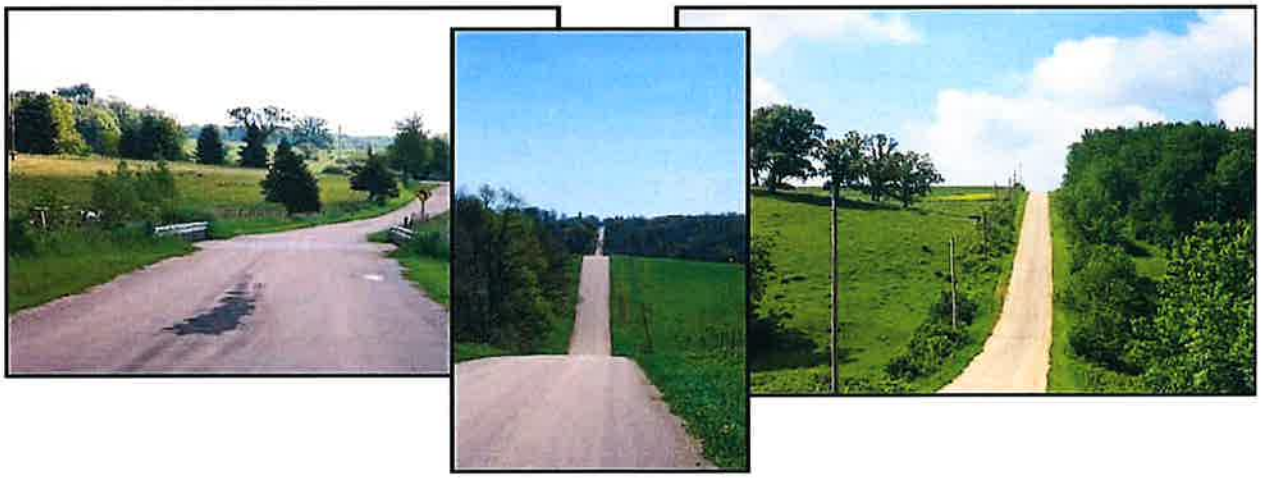
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1977, SWWRPC staff and representatives from its five-member counties conducted a thorough analysis of the region's transportation system. The report's goal was to: serve as a resource for the residents of southwest Wisconsin to use in analyzing transportation proposals; inform readers of the many varied and complex interrelationships evident in any transportation system; help determine where the emphasis should be placed in planning activities; and to provide a more comprehensive outlook when dealing with transportation problems.

In the intervening years, other transportation plans and reports have also looked at Iowa County and the region, resulting in many improvements to the transportation system.

This document is structured to provide historic context (see Map C.1 for early transportation routes in southwest Wisconsin) and to provide information on local issues within the transportation framework. Although many issues are presented in a regional context, the assertion made in the SWWRPC 1972 *Technical Report No. 4: Prospective for Regional Transportation Planning* holds true today: "It should be emphasized, however, that regional planning is not a substitute for local planning. On the contrary, regional planning is intended to strengthen local planning efforts by providing a more comprehensive base of information in a regional context in order to facilitate rational private and public decisions on the local level."

The advantage of using a regional context to inform local transportation planning is that the relationship to scale is reinforced. From this perspective, the Transportation Element provides historic and regional context, considers local transportation needs, and based on local input provides a 20-year jurisdictional plan that can serve as a resource guide and implementation tool.



Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001(2)(c)

(c) Transportation element. A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, electric personal assistive mobility devices, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation. The element shall compare the local governmental unit's objectives, policies, goals and programs to state and regional transportation plans. The element shall also identify highways within the local governmental unit by function and incorporate state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in the local governmental unit.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

The following are the transportation policies of the Town of Ridgeway.

- **Local Transportation Infrastructure and Issues**
  - Create a bicycle route connector to Folklore Village, and the Ridgeway Pine Relict State Natural Area, and to nearby camping facilities.
  - Create a Park and Ride lot in the vicinity of the new US 18/151 interchange.

- **Transit, Accessibility, and Special Needs Users**
  - Support the development and promotion of paratransit services for local residents.

- **Land Use**
  - Concern about the impact of growth on land use.

- **Cost**
  - Capital Improvement Program.
  - Maintenance and Improvement Funding Source.

TOWN OF RIDGEWAY

In reviewing the transportation survey responses that had been completed by residents, the Town of Ridgeway's Plan Commission identified the primary issues and concerns for this plan.

- The most satisfactory part of the Town of Ridgeway's existing transportation system is that town roads are kept in good driving condition.
- The least satisfactory aspect of the community's transportation system is that there is no public transportation.
- The aspect of the community's transportation system that respondents felt was most important to improve is that all gravel roads should be seal coated.

The Town of Ridgeway's Plan Commission respondents identified transportation projects or issues that they foresee in their jurisdiction.

