serve the community through the following strategies:

- **Strategy 3.1:** Encourage temporary conversions and multiple uses of parking facilities.
- **Strategy 3.2:** Support infill developments within identified vacant and underutilized parking lots.
- **Strategy 3.3:** Repurpose underutilized parking spaces into functional greenspaces such as urban meadows, community parks, stormwater retention basins, or rain gardens.
- **Strategy 3.4:** Expand the availability and prioritize accessibility of electric vehicle charging stations and designated electric vehicle parking spaces in parking facilities.

Parking Retrofits

Strategy 3.1: Encourage temporary conversions and multiple uses of parking facilities.

By reimagining parking lots and structures as flexible spaces, the region can optimize underutilized areas. These transformations foster vibrant public spaces and respond to evolving regional needs. Temporary conversions enable parking facilities to fulfill multiple purposes, thereby enhancing their value and utility through efficient land use and adaptation to seasonal variations. For example, parking lots can be repurposed for seasonal uses and outdoor event spaces, such as farmers markets in the summer and holiday markets in the winter. Parking lots can also be redesigned to support multiple uses at once, such as adding sports courts to underutilized portions of the lot. On-street parking spaces can be converted into temporary parklets that host outdoor seating for businesses.

This strategy aims to identify the benefits of allowing and supporting temporary conversions of parking facilities for boosting social and economic activity and promoting efficient land use. Municipalities can support temporary parking facility conversions by simplifying the permitting process for temporary uses, offering incentives and property tax reductions or credits to property owners, and fostering public-private partnerships. This approach encourages the repurposing of parking spaces for temporary public or commercial uses.

Image Source: Rockford City Market

Key Considerations

- Parklets and other parking facility conversions effect sightlines for street and sidewalk users; ensuring visibility, accessibility, and mobility for all users is a safety best practice for retrofits.

Implementation Timeframe

- Midterm (1-5 years)

Costs

- Updating permitting processes has no direct costs.
- Offering tax credits and incentives has no direct costs for a municipality. Depending on construction materials and style, a parklet can cost anywhere from $500 to $20,000. This cost can be split up a number of ways between local government, businesses, and non-profits/donations.

Partner Agencies

- Planning and Zoning departments, property owners, and community organizations.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Revisions to permits for temporary conversations of parking facilities, such as those for food trucks.
- Incentives available for temporary parking lot conversions.

Parking Retrofits

Strategy 3.2: Support infill developments within identified vacant and underutilized parking lots.

Many parking facilities are located in economically significant urban core areas but do not significantly contribute to the tax base or generate significant revenue compared to other land uses. Infill development constructs buildings or other facilities on previously unused or underutilized land within already developed areas; this can increase a density, walkability, housing stock, and provide further amenities and economic opportunities to an area. Parking lots that are vacant or underutilized are prime examples of land that is ideal for infill development.

Ideal locations for infill development of underutilized parking lots in the Rockford Region include those along commercial arterial corridors and those located in dense neighborhoods and urban cores. Structures, such as grocery stores, event spaces, and restaurants can be established within the previous parking lot and help attract jobs, residential units, businesses, and amenities to the region. The intention of this strategy is to support the replacement of underutilized parking lots with infill development projects through efforts such as incentives, zoning reform, and shared parking agreements.

Image Source: Google Street View

Key Considerations

- In order to determine priority parking lots for infill development, an assessment of existing parking lot utilization and viability for infill development is needed.
- Commercial corridors, mixed-use development areas, and neighborhoods in need of revitalization are ideal locations to prioritize infill development in the region.
- Infill development of an underutilized parking facility currently requires a special-use permit or zoning variance for many municipalities in the region; the process of acquiring this permit can be a disincentive to developers. Approval of broader zoning code reforms related to parking and land use could ease this process.

Implementation Timeframe

- Long term (6-10 years)

Costs

- Updating zoning codes has no direct costs.
- Creating an infill development incentive program using waived taxes in Winnebago County would cost approximately $70,000 annually (for the length of the incentive) for a commercial infill building on an underutilized parking lot with a fair-market-value of $2,274,250.[cclviii] Winnebago County is used as an example but this incentive would have similar costs depending on tax rates and taxing bodies in other counties and areas of the MPA. In the years following a successful implementation of a tax incentive program, the new capture of property taxes from infill development would quickly cancel out the previous costs incurred.
- Shared parking agreements may cost $50 to $500 depending on the zoning code. In some cases, fees may be waived, especially for non-profits.

Partner Agencies

- Public Works departments, Planning and Zoning departments, private lot owners, and consultants.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Completion of a utilization and infill development viability assessment of parking lots.
- Number of infill development projects that replace parking lots.

Parking Retrofits

Strategy 3.3: Repurpose underutilized parking spaces into functional greenspaces such as urban meadows, community parks, stormwater retention basins, or rain gardens.

Parking facilities present many environmental burdens on local ecosystems and environmental systems. Repurposing underutilized parking spaces into functional greenspaces can help mitigate environmental concerns, including flooding, increased temperatures, air and water pollution, and biodiversity and habitat loss.

Urban greenspaces not only offer significant environmental benefits, they also support community well-being by improving access to natural areas, and therefore improving resident's mental and physical health.[cclix] Greenspaces such as community parks, urban meadows, and community gardens, provide gathering spaces, improve public health, and increase a sense of community. Additionally, research indicates that urban greenspaces can increase property values and reduce crime rates.[cclx]

This strategy aims to explore the benefits of converting parking spaces within parking lots into greenspaces like rain gardens or converting entire parking facilities into larger greenspaces that improve climate resiliency and community well-being.

Image Source: Brett Ryan Studios

Key Considerations

- Areas with minimal access to greenspace and areas prone to flooding and extreme heat are highest priority for greenspace conversion.
- Active public engagement clarifies community preferences for neighborhood greenspace, enabling planners to create designs that align with local needs and aspirations.

