

# Coulee Region Transportation Study

*Innovative Solutions for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

## Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL)



# Study team

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SEH Project Consultant

**Nate Day, AICP**

SEH Project Consultant



# Agenda

- ▶ Welcome & Introductions
- ▶ Planning and Environment Linkages Study Basics / Process
- ▶ Data on Existing Conditions
- ▶ Wrap up and Questions



# Transportation Touches the Lives of Nearly Everyone Everyday.

- ▶ State and Federal Highways
- ▶ County City and Local Roads
- ▶ Transit Systems
- ▶ Airports
- ▶ Railroads
- ▶ Harbors
- ▶ Bike Facilities
- ▶ Pedestrian Facilities



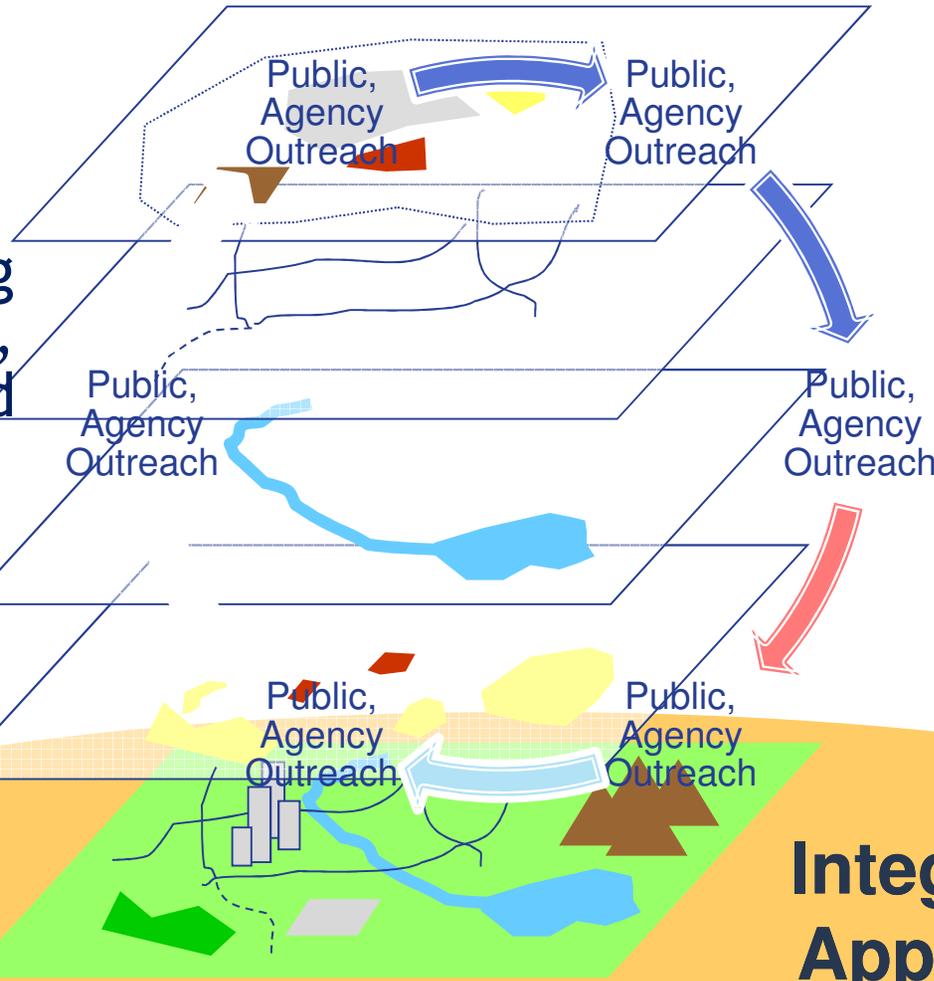
# What is Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL)?

- ▶ A *COLLABORATIVE* approach to transportation decision making that links planning to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by:
  - Considering the area's long-term environmental, community and economic goals
  - Engaging a broad spectrum of agencies and community stakeholders
  - Allowing the resulting planning data, analysis, products and decisions to be used in NEPA
- ▶ A *PROGRAM* that promotes tools and resources focused on shortening project delivery time
  - FHWA “Every Day Counts” initiative
  - Limits duplication of efforts during NEPA



# PEL is integrated planning

Considers transportation role in meeting environmental, community and economic goals, emphasizes improving an area's quality of life



- Land Use System
- Transportation System
- Water Resources System
- Other Natural, Cultural Resource Systems

**Integrated Approach**



# Integrating transportation planning w/ NEPA Is a new way of doing business

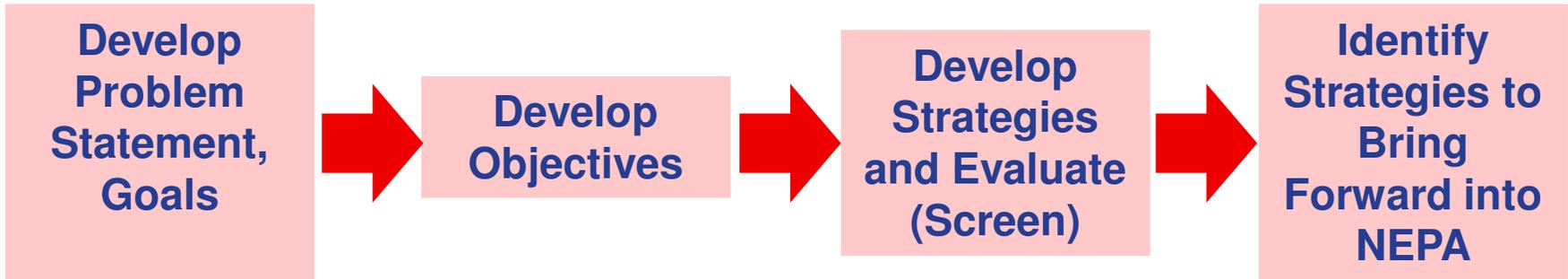
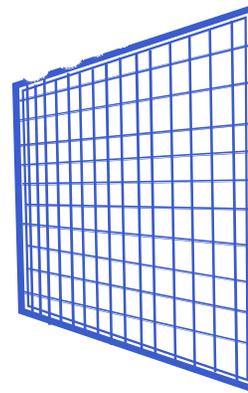
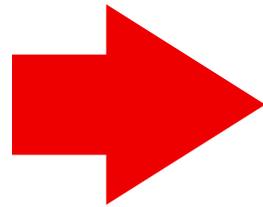
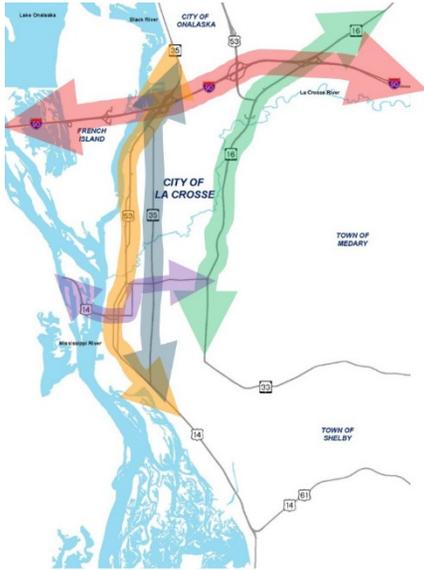
## Planning Methods...

## PEL Process...

A focus on transportation issues and outcomes	Understanding how transportation outcomes help meet community goals and enhance the area's quality of life
Limited public, municipal and agency involvement	Collaborative planning with extensive outreach
Minimal consideration of human and natural environment	Environmental analysis and preliminary mitigation are integral to the process
Transportation planning separated from land use, long range community planning	Planning transportation and land use concurrently and iteratively to strive for best possible outcomes
Analysis and decisions in report on a shelf	Analysis and decisions form the starting point for the NEPA study



# Planning & Environment Linkages (PEL)



# Planning & Environment Linkages (PEL)

- ▶ Engages broad range of stakeholders to plan for area's environmental, community, and economic future in light of transportation problems and needs
- ▶ Improves quality of results
  - Early involvement in the process
  - Increases stakeholder understanding of outcomes



# Coulee Region Planned Public Involvement

- ▶ Community Advisory Group (CAG)
- ▶ Technical Advisory Group (TAG)
- ▶ La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC)
- ▶ Local Officials Meetings
- ▶ Public Involvement Meetings/Open Houses
- ▶ Neighborhood Groups
- ▶ Business Groups
- ▶ Special Interest Groups
- ▶ Any time, any place



# Background and history



- ▶ Past Studies
  - La Crosse North-South Transportation Corridor Study (1998)
  - Coulee Connections Study (2006)
  
- ▶ City of La Crosse Vision Study (2015)
  
- ▶ Coulee Region Transportation Study (2015)
  - Transportation Projects Commission
  - Community Support



# Benefits of PEL for the Coulee Region



- ▶ Comprehensive study of the entire area
- ▶ Extensive outreach and coordination
- ▶ Opportunity to modify the original purpose and need
- ▶ Opportunity to propose new alternatives



# Benefits of PEL for the Coulee Region



- ▶ Opportunity to eliminate outdated and unworkable alternatives
- ▶ Aids in the selection of the appropriate type of environmental document
- ▶ Builds trust through a transparent process





# Coulee Region Transportation Study

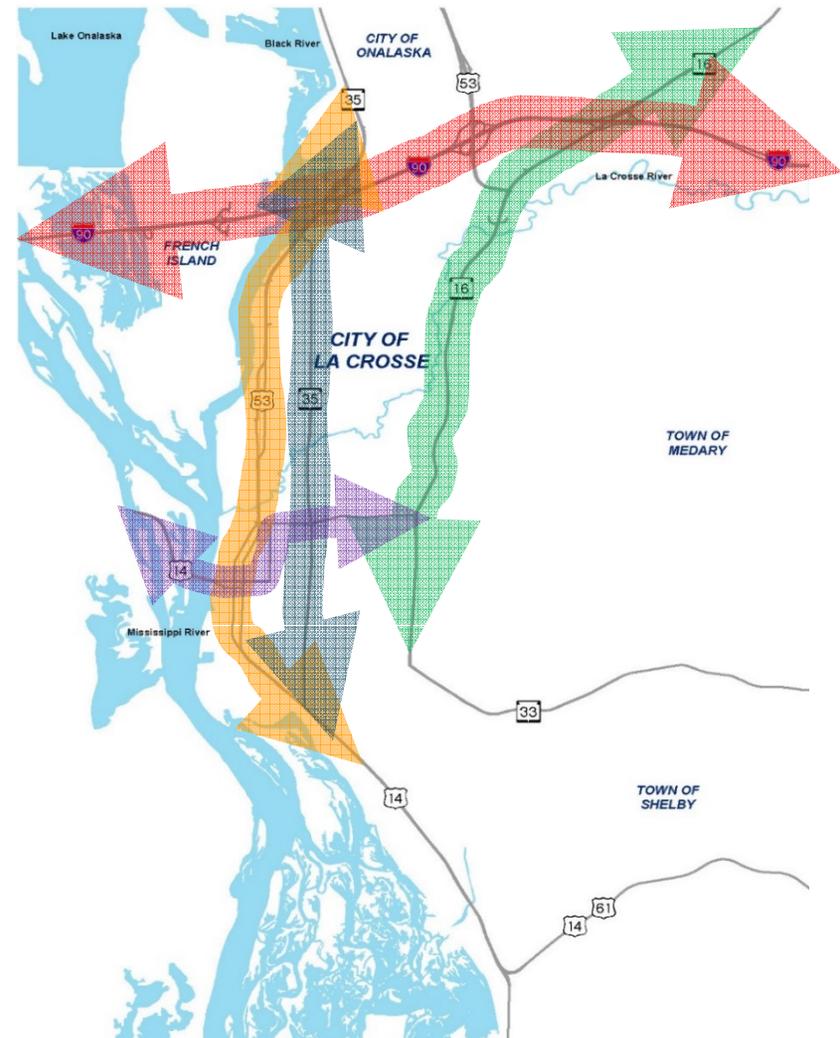
## Draft Goal

Improve vehicular and multi-modal travel and safety in a manner that accommodates economic development, incorporates community plans, contributes positively to the area's quality of life, and limits adverse environmental and social effects to the extent practical.



