

Agenda Items 1-14

Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission Staff Report on Projects for the Bimonthly Meeting on 12.13.2017

	Agenda Topic or Project Name	Purpose, Benefit, Project deliverables, and Contract Amount	Project Time Period	Project Status and Next Steps	Contact
1	Roll Call	Confirm a quorum	Today's Meeting	NA	NA
2	Minutes of last MRRPC Bimonthly Meeting	Confirm past meetings decisions and outcomes	Today's Meeting	NA	NA
3	Treasurer's Report	Present all financial activities occurring on the MRRPC accounts and the four business Revolving Loan Funds since last Bimonthly Meeting.	Today's Meeting	The MRRPC administers four federally funded business revolving loan funds that were awarded to the MRRPC between 1989 and 1995 to assist in overcoming rural economic distress and flooding. The loan funds cover all nine MRRPC counties. The latest was a \$100,000 Loan approved to Drifless Brewery Company LLC in Soldiers Grove on November 8, 2017.	Greg Flogstad, Director 608.785.9396 greg@mrrpc.com
4	Public Comments on MRRPC's Title VI Plan Update	Opportunity for public comments on MRRPC's Plan to comply with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 and all related regulations and statutes including a Limited English Proficiency Plan. Federal regulations call for input on plans regarding compliance with Title VI.	Public comments are to be received during December 13, 2017 Commission Meeting	Public notices were placed in regional newspapers and today's meeting agenda was mailed to minority groups in the region in order to solicit public comments.	Peter Fletcher, Planner 608.785.9396 peter@mrrpc.com
5	Decision on MRRPC's Title VI Plan Update Resolution	Federal regulations call for adoption of Title VI plans after public comment period to continue to receive federal funding and carry out programs.	It is proposed that the Commission act on the Resolution at today's meeting	Plan has been updated and needs approval. Vote on Resolution adopting Title VI plan.	Peter Fletcher, Planner 608.785.9396 peter@mrrpc.com
6	Decision on amendment to 2017 Wisconsin DOT work Program	An annual work plan is required to receive WIDOT funding for the Transportation Planning work in the Region. The funding allows the Transportation Planner to provide planning and development assistance to communities in the region. Total Budget \$62,872 – Federal \$50,297, State \$6,287, MRRPC \$6,287	January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017	During 2017 time allocated to Element V (Local assistance and State/Fed. Coop.) of the workplan was exceeded. It is required by WIDOT to modify the 2017 workplan "Planner's Time" percentages to reflect the actual time spent the elements.	Peter Fletcher, Planner 608.785.9396 peter@mrrpc.com
7	Decision on 2018 Wisconsin DOT Work Plan	An annual work plan is required to receive WIDOT funding for the Transportation Planning work in the Region. The funding allows the Transportation Planner to provide planning and development	January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018	A draft work plan has been prepared and submitted to the MRRPC and WIDOT for their review and approval. The MRRPC and WIDOT must approve the work plan.	Peter Fletcher, Planner 608.785.9396 peter@mrrpc.com

		assistance to communities in the region. Total Budget \$62,872 – Federal \$50,297, State \$6,287, MRRPC \$6,287			
8	Update on Buffalo County Zoning Ordinance	New zoning ordinance is needed to deal with growing development activity. Zoning Ordinance and Maps are to be completed on or prior to May 2018. Contract amount is for \$43,964.	May 2015 – May 2018	Staff has worked with the Buffalo County Zoning Department and has completed the first draft of the revised Zoning Ordinance. Over the past several months Town's reviewed their draft zoning maps that they submitted to the County in the Spring and have made final modifications. The first draft of the Buffalo County revised zoning map will be completed in December (a couple of Town's were late in returning their draft maps). The Zoning Committee is reviewing the draft documents and making final modifications prior to holding public information meetings. The public information meetings are tentatively scheduled for January/February. Input from those meetings will be compiled and modifications will be made to the draft zoning ordinance and zoning map prior to conducting public hearings.	Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com
9.	Report on October 2 nd Launch of SMRT Bus From Tomah to La Crosse	La Crosse County Public Transit Feasibility Study analyzed and made recommendations on service to Trempealeau and Monroe Counties. Based on the study a SMRT Bus route was developed and began service on October 2 nd to serve Tomah – La Crosse.	2017	On October 2, 2017 a pilot route consisting of two round trips (morning and evening) per day (Mon. – Fri.) began operating between Tomah and La Crosse. This pilot route is currently being funded by La Crosse County and Gundersen Health to date. Staff has been meeting with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to discuss the availability of grant funding for operating and capital costs associated with the expanded route in 2018. In the first month of service the bus provided 98 one-way trips.	Peter Fletcher, Planner 608.785.9396 peter@mrrpc.com

