

Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission Staff Report on Projects for the Bimonthly Meeting on 8.12.2026

Agenda Topic or Project Name	Purpose, Benefit, Project Deliverables, Contract	Project Time Period	Project Status	Contact
La Crosse County HMP	Hazard Mitigation Plan	June 2025 – December 2026	Contracted with County to complete. Project is moving along. Jack has more meetings scheduled with communities to review risks, hazards, vulnerable populations, hazard response capabilities and mitigation project lists. Josh created a special website for HMP maps. Third milestone was achieved per contract. We have not heard about BRIC funding.	Jack Zabrowski and Jon Bingol
Hazard Mitigation Plan Updates – Jackson and Buffalo Counties	Hazard Mitigation Plan	June 2025 – December 2027	Gave proposal to Jackson County, new EM is most likely looking for help and we will be reapplying for past BRIC dollars that had been approved FY24-25 and cancelled. Waiting on details from WEM/FEMA on grant. Buffalo County is going to update their plan in-house as new BRIC excludes HMP; Jack and I offered assistance if they want or need any.	Jon Bingol Jack Z
Town of Maiden Rock Comp Plan	Town's comp plan	2025 - 2026	Town of Maiden Rock Planning Commission met in May with Ken, and set goals and other sections of the plan. Getting closer, set dates for public hearing in August.	Ken Harwood
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 came from a federal DOT grant, local governments, corporate donations, Bremer Foundation Grants, and the fare box but was insufficient.	Service Began on December 3, 2012 - present	La Crosse County met in December to decide to include it in County budget, they have contacted partners to see if \$s can be contributed for 2026 as others also removed it from their budgets. Participating counties and groups do not seem favorable on making needed investment to share the cost of SMRT. The MPO study of forming a Regional Transportation Authority is completed. A group is looking at alternatives for regional transport efforts. The County leaders are keeping us posted as the project progresses.	Ken Harwood/Jon B
DOT Contract Work Plan	WisDOT is beginning to update the State Freight Plan. In addition, the LAPC is in the process of updating the MPO Plan, Beyond Coulee Vision 2040.	Ongoing	The 2026 Work Plan has been approved by WisDOT. Ongoing efforts are focused on executing the 2026 tasks and maintaining collaboration on MPO transitions and planning updates. WisDOT 2027 Plan is approved and we will need to approve it in August. Also, the Title VI Plan needs to be updated by December. Annual meeting is in September in Oshkosh.	Ken Harwood and Jon Bingol
Monroe County Economic Development Committee	Assisting the Committee as needed	Ongoing	Committee has been restructured and better defined with 5 County Supervisors and 5 Advisory members. We are now considered a partner rather than an Advisory member. The leadership did ask us to continue participating and helping where we can.	Jon Bingol
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 priorities this month with the new committee members. We collect payments and manage loan requests. Helping judge Elevate Grant.	Jon Bingol & Sarah Ofte

