

5300-05-00

US 12 Freeway Conversion

STH 19 – Parmenter Street

Dane County

WisDOT's Pre-Screening Worksheet for EA and ER Projects For Determining the Need to Conduct a Detailed Indirect Effects Analysis

1. Project Design Concepts and Scope

Do the project design concepts include any one of the following?

- Additional through travel lanes (expansion)
- New alignment
- New and/or improved interchanges and access
- Bypass alternatives.

As a result of the freeway conversion all direct access points and at-grade intersections would be eliminated. New grade separated interchanges would be provided to allow access at limited locations. No through travel lanes would be added.

2. Project Purpose and Need

Does the project purpose and need include:

- Economic development – in part or full (i.e. improved access to a planned industrial park, new interchange for a new warehouse operation).

No.

3. Project Type

What is the project document "type"?

- EIS project – a detailed indirect effects analysis is warranted.
- Many EAs will require a detailed indirect effects analysis (However, it also depends on the project design concepts and other factors noted here).
- If a Categorical Exclusion applies, a detailed assessment is not generally warranted, however documentation must be provided that addresses this determination including basic sheet information.

4. Facility Function

What is the primary function of the existing facility? What is the proposed facility?

- Urban arterial
- Rural principal arterial – Expressway

The proposed facility would convert the US 12 from an expressway to a freeway.

5. Project Location (Location can be a combination)
- Urban (within a Metropolitan Planning Area).
 - Suburban (part of larger metropolitan/regional area, may or may not be part of a metropolitan planning area).
 - Small community (population under 5000).
 - Rural with scattered development.
 - Rural, primarily farming/agricultural area.

The project area is located entirely within the town of Springfield and is rural. A portion of the southern project area is within the Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization planning area. This study is acknowledged in the MPO's 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

6. Improved travel times to an area or region
- Will the proposed project provide an improvement of 5 or more minutes? (Based on research, improvements in travel time can impact the attractiveness of an area for new development).

No. There would be an improvement of travel time due to the elimination of two signalized intersections in the project area. The improvement of travel time is not anticipated to be significant to the extent of attracting new development over the current roadway facility. There are no current problems with travel times and the level of service of the roadway facility is acceptable.

7. Land Use and Planning
- What are the existing land use types in project area?

The project area is entirely within the town of Springfield. Land use types are primarily agricultural with a scattering of residential and business uses. Other uses in the area include; a Dane County Maintenance Garage, Springfield town hall, and environmental areas such as open space, wetlands, wooded areas, or natural resource areas. See Exhibit 14.

- What do the local plans, neighborhood plans, and regional plans, indicate for future changes in land use?

Dane County and the town of Springfield plans indicate future land use of the project area as primarily "agricultural preservation".

In the unincorporated hamlet of Springfield Corners in the north section of the project area a "Town Center Plan" was developed which includes a mixed use of residential and commercial uses. See Exhibits 15 & 16. The development is planned for the areas east of US 12. The Preferred Alternative would involve a continuous split diamond interchange between WIS 19 East and West. County P would be re-routed along Lodi-Springfield Road. The Town Center Plan does show the specific improvements regarding the expansion of US 12 and other roadways would be compatible with the plan the Proposed Action is supported by town officials, included in the Comprehensive Plan, and would not preclude the plans goal to promote Springfield Corners as the town's community gathering place. The area west of US 12 is a mixture of a Rural Development District and agricultural preservation. The Preferred Alternative would provide two way frontage roads that are placed as close as feasible to US 12. Also, the split diamond interchange would involve less impact to lands than other interchange types. The conversion of agricultural land to a transportation purpose that is involved with the conversion of US 12 from an expressway to a freeway would not be

consistent with the goals of the plan but land used for transportation corridors is permitted. However, the Proposed Action was identified through coordination with town and county officials. The Proposed Action minimizes impacts to agricultural lands to the extent practicable and has the support of town and county officials.

The land use in the central section which includes Kickaboo Road and Meffert Road intersections is primarily agricultural preservation. There are also two rural development districts in this section. The Preferred Alternative would involve a continuous split diamond interchange between Kickaboo Road and Meffert Road. The split diamond interchange design would minimize impact to land which is consistent with the land use plans. The conversion of agricultural land to a transportation purpose that is involved with the conversion of US 12 from an expressway to a freeway would not be consistent with the goals of the plan but land used for transportation corridors is permitted. However, the Proposed Action was identified through coordination with town and county officials. The Proposed Action minimizes impacts to agricultural lands to the extent practicable and has the support of town and county officials.

