Dunn County Transit Commission
Transit Development Plan
2013-2017

February, 2013

Prepared with assistance from the
West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Dunn County Transit Commission
Transit Development Plan
2013-2017

February, 2013

This document was prepared with the assistance of federal funds as authorized under 49 USC Chapter 53, Section 5304 of the Federal Transit Act, with matching funds from Dunn County and West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

Introduction

Dunn County is a mostly rural county in west central Wisconsin, on the Interstate 94 corridor, approximately 45 miles from the Wisconsin-Minnesota state line. The county seat, and only incorporated city in Dunn County, is Menomonie. In 2008, the County purchased the assets of Disabled and Elderly Transportation, Inc. (DET, Inc.). DET, Inc. was a private non-profit provider of elderly and disabled transportation services throughout the County for over 40 years, providing about 40,000 trips in 2009. The change was made to provide a different kind of service, particularly in the City of Menomonie. By providing "urban" transit services through the new Commission, more federal and state funds are available to assist in operating the system and to build and maintain the bus fleet.

Purpose

The purpose of a transit development plan (TDP) is to consider how effectively and efficiently the transit system is currently serving the community and to develop recommendations for improvement in the short term, usually over a 5-year period. Since the Dunn County Transit Commissions services are so new, this TDP will largely serve to lay out the system's growth to a cost-effective system plan for Menomonie, as well as appropriate services to continue providing mobility in the rural portions of Dunn County.

Demographics

Dunn County is a mostly rural county in west central Wisconsin, with a total population of 43,857 (source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010). As shown in Figure 1, approximately 37 percent of the County's population, or 16,264 people, live in the City of Menomonie (source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010). There are seven incorporated villages scattered throughout the County (see Figure 2), and the remaining population lives in unincorporated rural areas, towns.

The City of Menomonie is home to the University of Wisconsin – Stout, a four-year university with 9,356 students, (2011-2012 academic year). Approximately 3,000 students live in on-campus student housing, with about a third of those living in dorms on the north campus, approximately a mile from the main campus. As is the case on and around many university campuses, parking is limited. A shortage of parking, or lots further removed from the campus encourage the use of transit options on and around the campus.

Figure #1:
Total Population by Municipality

Municipality	Total Population
Menomonie, City of	16,264
Boyceville, Village of	1,086
Colfax, Village of	1,158
Downing, Village of	265
Elk Mound, Village of	878
Knapp, Village of	463
Ridgeland, Village of	273
Wheeler, Village of	348
Colfax, Town of	1,186
Dunn, Town of	1,524
Eau Galle, Town of	757
Elk Mound, Town of	1,792
Grant, Town of	385
Hay River, Town of	558
Lucas, Town of	764
Menomonie, Town of	3,366
New Haven, Town of	677
Otter Creek, Town of	501
Peru, Town of	242
Red Cedar, Town of	2,086
Rock Creek, Town of	1,000
Sand Creek, Town of	570
Sheridan, Town of	454
Sherman, Town of	849
Spring Brook, Town of	1,558
Stanton, Town of	791
Tainter, Town of	2,319
Tiffany, Town of	618
Weston, Town of	594
Wilson, Town of	531
Dunn County, Total	43,857

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.

Existing Services and Vehicles

There are a number of transit services currently available to residents in Dunn County. Some of the services are available to an agency's clientele or to a specific user group, such as elderly persons or those with disabilities, while others are open to the general public, such as Dunn County Transit Commission's fixed route services and various privately owned services. These services are described in further detail in this section.

DCTC Fixed Route services

Dunn County Transit Commission (DCTC) started providing fixed route services within the City of Menomonie in 2010. The services were centered on the UW-Stout campus, largely to facilitate travel between the dormitories on the north campus and the main campus. There are three fixed routes, as shown on Figure 1. The routes have been primarily designed to meet the needs of UW-Stout students as they are a constant, stable rider base, and support the system through a minimal contribution from student fees, $2.00 per student, or approximately $18,000 per semester. The availability of the bus routes offers an option to searching for a parking space on campus and provides service to very close proximity to most academic buildings, as well as dormitories. The services are currently provided with 40-foot, 45 passenger accessible buses, and provided over 85,000 trips in 2011. The three routes are described in more detail below:

The **Stout Route**, first run in January 2011, circulates through the campus and the housing area on the northern campus, just under a mile away from the main campus, from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Each bus requires slightly less than an hour to cover the route, which includes three repeated loops through the northern portion of the route before returning to the southern portion via 3rd Street East, 13th Avenue, and South on Broadway to the loop on the south end of the route.

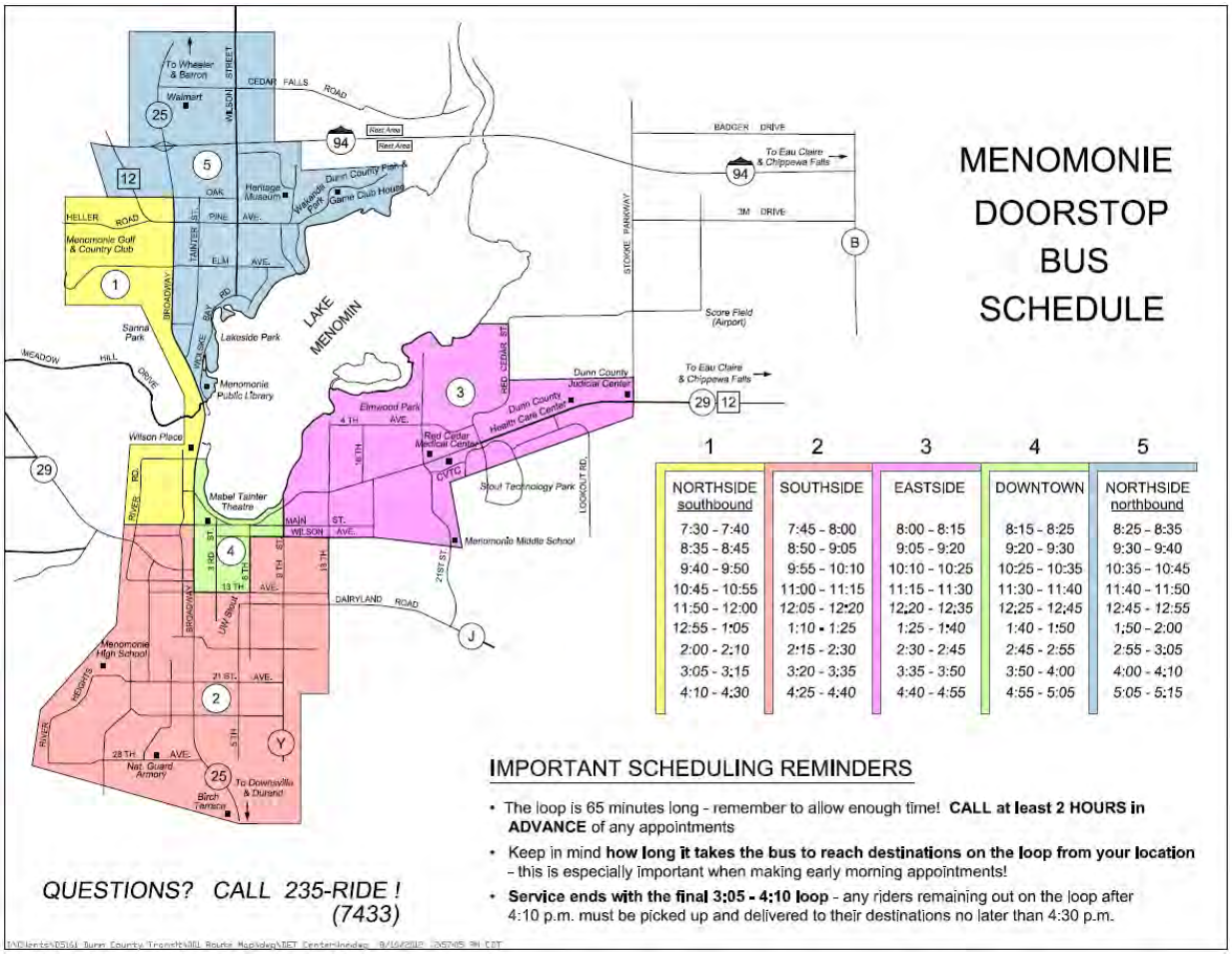
The **Menomonie/Stout Weekend Route** makes six runs from 10:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. on Saturdays, between the UW-Stout campus and the commercial area on the north side of Menomonie, including stops at WalMart, Marketplace Foods, and Fleet Farm.

The **Menomonie/Stout Evening Route** makes five runs between 5:30 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays, serving the UW-Stout campus and commercial and entertainment areas along North Broadway (STH 25). A few of the stops include Marketplace Foods, WalMart, and the movie theater.

The Dunn County Transit Commission Demand Response services

The Dunn County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) is the recipient of Dunn County's S.85.21 allocation, funding from the State of Wisconsin for specialized transit services, The ADRC provides about 80 percent of the County's Section 85.21 allocation to DCTC to provide elderly and disabled transportation throughout Dunn County, known as the **Menomonie Door Stop** service. The Door Stop is actually a modified demand response service, with a bus rotating through 5 different zones, available for pick-ups in each zone for 10-15 minutes, with reservations required only 2-hours in advance, and has a one-way fare of $2.00. (See Figure 2.) This door-to-door service has existed in Menomonie for over 3 decades (previously provided by DET), and provided approximately 8,800 trips in 2011. This includes sheltered workshop transportation had been provided through a contract between Indianhead Industries and DCTC.

Figure 2



The other 20 percent of the County's 85.21 money funds a volunteer driver program. The volunteer program has approximately 18 drivers and provided 4,317 trips in 2011, covering approximately 80,000 miles. Volunteer drivers are reimbursed at the federal rate (currently 55.5 cents/mile), with the rider paying half of that cost, and the other half funded with 85.21 dollars.

The New Freedom Program, administered by the Center for Independent Living of Western Wisconsin (CILWW), is a federally-funded volunteer driver program that is intended to provide transportation for all those trips that, for some reason, can't be served by other services. This can include evening, weekend, or holiday trips that fall outside of DCTC's service hours. It could also include trips with destinations outside the county, or even the state, that ADRC volunteer driver program is unable to fulfill. The New Freedom Volunteer Driver Program is an 18-county coordinated service in west central and northwestern Wisconsin, which, in total, provided over 12,000 trips in 2011. In Dunn County, alone, 1,891 one-way trips were provided, covering nearly 50,000 miles. (This number includes 40 trips which were actually provided by friends or relatives who were reimbursed through a voucher program, also administered by CILWW.) Nearly half of these trips (47%) are taken for medical purposes, 45 percent for shopping or independent living needs, while work, education/training, social/recreational categories, account for between three and five percent each.

Other Transit Options Available

Several other private services are available for intercity transportation from Menomonie. Jefferson Bus Lines stops in Menomonie, at the UW-Stout Memorial Student Center, twice each day. Near midday, passengers can board the coach for service to Eau Claire, several destinations along STH 29 to Wausau and Green Bay. Later in the afternoon, passengers can catch the westbound coach to Hudson or the Twin Cities. Connections can be made with other Jefferson routes, or to Greyhound and other providers at some locations, such as Eau Claire, Green Bay, or in the Twin Cities, to travel to other destinations.

Chippewa Valley Airport Shuttle service provides service to the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, with a stop at the Country Inn and Suites motel, on the north side of Menomonie, near the STH 25/I-94 interchange. In addition to the Twin Cities Airport, this shuttle will drop off or pick up riders in Eau Claire, Baldwin, Hudson, and the Mall of America. The Chippewa Valley Airport Service runs eleven round trips between Eau Claire and the airport every day.

Several other private coach companies, limousine services, and cab options are available for charter transportation service in the Menomonie area.

Existing Fleet

The vehicles currently owned by DCTC are shown in Figure 3. The fleet is aging and the cutaway buses have presented significant maintenance challenges. Also, the fleet is equipped with wheelchair lifts, rather than ramps, reducing reliability and increasing the time needed to board wheelchair passengers.

Figure 3
DCTC Vehicle Inventory (2012)

Vehicle Type (Bus, Van, Cutaway, other)	**Lift/Ramp Equipped** (Y or N)	**Model Year**	**Seated Passenger Capacity**	**Wheelchair Passenger Capacity**	**Expected Useful Life** (yrs.)	**Anticipated Replacement Date** (year)
Cutaway	yes	2012	14	2	5	2017
Cutaway	yes	2011	15	2	5	2016
Cutaway	yes	2011	15	2	5	2016
Cutaway	yes	2010	16	3	5	2015
Cutaway	yes	2010	26	5	5	2015
Transit bus	yes	1995	45	2	12	2013
Transit bus	yes	1995	45	2	12	2014

Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives were developed by the TDP advisory committee and will be made available for public review and input. The goals and objectives are based on a 5 year horizon and are directed toward establishing a safe and efficient, regionally connected transit system that meets the needs of the residents of Dunn County.

