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NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2014



**Jay Tappen,
Executive Director
Retired April 18, 2014**

**West Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning
Commission**

Director's Message from Jay Tappen and Lynn Nelson

As I prepare to leave the Commission after 23 years in its employ, I can't help but reminisce about my experiences and efforts during that time.

My first project for the Commission involved a Department of Natural Resources grant to bring a coalition of recycling interests together to create an organization to market cooperatively the recyclable materials collected throughout 26 counties. The

**Serving the
Counties of:**
Barron
Chippewa
Clark
Dunn
Eau Claire
Polk

Western Wisconsin Recycling Association was formed during that effort in the early 1990's and persists today as the Midwest Recycling Association in Amery, Wisconsin.

The main reason for the success of that project was the numerous people taken by an idea, working together to make it happen. I, as a planner, was just a facilitator; the real impact was made by people who had a stake in its outcome.

And so that is the recurring theme of my career in planning. Leveraging my expertise as a convener and information resource to allow counties, communities, and citizens to realize their potential. and that is what the Commission is about really. It is a partner with the people in the region, and the communities and organizations they represent, in moving the region forward to realize its potential.

I thank all of the people I have worked with over the years and I know we made a difference together.



Lynn Nelson
Executive Director
April 21, 2014

As of April 21, 2014, I became the fifth Executive Director in the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's 43-year history. Although I have been with the Commission for over 17 years, it is with great pride that I take on this new leadership role. I am proud of the WCWRPC, the work we do, and the partnerships that have been developed. It is with that respect of what has been accomplished in the past that we look to the future.

As you will note, in quite a few ways, I am not the same as past directors. Likewise the path we are going to take moving forward will not be exactly the same either. Every organization needs to evolve and grow to meet the needs of its constituents, and that is what we plan to do. After having been on the job for just one week, I am not quite ready to divulge what those changes are going to be, but stayed tuned. We think you will like what you see as we plan to be even more engaged in the work you do.

I echo Jay's sentiments. Together, in an even stronger way, we plan to partner with all of you to move the region forward.

Lynn Nelson
Executive Director

St. Croix

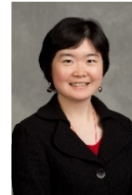
WCWRPC Staff:



Lynn
Nelson,
Executive
Director



Eric
Anderson,
Senior
Planner



Jing Duan,
GIS
Coordinator/
Associate
Planner



Tobi
LeMahieu,
Associate
Planner



Jennifer
Ludwig,
Loan
Processor



Lisa Ruth,
Office
Manager

Haymarket Square Summary Report

WCWRPC recently completed a placemaking effort to guide the design and programming of a new public plaza at the confluence of the Chippewa and Eau Claire rivers in downtown Eau Claire. The project demonstrates how an effective placemaking project engages the public to transcend the “place” and bring the “making” to the forefront. This 100% privately funded project included two workshops and facilitated site tour (with over 260 hours of total participant time) and a follow-up, online prioritization survey. To see the summary report, click [here](#).



Ann Schell,
Senior
Planner



Chris Straight,
Senior
Planner



Levi Wagner,
Lending
Specialist

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Facility (PF) Applications Released

The Wisconsin Department of Administration's Bureau of Community Development will be holding two application training sessions for the competitive 2014 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Facility (PF) grants. The training sessions will be held on:

- April 9, 2014 in Madison
- April 23, 2014 in Wisconsin Rapids

The CDBG-PF program is a federally-funded grant program designed to assist communities in expanding or upgrading municipal infrastructure such as water, sanitary sewer and storm drainage systems; streets; and sidewalks OR constructing facility projects which could include construction or renovation of libraries, community centers, senior centers, fire stations, health clinics, and day care facilities.



