

2008 IDOT Fall Planning Conference

Friday, October 3, 2008

Bob Soltau, MPO Coordinator, State Line
Area Transportation Study, Beloit

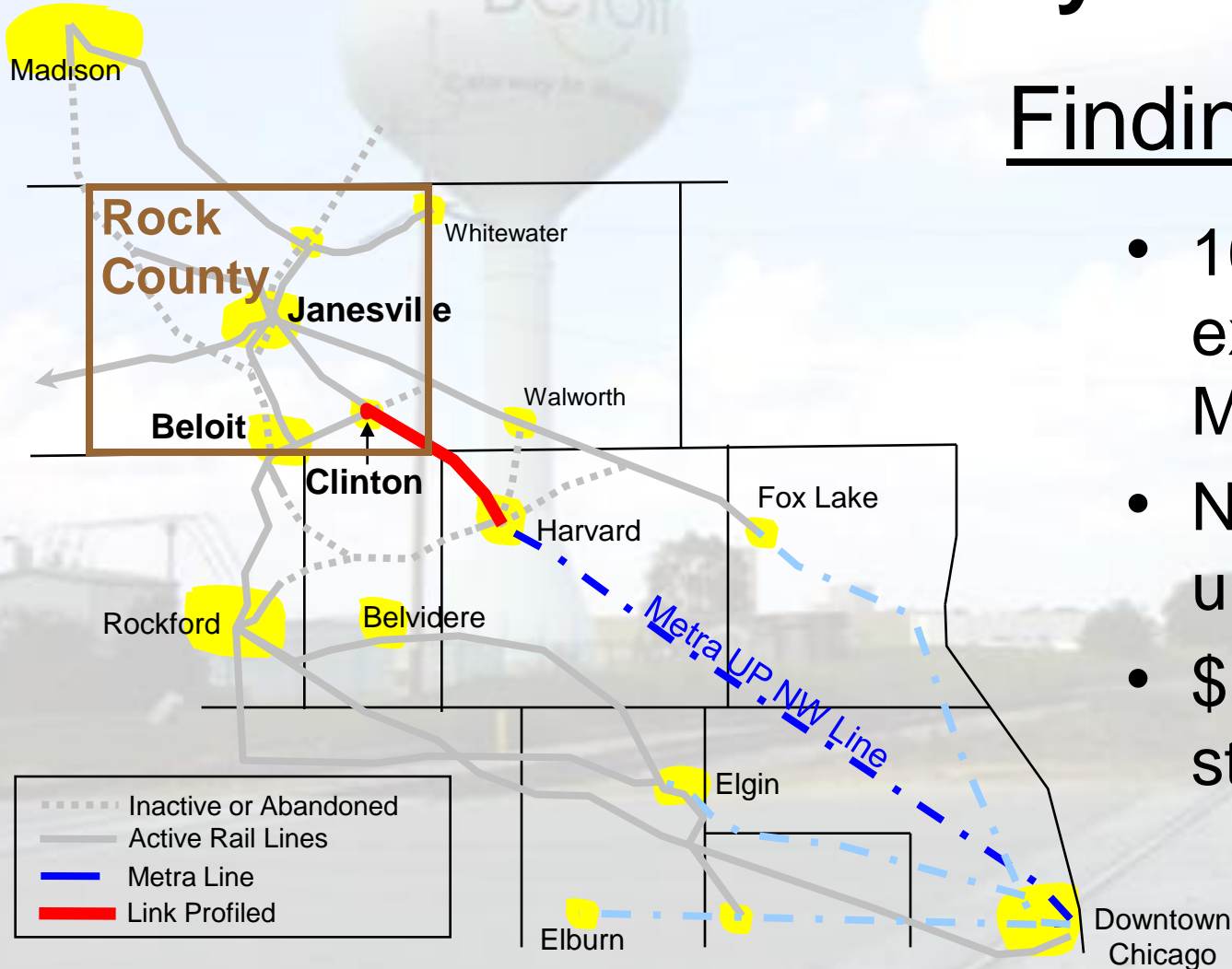
Gary Foyle, SCWCTS Project Manager,
Earth Tech | AECOM

South Central Wisconsin Commuter Transportation Study
SCWCTS

Study Background

- Interest in a Rock County commuter rail connection to Metra's Harvard line
- UP-NW Harvard-Clinton Commuter Rail Feasibility Study completed in 2002
- State grant provided to further study commuter rail link to Harvard
- Earth Tech hired fall 2006

2002 UP-NW Harvard-Clinton Commuter Rail Feasibility Study



Findings

- 16-mile extension of Metra
- No obstacles uncovered
- \$19 million for start-up

