

MRRPC

Providing Planning and Economic Development
Services to Improve the Region's Environment,
Economy and Quality of Life

Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission
1707 Main Street, Suite 435
La Crosse, WI 54601

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE PAID
LA CROSSE, WI
PERMIT NO. 588



MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012

*Providing Planning and Economic Development Services to Improve the
Region's Environment, Economy and Quality of Life*

MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION CONTACT INFORMATION

Address

Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission
1707 Main Street, Suite 435
La Crosse, WI 54601

Telephone 608.785.9396

Fax 608.785.9394

Email plan@mrrpc.com

Web Site www.mrrpc.com

Staff

Director Greg Flogstad

greg@mrrpc.com

Administrative Assistant Barb Buros

barb@mrrpc.com

Community Planner and GIS Specialist David Bonifas

dave@mrrpc.com

Transportation Planner Peter Fletcher

peter@mrrpc.com

Economic Development Planner Bryan Law

bryan@mrrpc.com



JACKSON COUNTY APPLIES FOR \$1 MILLION IN TRANSPORTATION GRANTS FOR COUNTY HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS TO

ACCOMMODATE FRAC SAND MINING. The MRRPC provided grant writing assistance to Jackson County for a Community Development Block Grant - Public Facilities Grant of \$400,000 and a Wisconsin Department of Transportation – Economic Assistance Grant of \$600,000 to fund approximately one mile of reconstruction on County Highway P to serve Badger Mining and Atlas Resin Proppants, Taylor Operation. The County will also provide \$ 200,000 in matching funds. The transportation improvement will assist in retaining 157 jobs and creating an additional 40 jobs over the next three years. The grant applications have been submitted to the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Award notification letters are hoped to be received in June 2012.

FORT McCOY- MONROE COUNTY JOINT LAND USE STUDY (JLUS).

The MRRPC staff has been involved in a Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) involving Monroe County and Ft. McCoy. The Defense Department has identified Ft. McCoy as an installation with possible encroachment issues with its surrounding community, meaning that, while no major incompatibilities currently exist between the base and the civilian communities, planning is recommended to avoid conflicts in the future. For example, noise from artillery training can be heard from the Fort, and the military is eager to reduce instances of civilian complaints to the extent practical about such noise; if Monroe County's residential growth continues at the pace of the last decade, more residential development pressure could emerge in noise-sensitive areas around the Fort. A UW La Crosse economist calculated in 2010 that Ft. McCoy has a \$1.3 billion economic impact on the region. Therefore, maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship is essential to the economy of

the County and the Region. The JLUS will recommend that: local communities support policies that help maintain the rural character of the area around the Fort, like agricultural and forest land uses that are generally compatible with Fort activities; communities educate the public through data and maps in the JLUS about the realities of life near the Fort; and the military and civilian communities work actively to communicate with each other in planning efforts and through more formal relationships.

CRAWFORD, VERNON AND LA CROSSE COUNTY COMMUTER BUS PROJECT READY TO ROLL.

For some time the MRRPC staff has been assisting the Crawford County Transportation Coordinating Committee and the City of Prairie du Chien on developing a tri-county commuter bus service that would serve Crawford, Vernon and La Crosse Counties. The purpose of the service is to meet travel to work, educational, medical, social and shopping needs for workers, students, elderly, disabled and others. The concept of this service was formulated by the City of Prairie du Chien and the Crawford County Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC). Vernon and La Crosse County TCCs also saw the benefits to this project and agreed to support it. The MRRPC provided technical assistance, coordination, and fund raising assistance. Now with federal funding assured through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, along with financial support from communities, counties, institutions and businesses, the daily commuter bus service is scheduled to begin operation in the Fall of 2012. The transportation service will include 3 daily (weekday) routes with stops in 12 communities. Commuter bus users will be charged a \$3.00 one way fare with transfers available to other public transportation services, and there will be a "Guaranteed Ride Home Service" ensuring access to a ride home in case of an emergency for users. The annual costs of this Monday-through-Friday, three-bus-route service is expected to total \$472,000 annually.



Approximately \$345,000 will come from a Federal-Wisconsin DOT grant, \$40,000 from the fare box, and the remaining \$87,000 from communities and businesses.

