

# PROFILE

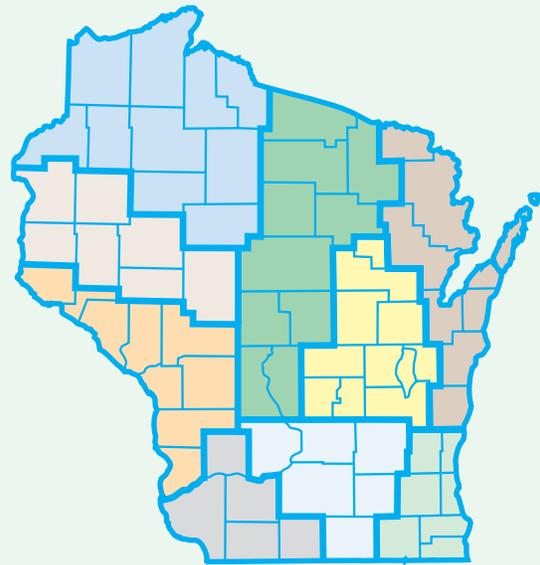
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## WISCONSIN'S REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

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APRIL 2005

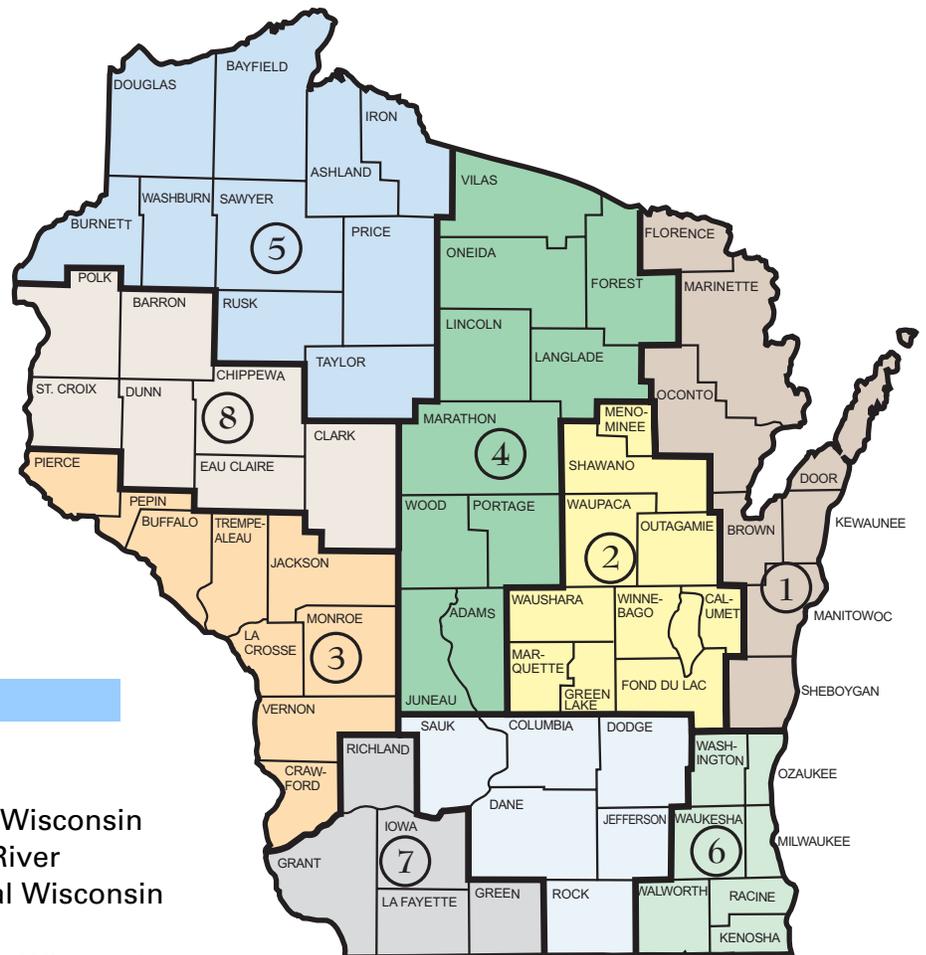
- ☆ BAY-LAKE
- ☆ EAST CENTRAL
- ☆ MISSISSIPPI
- ☆ NORTH CENTRAL
- ☆ NORTHWEST
- ☆ SOUTHEASTERN
- ☆ SOUTHWESTERN
- ☆ WEST CENTRAL



Prepared by the  
Association of Wisconsin  
Regional Planning Commissions

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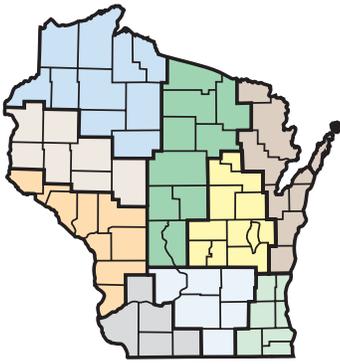
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## Regional Planning Commissions

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**Statutory Jurisdictions of Wisconsin's Regional Planning Commissions**



## Regional Planning: Past, Present, Future

Regional planning commissions in the State of Wisconsin are public agencies formed by executive order of the Governor. Wisconsin state statutes specify that regional planning commissions are to provide intergovernmental planning and coordination for the physical, social, and economic development of the Region.

Regional planning, as we know it today, began in 1959. However, there were earlier programs of State-inspired regional planning with significant accomplishments. For example, in the 1920s and the 1930s, Wisconsin state government included a high-profile regional planning program under the direction of a prestigious State planning board. This program dealt with the ravages of the depression, the industrialization of the urban economy, and the early stages of preparation for World War II. During the war years, the board and the regional planning program were phased out.

In the post-war period, unprecedented population growth and development occurred within the urban communities of the State. However, rural areas, particularly the north, were rapidly drained of population. This drain occurred primarily in the productive age groups, leaving a population base consisting of children to be educated and elderly to be cared for, but few residents in their prime income-earning years to pay the bills. As a result, community institutions began to suffer.