SCWCTS Study

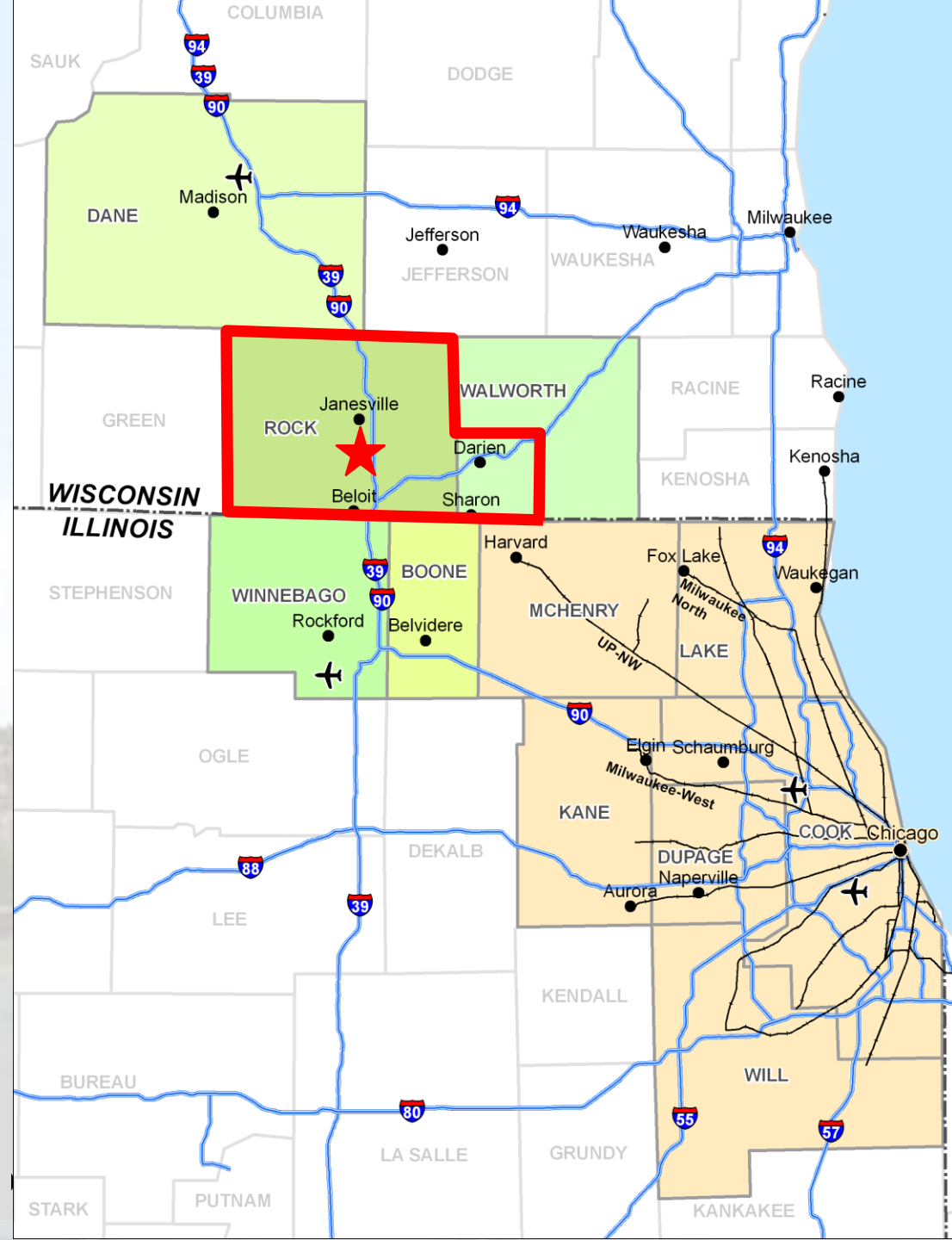
- At outset, decision made to
 - broaden study area to include Madison and Rockford
 - widened range of transit modes and infrastructure improvements

Study Area

- 11-county Madison to Chicago Corridor
- South Central Wisconsin:
 - Cities of Beloit & Janesville
 - Rock County, WI
 - SW corner of Walworth Co., WI

★ Beloit/Janesville

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Study Purpose

Evaluate the need and feasibility of transit links between South Central Wisconsin and