# Many strategies will be investigated

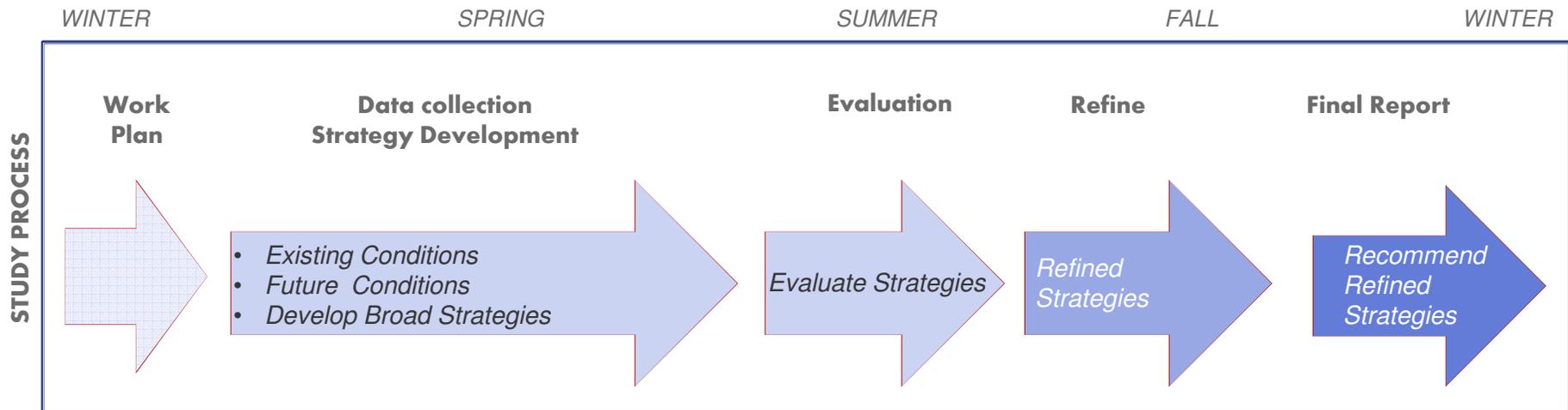
- ▶ Changes to existing roadways
- ▶ Multi-modal improvements
- ▶ Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) solutions
- ▶ New roadways
- ▶ No build options
- ▶ Other



# Study schedule



2015



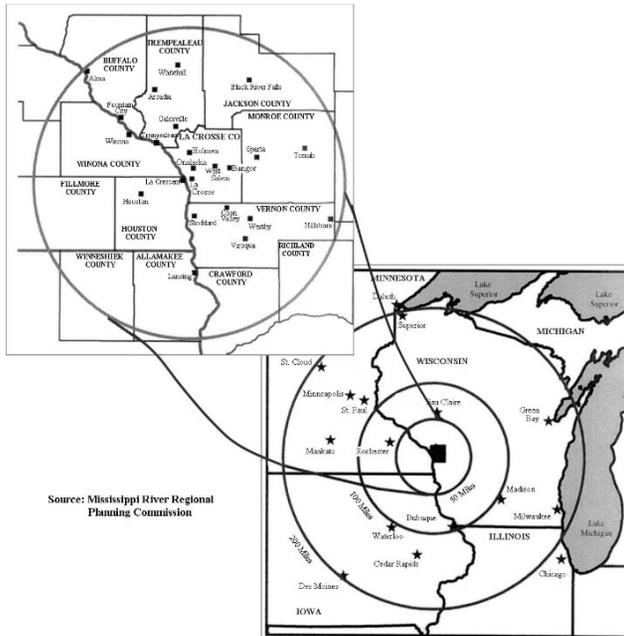
# Data collection and strategy development

## Existing Conditions



# Why transportation matters

- ▶ Connecting communities
- ▶ Connecting people and jobs
- ▶ Special events
- ▶ Economic activity/transport within the region
- ▶ Connection to other major cities/economic centers
  - Madison, Milwaukee, the Twin Cities, Mankato, Dubuque, Des Moines, and Chicago are all within 200 mi.

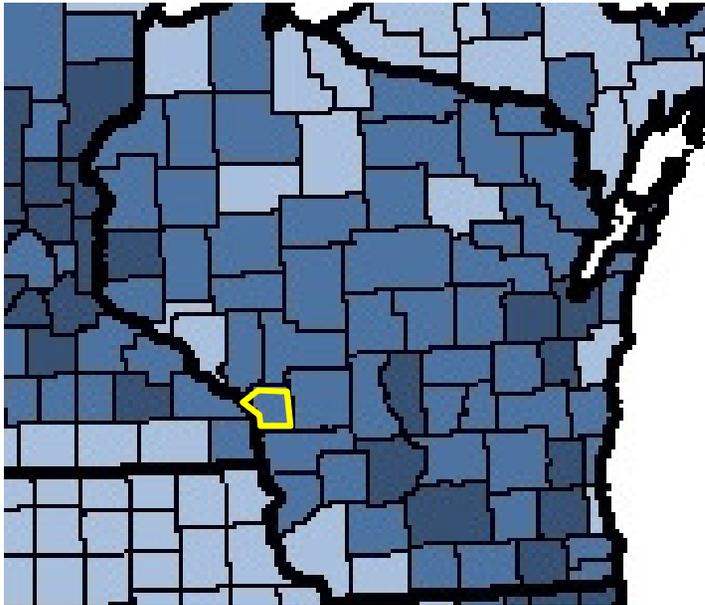


# What factors go into a transportation system?

- ▶ Population
- ▶ Jobs
- ▶ Traffic volume
- ▶ Crashes/Incidents
- ▶ Capacity/Travel times
- ▶ Bikes/Pedestrians
- ▶ Transit
- ▶ Freight
- ▶ Environmental resources