Implementation Timeframe

- Long term (6-10 years)

Costs

- Implementation of urban meadows on a small scale can be as much as $8 per square foot or more to convert/construct. Long term maintenance is much less expensive than that of asphalt, concrete, or short turf grass that needs to be mowed consistently.[cclxi]
- Prairie plant plugs cost approximately $0.45 per square foot for materials.[cclxii]

Partner Agencies

- Soil & Water departments, Planning & Zoning departments, park districts, private lot owners, and consultants.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Number of parking spaces and parking facilities converted into functional greenspace.

Parking Retrofits

Strategy 3.4: Expand the availability and prioritize accessibility of electric vehicle charging stations and designated electric vehicle parking spaces in parking facilities.

The popularity of electric vehicles (EVs) is on the rise across the United States, and this upward trend is mirrored in the Rockford Region. Incorporating EV charging stations into existing parking facilities can support economic and environmental well-being.

Parking facilities can further support economic growth in a region by installing EV charging stations and designated EV parking spaces, which generate revenue and attract visitors to the destinations of these EV charging stations. The location of EV charging stations and designated EV spaces within a parking facility can be strategically located near shopping destinations to attract EV drivers to shop while their vehicle charges.

This strategy aims to increase the functions of current parking facilities by offering charging stations to increase the economic contribution of parking facilities and promote zero emission vehicles. Additional information on EV charging station implementation is available in the Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan for the Rockford Region, including a map of public EV charging priority areas within the region.

Image Source: Region 1 Planning Council

Key Considerations

- Strong partnerships are needed to support implementation of EV charging stations throughout the region.
- Financial barriers to EV charging station installation and utilization exist, including low utilization rates during early EV market development and low margins on electricity sales relative to upfront costs and maintenance of charging stations.

Implementation Timeframe

- Midterm (1-5 years)

Costs

- Individual EV chargers through R1's partnership with Blink cost R1 members $4,938 to $7,488, depending on the model.
- Chargers require network fees of $480 annually after the first year.[cclxiii]

Partner Agencies

- Public Works departments, Planning & Zoning departments, private lot owners, consultants, and EV charging firms.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Number of EV parking spaces in the region.

Environment

Goal 4:

Reduce the environmental impact of parking facilities to support local ecosystems and mitigate the effects of climate change.

This plan identifies the burdens parking poses on the environment, including its contribution to air and water quality degradation, increasing urban temperatures, stormwater management issues, and habitat and biodiversity loss. Conventional parking lots are constructed using impervious and dark-colored materials, such as concrete and asphalt, which absorb sunlight and prevent water from soaking into the ground; this leads to increased temperatures and stormwater runoff.

Parking's impact on the environment is apparent not only through research and analysis but also from public and stakeholder input. When asked, residents of the Rockford Region consistently prioritized environmental considerations in their responses. Refer to Appendix B for the full Parking Reimagined surveys and their results.

Parking facilities can be transformed to minimize their negative impacts on the environment and instead, support environmental well-being. The objective of this goal is to balance the need for parking infrastructure with environmental integrity while promoting climate resilience.

Ecosystem Support. The development of parking facilities results in clearing greenspace and natural land that supports the local ecosystem. Land clearing removes trees and other critical habitats for native species, leading to habitat fragmentation.[cclxiv] Additionally, the removal of natural land disrupts the water cycle, and stormwater runoff from parking facilities increases the amount of sediment and contaminants entering waterways.[cclxv] Incorporating parking features that reduce environmental harm to ecosystems can help restore habitats and improve water quality to better support native species and vital environmental functions.

Climate Resilience. Climate change will directly impact the Rockford Region through increases in extreme heat, flooding, and storm severity.[cclxvi] Current parking infrastructure is not adequately equipped to handle the increased intensity of these climate impacts. Because of this, the region would benefit from climate-resilient improvements to parking that minimize the negative environmental burdens of parking and mitigate climate impacts like extreme heat and flooding.

Parking infrastructure that supports local ecosystems and climate resilience can be accomplished in the Rockford Region through the following strategies:

- **Strategy 4.1:** Increase the use of stormwater best management practices in parking facilities.
- **Strategy 4.2:** Implement cool and permeable pavements into current and future parking facilities.
- **Strategy 4.3:** Assess the feasibility of installing solar canopies within public parking lots.
- **Strategy 4.4:** Adopt or update landscaping guidelines and regulations to require a minimum amount of maintained native vegetation and shade trees to be incorporated into parking design.

Environment

Strategy 4.1: Increase the use of stormwater best management practices in parking facilities.

Parking facilities significantly contribute to stormwater management issues and regional floods. As discussed in Part 4: Benefits & Burdens, this is a result of the materials used to construct parking lots and roads. Parking facilities are typically built with impervious surfaces, such as concrete and asphalt, that do not allow water to soak into the ground and instead force the water to flow over the surface into stormwater grates of nearby streets. An increase in the amount of stormwater runoff increases the likelihood of flooding, especially in urban areas surrounded by other impervious surfaces.

The intent of this strategy is to address stormwater management and flooding concerns in the region through the implementation of stormwater best management practices (BMPs) within and near parking facilities. Part 5: Current & Future Trends identifies common forms of stormwater BMPs, such as bioretention basins, bioswales, porous pavement, and urban tree canopies, that can be installed within parking facilities to control stormwater runoff and mitigate flooding.

Image Source: Capital Region Watershed District

Key Considerations

- Priority parking facilities targeted for immediate stormwater BMP improvements include areas vulnerable to flooding located in flood zones.
- Bioswales, considered the most effective BMP to reduce stormwater runoff, remove pollutants and recharge groundwater tables.[cclxvii]
- Although BMPs require initial upfront costs for implementation, they reduce long-term expenses associated with flood damage and water quality degradation while improving the aesthetic of parking facilities.

Implementation Timeframe

- Midterm (1-5 years)

Costs

Costs vary based on the type of stormwater BMP installed.

- A bioswale costs on average $6.70 to $29.24 per square foot with an average maintenance cost of $0.07 to $0.26 per square foot.
- Tree plantings cost on average $15.84 to $350.87 per tree with a maintenance cost of $18.27 to $98.68 per tree.
- Porous asphalt costs on average $6.70 to $9.75 per square foot with a maintenance cost of $0.11 to $0.28 per square foot.[cclxviii]

Partner Agencies

- Public Works departments, Planning and Zoning departments, Soil & Water departments, private lot owners, and consultants.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Number of BMP installations within and near parking facilities.
- Percentage of parking facilities that host stormwater BMPs.
- Reduction in stormwater runoff of parking facilities with BMPs.