- In the Land Use Element, the Town of Ridgeway Plan Commission respondents expressed concern that development along the USH 18/151 corridor is not helping the jurisdiction to achieve its land use vision and should be discouraged. Concerns were raised about road access and sewerage disposal. Land uses that are encouraged are agriculture and open space.

- The town encourages new housing development to be in close proximity to the Village of Ridgeway. Although a cluster design is favored by the Plan Commission, such development would likely be single family homes in a predominantly rural setting. The Plan Commission does not consider sidewalks to be appropriate. In Section H, Land Use Element, subdivision development is seen as a potential land use conflict and concern was expressed about driveway density.

NEXT STEPS: The Town of Ridgeway coordinates with neighboring jurisdictions, Iowa County, and WisDOT. Careful consideration should be given when providing road access for new development. Input from WisDOT would be helpful in the planning process.

The next section looks more closely at the locally identified transportation issues. In reviewing the transportation survey responses that had been completed by residents, the Town of Ridgeway's Plan Commission respondents ranked the following transportation issues as having the highest priority for meeting local needs (#1 is the highest priority ranking):

1 **Transportation safety**
2 **Agricultural-vehicle mobility**
3 **Connectivity with the larger transportation system**
4 **Transportation to support economic development**
5 **Transportation needs of the elderly and disabled**
6 **Freight mobility**

These issues thread throughout the Town of Ridgeway's plan—including its housing, economic development, land use, and implementation elements. Although the scope of this plan is local, it recognizes that local planning is part of the mosaic that should inform WisDOT's vision and priorities for budgeting and planning. WisDOT also acknowledges the complexity of balancing these issues:

> *"Wisconsin's healthy economy has also caused increased commuter and commercial demand on local roads and streets. Much of the state's 100,000 miles of local roads are facing the same aging infrastructure needs as the state highways. Furthermore, an ever-increasing number of local roads are experiencing congestion problems as communities continue to grow. Because it is essential that state highways and local roads and streets work in unison, the state has to continue to provide funding to local units of governments to help support construction, improvement and maintenance of locally owned highways, roads, streets and bridges. As is the case with the state highway system, it is likely that demands on local roads and streets will continue to grow in the future (WisDOT)."*

Like WisDOT, local governments grapple with these issues and constraints as they make decisions related to housing, development, schools, roads, and funding. A report entitled *The Evaluation of Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plans*, examined Wisconsin's Transportation Plans and concluded:

> *"Population growth alone is a challenge that is anticipated in many states. Wisconsin anticipates a 13 percent growth over the plan period [through 2020]. This will create additional demand on existing transportation facilities, along with requiring additional services. This need for services will be compounded by the fact that both its elderly and working age populations will be increasing, with their separate transportation needs" (prepared for the FHWA and US DOT, April 2002)."*

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE & ISSUES

The comprehensive planning survey, yielded these responses from the residents of the Town of Ridgeway:

- The majority agreed or strongly agreed that Iowa County's overall road network (roads, streets, and highways) meets the needs of its citizens.
- The majority agreed or strongly agreed that the condition of local roads in the Town of Ridgeway is adequate for intended uses.

Transportation Modes

Plan Commission respondents were asked to identify the transportation modes that currently use public infrastructure within the Town of Ridgeway (in addition to personal cars, trucks, and motorcycles). They are identified below with an **X**.

	Mode	Used	Not Used
Travel	Carpooling	X	
	Para-transit (shared-ride, taxi)		X
Agriculture	Tractors	X	
	ATVs (all-terrain vehicles)	X	
Recreation	Bicycles	X	
	ATVs	X	
Freight	Trucking	X	
	Rail		X
	Air		X

Existing Roadways
The Town of Ridgeway has 65.53 miles of roads:

- 16.78 miles of County Trunk Highways
- 48.75 miles of Local Roads

The most heavily trafficked road through the jurisdiction is, of course, USH 18/151; it is classified on the County's rural functional highway system as a principal arterial, which is classified on the County's rural functional highway system as a major collector. CTH H, north of the Village of Ridgeway, connects with USH 14 and is classified on the County's rural functional highway system as a major collector. For more information, see Maps C.2, C.3 and C.4 and Table C-2.

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Transportation is a factor in location decisions of commercial and industrial development. In locations where the development is included in local plans, communities should also assess their transportation infrastructure and determine what future improvements may be needed. Communication, during this planning process and when unforeseen development opportunities arise, should include WisDOT, adjacent governmental units, as well as interested parties and other stakeholders. The value of local plans is that they inform county, regional, and state plans and this coordination can help to identify the transportation facilities needed by future development.