- Rockford, IL
- Northeastern, IL, and
- Madison, WI

Study Area Distances

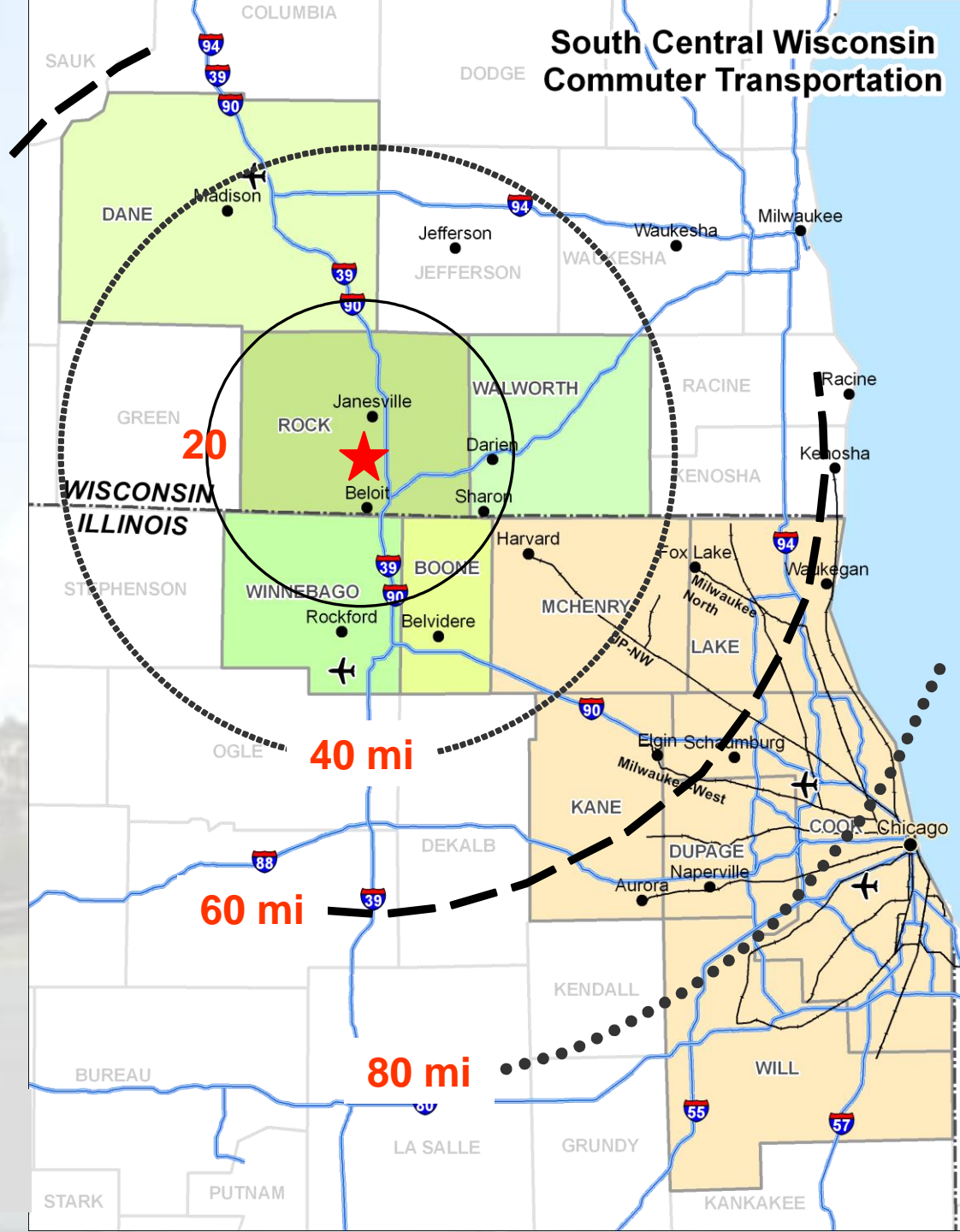
Madison-Chicago Corridor

Miles between Beloit/
Janesville AND:

Downtown Chicago	85
Schaumburg	60
Crystal Lake	40
Belvidere	25
Rockford	25
Madison	40

 **Beloit/Janesville**

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SCWCTS Study Contract

- \$250K State grant
- Task Order contract
 - Individual Tasks negotiated as project progresses
 - Each like a ‘Mini’ project
 - Scope
 - Schedule
 - Budget
 - Deliverable

Study Phases/Tasks & Timeline

Initial Study Tasks

- Stakeholder Survey
- Transportation Inventory
- Market Analysis
- Purpose & Need
- Screening of Alternatives

Decision Point



Final Work Tasks

- Rail Station Locations
- Commuter Rail Capital Costs
- Express Bus Plan & Costs
- Discounting Van Galder Fares
- Vanpools
- Public Meeting
- Project Website
- Future Project Work Plan
- Final report

Nov
06

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SCWCTS Initial Study Tasks

1. Stakeholder Survey
2. Initial Transportation Inventory
3. Market Analysis
4. Draft Purpose and Need
5. Screening of Alternatives

Stakeholder Survey

- Determine perceptions of
 - Need to improve regional transit links
 - Quality of current regional transit in accessing diverse locations
 - Maximum acceptable commuting distances and travel times
- Questionnaire mailed to 200 local leaders; 84 returned

Stakeholder Survey Summary

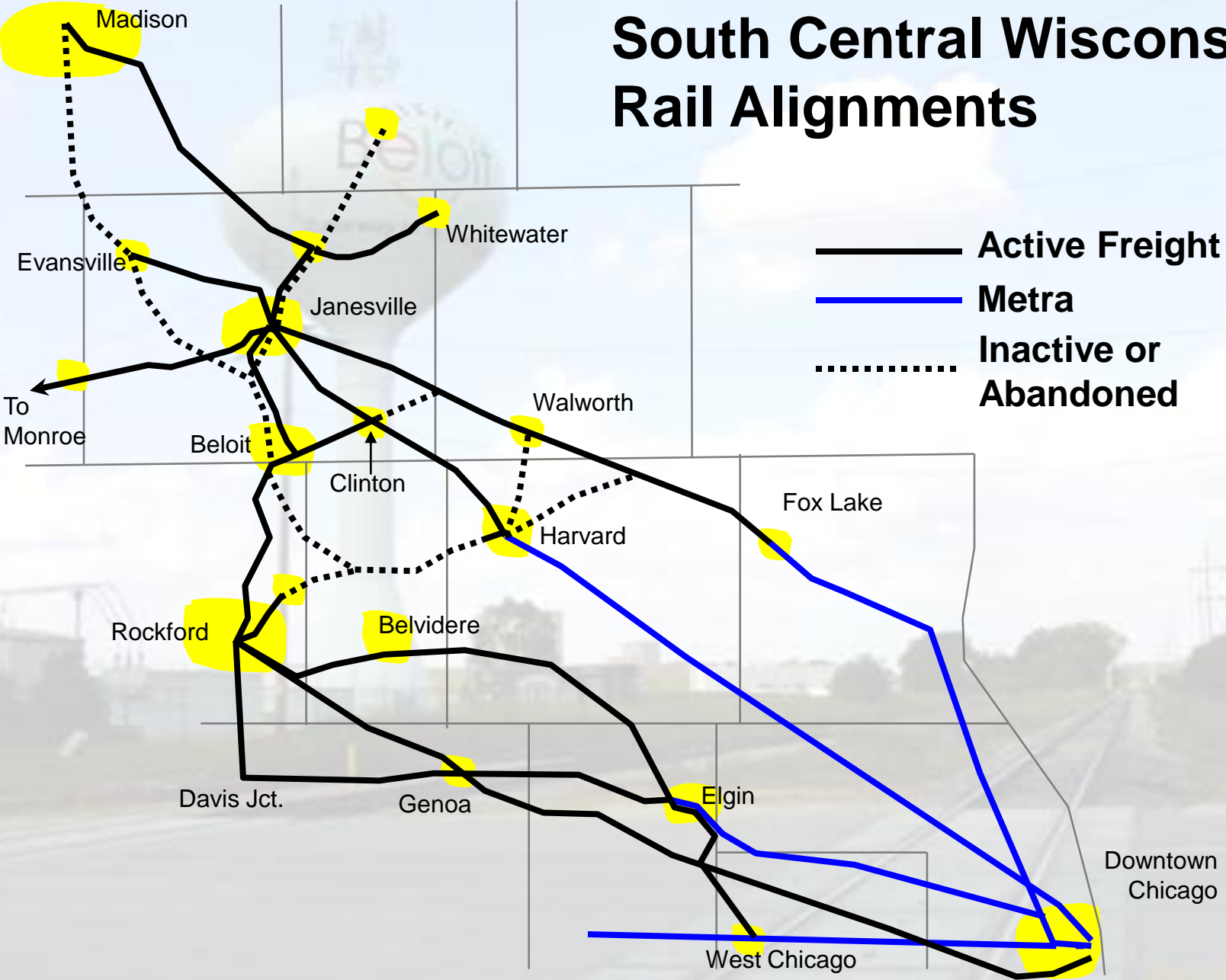
Perceived Demand for Regional Transit Access