10.	Discussion on solid biomass economic development initiatives for heat and electricity	One of the MRRPC's economic development goals is to encourage greater use of the region's solid biomass resources for heat and electricity. The regions overstocked forests, agricultural residues, and many other forms of low quality woody biomass growing in the region can be sustainably harvested, processed and burned as an extremely low carbon emitting renewable fuel that would generate income for landowners, create hometown jobs and reduce our reliance on imported and costly fossil fuels (fuel oil, propane, and coal).	2018 - 2020	This is the initial discussion on this regional economic development goal. Initiatives the MRRPC could undertake to encourage greater use of our region's woody biomass include: (1) Develop marketing materials centered on our region's characteristics to increase awareness and recognition of the benefits derived from biomass thermal and electrical energy. (2) Encourage legislation for investment tax credits on biomass facilities like solar and wind have. (3) Encourage Dairyland Power to process wood pellets on site for co-firing with coal (a well proven and practiced technology) and to also sell pellets to home owners, businesses, industry and farms (poultry) for heat. (4) Encourage large institutions to fuel switch if feasible like burning of wood chips like Gundersen Clinic and Hospital. Other examples of businesses and institutions that should be encouraged to study switching to woody biomass for heat: Ft. Mc Coy, Organic Valley, universities, colleges, hospitals, clinics, senior housing, nursing homes, schools, (5) Undertake a regional wood industry cluster economic development initiative with the State Wood Energy Team. (6) Pass a resolution and encourage others to pass resolutions that shows support for the Biomass Thermal Energy Council's (BTEC) Midwest Vision for 2025. BTEC proposes that 15% of all thermal energy in the Midwest come from renewable energy sources with 10% derived from sustainable produced biomass by 2025. The remainder of this energy would come from solar thermal and geothermal.	Greg Flogstad, Director 608.785.9396 greg@mrrpc.com
11a	Report on Crawford County's Farmland Preservation Plan	Crawford County is required to update its Farmland Preservation Plan to meet the requirements of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Protection Working Land's Initiative Program. Counties are required to designate Farmland Preservation areas in their counties for land owners to be eligible to receive Farmland Preservation Tax Credits. The Farmland Preservation Plan must also be consistent with the County's comprehensive plan. Total Project Cost \$60,000, The MRRPC contract is for \$30,000.	June 2014 – August 2017	Project completed. Plan has been adopted by the County Board.	Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com
11b	Crawford County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update	Update the Crawford County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. \$30,000 federal grant approved requiring a \$10,000 match from MRRPC and	2016-2018	A grant has been approved by FEMA and the money has been awarded. The grant cycle ends October 30, 2018. A contract with the Planning Commission for an	Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com