Goal #1: To meet the needs of transit dependent and choice riders throughout Dunn County.

Objectives:

1. Provide access for protected populations (elderly, disabled, minority, and the financially disadvantaged) in the rural areas of Dunn County to services and employment.
2. Provide services for UW-S students, faculty, and staff which allow them to access the campus facilities, student housing areas, health care, and local businesses.
3. Make connections to major trip destinations within and near Menomonie.
4. Make all stops accessible and meet all other relevant ADA requirements.
5. Encourage the installation of sidewalks throughout fixed route service area.
6. Continue to examine potential for connecting with neighboring communities, especially Eau Claire.

Goal #2: To operate a safe and efficient transit system

Objectives:

1. Provide service types and levels that are appropriate to the population density and ridership demand.
2. Review service efficiency annually, and work to meet WisDOT and/or FTA performance measures
3. Make designated bus stops safe and identifiable.
4. Coordinate communication and response needs with local emergency services agencies.

Goal #3: To encourage use of the system

Objectives:

1. Market the system, as appropriate, throughout the County.
2. Develop and distribute paper route maps/schedules.
3. Pursue web-based applications, such as scheduling and/or real-time route information.
4. Continue to coordinate with the University to develop appropriate services and information applications.
5. Include bike racks on buses.
6. Consider the use of “transit ambassadors/travel trainers” to assist inexperienced riders.
7. Establish fare outlets for the purchase of passes.
8. Develop a fair and competitive fare structure.
9. Coordinate with City and County departments to address infrastructure needs and other service matters.
10. Coordinate with the Greater Menomonie Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center, Main Street of Menomonie, Inc., and any other local agencies or organizations for input and dissemination of information on the system.

Goal #4: To operate and promote environmentally friendly practices
Objectives:

1. See “Goal #2: Encourage use of the system”, above.
2. Investigate sustainable practices and utilize as appropriate in transit facilities and vehicles.
3. Consider alternative-fuel vehicles when purchasing replacement or fleet expansion buses or service vehicles.

Goal #5: To pursue funding and partnerships to meet system objectives
Objectives:

1. Continue to develop fare arrangements with UW-S, technical school, school district.
2. Work with local coalitions and legislators to pass enabling legislation in Wisconsin to allow for Regional Transit Authorities, and encourage local participation in such a transit authority.
3. Work with WisDOT to access all appropriate funding sources for capital improvements and operations.
4. Establish intercommunity partnerships and work toward regional connections to neighboring transit systems.

The recommendations in this plan are to be measured against these goals and objectives, as are future capital and operating decisions made by DCTC.

Analysis

This section serves to determine the appropriate type and location of transit services in the City of Menomonie and the rural areas of Dunn County by a number of analysis tools. A spatial analysis of several socio-economic characteristics, such as low income households, concentrations of elderly population, and median income levels will help to understand the concentrations of potential transit dependent populations. A peer analysis will compare the services already provided by Dunn County Transit to other Wisconsin systems of similar characteristics. Last, a look at the major destinations within the Menomonie area will help to consider where transit users will want to go, to work, to shop, to school, and to recreate.

Socio-economic Analysis

While some transit systems, usually those in major metropolitan areas, can expect to attract a large number of choice riders, those that use transit service by choice rather than out of need, most smaller systems can expect that the majority of their riders will be people who do not have another transportation option available to them. Individuals from low income households are less likely to own a car, or multiple cars, and may need transit services to do their trip-making. The young and the elderly typically make up the largest portion of transit riders. Persons with disabilities often depend on transit or paratransit services to access jobs, school, shopping, etc.

Poverty

Figure 4 shows the percent of the population that is in poverty across rural portions of Dunn County (U.S. Census, 2010), by census place. Within the greater Menomonie area, a little more detail is provided by going to census tract level. (While neither of these geographic levels provides much detail, they are the most detailed geographic levels provided by the Bureau of the Census for these data items, due to privacy standards.) It is clear that poverty is most prevalent in in the City of Menomonie (29.6%), the villages of Wheeler (33.9%), Downing (19.4%), Colfax (17.1%), Knapp (15.5%), and the Town of Wilson (16.2%), all above the County average of 15.3 percent. (Source: American Community Survey 2006-2010 5-year estimates, U.S. Bureau of the Census.)

In looking at the City of Menomonie in more detail, at the census tract level, it is evident that the two tracts on the south side of the city have a higher incidence of poverty. Tract 97.08, which includes much of the UW-Stout campus area and the southeast portion of the City, shows the highest figure of 39.5% of the population below the poverty level. The tract 97.07, on the southwest area of Menomonie and some area to the south of the City, has a slightly lower percentage of persons in poverty, at 27.6 percent, still well above the County average. The northern half of the City is included in tract 97.05, where an estimated 14.4 percent of the population is below the poverty level. While this figure is better than the County average of 15.3 percent, it is important to remember that this is a fairly large geographic area and includes several smaller neighborhoods which likely have a number of lower income households.

Renter-Occupied Housing

Figure 5 shows the percent of occupied housing units within the towns, villages, and census tracts in the City of Menomonie that are renter occupied units. As a whole, Dunn County has a slightly higher percentage of renter-occupied units (32.3%), than the State of Wisconsin (31.9%), but that is not at all unusual for a city with a significant student presence. It follows that the areas including and near the university have much higher levels of renter occupied units. The southeast section of Menomonie has the highest rate, at 70.8 percent, and the southwest follows at 52.0 percent. More of the homes in the northern part of the City are owner occupied, with rentals accounting for 38.6 percent of total occupied units. In the more rural areas, the

towns are all below 20 percent of their occupied units renter occupied, while the villages range from 20.6 percent, in the Village of Downing, to just over forty percent, in villages of Elk Mound and Wheeler. Generally, higher density residential development, typical of most rental units, generates significantly more transit trips. It is also typical that rental units represent a more transient population and often own fewer cars per household than owner-occupied households.

Age

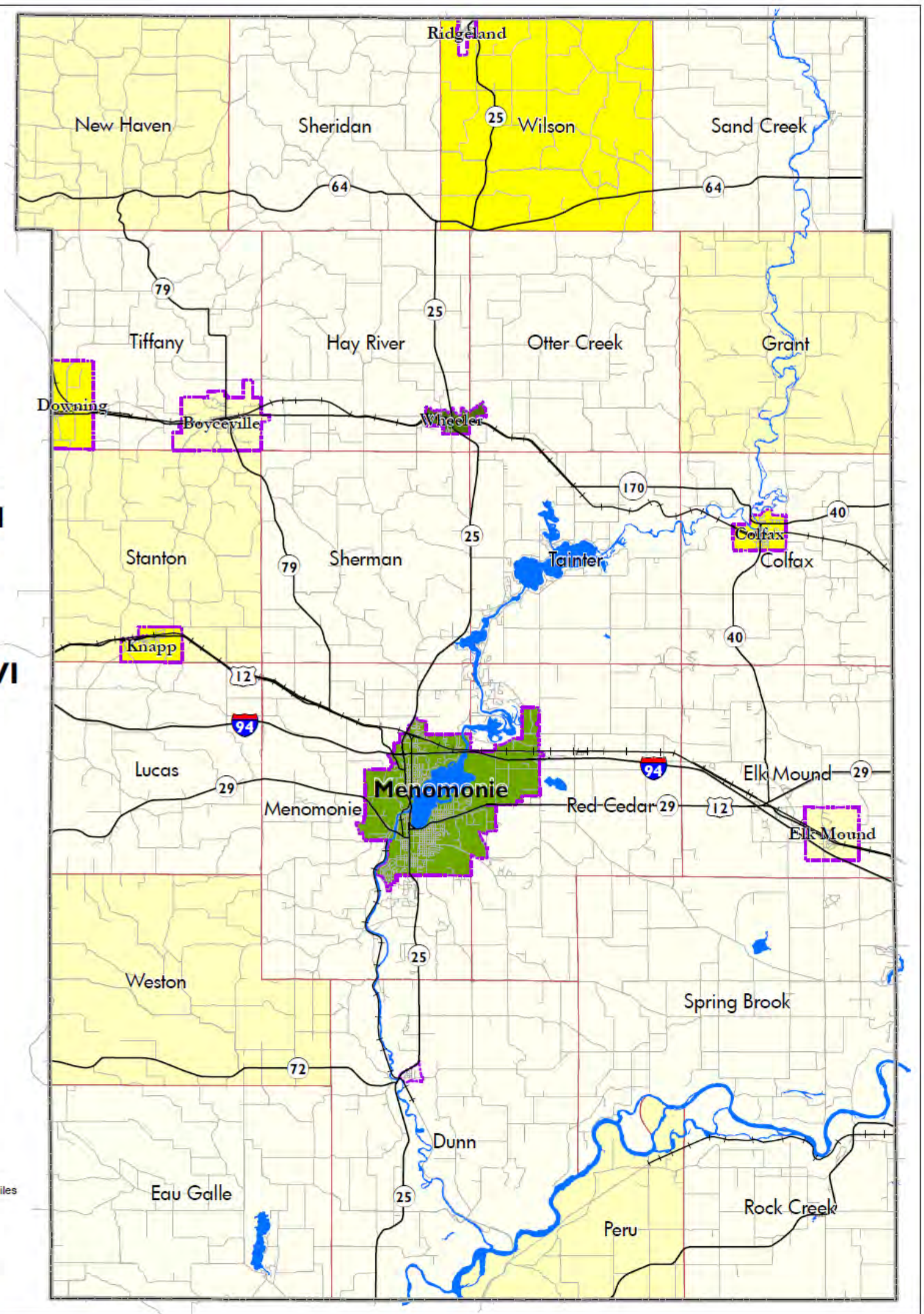
Age is relevant to transit ridership potential both, in terms of youth and the elderly. The elderly, in this case, those of age 60 and over, are more likely to not be driving, or driving less than the general population. Of course, the age of 60 is not a magic number when everyone gives up their driver's license, nor is it a time when the vast majority of people should surrender their license. In fact, it is apparently rare for persons of any age to surrender their license. It seems that in 2010, 93.85 percent of persons at ages from 40 to 59 in the State of Wisconsin had a valid driver's license. That number does not drop below 80 percent until the age of 82. Nearly 40 percent of persons in Wisconsin hold a valid driver's license past their 90th birthday. (Source: *Facts and Figures 2010*, WisDOT, Division of Motor Vehicles, 2011.) Possessing a license and actually driving are two different things. It becomes increasingly common for persons to decide to drive less, or not at night, etc., as they age, or to keep their license after deciding not to drive at all. (Wisconsin Drivers Licenses require renewal every eight years.) There is also an increased likelihood of disability as people age, possibly making them less able to drive. In any case, 60, while still very young for many, is a convenient age to use in this analysis, as it is an age that is commonly used as an eligibility threshold for programs, such as half fare eligibility on many bus systems. In this case it serves to illustrate the level of concentration of elderly persons by place within Dunn County. As seen on Figure 6, Notable concentrations of persons aged 60 and over occur in the villages of Colfax (27.3%) and Knapp (26.8%), and the Town of Eau Galle (26.4%). Several other towns and the northern half of the City of Menomonie have over 20 percent of their populations aged 60 and over (those roughly above the statewide figure of 19.2%). However, the towns of Colfax (13.8%) and Elk Mound (10.7%), the Village of Elk Mound (11.6%), and the southern half of the City (southwest at 12.0%, and the southeast at 8.4%), have under 15% of their population at or above the age of 60.

People under the age of 16 are not typically driving and are more likely than the general population to ride transit to and from school, recreational, or other activities. Interestingly, it does not always follow that those areas with proportionally more elderly persons will have lower youth (under 16) populations, or vice versa. In the case of the City of Menomonie, census tract 97.08, the southeast side, has both, a low elderly population (8.4%), as well as a low youth population (7.2%) well below the county figure of 18.2 percent. (See Figure 7.) This is due to the high concentration of college-aged residents in this area that includes the UW-Stout campus. Other than the City of Menomonie's proportionally low youth population, resulting from the high numbers of those aged 18 to 25, there are no figures that are particularly startling. The two highest proportions of youth population are in the Town and Village of Elk Mound. Speculation would lead us to this area's proximity, with easy commuting, to the City of Eau Claire, as a likely explanation. Working families with children may find this east central portion of Dunn County well-suited to these needs.