Environment

Strategy 4.2: Implement cool and permeable pavements into current and future parking facilities.

Parking facilities are a significant contributor to the urban heat island (UHI) effect and flooding due to the dark and impervious surfaces used to build them. As mentioned in Part 5: Current & Future Trends, the dark materials, typically asphalt, used to construct parking lots absorb sunlight and increase surface temperatures.

Extreme heat and flooding are the two most likely impacts of climate change to impact the Rockford Region. Currently, Illinois averages three days of extreme heat conditions per year; this number is projected to rise to 14 to 34 extreme heat days per year by 2050.[cclxix cclxx] Extreme heat is heightened in urban areas dominated by impervious surfaces, such as parking lots, due to a lack of greenspace and the high heat absorbency of manmade materials. Additionally, these impervious surfaces can lead to an increase in flooding because they do not allow water to infiltrate into the ground, which depletes groundwater resources and increases stormwater runoff.

This strategy aims to mitigate the increases in temperature and flooding commonly associated with parking facilities by reconsidering pavement materials. Part 4. Current & Future Trends describes smart surfaces as redesigned urban areas like parking lots that mitigate climate impacts and enhance resiliency. These include cool pavements with high reflectivity to lower temperatures using reflective coatings, and permeable pavements like porous concrete and permeable pavers, which allow water infiltration to reduce runoff.

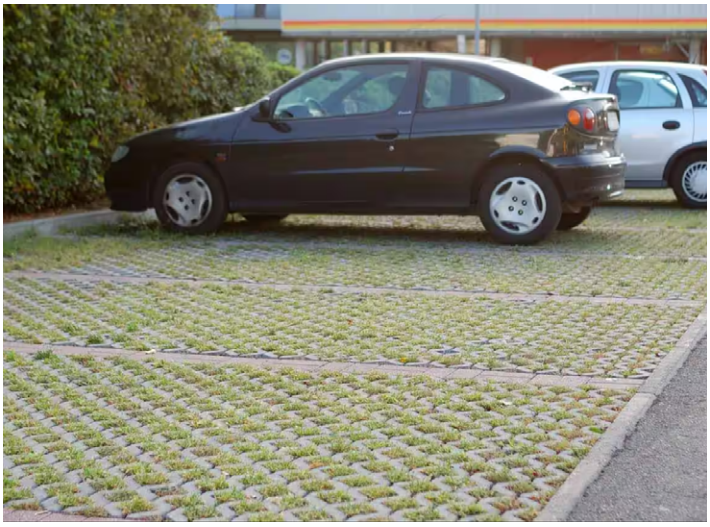


Image Source: Angi

Key Considerations

- Priority facilities for permeable pavement installations include those located within areas that are vulnerable to flooding.
- Parking lots located within areas vulnerable to extreme heat are ideal locations for cool pavement installations.
- Cool pavement installations are easy to install, can extend the lifespan of the pavement, and can yield significant savings on parking lot lighting and maintenance costs.[cclxxi]

Implementation Timeframe

- Midterm (1-5 years)

Costs

- Porous concrete costs on average $6.70 to $14.62 per square foot with a maintenance cost of $0.11 to $0.28 per square foot.
- Porous asphalt costs on average $6.70 to $9.75 per square foot with a maintenance cost of $0.11 to $0.28 per square foot.
- Permeable pavers cost on average $6.09 to $14.62 per square foot with a maintenance cost of $0.01 to $0.28 per square foot.[cclxxii]

Partner Agencies

- Public Works departments, private lot owners, and consultants.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Number of parking lots resurfaced with permeable pavements.
- Number of parking lots with cool pavement coatings.
- Percentage of parking facilities that have cool or permeable pavement.
- Reduction in surface temperature of parking lots with cool pavements.
- Reduction in stormwater runoff of parking lots with permeable pavements.

Environment

Strategy 4.3: Assess the feasibility of installing solar canopies within public parking lots.

Typical parking infrastructure does not support vehicle protection to the sun and weather, reduction of transportation-related GHG emissions, or multiple land uses of the parking facility. As highlighted in Part 5: Current & Future Trends, solar canopies are elevated structures hosting solar panels that can be placed in existing parking lots to provide renewable energy, shade, protection from weather, and reduced emissions. Parking lots are ideal locations for solar canopy installation as it enhances the functionality, services provided, and attractiveness of the parking lot.

Solar canopy parking lots are proven to reduce surface temperatures and carbon dioxide emissions, which could help support climate resiliency and public health in the Rockford Region. Additionally, the physical canopy provides shade to vehicles and people in the lot while also providing protection from snow, rain, and hail. The renewable energy generated from solar canopies can be used to reduce the parking facilities' energy costs and charge EVs.

During public engagement for this plan, many stakeholder and members of the public expressed their interest and desire for solar canopy parking lots in the region. The intent of this strategy is to highlight the benefits of solar canopy installations in parking lots and promote the facilitation of a feasibility analysis that assesses solar canopy implementation in parking lots within the Rockford Region.

Image Source: New Energy Works

Key Considerations

- Parking lots located within areas that are vulnerable to extreme heat are the priority solar canopy installations.
- Installation can have significantly high upfront costs, but, after installation, the energy generated from the solar panels can reduce energy costs for lighting and be used for EV charging.

Implementation Timeframe

- Long term (6-10 years)

Costs

- A solar canopy feasibility assessment could cost $60,000 to $80,000, dependent on the scope of the report.
- Solar canopies cost on average $3.46 to $4.01 per watt, including solar panels, canopy structure, labor, wiring, and other solar equipment.[cclxxiii]

Partner Agencies

- Public Works departments, Planning and Zoning departments, private lot owners, consultants, and solar firms.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Completion of a feasibility assessment of solar canopy installation in local parking lots.
- Number of solar canopies installed within parking facilities.
- Amount of energy generated from parking lot solar canopies.

