

Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission Staff Report on Projects for the Bimonthly Meeting on 10.09.2019

	Agenda Topic or Project Name	Purpose, Benefit, Project deliverables, and Contract Amount	Project Time Period	Project Status	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 transactions occurring in all accounts that includes: (1) Operational funds (checking, savings, CDs) (2) The four business Revolving Loan Funds and (3) the Disaster Recovery Microloan Fund.	Today's Meeting	(1) Review operational fund transaction activity that include: Checking, savings and certificate of deposit transactions. (2) Review transaction activity in the 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. (3) Review transaction activity in the Disaster Recovery Microloan program funded from Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation – WEDC.	Greg Flogstad, Director 608.785.9396 greg@mrrpc.com
4	Presentation on status of \$55 million CBD oil processing, bottling and labeling facility with workforce housing and childcare facilities in Kendall WI,	Hemp has economic development potential for the region. It can be grown for grain/seed, fiber or cannabidiol (CBD) use. Hemp's wide variety of products along with the region's overstocked biomass resources provides alternatives for the region's farmers.	Today's Meeting	Steve will give an overview of the project and the company proposing this facility in Kendall, along with the economic impacts not only for Kendall area but the potential on how hemp grown and processed for its use in myriad products can provide economic development opportunities for the entire region.	Steve Peterson, Economic Development Coordinator 608.769.9910 steve@gomonroecountywi.com
5	U.S. Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration Performance Review Preparation for February 12, 2019.	The MRRPC has been designated an Economic Development District (EDD) of EDA since 1977. There are hundreds of EDDs across the nation that undertake economic development initiatives and projects with EDA funding. To keep this EDD designation for this federal funding EDDs are evaluated every three years. EDA evaluates the staff, board of commissioners and its past, present and future economic development projects. Most of the region's industrial parks, revolving loan funds in the region have been funded by EDA as have business	The evaluation is set for February 12, 2020, MRRPC Bimonthly meeting	Today's meeting will provide information on EDA, and some of the criteria they evaluate EDD's on. The CEDS, Economic Distress, past projects, existing projects, and future projects will be discussed.	Dave Bonifas, Senior Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com

		incubators and many feasibility and marketing studies. It is important to receive a good evaluation from EDA so we can continue to channel their funding to economic development projects in the region.			
6	Status on the submission of an US Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant application to fund economic recovery planning, engineering, real estate appraisal, engineering and environmental assessment activity for the Villages of Ontario, La Farge, Viola and Readstown. If approved as submitted up to \$200,000 per community will be available for the above mentioned activities.	Economic Recovery Planning is needed by the flood impacted communities of Ontario, La Farge, Viola and Readstown. The following Planning Activities are proposed to assist these communities with economic recovery and long term sustainability: (1) site relocation decision research, (2) site design for community economic development and resettlement, (3) community facility assessment engineering and design, (4) public infrastructure engineering assessment and design, (5) project cost estimating, (6) real estate appraisal, (7) environmental assessment and (8) public participation.		A grant application was submitted to EDA in the third week in June. EDA requested some additional information on the application in late July. The MRRPC provided this information to EDA on July 31. The total project will be \$925,000 with \$185,000 in local match. No set time-line for EDA decision on the application has been given.	Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com
7	Report on Disaster Recovery Microloan Program.	Due to the increased frequency of natural disasters impacting businesses in Wisconsin the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation started developing a microloan program in early 2018. They were planning to roll it out in 2019. The recent flooding however sped this program up and they accepted applications in 2018 to assist to businesses impacted by the flooding of August 23-24 and September 3-4, 2018. WEDC has contracted with the MRRPC to administer	Today's Meeting	The grant application was approved the initial allocation of \$605,000 has been deposited in the MRRPC bank account The maximum loan amount is \$15,000 to businesses damaged by flooding. The interest rate will be 0% for a four year period with a six month initial payment deferral. The funds that are repaid to us can be used to cover administrative costs, set up an ongoing micro loan fund or for other economic development purposes. There are no federal regulations and minimum state tied to these funds. 16 loans have been approved and disbursed as of July 31, 2019 which was the application deadline. Excess	Greg Flogstad Director 608.785.9396 greg@mrrpc.com