Beth Waldhart,
Fund
Manager



Completed CDBG-PF project in Chippewa Falls

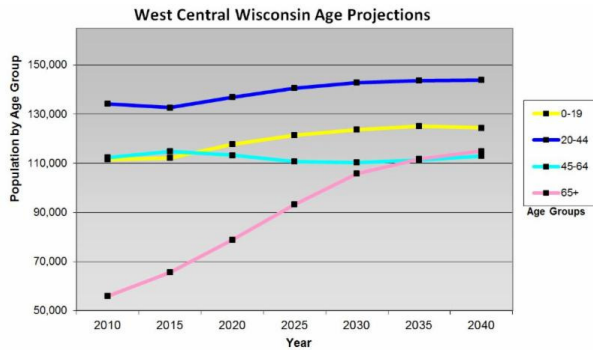
An eligible applicant is a general purpose unit of government (County, City, Village or Town) with a population less than 50,000 in which at least 51 percent of the residents are low- and moderate-income (LMI) or where the project provides services to a group of persons principally made up of LMI persons. The maximum award is \$500,000 or 50% of eligible project costs, whichever is less.

CDBG-PF projects are competitive and DOA accepts applications annually. Applications will be released and posted on the Bureau's website, <http://doa.wi.gov/Divisions/Housing/Bureau-of-Community-Development>, by April 1, 2014 and will be due on July 1, 2014.

WCWRPC staff will be attending one of the application trainings and can assist communities in determining project eligibility, verifying LMI eligibility, and preparing the grant application. Please contact WCWRPC's Tobi LeMahieu for more information.

Our Region is Projected to have 82,000 More Residents by 2040-What Are Your Plans?

Last December, the Wisconsin Department of Administration-Demographic Services Center released its updated population projections for Wisconsin's counties and municipalities through the year 2040. In accordance with Wisconsin Statutes §16.96, these are the official state population projections used for a variety of planning purposes. The projections show what might happen IF past population trends and patterns hold true, most notably fertility, mortality, and migration. The Demographic Service Center also produces the official annual population estimates which are used for purposes such as revenue sharing distribution.



A 19.8% population increase is projected for our region from 2010 to 2040. Our region will have 82,000 (or 1/5th) more residents. Consider in your plans where these residents will live, work, shop, and play. Most notable in the projections is that the 65+ age group will more than double between 2010 and 2040, while the other age groups remain relatively steady or grow much more slowly. This trend has implications on how we design our communities, as well as for our housing, facilities, senior services, economy, and labor force.

While all seven of our region's counties are projected to grow, these projections vary by county. St. Croix County is projected to continue to be Wisconsin's fastest growing county with a 41.1% increase between 2010-2040. One notable change since the previous projections, Clark County is projected to be the State's eighth fastest growing county at 23.9%. Polk County is close behind with a projected increase of 21.8%. In terms of actual population, Eau Claire County would experience the largest growth with over 12,800 new residents. And in Barron and Dunn counties, the under-65 age groups are projected to decrease. Chippewa County's growth has characteristics similar to the overall region, with the 45-64 age group remaining relatively steady and slight increases in the younger age groups, but an 88% increase in the 65+ age group.

These projections are an update to those produced by the Demographic Services Center in 2008, just prior to the housing and economic slowdown of the past five years. Our region's population growth slowed during this timeframe which impacted these projections. For example, the 2008 projections anticipated that our region would grow by 26.1% between 2010 and 2030. The updated projections have our region growing much more slowly at 16.5% during the same time period.

The Demographic Services Center annual population estimates and 2010-2040 population projections are available online at <http://www.doa.state.wi.us/Divisions/Intergovernmental-Relations/Demographic-Services-Center>. Please contact WCWRPC if you have any questions on this data or are in

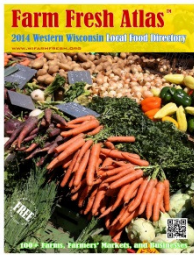
need of assistance with an update to your plans.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

Barron Area School District

In the middle of March, the WCWRPC completed the Safe Routes To School (SRTS) plan for the Barron Area School District. The school district includes an elementary school and middle school in the City of Barron, and elementary schools in both the villages of Alma and Ridgeland. There were 20 members on the SRTS Task Force, which met four times during the six-month process. The WCWRPC facilitated walking and biking audits at each school and parent and classroom surveys. The Task Force is committed to continue meeting in the future during the implementation phase of the project.