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Monroe County WEDC Thrive Rural recipient	Community Development project in Norwalk	February 2026 – December 2027	This second cohort of WEDC Thrive Rural grants just kicked off on 2/3/26. Jon has been included on the leadership team (like the Gays Mills project). Norwalk leadership met with the team in April and is considering project options. Group approved doing UW Ext Design WI and having us update their comp plan. Application for grant goes to County board on 8/26.	Jon Bingol
Village of Oakdale Outdoor Rec Plan	Complete Village's 5 year CORP	November 2025 – December 2026	Village CORP was approved at 12/15 Village Board meeting. Work is being done on the Plan, survey in process and Kia/Jon met with Village team on 6/3. Kia has plan mostly completed.	Kia Kling & Ken H
Northern Grain Belt Port Statistical Area	Ability to have data on volume of goods shipped through the ports	Ongoing	Our group met to discuss plans to move forward and establish next steps for La Crosse City/County Joint Harbor Commission, City of PDC, both Chambers of Commerce (LC and PDC) and us have signed the MOU. LC Chamber is taking a larger role and will be the lead organization working on Bylaws now.	Ken Harwood & Jon
Town of Burns Comprehensive Plan	Township asked MRRPC to update their plan.	2024 - 2026	Jack presented final goals and objectives for Town review and the plan is nearing completion. Public meeting to be scheduled following approval.	Jack Zabrowski
City of Arcadia Comprehensive Plan	City asked MRRPC to update their plan.	2025 - 2026	City selected us to do the Comp Plan. Group has been meeting monthly and is working on goals and remaining elements. Jack and Kia are working on Future Land use info and compliance with Act 173.	Kia Kling
Pierce County EDC	Develop strong partnership and connection with EDO.	ongoing	Working to build stronger connections. Group contributed \$2k to Pitch Contest and the Director also participated as a judge. She is also now on the BCF Board and promotes the RLF.	Jon Bingol
City of Galesville	City asked MRRPC to update their plan.	8/2025 – 9/2026	Survey is completed and results were shared with their Plan Commission. Goals and objectives updated, plan going well. Updating housing projections to comply with new "Truth in Planning" law, specifying densities and housing units over next 20 years in 5 year increments (Act 173) and future land use. Getting closer to completion.	Jack Zabrowski
Town of Garden Valley Comprehensive Plan	Town asked MRRPC to update the plan. Group is working on land use information.	2024-2026	Ken working with them on goals for the plan. Plan was put on hold due to issues with a metallic mining operation and legal questions. Town won zoning challenge. Ken making requested updates. Town needs to make decisions before we can move forward to complete the plan.	Ken Harwood
Crawford County Housing Task Force	Developing actionable strategies to improve housing in the county	ongoing	The group is considering various ideas to move the effort forward. The new DDI Director is willing to help us too. Crawford County did get \$500,000 for incentives to recruit people to the county from out of state.	Jon Bingol and Ken Harwood

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Jackson County ED committee	Advance and enhance economic development in the county	ongoing	We participate in monthly committee meetings. JC Economic Development & Tourism Director – Ken Pearson, he started on 1/26/26. Group moving forward. We continue to help where able.	Jon Bingol, Ken Harwood & Kia Kling
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 second \$25,000 grant. Group is wrapping up second grant and did get updated (reduced scope) on the Community Shelter.	Jon Bingol
Town of Clayton	Comp Plan	2026	Town of Clayton working do the comp plan update. Ken is meeting with them regularly and they are advancing the plan.	Ken Harwood
CRBC New Direction	CRBC Board recently adopted a new Strategic Plan to focus on more impactful businesses for incubation and acceleration	ongoing	Jon is President in 2026. Group to partner with SBDC, Score, WWBIC, Seven Rivers, La Crosse County others to host a resource center onsite to promote business development and have “office hours” at the facility. Joined consortium to support LADCO application for WEDC Ignite grant, they did not get big grant but did get \$10,000 to do some entrepreneurial training in the area two sessions, one on September 29 and another on November 5 in conjunction with UWL SBDC Small Business Summit. New Director doing well.	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 – December 2026	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 is a subcontractor of the City and the \$80,000 grant. Contracted with Jewell for engineering. Jewell prepared/presented preliminary alternatives for Trail expansion. Working on costs for each selected option.	Jon Bingol, Kia Kling, Jack Zabrowski, Ken Harwood
Mississippi River Parkway Commission (MRPC)	Organization established to promote and advance the Great River Road, Mississippi River Trail and regional marketing & tourism	ongoing	We attend their Board meetings and provide technical assistance where and when we can. Ken also serves on the marketing committee and is assisting them with a WI Dept of Tourism JEM grant. This is an important group for our region. Jon to present to them on 8/14.	Ken Harwood & Jon Bingol
WEDC SBD Grant	Apply for WEDC SBD grant for \$250,000 for the 9-county region	October 2024 – December 2026	Raised \$44,000 match from Vernon County \$10,000, La Crosse County \$30,000 and Monroe County \$4,000. Approved 8 loan/grants for \$533,000 with grants of \$151,000 WEDC and \$40,000 from match distributed. Business Plan/Pitch contest distributed \$21,000 to 8 companies. \$81,000 of \$250,000 left, \$4,000 (MC) left of \$44,000 match.	Jon Bingol
Audit firm CLA	Required annual government single audit	December 2026 – April 2027	Presented and approved at April 8 bimonthly meeting. Need Brock to add “Schedule of State Awards” to fulfill WEDC requirement for grant...instead CLA did SOE – Schedule of Expenses for WEDC per statute for \$1600.	Sarah Ofte & Jon Bingol