Environment

Strategy 4.4: Adopt or update landscaping guidelines and regulations to require a minimum amount of maintained native vegetation and shade trees to be incorporated into parking design.

Many parking facilities lack sufficient vegetation to support local ecosystems. While some Rockford Region municipalities already enforce landscaping guidelines for parking lot vegetation, these could be enhanced to better support environmental systems. Those without such regulations may consider adopting robust guidelines.

Residents of the Rockford Region ranked greenspace and shade trees as their second most valued feature when choosing a parking space. This feedback likely stems from the benefits natural space and native vegetation in parking lots offer; these benefits include enhanced aesthetics, connecting people in urban settings with nature, and trees providing shade to vehicles.

This strategy aims to increase the amount of native plants and trees in parking lots to better support local ecosystems, flood control, air quality, and aesthetics.

Image Source: Crowley Landscape

Key Considerations

- Local ecosystem, topography, and needs of the parking lot are factors to consider when selecting the vegetation type for parking lot landscaping.
- Water-absorbent plants are ideal vegetation to incorporate into parking lots located in flood zones, whereas drought-resistance plants and shade trees are ideal for parking lots located in UHIs.

Implementation Timeframe

- Short term (Within 1 year)

Costs

- There are no direct costs to adopt or update landscaping guidelines and requirements.

Partner Agencies

- Planning and Zoning departments and environmental consulting firms.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Number of municipalities in the region with landscaping guidelines and minimum native vegetation requirements for parking lots.
- Number of municipalities with updated regulations to require a higher amount of native plants and designated natural space in parking lots.

Parking Policy & Pricing

Goal 5:

Balance parking demand, parking space utilization, and parking efficiency through policy and pricing.

Regions face the challenge of providing adequate parking to meet demand while ensuring parking spaces are used efficiently and accessible to all users. As discussed in Part 4: Benefits & Burdens, parking has varied economic impacts, including its influence on property values, development, and affordability. Effective parking demand management can be incorporated into the Rockford Region through efficient policies and pricing to improve local economic development and ensure parking availability.

When implemented, policy and pricing adjustments can be effective methods to improve parking systems as they enable proactive management of parking resources, adjust to community needs, and create an environment that supports the sustainable and efficient use of urban spaces. Additionally, parking policy and pricing can be updated to align with regional development goals, such as creating a safe, connected, and economically competitive region.

Policies and pricing are vital to balancing the complex needs of parking demand, utilization, and efficiency. The following strategies address policy and pricing improvements that can better support economic development, land use, and parking experiences:

- **Strategy 5.1:** Update parking ordinances to better reflect parking demand, utilization, and development types.
- **Strategy 5.2:** Analyze parking demand and space occupancy to implement demand-based pricing.
- **Strategy 5.3:** Establish parking benefit districts in select areas to generate revenue for parking maintenance and other public service improvements.
- **Strategy 5.4:** Encourage shared parking agreements within commercial and industrial areas.
- **Strategy 5.5:** Encourage employers to provide parking cash-outs to employees who do not wish to utilize parking subsidies.

Parking Policy & Pricing

Strategy 5.1: Update parking ordinances to better reflect parking demand, utilization, and development types.

Effective demand management involves understanding and adjusting for peak and off-peak times, regional needs, and user preferences. Parking ordinances such as reduced or eliminated parking minimum requirements or implementing parking maximums in high-priority development areas can help balance demand with the actual need for spaces, reduce developer costs, and enhance mobility.

Parking minimums often exceed the amount of necessary parking because they are typically set to reflect the maximum amount of demand, which is rarely met in the region. This requires larger parking lots to be built, serving as an obstacle to new development due to high construction and maintenance costs.

Current parking ordinances can undergo reviews informed by travel demand and parking space utilization to determine if revisions are necessary; parking ordinances can be revised to better adapt to localized demand and support various land uses in a given area. Updating parking ordinances allows municipalities to more efficiently allocate space for developments, such as commercial or residential, which offer further economic opportunities.

Image Source: Region 1 Planning Council

Key Considerations

- A review of existing parking ordinances and the procedures used to establish these ordinances must be conducted in order to understand necessary updates for each municipality.

Implementation Timeframe

- Midterm (1-5 years)

Costs

- There are no direct costs to a public entity for passing a zoning ordinance to change parking requirements.
- A sensor that monitors two parking space costs approximately $539.22 to procure; all 50 sensors would cost approximately $26,961.47.[cclxxiv] Installation of sensors costs approximately $2,073.[cclxxv] The cost of collecting utilization data manually will vary in relation to the data collector's wage.

Partner Agencies

- Planning and Zoning departments.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Review of existing parking ordinances.
- Number of municipal parking ordinances that are updated or newly established.

Parking Policy & Pricing

Strategy 5.2: Analyze parking demand and space occupancy to implement demand-based pricing.

Pricing is one of the most effective tools for balancing parking demand, especially in high-traffic urban areas. Demand-based pricing can adjust prices based on real-time demand, helping to reduce peak-hour congestion and distribute demand more evenly throughout the day and across the region. Traditionally, public facility parking prices are set at a standardized rate by the facility owner and remain unchanged throughout the day, with the exception of event parking prices.

As discussed in Part 5: Current & Future Trends, if the parking price is set too high at spaces with low demand, it can discourage trips to nearby destinations; if the rate is too low, it can fail to manage parking at high-demand locations during peak travel hours. This reduces potential local businesses revenue and increases congestion.

Demand-based pricing considers parking facilities demand based on time of day and nearby destinations. This strategy acknowledges that in order to implement demand-based pricing in the region, an analysis of current parking demand and occupancy must be conducted.

Image Source: The Valet Spot

Key Considerations

- Demand-based pricing is reliant on continual space occupancy data; this data can be gathered by technologies such as smart sensors or cameras.
- Demand-based pricing implements higher parking costs in areas and times of higher demand; for example, Downtown Rockford on a Friday night would have higher parking costs than parking along a commercial corridor in a less populated nearby city.

Implementation Timeframe

- Midterm (1-5 years)

Costs

The following costs describe the components of demand-based pricing parking systems covering 100 on-street parking spaces, including occupancy technology.