	Chicago Metro Area	Rockford /Belvidere	Madison Area
Local Resident Access to Jobs	*	* *	* * *
Local Employers Access to Labor	*	* *	* *
Resident Access to Non-Work Destinations	* *	*	* * *

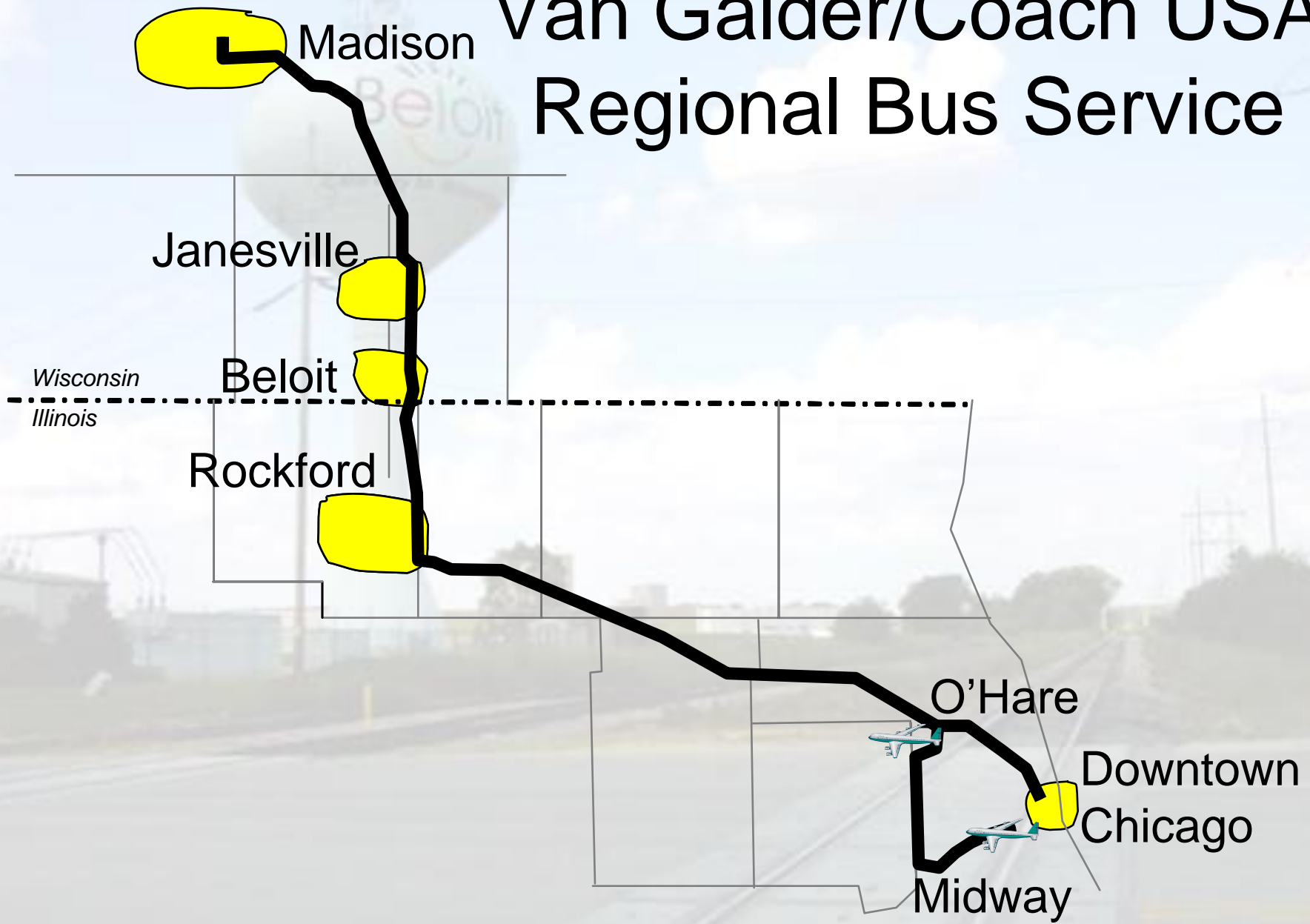
Initial Transportation Inventory

- Freight railroads, including abandoned rail lines
- Private and public regional transit
- Highways that could be considered for new or expanded transit service
- Initiatives that have been proposed by others

