

MRRPC

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

Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission
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MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

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

56th
Anniversary
1964-2020

The Villages of Readstown, Viola, La Farge, and Ontario Awarded \$800,000 in U.S. Economic Development Administration Funding for Economic Recovery Due to Flooding Disasters

These four Kickapoo River Valley communities have partnered with the MRRPC and have received \$800,000 in federal EDA funds to undertake flood recovery activities including: (1) Strategic direction consensus setting on economic development and site selection market research. (2) Preparing a Site Development Master Plan for community economic development and resettlement (safe sites for business, industry, homes and community facilities). (3) Community facility assessment, in coordination with Site Development Master Plan (including, waste treatment, municipal wells, electric utilities, communications-broadband, police – fire stations-municipal offices and flood mitigation facilities and corresponding cost estimates for community facilities). (4) Public infrastructure assessment, in coordination with Site Development Master Plan (including streets, sidewalks, water & sewer lines, storm sewer lines, electric lines communication-broadband lines, other public infrastructure needs and corresponding cost estimates for public infrastructure). (5) Real estate appraisal work on Site Development Master Plan and flood prone property acquisition and relocation activity needed to effectuate community economic development and resettlement consistent with the approved Site Development Master Plan. (6) Environmental assessment work to ensure all planning, engineering and future development activity



Severe flooding Downtown in the Village of Ontario, August 2018

does not violate local, state or federal environmental regulations. (7) Preparation of a public participation plan to ensure adequate public participation is provided throughout each community's economic recovery plan process. The four villages have completed the request for proposal process and have secured consultants to begin the planning process.

City of Westby awarded over \$3.5 million in U.S. Economic Development Administration Funding for Industrial Park Expansion

MRRPC staff submitted a grant proposal to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) on behalf of the city of Westby in October 2019 for an industrial park expansion project. This project came to light in lieu of persistent flooding issues in the area negatively affecting the local economy. In April 2020, EDA awarded a \$3.5 million grant to the city of Westby, to make critical infrastructure improvements needed to expand the city's industrial park and protect businesses from severe weather events. The EDA grant, to be matched with \$868,800 in local investment, is expected to create 49 jobs and spur \$15.6 million in private investment. "This investment will provide the necessary infrastructure upgrades to expand the city of Westby's industrial park and rebuild from the devastating floods that occurred in the spring of 2019," said Dana Gartzke, Performing the Delegated Duties of the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development. "Designed with 57 acres of developable space, the industrial park will help strengthen the regional economy, create new job opportunities, and make it more resilient in the face of natural disasters." MRRPC staff will continue to assist with the administering of funds and to the city of Westby from the EDA grant until the completion of the project.

La Crosse and Jackson County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans nearing completion

The La Crosse and Jackson County multi-hazard mitigation plans will be completed in 2020 and a draft has been created for each. The purpose of a multi-hazard mitigation plan is to address the different natural and manmade hazards which may occur within the county. These include disasters such as blizzards, wildfires, flooding, and train derailments, as well as to provide a list of potential projects which will prevent or lessen the loss of life or structures in the event of a hazard occurring. The plan provides information on each of the hazards, i.e. how often they occur, how much damage they have caused, how likely each is to occur again, and the amount of damage that will occur.

Flooding and severe snowstorms are the hazards the counties are most vulnerable to and cause the most damage. Many development projects presented are brick and mortar projects, such as the purchase of a backup generator for municipal buildings, the installation of larger culverts, a voluntary buyout of homes and businesses located in the 100-year floodplain, the purchase of electronic moveable road signs for road closures, or bank stabilization on roads to prevent landslides.

There are also non-brick and mortar projects, for example the development of a list of shelters that can be used to temporarily house residents in the event of flooding, tornadoes, and/or extreme hot or cold events. Multi-hazard mitigation plans maintain the counties' and other participating local governments' eligibility for Federal and State hazard mitigation grant programs.