		<p>Crawford County. The original plan was prepared to reduce costs and losses from natural disasters and some manmade disasters. This is an update to the existing plan. Inventories county's vulnerabilities to various types of disasters. The Plan Inventories and maps critical facilities and all structures in floodplains. The Plan Develops projects and strategies to reduce losses from future disasters. Plans must be approved by DHS-FEMA and Wisconsin Emergency Management. Once the updated plan is approved, the county and other participating local governments are eligible for Federal and State Hazard Mitigation Grant programs.</p>		<p>amount not to exceed \$29,000 has been signed. A public hearing explaining the update process was held on 4/27/16. A hazard risk assessment survey was mailed to all municipalities and first responders with a May 31st deadline for return. Staff has begun updating the demographic information such as populations, land use, employment and updating the risk assessment portion of the plan, i.e. number of times each hazard has occurred within the county and the amount of damage caused by the hazard. In addition, staff has also compiled the returned surveys. A second survey has been sent out to those municipalities which did not return the first survey. Staff is finalizing the social-economic data and hazard assessment chapters of the plan and has begun updating the maps. This involves migrating from the Mapinfo software over to the Arc Info software. Staff has continued identifying structures located in the FEMA100-year and updating their assessed values. Staff will be setting up meetings with county staff from highway, public health, land conservation and sheriff departments to obtain mitigation ideas from them.</p>	
11c	Trempealeau County Hazard Mitigation Plan update	<p>Update the Trempealeau County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. \$30,000 federal planning grant approved requiring a \$10,000 match from MRRPC and Trempealeau County. The original was prepared to reduce costs and losses from natural disasters and some manmade disasters. This is an update to the existing plan. The Plan inventories the county's vulnerabilities to various types of disasters. The Plan inventories and maps critical facilities and all structures in floodplains. The Plan develops projects and strategies to reduce losses from future disasters. Plans must be approved by DHS-FEMA and Wisconsin Energy Management. Once the updated plan is approved, the county and other participating local governments are eligible for Federal and State Hazard Mitigation Grant programs.</p>	2016-2018	<p>A grant has been approved by FEMA and the money has been awarded. The grant cycle ends October 30, 2018. A contract between the Planning Commission and Trempealeau County for an amount not to exceed \$28,000 has been signed. A public hearing explaining the update process was held on April 12th. A hazard risk assessment survey was mailed to all municipalities and first responders with a May 31st deadline for return. Staff also made a presentation of the updating process at the April 26th Trempealeau County Towns Association meeting. Staff is finalizing the updating of the demographic information such as populations, land use, employment and updating the risk assessment portion of the plan, i.e. number of times each hazard has occurred within the county and the amount of damage caused by the hazard. In addition, staff has also begun compiling the returned surveys. A second survey has been sent out to those municipalities which did not return the first survey. Staff has begun the process of updating information on the over 630 structures located within</p>	<p>Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com</p>

				the FEMA 100-year floodplain. Trempealeau County Land Information office has provided updated GIS data as a base for the mapping required for the plan. Staff made a presentation to the Law Enforcement/Emergency Management Committee to update them on the progress of the plan.	
11d	Scenic Mississippi Regional Transit (SMRT) bus serving Crawford, Vernon Monroe, and La Crosse counties	<p>Develop a fixed route public transportation service for Crawford, La Crosse, and Vernon Counties. Bus transportation will service commuters, elderly, disabled, medical appointments, and personal travel.</p> <p>Projected operating costs for 2017 are approximately \$350,000. Funding comes from a federal DOT grant, local governments, corporate donations and the fare box.</p>	Service Began on December 3, 2012 - present	<p>The SMRT Bus has been operating for five years in to La Crosse Vernon and Crawford Counties. In 2016 ridership increased by 8% over 2015 ridership. So far in 2017 ridership has decreased approximately 6% through the first nine months of 2017.</p> <p>Staff assisted La Crosse County in applying for an Bremer Grant for the SMRT Bus in 2018. Staff met with Bremer officials in November to discuss the grant application.</p> <p>The MRRPC will continue marketing and promotion and evaluate new routes and schedules and integrate service modifications that expand to Tomah and possibly Arcadia.</p>	Peter Fletcher, Planner 608.785.9396 peter@mrrpc.com
11e	Viroqua Outdoor Recreation Planning	Plan for maintenance and expansion of outdoor recreation opportunities in the city of Viroqua. Plan makes the city eligible for State Land and Water Conservation Grants and State Stewardship Grants. The city would like a new bike trail within the city and the development of the old swimming pool property.	2017	Staff has met with the city administrator and explained the process and time frame of developing a plan. Staff also made a presentation to the city parks committee on the process and what information the city will need to provide during the planning process. Staff has updated the old data found in the plan and submitted this data to the city for review.	Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com
11f	The transition of the Equipment and Metal Manufacturing Association (EMMA) Inc. to The Upper Mississippi River Manufacturing Alliance TUMMA Inc. Industry Cluster Initiative	Manufacturing is a priority economic sector because it is a major economic driver of the region. MRRPC serves a logistical support role by helping convene manufacturers to network in hopes developing joint workforce development services and ventures on new or better products. On November 24, 2015 EMMA voted to change its name and bylaws to TUMMA to invite all manufacturers in the tristate region to join. Its primary focus will be on improving the skill sets and knowledge of the region's manufacturing work force. A TUMMA steering group was established and met regularly.	Continual	On July 15, 2015, the EMMA board of directors met with Western Wisconsin Technical College, Workforce Connections, Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board on the concept of forming a manufacturing alliance organization like the North-East Wisconsin Manufacturing Alliance. The EMMA board was open to the idea of reorganizing under a manufacturing brand that would include all kinds of manufacturers. This concept was popular and all parties agreed to further pursue this concept. The MRRPC instigated this industry cluster initiative in 2005 and has been serving as a liaison for EMMA since and was instrumental in helping EMMA incorporate in 2007. In 2015 the MRRPC Director assisted EMMA-TUMMA in preparing amended articles of	

