



**MISSISSIPPI RIVER
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**
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James Kuhn, Cashton, WI
Chairman
Bill E. Schroeder, Hager City, WI
Vice Chairman
Vicki Burke, Holmen, WI
Secretary & Treasurer
Jon Bingol, La Crosse, WI
Executive Director

MINUTES

MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRRPC) BIMONTHLY MEETING

10:00 a.m., Wednesday, December 10, 2025

Altra Federal Credit Union Operations Building, 1700 Oak Forest Drive, Onalaska, WI 54650

Call to Order at 10:00 am

Vice Chairman Schroeder called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and asked for the roll call. A quorum was present. There were guests in attendance: Gregg Wavrunek Representing Senator Tammy Baldwin and Vicki Markussen, Executive Director - LADCO. The attendance roster is attached.

Minutes of October 8, 2025, Bimonthly Meeting

Vice Chairman Schroeder asked for a motion on the October 8, 2025, bimonthly meeting minutes. Commissioner Twidt made a motion to approve the October 8, 2025, bimonthly meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jaekel. Vice Chairman Schroeder asked if there were any questions or comments and hearing none, the minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report

Secretary Burke reported that on October 1, 2025, the balance in all accounts was \$424,884.42 and on November 30, 2025, the ending balance in all accounts was \$585,543.35. She reported the beginning balance on October 1, 2025, in all Revolving Loan Fund accounts was \$1,440,935.48 and the ending balance in all accounts on November 30, 2025, was \$1,446,579.94. Mr. Bingol reported that the Microloan funds were transferred from the River Bank account to the Altra Money Market Account in order to earn more interest. Commissioner Cooper made a motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Strnad. Vice Chairman Schroeder asked if there were any questions or comments, and the Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved.

Presentation by Vicki Markussen – Executive Director, LADCO

Ms. Markussen gave a presentation about the work that is being done at the La Crosse Area Development Corporation (LADCO). She gave a brief history of the organization and its main goal of attracting businesses to La Crosse County. She said that the organization's work includes assisting with brown field development, creating certified sites that are shovel ready for businesses to move into, and their work connecting businesses to available commercial properties for expansion.

Report on the WEDC Disaster Recovery Microloan Account

Mr. Bingol reported that the WEDC Disaster Recovery Microloan Account was money that was loaned out to businesses in Crawford, Vernon, and Monroe Counties that were affected by the 2018 floods. The money was loaned out to businesses in microloans up to \$15,000 at 0% interest. He said that all the loans have been repaid and he has consulted with WEDC about the potential use of the funds. He said that the funds could be used for economic development and in order to gain more interest the funds were transferred from the River Bank account into the Altra Federal Credit Union account.

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

•Land Use Planning and Zoning Assistance • Transportation Planning • Economic Development Planning • Recreation Planning • Business Lending • Grant Writing • Economic Data Dissemination • Assisting Local Interests in Responding to State, Federal and Private Programs • Advisory Services on Planning and Development Issues • Coordinator for Programs and Activities • Advocate on Issues Affecting the Region

Report on the La Crosse County Revolving Loan Fund

Mr. Bingol reported that the La Crosse County Revolving Loan Fund that we administer has one active loan remaining. He said that La Crosse County formed this Economic Development Loan Fund Committee to build the West Salem Industrial Park and support another revolving loan fund. He said that the county has decided to disband this committee. The account we maintained for the revolving loan fund has been closed and the money has been moved to a La Crosse County account. He said that we will continue to collect payments for the remaining loan and deliver them to La Crosse County. He also reported that the La Crosse County Board has formed another committee for economic development.

Decision on Executive Director signing EPA Grant Contract for Water Quality Project

Mr. Bingol reported that he had applied for an EPA Grant in August to begin October 1st. He said that the government shutdown had delayed the grant process. After the government shutdown EPA had approved a \$50,000 grant for the MRRPC to conduct a regional water quality study. He said that he is waiting for the final contract which will have a retro start date of October 1st. After discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Burke and seconded by Commissioner Twidt to approve the MRRPC Executive Director to sign the EPA water quality study contract for the MRRPC, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Update on HMPs---La Crosse and Jackson Counties (this year); Buffalo County (preapp); Monroe, Pierce, Trempealeau Counties (waiting review); Ho-Chunk Nation, Crawford, and Vernon Counties (completed)

Mr. Bingol reported that La Crosse County Hazard Mitigation Plan is progressing and is about a third of the way completed. He said that public engagement hearings are being scheduled with all the municipalities in La Crosse County. He said that maps of hazards, both natural and manmade are being shared at the meetings. He said that Jackson County has decided to complete their Hazardous Mitigation Plan revision on their own, but Mr. Bingol said that we will assist them if they need additional help. He said that the other plans are completed.