Trempealeau and Monroe County Multi-Hazards Mitigation Plans completed

Trempealeau County and Monroe County both adopted their multi-hazards mitigation plans this past year. These plans maintain the county and other participating local governments' eligibility for Federal and State Hazard Mitigation Grant funding that can help pay for the projects identified in their plan. The plans cover 19 natural hazards such as tornadoes, flooding, blizzards, extreme heat and cold; forest fires, landslides, etc. In addition, train derailments and pandemic flu were included in both plans. Trempealeau county which is located along the Mississippi River also included river cargo hazards. Some of the projects identified within these plans include: developing evacuations plans for communities; identifying and creating buffer zones between structures and woodlands; purchasing severe weather warning sirens; purchasing boats capable of swift water rescues; and purchasing portable electronic signs for road closures.

Town of Campbell Comprehensive Plan Update.

In March 2020 MRRPC staff began updating the Town of Campbell's comprehensive plan. The Town of Campbell located in La Crosse County adjacent to the City of La Crosse is mostly an urban Town with little open development areas remaining. The Town's Vision Statement is: *We foresee the Town of Campbell to be primarily suburban in character, accommodating low density residential, commercial, and industrial development so long as a land use plan and appropriate programs are in place to continually improve the quality of life and safety of the people in the Town of Campbell.* The town's existing comprehensive plan was adopted in 2007 and the Wisconsin State Planning Law requires that local units of government must update comprehensive plans a minimum of once every ten years. The comprehensive plan addresses nine planning elements, each of which has demographics, maps and plan element goals to be updated. In addition, future actions, projects, or policies for the town to implement moving forward will be identified in each planning element. Thus far, MRRPC has assisted the Town of Campbell in updating demographic data, updating facility locations, and are discussing the goals the town aspires to add to the plan.

Vernon County Outdoor Recreation Plan

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 businesses 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 has helped plan for and fund through grant writing. Recently the MRRPC has been assisting Vernon County in updating their outdoor recreation plan. The plan identifies existing outdoor recreation facilities and will also provide a list of recreation projects the county would like to undertake to improve outdoor recreation opportunities within the county.



Trout fishing has a \$952 million-a-year impact in the Driftless Area supporting thousands of jobs and boosting local economies in Vernon County.

Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission Staff Turnover

Executive Director Retires.

Greg Flogstad, Executive Director of the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission for the past 35 years retired December 31, 2019. We will miss your kindness, knowledge, and dedication to bettering the lives of the residents of the Mississippi River Region. We wish you and Lynn the best of everything in your retirement. **Thank You Greg for 35 years of service to the Mississippi River Region!**



New Director Hired

Dave Bonifas, who has been with the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission for 28 years was promoted to Executive Director following the retirement of Greg Flogstad. Dave graduated from UW-La Crosse with a BS in Geography. He interned at the MRRPC and was then hired as the Community Development Planner & GIS Specialist. Dave's previous positions within the MRRPC included Economic Development Planner, Transportation Planner and Senior Planner.



Dave Bonifas

The Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission welcomes two new Senior Planners

Abbey Nicewander joined the commission on October 22, 2019. Abbey brings to the commission experience in environmental planning, land use planning, and GIS. Previously, Abbey was a conservation specialist for an environmental consulting agency developing plans, GIS designs, and publishing books on native plant communities. She graduated from UW-La Crosse with a BS in Geography and from UW-Stout with an MS in Conservation Biology.



Abbey Nicewander

Bob Gollnik joined the commission on February 12, 2020. Bob brings to the commission extensive experience in transportation, economic development, and land use planning. He graduated from UW-Madison in 2006 with a MS in Urban & Regional Planning and has spent the majority of his time since then as a consultant involved in a wide range of Federal, State, and Local projects.