The current form of regional planning grew out of rapid development within metropolitan areas, creating a need for coordination of land use and infrastructure across municipal and county boundaries. At the same time, people with a deep concern for economic development and community

facilities in rural Wisconsin saw regional planning as a way of allowing individual communities to team up. By doing so, they could combine their resources through sharing expertise and speak with one voice that would be more powerful than the individual voice of each community.

A single law was devised for regional planning commissions (RPCs). That law was designed to be flexible enough to serve urban metropolitan regions as well as sparsely populated rural regions. Regional planning commissions began to be formed under this law in 1959. Over the course of 15 years, a total of eight multi-county regional commissions were formed serving 66 Wisconsin counties.

Over the 45-year history of the current regional planning movement in Wisconsin, the commissions have experienced several stages of development. In the early years, Federal funding helped sustain the RPCs, creating in some quarters an impression the RPCs were regional branches of Federal agencies and programs. During the mid-period of RPC existence, the State government once again instituted a State planning office and a department of local affairs and development whose mission included working through the RPCs to strengthen intergovernmental coordination and planning.

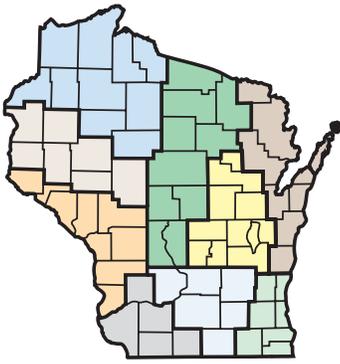
Throughout the early years of heavy Federal emphasis, the RPCs established a strong relationship with local governments. This was done in recognition that local governments ultimately are the place where most decisions are made regarding land use, resource management, and infrastructure. The local connection also reflected the fact that most commissioners of RPCs are members of and are appointed by local elected bodies.

### About AWRPC

The Association of Wisconsin Regional Planning Commissions (AWRPC) is a voluntary association of the eight regional planning commissions in the State of Wisconsin. AWRPC convenes meetings of RPC leaders to exchange information and serves as a clearinghouse for State

agency communications and involvement with RPCs.

For more information regarding AWRPC, please contact the Executive Director of your local Regional Planning Commission.



By the mid-1970s, Federal and State funding for planning activities done within RPCs had declined. Today, State and Federal funding for planning work with RPCs amounts to less than 40 percent of aggregate RPC expenditures.

The remainder comes from local sources. Local funding primarily occurs in the form of general appropriations to support the ongoing data collection, planning, and coordination functions of RPCs. Local funding also comes from the specific purchase of services from RPCs to support particular local projects.

Over several decades, the RPCs have responded to changing community priorities. Today's priorities are focused on comprehensive planning at the regional, county, and local levels of government, meeting in particular Wisconsin's "smart growth" planning requirements that were put in place near the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. While not fully reflected in the State's new comprehensive planning legislation, the RPCs did put forth a proposed system for coordinating planning at all levels of government (See Appendix A).

This publication profiles Wisconsin's eight regional planning commissions. It points out the diversity of work efforts and the common thread of intergovernmental cooperation and teamwork. In some respects, the RPCs are the instrument through which technical expertise can be shared by dozens or even hundreds of local governments who could not afford this expertise individually. In other respects, RPCs are like the public library. They collect, catalog, record and make available maps and data.

Hundreds of public and private data users call upon the RPC for basic information annually.

RPCs seldom receive much recognition for this basic function: like the library, we tend to drive by and take it for granted. When we need a book, we are grateful that the library is there, open and fully stocked with books and librarians who can facilitate our entry into the system. In still other respects, the RPCs are like associations of local governments. These associations are organized on the basis of geographic regions. These regions cut across and serve cities, villages, towns, and special districts of all kinds.

Over the decades, specific issues come and go, rising and falling in relative prominence. What remains constant is the need for localities within a region to have a regional voice and to have a locally controlled entity through which the sharing of ideas, information, and resources can be accomplished. The future for regional planning is bright. In virtually all parts of the State, innovative partnerships of public and private interests are working together for sustained, quality economic growth. Many of these partnerships are created by RPCs. Also, in many parts of the State, traditional intergovernmental conflicts are being addressed. Interested parties are coming to the bargaining tables. Often negotiated agreements are reached following regional planning commission facilitation. There is evidence in public proclamations by leading elected officials of a growing public acceptance of the need to act regionally.

This publication introduces the reader to the current status of regional planning across Wisconsin. We urge readers of this booklet to contact their own regional planning commission for more detailed information.

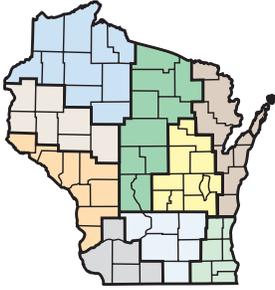
**RPC Designations**

All regional planning commissions in Wisconsin are designated by the State and Federal governments as clearinghouses for the purpose of reviewing Federal grant applications against adopted regional and local plans and development priorities. Seven of the commissions are designated or authorized as Economic Development Districts by the U.S. Economic Development

Administration for purposes of areawide economic planning and to guide the investment of Federal funds for economic development.

All eight commissions are affiliates of the Wisconsin State Data Center, whereby they provide data services (particularly census data) to local units of government and to the

public. In addition, three commissions have been recognized by the U.S. Department of Transportation as Metropolitan Planning Organizations to carry out a comprehensive transportation planning process in the State's urban areas. One commission is a designated water quality planning agency.



## RPC Planning and Assistance Activities

### Functions

Under Wisconsin law, regional planning commissions have the following functions:

1. They may conduct all types of research studies; collect and analyze data; prepare maps, charts and tables; and conduct necessary studies.
2. They may make and adopt plans for the physical, social and economic development of the Region.
3. They may publish and advertise their purposes, objectives and findings, and may distribute reports thereon.
4. They may provide advisory services on planning problems to the local governmental units within the Region and to other public and private agencies in matters relative to its functions and objectives.