Figure 4

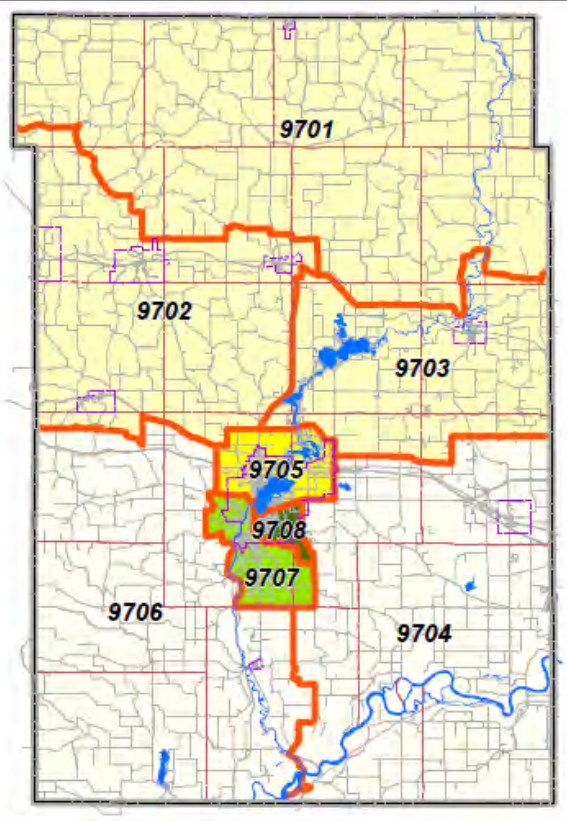
PERCENT OF POPULATION IN POVERTY BY PLACE (2010)

Dunn County, WI



0 1 2 4 6 Miles

Data Sources:
Dunn County Land Information
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
http://dnr.wi.gov/maps/gis/geolibrary.html;
Wisconsin State Legislature WISE for Local Redistricting
http://legis.wisconsin.gov/ltsb/wiselr/data.htm;
2006 - 2010 American Community Survey.



INSET MAP: PERCENT OF POPULATION IN POVERTY BY CENSUS TRACT (2010)

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

Data Sources:
Dunn County Land Information
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
http://dnr.wi.gov/maps/gis/geolibrary.html;
Wisconsin State Legislature WISE for Local Redistricting
http://legis.wisconsin.gov/ltsb/wiselr/data.htm;
2006 - 2010 American Community Survey.

October 29, 2012

Population in Poverty

- 0% - 9.99%
- 10% - 14.99%
- 15% - 19.99%
- 20% - 24.99%
- 25% - 29.99%
- 30% +

- Major Roads
- Roads
- Railroads
- Water
- Cities/Villages
- Towns
- County Boundary
- Census Tracts

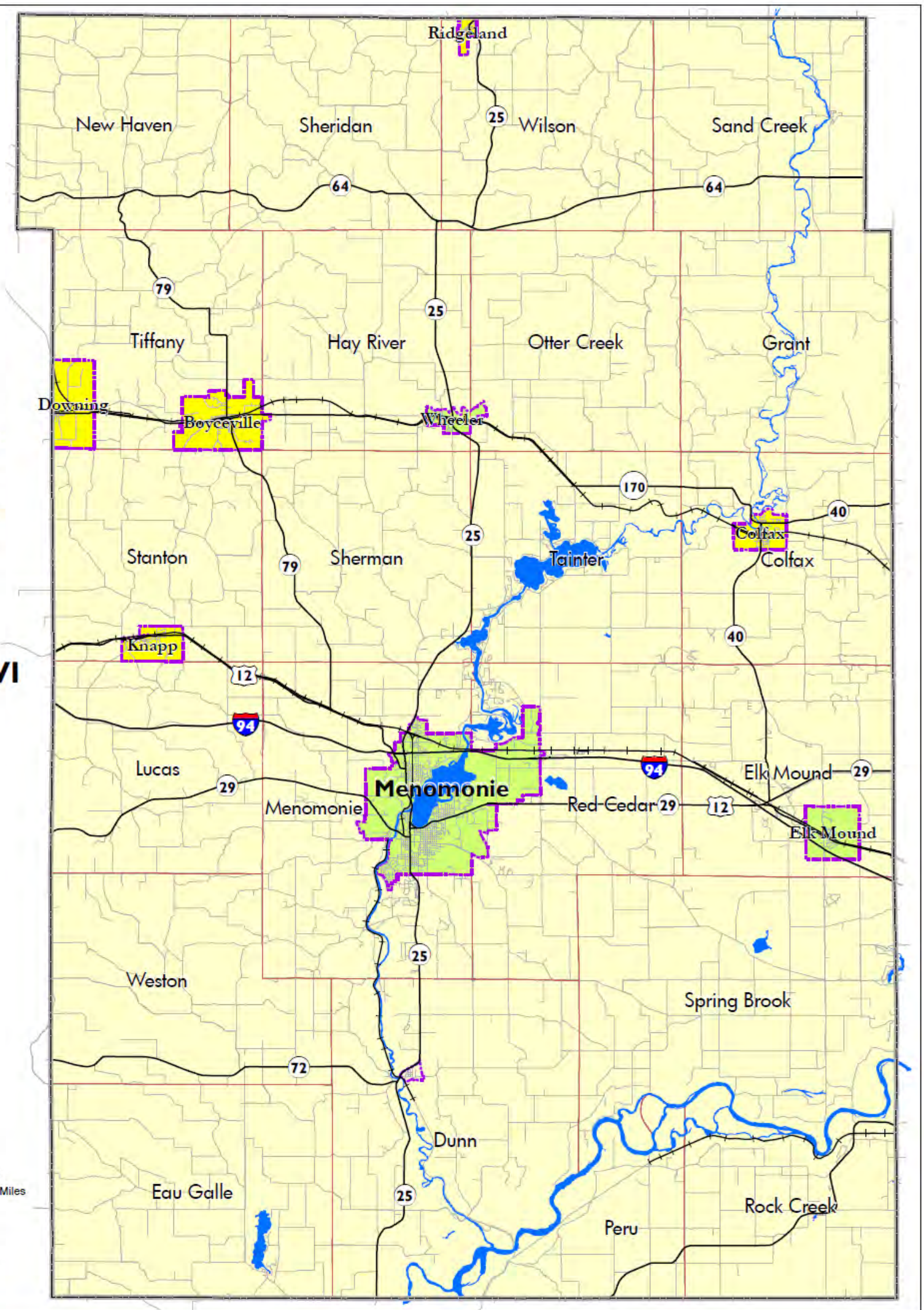
WCWRPC
West Central Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission

N W E S

Figure 5

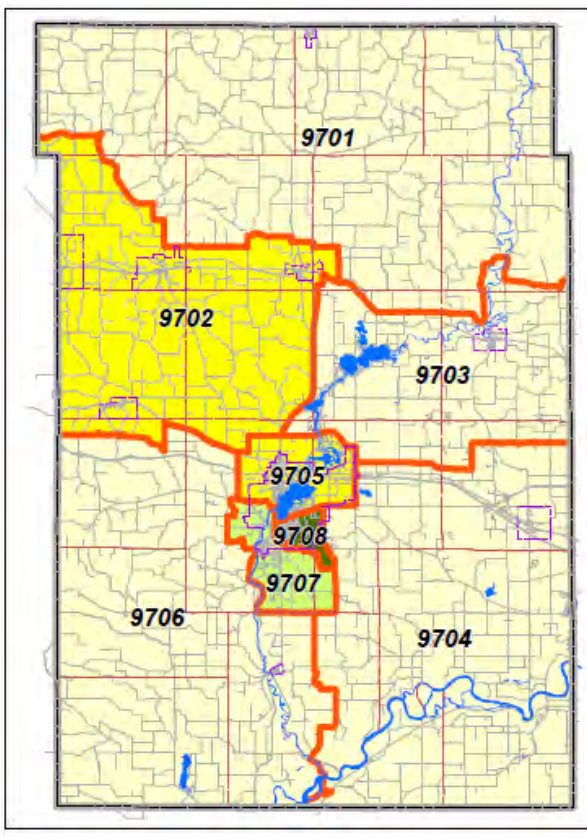
PERCENT OF UNIT THAT ARE RENTER OCCUPIED BY PLACE (2010)

Dunn County, WI



0 1 2 4 6 Miles

Data Sources:
Dunn County Land Information
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
http://dnr.wi.gov/maps/gis/geolibrary.html;
Wisconsin State Legislature WISE for Local Redistricting
http://legis.wisconsin.gov/ltsb/wiselr/data.htm;
U.S. Census Bureau, 2010



INSET MAP: PERCENT OF UNITS THAT ARE RENTER OCCUPIED BY CENSUS TRACT (2010)

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

Data Sources:
Dunn County Land Information
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
http://dnr.wi.gov/maps/gis/geolibrary.html;
Wisconsin State Legislature WISE for Local Redistricting
http://legis.wisconsin.gov/ltsb/wiselr/data.htm;
U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

October 29, 2012

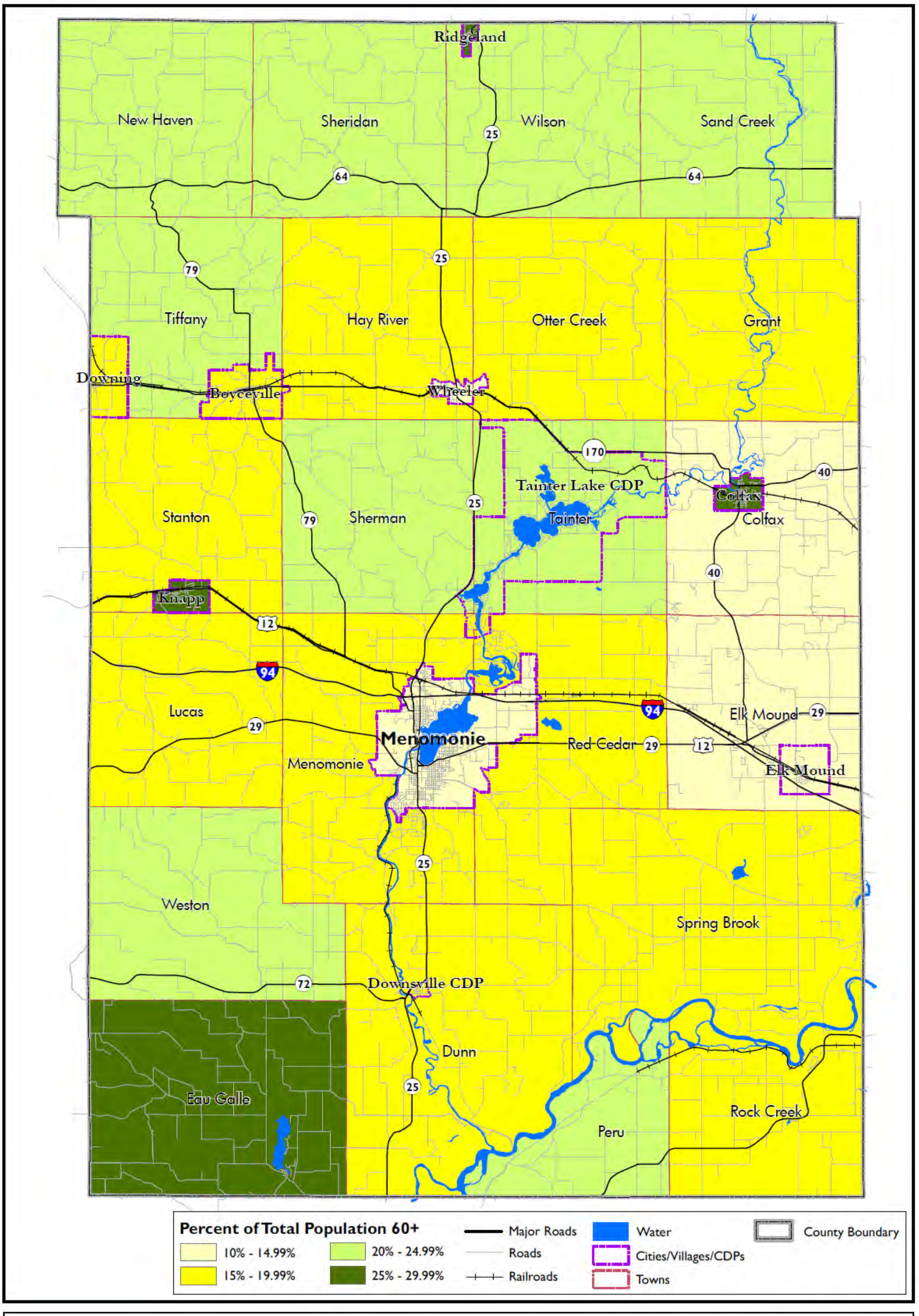
Renter Occupied

- 1.00% - 19.99%
- 20.00% - 39.99%
- 40.00% - 59.99%
- 60.00%+

- Major Roads
- Roads
- Railroads
- Water
- Cities/Villages
- Towns
- County Boundary
- Census Tracts

WCWRPC
West Central Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission

N W E S



West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Figure 6

Percent of Population Age 60 Years and Over

0 1 2 4 Miles

July 17, 2012

Data Sources:
Dunn County Land Information
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
http://dnr.wi.gov/maps/gis/geolibrary.html;
Wisconsin State Legislature WISE for Local Redistricting
http://legis.wisconsin.gov/ltsb/wiselr/data.htm;
U.S.Bureau of the Census, 2010 decennial census.