The land use in the south section which includes the County K intersection is primarily either agricultural preservation or transitioning agricultural land near urban developing areas. Land south of the intersection is also within the intergovernmental agreement area between the town of Springfield and the city of Middleton. The Preferred Alternative would involve a partial clover leaf/jug handle interchange mainly north of County K. The intergovernmental agreement defines growth areas at the boundaries between the city of Middleton and the town of Springfield. This agreement is intended to guide and accomplish a coordinated, well-planned and harmonious development of the territory covered by the Plan. While the project would impact these areas it would not preclude the ability to achieve the terms of this agreement. The conversion of agricultural preservation land to a transportation purpose that is involved with the conversion of US 12 from an expressway to a freeway would not be consistent with the goals of the county land use plan but land used for transportation corridors is permitted. However, the Proposed Action was identified through coordination with town, city and county officials. The Proposed Action minimizes impacts to agricultural lands to the extent practicable and has the support of town, city and county officials.

What types of permitted uses are indicated in the local zoning?

Zoning regulations are implemented by Dane County. As indicated above the surrounding area is primarily "agricultural preservation" or A-1 EX Agricultural District defined under Chapter 10 Dane County Code of Ordinances. Rezoning from A-1 EX zoning district must meet the requirements of chapter 91 of the Wisconsin State Statutes and the Dane County Farmland Preservation Plan. Furthermore, the town of Springfield must approve of the change as per the policies included in the town's comprehensive plan. Town's policies include; restricting residential density to no more than one dwelling unit per 35 acres and allowing commercial development as necessary to support agricultural operations.

Other zoning includes other agricultural uses, business/commercial, residential, and land conservation A-2, B-1, LC-1, C-1, C-2, R-1, R-3A, R-4, RH-1, RH-2, and CO-1. These areas represent a small portion of the project area.

- Would the project potentially conflict with plans in the project area? (e.g., capacity expansion in areas in which agricultural preservation is important to local government(s)?)

Eliminating direct access and at-grade intersections and providing limited access point via grade separated interchanges could encourage development in interchanges areas. However existing zoning in interchange areas would prevent any further development beyond current trends. There would be three interchanges within the project area.

One interchange would be located at County P and WIS 19 East and West in the north section. County P is located in the unincorporated hamlet of Springfield Corners. The new interchange would be compatible with their Town Center Plan.

The interchange in the central section would be at Meffert Road. This interchange was modified from the original design as a result of comments received during the public meetings to better accommodate access to the nearby Kickaboo Road. There are also a couple of existing residential developments that would utilize the interchange. It is not expected that the new interchange would encourage further residential development in the interchange area over current trends.

The interchange in the south section would be located at County K. The access road south of Fisher Road was modified from the original design as a result of comments received during the public meetings to better accommodate farm properties. There are a few businesses currently at this intersection. It is not expected that the new interchange would encourage further commercial development in the interchange area over current trends.

The limited access points could discourage development outside of the interchanges areas which could help with the project need of agricultural preservation.

The conversion of agricultural preservation land to a transportation purpose that is involved with the conversion of US 12 from an expressway to a freeway conflicts with the goals of the county land use plan but land used for transportation corridors is permitted. The Proposed Action was identified through coordination with town, city and county officials. The Proposed Action minimizes impacts to agricultural lands to the extent practicable and has the support of town, city and county officials.

8. Population/Demographic Changes

- Have the population changes over past 5, 10, and 20 years been high, medium, low growth rate vs. state average over the same period? (i.e. USDA defines high growth in rural areas as greater than annual population growth of 1.4%).

Population Data, 1990-2010

Entity	1990 Population	2000 Population	2010 Population	1990-2010 Change (%)	2000-2010 Change (%)
Town of Springfield	2,650	2,762	2,734	3.2	-1.0
Dane County	367,085	426,526	488,073	33.0	14.4
Wisconsin	4,891,769	5,363,675	5,686,986	16.3	6.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Between 2000 and 2010 the town of Springfield has a low growth rate (-1.0% growth) as defined by the USDA. Dane County has a high growth rate (14.4% growth) compared to the state of Wisconsin as a whole, which saw 6.0% population growth between 2000 and 2010.

- What are the projections for the future for population? (Use Wisconsin DOA projections).