Bob Gollnik

2019 MRRPC Audit.

Mr. Michael Temp, CPA, Tostrud and Temp, S.C. reported the findings of the 2019 Audit at the June 10, 2020, 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 Governmental Fund Statement showed revenues of \$340,708 and operating expenses of \$348,885. Assets totaled \$335,432 with liabilities of \$21,936 resulting in a fund balance of \$313,496 on December 31, 2019. The business revolving loan funds audit reports that since inception \$5,302,590 has been loaned to fund businesses and \$486,352 is presently owed to the respective revolving loan funds.

MRRPC Commissioners

- Buffalo County**
John Schlesselman, Del Twidt, Mary Anne McMillan Urell
- Crawford County**
Gerald Krachey, Dennis Pelock, James Czajkowski
- Jackson County**
Ron Carney, Todd Stittleburg, Brad Chown
- La Crosse County**
Vicki Burke (Secretary/Treasurer), James Ehram, Vacant
- Monroe County**
Sharon Folcey, James Kuhn (Chairman), Cedric Schnitzler
- Pepin County**
James Kraft, Bruce Peterson, Irene Wolf
- Pierce County**
Richard Purdy, Greg Place, William Schroeder
- Trempealeau County**
Margaret Baecker (Vice Chairman), Phillip Borreson, Ernest Vold
- Vernon County**
Herb Cornell, Nancy Jaekel, Jo Ann Nickelatti

Frac Sand Operations faltering in Wisconsin

Wisconsin’s frac sand industry appears to be migrating away from the state’s rural north, and towards more favorable territories as far south as Texas. Not because Wisconsin’s resources are depleted, or because the sand is of a lower quality. Rather, the coveted “northern white” sands of Wisconsin and Minnesota are more expensive to transport and process.

Covia a Wisconsin sand mine operator is facing bankruptcy as the COVID-19 pandemic and falling oil prices continue to shake the industry. Covia, which owns permitted mines and plants in Columbia, Dunn, Monroe, Pierce and Waupaca counties, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy June 29th. This announcement was preceded by Hi-Crush Inc., announcing that it plans to file for bankruptcy later this year. Hi-Crush said it has reduced its workforce by about 60% since mid-March and closed mines in Blair and Whitehall. The Hi-Crush mine in Augusta has been closed since Jan. 2019. The company also is operating its facility in Wyeville at reduced capacity. Emerge Energy Services, the parent company of Superior Silica Sands, filed for bankruptcy in 2019. Superior Silica operates mines in Barron and Chippewa counties. In addition to these bankruptcies Smart Sand Inc. laid off 55 workers at a plant near Oakdale.

These bankruptcy filings and layoffs have been brought on by a combination of the COVID-19 pandemic, plunging oil prices, an increase in the supply of sand and users turning to cheaper lower-quality sand mined closer to oil fields. According to the Department of Workforce Development, frac sand producers have laid off more than 130 Wisconsin workers so far this year.

This affects the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission area as western Wisconsin is the epicenter of Frac Sand Mining in Wisconsin. At the beginning of 2020, there was a total of 128 sand frac facilities scattered around the state, with 92 of them active. Though the frac migration out of Wisconsin and further south suggests that number is lower.

There are several reasons why frac sand companies have moved from Wisconsin. It is less expensive to be close to the hydraulic fracturing process due to the fact that the production of frac sand and mostly the transportation of it via train and truck is extremely expensive; therefore they take the cheaper route and take resources closer to the site even if the deposits are not as good.” And some states have fewer regulations regarding mining in contrast to Wisconsin.” Particularly, in regards to after-project clean-up and reclamation of sand frac sites.

Department of Administration’s CDBG Close Grant Program

In December 2018, the State of Wisconsin submitted to HUD a Substantial Amendment to the State’s Comprehensive Plan to create an ED-RLF closeout program (CDBG-CLOSE) which HUD has officially approved. The CDBG CLOSE Program was launched February 1st which includes the 132 locally held revolving loan funds for economic development around the state. These CDBG RLFs could no longer make loans.