Over the years, the demands of various regions on the regional planning commissions have changed. These changes, however, have not altered the basic advisory role of the commissions. The original and traditional role of the commissions was to plan for the physical development of the areas they served. This involved planning issues such as land use, transportation, natural resources, and water and sewer services. While this function has continued to be important, additional program responsibilities have been assumed, including technical assistance in such areas as economic development, grant and loan services, and local government management.

Bay Lake  
East Central  
Mississippi River  
North Central  
Northwest  
Southeastern  
Southwestern  
West Central

	Bay Lake	East Central	Mississippi River	North Central	Northwest	Southeastern	Southwestern	West Central
<b>•COMMUNITY PLANNING</b>								
Capital Improvements Programming	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Citizen Surveys	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Community Development	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Comprehensive Planning	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Downtown Improvement	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Historic Preservation	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Land Use Planning	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Local Technical Assistance	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Public Facilities	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Public Land Survey Recommendations				•	•			
Rural Development	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Street Naming/House Numbering	•	•		•				
Urban Service Districts	•	•		•		•		•
Waterfront-Harbor Planning	•	•	•		•	•		
Zoning Assistance	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>•DEMOGRAPHICS</b>								
Census Information Clearinghouse	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Population Information	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
State Data Center Affiliate	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>•ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>								
Business Incubation Program					•			
Economic Development	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Equity Venture Fund					•			
Industrial Development	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Industrial Site Data	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
International Business Development					•			
Loan Funds Administration	•		•	•	•	•	•	•
Loan Funds Packaging	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Market Assessments				•	•			
Tax Incremental Financing Districts	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Technology Innovations Services	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Tourism Development	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
<b>•GRANTS</b>								
CDBG Assistance/Administration	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Housing	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Business Development Grants	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Industrial Park Grants	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Outdoor Recreation Grants	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Public Works Grants	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Other Grant Assistance	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

## RPC Planning and Assistance Activities

	Bay Lake	East Central	Mississippi River	North Central	Northwest	Southeastern	Southwestern	West Central
<b>•MAPPING</b>								
GIS and Base Mapping	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>•NATURAL RESOURCE PLANNING</b>								
Air Quality Management	•	•				•		
Coastal Zone Management	•				•	•		
Environmental Impact Review	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Environmental Resources	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Farmland Preservation	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Floodplain Management		•	•		•	•	•	
Lakes Management Planning	•	•		•	•	•		•
Mining Impact Studies				•	•	•		
Park and Open Space	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Resource Conservation	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Resource Recovery		•		•	•		•	•
Sewer Service Area Planning	•	•	•	•		•		•
Solid Waste Management Planning	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Subdivision–Land Division Assistance	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Timber Resource Analyses Projections								•
Wastewater Treatment Planning	•	•				•		•
Water Supply		•				•		
Water Quality Management/Monitoring	•	•			•	•		•
Watershed Improvement	•	•		•	•	•		•
Wetlands Protection Management	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>•PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION</b>								
Governmental Organizational Studies	•	•		•		•		
Reapportionment Assistance	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Review of Federally Assisted Projects	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Shared Staff Services				•	•	•		
<b>•TRANSPORTATION</b>								
Airport Systems						•		
Bikeways	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Car/Vanpooling Coordination		•	•					
Elderly and Disabled Transportation	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Highway Access Control Assistance	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Port Development	•		•		•			
Rail Continuation and Abandonment	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Rural Transportation	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Traffic Engineering Assistance		•				•		
Transportation Improvement Program	•	•		•	•	•		•
Transportation System Management	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Transportation Highways	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Transportation-Transit	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

## Functions (continued)

The broad range of functions and services performed by Wisconsin's regional planning commissions is exemplified by the adjoining list of planning and assistance activities. The variations in the services provided are a result of the different needs and levels of financial support provided by each commission's member units of government. Commissions receive funds through a statutorily authorized charge, State and Federal planning grant programs, and contracts with local governments for special planning services. Local funds are often used by the commissions as a match for Federal and State planning grants.



- **Bay Lake**
- East Central
- Mississippi River
- North Central
- Northwest
- Southeastern
- Southwestern
- West Central



**Bay Lake Regional Planning Commission**

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Green Bay, WI 54303-2757  
Telephone: (920) 448-2820  
Fax: (920) 448-2823  
Website: [www.baylakerpc.org](http://www.baylakerpc.org)

**Counties Served:** Brown, Door, Florence, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Oconto, Sheboygan

**Year Created:** 1972

## Program and Activity Summary

The Commission fulfills its economic development responsibilities through the ongoing monitoring of economic conditions in the Region and through the implementation of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Through the CEDS planning process, the Commission has identified three regional strategies to pursue. These strategies are: the linkage and coordination of Federal, State, local, and private economic development programs; regional and community economic development; and harbor development.

The Commission works on an ongoing basis with local communities in the Region to develop new comprehensive plans and update existing plans. Specific elements addressed in the comprehensive planning process include: physical setting, population, economic analysis, land use, transportation, park and recreation facilities, community facilities, housing, and plan implementation alternatives. Commission staff also works with local communities on such specific projects as capital improvement programs, zoning ordinances, grant applications, community surveys, and trade area surveys.

A major environmental focus of the Commission continues to be the Lake Michigan and Green Bay shoreline. Working in conjunction with the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, the Commission has worked on issues such as cumulative and secondary impacts of development in coastal areas, bluff stability along Lake Michigan, and natural areas protection. The Commission has also been involved with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources addressing issues related to Lake Michigan and the lower portion of Green Bay, as well as the Manitowoc, Marinette, Oconto and Sheboygan areawide sanitary sewer plans.

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## Transportation:

Through its annual transportation work program, the Commission addresses issues on air and harbor planning, highway studies and plans, rail transportation and acquisition issues, elderly and handicapped transportation, and local transportation assistance plans. In addition, the Commission conducts urban transportation planning activities as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Sheboygan Urbanized Area.