South Central Wisconsin Rail Alignments



Van Galder/Coach USA Regional Bus Service



Market Analysis Findings

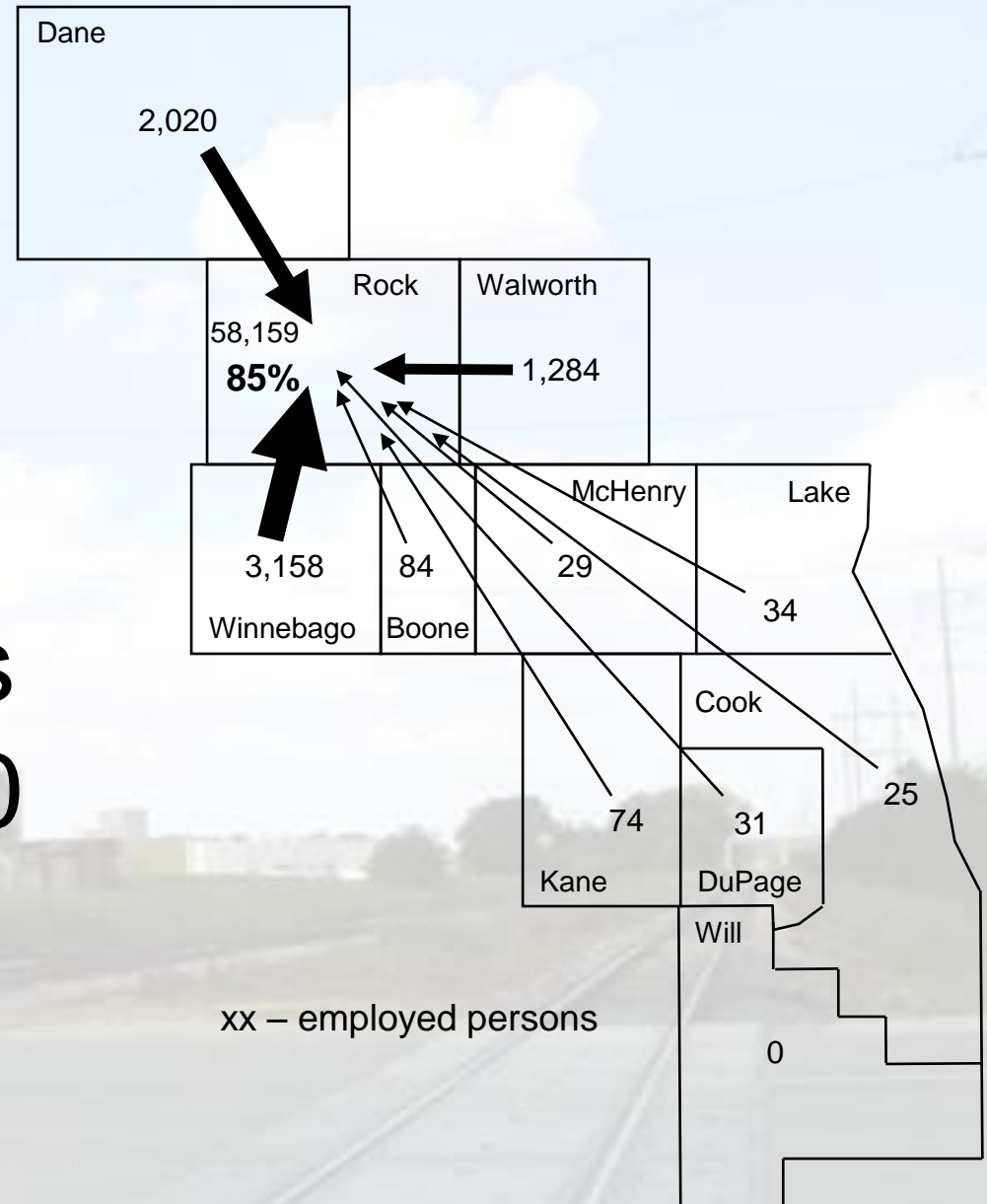
Where Rock County Residents Worked in 2000



SOURCE: U.S. Census

Market Analysis Findings

Where Rock County Workers Resided in 2000



SOURCE: U.S. Census

Rock County % Residents by Place of Work

	2000
Rock County	78%
Wisconsin Outside of Rock Co.	14%
Outside of Wisconsin	9%
Total	100%

Rock County % Residents by Place of Work

	1990	2000	2006
Rock County	80%	78%	74% ↓
Wisconsin Outside of Rock Co.	10%	14%	↑ 20%
Outside of Wisconsin	10%	9%	6% ↓
Total	100%	100%	100%

Draft Purpose and Need

- Report contents:
 - Description of Corridor
 - Existing and planned transportation resources
 - Review of the transportation system's performance
 - **Specific transportation problems** and potential regional transit markets
 - Goals and objectives

SCWCTS Selected Problems

- Imbalance in jobs-housing; SCW is an 'exporter' of workers
- High % of residents with occupations in manufacturing
- Compared to 11-county area, South Cent. WI has
 - higher rate of unemployment
 - lower median household incomes
 - lower wages for local jobs
- Current regional transit generally
 - does not serve all regional destinations
 - slower than auto
 - more costly than auto
 - requires an auto to access

Transit Alternatives Screened

- Commuter Rail
 - 9 linked to Metra and NE Illinois
 - 4 in the Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford Corridor
 - 1 Rail Preservation Network
- 2 Exclusive Busways, BRT
- Express Bus Routes
 - 6 in the Madison-Janesville-Beloit-Rockford Corridor
 - 2 in other Corridors
- 2 Feeder Bus Routes to Metra
- 2 Specialized Transit Alternatives

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Pivot Meetings

- Two meetings of decision-makers to present research and screening results
- Technical: half-day workshop
- Stakeholder: present and seek feedback on Technical meeting recommendations