The Town of Ridgeway's Plan Commission respondents were asked whether their existing local transportation system does a good job of meeting the needs of the jurisdiction's economic development goals related to:

- Agriculture Yes
- Retail/Commerce Not Sure
- Shipping Yes
- Manufacturing Yes
- Tourism Yes
- Park and Ride No

ENVIRONMENT

Transportation and construction projects can impact the natural environment around a project area. When making short- and long-term transportation decisions, it is important to adequately address environmental implications on air quality and energy consumption; agricultural lands; and wetlands and wildlife. To minimize these effects, efforts to preserve the environment of a project area can include:

- Wetland mitigation (preservation, creation, enhancement and restoration)
- Prairie restoration
- Archeological work
- Hazardous waste management
- De-icing procedures and salt reduction
- Storm water management

- Noise monitoring and noise walls
- Nesting boxes
- Erosion control

One aspect of this is to manage storm water run-off from transportation facilities. Additionally, transportation improvements and community development decisions should be coordinated and the impacts that each has on the other should be considered.

AESTHETICS

The 40-mile Military Ridge State Trail runs through the Town of Ridgeway, along the former Chicago and North Western Railroad corridor. The limestone-surfaced trail is open to hikers, bicyclists, and wheelchair users in late spring, summer, and fall and snowmobilers and cross-country skiers in the winter. There are several observation platforms adjacent to the trail for viewing wetlands, wildlife, and other natural features. In Ridgeway, the trail passes by a historic railroad depot.

Bike Trails, in the Town of Ridgeway, were rated good or excellent by 67 percent of survey respondents. According to the Iowa County Bicycling. Conditions map (see the *Bicycle Trails & Road Improvements* section of this document) most county roads in the Town of Ridgeway are rated "best conditions for bicycling." Of Town of Ridgeway survey respondents who expressed an opinion, only 39 percent indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that there should be more biking and walking lanes along public roadways.

TRANSIT, ACCESSIBILITY, and SPECIAL NEEDS USERS

The State of Wisconsin Van Pool Service, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Administration, currently operates vans that make stops in Iowa County and one of these routes has a pick-up point in Ridgeway. Although limited, transportation for the elderly and disabled is provided by the Iowa County Commission on Aging.

PRIORITIES & FUTURE PROJECTS – TRANSIT

Support the development and promotion of paratransit services for local residents.

In 2002, the Town of Ridgeway's Plan Commission survey respondents were concerned that the current level of service for the elderly and disabled is insufficient to meet current and future needs.

Park- and-ride

In 2016, 70% of the Town of Ridgeway's Plan Commission survey respondents indicated that a park-and-ride lot should be provided near the new highway interchange.

LAND USE

The land use and transportation relationship is cyclical, beginning when population and economic growth create demand for land development. New development results in more vehicle trips and places greater demand on surrounding streets, roads, and highways. This is a complex interrelationship. As a WisDOT report acknowledges,

> *"WisDOT influences land development mostly through the provision of infrastructure. Some transportation-related regulations also may have an effect. For state transportation, the effects on surrounding land uses are often more unintentional than intentional … the most significant role that transportation plays in land development is affecting access to land."*

Some land use trend indicators include:

- Past and projected population growth
- Employment trends by sector
- Residential housing permits housing prices over the last 5-10 years

- Population densities changes: persons/acre; households/acre; commercial persons/acre use (indicating rate of land consumption)
- Conversion of ag-land to non-ag-land uses and comparison with the land sale prices land remaining in ag (indicating stability of ag-uses)
- Participation in Farmland Preservation Program (indicating stability of ag-uses)
- Septic system permits (indicating development in unsewered areas)
- Changes (or requests) to expand sewer service areas (indicating expansion of urban service areas)
- Commuting patterns (indicating the relationship between employment and residential land uses)

(From *Land Use in Environmental Documents: Indirect and Cumulative Effects Analysis for Project-Induced Land Development*. WisDOT, 1993)

Local government plans, in conjunction with a zoning ordinance, attempt to direct residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural uses to the most appropriate part of the community. When coordination is lacking or inadequate, the outcome can cause congestion and increase the chance for crashes. Retrofitting transportation facilities for enhanced mobility and safety is difficult for local governments and WisDOT.

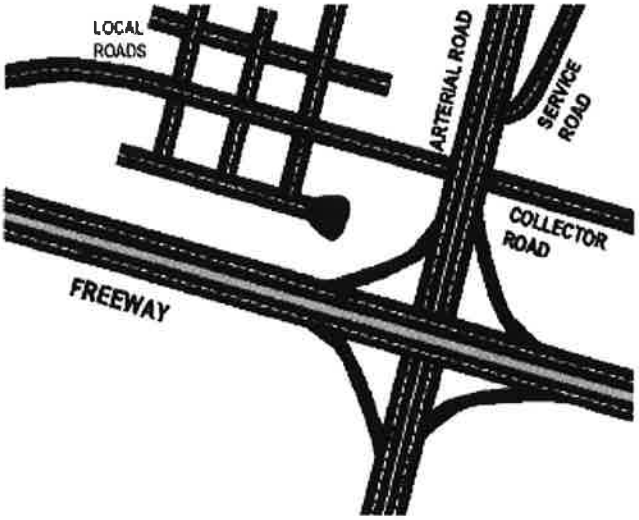
But realistically, given the cyclical nature of the transportation-land use relationship, when transportation improvements alleviate congestion, the newly developed land may become even more accessible, resulting in higher land values and greater pressure to develop adjacent, undeveloped land. The cycle begins again with more intensive levels of development and greater transportation demands. These pressures are being felt in eastern Iowa County. Although some parts of the county are not seeing growth, they may anticipate continued spillover that will have an impact on local development and infrastructure within the 20-year planning window.

