

Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission Staff Report on Projects for the Bimonthly Meeting on 4.9.2025

Agenda Topic or Project Name	Purpose, Benefit, Project Deliverables, Contract	Project Time Period	Project Status	Contact
V. Ellsworth Outdoor Recreation Plan Update	Outdoor Recreation Plan	April 2023-February 2025	The focus now is on finalizing the draft in collaboration with the Village, aiming for completion by the end of the year. The Village held its public hearing and later adopted the plan. Now finished plan to be sent to Village both hardcopy and electronic. Completed	Ken Harwood
Hazard Mitigation Plan Updates – Monroe, Pierce, and Trempealeau Counties	Submitted planning grant applications for Monroe, Pierce, and Trempealeau Counties. Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans are prepared to reduce costs and losses from natural disasters for counties and municipalities.	2023-2025	Kickoff meetings and public surveys have been completed, and final drafts for all three counties have been submitted to WEM for review. Teams are now getting County resolutions adopting the HMP that WEM has approved (Pierce April 15, Trempealeau ?, Monroe ?) and then we will work with County groups to try to get resolutions from all governmental units (Towns, Villages, Cities).	Jack Zabrowski
Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Ho-Chunk Nation	Submitted planning grant applications for the Ho-Chunk Nation. Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans are prepared to reduce costs and losses from natural disasters for counties and municipalities.	2023-2025	Public outreach events and data collection are complete, and a draft plan has been shared with Nation leadership and submitted to WEM/FEMA for review. The next step involves presenting the updated plan to Nation departments while addressing any feedback from the review process. Waiting for Tribal approval process.	Jon Bingol & Jack Zabrowski
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. 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	Funding for operations has been supported by a Bremer Foundation grant, and discussions on long-term sustainability and electric bus initiatives are underway. The focus remains on developing a financial sustainability plan and addressing operational challenges, such as staffing and funding shortfalls, in collaboration with local governments. More work to do this year to maintain the service.	Ken Harwood
DOT Contract Work Plan	WisDOT is beginning to update two long-range plans: Connect 2050 (the Long-Range State Transportation Plan), and the Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050. In addition, the LAPC is in the process of updating the MPO Plan, Beyond Coulee Vision 2040.	Ongoing	The 2024 Transit Plan was completed and approved, with the DOT Work Plan submitted in November. Ongoing efforts are focused on executing the 2025 tasks and maintaining collaboration on MPO transitions and planning updates. In process.	Ken Harwood and Jon
Monroe County Economic Development Committee	Assisting the Committee as needed	Ongoing	Committee has some new members and a new Chair and changing priorities for ED and Tourism. We will help as we are allowed. They contracted with River Travel Media to run the EDT event next April. Event in Warrens April 10 -11. Group hosted a Housing meeting March	Jon Bingol

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Vernon County Economic Development Committee RLF	County EDC approved a new loan manual and MRRPC to administer the fund. Will be paid for actual costs, time and materials.	Ongoing	MRRPC to administer the RLF and ED committee is updating the VCEDLF manual. We collect payments and manage loan requests. Committee updated loan manual in November. Two new loan applications in February.	Jon Bingol & Sarah Ofte
Vernon County Comprehensive Plan	County asked to have MRRPC update their Comprehensive Plan.	2023 - 2025	Vernon County Plan Commission has reviewed the first draft and suggested edits. Final stakeholder engagement was held on December 2 at the County Courthouse. A second draft will be ready for review at the Committee's December 16 meeting. Held Public Hearing January 29, 2025. Final draft to go to County Board for ordinance adoption in February. Comp Plan passed and has been adopted, bound copies provided to County and they copied me on their submission of completion to DOA 4/1/25.	Jack Zabrowski
Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan Update	The township asked to have MRRPC update their Comprehensive Plan.	2023 - 2025	MRRPC Board approved the contract on 4/12/23. The Town had meeting with Jon on 7/8/24 to review survey results, existing conditions and discuss possible zoning ordinances as well as how to administer the process. 11/11 Simon and Jon met with Team discussed having public hearing in Q1 2025. Still working to finish plan.	Jon Bingol
City of Black River Falls Comp Plan	The city has asked MRRPC to update their Comprehensive Plan.	2023 - 2025	The city held an Intergovernmental meeting on 12/5. Ken took over plan in January and met with commission to work on goals and make updates since last meeting. Public hearing to be held March 27, Ken and Jon attended, Plan Commission approved comp plan and advanced it to full City Council for adoption of ordinance in April.	Ken Harwood & Jon Bingol
Pepin, Pierce, Buffalo, Trempealeau, Monroe, La Crosse and Vernon Counties Broadband Plan (Crawford in group with Prosperity SW redo)	Counties have received PSC grants for Broadband planning of \$18,300 each.	2023 – 2025	Counties are working on preparing to apply for additional grants in August. Vernon County has the highest percent of fiber to the home in the State. 4 County group hired a consultant to help and are developing a Plan. All other counties working their BB plans. BEAD letters of support and applications for this round of grants due late February. Waiting to hear if any projects have been approved.	Jon Bingol
Village of Oakdale Comprehensive Plan	Village asked if MRRPC can help with their update as they have a "Lean Plan", but it needs more data.	2023-2025	Board met in 1/25 considering hosting an intergovernmental meeting before having public hearing in 2025 getting close to finish and will set public hearing date and give notice this month. Public hearing April 7.	Jon Bingol
Village of Coon Valley Comp Plan	Village asked if MRRPC can help with their update.	2023-2025	Determining data needs and waiting for direction from the Village. TBD. I sent group possible funding sources but haven't gotten a reply yet.	Jon Bingol
Village of Merrillan Outdoor Recreation Plan	Village asked if MRRPC can help with their update.	2023-2025	Determining data needs and waiting for directions from Village. Survey is complete. Village pushed out timeline to get more data on sites and finalize goals for Outdoor rec plan. Ken and Jon met with Village to complete Plan on 12/12 for public hearing.	Ken Harwood