Benefits of the Commuter Bus Service

- ◆ The service will connect the various communities in the region and open up new opportunities for businesses and residents. On a daily basis, each community on the routes will be served by 6 to 12 commuter bus stops Monday through Friday.
- ◆ The service will provide efficient and dependable access to employment for low-income and disabled individuals, as well as the general population.
- ◆ The service will assist rural and urban employers in the region by opening up access to a larger work force.
- ◆ Buses will be equipped with bike racks to encourage users to bike to other destinations and/or encourage recreational biking in the area.
- ◆ The multi-county service begins to address (reduce) the enormous cost of providing medical transportation services to an increasing elderly population by coordinated routes and multi-occupancy vehicles.
- ◆ The elderly population in the region and country is growing and the need for public transportation for not only medical but social and daily living is needed so elderly residents remain healthy, continue to live in their homes, and remain a vital part of our communities.
- ◆ The transportation service will provide access to education (affordable transportation) for students attending University of Wisconsin – La Crosse, Viterbo University, Western Technical College Viroqua and La Crosse campuses.

SPRING VALLEY, VIROQUA AND WESTBY COMPLETE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PLANS AND APPLY FOR IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.

In 2010 the MRRPC staff wrote successful Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) planning grants for the Village of Spring Valley (Pierce County) and the Cities of Westby and Viroqua (Vernon County). The grants were awarded in 2011. SRTS grants provide 100% funding (no local match required) for planning projects that create safer and healthier ways for children from kindergarten through 8th grade to go to school. Goals of the Safe Routes to School Program are: (1) To enable and encourage children to walk and bicycle to school; (2) To make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; (3) To facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

Safe Routes to School planning taskforce committees made up of school officials, city and village representatives and residents were formed in each community to oversee the planning process. School parent surveys were distributed to gauge the attitudes of parents

and children regarding walking and biking to school. Teachers were also involved by surveying children in their classroom each day for one week on how each student arrived at school – walked, biked, school bus, car, or carpool. From this data key issues were identified and actions were then devised to address the issues. The Safe Routes to School Plans were completed in November of 2011 and adopted by the communities. In April and May 2012 MRRPC staff assisted these communities in writing implementation grants for projects listed in the plans that included new sidewalks, installation of Rapid Flash Beacons at pedestrian crossings, crosswalk signs, and portable electronic driver feedback signs.

LinkWISCONSIN HIGH-SPEED INTERNET/

BROADBAND INITIATIVE. The MRRPC was asked to participate in LinkWISCONSIN, a state-wide initiative to promote the use and availability of broadband internet access. The effort began with the Public Service Commission (PSC) mapping coverage throughout the state. The maps divide the state into 9 regions. The PSC then developed voluntary planning teams in each region comprised of representatives from educational institutions, library systems, medical centers, law enforcement, internet providers, businesses and others. Promoting the increased use of broadband coverage across the region and state is important as it can benefit social ties, education, government services, healthcare, business and reduce energy use. The LinkWISCONSIN maps can be used as a general reference point for areas that have poor internet service to see who the existing providers are and other providers nearby. The LinkWISCONSIN site also provides articles on how underserved areas in the state have succeeded in getting better internet service through developing their own business case by creating influential networks of key users to induce the internet companies to provide better service. With many businesses now required to electronically file their quarterly and year-end tax reports and DNR compliance reports, quality internet service is needed now more than ever and will only continue to grow. The LinkWISCONSIN Initiative strives to increase the public awareness of broadband benefits that can aid all segments of society. If stronger demand for broadband is shown, providers are more likely to invest in fulfilling that need. For more information on LinkWISCONSIN initiative, visit the website: www.link.wisconsin.gov/lwi.



TOWN OF UTICA ZONING ORDINANCE

AMENDED. Staff assisted the Town of Utica in revising their Zoning Ordinance. The Town adopted their Comprehensive Plan in 2009 and needed to amend their zoning ordinance to address the land use provisions identified in the Plan. A key concept included in the amendment was

2011 MRRPC AUDIT

Mr. Michael Temp, CPA, Tostrud and Temp, S.C. reported the findings of the 2011 Audit at the April 11, 2012, Commission meeting. Mr. Temp stated that the MRRPC was given an unqualified audit opinion, meaning they found that the MRRPC followed generally accepted accounting principles in the preparation of its financial statements and that the financial statements can be relied upon to provide an accurate picture of the Commission's finances. The audit showed 2011 operating revenues of \$435,127 and operating expenses of \$426,271. The audit also reported total assets of \$275,403 (not including business revolving loan funds) and total liabilities of \$41,577 resulting in the MRRPC having net assets valued at \$233,826 on December 31, 2011. The audit included reports on the four business revolving loan funds the Commission administers. These reports indicated that since the four revolving loan funds' inception dates, \$4,459,590 has been loaned to businesses and \$821,183 is owed to the respective revolving loan funds from businesses.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION PROFILE

The Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission was created in 1964 under Wisconsin Statute 66.0309 to provide cost-shared planning and economic development services to the Western Wisconsin county governments of Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Trempealeau and Vernon, and the communities and businesses within these counties.

The Region covers over 6,000 square miles and in 2010 had a population of over 317,068. The Region makes up 11% of Wisconsin's land area, 5.6% of the State's population and 4% of the State's real estate equalized value.

The MRRPC meetings are held bimonthly on the second Wednesday of even-numbered months. The meetings are usually held in La Crosse, due to its central location within the Region.

Each of the nine counties is represented by three commissioners. One commissioner from each county is appointed by the county board, another commissioner from each county is appointed by the Governor, and a third commissioner from each county is appointed by the Governor selected from a list of two or more persons nominated by the county board. The commissioners serve six-year terms and

make policy, staffing and budgetary decisions of the MRRPC. The following is a list of current MRRPC commissioners.

COMMISSIONERS

Buffalo County

John Schlesselman, James Scholmeier, Kathleen Vinehout

Crawford County

Gerald Krachey, Ron Leys, Greg Russell

Jackson County

Ron Carney, James Christenson, Eugene Savage

La Crosse County

Vicki Burke, James Ehram, Tara Johnson

Monroe County

James Kuhn, Cedric Schnitzler

Pepin County

George Dupre, Mike Murray, David Smith

Pierce County

Richard Purdy, James Ross, William Schroeder

Trempealeau County

Margaret Baecker, Phillip Borreson, Barbara Semb

Vernon County

Gail Frie, Nancy Jaekel, Jo Ann Nickelatti

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission would like to thank the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Administration, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, The Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration, Wisconsin Emergency Management, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Defense, and most of all the County Boards of Supervisors of Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Trempealeau and Vernon for their cooperation and involvement. The combined resources of these local, state, and federal government partners provide the funding that make the activities of the MRRPC possible.

ANNUAL REPORT DEDICATED TO PAST AND PRESENT COMMISSIONERS

This annual report is dedicated to the Commissioners who have served and continue to serve on the MRRPC Board. Their continual dedication to review and approve the various projects mentioned in this report would not be possible without their involvement. Many Commissioners need to take a day off from work to attend the Commission's Bimonthly meetings. For this we are extremely grateful!

Per capita income rose in the Region from 2000 to 2009, at a rate faster than the state and the nation.

	2000	2009	% change 2000-2009
Buffalo	28,146	37,400	32.9
Crawford	21,203	28,860	36.1
Jackson	23,220	31,880	37.3
La Crosse	26,516	35,682	34.6
Monroe	22,012	30,577	38.9
Pepin	23,519	32,525	38.3
Pierce	26,143	32,226	23.3
Trempealeau	23,695	32,589	37.5
Vernon	19,644	27,934	42.2
MRRPC Region	23,789	32,186	35.3
State of Wis.	29,141	36,927	26.7
Nation	30,319	38,846	28.1

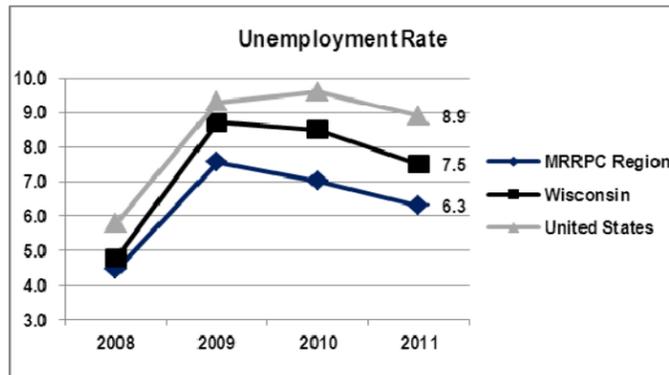
Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce - Bureau of Economic Analysis

Manufacturing employment increased in the Region from 2001 to 2006, in contrast to both the state and the nation; and despite the severe recession that began in December 2007, the Region has lost manufacturing jobs at a slower rate than the state and nation.