Coordination with local governments and WisDOT can serve to address future mobility needs by looking at the potential impacts of planned development. If plans indicate that increased capacity will be needed, it can be incorporated into the transportation plan for that area. If this communication occurs during the planning process, coordination can help to ensure that more options are considered. One of the tools that can help to assess alternatives is to conduct a traffic impact analysis, looking at possible scenarios.

Ideally, WisDOT is included in the local planning process and effective planning helps the community to realize its local goals for development, efficiency, and safety, while minimizing environmental impacts. This can save both money and time, over the long- and short-term. When developments are planned and sited with adequate transportation facilities the community benefits. Land is developed more efficiently if proximity to other development and to transportation infrastructure. WisDOT (and the taxpayers) benefit because transportation investments continue to function throughout their projected life cycle and the public gets the best return on its tax investment.

The community can plan for areas of new business and housing development that will be served by a system of local roads or streets. Rather than wait for a developer proposal, the comprehensive planning process is an opportunity for the community to lay out a logical system of collectors and local roads in undeveloped areas with the jurisdiction's boundaries. The community can potentially alter the plan to suit a particular development's needs and still uphold an overall plan that ensures efficient and safe connectivity. If there are questions during the planning process about the access management implications of a proposed development, coordination with WisDOT early in the process can help minimize future conflicts.

ENHANCING & IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY



Access management attempts to minimize conflicts by coordinating land development access, while preserving the flow of traffic on the surrounding road system in terms of safety, capacity, and speed. The main function of access management is to establish a balance between the existing traffic flow and highway access. It is achieved through managing the design and location of driveways, median openings, and points of access to the state highway system. The level of highway access control is based on the importance of the highway to regional and statewide travel as determined through a functional classification system. Although controversial in some jurisdictions, its primary goal is to ensure highway safety and to sustain the efficiency of the transportation system so costly retrofits don't have to be made later.

EFFICIENCY & SAFETY

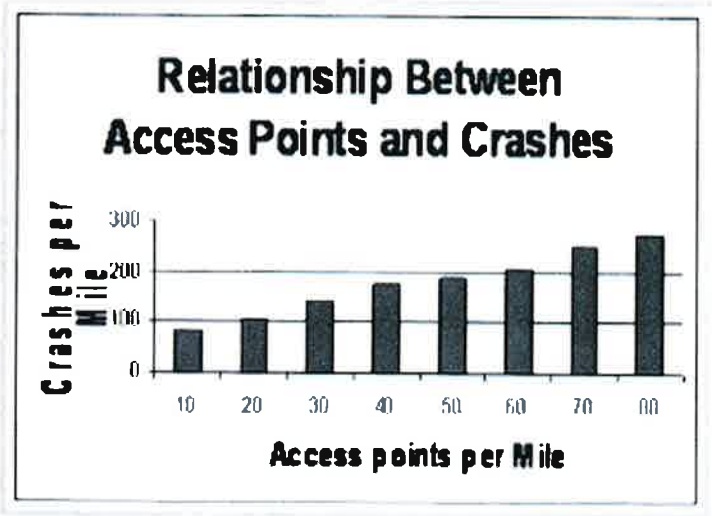
A 1980 report entitled *Access Control* explained the rationale for the state's access management regulations:

> *"The highly interdependent relationship that exists between land use and highways makes it necessary for the planning of each to be coordinated with the other. … A property system must provide access to property and safe, efficient movement of traffic from one place to another. Both of these functions cannot easily be provided on the same street or highway. Vehicles entering or leaving the roadway slow traffic and cause congestion. Congested streets or highways handle less traffic than if traffic were moving freely. In addition, congestion imposes increased travel costs on users in the form of longer travel time and greater operating costs, higher accident rates, and loss of the public investment in the street or highway because its traffic carrying capacity is reduced. Access control can provide an effective and low cost means of abating the harmful effects of congestion. Five direct advantages are afforded by controlling access:*

- *Preservation of the capacity and integrity of the roadway*
- *Reduction of travel times*
- *Improved safety and driving conditions*
- *Economy of operation*
- *And protection of the public investment in streets and highways.*