- A sensor that monitors two parking space costs approximately $539.22 to procure; all 50 sensors would cost approximately $26,961.47.[cclxxvi] Installation of sensors costs approximately $2,073.[cclxxvii]
- A payment terminal costs $5,823 to purchase and $1,078 to install.[cclxxviii]
- A gateway that connects sensors costs $1,244 per unit and an additional $1,078 to install.[cclxxix]
- Access to a software that allows parking occupancy and payment data to monitored costs approximately $1.56 per space per month.[cclxxx]
- In total, the components listed above will cost approximately $40,250 for the first year of operations.[cclxxxi]
- Additional costs to be incurred include parking enforcement staff and parking signage.

Partner Agencies

- Planning and Zoning departments, Public Works departments, and third-party service providers.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Completion of a parking demand and occupancy study or report.

Strategy 5.3: Establish parking benefit districts in select areas to generate revenue for parking maintenance and other public service improvements.

A parking benefit district (PBD) is a designated area where revenue from paid parking is used for local public service improvements. Public parking facilities require regular maintenance, including resurfacing, signage updates, lighting, and safety features. Revenue from PBDs ensures that maintenance needs can be met without depleting funds from general municipal budgets.

Paid parking is often criticized because there is a common sentiment that parking at one's destination should be free; PBDs attempt to combat this view by using parking revenue to fund visible improvements in the area where people are paying to park. When asked, 74 percent of survey respondents said their perception of paid parking would positively change if they knew the revenue was spent on public improvements.

This strategy highlights the advantages of establishing PBDs in select areas across the Rockford Region to balance parking demand and enhance public services through increased revenue. Ideal areas for PBDs in the region are those with high parking demand, such as dense urban cores, where pricing strategies can be employed to manage that demand. These areas can be transformed to be more desirable through service improvements that increase the safety, walkability, and experience of the PBD.

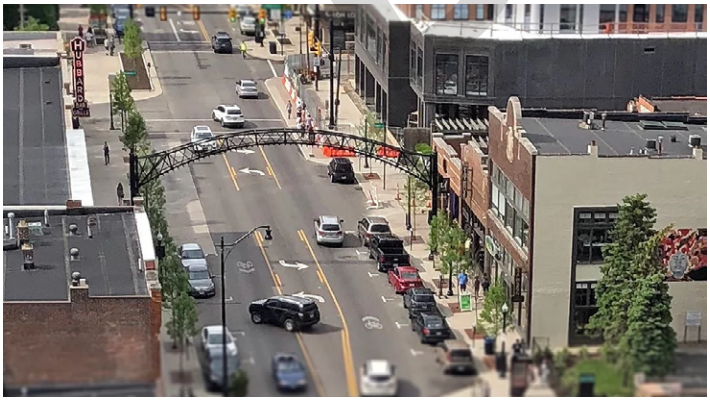


Image Source: Parking Reform Network

Key Considerations

- To further increase public support of PBDs, municipalities can conduct public outreach to gather input on priorities for allocating additional revenue within the PBD.

Implementation Timeframe

- Long term (6-10 years)

Costs

The following costs describe the components of demand-based pricing parking system covering a parking-benefit district containing 100 on-street parking spaces, including occupancy technology.

- A sensor that monitors two parking spaces costs approximately $539.22 to procure; all 50 sensors would cost approximately $26,961.47[cclxxxii]. Installation of sensors costs approximately $2,073.[cclxxxiii]
- A payment terminal for those parking their vehicle costs $5,823 to purchase and $1,078 to install.[cclxxxiv]
- A gateway that connects sensors costs $1,244 per unit, and an additional $1,078 to install.[cclxxxv]
- Access to a software that allows parking occupancy and payment data to monitored costs approximately $1.56 per space per month.[cclxxxvi]
- In total, the previously listed components will cost approximately $40,250 for the first year of operations.[cclxxxvii]
- Additional costs include parking enforcement staff and parking signage.
- Administrative costs to host a citizens advisory forum to guide the investment of parking revenue will also be incurred.

Partner Agencies

- Planning and Zoning departments, Public Works departments, and citizen advisory forums.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Establishment of PBDs.
- Amount of revenue generated from PBDs.
- Number of public improvements funded through PBDs.

Parking Policy & Pricing

Strategy 5.4: Encourage shared parking agreements within commercial and industrial areas.

Shared parking optimizes space in areas where individual buildings do not consistently fill their lots throughout the day. As discussed in Part 5: Current & Future Trends, shared parking refers to when a parking facility serves two or more individual land uses. Shared parking can include shared parking agreements between adjacent land uses or parking management districts that allow drivers of various destinations and uses to access the parking facility at any time.

Shared parking agreements are best suited for commercial and industrial areas that do not necessitate individual parking lots, whereas parking management districts are best suited to areas with compact pedestrian-oriented development that have a limited supply of parking. Shared parking agreements can be incentivized through zoning and planning policies such as flexible zoning requirements and expedited permitting processes, financial incentives, and outreach programs that present benefits to property owners.

Image Source: Addison Del Mastro

Key Considerations

- Public entities can engage with and present the economic benefit advantages of shared parking to businesses and property owners to encourage shared parking agreements.
- A tax rebate used as an incentive for shared parking agreements would see a small percentage of taxable revenue or property value foregone.

Implementation Timeframe

- Ongoing

Costs

Costs for shared used parking agreements are denoted below; the majority are indirect.

- There is no direct cost to a public entity to facilitate a shared parking agreement.
- There is no direct cost to a public entity to provide zoning incentives encouraging shared parking agreements.
- A small outreach campaign to private land owners encouraging shared parking agreements costs between $5,000 and $10,000.[cclxxxviii]

Partner Agencies

- Planning and Zoning departments and private lot owners.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Shared parking incentives available and distributed.
- Number of shared parking agreements created.
- Number of parking management districts established.

Parking Policy & Pricing

Strategy 5.5: Encourage employers to provide parking cash-outs to employees who do not wish to utilize parking subsidies.