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			Village Board adopted the plan. Final copies being sent to them...paper and electronic. Completed.	
Northern Grain Belt Port Statistical Area	Ability to have data on volume of goods shipped through the ports	Ongoing	The team is meeting with stakeholders to look at next steps and how best to improve the organizational structure to go after more funding for local projects. Working with La Crosse Area Port Authority to determine structure options and proposed linkage to NGBP. Still moving forward...slowly. Consultants have been focusing on Winona area as we questioned some of their processes.	Ken Harwood
Town of Greenfield Comprehensive Plan	Township asked MRRPC to update their Plan and delivered the signed contract and first check to the office on 10/3/23	2023-2025	The Future Land Use map was updated, and the Comp Plan first draft has been submitted to the Town of Greenfield Plan Commission for review. Jack Zabrowski will review the plan at the Plan Commission meeting Dec. 9. Open house on January 14. Public hearing April 14.	Jack Zabrowski
Town of Burns Comprehensive Plan	Township asked MRRPC to update their plan.	2024 - 2025	Jack Zabrowski attended the Town of Burns Town Board meeting on Nov. 13 to confirm initiation of the Comp Plan process creation. MRRPC staff is creating an initial survey, working thru edits to be distributed later this month. Still in process.	Jack Zabrowski
City of Arcadia Comprehensive Plan	City asked MRRPC to update their plan.	2025 - 2026	In July they approved a Community/ED Planner position and hired one. They put out RFP for comp, outdoor rec, historic preservation plan due end February. Submitted a proposal. Spoke to two City officials about proposal March 31, they are speaking with City leadership next.	Jon Bingol
Town of Martell Comprehensive Plan	Town approved MRRPC to do the plan 5/14/24	2024-2025	Met with Town Planning Committee and the Town Board for contract. Ken starting on Survey and Team on existing conditions meeting on 6/11/24. Closed survey, working with Town on goals and objectives. Ken just got final edits from Committee and they plan to have public hearing in May.	Ken Harwood
Pierce County EDC	Develop strong partnership and connection with EDO.	ongoing	They hired a new Director Lauren Highfill and we invited her to 12/9 BCF annual meeting and December Bimonthly meeting. I presented at a meeting they are hosting for all county municipalities on 2/19. Working to build stronger connections.	Jon Bingol
USDA RPN 8 county outdoor rec project	County group received National Park Foundation grant for technical assistance, waiting to hear on USDA Opportunity grant by end of June. Team moving forward to develop a regional outdoor rec plan and strategy to create destinations.	To be done in August 2025...	Partnering with WCWRPC and other area counties and organizations to make this plan a reality. USDA rep Sarah S. to speak at MRRPC August meeting. We received a grant of \$70,000 and the official start date is planned for 8/12. The contract is for \$20,000 and started on our 4 county existing conditions and survey questions/methodology and distribution approach. Worked with WCWRPC to develop survey to citizens for project to release in December. Team started existing conditions for our 4 counties from previous/recent County ORPs we did. We are doing a survey of businesses for the project. Community outreach meetings scheduled	Jon Bingol, Jack Zabrowski, and Ken Harwood