In contrast, relieving congestion by building new streets and highways [and bypasses] is becoming increasingly less desirable as it becomes more and more difficult to acquire the necessary rights-of-way and to find public funds to pay high construction costs. Continued new construction also consumes extensive amounts of land that may more profitably be put to other uses. … Like it or not, none of us have an absolute unlimited right to use our land in any manner we please. We must take into consideration the impact that our use of land and land rights will have on others, both our immediate neighbors and the general public. Thus, if use of the right of access creates harmful interference with the public right to travel on a street or highway by increasing congestion and the likelihood of having an accident, the right of access may be regulated…"

Since 1980, when the quoted report was written, development pressures have only increased. Perhaps the reason that crash data has decreased is that jurisdictions have worked to ensure the safety of corridor routes is preserved. Nonetheless, access management has been a contentious issue and some people believe that the regulations impede development. However, congestion, caused by poor planning, and the resulting loss of the efficiency of a roadway may make development less attractive. On a human scale, the most important issue and the greatest responsibility is to ensure safety.



MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENTS

WISLR
Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads

According to the UW-Madison Transportation Information Center, by using the PASER system and Roadware software, municipalities can determine budget parameters, select possible projects, and evaluate the implications of maintenance decisions.

The Town of Ridgeway uses the state's PASER (**PA**vement **S**urface **E**valuation & **R**ating) system and reported that the system has been a useful tool for selecting projects and local budgeting.

COST

For many local governments, maintenance of the local road system is the single largest expenditure category. Privatization is often touted, but to-date, only a small handful of Wisconsin cities and villages (less than 1 percent) have privatized street repair and maintenance A more common municipal practice in Wisconsin is contracting with county highway departments for certain types of repairs and maintenance, ranging from complete contracting to cooperative projects. Not surprisingly, development can add new demands for services and increase local costs without providing comparable increase in revenues. (Taken, in part, from UW-Extension *Fact Sheet #2: Comparison of Service Production Methods and the Incidence of Privatization.*)

FUTURE PROJECTS & PRIORITIES - COST

Maintenance & Improvements

The State of Wisconsin's Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) is a reimbursement program and pays up to 50 percent of total eligible project costs, with the balance matched by the local unit of government. Towns are eligible under the Town Road Improvement Program (TRIP). Eligible projects include (but are not limited to) asphalt purchasing, bridge replacement or rehabilitation, design or feasibility studies, reconstruction, and resurfacing. LRIP is a biennial program. See Appendix C-6 for more information.

Capital Improvement Program

Many municipalities use a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to assist in planning for major project costs. A CIP is a multi-year scheduling of physical public improvements, based on the examination of available fiscal resources, as well as the prioritization of specific public improvements, to be constructed for a period of five to six years into the future. Capital improvements are those that include new or expanded physical facilities that are relatively large in size, expensive, and permanent. Street improvements, public libraries,

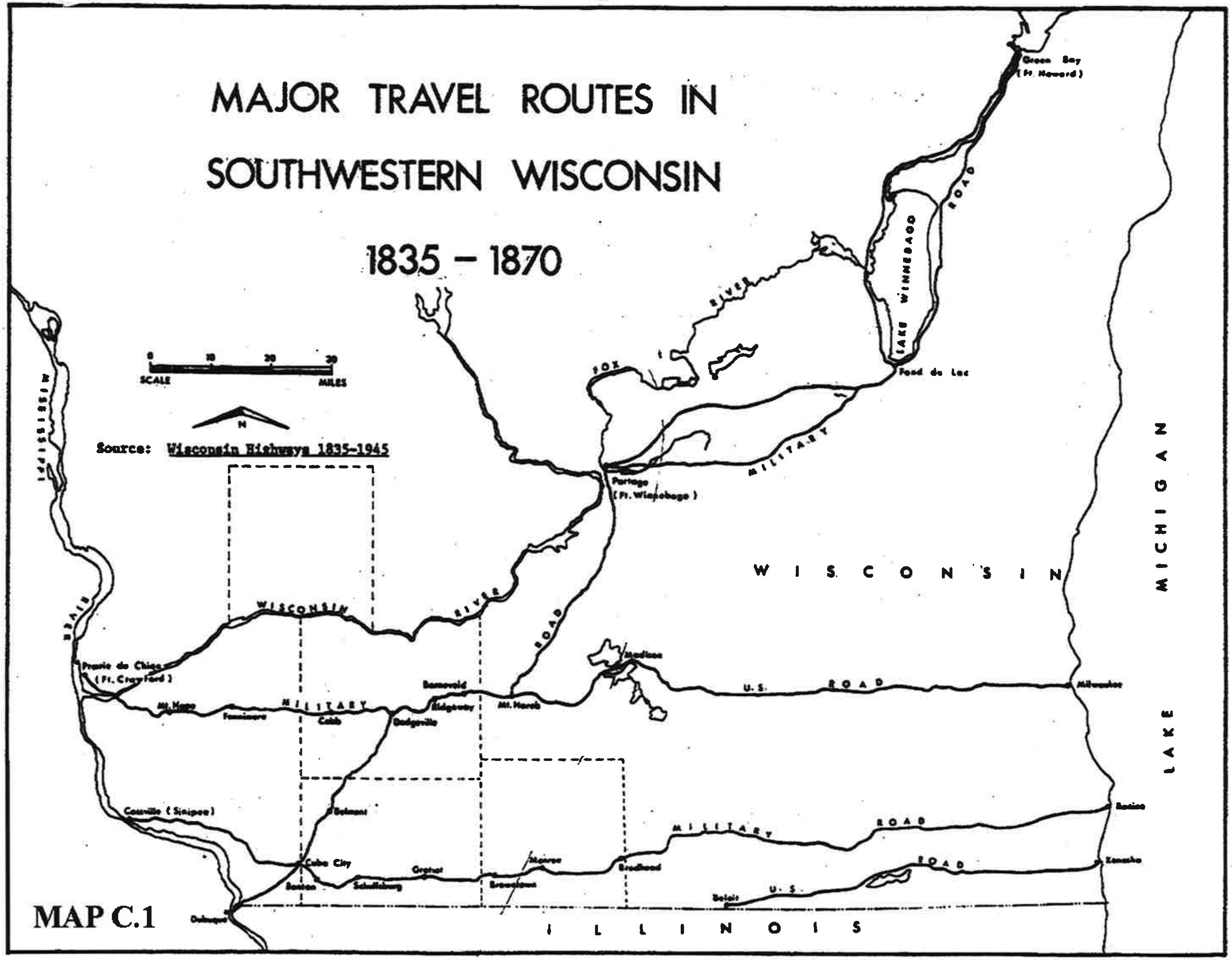
water and sewer lines, and park and recreation facilities are common examples of capital improvements.