		<p>Officer elections were held in January 2016. A fulltime director was hired in February 2016 and resigned in March 2016. Funding for initial position was provided by the Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board. In June 2016, a \$80,000 Request for Proposals RFP was issued by the Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board. The RFP was awarded in July to Western Technical College to hire a Business Services Coordinator to assist TUMMA and other industry sectors. The Business Services Coordinator will work directly with technical colleges, universities, Workforce Boards and manufacturers in the region to raise awareness of manufacturing careers and develop workforce development initiatives. Major emphasis will be to increase K-12 students' interests in manufacturing careers. This position will be housed in the new Integrated Technology Center on the WTC campus.</p>		<p>incorporation and completing the IRS name change form from EMMA to TUMMA so TUMMA could assume EMMA's tax ID number and non-profit 501c 6 status.</p> <p>TUMMA sponsored a Manufacturing Week Luncheon on October 6. During this Luncheon presentations were made by Ron Wanek President of Ashley Furniture Dan Conroy the HR Director for Nexen Group Inc. Both discussed their company's history and what they are doing to try to solve the skills gap in their employment recruiting. A presentation was also made by the Onalaska High School Technical Education Instructor about establishing their Fabrication Lab. The Western Technical College President also discussed their programs for manufacturing and the resources offered with their new Integrated Technology Center. TUMMA will be having their Annual Meeting on December 14, 2017. From 3-5 PM at the Western Technical College's Integrated Technology Center. They will have two industry spotlight presentations and a presentation on ways to connect with K-12 students and teachers.</p>	
11g	Contract to Update Comprehensive Plans for Trempealeau County Towns	<p>Trempealeau County contracted with the MRRPC to update the 13 town comprehensive plans and will provide the MRRPC \$2,200 per town to do so. Trempealeau County will be responsible for the mapping. Total contract calls for \$28,600 in funding to MRRPC and completion of all 13 plans by December 2017.</p>	June 2016 – December 2017	<p>MRRPC staff has completed draft Comprehensive Plan revisions for 13 Towns in Trempealeau County. The revised plans have been forwarded to Trempealeau County and the respective Town's for their review. Towns are reviewing draft plans and scheduling public hearings to gain public input on the revised plans. The Town of Chimney Rock held their public hearing in May and approved their plan. The Town of Lincoln held a public hearing in June. The remaining towns will be holding public hearings later in 2017 and 2018.</p>	<p>Peter Fletcher, Planner 608.785.9396 peter@mrrpc.com</p>
11h	MRRPC preparing an update the Mississippi River Parkway Commission's corridor management plan. PF	<p>The Wisconsin Mississippi River Parkway has contracted with the MRRPC to prepare an update to the Corridor Management Plan for the Great River Road. The contract for the project is \$7,200.</p>	2017-2018	<p>Staff inventoried public facilities along the Great River Road and presented a draft inventory to the Parkway Commission. MRPC Commissioners finalized rating GRR public facilities in September and MRRPC staff tabulated the ratings. The MRRPC is utilizing the information to assist the MRPC in preparing recommendations for the various facilities. It is anticipated the first draft of the updated CMP will be completed in January/February 2018 with plan completion in Spring/Summer of 2018.</p>	<p>Peter Fletcher, Planner 608.785.9396 peter@mrrpc.com</p>