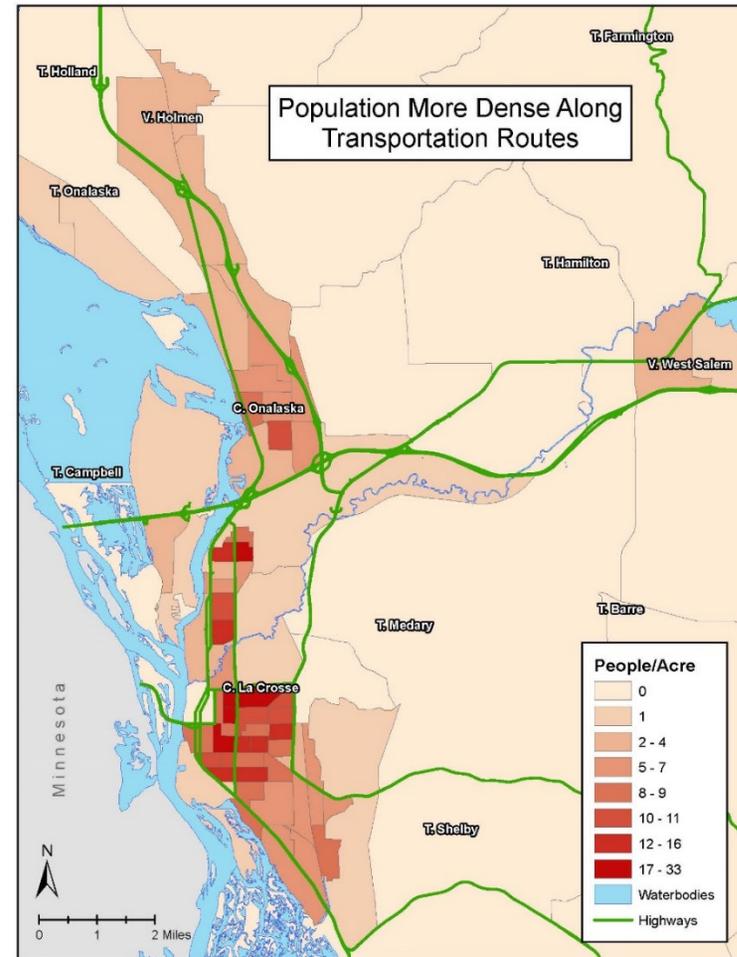
# Population growth and density



**1980 to 2010 Population Change**

- Population Decline
- Population Growth
- Rapid Population Growth

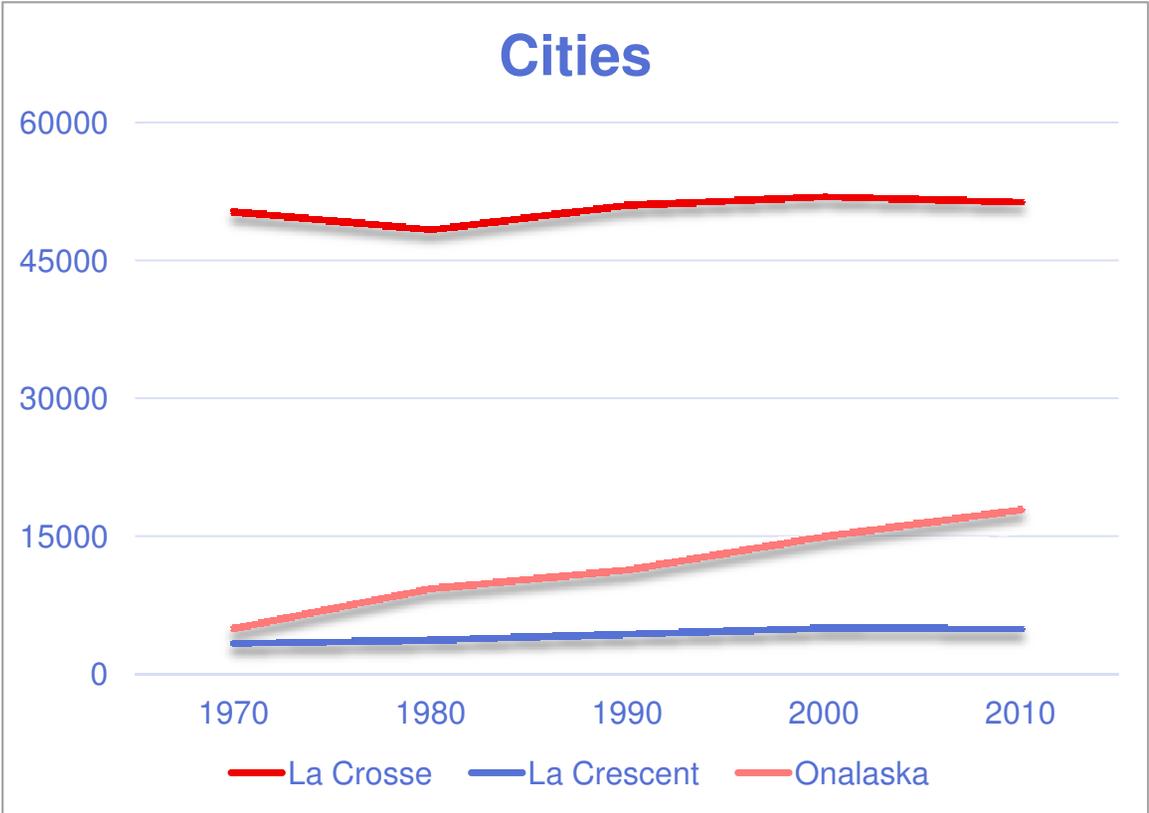
*\*Source: US Census Bureau*



*\*Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 5-Year Estimates*



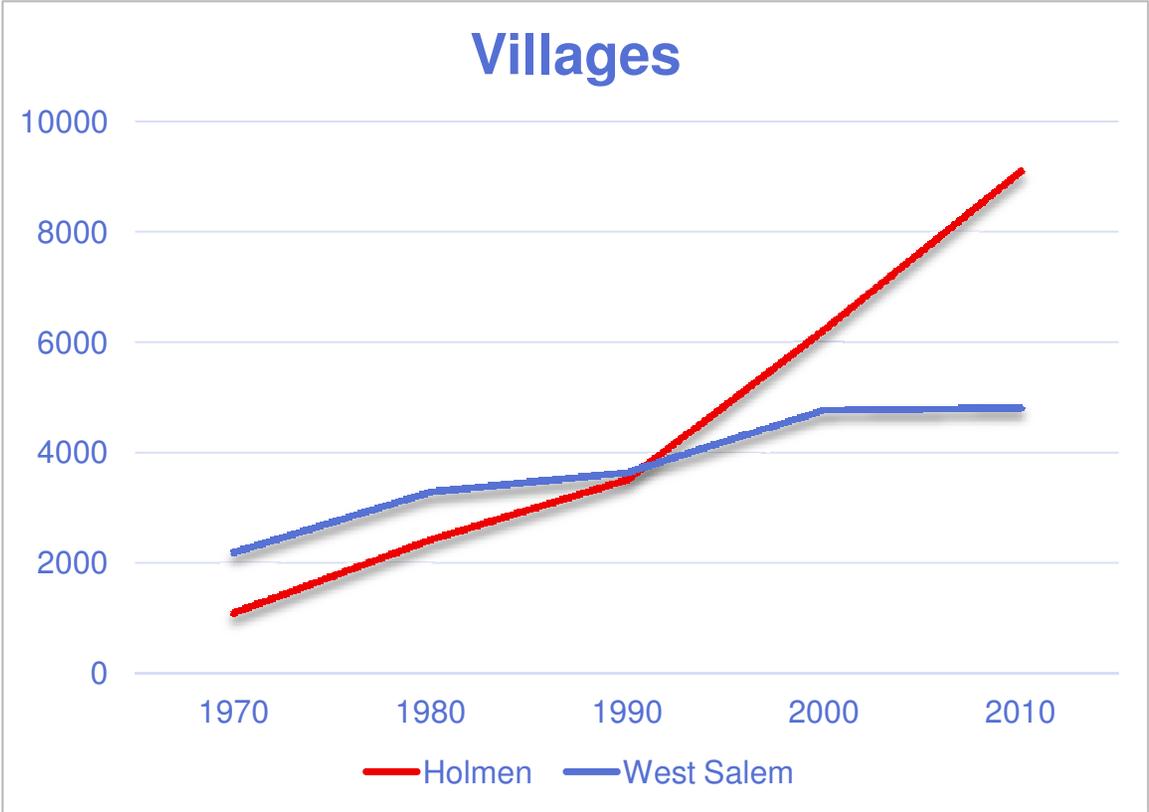
# Historical populations 1970-2010



\*Source: US Census Bureau



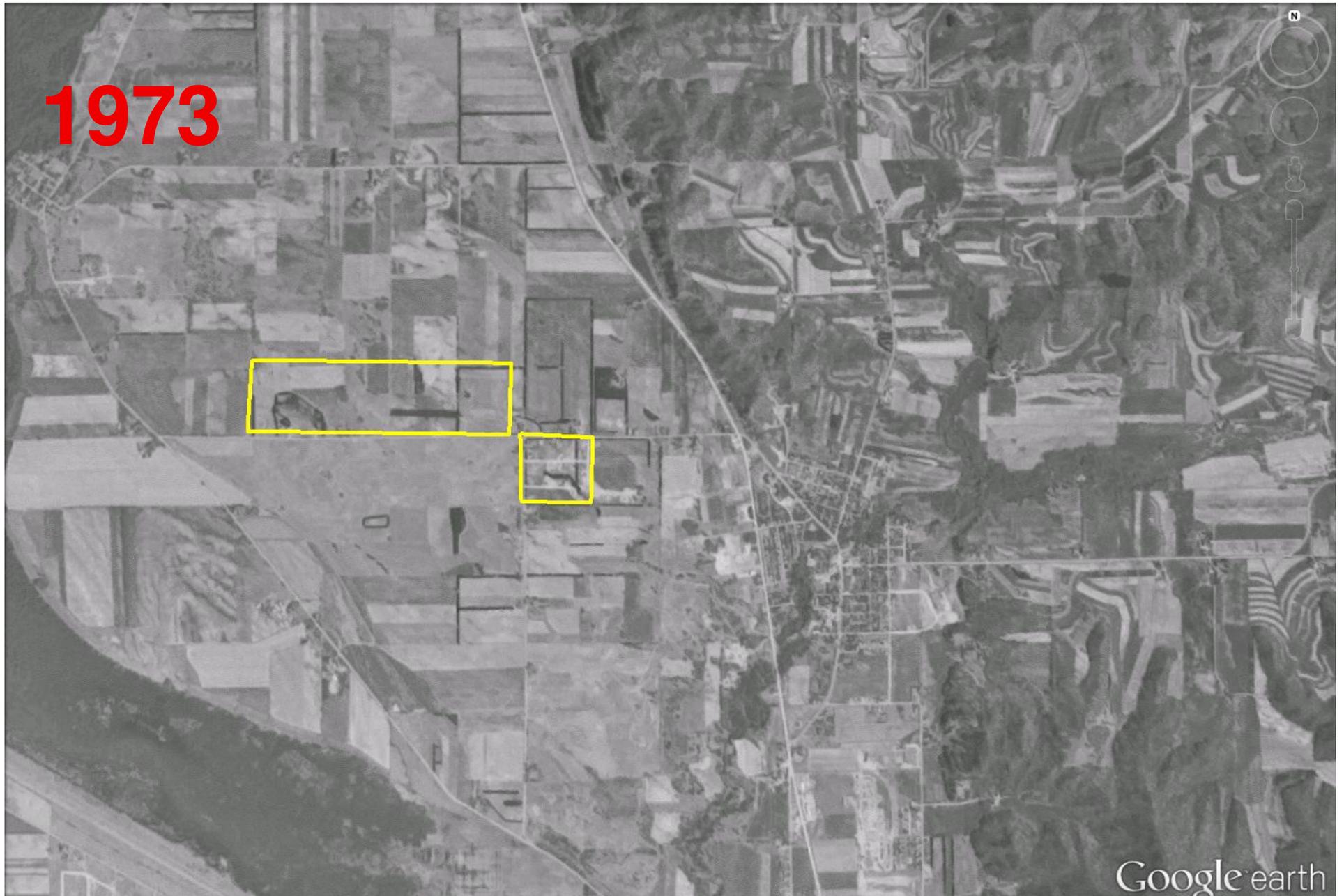
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# Holmen Area 1973-2011