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			in all 8 counties, ours are: Pepin 4/3, Buffalo 4/8, Trempealeau 4/9 and Jackson 4/14.	
City of Galesville	City asked MRRPC to update their plan.	2025?	MRRPC approved a contract 2/24 and we are waiting on the City's response...TBD...will have to start over, looking for new contacts there	Jon Bingol Exec. Director
Town of Garden Valley Comprehensive Plan	Town asked MRRPC to update the plan. Group is working on land use information.	2024-2025	The survey is nearing the end and Town input results from written responses. Updated existing conditions. Sent Survey summary and updates. Ken meeting with committee 12/3. Ken working with them on goals for the plan.	Ken Harwood
Crawford County Housing Task Force	Developing actionable strategies to improve housing in the county	ongoing	The County reviewed recently completed Housing Study done by SWWRPC and are determining steps to utilize the data to advance housing options in the county. Toured available site for development in September. Met in January we will help to update recent housing study with current data and additional strategies to move forward. Next meeting April 9	Jon Bingol & Ken Harwood
Jackson County ED committee	Advance and enhance economic development in the county	ongoing	Participated in a strategic planning session lead by Seven Rivers Alliance on 8/5. Will assist where able. Attended 2 nd strategy meeting on 11/4 and committee meeting in December. Missed January meeting but will help as needed, They are looking for ways to fund an ED position.	Jon Bingol
Gays Mills Thrive Project WEDC ORP	Gays Mills is developing plans to build a community pavilion and applying for planning \$s thru WEDC	April 2024 - 2026	The team reviewed updated RFPs for initial planning work and selected engineering firm. Awarded first \$25,000 grant and selected firm for engineering met them 11/11 for kickoff. Reviewing engineering estimates, may consider options to reduce the cost.	Jon Bingol
CRBC New Direction	CRBC Board recently adopted a new Strategic Plan to focus on more impactful businesses for incubation and acceleration	ongoing	We will need to hire again as well as develop an implementation plan to advance the strategic direction. Jon to be President in 2025. Group to partner with SBDC, score, WWBIC, seven rivers, others to host a resource center onsite to promote business development and have "office hours" at the facility. Team is working to create space for resource center and find new spots for tenants in needed areas.	Jon Bingol
BRF planning grant for Connector Trail	City awarded a DOT TAP grant to connect bike path and identify river crossing and early	September 2024 – October 2025	BRF bike ped Study to explore the expansion of an existing 4-mile paved recreational trail to connect with other areas of the City and the County. Plan will require engineering to develop river crossing. MRRPC fee TBD of the \$80,000 grant. Held meeting of local committee to assist in the process and working on finalizing RFQ for engineering/consultant for study.	Jon Bingol, Jack Zabrowski, Ken Harwood
La Crosse County Outdoor Rec Plan	Complete a CORP for County	October 2024 – April 2025	\$4,000 to do their Plan. Started Plan in November. Had several meetings and survey is out and plan is progressing well.	Ken Harwood & Jack Zabrowski

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WEDC SBD Grant	Apply for WEDC SBD grant for \$250,000 for the 9-county region	October 2024 – December 2026	Met with a broad group of partners to determine a plan to apply for this grant as a region. Application due on 10/17...submitted. Was asked to update application in December and again in January. We have been selected...contract approval April 9 bimonthly.	Jon Bingol
Town of Scott Comp Plan	Update Town's Comprehensive Plan	December 2024 – January 2026	Town approved contract in December and had kickoff meeting 1/27. Simon/Ken (in person) and Jon(virtually) went through process, existing conditions, survey and expectations. Group will meet monthly. Survey created and post cards, posters and paper copies delivered March 24.	Ken Harwood
City of Durand Proposal for Comp Plan, Outdoor Rec Plan and Zoning Assistance	Submitted proposal to update the City's Comp and Outdoor Rec Plans as well as update Zoning	3/25 - ?	Still waiting on next steps.	Jon Bingol
HMP preapplication for Buffalo county	5 year HMP process thru wem/fema	12/24 - 2027	Submitted preapplication and working with County EM and WEM.	Jack Zabrowski
New Audit firm CLA	Required annual government single audit	December 2024 – April 2025	Met with Brock to get plan for audit and identify data request and processes. Should have results at April 9 bimonthly meeting.	Sarah Ofte & Jon Bingol
Hazard Mitigation Plans for Jackson & La Crosse	5 year HMP process thru WEM/FEMA	11/24 - 2026	Waiting for engagement letters from WEM/FEMA to be able to start these HMPs. No news on these out of FEMA...Jack and County EMs have tried via WEM	Jack Zabrowski
Ho-Chunk Nation Comprehensive Community Evaluation	Submitted proposal to their RFP on a very extensive research project.	3/25 - ?	Waiting for a response.	Jon Bingol
Town of Arcadia	Garbage Study/Project	4/25 -	Town received an Innovation Grant and want us to do the study. Contract to be approved April 9 bimonthly.	Jon Bingol
MRRPC Regional Comprehensive Plan Update	10 year Update of Plan	11/24 – 12/25	Still gathering data to update Plan before sharing with MRRPC comp plan committee.	Jon Bingol
DNR Water Quality Plan	Create a regional water quality plan	4/25 - ?	The other 8 RPCs work with DNR on water issues. We are exploring how we get involved. Spoke with DNR and are working on a proposal to have them fund a Regional Water Quality Study.	Jon Bingol & Jack Zabrowski