Many employers provide free or subsidized parking spaces. As climate-friendly transportation options gain popularity and infrastructure costs increase, employers are increasingly offering parking cash-outs to employees as an alternative to guaranteed parking spaces. Employer parking cash-outs are programs in which the employer offers employees the option to receive taxable cash income instead of a subsidized parking space at work.

This strategy aims to encourage employer parking cash-outs in the Rockford Region. Municipalities can encourage parking cash-outs by offering tax benefits or subsidies for employers that implement them. Additionally, local ordinances can be updated to encourage or require parking cash-outs in areas with high parking demand, limited parking availability, or significant congestion. Transit agencies may also want to present the benefits of parking cash-outs to employers as it can increase ridership rates.

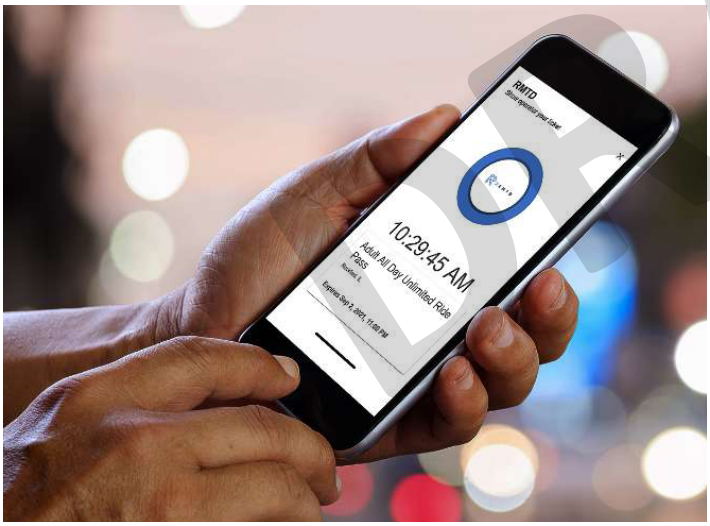


Image Source: Rockford Mass Transit District

Key Considerations

- Employers may seek to provide employees with an alternative subsidy, such as monthly transit passes.
- Additional incentives for employees to forgo their parking space could include employer provided secure bicycle storage and preferred parking spaces for carpoolers.

Implementation Timeframe

- Ongoing

Costs

The following costs are associated with employer parking cash-outs.

- There is a no direct cost to a public entity passing an ordinance incentivizing employer parking cash-outs.
- Employers purchasing RMTD transit passes to serve as parking subsidy replacement would spend $55.00 per month for each employee receiving a transit pass.[cclxxxix]
- Public entities can expect to spend approximately $5,000 on a communications campaign informing employers about parking cash-outs.[ccxc]

Partner Agencies

- Local governments, business bureaus, and chamber of commerce.

Metrics to Evaluate Success

- Monthly ridership for RMTD and other transit providers in the region.
- Amount of employers offering cash-out programs.

PART 8: CONCLUSION

The Parking Reimagined Plan serves as a pivotal step in transforming the parking landscape of the Rockford Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) into one that balances environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and equitable transportation practices. This plan examines the intricate role parking plays in shaping transportation systems, land use patterns, and quality of life. This conclusion underscores the plan's core themes, highlights the significance of its recommendations, and calls for a collective commitment to reimagining parking in the Rockford Region over the next ten years.

Reaffirming the Purpose

The overarching purpose of the Parking Reimagined Plan is to address the challenges posed by outdated parking practices while seizing opportunities to enhance the region's mobility, sustainability, and economic growth. Rather than focusing solely on increasing parking supply, this plan advocates for more effective utilization of existing resources, policy reforms, and the integration of innovative solutions. By doing so, the plan aims to support residents, businesses, and visitors in ways that foster connectivity, reduce environmental burdens, and enhance the overall experience of living and working in the region.

Summary of Findings

An in-depth analysis of the region's parking infrastructure and practices revealed critical insights into the current state of on- and off-street parking. Key findings include:

- **Parking Supply and Demand.** The Parking Demand analysis revealed that there are between two and four parking spaces for every registered vehicle in the Rockford Region. This indicates an oversupply of parking, even when considering the highest estimates of regional population growth.
- **Environmental Impacts.** Conventional parking practices lead to land degradation, stormwater runoff, and heat island effects. Addressing these challenges requires incorporating green infrastructure, such as permeable pavements, tree canopies, and rain gardens, into parking lot designs.
- **Policy Gaps.** Inconsistent regulations, including parking minimums, often result in less optimal land use and unnecessary costs. Reforming these policies can promote sustainable development, enhance accessibility, and reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles.
- **Public Perceptions.** Surveys and public engagement highlight various viewpoints on parking availability, costs, and accessibility. Transparent communication about the benefits of proposed changes will be essential to gaining public support and dispelling misconceptions.

Actualizing Plan Goals

Anchored in public and stakeholder engagement, Part 7: Strategies & Recommendations outlines actionable goals and strategies to address mobility, placemaking, parking retrofits, environmental sustainability, and policy innovation. Strategies were crafted based on public feedback and research, and each goal includes a clear framework for the purpose of actualizing the goal.

Key recommendations include enhancing multimodal connectivity, incorporating active transportation infrastructure, reimagining parking facilities as community assets, and reducing environmental impacts through stormwater management and climate-resilient designs. Innovative solutions like mobility hubs, solar canopies, demand-based pricing and shared parking agreements are paired with equitable practices such as employer parking cash-outs and updating parking ordinances.

Actualizing the defined goals will require strong collaboration among public agencies, private stakeholders, and community members. Successful implementation hinges on securing adequate funding, updating local policies and ordinances, and leveraging public outreach to build awareness and support. Partnerships with planning departments, public works, and other partners identified in Part 7: Strategies & Recommendations will be critical to align resources and expertise. Additionally, continuous evaluation through defined metrics and adaptive management will ensure strategies remain effective and responsive to evolving regional needs. Prioritizing equity, sustainability, and community engagement will be key to transforming these goals into tangible outcomes.