## Information and Data Systems:

The Commission functions as a depository of technical information and data derived from Federal, State and local sources. Information is provided to public and private groups and individuals as required. The Commission maintains its status as an affiliate of the Wisconsin State Data Center. The Commission has an established Geographic Information System (GIS), which is used extensively to provide mapping and database integration, as well as for analysis of development trends and identification of critical natural resources. Aerial photography is available for the Region.

## Operating Characteristics:

### 2005 Budget:

\$932,861 (34% Federal, 10% State, 21% Local Levy, 33% Local Contracts, 2% Miscellaneous)

## Commission and Method of Selection:

Twenty-four persons serve as Commissioners on the Commission. Of the three members from each county, one is appointed by the County Board, one is appointed by the Governor from a list provided by the County Board and one is appointed by the Governor.

## Current Commissioners are:

**Brown:** Paul Jadin; Chris Swan; Christopher Zabel

**Door:** Jaime Forest

**Florence:** Edwin A. Kelly; Yvonne Van Pembroke; John Zoeller;

**Kewaunee:** Mary Hanrahan; Brian Paplham; Charles Wagner

**Manitowoc:** Kevin M. Crawford; Donald Markwardt Schaw Vang

**Marinette:** Florence Magnuson; Cheryl R. Maxwell (Vice-Chair); Mary G. Meyer

**Oconto:** Donald A. Glynn; Thomas D. Kussow; Lois L. Trever (Sec./Treas.)

**Sheboygan:** James E. Gilligan, (Chairperson); Flossie Meyer; James R. Schramm

**Wisconsin Department of Commerce:**  
Sec. Cory Nettles, Ex-officio Member

## Authorized Staff: 11

### Staff Contacts:

**Mark A. Walter**, Executive Director

**Richard L. Heath**, Assistant Director/Principal Planner

**Jeffrey C. Agee-Aguayo**, AICP, Sheboygan MPO  
Transportation Planner

**Brandon G. Robinson**, Community Assistance Planner

**Katie L. Hess**, Economic Development Planner

**James J. VanLaanen**, AICP, Transportation Planner

**Angela Pierce**, Natural Resources Planner



- Bay Lake
- **East Central**
- Mississippi River
- North Central
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- Southeastern
- Southwestern
- West Central



**East Central Wisconsin  
Regional Planning Commission**

132 Main Street  
Menasha, WI 54952  
Telephone: (920) 751-4770  
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E-Mail: [staff@eastcentralrpc.org](mailto:staff@eastcentralrpc.org)  
Website: [www.eastcentralrpc.org](http://www.eastcentralrpc.org)

**Counties Served:** Calumet, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Menominee, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara, Winnebago

**Year Created:** 1972

## Program and Activity Summary

### Economic Development:

The Commission updates the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy on an annual basis. The CEDS contains current economic statistics, a development strategy for the Region, and projects proposed for EDA funding. The Commission maintains a database of industrial sites and buildings, provides technical assistance for communities seeking Wisconsin Development Fund and EDA loans and grants, and works with communities and organizations on economic development projects. The promotion of heritage tourism is another Commission priority with particular emphasis on the Fox River Corridor project and the Heritage Signing Program.

### Community Development:

The Commission provides information and technical assistance for ongoing community planning and grant applications, develops open space plans, prepares park site and trail plans. The Commission offers a cost-sharing program, project services contracts for community land use planning. East Central contracts directly with local governments for various types of other planning services, such as the preparation of development codes, capital improvement programming, concept site development plans, and public facility and service planning.

### Land Use and Environmental Resources:

The Commission maintains regional development policies, serves as the sewer service area management agency, provides technical assistance for groundwater studies and water quality management, and promotes wetland preservation and floodplain management.

The Commission participates in watershed planning projects and provides stormwater management planning. As well as administration of a five-county regional NR-135 nonmetallic mining reclamation program.

### **Transportation:**

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Appleton and Oshkosh Urbanized Areas, the Commission has prepared long-range urban transportation/land use plans consistent with requirements of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). These plans are currently being updated as required by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA21).

The Commission also serves as staff to the new Fond du Lac Area MPO. The first long-range transportation/land use plan for this urbanized area is being developed by October 2005.

The Commission works cooperatively with WisDOT on urban multimodal transportation planning encompassing the highway network, two urban bus systems, specialized transit for the elderly and disabled, rail, and bicycle and pedestrian ways. Regional transportation planning focuses on highway corridor studies, local traffic operations, access control, bypasses, jurisdictional transfers, highway maintenance, one small urban bus system, multiple shared-ride taxi systems, and transit for the elderly and disabled.

### **Information and Data Systems:**

The Commission provides technical and contract assistance to county land records committees and other governmental units to establish land information systems and provide digital data services. The Commission maintains an Internet website to provide basic agency and regional information. Through its Information Center, the Commission responds to data requests and distributes large-scale aerial photos and county and community base maps of various scales. Geographic Information System (GIS) technology has been instituted to integrate regional database and mapping capabilities. The Commission also serves as the regional clearinghouse for proposals submitted under various State and Federal grant programs.

### **Operating Characteristics:**

**2005 Budget:** \$1,745,851 (32.7% Federal, 7.6% State, 44.0% Local Levy, 9.7% Local Contracts, 6% Miscellaneous)

### **Commission and Method of Selection:**

Each member county has at least three Commissioners: 1) the County Board Chairman; 2) the County Executive or an elected official appointed by the County Board for a two-year term; and 3) a Governor's appointee from a list of six County Board nominees, four of whom must be private citizens. Additional Commissioners are provided for each attained increment of 50,000 population. The first such Commissioner is the head elected official of the largest city in the county; the second is appointed by the County Board for a two-year term.