		this program in the MRRPC region.		funds will need to be returned to WEDC.	
8.	Report on City of Mondovi and City of Westby Industrial Park EDA Applications.	<p>The Cities of Mondovi and Westby are both pursuing Federal EDA grants to develop new industrial parks.</p> <p>Mondovi's New Industrial Park will be located on the City's West side it will 210 acres in size and serve an expanding industry that will locate there and create 25 jobs. Included within the boundary of the industrial park will be the City's new wastewater treatment facility that will use an anerobic digester that will also generate electricity for the City. The total project cost is expected to be \$7.5 million with 50% the costs hopefully covered by a Federal EDA grant.</p> <p>The City of Westby is planning a 74 acre industrial park on the north side with costs totaling \$4.3 million, hoping that an EDA grant will cover 80% the costs due to disaster declaration.</p>	Grant applications for both projects are expected to be submitted to EDA in the Fall of 2019.	MRRPC staff is presently assisting with the grant applications	Greg Flogstad Director 608.785.9396 greg@mrrpc.com
9.	Decision on hiring policies and procedures for the Executive Director position and announcement on selection of person to fill Senior Planner position opening. GF	<p>The MRRPC needs to fill the Executive Director position. This is a unique hire for the MRRPC. Over 34 years have passed since hiring an Executive Director. Additional vacation time may be needed to be adjusted from the existing personnel policy manual if top candidates have quality past experience and earned commensurate vacation days. We should set the parameters for this now to avoid postponing to another meeting.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The Executive and Administration Committee selected Abbey Nicwander as the New Senior Planner.</p>	Today's Meeting	Executive Director Job description was approved at 08.14 2019 Bimonthly Meeting. Position has been posted in La Crosse Tribune on two Sunday editions. Was also posted in La Crosse Tribune Online job service, Indeed, LinkedIn and the following state chapters of the American Planning Association: Wisconsin, Illinois, and Minnesota. Application deadline is October 18, 2019 or until the position is filled.	Greg Flogstad Director 608.785.9396 greg@mrrpc.com

		She will start work on October 21, 2019.			
10.	Decision on Pepin County 2019 Contributions	The Director, Greg Flogstad, received an E-mail from the Pepin County Administrative Coordinator on January 8, stating that they did not include MRRPC contributions in their 2019 budget.	Today's Meeting	Greg Flogstad asked and was granted time on the County Board's February 20 th Meeting Agenda. He gave a presentation on the past and current activities of the MRRPC and asked the county to reconsider. At the end of his presentation there was a question and answer period. The County Board Chair stated they would not be making a decision at that meeting. On July 8 th MRRPC Staff-Peter Fletcher and Dave Bonifas met with the Pepin County Land Conservation and Planning Committee about MRRPC services. Greg Flogstad received an E-mail from the County Administrative Coordinator after this meeting. Greg Flogstad received an E-mail from the Administrative Coordinator that stated " We will be taking a Budget Modification to the County Board at their August meeting so we can amend the 2019 Budget and get the 2019 fees paid."	Greg Flogstad Director 608.785.9396 greg@mrrpc.com
11a	Trempealeau County Hazard Mitigation Plan update	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	2016-2018	A draft of the plan has been completed and a public hearing was held on August 14 th . The draft of the plan was sent to Wisconsin Emergency Management for review. The plan was approved by WEM and will now go before the Trempealeau County Law Enforcement and Emergency Management Committee for approval and recommendation to send to the County Board for approval	Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com

		Federal and State Hazard Mitigation Grant programs.			
11b	Monroe County Hazard Mitigation Planning	<p>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 inventories 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.</p>	2016-2018	<p>A draft of the plan has been completed and a public hearing was held on August 14th. A draft of the plan was sent to Wisconsin Emergency Management for review. Once Wisconsin Emergency Management approves the plan it will be presented to the Monroe County Board of Supervisors for approval.</p>	<p>Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com</p>
11c	Jackson County Hazard Mitigation Plan	<p>Update the Jackson County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. \$30,000 federal grant approved requiring a \$10,000 match from MRRPC and Jackson 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.</p>	August 2018 through March 2021	<p>Jackson County received notification from FEMA in August that their grant application to update their existing plan has been approved. The final plan is due in March 2021. MRRPC staff has begun updating demographic information for the plan. Also, staff has begun creating a hazard risk assessment survey which will be mailed out to all municipalities, EMS, Fire Departments, Police Departments and various county departments. In addition, work has begun updating information on all structures located within the FEMA 100-year flood boundary and updating historical occurrences of all the natural hazards.</p>	<p>Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com</p>

		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.			
11d	La Crosse County Hazard Mitigation Plan	Update the La Crosse County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. \$31,331 federal grant approved requiring a \$10,444 match from MRRPC and La Crosse 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.	August 2018 through March 2021	La Crosse County received notification from FEMA in August that their grant application to update their existing plan has been approved. The final plan is due in March 2021. MRRPC staff has begun updating demographic information for the plan. Also, staff has created a hazard risk assessment survey which was mailed out to all municipalities, EMS, Fire Departments, Police Departments and various county departments. Staff has completed updating the historical occurrences of all the hazards identified in the plan. Also, staff has begun updating critical structures information such as nursing homes, residential care facilities, schools, etc.	Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com
11e	Scenic Mississippi Regional Transit (SMRT) bus serving Crawford, Vernon, Monroe, and La Crosse counties	Develop a fixed route public transportation service for Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe and Vernon Counties. Bus transportation will service commuters, elderly, disabled, medical appointments, and personal travel. Projected operating costs for 2019 are approximately \$420,000. Funding comes from a federal DOT grant, local governments, corporate donations, Bremer Foundation Grants and the fare box.	Service Began on December 3, 2012 - present	The SMRT Bus has been operating for over six years serving La Crosse, Vernon, Crawford, and Monroe Counties. In 2017 ridership decreased by about 6%. In 2018 ridership rebounded on the SMRT system and increased by 9% over 2017 ridership. Ridership so far in 2019 has decreased approximately 10% over 2018 ridership numbers. Weather issues in January caused the service to cancel around a week of service which impacted overall ridership numbers. On July 19, 2019 The SMRT Bus system through La Crosse County as the applicant, was awarded a	Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com