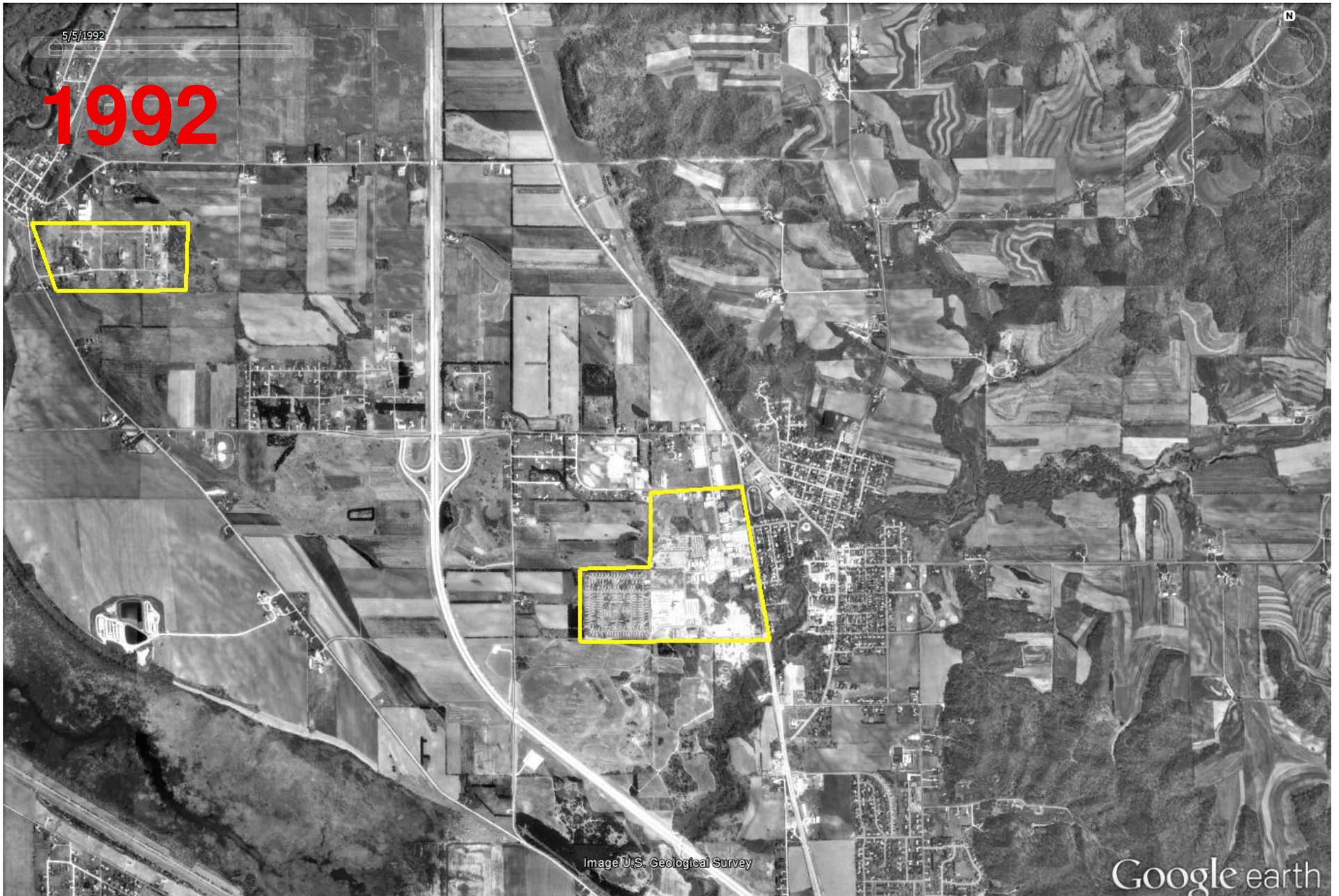
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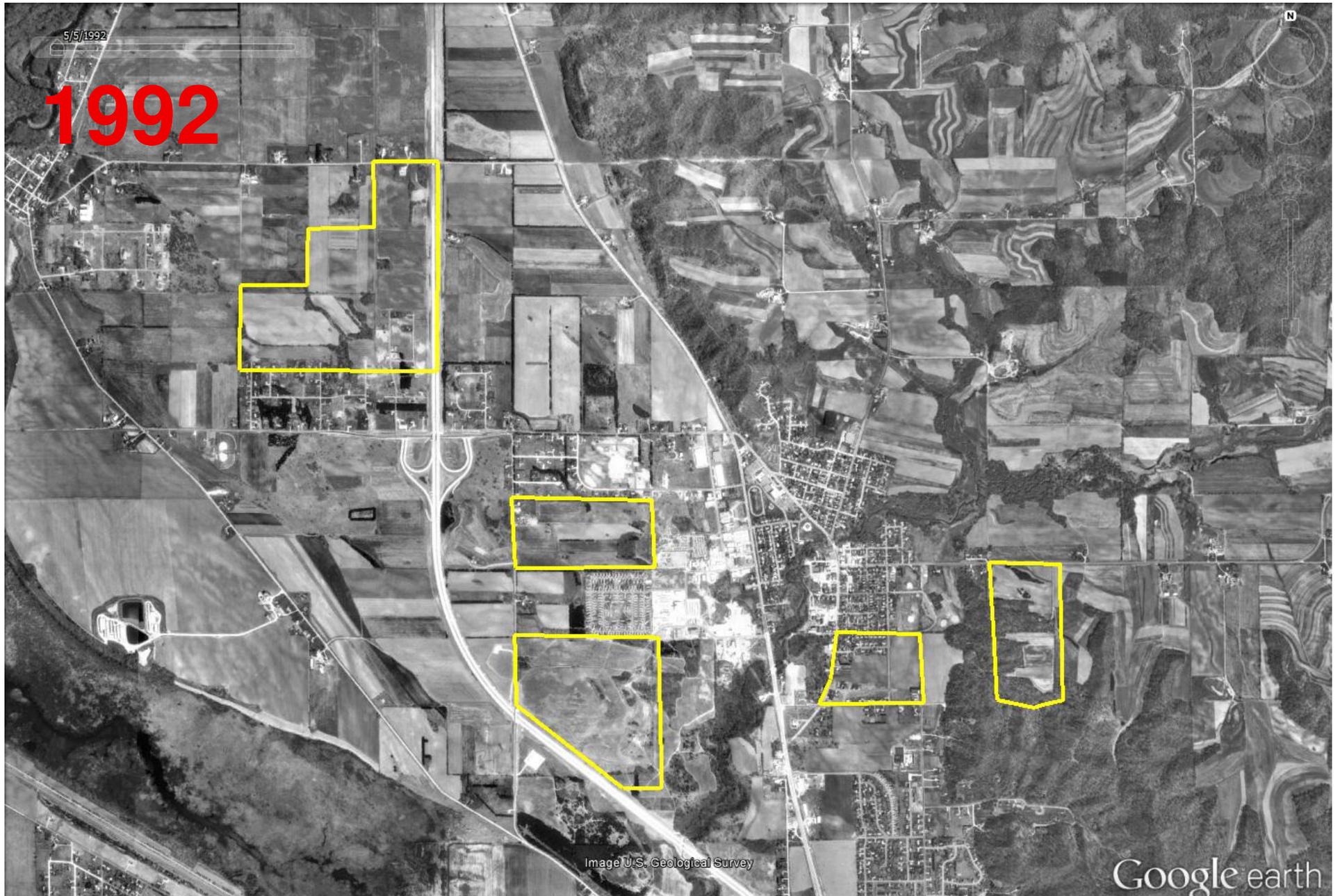
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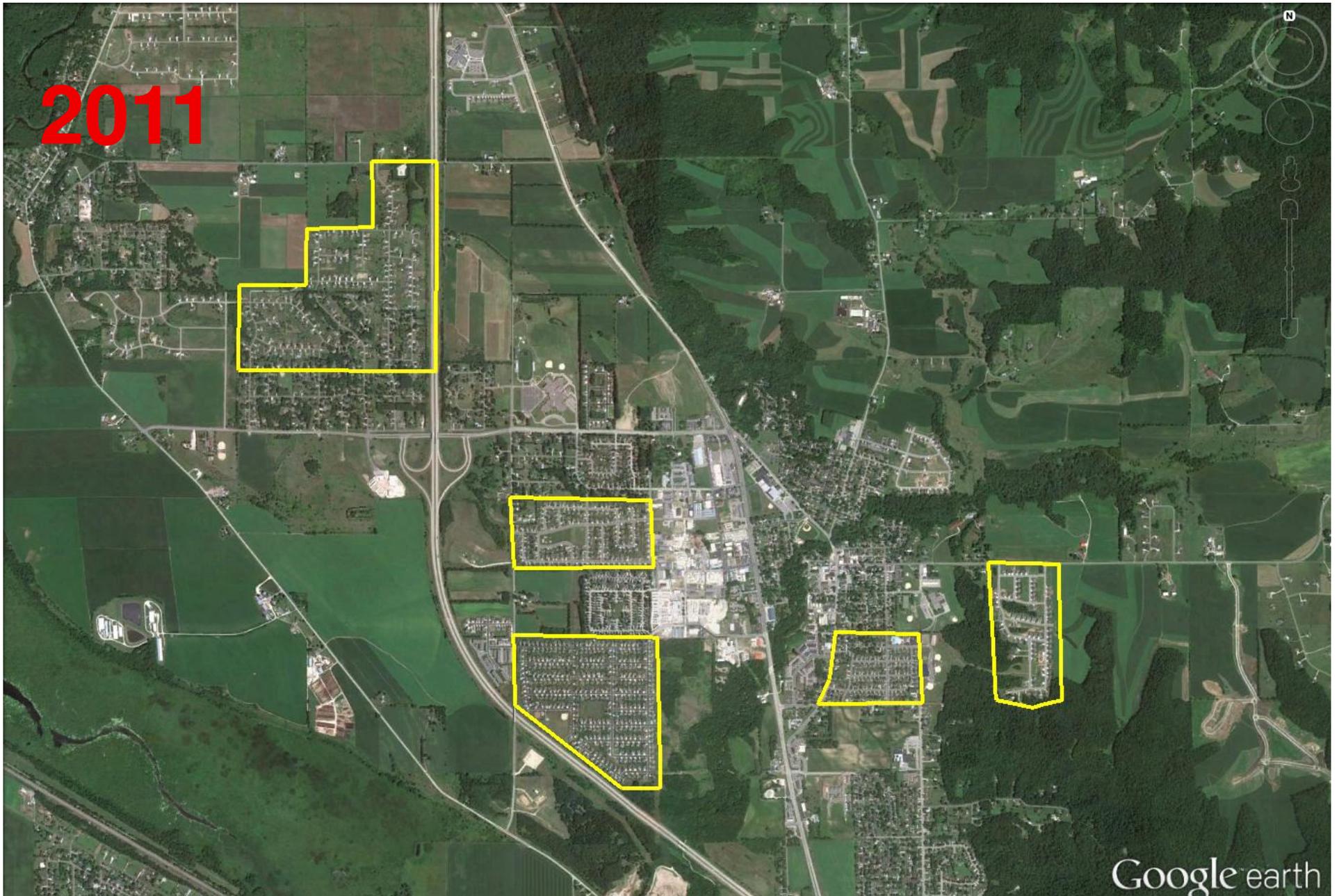
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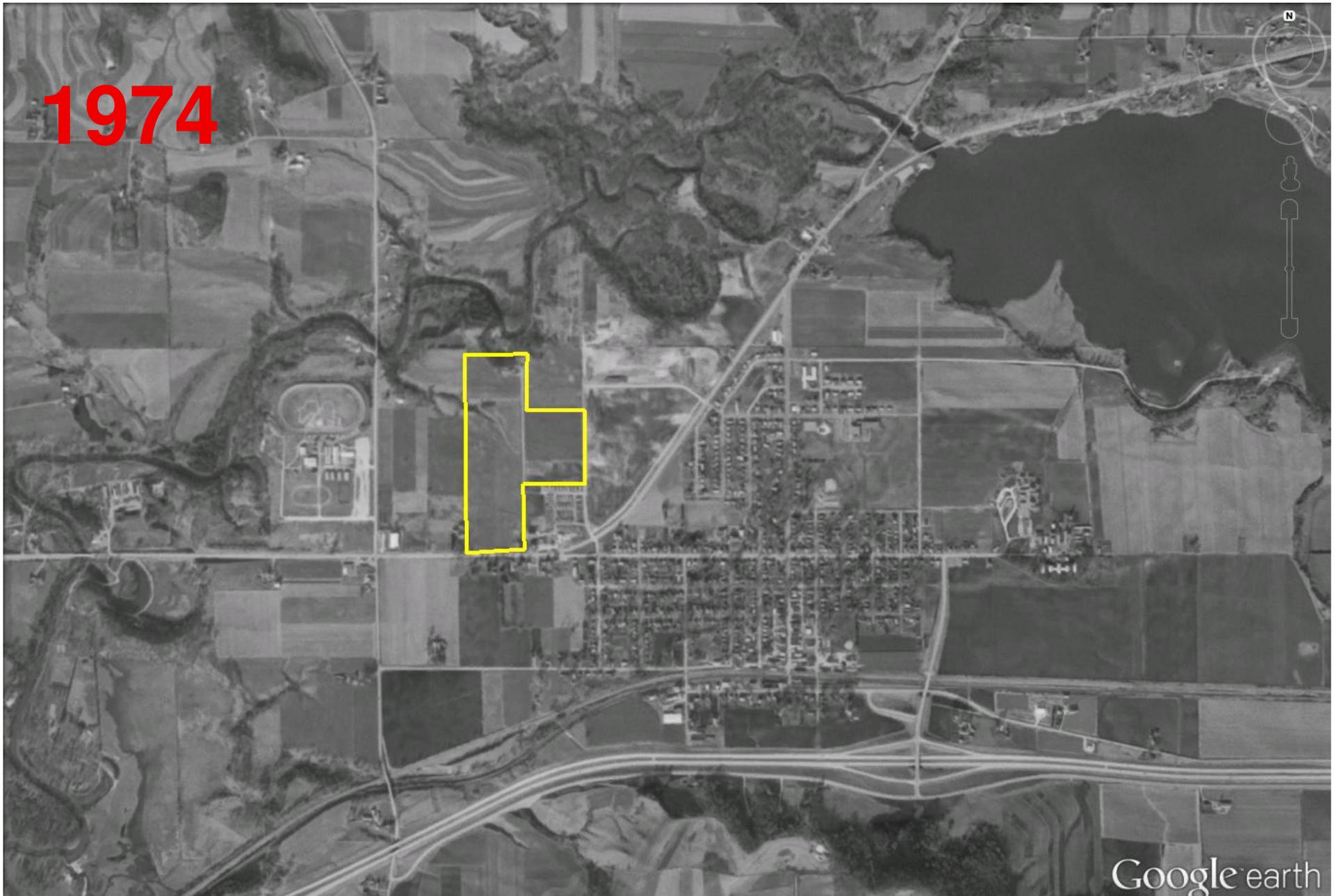
# Holmen Area 1973-2011



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# West Salem Area 1974-2011



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# What factors go into a transportation system?

- ▶ Population
- ▶ **Jobs**
- ▶ Traffic volume
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- ▶ Bikes/Pedestrians
- ▶ Transit
- ▶ Freight
- ▶ Environmental resources



# Top 10 employers in La Crosse Co.

Organization	Rank		
	1996	2002	2012
Trane	1	1	3
Gundersen (Lutheran) Health System	2 & 3	2 & 3	1
Mayo/Franciscan Skemp	4	4	2
UW-La Crosse	5	7	7
City of La Crosse	6	10	
Fleming Companies	7		
La Crosse Footwear	8		
First Federal Savings Bank	9	8	
The Company Store	10		
La Crosse Public Schools		5	6
La Crosse County		6	5
Reinhart Foodservice		9	
Kwik Trip			4
CenturyLink			8
Wal-Mart			9
Logistics Health Inc.			10

\*Source: [http://lacrossetribune.com/largest-employers-la-crosse-county/article\\_d312f82c-12bc-11e3-90bf-001a4bcf887a.html](http://lacrossetribune.com/largest-employers-la-crosse-county/article_d312f82c-12bc-11e3-90bf-001a4bcf887a.html)