Pivot Meetings' Recommendations for Final Study Work Tasks

1. Recommend Commuter Rail Station Locations
2. Prepare Commuter Rail Operating Plans and Capital Costs
3. Develop Express Bus Plan & Costs
4. Evaluate Discounting Van Galder Fares
5. Investigate Vanpools
6. Assist Convening of Public Meeting
7. Develop Project Website
8. Future Project Work Plan
9. Prepare Final report

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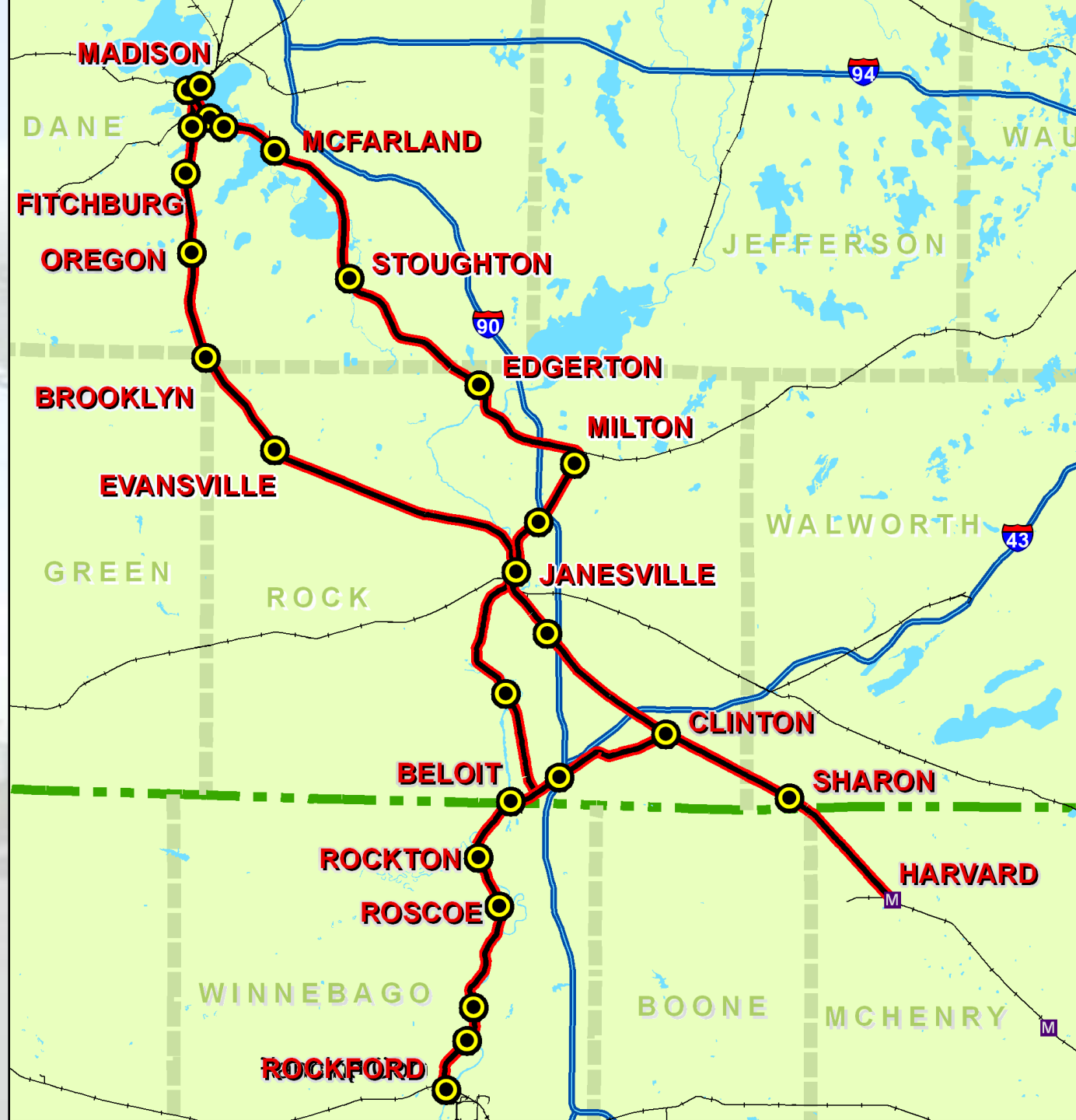
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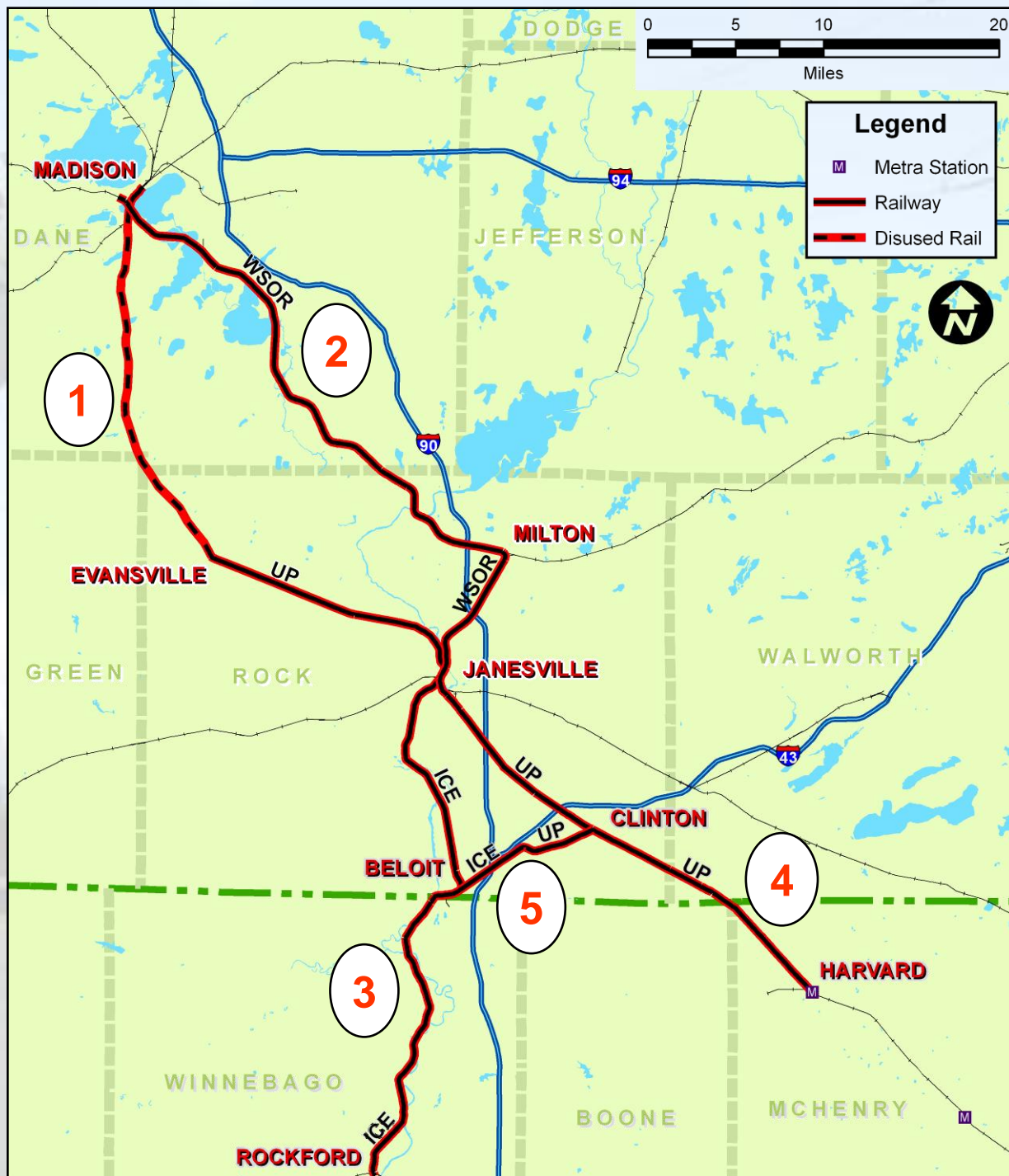
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Rail Station Locations