	2001	2006	2009	% Chge 2001-2006	% Chge 2001-2009
Buffalo	386	413	427	7	10.6
Crawford	1,743	1,991	1,468	14.2	-15.8
Jackson	827	940	830	13.7	0.4
La Crosse	9,848	9,196	8,090	-6.6	-17.9
Monroe	3,556	4,306	3,548	21.1	-0.2
Pepin	206	160	157	-22.3	-23.8
Pierce	1,009	1,082	1,114	7.2	10.4
Trempealeau	5,173	5,622	5,334	8.7	3.1
Vernon	942	1,049	826	11.4	-12.3
MRRPC Reg.	23,690	24,759	21,794	4.5	-8.0
State of Wis.	569,827	521,563	449,883	-8.5	-21.0
Nation	16,913,600	14,688,200	12,393,700	-13.2	-26.7

Source: Regional Economic Information System (REIS), Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Unemployment in the Region, state, and nation increased sharply in 2009. In the Region and the state, it has gradually declined since then; the national rate continued climbing until 2010.



Source: Wis. Dept. of Workforce Development, LAUS

Manufacturing was the highest contributor to the Gross Regional Product (GRP) in 2010, with nearly \$2 billion (17.4% of the Region total) in goods and services produced.

Economic Sector	Regional Total (In millions)
Manufacturing	1,876.1
Government	1,523.3
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,242.7
Retail Trade	769.8
Finance and Insurance	696.3
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	605.6
Wholesale Trade	577.2
Transportation and Warehousing	570.7
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	525.1
Construction	432.9
Utilities	405.1
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	322.8
Accommodation and Food Services	277.0
Admin. & Support & Waste Mgt & Remediation Services	217.3
Other Services (except Public Administration)	207.7
Information	191.2
Management of Companies & Enterprises	148.5
Educational Services	85.1
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	48.1
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas	43.9
Totals	10,766.4

Source: Economic Modeling Systems, Inc. (EMSI)

Equalized value has risen by 2.55% since 2007, in contrast to a loss of 4.50% state-wide.

	2007	2011	% change 2007-2011
Buffalo	\$925,188,300	\$988,458,400	6.84
Crawford	\$1,048,407,700	\$1,062,341,200	1.33
Jackson	\$1,241,091,500	\$1,388,461,900	11.87
La Crosse	\$7,377,974,100	\$7,583,244,400	2.78
Monroe	\$2,396,292,300	\$2,605,169,900	8.72
Pepin	\$530,493,900	\$550,452,700	3.76
Pierce	\$3,181,792,500	\$2,792,313,700	-12.24
Trempealeau	\$1,621,811,900	\$1,764,766,300	8.81
Vernon	\$1,636,581,300	\$1,733,721,300	5.94
MRRPC Region	\$19,959,633,500	\$20,468,929,800	2.55
Wisconsin	\$497,920,348,700	\$475,506,244,600	-4.50

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

The Region's sales tax revenue has recovered its losses during the recession that began in December 2007, and has surpassed the high set in 2008.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	% Change 2008-2011
Buffalo	\$617,966	\$566,461	\$574,233	\$604,894	-2.1
Crawford	\$1,324,362	\$1,282,615	\$1,255,398	\$1,304,584	-1.5
Jackson	\$1,129,614	\$1,028,308	\$1,047,026	\$1,161,660	2.8
La Crosse	\$9,861,708	\$9,295,932	\$9,491,313	\$10,152,970	3.0
Monroe	\$2,775,228	\$2,678,044	\$2,595,395	\$2,706,015	-2.5
Pepin	\$385,905	\$349,092	\$356,031	\$377,269	-2.2
Pierce	\$1,556,521	\$1,424,041	\$1,528,708	\$1,545,033	-0.7
Trempealeau	\$1,372,755	\$1,306,049	\$1,351,773	\$1,501,125	9.4
Vernon	\$1,355,882	\$1,277,708	\$1,275,716	\$1,391,791	2.6
MRRPC Region	\$20,379,940	\$19,208,250	\$19,475,593	\$20,745,342	1.8
Wisconsin	\$288,626,787	\$268,135,863	\$271,698,527	\$291,421,069	1.0

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

maintaining the town's existing agriculture district to enable landowners to continue to receive tax credits as the State transitions to the "Working Lands Initiative". It is planned that the Town Board will be considering adopting the amended ordinance in June - July 2012.