				<p>\$492,570 in federal funds to acquire 2 battery electric cutaway buses and associated infrastructure equipment to serve the SMRT system. SMRT routes are being analyzed by the WISDOT electric bus contractor to determine if electric buses are capable of serving its route distances and terrain. MRRPC staff assisted La Crosse County with the electric bus application and the successful Bremer Foundation grant to help cover operating costs.</p> <p>On May 13, 2019, the SMRT Bus system added a mid-day route between La Crosse-Tomah. The additional route will provide more flexibility for riders to use the bus for medical appointments, school, and daily activities. Providing three runs a day from La Crosse to Tomah and points in between.</p>	
10f	La Crosse County Outdoor recreation plan	As part of receiving annual county contributions, the MRRPC updates and maintains county outdoor recreation plans. The MRRPC is currently working with La Crosse County on updating the county's outdoor recreation plan.	November 2018 – June 2019	<p>MRRPC staff met several times with La Crosse County staff over the last nine months and gathered background information (recreation budget, projects, data, etc.) that assisted in updating the outdoor recreation plan.</p> <p>The final draft of the Outdoor Recreation Plan was provided to La Crosse County in March and was posted on the La Crosse County website. In March/April La Crosse County towns, and cities/villages were asked to review the plan and provide information on their municipality's future outdoor recreation projects. Information from local units of government was received and incorporated into the planning document. The Outdoor Recreation Plan was approved by the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors in May and the finalized document has been posted on the La Crosse County and MRRPC website.</p>	Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com
11g	City of Mondovi Comprehensive Plan	Assist Mondovi in having an up-to- date Comprehensive Plan that meets Wisconsin Statutes. Total contract is for \$12,000.	June 2018 – July 2019	MRRPC staff facilitated a public open house meeting in February 2019 to provide the opportunity for residents to provide input on the draft updated Comprehensive plan. Comments received and plan modifications were made and in April staff completed a public hearing draft of the updated comprehensive plan. A public hearing	Dave Bonifas, Planner 608.785.9396 dave@mrrpc.com

				<p>on the updated comprehensive was held on April 30, 2019 in the City of Mondovi. A few modifications pertaining to future annexations and planning maps were requested.</p> <p>Staff has made plan modifications and forwarded the final updated comprehensive plan to the City of Mondovi. Plan was adopted on July 9, 2019. Completing the project.</p>	
11h	<p>Report on the Wisconsin Department of Administration's proposed Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Close Grant program involving terminating all CDBG Revolving Loan Funds across the state. Then allowing communities to apply for a guaranteed CDBG grant for the amount of RLF funds returned. GF</p>	<p>Due to compliance issues and over \$50 million sitting in bank accounts across the state the WI DOA is proposing to terminate the CDBG RLFs in all communities and counties. As an incentive for RLF communities and counties to participate it will allow counties and communities to apply for a CDBG grant in an amount that is equal to the amount of CDBG funds that are returned. This CDBG grant is guaranteed to be funded. Grants may be for road, water sewer, other public facilities, housing, planning, job training services and centers, food pantries, senior centers, services to the homeless, and public safety, child care, health services: substance abuse services-counseling and treatment (opioid treatment), fair housing counseling, education programs, energy conservation, services for senior citizens, and other similar projects approved by DOA. Projects must also benefit a population area that is at least 51% Low and moderate Income.</p>	<p>This program was rolled out by WI DOA in February 2019. Communities and counties have two years to return the funds and apply for CDBG grant for the amount of RLF funds that they returned to the State.</p>	<p>The Wisconsin Department of Administration received approval from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development roll out this program. DOA has sponsored meetings and webinars on this program and attended meetings in various counties to explain this program. Communities and counties will have two years to determine and apply for projects that are CDBG eligible and provide service to a population that is at least 51% Low and moderate income and/or a blighted project. 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.</p>	<p>Greg Flogstad Director 608.785.9396 greg@mrrpc.com</p> <p>David Pawlisch, Bureau Director, Community Development, WI Dept of Administration 608.2617538</p>
12	Old Business				
13	New Business				
14	Adjourn				