N W E S

Figure 7
Dunn County by Place and selected tracts
Population under the Age of 16

Municipality or Census Tract	total pop	Pop. under age 16	Percent of Pop. under age 16
Wisconsin	5,686,986	1,180,079	20.75%
Dunn Co.	43,857	7,993	18.23%
Menomonie, City of	16,264	1,933	11.89%
Boyceville, Village of	1,086	234	21.55%
Colfax, Village of	1,158	246	21.24%
Downing, Village of	265	64	24.15%
Elk Mound, Village of	878	232	26.42%
Knapp, Village of	463	82	17.71%
Ridgeland, Village of	273	59	21.61%
Wheeler, Village of	348	90	25.86%
Colfax, Town of	1,186	287	24.20%
Dunn, Town of	1,524	310	20.34%
Eau Galle, Town of	757	125	16.51%
Elk Mound, Town of	1,792	519	28.96%
Grant, Town of	385	74	19.22%
Hay River, Town of	558	103	18.46%
Lucas, Town of	764	164	21.47%
Menomonie, Town of	3,366	778	23.11%
New Haven, Town of	677	141	20.83%
Otter Creek, Town of	501	106	21.16%
Peru, Town of	242	41	16.94%
Red Cedar, Town of	2,086	483	23.15%
Rock Creek, Town of	1,000	253	25.30%
Sand Creek, Town of	570	116	20.35%
Sheridan, Town of	454	88	19.38%
Sherman, Town of	849	155	18.26%
Spring Brook, Town of	1,558	339	21.76%
Stanton, Town of	791	156	19.72%
Tainter, Town of	2,319	420	18.11%
Tiffany, Town of	618	128	20.71%
Weston, Town of	594	139	23.40%
Wilson, Town of	531	128	24.11%
Tract 97.05	6,373	1,100	17.26%
Tract 97.07	6,833	1,122	16.42%
Tract 97.08	6,188	446	7.21%

Source: 2010 Census, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Persons with Disabilities

Census figures on populations with disabilities are not readily available in the 2010 census, or in the American Community Survey (ACS) data at the geographic level that would be useful for this analysis. In 2000, there were no real areas within the County that stood out, in terms of a percentage of the population with disabilities. Within the State, 16 percent of the population was determined to have a disability, by 2000 Census definition. Dunn County, as a whole, was somewhat lower at 14.8 percent. By census tract within the County, the figure only ranged from 12.5 percent to 18.4 percent. The higher figure was in the southwestern portion of the County, where the population tended to be a bit older than the county average, as well.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities. It is important to note that ADA does require all transit systems to provide paratransit services to those who are unable to access the bus system. In the case of a fixed route system, the paratransit service must provide at least curb to curb service to origins and destinations within three quarters of a mile of the fixed route service, with fares no more than twice the normal fixed route fare. The law intends that paratransit offer service that is comparable to the fixed route service. Service hours need to be, at least, the same as the general services and must be available upon next day, or less, request. Technical assistance and details on other service requirements of ADA can be found on the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) website, or in a series of topic guides, funded by the FTA, on the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF) website at: http://www.dredf.org/ADAtg/index.shtml.

Peer Analysis

There are a number of small bus systems in the State of Wisconsin, that are supported by the Rural and Small Urban Area Public Transportation Assistance program which allocates federal funds to local public bodies or Native American tribes. These funds under Federal Section 5311 support capital and operating expenses for public transportation services that are operated in non-urbanized areas (population between 2,500 and 50,000). The systems included in the peer group are those in the category that provide fixed route services.

WisDOT regularly analyzes these systems for efficiency and effectiveness. The most recent data available for these systems is 2009 operating data. WisDOT utilizes six measures of performance to analyze and assist the systems in improving their operations, (see Figure 8). While Dunn County Transit Commission was not yet operating in 2009, 2011 data for the limited routes operated by DCTC were entered at the bottom of the table for comparison. We can see that DCTC was doing well in most categories. The darker shading denotes those systems that are more than one standard deviation above the category average, while the paler shading shows those that are more than one standard deviation below the average for each measure. In farebox recovery, DCTC rated quite high, likely due to the contribution from student fees which provides a guaranteed level of revenue, even with passengers per capita performance being quite low. As this system is really just developing, it is more important that these measures be kept in mind as the system is created and as it matures. DCTC can use these performance measures to help guide development decisions and make adjustments to the system to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The biggest message that can be taken from the peer analysis, at this point, is that there is a need to serve the larger community, and to have the system recognized as a service available to the general public. Success in this area should improve the “passengers per capita” performance.

Service Area Analysis

In the scope of this study, we are really looking at two different types of services areas: one being the City of Menomonie and its immediate surroundings, characterized by a more urban density of development and activity; and the second type of service area is the rural, more sparsely populated part of the County.

Urban Service Area

First we will consider the Menomonie area, or urban portion of the County. While the demographic analysis gave us some idea of where likely transit riders live, the trip origin, it is also important to consider where people will likely want to go, or the trip destination. In general, persons riding transit need and want to go to the same types of places as those who are driving. Typical trip purposes include work, school, medical appointments, shopping and other personal business, and recreation. Within the City of Menomonie and the immediate surrounding area, Figure 9 shows the locations of schools, government services, medical facilities, and commercial areas that area known trip destinations. Special attention is given to those locations that are frequented by those who are not able to drive: the elderly, children, persons with disabilities, and those of low income that may not access to a car. Indianhead Enterprises, for example, employs a large number of persons with disabilities. While the industrial park would not seem to be the easiest place to serve, due to its distance from the urban core and its general low density, serving Indianhead Enterprises would likely make a great deal of sense. It is possible that a route could include an extension to Indianhead only a few times a day, to accommodate shift changes, but it may be more prudent to include it on every run. These details can be addressed later in route development.

Figure 8

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS - SMALL BUS SUMMARY

Performance Measure	Data	Mean	Standard Deviation
Cost/Hour	2009	$55.59	$12.27
Operating Ratio	2009	16.24%	16.30%
Cost/Passenger	2009	$12.92	$5.18
Passenger/Hour	2009	6.02	4.03
Passenger/Capita	2009	6.02	3.01
Hours/Capita	2009	1.00	0.91

Performance Parameters

+/- One Standard Deviation	
$43.31	$67.86
-0.06%	32.54%
$7.74	$18.10
1.99	10.05
3.01	9.03
0.09	1.91

*Shading denotes system outside of the Standard Deviation.

Small Bus Systems	Expense/ Revenue Hour	Farebox Recovery	Cost/ Passenger	Passengers/ Revenue Hour	Passengers/ Capita	Revenue Hours/ Capita
Adams County	$33.30	14.65%	$30.71	1.08	0.62	0.57
BART	$40.12	12.75%	$9.44	4.25	8.21	1.93
Door County	$50.61	55.00%	$12.21	4.15	2.95	0.71
Ladysmith	$44.51	7.88%	$11.02	4.04	6.76	1.67
Manitowoc	$71.71	9.14%	$5.47	13.12	7.84	0.60
Menominee Tribe	$68.47	3.85%	$20.09	3.41	11.19	3.28
Merrill	$71.55	18.34%	$6.50	11.01	7.19	0.65
Monona				3.87	2.05	0.53
Rusk County*						
Sawyer County	$57.74	8.02%	$15.43	3.74	4.16	1.11
Stevens Point	$62.27	16.54%	$5.41	11.50	9.24	0.80
GROUP MEAN AVERAGE:	**$ 55.59**	**16.24%**	**$12.92**	**6.02**	**6.02**	**1.00**
****Dunn County TC**	**$ 50.91**	**42.00%**	**$6.24**	**8.15**	**1.90**	**2.33**

Notes:

* Do not have confirmed ridership data for Rusk County in 2009, and costs are inconsistent with 2008.

**DCTC figures are for CY 2011.

The City, as it is built around the south and west shores of Lake Menomin, clearly lends itself to a particular route pattern. From the downtown and campus city center area, most destinations could be served with a radial pattern: a route to the north, a route to the south and a route to the east, meeting at a central transfer site. Existing routes serve the campus and student housing areas, well, along with the commercial areas to the north, in the North Broadway (STH 25) corridor, but many medical facilities and government service buildings lie to the east along the general Stout Road (STH 29) corridor. As discussed in the previous section, in order to serve the community at large, it will be necessary to serve these destinations, as well.

Rural Service Area

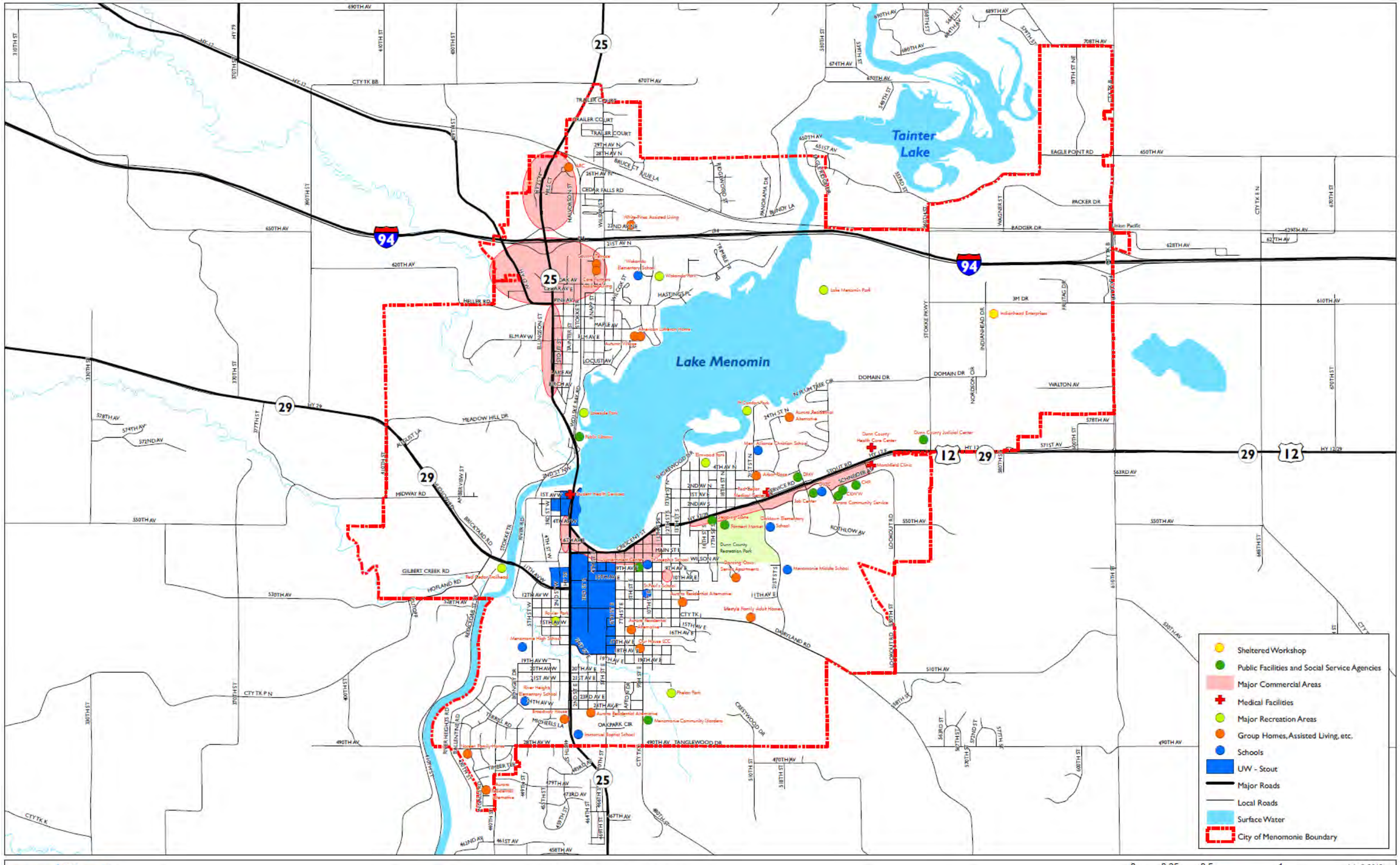
Providing transit services in rural areas is challenging due to low densities and, few people with lots of space between them. While trip origins are sparse and scattered across the County's rural areas, the most common destinations are urban centers, where services are clustered. The destinations shown in Figure 9, are likely the most common destinations for those living in the rural areas, as well as for those living in the City. To some extent, smaller communities, such as Colfax and Boyceville, also provide trip destinations. County nutrition sites, senior centers, and schools are among the common transit destinations throughout Dunn County. Most Wisconsin counties address this rural service challenge by providing specialized services to those who need it the most, usually the elderly and disabled persons living in rural areas, but there are a few rural general public systems in Wisconsin. Transportation services in lower density areas can be provided through either volunteer or paid driver demand response programs, or by a fixed or modified-fixed route service. A discussion of these service types and some examples follows:

Rural fixed and modified-fixed route

Route systems most commonly found in the rural portions of Wisconsin counties offer very infrequent service, sometimes with one or two trips per week, to allow elderly and disabled persons to attend to grocery and other shopping, social, or personal business needs. This service is often provided with a lift-equipped van or small bus to transport riders to a larger community within the county where shopping and services are readily available. Different areas of a county can be served on assigned days and advanced reservations can enable pickup at the riders' residences. While these services, most commonly funded through Wisconsin's Section 85.21, Specialized Transportation Assistance Program for Counties, are intended to serve the elderly and disabled persons, general public can be served on a space available basis. This type of service is not usually suitable for work or educational purposes, as it most often does not meet the frequency or timing needs for these trip purposes.

Some fixed routes are set up in rural areas to serve very specific needs, such as transportation for persons with disabilities to a particular work site. Dunn County currently provides this type of service to workers at Indianhead Enterprises. This is more of a subscription service, where a route is set up to pick up the same person at the same time and location each day, similar to a school bus route.

A few counties in Wisconsin offer rural transit services on a fixed-route, or modified fixed- route basis, for the general public. Door County recently built on several existing routes that served either sheltered workshop clients or seniors, and established general transit routes. This was largely accomplished through increased marketing of the route as a transportation option for the general public and by linking the services to a couple of shared ride taxi zones. The fixed route bus can deviate up to a half mile from the designated route to pick up or drop off passengers at the curbside of their origin or destination. The routes are fairly new, as general public routes, so representative performance data is not yet available. Another example, with more service experience, is the Bay Area Rural Transit System (BART), in Ashland and Bayfield counties. The rural routes connect a number of smaller communities to each other and to Ashland, with several stops in each community. There is also an option to flag down the bus on the route, or call ahead to ensure a pick-up on a rural highway. The main route makes 6 round trips a day through Bad River, Ashland, Washburn, Bayfield, and Red Cliff. Other routes are of a more modified-fixed nature, one making three trips every Monday and Thursday between Mellen and Ashland, and one making a single round trip every Friday between Iron River and Ashland. All of these BART routes connect to other services in Washburn, Ashland, and Mellen. BART's performance data can be seen in Figure 8.


Tainter Lake
Lake Menomin
Sheltered Workshop
Public Facilities and Social Service Agencies
Major Commercial Areas
Medical Facilities
Major Recreation Areas
Group Homes, Assisted Living, etc.
Schools
UW - Stout
Major Roads
Local Roads
Surface Water
City of Menomonie Boundary
0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles
July 9, 2012
West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Demand response rural services

Specialized transportation for the elderly and persons with disabilities is currently operated by volunteer drivers in Dunn County. This is usually the most cost effective means of meeting many travel needs, especially for the elderly and ambulatory disabled persons, and can be a very effective component of a rural transportation system. It can be challenging to build and maintain an adequate pool of drivers, and the service is most often limited to those riders who can get in and out of the vehicle unassisted. As volunteer programs normally involve the use of drivers' personal vehicles, passengers with wheelchairs must be able to transfer from their chair to the vehicle under their own power.

A similar system can be offered using accessible vehicles, usually with paid drivers, through a for-profit or non-profit entity, typically at about $20 to $25 per trip. An example of this type of service is nearby, in Eau Claire County. In Eau Claire County, a private, for-profit company provides transportation services to elderly and disabled persons with lift-equipped vans. The service is coordinated with the City of Eau Claire's ADA paratransit service, in that the services are contracted jointly and administered by Eau Claire Transit. This allows for the County's 85.21 funds to leverage federal transit funding, a win-win for the City and the County.

Door County, as previously discussed, operates demand response shared ride taxi service for the general public within zones around the more populous areas of the County, and providing a link to their fixed routes. All of the vehicles used in Door County's transit system are accessible. This relatively high level of service for a rural area and can be fairly expensive, but in the case of Door County, the rural land area is just over half that of Dunn County and the rural population density is significantly higher in Door County. Also, two major highways provide access to most of Door County's rural communities and populations, as opposed to Dunn County where trips are long and indirect between more remote rural communities. The result of the lower density and larger area is much longer and less efficient trips, therefore requiring three to four times as many vehicles to provide an equivalent level of service.

Recommendations

This section will present several transit services and make capital needs recommendations, and measure them against the goals presented earlier in this report. Cost estimates will be included to assist in the selection and implementation of services over the next several years. The costs stated are rough, based on general cost estimates per hour or trip, as appropriate to the transit mode. The alternatives will be categorized as either urban or rural services, and include fixed route and demand response alternatives, as deemed appropriate.

Urban Services

The layout of the City of Menomonie on the banks of Lake Menomin leaves us with a few fairly obvious route corridors: to the south, to the north long STH 25, and to the east along STH 12 to an area with a number of government service, health-related, and commercial land uses. Starting from a point in the downtown area (to be discussed more later), a radial pulse system of routes, with regularly timed arrivals and departures to facilitate transfers, can provide easy access to most of the urban area. While large looped routes can result in long circuitous rides, the use of smaller loops can provide for boarding and alighting options without walking distances that are too excessive, while still providing important access to residential neighborhoods with a smaller number of routes. The following recommendations are for three fixed routes. Their ability to be run in either, half hour or hourly headways, the time between buses on a route, is estimated. The routes will undoubtedly require some tweaking to make them run effectively within a regularly timed system. It is critical that buses are able, with only occasional exceptions, such as unusual traffic delays, to keep to their schedule, so that riders will easily know when the bus will be arriving at their stop (e.g. at six minutes past every hour), and so that transfers between routes can occur in a nearly seamless manner. The routes, as recommended, my require some adjustments to adjust timing or to better serve particular sites, but they must always run on regular intervals, either half hour or hour headways, and must always meet at the transfer facility to allow all passengers the opportunity to make a connection.

Service hours on all three routes are recommended to be approximately 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with reduced service on Saturdays. It is important that the buses are running early enough to bring passengers from all over Menomonie to the transfer center in time to catch the commuter bus, described later in the Rural Services section. Discussion has occurred relative to service for night classes at UW-Stout, as late as 9:30 p.m. This study would recommend not implementing that service during the initial route implementation. Consideration of longer service hours can be undertaken after the core service is established, when the system has a better idea of its capacity to add service.

South Route Recommendation

A southern route is currently serving the UW-Stout campus, Menomonie High School, and some residential areas with significant student and other low-income population. With some modification, the route could reach south to the trailer park just south of the city limits, off of STH 25. Low-income residential areas in the southern part of the area are served. Off campus student housing is typically mixed in these low-income residential areas, with apartments and houses for rent. The route provides a link between student housing areas, both off campus and north campus dormitories, and the main campus. The south route is shown on Figure 10.

North Route Recommendation

A route to serve a corridor from a downtown transfer station to the commercial/office development north of I-94, as well as the North Broadway corridor commercial strip and a residential area in between, resulted in the proposal shown in Figure 11. This alignment allows for students to either, walk from the main campus or transfer from another route, to access commercial and entertainment areas along the popular Broadway corridor. It also provides access to retail and office employment in the corridor, as well as to Goodwill, ARC's offices, and swings through an older residential area in the northern part of the City. Consideration was given to serving the trailer parks north of Cedar Falls Road, however, the added distance would make it nearly impossible to keep on a ½ hour cycle to facilitate transfers to other routes.

East Route Recommendation

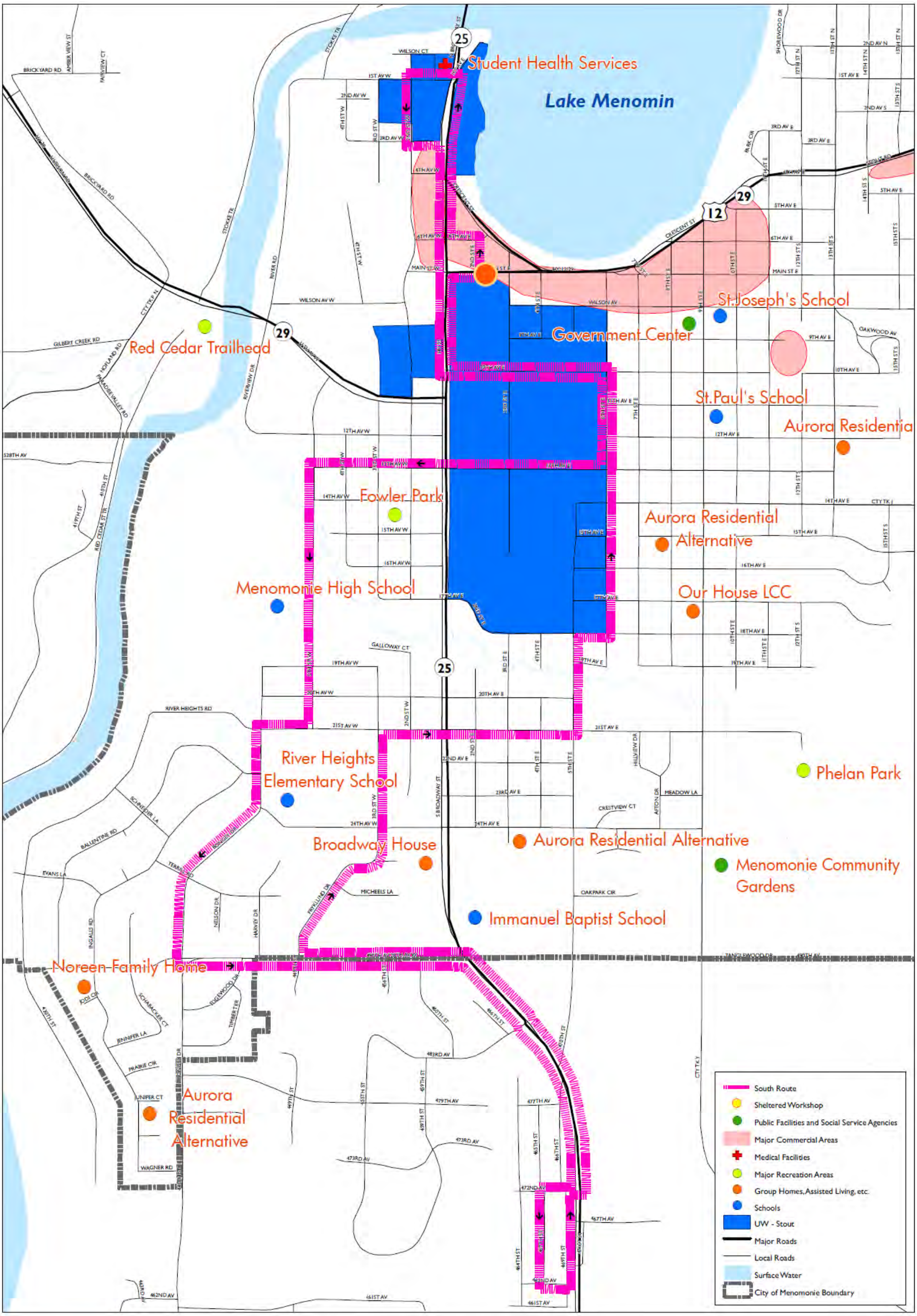
The east side of Menomonie has a number of key destinations, as previously noted in Figure 12. Some difficulty arises due to a lower density of much of the development that may warrant bus service. While a half hour route should be able to serve the residential area to the southeast of downtown, as well as Government Center and several schools, while reaching out to serve the Job Center, CVTC, the County Health Care Center, Red Cedar Medical Center, etc., the industrial park is a bit too distant and very low density, making it difficult to serve as a part of this route. A better option may be to combine service to Indianhead with a rural route connecting Menomonie and Eau Claire, to be discussed later in this chapter.