CDBG ED-RLFs fall into two categories: the funds that were capitalized Pre-1992 and the post 1992 funds. Municipalities with funds that were capitalized pre-1992 can apply to the state to certify those dollars. Once the certification process is completed by the state, those dollars become defederalized and the municipality can use those dollars without any federal strings attached and will no longer be required to file reports with the state. Municipalities can continue their revolving loan fund or use the funds for other needs since the federal regulations on these funds no longer apply. The Post-1992 funds are given a couple different options. Option one would be to pay the State the cash on hand from the RLF and then as existing loans are repaid send the payments to the State. The amount of money from cash on hand paid to the State by the municipalities would then be granted back to the municipality for any eligible CDBG project. Option two involves returning both cash on hand along with adding additional local government funds to DOA that equal the amount of principal owed to the RLF from outstanding loans. The local government can then apply for an eligible CDBG project that would total the sum of these two amounts and also continue its RLF if it chooses since the funds owed to the RLF would still be coming in from the businesses.

Communities have two years to apply for this program and two more years to complete their project, making January 31, 2023 the final project completion date. CDBG Projects selected are required to meet a national objective, for example benefit low- and moderate-income persons, prevention or elimination of slums or blight, or address community development needs having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community for which other funding is not available. Examples of potential projects include: roads/streets, water/sewer lines, wastewater treatment plants, municipal wells, community centers, senior centers, fire stations, planning, drug rehab, health care or dental clinics and environmental remediation. Counties in the region that will need to address this program are: Pierce, Pepin, Buffalo, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon Counties. Cities and Villages in the region that will need to address this are Tomah, Sparta, Kendall, Hillsboro, and Osseo. MRRPC staff is assisting both Pierce and Pepin Counties with this program.

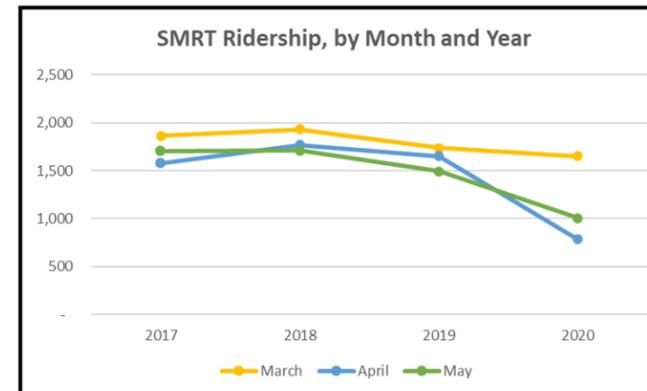
Businesses Damaged by Flooding in 2018 Receive Deferral of Payments Due to COVID-19

Severe storms on the 27th and 28th of August 2018 led to catastrophic flooding and dam failures in the region resulting in both federal and state disaster declarations. In response to this the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) contracted with the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission to provide Disaster Recovery Microloans (DRM) to businesses damaged by flooding. The maximum DRM loan amount is \$15,000 at a 0% fixed interest rate for 48 months with a 6-month deferral on the first payment. These emergency loans provide some financial relief until longer term business recovery activities or resources can be obtained either through insurance, SBA, FEMA or time for the business to recover on its own. Sixteen businesses were recipients of this \$233,059 in Disaster Recovery Microloan Lending. These businesses were hit hard by the Stay At Home order due to COVID-19. As a result 3 month deferrals of payments were offered to these businesses. Fourteen of the sixteen businesses opted to take advantage of the deferral.