# Downtown La Crosse 1973-2011

1973



# Downtown La Crosse 1973-2011



1981

Google earth

# Downtown La Crosse 1973-2011



# Downtown La Crosse 1973-2011



# Downtown La Crosse 1973-2011



# Downtown La Crosse 1973-2011



# Mall Area 1974-2011



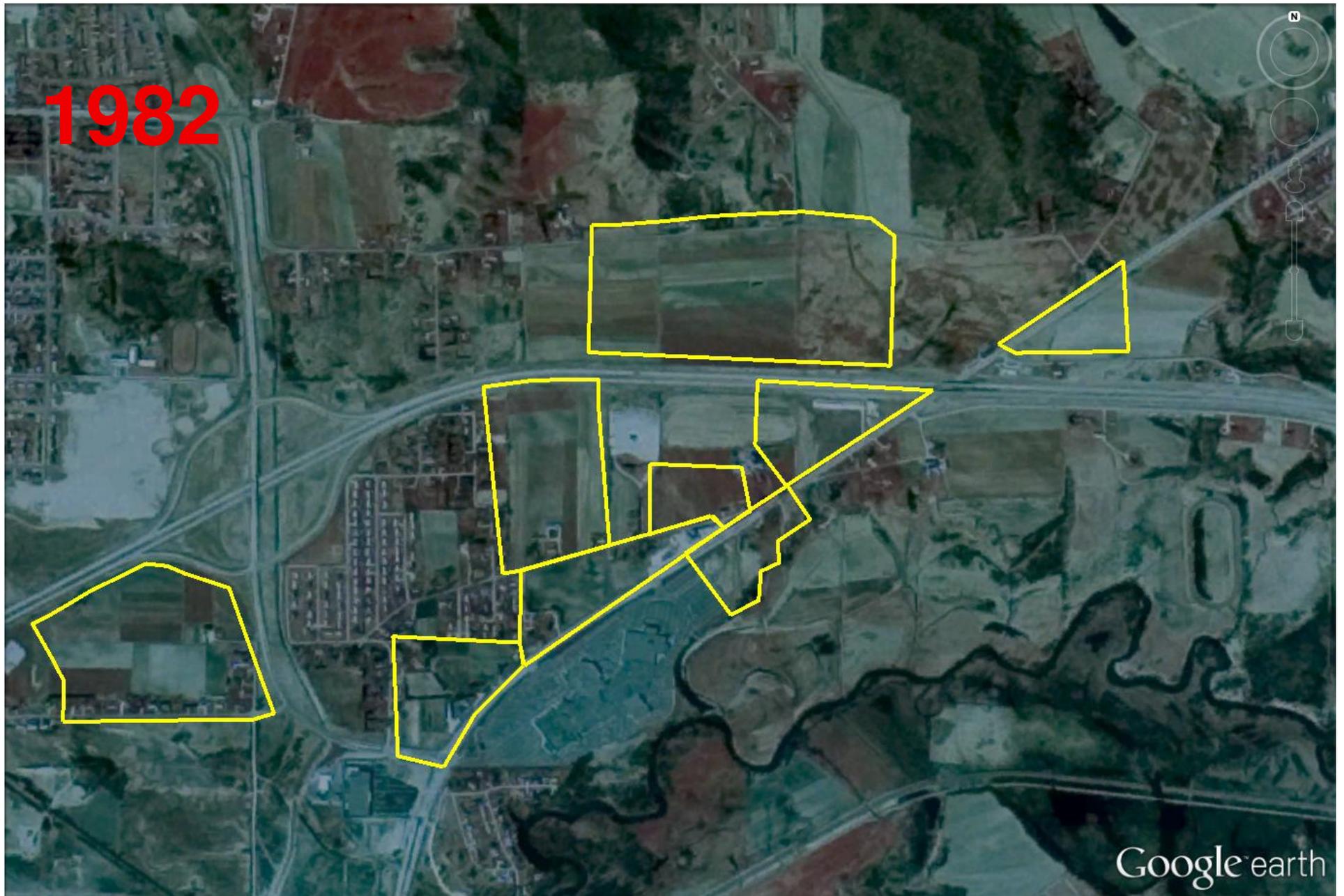
# Mall Area 1974-2011



1982

Google earth

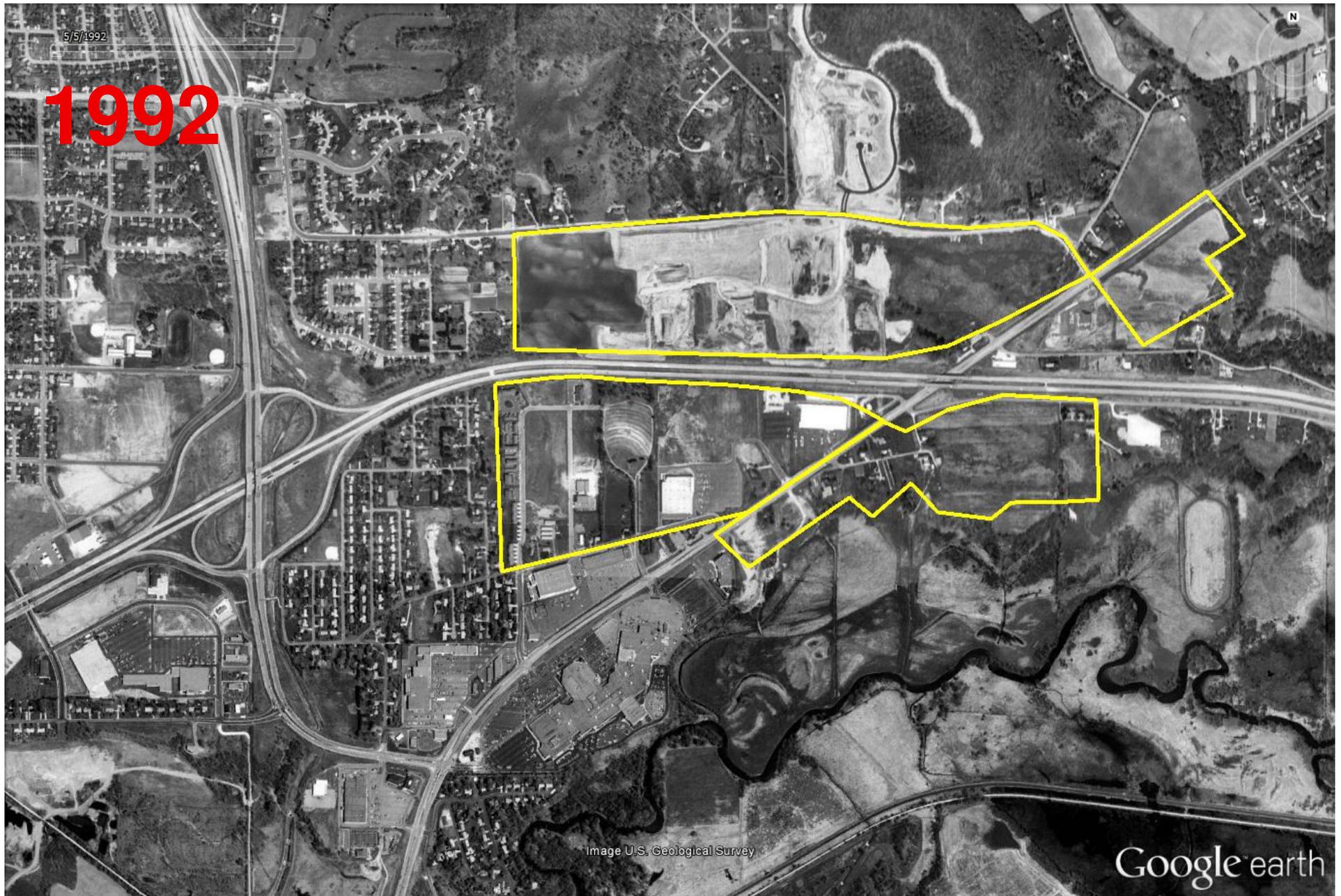
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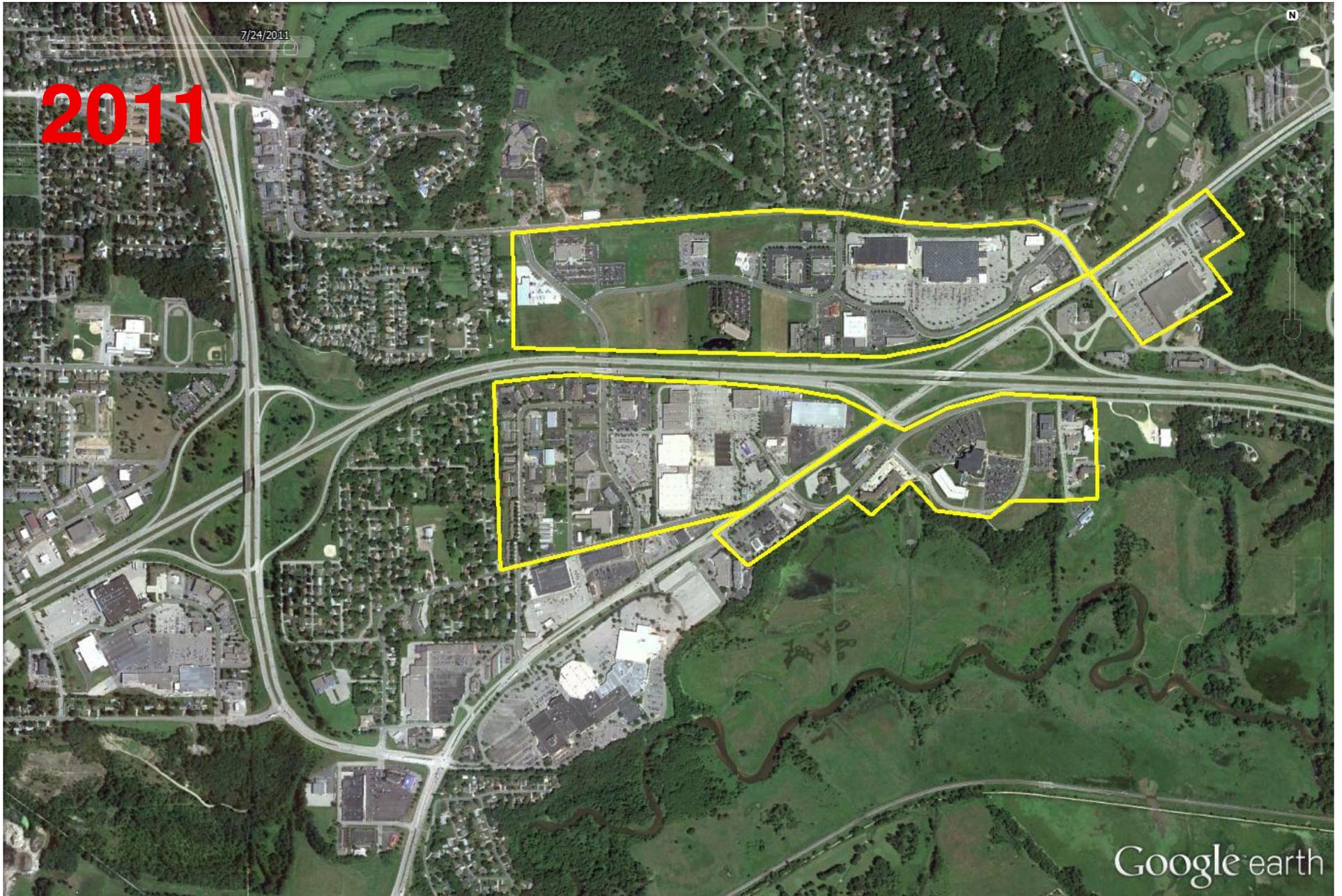