### **Current Commissioners are:**

**Calumet:** Merlin Gentz; Wilma Springer; Clarence Wolf

**Menominee:** Brian Kowalkowski; Randy Reiter; Ruth M. Winter;

**Outagamie:** Larry Cain; Donald Grissman; Marvin Fox  
Tim Hanna; Robert "Toby" Paltzer; Clifford Sanderfoot

**Shawano:** Marshal Giese; Arlyn Tober;  
M. Eugene Zeuske

**Waupaca:** Duane Brown; Robert Danielson;  
Dick Koeppen; Brian Smith

**Waushara:** Yvonne Feavel; Lester Van Loon  
Norman Weiss

**Winnebago:** David Albrecht; Ernie Bellin; Mark Harris;  
Arden Schroeder; Phillips Scoville;  
William Castle ; Richard Wollangk (Alternate)

### **Authorized Staff: 20**

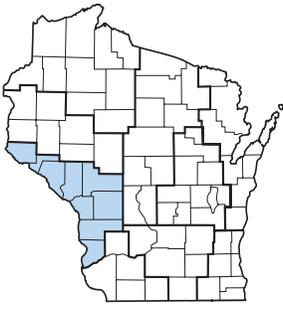
#### **Staff Contacts:**

**Eric Fowle**, Executive Director

**Fred Scharnke**, Assistant Director

**Walt Raith**, Principal Planner

**Elizabeth Runge**, Principal Planner



- Bay Lake
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- West Central



**Mississippi River  
Regional Planning Commission**

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Website: [www.mrrpc.com](http://www.mrrpc.com)

**Counties Served:**

Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, La Crosse,  
Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Trempealeau, Vernon

**Year Created:** 1964

## Program and Activity Summary

### Economic Development:

In 1977, the Commission was designated an Economic Development District by the U.S. Department of Commerce-Economic Development Administration (EDA). Each year the Commission has prepared updates to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Report which analyzes the regional economy and identifies economic development projects throughout the Region. This reporting maintains the eligibility for all local governments, organizations, and businesses throughout the Region to apply for public works grants, business loans and research grants from EDA. Economic development services provided by the Commission as a result of this association include: administration of several revolving loan funds to assist business financing needs in the Region, grant writing assistance for community public works and business development projects, administration of Community Development Block Grant revolving loan funds for business and housing projects, administering technology zone tax credits for expanding high-technology companies, and preparing local economic development plans.

### Community Development:

The Commission's pooled office staff and resources that are cost shared allow the Commission to provide cost effective community development services. Assisting local interests in responding to State and Federal programs, providing advisory service on local planning problems, and serving as a coordinating agency for regional programs and activities are some examples of community development services provided. Recently the Commission assisted some of our counties with their all hazards mitigation planning as prescribed by new Federal regulations.

### Land Use and Environmental Resources:

The Commission is actively involved in land use and environmental resource advisory work. Community and county comprehensive land use planning, zoning and subdivision ordinance preparation, Geographic Information System (GIS) resource mapping, park and recreation planning, urban sewer service area planning, and environmental assessment reports are examples of services provided.

### Transportation:

The Commission's transportation services include the following: assisting the Mississippi River Parkway Commission in its planning and promotion activity for the Great River Road; assisting the La Crosse Area Planning Committee in meeting its Federal and State transportation planning requirements; assisting in expanding or establishing new multi-modal transit services; advising local governments on meeting and financing transportation needs of the elderly and handicapped; coordinating the involvement of Federal and State transportation plans and policies for consideration into local land use plans; providing a roadway management program that enables local governments to systematically prioritize their roadway maintenance needs based on sound evaluation criteria; and assisting in the development of harbor plans and projects for communities along the Mississippi River.

### Information and Data Systems:

The Commission's planning activity, coupled with its designation as a State affiliate data center, allows the Commission to maintain a wealth of socioeconomic and geographic data on the Region. The Commission's computer database and library is frequently used by local governments, businesses, churches, hospitals, students, utility companies, civic groups, and development organizations. The Commission has created a Western Wisconsin Industry Cluster and Regional Trade Report. This report holds a listing of all manufacturers in the Region by industrial classification code along with address and contact information. Input and output information on each company is also available. This information is being used to build our economy around our industry cluster strengths.

### Operating Characteristics:

**2005 Budget:** \$344,023 (35% Federal, 19% State, 40% Local Levy, 6% Local Contract)

### Commission and Method of Selection:

Three Commissioners from each county serve on the Commission. One Commissioner is appointed by the County Board, one is appointed by the Governor, and one is appointed by the Governor from a list of names submitted by the County Board.

### Current Commissioners are:

**Buffalo:** Bergie Ritscher; James Scholmeier; Kathleen Vinehout

**Crawford:** Virgil Butteris; Gerald Krachey; Robert Zinkle  
**Jackson:** Ron Carney; James Christenson; Eugene Savage, (Vice-Chair)

**La Crosse:** Vicki Burke; James Ehram; Jan Keil, (Sec./Treas.)

**Monroe:** George Baker; James Kuhn; Cedric Schnitzler

**Pepin:** George Dupre; David Smith; Norman (Mike) Murray

**Pierce:** Richard Purdy; William Schroeder; Richard Wilhelm, (Chair)

**Trempealeau:** Margaret Baecker; John Killian; Jerold Nysven

**Vernon:** George Nettum; Jo Ann Nickelatti; Dean Warren

### Authorized Staff: 5

#### Staff Contacts:

**Greg Flogstad**, AICP, Director

**Peter Fletcher**, Transportation Planner

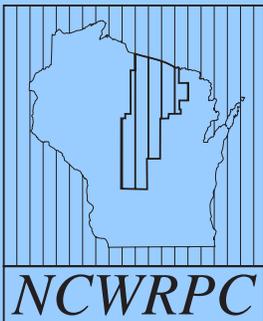
**Randall Larson**, Economic Development Planner

**David Bonifas**, Community Development Planner

**Barb Buros**, Administrative Assistant



- Bay Lake
- East Central
- Mississippi River
- **North Central**
- Northwest
- Southeastern
- Southwestern
- West Central



**North Central Wisconsin Regional  
Planning Commission (NCWRPC)**

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E-Mail: [staff@ncwrpc.org](mailto:staff@ncwrpc.org)  
Website: [www.ncwrpc.org](http://www.ncwrpc.org)

**Counties Served:**

Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln,  
Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, Wood

**Year Created:** 1973

## Program and Activity Summary

### Economic Development:

The Commission annually prepares a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) as a way to monitor the economic condition of the Region and to provide a basic development strategy for the Region. The Commission provides technical assistance to members to prepare local economic development plans and apply for loans and grants from State and Federal sources. In conjunction with the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, the Commission has inventoried the Region's available industrial sites and buildings and maintains that database. These sites and buildings are marketed worldwide, via the Internet, in an effort to attract new jobs to the Region. The Commission is also the area administrator for the newly created North Central Advantage Technology Zone Program.