Building on Success

This Parking Reimagined Plan builds upon the region's own successful actions. As outlined in the plan, the region has demonstrated its ability to adapt parking strategies in alignment with community goals, often doing so swiftly and with remarkable flexibility. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, many restaurants repurposed parking spaces for outdoor seating, demonstrating how parking areas can adapt to support local businesses and community needs. This flexibility not only helped businesses survive but also enhanced the dining experience, showing how creative parking solutions can foster economic vitality. Similarly, City Market, a popular, well-attended community event that transforms parking lots into vibrant spaces for vendors and visitors, exemplifies how parking areas can be reimagined as dynamic, multi-functional venues. By incorporating lessons from these initiatives and many like them, Parking Reimagined aims to replicate and expand actions already embraced by the community.

Continuous Imagination

The region can build upon successful actions while also looking to other communities for parking inspiration and imaginative solutions. The aim of adopting successful practices is to enhance economic competitiveness, climate resiliency, and quality of life. For example, adopting shared parking strategies can optimize land use and attract businesses, while incorporating climate-resilient designs like solar canopies demonstrates a commitment to sustainability and innovation. By adapting these proven strategies to local needs, the region can transform parking into a strategic, regional asset that supports economic growth, advances climate goals, and improves community well-being.

REGION 1 PLANNING COUNCIL
MPO POLICY COMMITTEE

MPO RESOLUTION 2025-07

RE: **Award of MPO-Attributable Federal Funds**

WHEREAS Region 1 Planning Council is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Rockford Urban and Metropolitan Area, and the MPO Policy Committee has the specific responsibility to direct and administer the continuing urban transportation planning process; and

WHEREAS the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) authorizes several formula funding programs, including the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG), Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP); and

WHEREAS under agreement with the State of Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) a portion of the funding authorized under the Surface Transportation Block Grant program (STBG), Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), hereafter referred to as MPO-Attributable Federal Funds, is annually allocated for use in the MPO's metropolitan planning area; and

WHEREAS it is the responsibility of MPO Policy Committee to determine the appropriate uses for MPO-attributable funds in accordance with applicable Federal and State guidelines; and

WHEREAS the MPO conducted a competitive selection process to develop recommendations for project(s) selection from October 15, 2024 to November 29, 2024; and

WHEREAS the received projects applications were scored in accordance with the evaluation criteria approved by the MPO Policy Committee on October 1, 2024 via MPO Resolution 2024-15; and

WHEREAS the projects received and scored were discussed at the January 23, 2025 meeting of the MPO Technical Committee for project(s) to develop a preliminary program of projects for MPO-Attributable Federal Funds; and

WHEREAS a preliminary program of projects, provided in "Attachment A", was released for a 45-day public comment period from January 24, 2025 to March 10, 2025 and discussed at the February 27, 2025 meeting of the R1 Community Advisory; and

WHEREAS the preliminary program of projects, provided in "Attachment A", were discussed and recommended for approval at the April 17, 2025 meeting of the MPO Technical Committee; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The MPO Policy Committee, upon deliberation at their May 2, 2025 meeting, hereby selects the following projects for programming of MPO-Attributable Federal Funds:

- 30 percent of STBG funds from the available balance in the amount of $1,360,000 for the Winnebago County Highway Department's Central Ave Roadway Reconfiguration in FY 2025.
- 14 percent of TAP funds from the available balance in the amount of $634,000 for the Winnebago County Highway Department's Riverside Blvd Shared-Use Path in FY 2026.
- 100 percent of CRP funds from the available balance in the amount of $632,627 for the Winnebago County Highway Department's Riverside Boulevard Traffic Signal Coordination in FY 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The MPO Policy Committee amend the Fiscal Year 2025-2028 MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the purpose of the addition of project(s) selected by the MPO Policy Committee for the programming of MPO-Attributable Federal Funds, "Attachment B".

We hereby certify the foregoing has been approved by a majority of the MPO Policy Committee Members on this 2nd day of May 2025.

Chairman Joseph V. Chiarelli MPO Chair	Chairman Karl Johnson MPO Vice-Chair

Number of members authorized to vote _____

Ayes _____ Nays _____ Abstain _____

Attachment A:

MPO Attributable Funds
Program of Projects

Surface Transportation Block Grant						
ID	**Name**	**Sponsor**	**Activity**	**Year Requested**	**Amount Requested**	**Score**
02-03	Central Ave Roadway Reconfiguration	Winnebago County Highway Department	Capacity (R)	2025	$1,360,000	77.0
Transportation Alternatives Program						
ID	**Name**		**Activity**	**Year Requested**	**Amount Requested**	**Score**
02-02	Riverside Blvd Shared-use Path	Winnebago County Highway Department	Bicycle/Pedestrian	2026	$634,000	85.4
Carbon Reduction Program						
ID	**Name**		**Activity**	**Year Requested**	**Amount Requested**	**Total**
02-04	Riverside Boulevard Traffic Signal Coordination	Winnebago County Highway Department	Intersection	2025	$800,000	85.6

Attachment B:

MPO Transportation Improvement Program
FY 2025-2028

Fiscal Year 2026											
Highway Projects											
Project #	Project Location	Termini	Project Type	Phase of Work	Federal Share (000s)		State Share (000s)		Other Share (000s)		Total
					Source	Amount	Source	Amount	Source	Amount	
02 - Winnebago County Highway Department											
02-25-12	Central Avenue	Riverside Boulevard to Auburn Street	Capacity	CON	STBG-U	$1,360	-	-	Local	$480	$1,840
02-25-13	Riverside Boulevard Shared-Use Path	Perryville Road to Bell School Road	Bike/Ped	CON	TAP	$830	-	-	Local	$196	$1,026
02-25-14	Riverside Boulevard	Material Ave to I-90	Intersection	CON	CRP	$800	-	-	Local	$280	$1,080

MPO-Attributable Federal Funding

Annual Allocations

Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG): $4,538,700

Transportation Alternative Program (TAP): $622,690

Carbon Reduction Program (CRP): $632,630

Surface Transportation Block Grant

The Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) provides flexible funding for a wide variety of projects, including highways and transit. Surface Transportation Block Grant funds are the most versatile and may be used for any project that is recommended in or consistent with the R1 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Funds can be used on any federal-aid roadway classified above a local road or a rural minor collector and bridge projects on any public road.