The Town of Ridgeway currently does not have a Capital Improvement Plan, but respondents expressed interest in creating a capital improvement program and requested more information.

Table C.2: STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR LOCAL ROADS

City/Village/Town/County Certified Mileage List - (R-03) - updated January 1, 2017

				County Jurisdiction			Municipal Jurisdiction		
Road Name	Gross Miles	County Miles	Municipal Miles	Art.	Coll.	Loc.	Art.	Coll.	Loc.
Alfred Dr	0.81		0.81						0.81
Aschliman Rd	0.46		0.46						0.46
Black Oak Rd	1.54		1.54						1.54
W Brigham Rd	0.9		0.9						0.9
Brotherhood Ln	2.38		2.38						2.38
Cemetery Rd	0.62		0.62						0.62
S Clay Hill Rd	3.29		3.29						3.29
Crossen Rd	0.47		0.47						0.47
CTH BB	2.48	2.48			2.48				
CTH H	8.6	8.6			8.6				
CTH HHH	0.57	0.57			0.57				
CTH T	0.97	0.97			0.97				
CTH W	0.91	0.91			0.91				
CTH Y	2.95	2.95			2.24	0.71			
CTH ZZ	0.3	0.3			0.3				
Dugway Rd	3.3		3.3						3.3
Freds Dr	0.29		0.29						0.29
F St	0.04		0.04						0.04
Hands Hill Rd	2.67		2.67						2.67
Hi-Point Rd	0.75		0.75						0.75
Johnson Dr	0.37		0.37						0.37
Jungbluth Rd	0.43		0.43						0.43
Knobs Rd	2.74		2.74						2.74
Korback Rd	1.36		1.36						1.36
Lawinger Rd	0.5		0.5						0.5
Lease Dr	0.25		0.25						0.25
Lease Rd	0.23		0.23						0.23
Mc Graw Dr	0.09		0.09						0.09
Mill Rd	0.96		0.96						0.96
Moon Rd	1.09		1.09						1.09
Old Hwy 18	0.18		0.18						0.18
Pikes Peak Rd	3.35		3.35						3.35
Prairie Rd	4.51		4.51						4.51
Reed Rd	0.84		0.84						0.84
Ridgevue Rd	2.6		2.6						2.6
Ridgeway Brigham Tn Ln Rd	0.07		0.07						0.07
Rikli Dr	0.18		0.18						0.18
Rock Rd	1.32		1.32						1.32
Rosy Ln	1.81		1.81						1.81
Ryan Rd	0.2		0.2						0.2
Sawle Rd	0.25		0.25						0.25
Section Line Rd	0.68		0.68						0.68
Spring Rd	1.8		1.8						1.8
Strutt Rd	0.65		0.65						0.65
Sunny Ridge Rd	1.42		1.42						1.42
Thomas Rd	0.25		0.25						0.25
Trainor Rd	0.94		0.94						0.94
Twin Ct (1)	0.13		0.13						0.13
Twin Ct (2)	0.07		0.07						0.07
Urness Rd	0.5		0.5						0.5
Weier Rd	1.46		1.46						1.46
Total Miles	**65.53**	**16.78**	**48.75**	**0**	**16.07**	**0.71**	**0**	**0**	**48.75**