In addition, the Commission administers a regional revolving loan fund, on behalf of the North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation, which is designed to provide low cost financing to businesses that increase employment, add to the local tax base and bring general economic stability to the Region.

### Community Development:

The Commission assists local communities with a range of community development activities, including grant writing and administration, tax incremental financing planning, downtown revitalization, capital improvements planning, housing and public facility needs surveys and studies, park layout and design, zoning ordinance development and other general technical assistance.

As part of its statutory function of preparing a master plan for the Region, the Commission has recently updated this plan under the new comprehensive planning law. The Regional Comprehensive Plan creates framework for consistency and coordination in the preparation of county and local comprehensive plans throughout the Region.

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### Land Use and Environmental Resources:

The Commission provides land use planning assistance to counties and local communities. It prepares land use plans, sewer services plans, wellhead protection plans, lake classification studies, and outdoor recreation plans. In addition, zoning codes and ordinances and other implementation tools are developed.

### Transportation:

The Commission participates in transportation in a variety of ways, including the development of local road improvement plans, traffic count assistance, highway access plans, and alternative route plans. It also provides assistance in preparing grant applications to fund local transportation related projects, including Federal Enhancements and State TEA programs. The Commission conducts special projects such as highway corridor studies as well.

### Information and Data Systems:

The Commission is a regional data center, a State Data Center affiliate, and a U.S. Census clearinghouse. As such, the Commission maintains a wide range of socioeconomic information, including population, income, and employment data. In addition, the Commission has developed and maintains a regional Geographic Information System (GIS) to assist in the planning analysis process. The Commission also maintains base maps and aerial photography for the Region.

### Operating Characteristics:

**2005 Budget:** \$670,084 (11% Federal, 12% State, 30% Local Levy, 46% Local Contracts, 1% Other)

### Commission and Method of Selection:

The Commission is governed by three Commissioners from each member county. Each county appoints one Commissioner directly, while the other two are appointed by the Governor, one directly and one from a list of names submitted by the county.

### Current Commissioners are:

**Adams:** Wilbur Fritz; Donald Krahn; Herbert Rieckmann

**Forest:** Erhard Huettl, (Chair); Donald Kline; Paul Millan

**Juneau:** Robert Hayward; Helmi Mehus; Vacant;

**Langlade:** George Bornemann; Robert E. Curran; Frank Trimmel

**Lincoln:** Thomas Rick; E. Richard Simon; Doug Williams

**Marathon:** Virginia Heinemann (Vice-Chair); Brad Karger; Bettye Nall

**Oneida:** Beverly Long; Wilbur Petroskey; Thomas Rudolph

**Portage:** Vacant

**Vilas:** Vacant

**Wood:** Fred Camacho; Maurice Mathews(Sec./Treas.); Vacant

### Authorized Staff: 10

#### Staff Contact:

**Dennis Lawrence**, AICP, Executive Director



- Bay Lake
- East Central
- Mississippi River
- North Central
- **Northwest**
- Southeastern
- Southwestern
- West Central



**Northwest Regional  
Planning Commission**  
*an economic development district*

**Northwest Regional Planning Commission**

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Spooner, WI 54801  
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E-Mail: [info@nwrpc.com](mailto:info@nwrpc.com)  
Website: [www.nwrpc.com](http://www.nwrpc.com)

**Counties Served:**

Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Rusk,  
Sawyer, Taylor, Washburn, Red Cliff, Lac du Flambeau,  
Lac Courte Oreilles, Bad River, St. Croix

**Year Created:** 1959

## Program and Activity Summary

### Economic Development:

The Commission annually updates its Overall Economic Development Program which examines the regional economy and identifies locally significant economic development projects. The inclusion of economic development projects allows communities to gain access to the Economic Development Administration's grant programs. In addition, the Commission works with local communities to secure grants from State and Federal sources.

The Commission's revolving loan funds, operated out of the Northwest Wisconsin Business Development Corporation, targets economic development opportunities in the Region. These funds continue to provide financial assistance for numerous businesses in the Region.

The Wisconsin Business Innovation Corporation is a corporation linking markets, technology and enterprise formation to create higher skilled/high paying jobs. The Corporation offers a unique array of technical, financial and business support services along with capital and real estate critical to enterprise formation and growth.

Other avenues of economic development available within the Commission include the Enterprise Center Network of business incubators, innovation services and linkages, access to technology services and transfer, the Wisconsin Rural Enterprise Fund equity investments venture fund, and access to international markets via international joint ventures.

### Community Development:

The Commission provides technical assistance to county and local units of government. It also engages in a range of community development activities, including grant writing and administration, tax incremental financing district development and administration, downtown revitalization, capital improvements planning, housing and public facility needs studies, transportation studies, site planning for businesses, harbor studies, and other planning and community development activities.

Regional housing assistance is provided through the Commission by Northwest Affordable Housing, Inc. Northwest Affordable Housing assists low- and moderate-income families in obtaining home ownership and is developing multi-family housing units in areas of need.

### Land Use and Environmental Resources:

The Commission provides technical assistance to local units of government relating to land use planning. Geographical

Information System development and mapping services are available to local units of government. The development of comprehensive land use plans provides assistance to communities in their development of local lands and policies to encourage proper growth and development activities.