Western Wisconsin Farm Fresh Atlas™



The 2014 Farm Fresh Atlas is now available online at www.wifarmfresh.org. The hardcopy of the Atlas will be available in the middle of April. The local food directory lists direct-market farms, farmers' markets, and sponsors. The 2014 Atlas has 69 farms, which is an increase of 17 farms since the 52 farms in the 2012 Atlas. The Western Wisconsin Atlas was first released in 2006. The WCWRPC puts together the annual publication.

In the 2014 Western Wisconsin Farm Fresh Atlas, you'll find farms, farmers' markets, and businesses that provide all you need to find local, sustainably grown food such as fresh fruit you pick yourself, cattle and bison grazed on pastures, or vegetables harvested that day. When you buy locally grown food, your food dollars stay in Western Wisconsin and keep family farms and rural communities alive. In addition, eating food grown sustainably and organically is good for our environment and your health.

Global Trade Directors Visit to Wisconsin 2014

In-country market experts from Wisconsin's Global Trade Network will be visiting Wisconsin to share insights and advice on export opportunities in key international markets. Organized with regional

partners, these meetings offer Wisconsin companies a unique perspective on the growth potential offered by new or expanded export programs built on reliable market intelligence.

Stops throughout Wisconsin include:

- Milwaukee - May 13th: International Trade Day Conference. Click [here](#) for more information.
- Fond du Lac - May 14th: Global Market Intelligence Conference. Click [here](#) for more information.
- Eau Claire - May 15th: Global Market Intelligence Conference. Click [here](#) for more information.
- Madison - May 16th: BRICs and Beyond Conference. Click [here](#) for more information.

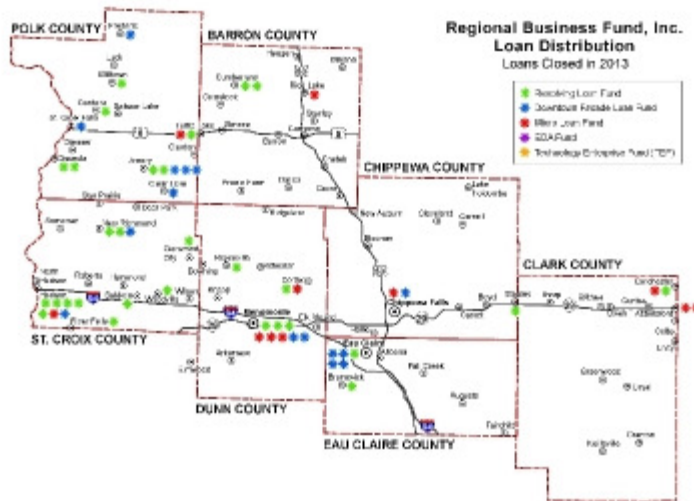
Whether your company is currently engaged in exporting or is seeking information on how to build an exporting strategy, these meetings will deliver actionable information to help you tap new international markets. If you have any questions, please contact Rachel Best at Rachel.Best@wedc.org.



REGIONAL BUSINESS FUND, INC.

Regional Business Fund, Inc. - Year in Review, 2013

In 2013, Regional Business Fund, Inc. (RBF, Inc.) awarded 55 loans totaling just over \$4.2 million. The loans assisted businesses in creating over 300 jobs and helped leverage \$48.6 million in private financing. The map below depicts the geographic distribution of the 2013 loans by program. Detailed loan information will be available in the full 2013 annual report.



The RBF, Inc. December 31, 2013 balance sheet indicated the programs were capitalized at over \$16.1 million, which consisted of over \$4.6 million in cash reserves and \$11.5 million in loan receivables. All available cash, along with approximately \$3 million in annual loan repayments, will be used to finance future projects.

RBF, Inc. Activity Report (2014) January - March

Loans Funded: 10
Total Amount: \$554,367
Jobs Created/Retained: 85

Pending Loans: 8
Total Amount: \$441,086
Jobs Expected: 57

Pending Loan Applications: 13
Total Amount: \$880,000
Jobs Expected: 98

For more information, please contact:
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