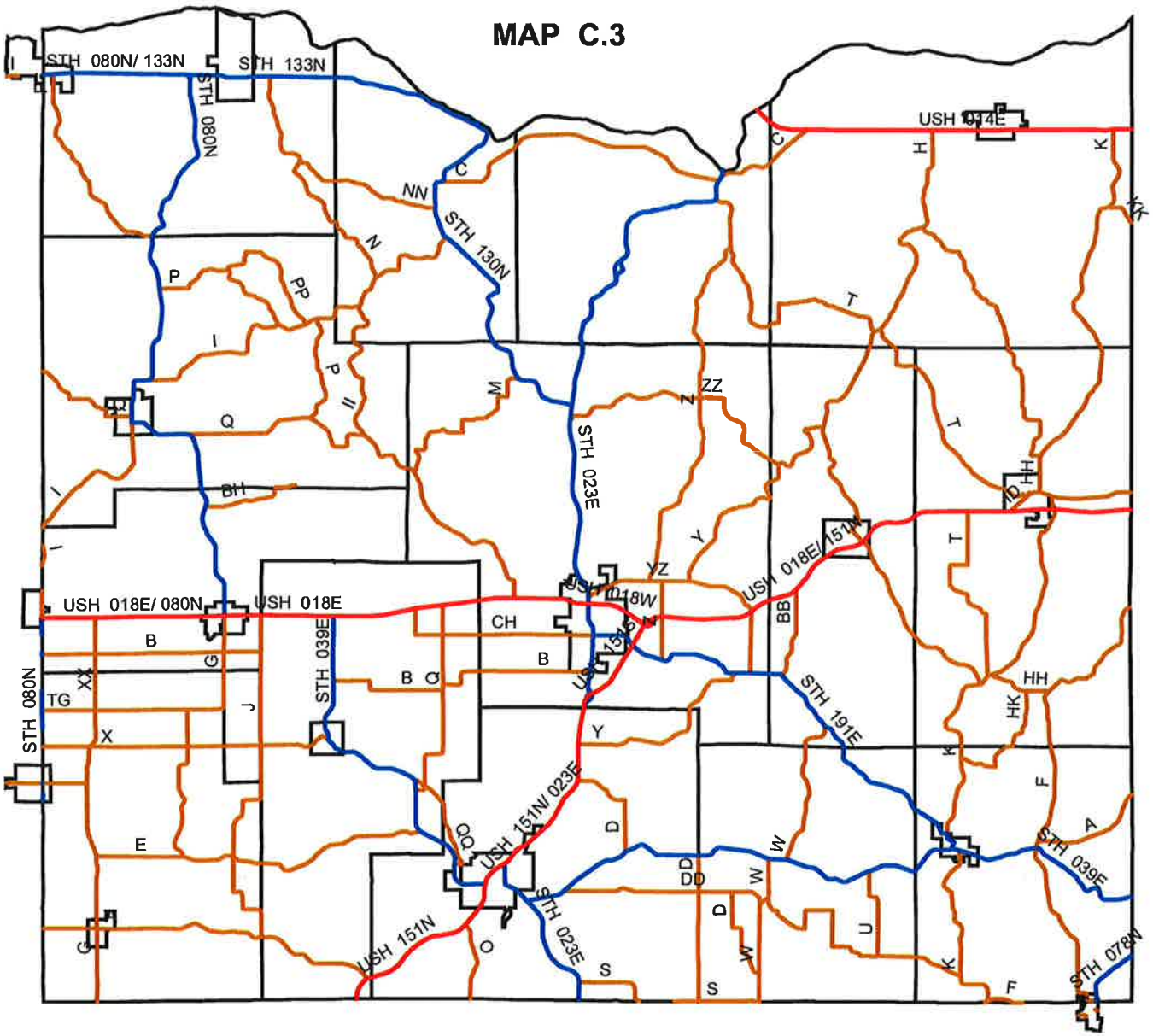

MAJOR TRAVEL ROUTES IN
SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN
1835 – 1870
SCALE 0 10 20 30 MILES
N
Source: Wisconsin Highways 1835-1945
Green Bay (Ft. Howard)
LAKE WINNEBAGO
ROAD
Fond du Lac
FOX RIVER
MILITARY
Portage (Ft. Winnebago)
WISCONSIN
LAKE MICHIGAN
WISCONSIN RIVER
ROAD
Madison
U.S. ROAD
Milwaukee
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
Prairie du Chien (Ft. Crawford)
Mt. Hope
Fennimore
MILITARY
Cobb
Dodgeville
Barneveld
Ridgeway
Mt. Horeb
Cassville (Sinipee)
Belmont
Cuba City
Benton
Shullsburg
Gratiot
Browntown
Monroe
Brodhead
MILITARY ROAD
Racine
Kenosha
U.S. ROAD
Beloit
Dubuque
ILLINOIS