The Commission engages in a range of coastal management activities in its role as liaison between the State Coastal Management Program and local units of government. Examples of activities include studies of dredge disposal alternatives, development of coastal hazard management strategies, lakes management and classification systems, and waterfront redevelopment.

The Commission is also very active in waste management planning, including technical assistance in the form of pollution prevention strategies, waste to energy studies and recycling. A hazardous waste collection program service for households, businesses and municipalities has been implemented in the Region. In addition, services are also available for brownfield site remediation in local municipalities and environmental management assistance to businesses.

### Transportation:

The Commission's Roadway Management Program helps local officials make effective road investment decisions through studies that result in a timetable for roadway maintenance and upgrading. The Commission has also been active in expressing the Region's needs relating to regional highway improvement plans and transportation infrastructure improvements.

### Forest Resources:

The Commission's Forest Resources Program supports economic development efforts which utilize the Region's abundant forest resources. The Commission provides technical assistance to forest products industries, conducts applied research related to forestry, and analyzes policies which directly impact the industry.

### Information and Data Systems:

The Commission serves as a clearinghouse for a range of resource, demographic and economic development information. The Commission also maintains local and regional maps and assists local governments in creating new mapping systems.

### Operating Characteristics:

**2005 Budget:** \$2,575,011 (5% Federal, 15% State, 8% Local Levy, 55% Local Contracts, 17% Miscellaneous)

### Commission and Method of Selection:

The Commission contains 31 Commissioners. All County Board chairmen serve as Commissioners, and an additional Commissioner per county is appointed by the County Board. The mayors of communities over 2,500 persons serve on the Commission, and all five Tribal Governments in the Region are represented by the tribal chairman or designee.

### Current Commissioners are:

**Ashland:** Peg Kurilla\*; Ronald Nye; Fred Schnook, Mayor–Ashland

**Bayfield:** John Blahnik\* (Alt); William Kacvinsky;

**Burnett:** Philip Lindeman\*; Clifford L. Main

**Douglas:** Bill Eckman; Douglas Finn\*; David Ross, Mayor–Superior; John Shepard;

**Iron:** Jim Kichake; Gus Krone\*

**Price:** Lyman Coddington; Neil Hagmann, Clerk; Daniel Racette\*

**Rusk:** Dan Guids, Mayor–Ladysmith; Eldon Skogen; Randy Tatur\*

**Sawyer:** Hal Helwig\*; Jean Laier

**Taylor:** Allen Beadles\* (Alt); Ron DeChatelets, Mayoral

Appointment–Medford; Jim Metz; George Southworth (Alt for Allen Beadles);

**Washburn:** Peter Hubin\*; Louis Villella, Mayor–Spoonier; Robert Washkuhn

**Northwest Tribal Nations of Red Cliff, Lac Du Flambeau, Lac Courte Oreilles, Bad River and St. Croix:** Michael LaGrew\*

**Red Cliff Tribal Council:** Jeff Benton; Ray DePerry

**Lac Du Flambeau Tribal Council:** Henry St. Germaine

**Lac Courte Oreilles Tribal Council:** Louis Taylor

**Bad River Tribal Council:** Donald Moore

**St. Croix Tribal Council:** David Merrill

**City of Ashland:** Lowell Miller

**City of Ladysmith:** Ronald Moore

**City of Medford:** Fred Schroeder

**City of Superior:** Margaret Ciccone

**City of Park Falls:** Eugene Schneider; Neil Hagmann (Alt)

### Authorized Staff: 24

#### Staff Contacts:

**Myron Schuster**, Executive Director

**Sheldon Johnson**, Deputy Director

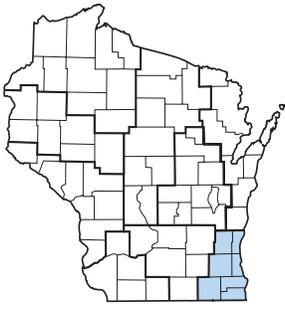
**Mark Mueller**, Director of Business and Innovation Services, WBIC

**Richard Schneider**, Environmental Planner

**John Stroschine**, Business Development Specialist

**Rick Roeser**, Enterprise Center Manager

\*Executive Committee Board Members



- Bay Lake
- East Central
- Mississippi River
- North Central
- Northwest
- **Southeastern**
- Southwestern
- West Central



**Southeastern Wisconsin  
Regional Planning Commission**

P.O. Box 1607, W239 N1812 Rockwood Drive  
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Website: [www.sewrpc.org](http://www.sewrpc.org)

**Counties Served:**

Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine,  
Walworth, Washington, Waukesha

**Year Created:** 1960

## Program and Activity Summary

### Land Use and Environmental Resources:

Land use planning responsibilities include the preparation of plan recommendations concerning the physical aspects of land use development, and also includes responsibility for developing demographic, economic, and public financial resource data that serve as the basis for regional and subregional plans. The Commission conducts planning activities regarding the protection of the Region's environment, including: regional water quality, nonpoint source pollution abatement, local sewerage facilities, floodland and stormwater management, and coastal management.

### Transportation:

The Commission conducts a range of transportation planning activities, including: data collection, collation, and development; long-range planning; transportation systems management; traffic engineering; transportation improvement programming; rail system planning; air transportation planning; and data provision and technical assistance.

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### **Community Development:**

The Commission assists local units of government in the Region in the conduct of local planning efforts, thereby promoting coordination of local and regional plans and plan implementation actions, and generally promoting good public administration, as well as sound physical development within the Region. Four basic types of services are provided: education, advisory, review, and project planning.

### **Economic Development:**

The Commission assists county and local units of government in the Region in pursuing economic development activities, and coordinating county and local economic development plans and programs. Four basic types of services are provided: economic development program planning; data provision; grant application preparation and grant award administration; and project planning.

### **Information and Data Systems:**

The Commission creates and maintains a series of regional planning base maps; serves as a regional coordinating center for the conduct of large-scale topographic and cadastral mapping efforts that serve as an automated mapping base to support land records modernization efforts; and secures orthophotography of the Region at five-year intervals. The Commission also maintains an extensive data bank and processes requests for data retrieval from a broad range of internal and external sources.