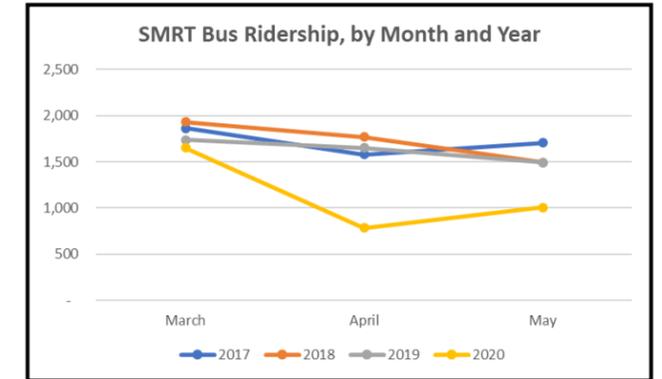
Scenic Mississippi River Transit – SMRT Bus Service Updates

The SMRT Bus began service in December 2012 with routes serving La Crosse, Viroqua, and Prairie du Chien, and eight communities in-between. In October 2017, a public transit feasibility study conducted by La Crosse County, the La Crosse Area Planning Committee, and the MRRPC, led to the SMRT Bus expanding route offerings to Monroe County. An additional mid-day route from La Crosse to Tomah was added in May of 2019.

Throughout COVID Restrictions the SMRT Bus has maintained daily service on all routes. Ridership declined from the previous year by 5% in March, 71% in April, and 39% in May. While many basic and “non-essential” riders have declined on the routes, routes serving area medical facilities remained strong throughout restrictions. Riders with the Mayo Clinic, Gunderson Health, and Vernon Memorial Health programs totaled 2,186 riders over the three-month span.



To finance operations, the MRRPC staff continues to assist in marketing and raising funds from area private and public sources to match a U.S. Department of Transportation Grant. Routes and schedules are also regularly evaluated in order to assure that service is as optimal as possible. The annual rider survey has been postponed until Fall 2020 to capture post-COVID ridership trends and patterns.



Region’s Tourism Spending			
Jurisdiction	2018 Tourism-Visitor Business Sales \$	2019 Tourism-Visitor Business Sales \$	Percent Change
Buffalo	21,700,000	22,200,000	2.41
Crawford	64,000,000	64,900,000	1.42
Jackson	58,300,000	56,200,000	-3.65
La Crosse		457,500,000	1.92
Monroe	133,800,000	135,800,000	1.49
Pepin	13,500,000	14,200,000	5.75
Pierce	55,500,000	57,500,000	3.56
Trempealeau	54,000,000	56,000,000	3.74
Vernon	62,800,000	65,000,000	3.64
Region	912,500,000	929,300,000	1.84
Wisconsin	21,571,600,000	22,233,400,000	3.02

Source: Wisconsin Department of Tourism. Visitor Business Sales is defined as revenue from recreation, lodging, restaurants, attractions and visitor expenditures traced to food wholesalers, farmers, utilities, marketing, publishing etc., plus ripple effect of tourism employee expenditures

Regional Tourism Spending Increases 1.84% in 2019.

The Wisconsin Department of Tourism visitor expenditure data table above shows that direct visitor expenditures in the region totaled \$929.3 million in 2019 a 1.84% increase over 2018. The MRRPC’s planning and economic development activities often involve improving recreational opportunities that helps tourism and improves the quality of life for residents.

2020 USDOT BUILD Discretionary Grant Program

The Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020, allocated \$1 billion to be awarded by the US Department of Transportation through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation discretionary grant program. Previously known as Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER Discretionary Grants. Congress has dedicated nearly \$8 billion since 2009 in National Infrastructure Investments to fund projects that have a significant local or regional impact.

The Program has provided a combined \$7.9 billion to 609 projects in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, including nearly \$2.9 billion in Federal funding to 264 rural projects across the nation, leveraging an estimated \$5.6 billion in non-BUILD/TIGER funding. For the current funding cycle, MRRPC submitted a planning grant proposal to create a “Regional Freight Strategy” for the 9-County region. The MRRPC Region is situated along major multi-modal corridors that connect large cities, as shown in the Great Lakes Megaregions and Freight Analysis Framework maps. The purpose of the proposed strategy is two-fold:

- 1) to achieve goals set for the in the MRRPC 2017-2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), and
- 2) to transcend traditional planning boundaries and provide a strategy for rural areas represented by the MRRPC – including portions of two separate WisDOT districts (Southwest and Northwest). The La Crosse area is home to the La Crosse Area Planning Commission, which overlaps a portion of the Southern MRRPC region, but there are multiple rural areas that lack resources for specialized transportation planning and strategy development.