The three recommended routes are shown together on Figure 13. Annual operating costs for the three fixed routes, assuming half-hour headways (one bus running each route) are shown below, in Figure 14. Three similar systems in the State are shown for comparison. The other systems have a higher number of revenue hours in a year, mainly due to the fact that they are funning a larger number of buses on more routes than proposed for the Menomonie area. These figures are a rough estimate of the annual cost of operating the three recommended routes and will require more detailed computations for grant application purposes.

Figure 14
Estimated Fixed Route Operating Expenses

Fixed Route Services	Operating Expenses	Revenue Hours/Year	Cost/Revenue Hour
Manitowoc	$2,034,792	24,646	$82.56
Stevens Point	$1,309,104	20,281	$64.55
Fond du Lac	$1,077,597	30,932	$34.84
Averages	$4,421,493	75,859	$58.29
Dunn County Fixed Route Estimates	**$632,500**	**11,500**	**$55.00**

Source: National Transit Database, and DCTC.



West Central Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission

Figure 10
Recommended South Route

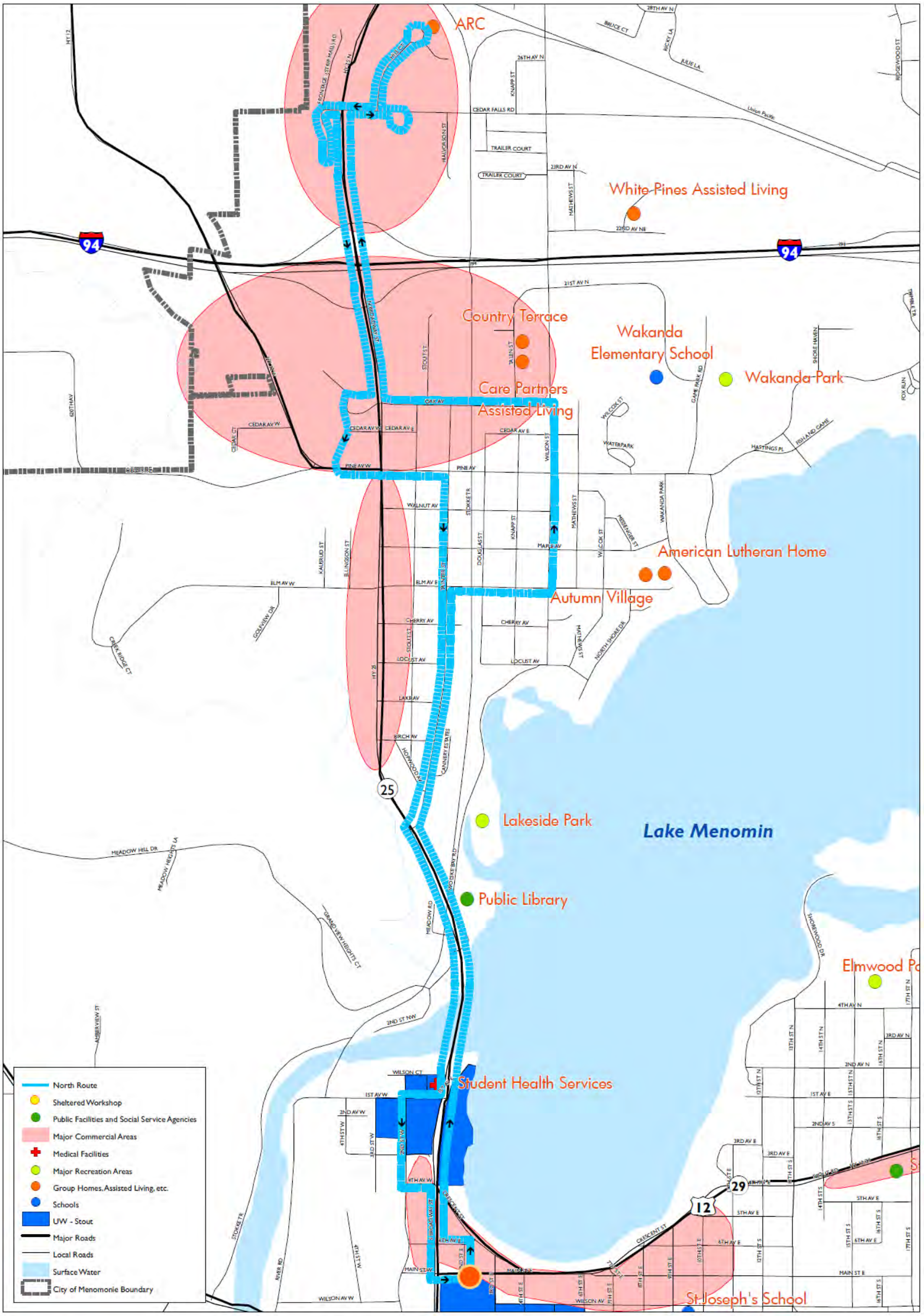


Figure 11
Recommended North Route

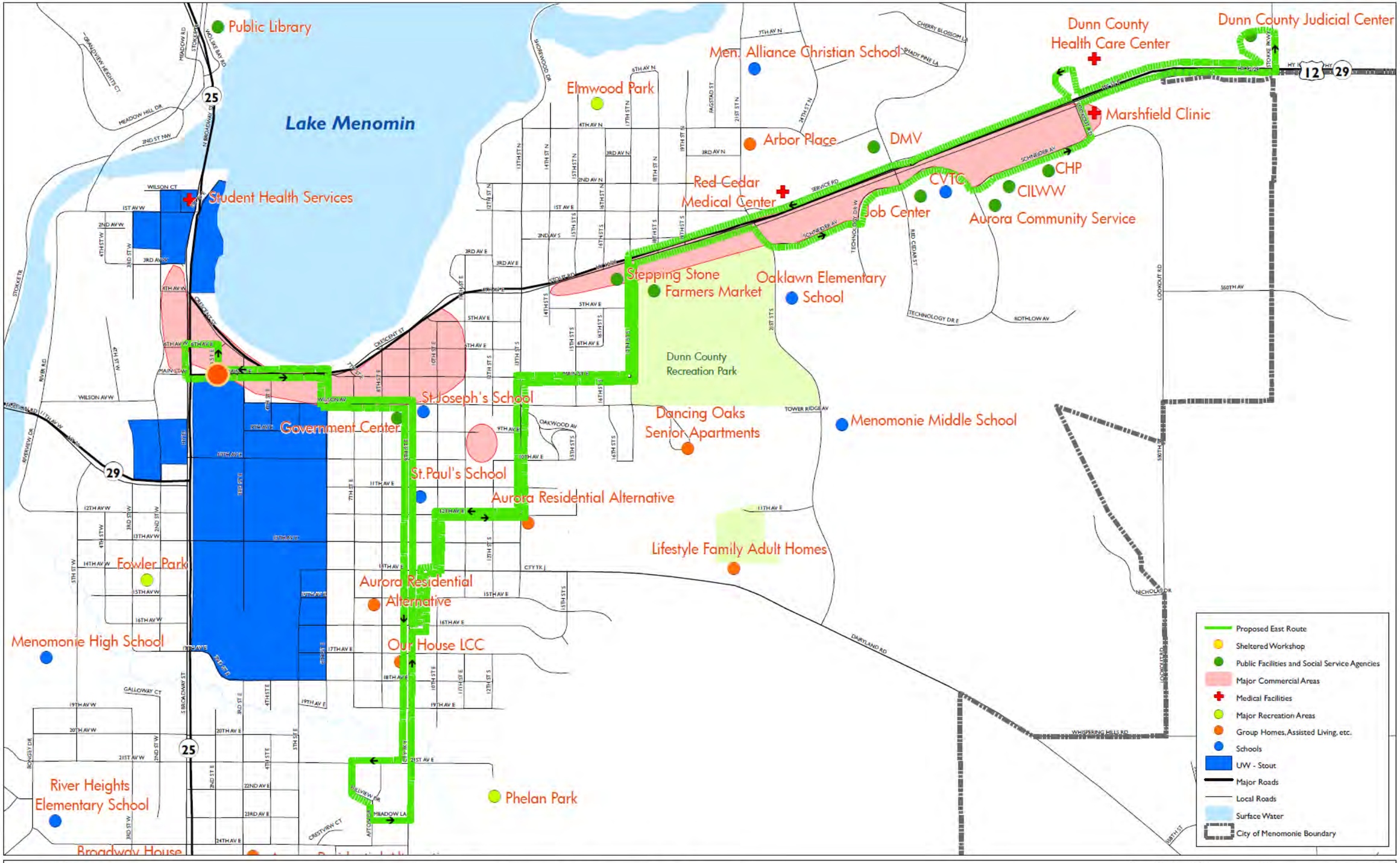
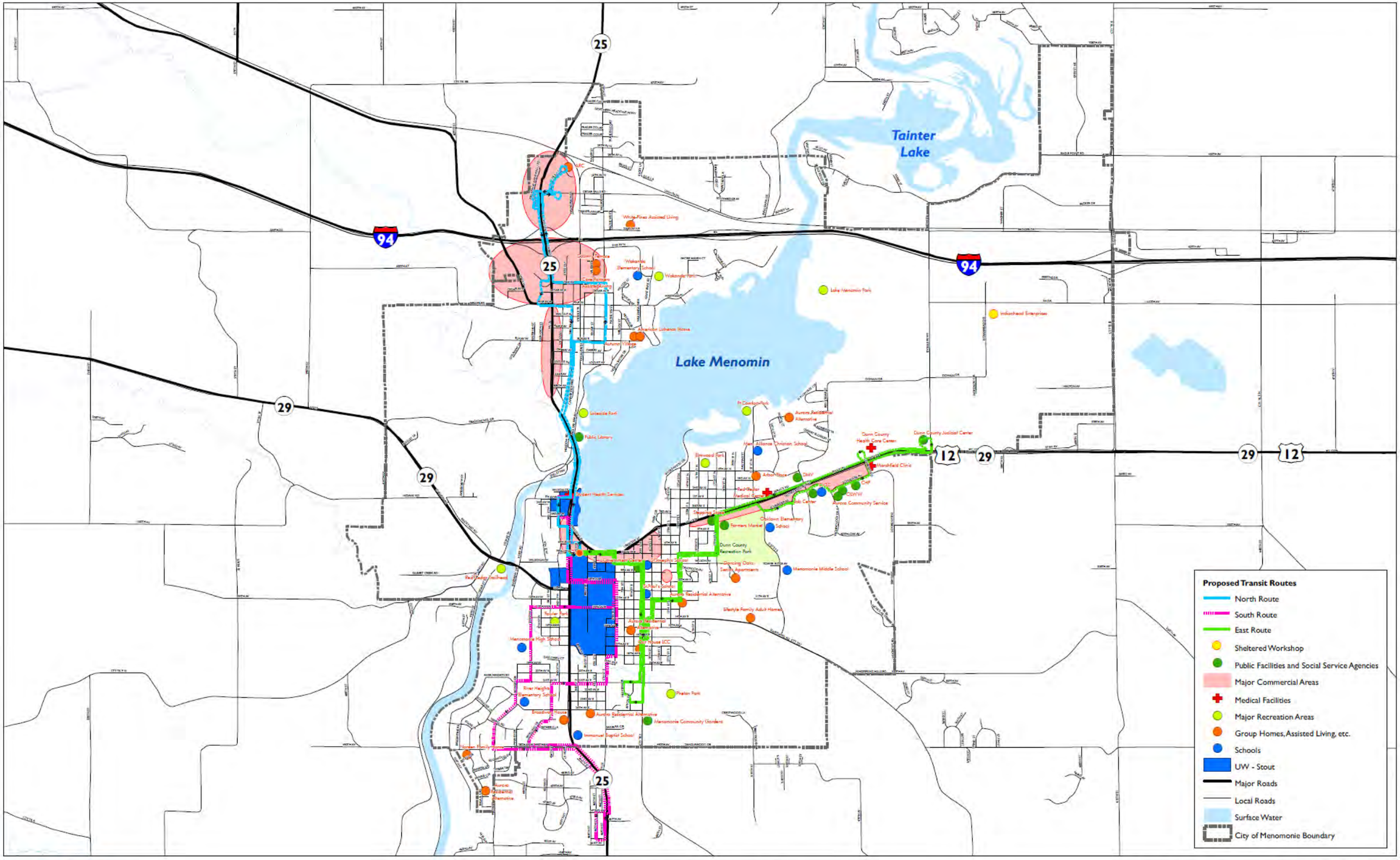


Figure 12
Recommended East Route



West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Figure 13
Recommended Fixed Route System

Complementary Paratransit Services

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires a complementary paratransit service for those persons who are unable to use the fixed route bus system due to a disability. Some of the key service minimums required by ADA include:

- Service to area that is within ¾ mile of a fixed route;
- curb-to-curb service;
- same service hours and days as the fixed route service;
- fares no more than twice the full adult fare on the fixed route;
- no more than a 24-hour requirement for trip reservations;
- free fare for an attendant;

It is recommended that DCTC provide paratransit services with the use of smaller accessible vehicles. In the short term, it may be necessary to use the 'door-stop' bus or other available buses until the most appropriate vehicles can be procured. Figure 15 shows rough ridership and cost estimates for this service based on the experiences of other similar systems.

