

CHIPPEWA-EAU CLAIRE

# MPO QUARTERLY

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Edition #09



Passenger Rail  
*Update On  
Passenger  
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Chippewa Valley*

Traffic Calming  
Funds  
*Proposed State  
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Chippewa  
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*Master Plan  
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Started*



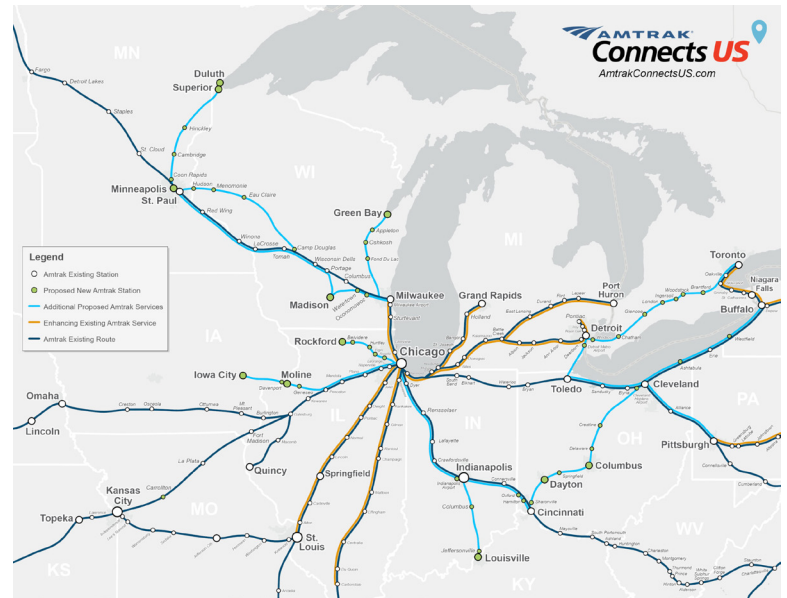
## Passenger Rail Update

In January, the West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition (Coalition) hosted their 2023 annual meeting. At that meeting, presenters discussed current happenings with passenger rail serving the urban area. The speakers included WisDOT, Amtrak, contract passenger rail operators, and the High Speed Rail Alliance.

The Coalition has been working with the Chippewa-St. Croix Rail Commission and WisDOT on two passenger rail options: 1) Eau Claire to Twin Cities corridor and 2) Amtrak service from Chicago/Milwaukee to the Twin Cities traveling through Eau Claire (see map to the right).

Applications are being prepared for the Federal Rail Administration Corridor Program. Successful applications will receive a \$500,000 planning assistance grant to determine the feasibility and economic benefits of the proposed lines.

The Coalition's [YouTube page](#) has all the presentations from the Annual Meeting. If you are interested in passenger rail in the Chippewa Valley, these videos will do an amazing job updating you on what has been done and what future plans are.



## Town of Anson

In February, the Town of Anson passed a resolution to join the Chippewa-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). With Anson joining the MPO, all four cities and villages, all 11 towns, and both counties are now members and part of the MPO.

## Project Updates

Chippewa Valley Safe Routes To School (SRTS) Partnership - Ongoing. Currently updating Eau Claire SRTS Plan. Planning for the second annual Walk and Roll Challenge

Chippewa Valley Bike Routes - Communities continue to purchase and install additional signage. End of 2023 is still the target date for full installation in the Chippewa Valley. MPO staff continues to facilitate.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Story Maps - [City of Chippewa Falls](#) 2023-2026 and [Chippewa County](#) 2023-2026 are updated. Eau Claire County will be started in 2023.

Village of Lake Hallie CTH OO/Old Abe State Trail crossing study - Completed.

Urban Work Program and TIP Recertification - Completed in September and October.

City of Chippewa Falls Wayfinding Plan - Ongoing.

Chippewa County Crash Report - Completed.

## Interesting Watch

In 2006, PBS released a series called  $e^2$  (e squared). This series looked at the economies of being environmentally conscious and focused on design, energy, and transportation over the series' three years. One of the better episodes was [e<sup>2</sup>: Bogota, Building a Sustainable City](#) (link to a YouTube video). This episode looks at Bogota's path to try to make one of the most chaotic cities in the world into a model of civic-minded and sustainable urban planning. A quote in the episode "Have people believe and think in the long-term and in big things," is in a part of the show that reminds us that the communities that we help plan are people and their daily lives. It also talks about the need for the public to be invested in both the process and outcome.

The entire  $e^2$  series is available on [Amazon](#) (this link takes you to Season 2). The Bogota episode is 25 minutes and is extremely inspirational for those of us in professions and elected officials working every day to create better and more livable cities for all populations. It also reminds us that we can be a part of the solution to make large and meaningful changes in our communities that impact people in our community and enhance their lives.

### The Chippewa-Eau Claire MPA includes:

The cities of Altoona, Chippewa Falls, and Eau Claire, the Village of Lake Hallie, and all or parts of the towns of Anson, Brunswick, Eagle Point, Hallie, Lafayette, Pleasant Valley, Seymour, Tilden, Union, Washington, and Wheaton.  
[www.wcwrpc.org](http://www.wcwrpc.org) 715.836.2918

### Chippewa Valley Airport - Master Plan

The Chippewa Valley Regional Airport (EAU) has started their Master Plan process. They held a public open house on February 16th. At that meeting, the Master Plan consultants discussed the planning process and were available for questions from 6pm to 8pm. The initial part of the planning process includes the inventory of existing conditions and resources at EAU. The entire process will take approximately 20 months and is planned to be completed in June 2024.



### Initiative to Keep Streets and Communities Safe

Earlier this month, Governor Evers announced his 2023-2025 budget. Included in this budget are initiatives to reduce reckless driving, promote safer driving, and keep streets and communities safe. The plan includes financial help to communities to re-engineer roads to improve the safety of all modes of traffic.

The proposed budget provides \$60 million over the biennium for traffic calming grants to construct traffic circles, pedestrian islands, bump-outs at crosswalks, and other treatments that slow vehicle traffic, making conditions safer for bikers and pedestrians. It also looks to restore roadway design considerations in State law that support non-motorist infrastructure known as complete streets, empowering local communities to safely integrate all modes of transportation.

#### Did you know?

Regarding safe driving behavior, according to the press release for this funding, 20 percent of all Wisconsin licensed drivers have at least one conviction for operating while intoxicated.

### Contact Information

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### MPA Geography - 101

How good is your geography in the MPA? We will continue to show a different aerial photo of the MPA, and you can try and see if you know where it is located.



MPA Geography 101 Answer: This photo is in the Town of Lafayette. The Town Hall, Town Garage, and Town Park are in the photo. Here is a [link](#) to the web map.

## Map of the Quarter

The map below shows the road system in the MPA. As you can see, the local roads are the narrowest, followed by county highways and U.S. highways, and Interstate Highway 94 is the widest. The map allows the viewer to see the road system and spatial patterns in the MPA. For fun, can you pick out the four public high schools, Oakwood Mall, Chippewa Valley Airport, and Northern Wisconsin State Fairgrounds on the map?

# Chippewa-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Organization