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Jackson County Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan	Complete ORP for County	1/26 – 6/30/26	Working with County Parks Department and Chamber to update their Outdoor Rec Plan. Work has begun on the Plan.	Kia Kling & Ken H
Clean Cities Grant	Contracted by Clean Cities to do Community Engagement and Mapping of Great River Road EV/CNG fueling sites	2/26 – 6/27	This is a Dept of Energy Grant dispersed through the American Lung Assoc. to Clean Cities and \$30,000 contract. Work started, surveys approved will distribute Freight Survey later in August and Community Survey in September. Inventory of alternative fuel sites in the Great River Road corridor is progressing. Public meeting will be scheduled after surveys are completed.	MRRPC Team
Regional Industrial Site Assessment	Partnering with 7RiversAlliance and utilities	2026 - 2027	There is a need to develop an inventory of available sites for development in all 9 counties as well as assess readiness and identify recommendations where needed. 7RA submitting request for WEDC for Capacity Building Grant and requested contribution for counties and utility companies.	Jon Bingol & Ken Harwood
3-year EDA Project Planning Grant	Apply for EDA Project Planning Grant for 4/1/26 - 3/31/29	Due 2/20/26	We are in the process of apply for this EDA grant. We need MRRPC Board resolution/approval at 2/11/26 meeting. Submitted on 2/20 waiting for approval. Had to update budget but still no news...	Sara Ofte and Jon Bingol
MRRPC Regional Comprehensive Plan Update	10 year Update of Plan	11/24 - 2026	Still gathering data to update Plan before sharing with MRRPC comp plan committee. Kia has updated data and merging it into a new document. Working to organize the committee and moving survey for plan to Survey123 as Qualtrics is ending 6/15. Will be sent to Commission for review before releasing to the public. TBD	Jon Bingol & Kia Kling
DNR Water Quality Plan	Create a regional water quality plan	10/1/25 – 9/30/26	EPA approved MRRPC Regional Water Quality Study \$50,000 grant and they extended deadline to March 2027 due to approval delay. Contract signed. Started on project. Data has been requested to Ben Koch WI DNR Regional Engineer for CMAR for wastewater treatment plants in the region. Submitting QAPP in August.	Jon Bingol, Kia Kling & Jack Zabrowski
Crawford County Comprehensive Plan	Update the plan	2026 - 2027	County kickoff with Land Use and Soil & Water committees 8/11. Update under way.	Jon and Ken
Trempealeau County Outdoor Rec Plan	Update Plan by April 2027	2026 - 2027	Working on details with County Parks. Jon to present to County Board in September.	Jon
Trempealeau County Comp Plans for Townships	Update Town Plans	2026 - 2028	Meeting with County Admin and staff in September to develop timeline, costs, etc...	Jon
OZ 2.0	Nominate approved census tracts in the Region for Governor selection	7/31/26	All available sites did submit applications for the Governor's selection via WEDC. This program is run through US Treasury and attracts investment by providing incentives to reduce capital gains for investors.	Jon

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Town of Jefferson Monroe County Comp Plan	Update Town comp plan	2026 - 2027	Sent proposal to Town Chair. Waiting for response.	Jon
Placer.ai Reports	Delivered reports to	ongoing	Working with Explore La Crosse, City of La Crosse and City of Onalaska on custom reports.	Jon