Figure 15
Wisconsin Peer Paratransit Comparisons

ADA Paratransit Services	Fond du Lac	Manitowoc	Stevens Point	Total/ Average	DCTC - Menomonie ADA Estimates
Service Area Population	49,470	47,000	26,900	41,123	**17,000**
ADA Certified	910	548	375	611	**249**
Percent of Pop. Certified	1.84%	1.17%	1.39%	1.47%	1.47%
ADA Rides	14,408	10,624	9,314	11,449	**4,672**
ADA Rides per ADA Person	16.00	19.39	24.84	18.74	18.74
ADA Rides per 1,000 Pop.	291	226	346	278	275
Cost/Ride	$13.80	$18.29	$19.28	$17.12	**$18.17**
Annual Cost	$198,830	$194,313	$179,574	$196,039	**$84,872**

Note: Peer data is 2011 data. DCTC cost data is inflated to 2013 dollars.

Rural Services

Menomonie-Eau Claire Commuter Route

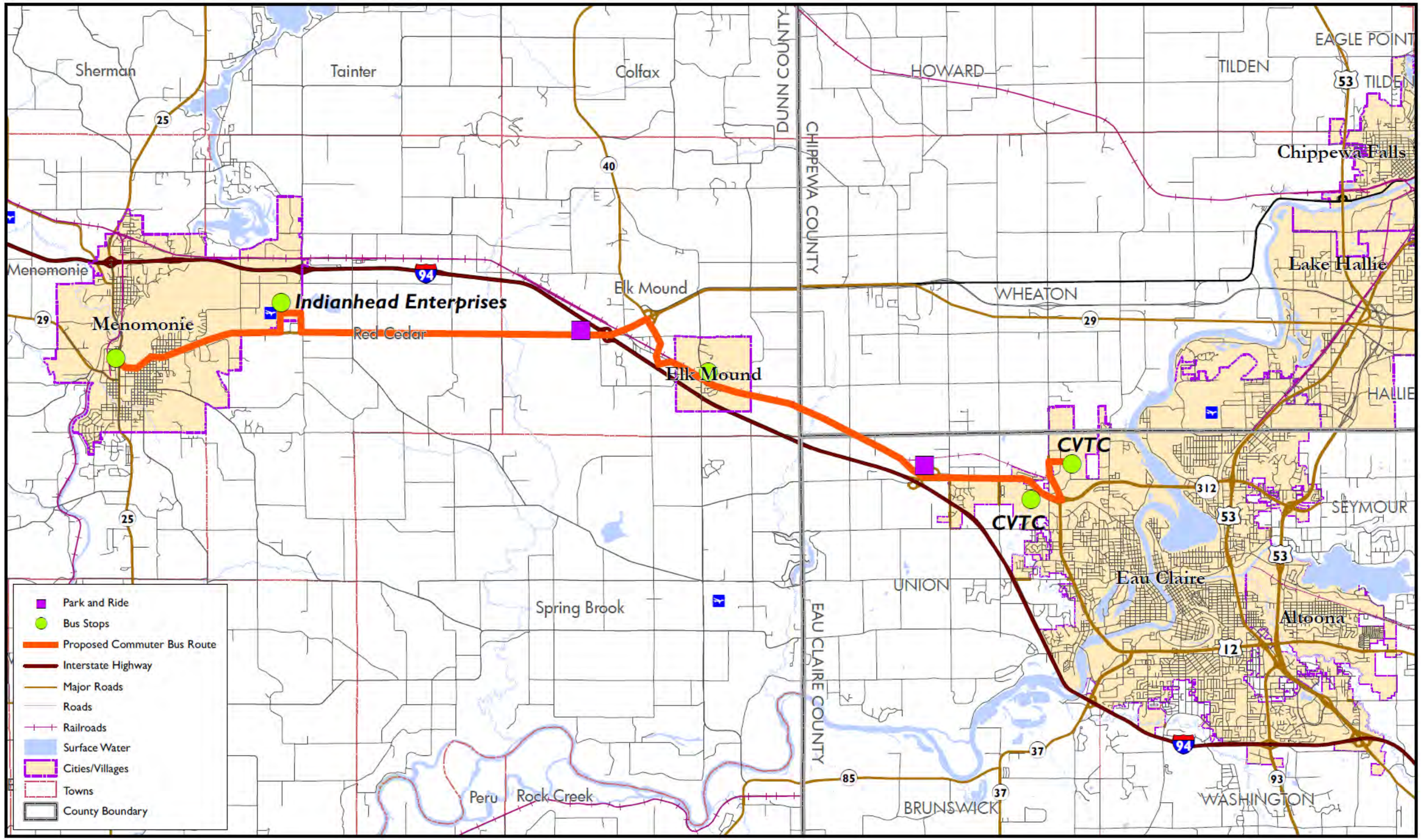
One rural, or more accurately, intercity travel need that was included in this plan's goals, is for trips between Menomonie and Eau Claire. The need for intercity transit services has been expressed in numerous venues across west central Wisconsin, particularly in the Interstate 94 corridor. It is anticipated that, between commuters to and from both communities' University of Wisconsin campuses and work commuters, there should be enough demand for service to be provided in coordination with Eau Claire Transit (ECT). Early contacts with ECT have yielded positive interest with the coordinated effort.

A Menomonie-Eau Claire service is recommended to include three trips each way, Monday through Friday, leaving from Menomonie at approximately 7:15 a.m., 11:15 a.m., and 4:15 p.m., with scheduled stops at Indianhead Enterprises, Inc., the park and ride lot at the interchange of STH 29 and Interstate 94 (Dunn County), downtown Elk Mound, the park and ride lot near STH 312 and USH 12 intersection (Eau Claire County) and the CVTC Gateway Campus. It is estimated that the travel time would be approximately 35-40 minutes, leaving a few minutes for transfers with the ECT bus to the UW-EC campus and downtown Eau Claire. There may be other locations that would better service as the connection between the two systems. The CVTC Gateway campus is used here, as it is a location that would not impede too far into the ECT service area, and would provide a reasonable run time for the route. Exact route schedules and the actual location for the Eau Claire terminus would need to be coordinated with ECT. The final terminus should be located at a strong destination for riders of the service, thereby minimizing the need for transfers. The location should also have available park and ride space for riders that drive to catch the commuter bus.

Of secondary importance, the commuter route could also be an effective way to serve Indianhead Enterprises for at least two of their three arrival and dismissal times, at approximately 7:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. While their afternoon dismissal time is somewhat earlier that accommodated here, the 4:15 timing is expected to better serve university students and work commuters between the two cities. These and other details will need to be worked out in discussions between DCTC and ECT. The proposed route is shown in Figure _.

As a commuter route, the Menomonie-Eau Claire route would need to be provided with an accessible vehicle, but would not require the complementary the paratransit services that are required in the urban service area. Other amenities, such as the availability of wireless internet service and reading lights, would be appropriate for this type of service and help to encourage ridership.

Fares for this type of commuter service are typically more than for urban bus routes, often in the range of $2.50 to $5.00, depending upon the distance the route covers. Coordination with the partnering transit system, in terms of seamless and free transfers, is also recommended. Monthly passes are a good alternative for this service, providing a more cost effective option for frequent riders. Employers may decide to encourage the use of the service, perhaps by purchasing passes. Employers may see the service as a solution to parking issues, an improvement in employee reliability. The purchase of passes can also provide the employer with a federal tax deduction.



West Central Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission

Figure 16:
Proposed Commuter Bus Route
between Menomonie and Eau Claire

Rural Shared-Ride Services

One of the goals established for this plan was to provide services to elderly and disabled populations in the rural areas. While there are currently a couple of volunteer driver programs in the county, there is a desire to provide a more. Countywide on-demand shared ride taxi, for those that are elderly and/or disabled, may be too much to take on all at once. The scattered populations in the rural areas would require several vehicles and drivers to deal with widely divergent trips.

It is recommended that services could begin with shared ride services, outside of the fixed route service area, in a different quadrant of the county each of four days in the week, Monday through Thursday. It is anticipated that most of the trips would have destinations in Menomonie, though it is possible that trips could, on the northwest quadrant day, occur between Boyceville and Downsville, for instance. The return trip for that passenger, from Downsville to Boyceville would, of course, need to be eligible that day, as well. The service could require 24-, or 48-hour advance scheduling. There may be some ability to cover trips in not schedule day quadrants, if time is available, or if the vehicle is going to be in an a particular area for a drop-off, but that will need to be determined as the operations become clearer. This service could be contracted out, or run in-house. If the service is contracted, consideration should be given to combining the contract with the ADA paratransit service in the fixed route service area, as this may result in a lower per trip cost.

If the rural shared-ride taxi service were to be operated in-house, there may be some potential for providing additional trips with the vehicle that is running the commuter trips between Menomonie and Eau Claire, for a couple of hours between its scheduled morning, midday, and late afternoon runs, in addition to the vehicle providing the rural service for that day. This is an option to help meet a higher demand, if needed, and to use vehicles and drivers more effectively.

The quadrant approach should be considered a place to start, with opportunities to refine services, or add service days if a particular area, or the entire County, presents a greater demand.

Major Capital Needs

Transit Center

It is recommended that the Dunn County Transit Commission establish a transfer center with good access to downtown and the UW-Stout campus. The transfer center will need space for two to three buses (or more, for future expansion allowance), preferably either on the same side of a street or around the corner from one another, so that passengers wishing to transfer from one route to another would not need to cross the street. The proximity of the downtown to the campus provides a perfect situation, high use destinations and a natural route convergence point all falling in the same spot. This will minimize the need for transfers, as well as make those transfers that are necessary very simple, efficient, and comfortable for riders.

While on-street parking in most downtowns holds a nearly sacred status, there are a few opportunities that may prove acceptable to downtown merchants. It is important to remember that the buses will bring shoppers to the downtown, and a transit center can provide opportunities for aesthetic improvements and increase activity in the downtown. Businesses such as coffee shops, dry cleaners, pharmacies, banks, and others can capitalize on the convenience of being near a transit hub.

Vehicles

There are some different headway (the length of time between buses on a route) options that are possible for the fixed route service, affecting the number of buses needed to provide the service. If the east and north routes are run on hourly headways, two accessible vehicles are required to run the three recommended routes. If half hour headways are desired on all routes, three vehicles would be required. This study recommends hourly headways on the east and north routes until three new accessible buses have been purchased, in 2014, as shown in Figure 16.

It is important to remember that it commonly takes about 18 months from the time of order, for a bus to be delivered and ready for service. For example, a bus that is funded and ordered midyear 2013 would not available for service until late 2014 or early 2015. It is possible to temporarily fill the gap by purchasing used buses from other transit systems. Such used buses will be past their projected usable life of 12 years, and can have some maintenance issues, but it is an option to be considered if full implementation of the fixed route system is desired within a year or two.

All of the buses purchased should be low-floor, ramp equipped, and include bicycle racks on the front of the bus. Seating capacity will need to be considered in greater detail prior to order, however, very high peak ridership on the existing routes would indicate the need for fairly large transit buses. Communication systems should also be easily and quickly linked to emergency services, for the safety of passengers and drivers.