MAP C.1

U.S. & STATE HIGHWAYS
AND
COUNTY HIGHWAYS

- IOWA COUNTY, WISCONSIN -

MAP C.3



Legend

- Municipal Boundaries
- U. S. Highways - USH
- State Highways - STH
- County Highways - CTH

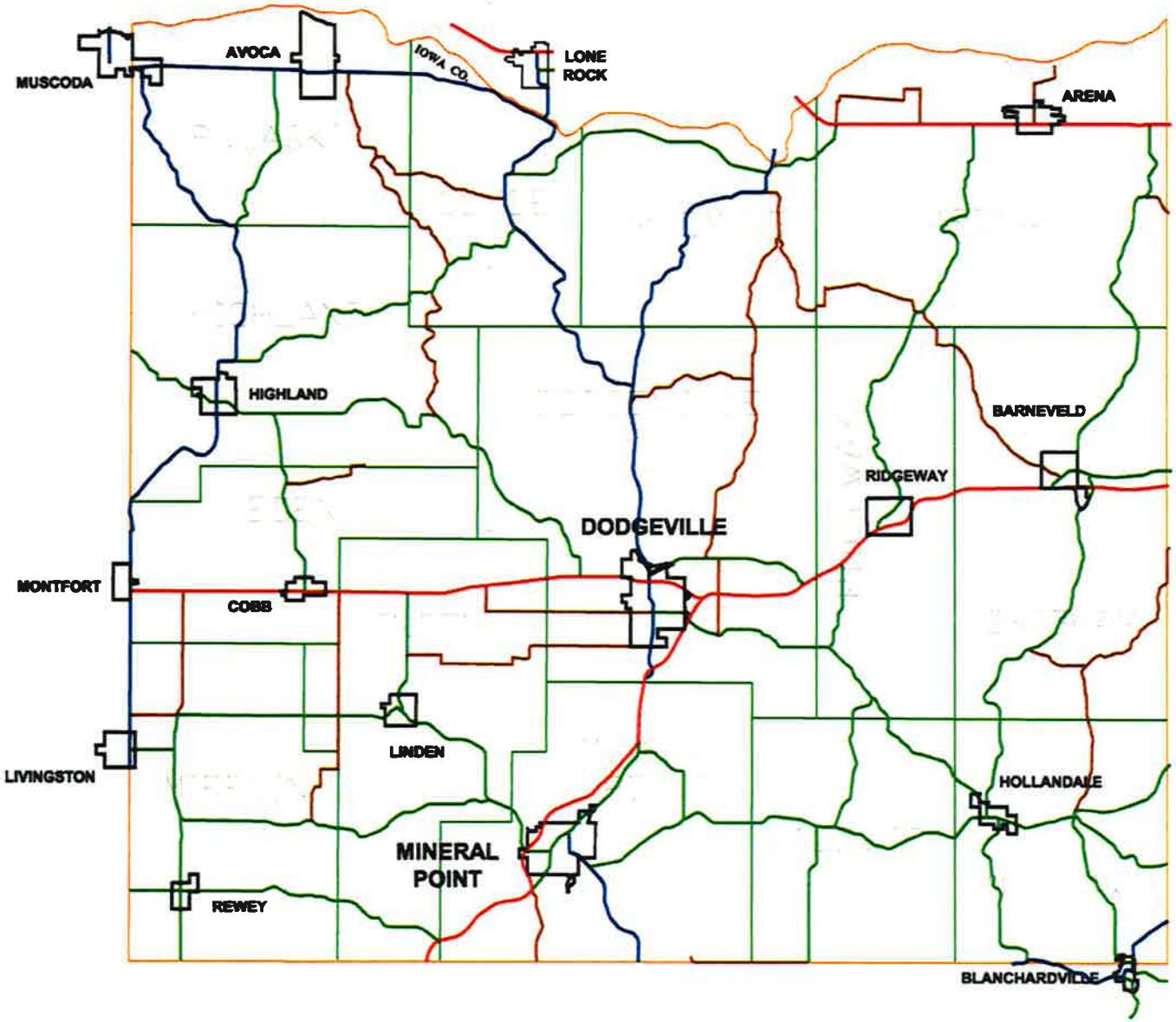
1 inch equals 4.34 miles

N
W E
S

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
719 Pioneer Tower
1 University Plaza
Platteville, WI 53818

December 17, 2004
IA CO US ST CO HWYS

IOWA COUNTY RURAL FUNCTIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEMS



LEGEND

- PRINCIPAL ARTERIALS
- MAJOR ARTERIALS
- MAJOR COLLECTORS
- MINOR COLLECTORS

N W E S

2 1 0 2 6

MILES

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

MAP C.4