Key tasks of the proposed Strategy include:

- Task 1: Demographics, Economics, Transportation
- Task 2: Importance of Freight Movement in the Region
- Task 3: Business and System User Outreach
- Task 4: Goods Movement Data Summary
- Task 5: Growth Projections, Trends, System Performance
- Task 6: Community, Environmental, and Economic Impacts
- Task 7: Opportunities and Strategies
- Task 8: Freight and Comprehensive Planning

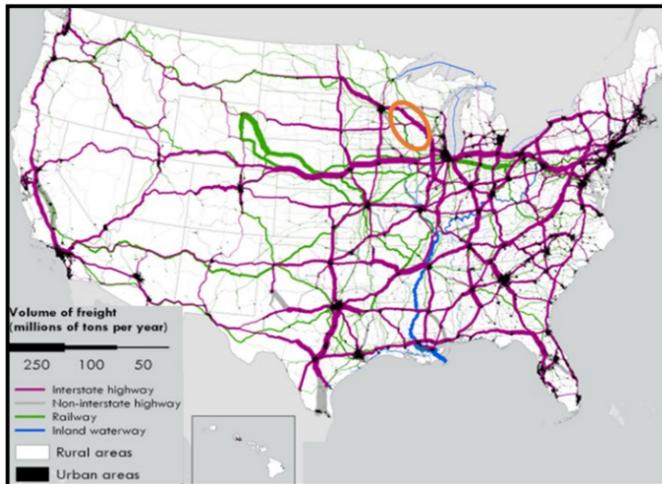
Awards are expected to be announced in early Fall 2020. Additional information about the program is available at: <https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants>

Figure 1: Great Lakes Megaregion



The MRRPC region borders Minnesota and is at the confluence of major freight infrastructure in the Upper Midwest while also being within a day or less drive of all the most populated places in the Great Lakes Megaregion, including Minneapolis-St Paul, Chicago, Milwaukee, St Louis, and Indianapolis (Figure 1). Source: America 2050

Figure 2: Freight Volume by Mode



The region is a source of agriculture, mining, energy, food production, and industrial commodities, and is proximate to major freight infrastructure in the upper Midwest. As shown in Figure 2, a substantial amount of freight tonnage also moves through the region via rail, highway, and waterway networks. Source: USDOT Freight Analysis Framework

Table 1 Mississippi River Region Economic Indicators 2010-2019

Counties, Region, States, Nation	2010 Jobs	2019 Jobs	% Job Change	2010 Payrolled Business Locations Est.	2019 Payrolled Business Locations Est.	2010 - 2019 % Change in Payrolled Business Locations	2010 Gross Regional Product	2019 Gross Regional Product	2010 - 2019 % Change in Gross Regional Product	2010 Avg Earning Per Job	2019 Avg Earning Per Job	2010 - 2019 Earning Per Job % Change
Buffalo	7,859	6,810	-13%	368	385	5%	497,722,218	466,680,092	-6%	32,556	40,324	24%
Crawford	10,537	10,356	-2%	483	461	-5%	640,586,049	878,418,705	37%	32,628	44,384	36%
Jackson	10,936	11,812	8%	458	499	9%	677,666,056	921,826,420	36%	40,743	51,523	26%
La Crosse	80,247	85,400	6%	2,875	3,225	12%	5,416,582,490	7,567,164,689	40%	41,931	52,390	25%
Monroe	26,204	27,927	7%	1,051	1,174	12%	1,654,113,327	2,374,435,827	44%	39,433	50,625	28%
Pepin	3,806	3,861	1%	258	279	9%	210,075,565	270,273,042	29%	31,394	39,562	26%
Pierce	16,399	16,920	3%	824	956	14%	892,811,610	1,208,072,730	35%	33,289	40,668	22%
Trempealeau	19,026	19,076	0.2%	699	811	13%	1,068,803,258	1,471,720,551	38%	35,203	46,617	32%
Vernon	14,874	15,420	4%	659	726	9%	752,698,068	986,803,899	31%	29,937	37,561	25%
Mississippi River Region	189,888	198,582	5%	7,675	8,516	9%	11,811,058,641	16,145,395,955	37%	38,045	48,284	27%
Wisconsin	3,405,313	3,707,964	9%	156,451	179,359	11%	246,276,925,188	337,184,166,574	37%	44,653	55,754	25%
Iowa	1,928,352	2,075,950	8%	95,253	103,903	8%	139,130,678,963	192,657,032,380	37%	41,387	52,711	27%
Minnesota	3,398,853	3,805,625	12%	163,743	178,083	7%	268,804,019,260	376,814,038,648	36%	48,997	62,096	27%
U.S.	173,135,442	202,749,016	17%	9,033,392	10,203,204	11%	14,605,601,358,500	20,868,672,401,912	37%	49,726	61,436	24%