11i	Monroe County Hazard Mitigation Planning	A grant to DHS-FEMA was written by staff to update the Monroe County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans are prepared to reduce costs and losses from natural disasters for counties and municipalities. This is an update to the existing plan. The plan inventory's the county's vulnerabilities to various types of disasters. Inventories and maps critical facilities and all structures in floodplains. Develops projects and strategies to reduce losses from future disasters. The Plan must be approved by DHS-FEMA and Wisconsin Emergency Management. Once the updated plan is approved, the county and other participating local governments are eligible for Federal and State Hazard Mitigation Grant programs. The total project is in the amount of \$43,744, of which \$32,808 is the grant award and the remaining \$10,936 is a required match.	2016-2018	A contract has been signed and work has begun on this project. Staff has met with the Monroe County Emergency Management Director and a representative from the sheriff's office to work out how the grant will be administered and who will perform what activities. Staff has also begun updating the required social – economic data. In addition, 2 surveys have been sent out to all municipalities, first responders, fire departments, and policing departments. A meeting with Monroe County, MRRPC staff and a representative from Fort Mc Coy was held on June 12 th . Staff met with the Monroe County Land Information Officer and obtained base maps for the county. Updating the structures located within the FEMA 100-year floodplain has begun. Staff made a presentation at the Monroe County Towns Association meeting on August 17 th .	Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com
11j	Vernon County Hazard Mitigation Plan	A grant to DHS-FEMA was written by staff to update the Vernon County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan and to complete county parcel mapping. The MRRPC will be preparing the plan update and the county will be responsible for completing the parcel mapping. Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans are prepared to reduce costs and losses from natural disasters for counties and municipalities. This is an update to the existing plan. The plan inventory's the county's vulnerabilities to various types of disasters. Inventories and maps critical facilities and all structures in floodplains. Develops projects and strategies to reduce losses from		A contract has been signed and work has begun on this project. Staff has met with the Vernon County Emergency Management Director and the Vernon County Land Information Officer to work out how the grant will be administered. Staff has also begun updating the required social – economic data. In addition, 2 surveys have been sent out to all municipalities, first responders, fire chiefs and police chiefs. Staff made a presentation at the Vernon County Towns Association meeting on April 27 th . A second set of surveys have been sent out to those who have not responded to the first set of surveys. Staff met with the Vernon County Land Information Officer to discuss mapping needs. Work on updating the structures located in the FEMA 100-	Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com

		future disasters. The Plan must be approved by DHS-FEMA and Wisconsin Emergency Management. Once the updated plan is approved, the county and other participating local governments are eligible for Federal and State Hazard Mitigation Grant programs. The total project is in the amount of \$259,793.98, of which \$40,000 of that amount is for the plan update.		year flood plain has begun. The Vernon County Emergency Management Director has taken a different job and will be leaving in the middle of October. Staff met with the new director and has brought him up to date with the process.	
11k	Status of MRRPC counties impacted by severe storms, July 19-22, 2017	Share information on storms impact, recovery efforts and state-federal assistance provided and future long term recovery assistance.	Today's Meeting	A formal request from the Governor for a Presidential Disaster Declaration was sent to FEMA. FEMA personnel toured Western Wisconsin and inspected the damage and reviewed damage receipts. The paper work has been submitted requesting a Presidential Disaster Declaration. SBA loans are available to businesses and homeowners impacted by the floods in July 2017. A Presidential Disaster was declared for 11 counties in October. The MRRPC counties included in the declaration are Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau and Vernon Counties.	Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com
11l	Report on the successful Coulee Region' Business Center and Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board's Joint Application of \$45,000 to the U.S. Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration to fund a feasibility study on development of a fabrication lab, food processing, packaging and distribution center and a transitional jobs program to assist persons with barriers to employment.	This feasibility study was funded by EDA for \$45,000 and is being matched by an additional \$45,000 from the City of La Crosse, the CRBC and the La Crosse Industrial Park Corporation, each providing \$15,000. The funding will be used to hire a consultant(s) to research the development of a fab lab, a food processing, packaging and distribution operation and training opportunities for hard to employ persons as well as look for additional space because the Coulee Region Business Center is always at or near full capacity. The MRRPC Director assisted in writing this grant.	2017-2018	The MRRPC wrote a Request for Proposal (RFP) that was mailed out in late November to consultants. The consultants are required to submit their proposals by December 18, 2018. It is expected that a consultant will be hired by late January 2018 to undertake this study. The MRRPC staff will continue to provide assistance where needed to help administer this grant implement the recommendations from the feasibility study.	Greg Flogstad, Director 608.785.9396 greg@mrrpc.com
12	Old Business				
13	New Business				
14	Adjourn				