EQUIPMENT AND METAL MANUFACTURING ASSOCIATION (EMMA) INDUSTRY CLUSTER INITIATIVE.

The Equipment and Metal Manufacturing Association (EMMA) has spent the last 12 months looking at the future and plotting a course to be a dynamic organization that serves the needs of the Region's manufacturers. Last summer, EMMA engaged in an update of its strategic plan. EMMA hosted Governor Scott Walker as the keynote speaker at a general meeting in December, at which they wanted to present a new sense of energy to its membership. EMMA has focused on putting member companies front and center, giving them a chance to present themselves to the rest of the members and stimulate ideas for cooperative and collaborative activities. One or two member companies are invited to give a demonstration of their production process and products at each general membership meeting, to promote capacity awareness and joint ventures. The general membership meetings give EMMA members an opportunity for networking, which EMMA members themselves have identified as an important feature of membership. EMMA membership is open to manufacturers, employees, students, educators, suppliers, or anyone who has an interest in helping to make equipment, machinery, and metal manufacturers more globally competitive and prosperous. Find out more at emmatristate.org.

FOOD RESOURCE AND AGRIBUSINESS NETWORK (FRAN) INDUSTRY CLUSTER INITIATIVE.

FRAN members have explored joint ventures that would help them reduce costs and increase efficiencies. Options the group have explored include joint recycling and pooling transportation of raw materials and finished products. FRAN members have worked successfully to obtain grants for joint training in areas such as workplace safety, leadership training, welding, electronics maintenance, and others. The FRAN network has begun regularly meeting at member facilities for a tour and a presentation on issues in the food industry that the host company has expertise in handling. For more information on FRAN's activities, please visit the FRAN website: frannetwork.org.



KICKAPOO VALLEY REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE.

The Kickapoo Valley Regional Economic Development Initiative (KVREDI) is a collaborative group of municipalities, state agencies, and nonprofits that has grown out of efforts to help communities along the Kickapoo River recover from the disastrous flooding of 2007 and 2008. The KVREDI has identified three sectors as major economic drivers in the Valley: (1) Agriculture and food processing; (2) Wood and forest products; and (3) Recreation and tourism. The MRRPC staff and other members of the KVREDI have participated in efforts to market the Kickapoo Valley and the larger Driftless Area as a prime tourism destination. This involved participating in focus groups convened through a JEM Destination grant that was secured by communities in the Driftless Area. These focus groups helped determine a logo that can be used by local communities to communicate the tourism opportunities in the Driftless Area.

The MRRPC is actively involved in exploring the possibility of enhancing the wood and forest products industry in the Valley through investments from federal and state governments, as well as charitable foundations in the Region. One promising opportunity involves biofuels. The Kickapoo Valley has overstocked forests that have great potential for biofuels and finished wood products. The MRRPC and others are interested in studying the feasibility of a wood-pellet and/or wood chip production facility in the Valley. Such a facility would reduce the valley's dependence on fossil fuels, create green jobs and also retain energy dollars in the region, as opposed to sending them to out-of-state oil and gas producers. Any such plant would be studied for its sustainability, since careful management of the forests of the Valley would be necessary for continued success.

COUNTY TACTICAL INTEROPERABILITY COMMUNICATION (TIC) PLANNING.

Increased threat levels to the U.S. have resulted in the Department of Homeland Security calling for and providing funding to states to prepare Tactical Interoperability Communication (TIC) Plans. This past year MRRPC staff received training and began assisting county emergency management directors, law enforcement and emergency assistance organizations with their plans. These plans inventory communication resources such as: key contacts, radios, dispatch centers, mobile communication equipment, radio channels, software patches, equipment use policies, etc. Existing communication problems and planned resolutions to those problems are also identified. This information is vital during disasters when outside agencies respond to emergency situations. Knowing what channels the host agencies and outside responding agencies are capable of communicating on improves command and control instructions, reducing response time and confusion among all parties. A faster and more effective response

means less health, public safety and financial losses, making recovery from a disaster more socially and economically manageable. TIC planning is underway in Pepin County and a TIC plan kickoff meeting was recently held in Trempealeau County. Both of these plans are expected to be completed later this year with other county TIC plans to follow.