1992

Image U.S. Geological Survey

Google earth

# Mall Area 1974-2011



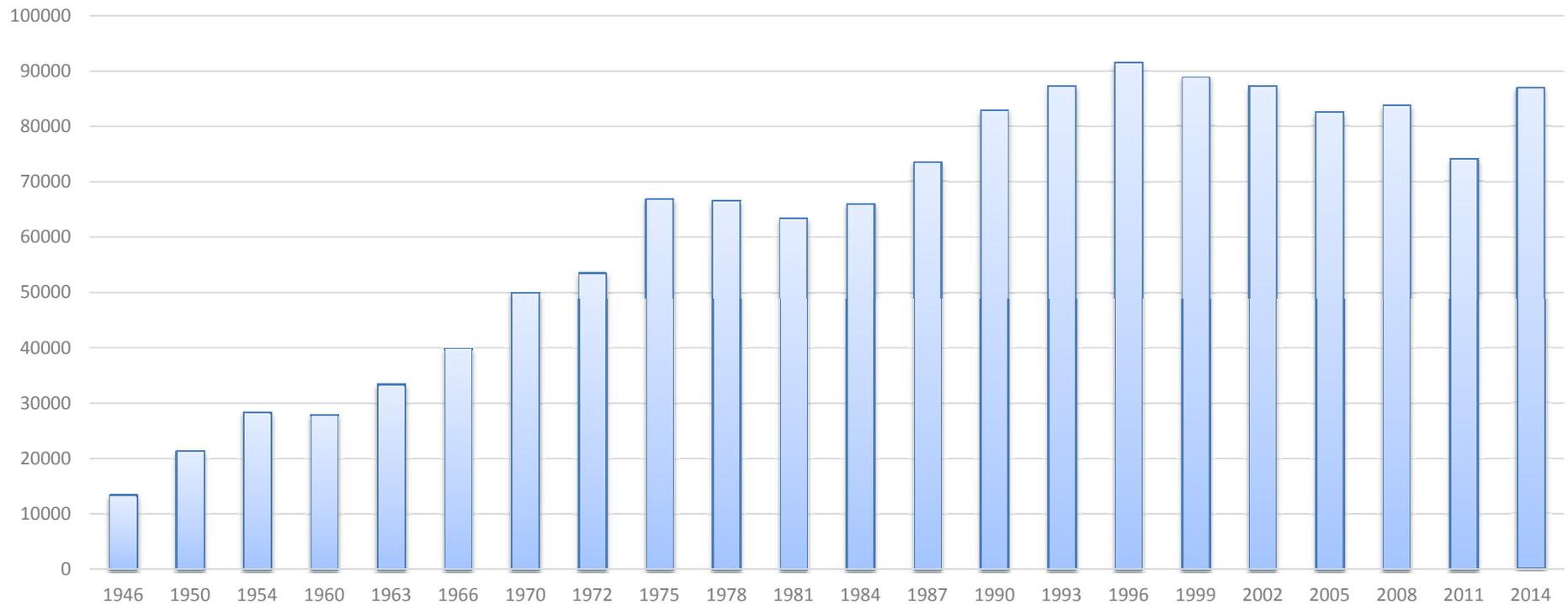
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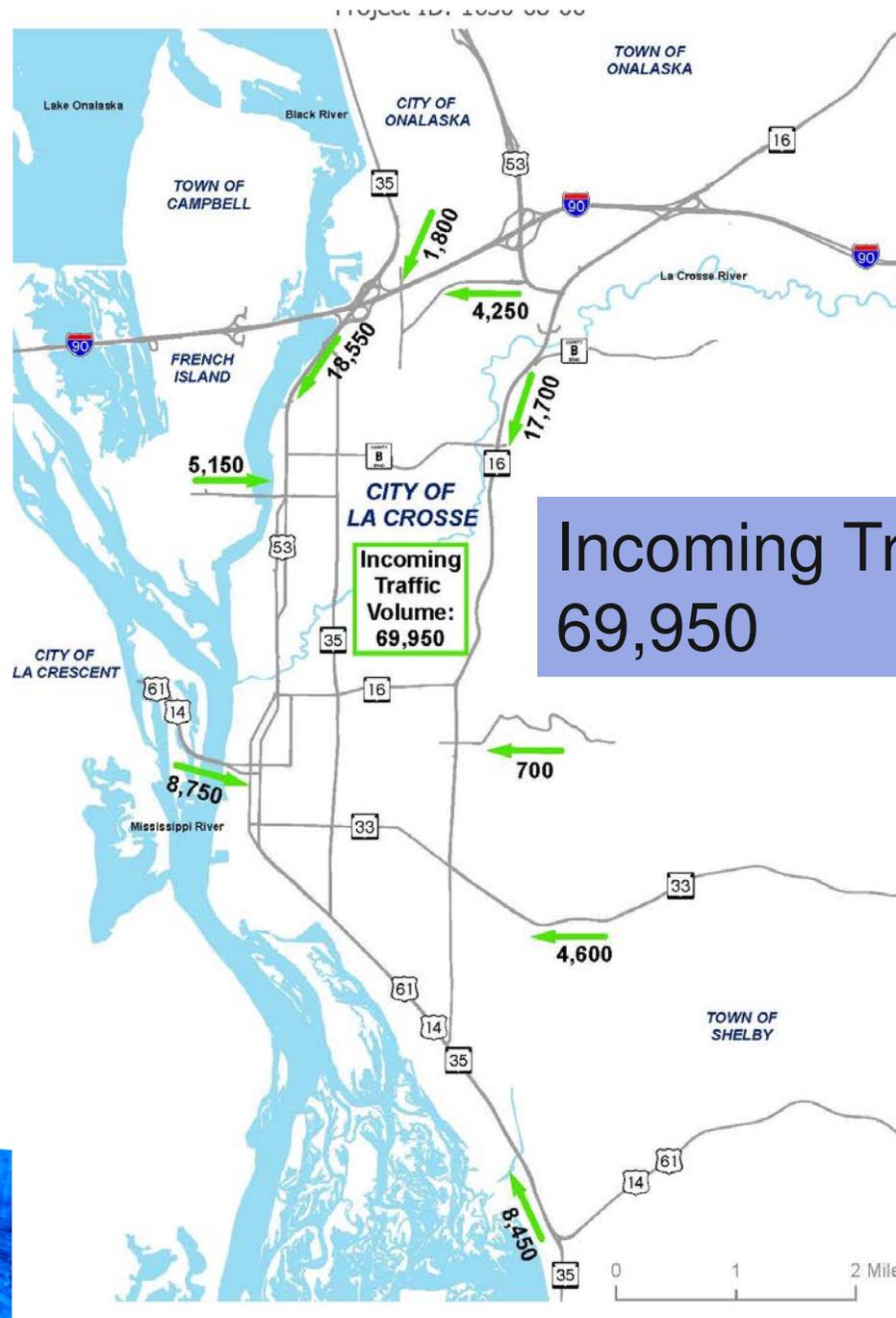


# Traffic volume

Total Traffic at  
the La Crosse River  
US 53, WIS 16, WIS 35



# Traffic volume



Incoming Traffic Volume:  
69,950

\*Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation 2014 AADT Traffic Counts



# What factors go into a transportation system?

- ▶ Population
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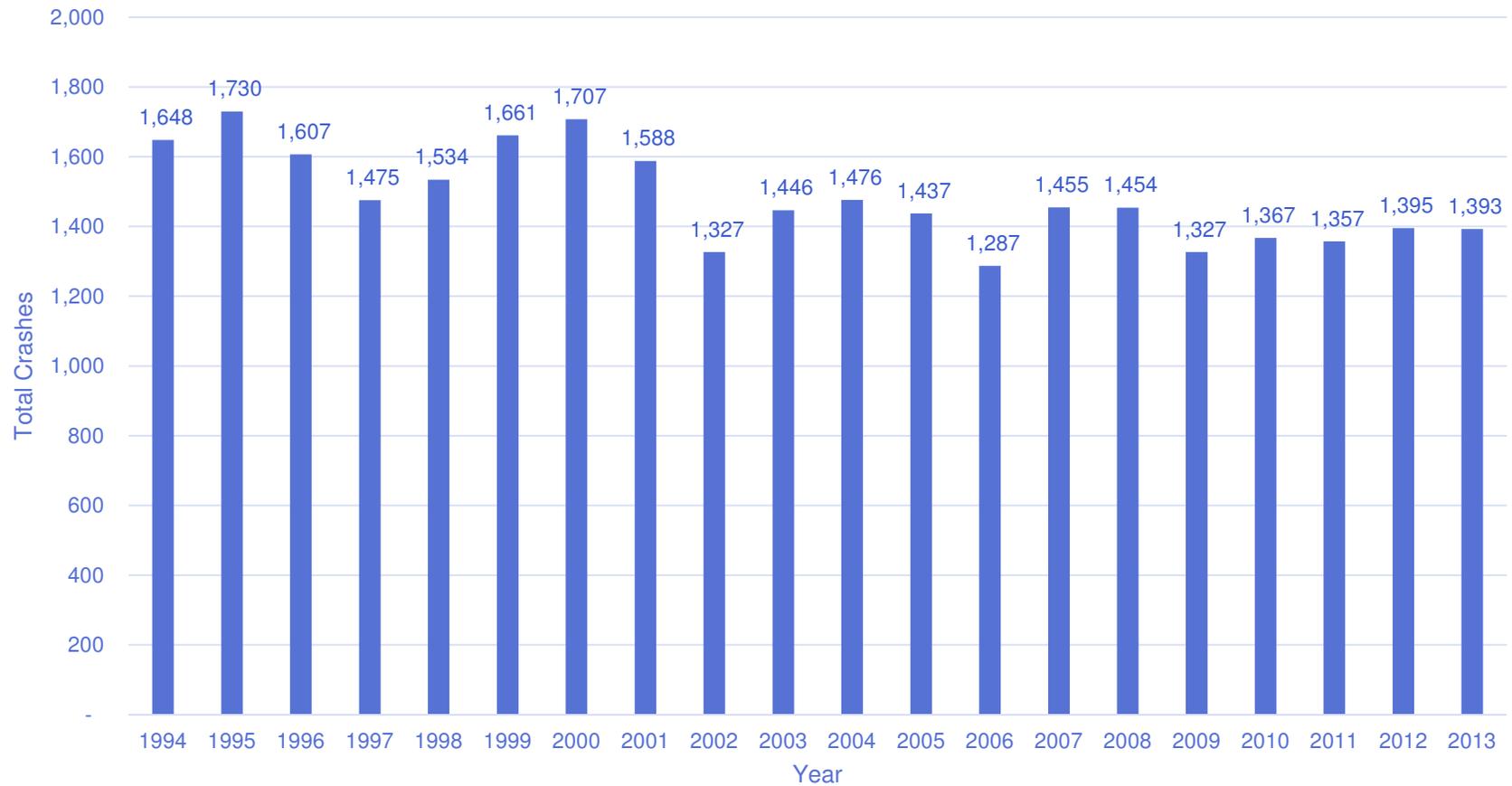
# City of La Crosse crash summary

Crash Summary	
Citywide Summary	
(1994-2013)	
Total Crashes =	29,671
Average Crashes / Year =	1,484
Total Fatalites =	40
Injury Crashes =	9,407
Property Damage Only =	20,224
Intersection Related Crashes =	17,502

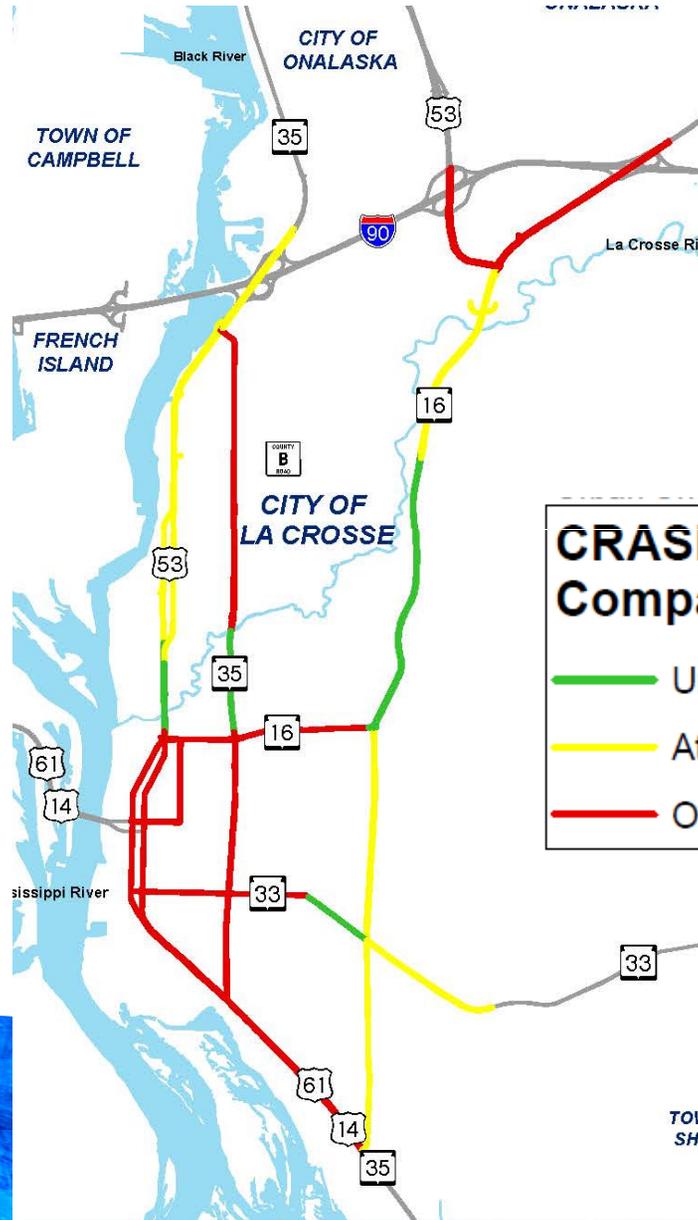


# City of La Crosse Crash Summary

City Wide Total Crash Summary (1994-2013)