Figure 17
Proposed Vehicle Purchase Schedule

Anticipated Purchase Year	Recommended Replacement Vehicle Type	Approximate Seating Capacity (seated/wheelchair)	Minimum Useful Life (yrs.)	Estimated Unit Cost (in 2013 $)	Estimated Cost (in 2013 $)	Federal Share (80%)	Local Share (20%)
2013	1 - 30-40' Heavy Duty Bus*	30/2	12	$375,000	$375,000	$300,000	$75,000
2014	2 - 30-40' Heavy Duty Bus*	30/2	12	375,000	750,000	600,000	150,000
2015	2 - Accessible Medium Bus	10/2	5	70,000	140,000	112,000	28,000
2016	2 - Accessible Medium Bus	10/2	5	70,000	140,000	112,000	28,000
2017	1 - Accessible Medium Bus	10/2	5	70,000	70,000	56,000	14,000
2018	1 - 30-40' Heavy Duty Bus*	30/2	12	375,000	375,000	300,000	75,000
6-Year Total					**$1,850,000**	**$1,480,000**	**$370,000**

* - These vehicles are available in an electric hybrid version for a total cost of approximately $500,000 - $600,000.

Other Facilities

Maintenance Facility

In order to maintain the reliable system that is critical to building and maintaining ridership, buses need to be kept clean and in good working order. Shop facilities and a mechanic that is available and able to do routine maintenance, as well as emergency repairs on the fleet, as a high priority job, are necessary to build trust of the riding public. These facilities and personnel can be contracted through another county department or the private sector, but must be able to respond quickly to fleet needs. Ideally, an in-house mechanic and shop would allow for a good level of expertise and knowledge of the bus fleet and be able to maintain the priority that a transit system needs to succeed. The transit commission will need to address this important issue soon, as the bus storage facility that is to be constructed soon, would be the most logical place to house a maintenance facility. There have already been some instances of multiple

buses in need of repairs and out of service, in one case causing a breach in service. If a maintenance facility is not in the system's future, DCTC may need to consider a contracted relationship with the highway department or a private company qualified in bus mechanics. Another option would be a combination using the highway department for routine maintenance and minor mechanical problems, and a private mechanic for more major repairs or as backup when the highway department is too busy. It is recommended that this issue is addressed by the transit commission, as soon as possible, so that the active fleet can be on the road and the system can continue to be seen as safe and reliable.

Stops and Shelters

With cold winter weather, and summer sun, bus shelters should be located at major pick-up locations, and at locations that typically serve more elderly or disabled riders. Many of these locations are obvious and some are already programmed for installation, but boarding counts and driver input will undoubtedly suggest locations in need of shelters, as the system develops and grows. Shelters should be scaled to address the needs of the particular location, and need to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The cost of a basic shelter ranges from $5,000 to $10,000, depending upon size and model type.

Bus stop signs are useful in identifying safe locations for passenger boarding and alighting, as well as making people aware that the system exists. Once routes are comfortably established and there is an identifiable brand in place, route signs, with route and system identification, are recommended. It is still possible for drivers to stop at other safe locations, if a designated stop is not convenient for a passenger. Some systems allow passengers to flag down a bus at any intersection, but driver discretion is important to ensure the safety of all riders, as well as drivers.

Marketing and Promotional Needs

The success of each of the elements proposed for the Dunn County transit system for will need to be promoted to build awareness of the services and to let the public know that services are safe and reliable. Development of a brand and a marketing program are important, and can be expensive. It is recommended that university classes, supervised student internships, and university organizations be considered as appropriate. These opportunities can be very valuable in building experience for the resumes of students nearing graduation and about to enter the work force.

An area of particularly good fit for students is in the setting up of applications for online route information, and the distribution of electronic service announcements or alerts to students and other technology savvy community members. Upper level marketing class or independent study student may find that the development of a marketing plan for DCTC could be a beneficial and appealing project. Communication with the student(s), organization, or professor is very critical to a useful and applicable outcome for the transit system. This can involve significant effort for DCTC staff, but the experience can be mutually beneficial.

While electronic versions of route maps and trip information are rapidly becoming the chosen source for many transit riders, there is still a place for hardcopy route maps and schedules. The cost of their development and printing can be reduced through sponsorships by local businesses, health organizations, local fraternal organizations, or the area chamber of commerce, usually in exchange for advertising on the final product. Local government agencies with GIS capabilities, perhaps Regional Planning Commission or Dunn County, may have the capability to design and print route maps at a reasonable cost.

The statewide organization of transit operators, Wisconsin Urban and Rural Transit Association (WURTA), can be a resource for of marketing materials developed through a coordinated effort. Past statewide efforts have produced radio and television advertisements that can be easily customized for each individual system.

The different services may require different marketing approaches. It is critical to consider the audience for each of the services and what is most important to that rider group. Rural services marketing might be more effectively marketed through partnerships with ADRC, ARC, nutrition centers, etc. However, not all elderly or individuals with disabilities have direct contact with these agencies, but often they are aware of other avenues for marketing to the general elderly or disabled populations. The commuter service, on the other hand, might best be marketed though universities, technical colleges, and major employers in Menomonie and Eau Claire.

In summary, it is strongly recommended that partnerships be sought out, whenever appropriate, in order to keep costs to a minimum. It is, however, very important to be sure that the partnering entities have the appropriate expertise for the project and that there is clear and ongoing communication to insure that the final product meets the DCTC's needs.

Implementation and Evaluation

Figure 17 shows a suggested implementation schedule for the procurement of buses and other capital purchases, and for the establishment of services. The length of time required for the procurement of buses, approximately 18 months, delays the implementation of some new routes. Some considerations to facilitate earlier implementation of service recommendations include the purchase of used buses from other transit providers, until new buses can be procured, or determine if there is a means of using existing vehicles to provide as much of the service as possible.

Of course, budget considerations will need to be made each year, often the determining force in the speed of implementation. While it is possible to phase in routes, one or two at a time, or to implement some routes with longer headways until new buses are available, the system will not be able to function conveniently and efficiently for riders until all the routes are in place and all routes meet at the transfer station to make transfers nearly seamless. Unavailable or inconvenient connections will discourage ridership and lower the performance level of the entire system. Therefore, the most expeditious implementation schedule possible is recommended.

Figure 18
Implementation Schedule

Project	Date	Funding Source	Est. Total Cost	Est. Local Share	Notes
Consideration of bus maintenance needs	1/13				
Bus Purchase (1)	2013	FTA-Sec. 5311 or 5339	$375,000	$75,000	
Establish Transfer Center	2013				
Shelter purchase (6-10)	6/13	Local	30,000-100,000	30,000-100,000	based on determined need
Start 3-Route system in Menomonie	8/13				hourly headways on 2 rts.
Start ADA paratransit service in Menomonie	8/13	FTA-Sec. 5311	90,000	18,000	
Bus Purchase (2)	2014	FTA-Sec. 5311 or 5339	800,000	160,000	
Start Menomonie-E.C. Commuter Route	8/13	FTA-Sec. 5311			dep. on available vehicle
Paratransit vehicle purchase (2)	2015		140,000	28,000	
Increase service to 1/2 hr. on 3 routes	8/15	FTA-Sec. 5311			dep. on available vehicle
Issue RFP for rural E&D shared-ride service	7/15				consider combining with urban ADA service
Start rural E & D shared-ride taxi service	1/16	FTA-Sec. 5311			
Paratransit vehicle purchase (2)	2016		140,000	28,000	
Paratransit vehicle purchase (1)	2017		70,000	14,000	
Shelter purchase (4-6)	2017		20,000-60,000	4,000-12,000	based on determined need
Bus Purchase (1)	2018		375,000	$75,000	

Future System Evaluation

It is recommended that the DCTC take several different approaches to evaluating the services provided and the operation of the system. Several reporting requirements are required by granting agencies, while others are recommended, but not strictly required. Evaluation of the system provides valuable information that may me missed in regular day to day operations. Evaluation also presents opportunities to improve services, to be sure they are functioning as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Every five years, a transit development plan (TDP) should be developed to include a service analysis, recommendations for service improvements, as well as addressing any other issues

that the system might be facing, such as fare analysis or changing funding issues. While a TDP is no longer an FTA requirement, they are encouraged by FTA and WisDOT.

It is recommended that the system continue to submit performance data to WisDOT, as required, on an annual basis. Further, it is important to consider input from riders and local interests. These comments may be received through unsolicited comment, or through solicited comment in rider or community surveys. Surveys are most commonly conducted during TDP development, however, in the case of a new system, comment may be sought out on a shorter term to determine the public's opinions and input. Surveys are best professionally developed and conducted, to ensure valid response.

Changes to routes, service, or schedules resulting from either comment or system review should almost never be done immediately, unless they are of an emergency nature or do not directly affect passengers. If possible, significant route, service, and schedule changes should not be implemented more often than once a year, preferably during the summer months, prior to the fall increase in ridership. Frequent and seemingly haphazard changes can make the system appear unreliable and potentially lead to declining ridership.

Plan Evaluation

For the purposes of reviewing the effectiveness of this plan, it is helpful to look back at the goals and objectives that were set earlier in the planning process. Figure 18 lists all of the goals and objectives from the "Goals and Objectives" section of this document and notes which of the major recommendations in this plan meet each of them. It is important to review the plans goals and objectives periodically, especially prior to implementing any changes to the system, so that actions are going in the right direction for the community. From time to time, goals may change. Funding levels, changes in the local environment, or other situations not anticipated at the time of this plan's development, may prompt changes in the system's future development. For all of these reasons, it is recommended that the plan be reviewed periodically, probably annually, and updated approximately every five years.

Figure 19
Comparison of Recommendations to Goals and Objectives

Goals and Objectives	Recommendations											
	Urban bus routes	ADA paratransit service - urban	Rural shared-ride taxi	Menn.- E.C. commuter service	Vehicle purchase	Transfer Station	Bus Stops and Shelters	Maintence facility	Evaluation	Marketing Plan and Brand	Route and schedule guides	Partner with other local entities
Goal #1: To meet the needs of transit dependent and choice riders throughout Dunn County.												
Objectives:												
1. Provide access for protected populations in the rural areas of Dunn County to services and employment.	√	√	√	√								
2. Provide services for UW-S students, faculty, and staff to campus facilities, student housing areas, health care, and local businesses.	√	√										
3. Make connections to major trip destinations within and near Menomonie.	√	√	√	√								
4. Make all stops accessible and meet all other relevant ADA requirements.	√											
5. Encourage the installation of sidewalks throughout fixed route service area.	√											
6. Continue to examine potential for connecting with neighboring communities, especially Eau Claire.				√								
Goal #2: To operate a safe and efficient transit system												
Objectives:												
1. Provide service types and levels that are appropriate to the population density and ridership demand.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√					
2. Review service efficiency annually, and work to meet WisDOT and/or FTA performance measures									√			
3. Make designated bus stops safe and identifiable.						√	√					
4. Coordinate communication and response needs with local emergency services agencies.					√							
Goal #3: To encourage use of the system												
Objectives:												
1. Market the system, as appropriate, throughout the County.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√			√	√	√
2. Develop and distribute paper route maps/schedules.										√	√	√
3. Pursue web-based applications, such as scheduling and/or real-time route information.										√	√	√
4. Continue to coordinate with the University to develop appropriate services and information applications.										√	√	√
5. Include bike racks on buses.	√			√	√							
6. Consider the use of "transit ambassadors/travel trainers" to assist inexperienced riders.	√	√	√				√			√	√	√
7. Establish fare outlets for the purchase of passes.	√	√	√							√	√	
8. Develop a fair and competitive fare structure.	√	√	√	√					√			
9. Coordinate with City and County departments to address infrastructure needs and other service matters.						√	√	√		√	√	√
10. Coordinate with the GMACC, Main Street, Inc., and other agencies & orgs. for input and dissemination of system information										√	√	√
Goal #4: To operate and promote environmentally friendly practices												
Objectives:												
1. See "Goal #2: Encourage use of the system", above.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
2. Investigate sustainable practices and utilize as appropriate in transit facilities and vehicles.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	
3. Consider alternative-fuel vehicles when purchasing replacement or fleet expansion buses or service vehicles.					√							
Goal #5: To pursue funding and partnerships to meet system objectives												
Objectives:												
1. Continue to develop fare arrangements with UW-S, technical school, school district.										√	√	√
2. Work with local coalitions and legislators to pass RTA enabling legislation, and encourage local participation.												√
3. Work with WisDOT to access all appropriate funding sources for capital improvements and operations.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
4. Establish intercommunity partnerships for regional connections to neighboring transit systems.				√						√	√	√