PEPIN, CRAWFORD AND TREMPEALEAU COUNTY MULTI-HAZARD MITIGATION PLANS COMPLETED, AND JACKSON, LA CROSSE AND VERNON COUNTY BEING UPDATED.

Multi-hazard mitigation plans provide a listing of hazard mitigation projects that are developed to reduce losses to life and property in the event of a natural hazard occurring. The plans cover 19 natural hazards, such as tornadoes, flooding, blizzards, extreme heat, pandemic flu etc. This past year MRRPC staff assisted in updating plans in Crawford, Pepin, and Trempealeau counties. Each plan has also been adopted by the County Board. Vernon County's Plan will be presented at a public hearing in June. The Jackson and La Crosse County Plans are currently being updated and are scheduled to be completed the end of 2012. Each of these amended plans meet the new federal requirements regarding responsible party identification and measuring progress on projects since a previous plan. When approved by Wisconsin Emergency Management, the counties will be eligible for federal and state hazard mitigation grant funding that assists funding of projects listed in their plans. Some projects identified in Crawford County are: investigate the costs and benefits of installing automated gages on the Kickapoo River; develop a flood warning and evacuation plan for Mississippi River floodplain property owners in the city of Prairie du Chien and the towns of Prairie du Chien, Bridgeport, and Eastman; encourage developers and builders to bury electrical and telecommunications lines; update the existing list of buildings that can be used as shelters during disasters like extreme heat and cold events; and inventory and prioritize road shoulder segments that are susceptible to erosion and land/mud slides. Projects identified by the City of Prairie du Chien are: improve the storm water system; improve readability of important signs so they can be interpreted during times of poor visibility like a disaster event; and undertake erosion control and road improvements at the city reservoir.

MONROE AND CRAWFORD COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN UPDATES.

Creating and maintaining quality recreation opportunities contribute greatly to a community's quality of life. Community recreation opportunities also play an important role in attracting business and a high quality workforce. Recreation planning is an activity the MRRPC assists counties and communities with. By preparing and updating these plans local governments become

eligible to apply for grants under the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Wisconsin Stewardship Grant Program. Land acquisition, easement purchases, boat landings, trails, bathroom facilities, handicap fishing piers, and public campground improvements are types of projects the MRRPC have helped plan for and fund through grant writing. Recently the MRRPC has been assisting Monroe and Crawford counties in updating their outdoor recreation plans.

BUSINESS LOANS

Business Capital Fund (BCF): The BCF held its annual meeting on November 9, 2011. The major topic of discussion was how to better attract potential borrowers to the BCF. The BCF revised its informational brochure and sent it to banks in the service area to market its availability to provide gap financing. The reduction in commercial lending the past few years has affected the BCF, since private-sector funding must be at least two-thirds of the total financing package. Since its inception, the BCF has made a total of 58 loans, totaling \$3,393,629. These loans have leveraged \$35,976,193 from private-sector sources, and have helped create or retain 475 jobs. The BCF can be proud of the benefit it has provided for economic development in the Region. Loan funds are available, so if you know of a business in Buffalo, Jackson, Pepin, Pierce, or Trempealeau County in need of gap financing, please have them give us a call.

Crawford, Monroe, Vernon (CMV) Growth Development Fund: One of the topics at the December 20, 2011 CMV Growth Development Fund's meeting on December 20th was analysis of trends in the economies of Crawford, Monroe, and Vernon Counties, such as lower per-capita income than the state as a whole and the effects of the recession on unemployment. Another topic of discussion was how the CMV could better promote itself to businesses. The CMV administrator regularly attends meetings of Inventor and Entrepreneur Clubs in the service area to publicize the fund, and has contacted lenders through one-on-one meetings and mass mailings to help make them aware of the fund's ability to provide gap financing. The CMV has made 5 loans since its inception, totaling \$230,000, leveraging \$1,350,199 in private investment and creating 25 jobs. Loan Funds are available, so if you know of a business in Crawford, Monroe, or Vernon County in need of gap financing, please have them give us a call.

La Crosse County Economic Development Fund: This business loan fund is comprised of three separate fund pools; Federal-EDA, State CDBG and County. Since the fund was capitalized in the early 1990's through the sale of county property, it has made over \$7 million in loans and created or retained over 800 jobs and leveraged over \$20 million in private financing. The fund provides affordable gap financing up to one third of a project's costs. The LCEDF has loan funds available,

so if you know of a business in La Crosse County in need of financing please have them give us a call.