# 2009-2013 crash rates



**CRASH RATE (2009-2013)  
Compared to Statewide Average**

- Under
- At
- Over

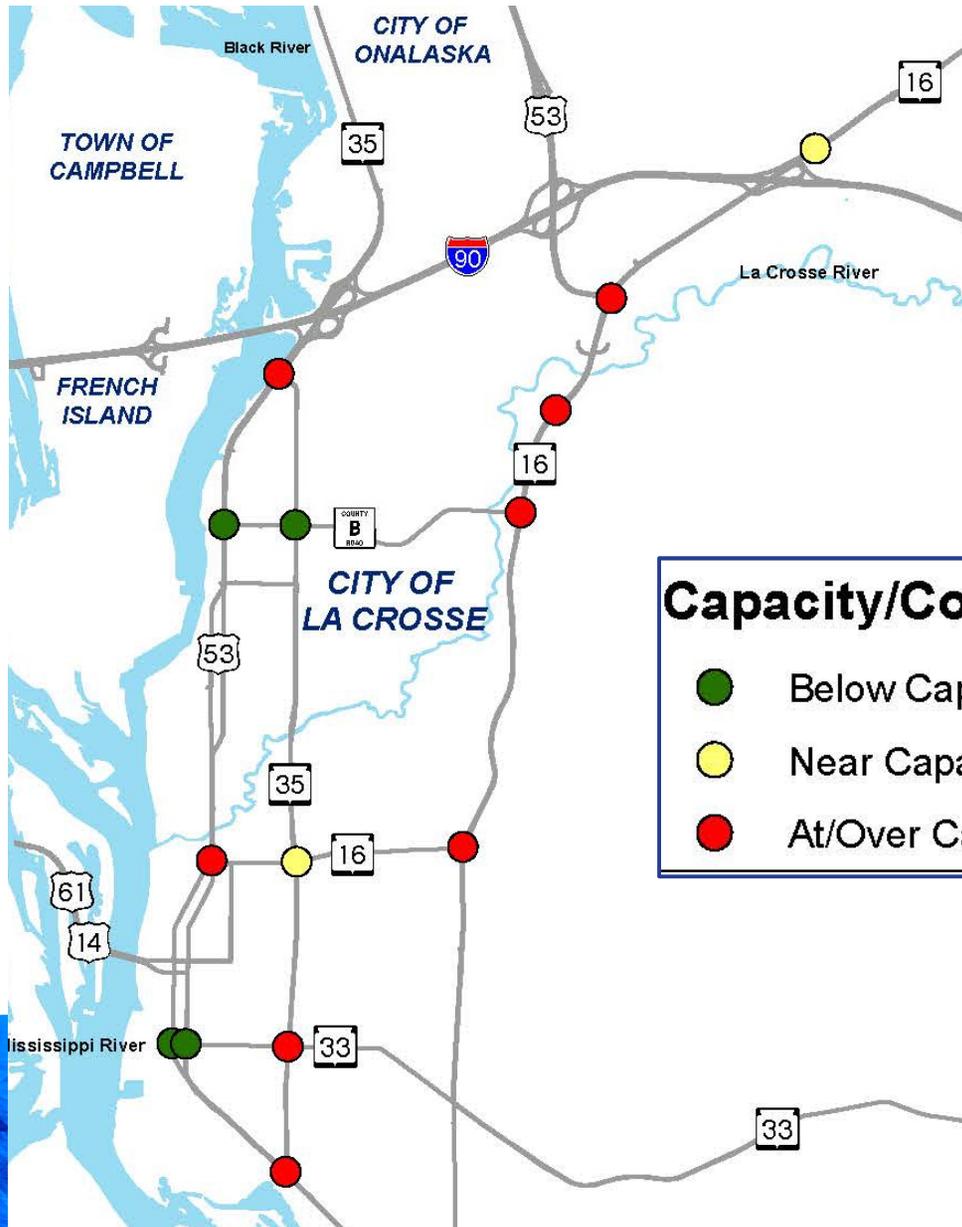


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# Existing PM peak hour capacity/congestion

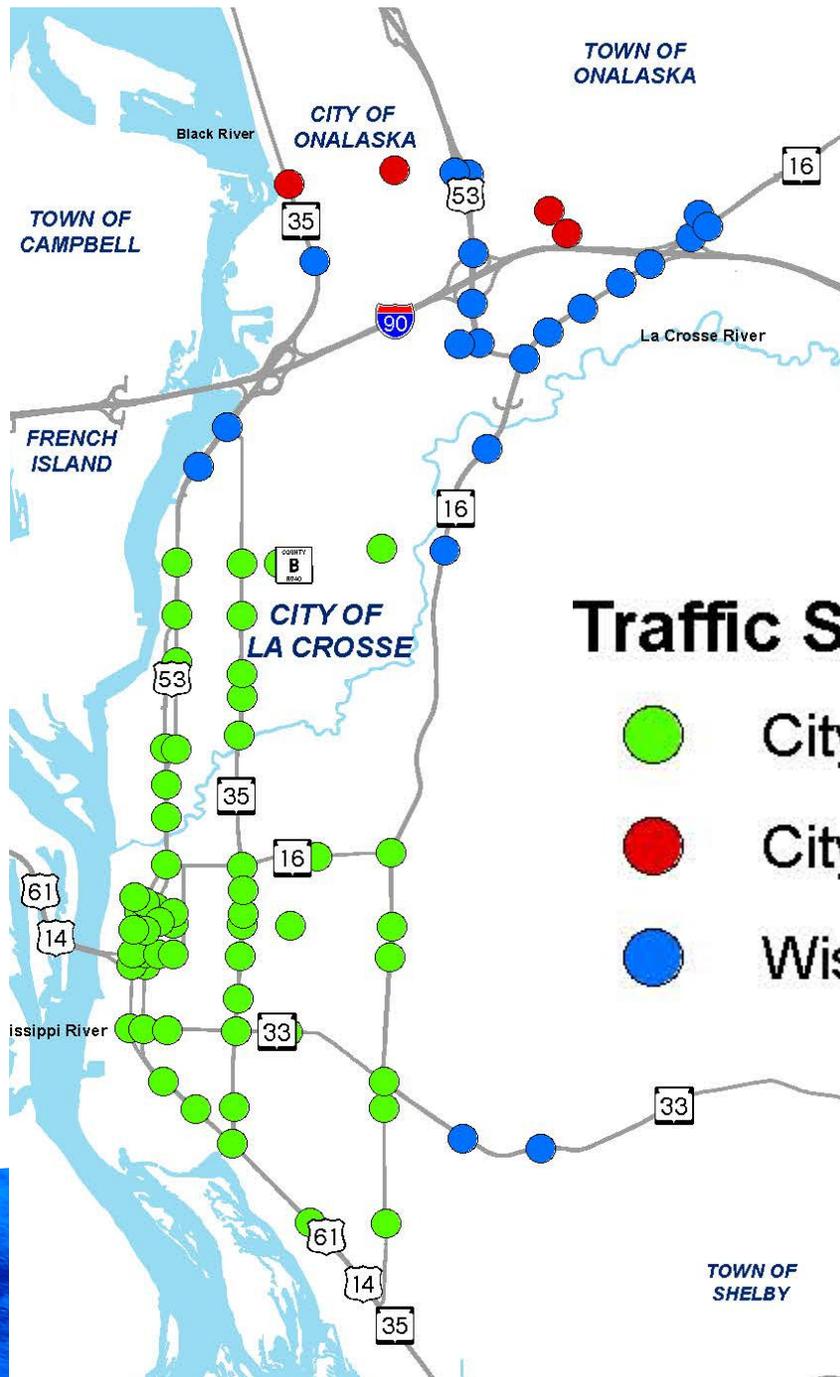


## Capacity/Congestion

- Below Capacity - Low Congestion
- Near Capacity - Medium Congestion
- At/Over Capacity - High Congestion



# La Crosse area signal locations



## Traffic Signals

-  City of La Crosse (55)
-  City of Onalaska (4)
-  WisDOT (21)



# What factors go into a transportation system?

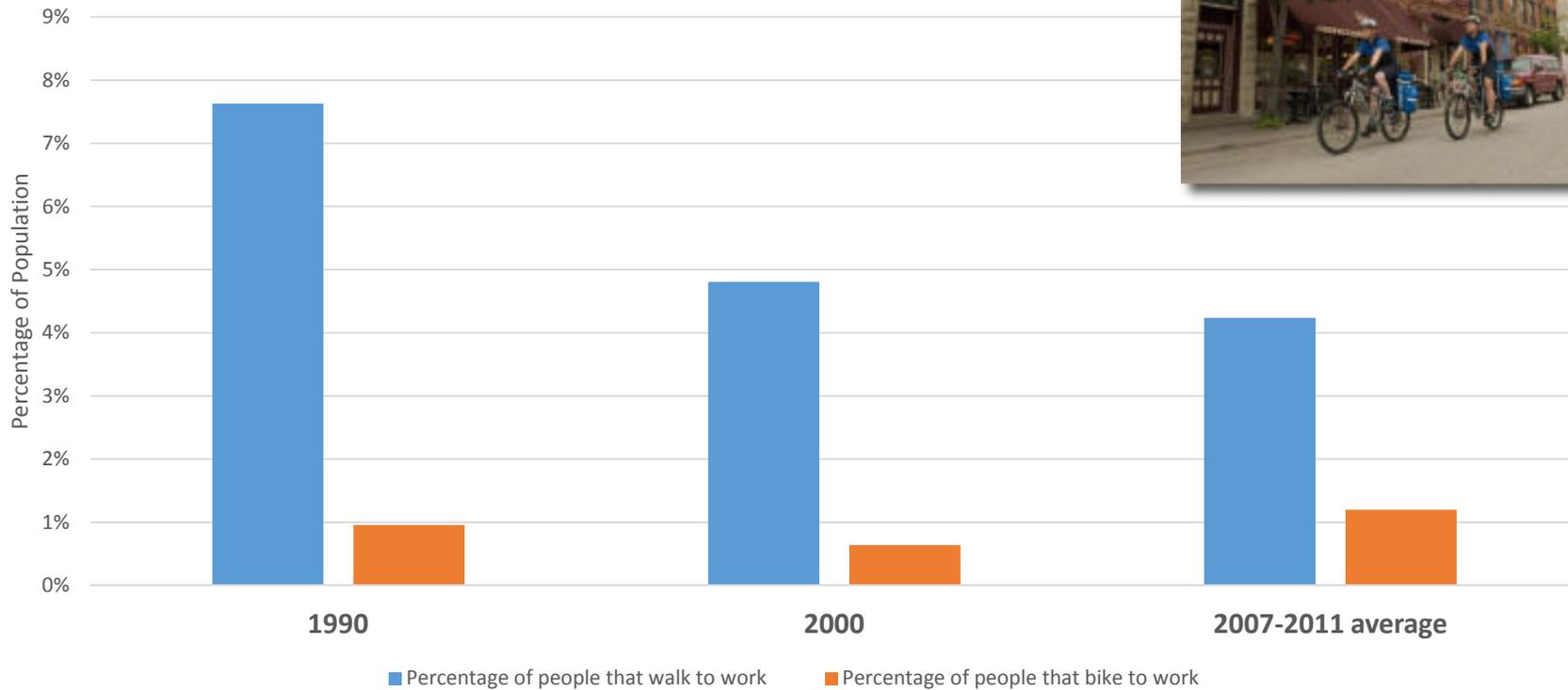
- ▶ Population
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# Bike & pedestrian transportation

People that Walk or Bike to Work  
(La Crosse and La Crescent Metropolitan Area)



\*Source: US Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Census, 2007-2011 American Community Survey



# What factors go into a transportation system?

- ▶ Population
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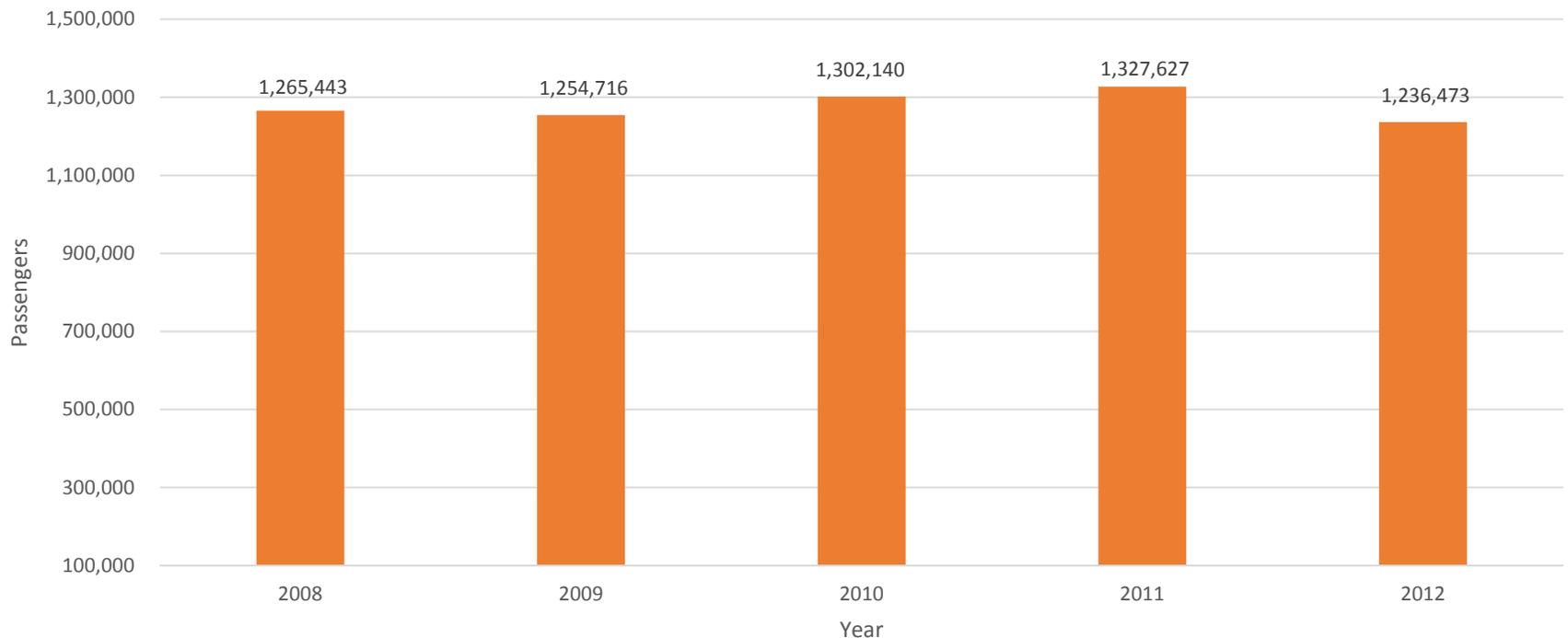