- Generalized Locations
- Not Universe of Potential Sites
- Nodes to Guide Land Use Decisions



Commuter Rail Operating Plans & Capital Costs

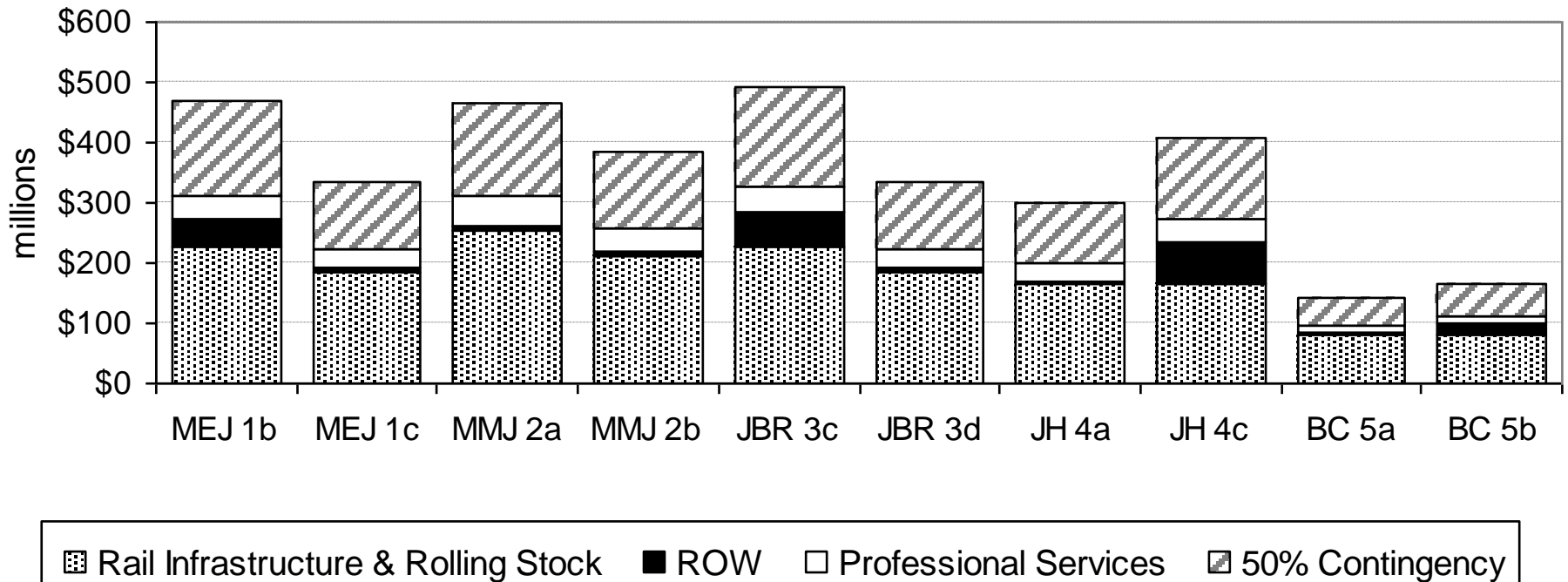


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Commuter Rail Capital Costing Approach