Projected Population Data, 2040

Entity	2010 Population	2040 Population	2010-2040 Change (%)
Town of Springfield	2,734	2,790	2.0
Dane County	488,073	606,620	24.3
Wisconsin	5,686,986	6,491,635	14.1

Source: Wisconsin's Future Population: Projections for the State, Its Counties and Municipalities, 2010 - 2040, & MCD and Municipal Population Projections, 2010-2040, Wisconsin DOA, Dec. 2013

Wisconsin's population is expected to grow by 14.1% from 2010 to 2040, an average of 2.2% in each of the 5-year periods. This projected growth rate is slower than that of the 1990s and early 2000s but faster than that of the early 1980s and late 2000s. Dane County is projected to gain 118,547 residents (24.3%) during the 30-year period between 2010 and 2040, the 6th largest percentage increase and the largest numeric increase among all counties in Wisconsin. Having a Census 2010 count of 488,073, Dane County is expected to exceed 600,000 residents in about 2038. Towns, now containing almost 30% of the state's inhabitants, are projected to add more than 233,000 new people between 2010 and 2040, an increase of 14%. The town of Springfield is expected to see a 2.0% increase in population from 2010 to 2040.

- Have there been considerable changes for population demographics and employment over the past 10-20 or more years?

Age Statistics, 2000

	Town of Springfield	Dane County	Wisconsin
Median Age	37.9	33.2	36.0
% under 18	30.1	22.6	25.5
% over 65	7.5	9.3	13.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Town of Springfield Comprehensive Plan March 2007

Age Statistics, 2010

	Town of Springfield	Dane County	Wisconsin
Median Age	44.5	34.4	38.5
% under 18	24.7	21.7	23.6
% over 65	11.1	10.3	13.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The population in Dane County and the town of Springfield is aging. Between 2000 and 2010, the median age increased by 1.2 years in Dane County and 6.6 years in the town of Springfield. By comparison, the median age increased by 2.5 years in the state during 2000 and 2010. The median age in the town of Springfield is higher than the county and state median ages.

Labor Force Statistics

Entity	2000			2010		
	Employed	Population 16 and older	% Employed	Employed	Population 16 and older	% Employed
Town of Springfield	1,715	2,123	80.8	1,672	2,128	78.6
Dane County	256,180	341,422	75.0	290,309	393,403	73.8
Wisconsin	2,872,104	4,157,030	69.1	3,078,465	4,458,387	69.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Between 2000 and 2010 employment has decreased slightly for the town of Springfield, Dane County and Wisconsin which reflects the recession which began in 2007. However, compared to statewide and Dane County the employment levels are greater in the town.

9. Rate of Urbanization

- Does the project study area contain proposed new developments?

No. The Town Center Plan in the unincorporated hamlet of Springfield Corners identifies anticipated growth in the area, but the timeline for development is unknown.

- What are the main changes in developed areas vs. undeveloped areas over past 5, 10, and 20 years?

A few residential developments have occurred over the past 20 years in the project area. In particular in the unincorporated hamlet of Springfield Corners and near Kickaboo Road in the central section. There does not appear to be any changes in these areas vs. undeveloped areas other than the loss of agricultural land.

- Have there been significant conversions of agricultural land uses to other land use types, such as residential or industrial?

Yes. There has been some conversion of agricultural land as a result of residential development as mentioned in the previous response.

10. Public, State and/or Federal Agency Concerns

- Have local officials, federal and/or state agencies, property owners, stakeholders or others raised concerns related to potential indirect effects from the project? (e.g., land use changes, "sprawl", increase traffic, loss of farmland, etc.).

Yes. Several meetings have been held with local officials and the public. Preservation of the agricultural lands was identified as a goal for the project. Limiting the loss of agricultural land as a direct result of the Proposed Action is a factor in selecting the Preferred Alternative. Also, access is a main concern. Removing direct access would require motorists to modify their current routes in order to access US 12 at interchange locations.

Overall the town, city, and county are in support of the selected Preferred Alternative over other alternatives since it provides the best balance between preserving agricultural lands and providing access.

Conclusion

Through screening analysis using WisDOT's pre-screening for indirect effects procedure and FDM guidance on indirect effects, it is concluded that the factors of the project, its location and other conditions do not warrant further detailed analysis of the potential for indirect effects. The project would not have the likelihood to result in significant indirect effects as defined by NEPA. This conclusion was based on the evaluation of 10 pre-screening factors including project design concepts and scope; project purpose and need; project type; facility function (current and planned); project location; improved travel times to an area; local land use and planning considerations; population and demographic considerations; rate of urbanization; and public/agency concerns.

The data and evaluation supporting this conclusion are attached. Therefore, further evaluation of indirect effects in a detailed analysis is not warranted. If changes are made to the project design and alternatives, this screening would be re-examined for sufficiency.