Monroe County Revolving Loan Fund: The Monroe County RLF made one loan in the last year, in the amount of \$20,000, to a business in Sparta. This loan will keep a long-standing local business running and even expanding its offerings, all while retaining jobs. The Monroe County RLF has made eleven loans since its inception, totaling \$1,179,692, leveraging \$9,521,106 in private financing and creating or retaining 149 jobs.

2012-2017 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY- CEDS COMPLETED.

At the April 11, 2012, meeting, the Commission approved the five-year update to the 2012-2017 CEDS. The CEDS outlines economic development strategies and projects, and maintains the eligibility of local governments and institutions in the Region for federal funding from the U.S. Department of Commerce—Economic Development Administration. The major economic development goals and objectives of the region that are in the CEDS are summarized below with some of the economic data following. To see how specific assets and attributes of the region fit these goals and the objectives developed to achieve them, please review the complete CEDS document at: http://www.mrrpc.com/CEDS_Report.html.

CEDS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. **Industry Cluster Goal. Form Economic Development Partnerships and Encourage Industry Cluster Networks as a Catalyst for Innovation, Global Competitiveness and Regional Economic Growth.** The following economic sectors are key drivers of the regional economy or have a special niche with regional educational and workforce resources available to serve them. Specific objectives in the CEDS are targeted towards these industries.
 - a. Equipment, Machinery and Metal Manufacturing
 - b. Agriculture and Food Processing Industry
 - c. Forest and Wood Product Industry
 - d. Software Design, Information, Technology and Composite Industries
 - e. Health Care
2. **Buy Regionally, Sell Globally Goal. Encourage Increased Local Consumption of Products Made in the Region and Further Develop the Region's Export Economy.**
 - a. Encourage and support initiatives involving locally produced and consumed products (farmer markets, community supported agriculture, Wisconsin Farm Atlas etc.)
 - b. Develop a database and market what is made in the region to increase "Buying Regionally".
 - c. Identify and pursue import substitution and export strategies on products where we have or can create a competitive advantage.

3. **Quality of Place and Tourism Goal. Protect Natural Resources, Improve Recreation Opportunities and Mitigate Losses from Disasters to Enhance the Region's Attractiveness and Quality of Life.** Specific objectives are listed in the CEDS.
4. **Business Expansion and Innovation Services Goal. Increase Entrepreneurism, Business and Workforce Growth Through Collaborative Networks of Innovation.** Specific objectives are listed in the CEDS.
5. **Infrastructure, Public Facility and Renewable Energy Goal. Further Develop the Region's Transportation, Telecommunication, Renewable Energy, and Public Facility Infrastructure.** Specific objectives are listed in the CEDS.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC TRENDS REPORTED IN THE CEDS

Population has increased at a rate faster than the state, but slower than the nation.

	2000	2010	% Change
Buffalo	13,804	13,587	-1.6%
Crawford	17,243	16,644	-3.5%
Jackson	19,100	20,449	7.1%
La Crosse	107,120	114,638	7.0%
Monroe	40,899	44,673	9.2%
Pepin	7,213	7,469	3.5%
Pierce	36,804	41,019	11.5%
Trempealeau	27,010	28,816	6.7%
Vernon	28,056	29,773	6.1%
MRRPC Region	297,249	317,068	6.7%
State of Wis.	5,363,675	5,686,986	6.0%
Nation	281,421,906	308,745,538	9.7%

Sources: US Census 2000; US Census 2010

The number of housing units has increased at a rate slower than the state and the nation.

	2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010
Buffalo	6,098	6,664	9.3%
Crawford	8,480	8,802	3.8%
Jackson	8,029	9,727	21.1%
La Crosse	43,479	48,402	11.3%
Monroe	16,672	19,204	15.2%
Pepin	3,036	3,579	17.9%
Pierce	13,493	16,132	19.6%
Trempealeau	11,482	12,619	9.9%
Vernon	12,416	13,720	10.5%
MRRPC Region	125,185	140,859	12.5%
State of Wis.	2,321,144	2,624,358	13.1%
Nation	115,904,641	131,704,730	13.6%

Source: US Census 2000; US Census 2010