Source: EMSI – Datarun 2020 Qtr. 2, Compiled by the MRRPC

Mississippi River Region Economic Indicators

Table 1 shows the growth or decline of four economic indicators over a nine-year period (2010-2019). The nine county Mississippi River Region saw an upward trend in each of the four indicators slightly below or on par with the state of Wisconsin as a whole. Individual counties saw a similar positive trend, though both Buffalo and Crawford county saw declines in job and/ or business growth. The total number of jobs in most counties rose by 5-14%. The two exceptions to this were Crawford county where job numbers experienced a decline of 2% and Buffalo County, which experienced a decline of 13%. The Buffalo County decline is probably attributed to a major trucking company cutting jobs and/or reassigning drivers to another payrolled location in a different county. The closure of a coal power plant in Alma likely attributed to this decline as well. As a whole, the region experienced a 9% increase, below the 11% increase statewide. Counties also experienced an increase of 5-14% in the number of payrolled business locations, except Crawford, which saw a 5% decline. The Gross Regional Product of the Mississippi River Region increased 37% over the nine-year period. The only county that experienced a decline in GRP growth was Buffalo, with an 6% decrease. All other counties grew anywhere from 31-44%. Finally, the data shows the average earnings per job increased by 27% in the region, similar to the 25% upsurge statewide. All counties underwent a similar increase, with the average earnings per job rising anywhere from 22-36%.

Below are the definitions of the economic indicators used in Table 1 and sources where this information was found.

Total Number of Jobs: A job is any position in which a worker provides labor in exchange for monetary compensation. This includes those who work as employees for businesses (a.k.a. “wage and salary” employees) and proprietors who work for themselves. The total number of jobs were acquired via Emsi data based off the QCEW (Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages), with additional estimates from County Business Pattern. Payroll Businesses Description (Emsi).

Payrolled Business Locations are the same datapoint as QCEW Establishments - the single, physical locations where economic activity takes place. Due to the fact that QCEW captures only the businesses covered by state or federal unemployment insurance systems, we can infer that this datapoint is limited to payrolled business locations. This is an important distinction, as many small businesses (especially in the retail sector) are run exclusively by the owners and have no payroll. Such businesses are Not represented in this data point. Source: Emsi data based on the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW).

Gross Regional Product measures the final market value of all goods and services produced in a region. This figure is the sum of earnings, property income, and taxes on production. Source: Emsi data based primarily on data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) and the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Average Earnings also called “Current Total Earnings”, this is the total industry earnings for a region divided by number of jobs. Includes wages, salaries, supplements (additional employee benefits), and proprietor income. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. If using only QCEW and/or non-QCEW in Class of Worker settings, this figure shows only wages, salaries, and supplements paid to Employees.