Update on 8 County USDA RPN and RBDG

Mr. Bingol reported that the public hearings for the 8 County USDA RPN and RBDG Outdoor Recreation Plan have been set and scheduled in Jackson, Buffalo, Pepin, and Trempealeau Counties. He said that a Power Point will be shared with highlights of the plan and information about the Rural Partners Network USDA which has economic development funds for every state. He said the plan includes an inventory scoring matrix to help these areas become a destination as well as improving the quality of life for residents who live in the region. The plan is being submitted to USDA in December.

Update on Transportation Activities

Mr. Harwood reported that he continues to assist with the Great River Road newsletter and the JEM Grant the Mississippi River Parkway Commission has received to promote the Great River Road. He reported that the Lansing Bridge will be coming down between 9 am and noon on December 18th. He said that the ferry from Cassville will be used to transport cars back and forth from Iowa to Wisconsin. He also reported that the La Crosse Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is seeking funds to create a regional transit authority to oversee transit in the region. Mr. Harwood reported that ways to fund the SMRT Bus are being pursued. He said that the 2026 WisDOT Rural Transportation Program was approved at the federal level.

Update on MRRPC Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Bingol reported that a link to the survey was emailed to commissioners for them to take the survey and then provide feedback and suggestions. In 2026 the committee will convene to finalize the survey and have it disseminated for residents in the region to take the survey.

Update on WEDC SBDG Grant

Mr. Bingol reported that the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission has been promoting the WEDC SBDG Grant and \$90,000 in grants have been awarded to businesses along with \$300,000 in loans from our revolving loan funds with private financing resulting in a \$2.7 million of total investment in our region. He said that he is also promoting the Business Plan Contest with a deadline of Noon on February 13, 2026. He reported that he is also working with regional partners to develop this culture of entrepreneurship in the region beginning with the Coulee Regional Business Center (CRBC)

Update on Wisconsin Workforce Development Board

Mr. Bingol reported that he has officially resigned from the Wisconsin Workforce Development Board. He said that he is also assisting TUMMA to help them become a larger organization which the planning commission helped to develop through previous grants.

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Reports from Commissioners

Mr. Bingol reported that USDA has \$537 million allocated to Wisconsin. He said that these dollars are used for community wastewater treatment plants, fire trucks, and other community projects.

Commissioner Schroeder reported that the train hub in Hager City has been very busy and has 30 unit trains and transported 450,000 bushels of grain per unit train.

No Old Business nor any New Business.

Adjourn at 11:45 am

Vice Chairman Schroeder asked if there was any other new business. Hearing none, a motion was made to adjourn by Commissioner Twidt and seconded by Commissioner Anderson. The motion was unanimously approved.

Vicki Burke,
Secretary/ Treasurer

Date

MRRPC Bimonthly Meeting Attendees	
Name	Representing
John Schlesselman	Buffalo County – in person
Mary Anne McMillan Urell	Buffalo County – in person
Del Twidt	Buffalo County – in person
Craig Anderson	Crawford County – in person
Gerald Krachey	Crawford County – in person
Bruce Strnad	Crawford County – in person
Brad Chown	Jackson County – in person
Ron Carney	Jackson County - online
Tom Cooper	Jackson County - online
Leonardo Silva	La Crosse County – in person
Vicki Burke	La Crosse County – in person
Cedric Schnitzler	Monroe County – in person
Dennis Treu	Monroe County – online
Neil Gulbranson	Pierce County – in person
Bill Schroeder	Pierce County – in person
Richard Purdy	Pierce County – online
Patrick Sorge	Trempealeau County – in person
Phil Borreson	Trempealeau County – in person
Charles Jacobson	Vernon County – in person
JoAnn Nickelatti	Vernon County - online
Nancy Jaekel	Vernon County – in person
Jon Bingol	MRRPC Staff – in person
Sarah Ofte	MRRPC Staff – in person
Kia Kling	MRRPC Staff – in person
Gregg Wavrunek	Representing Senator Tammy Baldwin
Vicki Markussen	Executive Director – La Crosse Area Development Corporation (LADCO)