# Total transit ridership – Coulee Region

- ▶ OHWSPT Shared Ride Taxi
- ▶ La Crosse County Rural Transit
- ▶ Jefferson Lines
- ▶ MTU

Total Transit Ridership (2008-2012)

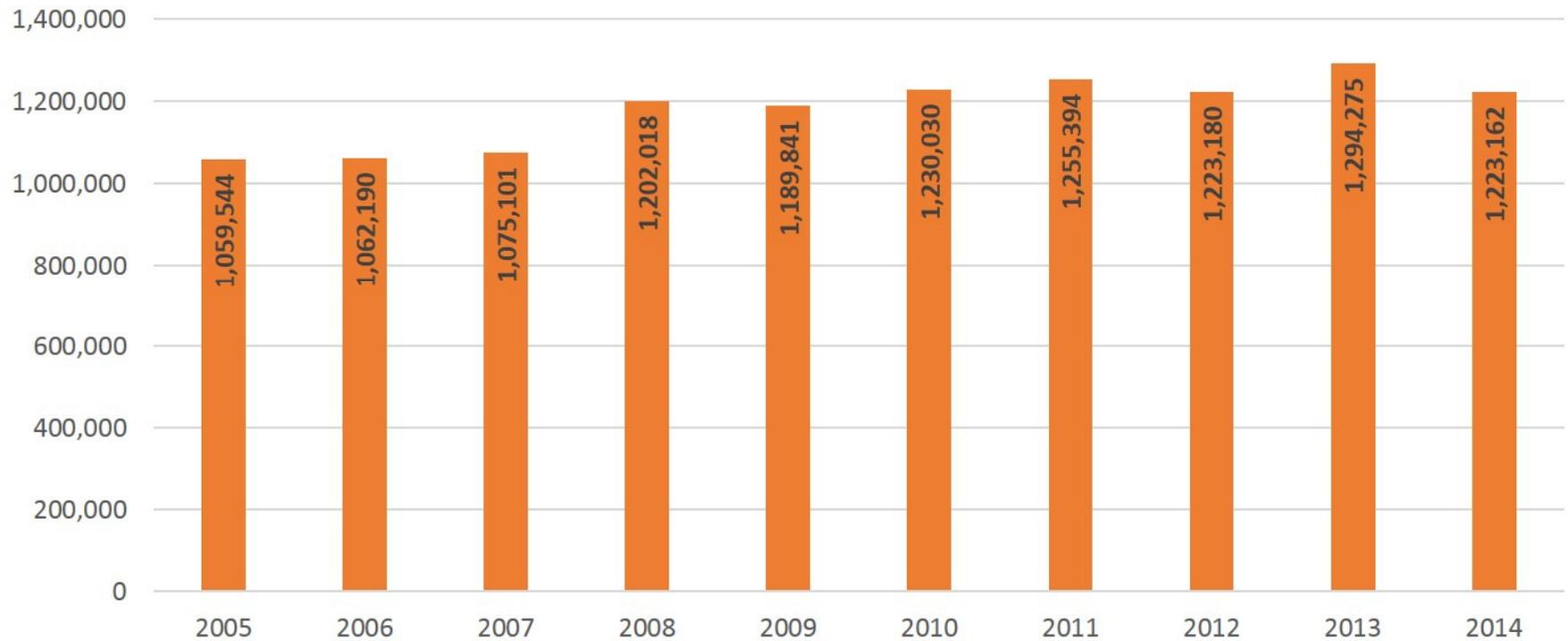


\*Source: La Crosse Area Planning Committee



# Transit - MTU

MTU Fixed-Route Ridership



*\*Source: US Federal Transit Administration – National Transit Database and MTU*



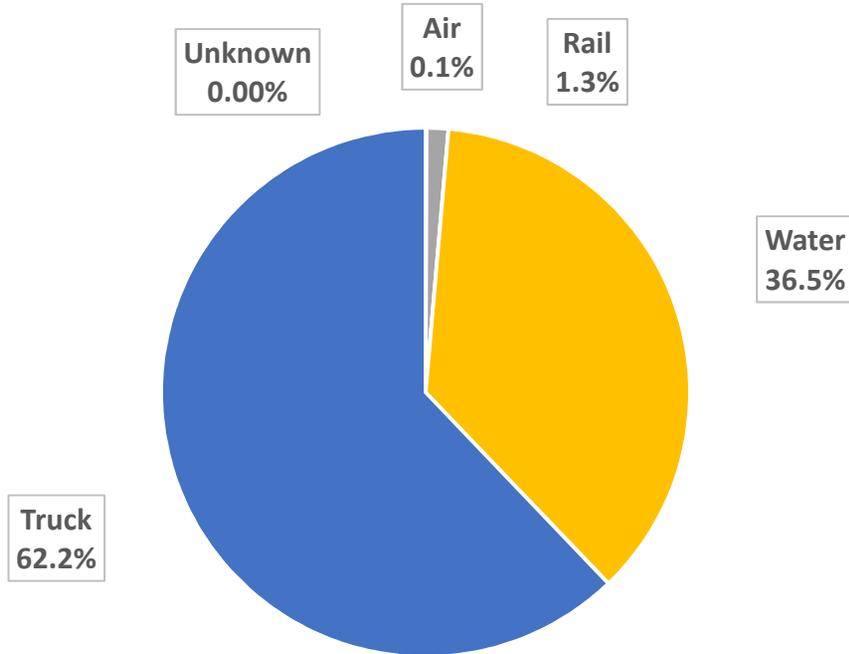
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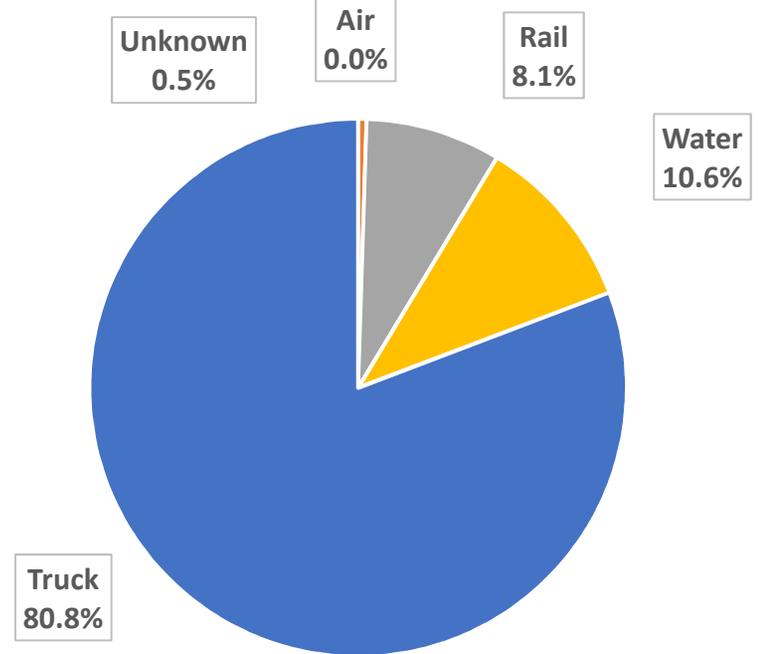
# Freight comparison

Freight **Originating** in La Crosse County - 2007



**Originating: 5,369,871 tons**

Freight **Terminating** in La Crosse County - 2007



**Terminating: 3,060,195 tons**

*\*Source: 2007 Commodity Flow Surveys c/o WisDOT*



# Truck freight

## US 53

- Truck % = 9.7%
- 2012 Value = \$811,570,289

## WIS 16

- Truck % = 4.8%
- 2012 Value = \$145,175,521

## WIS 35

- Truck % = 8.0%
- 2012 Value = \$252,516,530



*\*Source: WisDOT Planning and Economic Development, February 2015*



# What factors go into a transportation system?

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- ▶ **Environmental resources**

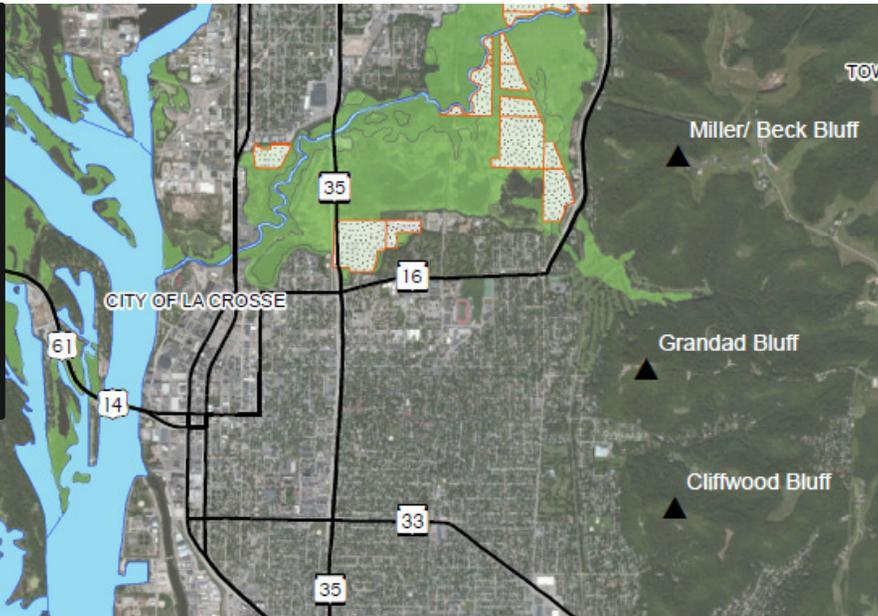


# Environmental Resources

## Natural



- ▶ La Crosse River Marsh
- ▶ Bluffs
- ▶ Recreational Trails
- ▶ Mississippi River
- ▶ La Crosse River
- ▶ Black River
- ▶ Local parks
- ▶ Hixon Forest
- ▶ Threatened and endangered species
- ▶ Conservancy land

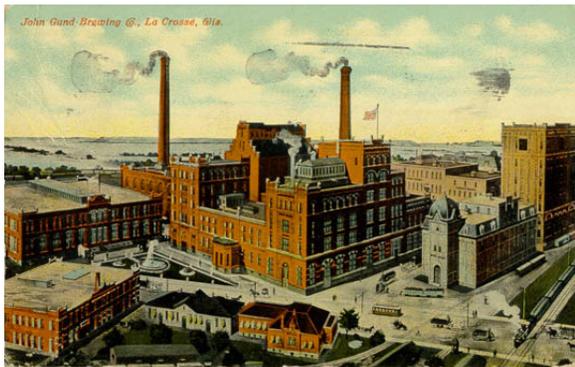


# Environmental Resources

## Social/Cultural



- ▶ Historic properties
- ▶ Neighborhoods
- ▶ Community centers
- ▶ Diverse population
- ▶ Waterfront
- ▶ Local festivals
- ▶ Vibrant downtown



# Top places to live

- ▶ Livability.com: La Crosse appears in list of Top 100 places to live in the US
- ▶ Forbes.com: La Crosse ranks #39 in the nation in “2011 Best Places for Business and Careers”
- ▶ Wisconsin for Home Ownership: Onalaska voted #8
- ▶ Outside Magazine: La Crosse ranked in “The 16 Best Towns To Live In”
- ▶ U.S. News and World Report: UW La Crosse ranked #3 Public Midwest Regional University



# Benefits of future planning in the Coulee Region



# Questions

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