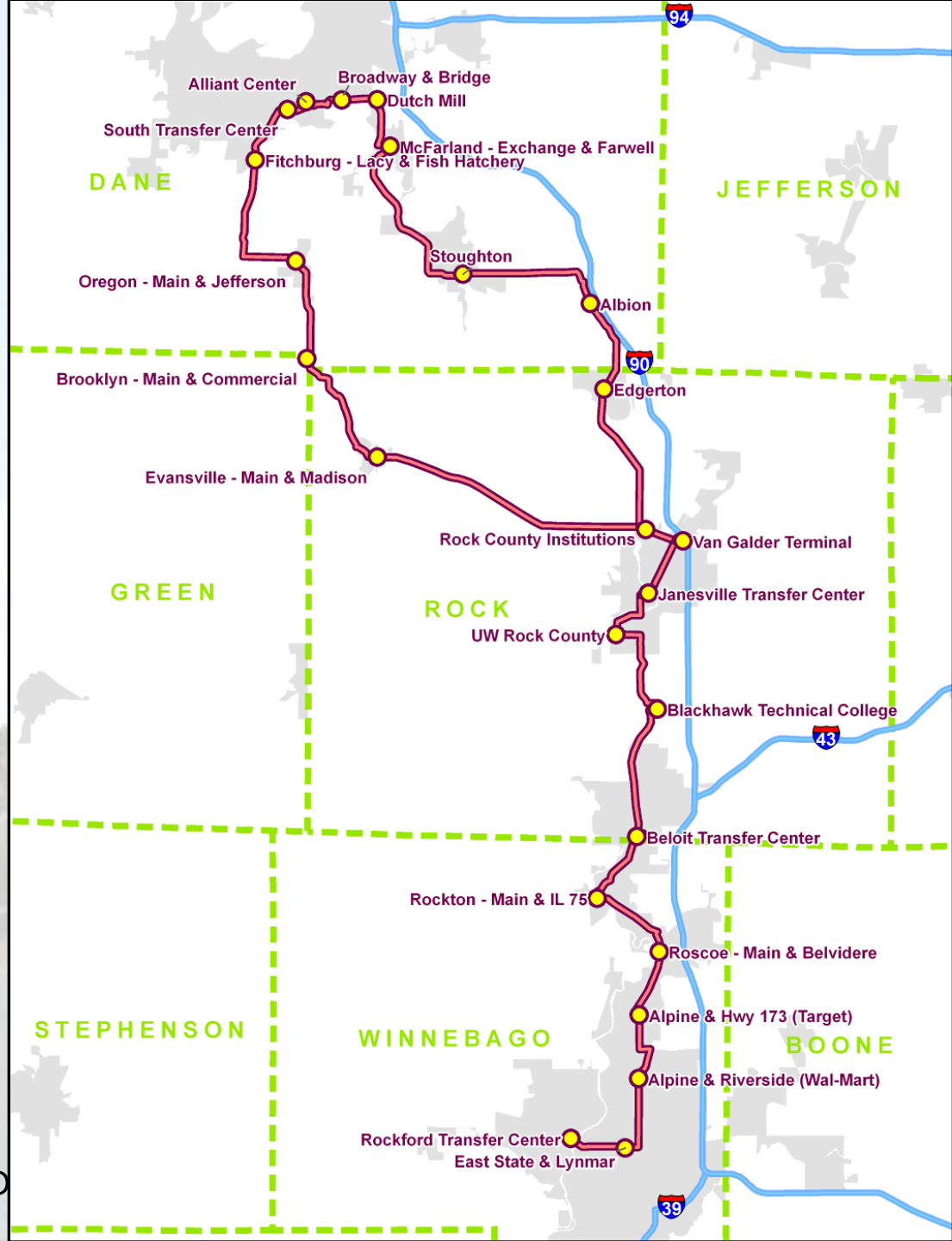
- Inputs
 - Those we can control
 - Those outside of our control or knowledge
- Future rail scenarios, including:
 - Rail ROW ownership
 - Freight operator & traffic
 - Other passenger rail operations (Madison, Rockford)
- Committee selected two scenarios for each of the 5 corridors

Commuter Rail Summary Capital Costs by Corridor and Scenario



Regional Express Bus

- Rockford-Madison
- Serve city downtowns
- Major arterials, but not I-90
- Alternative alignments
Janesville-Madison



Regional Express Bus Service

- Potential mitigation for I-90 construction induced congestion
- Options
 - Combinations of operators
 - Beloit, Janesville, Rockford, Madison
 - Development of park-n-rides
 - Van Galder Integration
- Estimated annual operating costs
 - \$550k to \$830k

Discounting Van Galder Fares

- Use small scale test to evaluate impacts of a discounted commuter fare
- Focus on Janesville-Madison
- Communities assist in promotion
- Initiate in September 2008

Vanpools

Vanpool Programs serving SCW:

- State of Wisconsin Vanpool Rideshare Program - current
- Pace Vanpool Incentive Program (VIP) - current
- VPSI, Inc. - potential

Project Website

<http://www.co.rock.wi.us/Dept/SCWCTS/>

Site is Hosted by Rock County



Public Open House

- June 18, 2008
- Blackhawk Technical College in Janesville
- Open house format
- Attendance: ~50

Recommended Future Study Topics

- Follow-thru on Van Galder fare demo
- Promote vanpools to area residents
- Coordinate with WisDOT
 - RIDESHARE program
 - on park-and-rides
 - on I-90 project
- Revise Long Range Transportation Plans
- Preserve Rail Facilities & Rights-of-Way

former UP line north of Evansville, WI