Eligible projects can include highway projects and bridge improvements (construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, resurfacing, restoration, and operational), transportation system management, public transit capital improvement projects, commuter rail, carpool projects, bus terminals and facilities, bikeways, and pedestrian facilities.

Transportation Alternative Program

The goal of the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) is to allocate resources to well-planned smaller scale, but critically important projects that provide and support connected alternate modes of transportation that are safe for all users, enhance the transportation system through preservation of visual and cultural resources, and improve the quality of life for members of the communities impacted.

Projects must enhance the transportation system be serving a transportation need or providing a transportation linkage, use, or benefit. Each project or activity must demonstrate a relationship to surface transportation. Project categories include: Pedestrian/bicycle facilities (on-road and off -road), sidewalks; Conversion of abandoned railroad corridors to trails;

Streetscapes (stand-alone landscape projects are ineligible); Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities; Vegetation management in transportation rights-of-way; Archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project; Storm water management, control and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff ; Reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats; and construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas.

Carbon Reduction Program

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) establishes the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), which provides funding to projects and programs that reduce transportation emissions. Funding can be used for a wide range of projects that support this goal, including: Operational projects that improve traffic flow, such as the construction of roundabouts, left-turn lanes or other managed lanes; Intelligent Transportation Systems; Certain traffic control measures, such as traffic signal coordination, intersection improvements, and incident management; Construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities; Promotion of alternative travel modes, including ridesharing; Acquisition, installation, or operation of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging infrastructure or hydrogen, natural gas, or propane vehicle fueling infrastructure; Construction of a bus rapid transit corridor or dedicated bus lanes; and Purchase of new public transportation facilities and equipment.

REGION 1 PLANNING COUNCIL
MPO POLICY COMMITTEE

MPO RESOLUTION 2025-09

RE: **Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program**

WHEREAS the Federal Highway Act of 1962, as amended, and the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, as amended, provide for an urban transportation planning process; and

WHEREAS the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) currently authorizes funding to improve our nation's transportation system for highways, highway safety, public transit, alternative non-motorized forms of transportation, and freight; and

WHEREAS the IIJA Act and its predecessors, require a Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) as well as a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); and

WHEREAS the Region 1 Planning Council is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Rockford Urban and Metropolitan Area, and the MPO Policy Committee has the specific responsibility to direct and administer the continuing urban transportation planning process: and

WHEREAS the MPO Policy Committee has adopted the August 22, 2024 version of the Fiscal Year 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and;

WHEREAS the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have approved the FY 2025-2028 MPO TIP; and

WHEREAS the City of Belvidere has requested one (1) updated fiscal year change; the Illinois Department of Transportation has requested the addition of two (2) new project phases; Winnebago County has requested the addition of three (3) new projects; Rockford Mass Transit District has requested the addition of one (1) new project; Boone County Transit has requested the addition of one (1) new project; and

WHEREAS the projects being amended in the adopted and approved version of the FY 2025-2028 TIP will not affect or impact the other projects listed in the FY 2025-2028 MPO TIP; and

WHEREAS the MPO Technical Committee has recommended the adoption of the TIP amendment by the MPO Policy Committee; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The MPO Policy Committee hereby amends the FY 2025-2028 MPO Transportation Improvement Program to include the projects listed in "Attachment A".

We hereby certify the foregoing has been approved by a majority of the MPO Policy Committee Members on this 2nd day of May 2025.

Chairman Joseph V. Chiarelli MPO Chair	Chairman Karl Johnson MPO Vice-Chair

Number of members authorized to vote _____

Ayes _____ Nays _____ Abstain_____

Attachment A

Fiscal Year 2025

Highway Projects

Project #	Project Location	Termini	Project Type	Phase of Work	Federal Share (000s)		State Share (000s)		Other Share (000s)		Total	Amendment Action
					Source	Amount	Source	Amount	Source	Amount		
01 - Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)												
1-17-7	I-39, US 20 & Harrison Avenue	0.3 mi E of Mulford Rd to 0.2 mi N of Harrison Ave	Capacity	CON	NHPP	$10,440	State	$1,560	-	-	$12,000	New Project Phase
1-17-7	I-39, US 20 & Harrison Avenue	0.3 mi E of Mulford Rd to 0.2 mi N of Harrison Ave	Capacity	CON	NHPP	$4,350	State	$650	-	-	$5,000	New Project Phase

Fiscal Year 2026

Highway Projects

Project #	Project Location	Termini	Project Type	Phase of Work	Federal Share (000s)		State Share (000s)		Other Share (000s)		Total	Amendment Action
					Source	Amount	Source	Amount	Source	Amount		
02 - Winnebago County Highway Department												
02-25-12	Central Avenue	Riverside Boulevard to Auburn Street	Capacity	CON	STBG-U	$1,360	-	-	Local	$480	$1,840	New Project
02-25-13	Riverside Boulevard Shared-Use Path	Perryville Road to Bell School Road	Bike/Ped	CON	TAP	$830	-	-	Local	$196	$1,026	New Project
02-25-14	Riverside Boulevard	Material Ave to I-90	Intersection	CON	CRP	$800	-	-	Local	$280	$1,080	New Project
14 - City of Belvidere												
14-24-2	Kishwaukee Overlook	North Street to the Kishwaukee River	Other	CON	TAP	$217	-	-	Local	$57	$274	Change in Fiscal Year

Fiscal Year 2025

Transit Projects

Project #	Description	Justification	Unit Cost (000s)		Federal Share (000s)		Other Share (000s)		Total	Notes	Amendment Action
			Units	Cost/Unit	Source	Amount	Source	Amount			
07 - Rockford Mass Transit District											
07-25-15	Demand Response Vehicle	Maintain safe, reliable, sustainable bus service	1	$132	5310	$132	TRC/TDC[1]		$132	$26,400 in TDCs planned to be requested.	New Project
26 - Boone County Transit											
26-25-01	Demand Response Vehicle	Maintain safe, reliable, efficient public transit bus service	1	$132	5310	$132	TRC/TDC[1]		$132	$26,400 in TDCs planned to be requested.	New Project