### **Operating Characteristics:**

**2005 Budget:** \$7,764,730 (39% Federal, 7% State, 30% Local Levy, 24% Local Contracts)

### **Commission and Method of Selection:**

The Commission consists of 21 members, three from each of the seven member counties. One Commissioner from each county is appointed by the County Executive or County Board and is an elected County Board supervisor. The remaining two from each county are appointed by the Governor, one from a list prepared by the County.

### **Current Commissioners are:**

**Kenosha:** Leon Dreger; Leonard Johnson;  
Adelene Robinson

**Milwaukee:** Lee Holloway; William R. Drew (Vice-Chairman); Linda J. Seemeyer

**Ozaukee:** Robert A. Brooks; Thomas H. Buestrin (Chairman); Gustav W. Wirth, Jr. (Secretary)

**Racine:** Richard A. Hansen (Treasurer);  
Michael J. Miklasevich; James E. Moyer

**Walworth:** Anthony F. Balestrieri; Gregory L. Holden;  
Allen L. Morrison

**Washington:** Kenneth F. Miller; Daniel S. Schmidt;  
David L. Stroik

**Waukesha:** Kenneth C. Herro; Anselmo Villareal  
Paul G. Vrakas

### **Authorized Staff: 80**

#### **Staff Contacts:**

**Philip C. Evenson**, AICP, Executive Director

**Kenneth R. Yunker**, PE, Deputy Director

**Nancy M. Anderson**, AICP, Chief Community  
Assistance Planner

**Robert E. Beglinger**, PE, Chief Transportation Engineer

**Michael G. Hahn**, PE, Chief Environmental Engineer

**Leland H. Kreblin**, RLS, Chief Planning Illustrator

**Elizabeth A. Larsen**, Business Manager

**John G. McDougall**, Geographic Information Systems  
Manager

**John R. Meland**, Chief Economic Development Planner

**Dr. Donald M. Reed**, Chief Biologist

**William J. Stauber**, AICP, Chief Land Use Planner



- Bay Lake
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- Mississippi River
- North Central
- Northwest
- Southeastern
- **Southwestern**
- West Central



**Southwestern Wisconsin  
Regional Planning Commission**

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Platteville, WI 53818  
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Fax: (608) 342-1220  
E-Mail: [swwrpc@uwplatt.edu](mailto:swwrpc@uwplatt.edu)  
Website: <http://www.swwrpc.org>

**Counties Served:**  
Grant, Green, Iowa, Lafayette, Richland

**Year Created:** 1970

## Program and Activity Summary

### **Economic Development:**

The Commission provides assistance to local units of government and economic development organizations, and maintains eligibility for financial assistance from the Economic Development Administration, annually preparing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The Commission provides assistance in determining possible financing alternatives for business expansion and job creation; supports the creation of small business through entrepreneurial activities such as the establishment of business incubators and counseling programs; and assists in developing financing proposals for business location and expansion. In addition, the Commission promotes the region and provides broad support for local economic collaboration and cooperation. The Commission co-chairs the Southwest Wisconsin Regional Economic Development Coalition, an informal group of interested organizations, individuals and businesses in southwest Wisconsin.

### **Community Development:**

The Commission provides a range of planning services to local communities, including: preparation of comprehensive development plans; assistance with zoning ordinances and other regulations and codes to guide development, identification of community facility needs; mapping/GIS services; preparation of grant applications for financing public projects; assistance with capital improvement planning and budgeting, public recreation plans, tax incremental financing, downtown revitalization, historic preservation, and other community development projects.

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### **Land Use and Environmental Resources:**

The Commission has base maps that show communities, streams, roads, land use, wetlands, vegetation, and other natural features, and other data can be mapped with the Commission's Geographic Information System (employment, income, etc.). This data and the maps are available for use by local officials in developing land use plans, zoning maps, recreation plans, etc. The Commission works with local counties in implementing the farmland preservation plans completed for each county in the Region. The Commission also provides assistance in the coordination of land use with plans of other agencies, including state agencies, county land conservation departments, local zoning administrators, and foresters.

### **Transportation:**

The Commission provides transportation planning services to local governments in the region. The Commission assists by coordinating between the WisDOT and local communities in matters of corridor studies, highway planning, bypass studies, airport developments, and rail preservation programs. The Commission conducts functional and jurisdictional highway planning studies for member counties and works with local units of government in the preparation of pavement management studies (PASER). The Commission also works with three rail transit commissions in the Region to maintain rail service to southern Wisconsin. The Commission has successfully promoted the completion of a four-lane highway between Madison and Dubuque (Hwy. 18/151), as well as the improvement of other major highways serving southwestern Wisconsin. The Commission works closely with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation in coordinating these highway needs with their Six-Year Highway Improvement Program.

### **Information and Data Systems:**

The Commission is a State Data Center affiliate and provides census data and other information on population, housing, and economic trends to groups and individuals in the Region. The Commission also maintains a website ([www.swwrpc.org](http://www.swwrpc.org)) with data and links to regional and statewide information resources.

### **Operating Characteristics:**

#### **2005 Operating Budget:**

\$716,000 (8% Federal, 8% State, 20% Local Levy, 64% Local Contracts)

### **Commission and Method of Selection:**

The Commission is governed by 15 Commissioners, three from each member county. One position is automatically filled by the County Board Chairman, one Commissioner is appointed outright by the Governor, and one Commissioner is appointed by the Governor from a list of names submitted by the County Board.

### **Current Commissioners are:**

**Grant:** Eugene Bartels; Eileen Nickels  
Coletta Wegmann (SWWRPC Sec./Treas.);

**Green:** Tom Daly, (SWWRPC Vice-Chair);  
Donna Douglass; Nathan L. Klassy

**Iowa:** Ron Dentinger; Richard Gorder;  
Bob Regan

**Lafayette:** Tim McGettigan; Lawrence Cherrey  
Jack Sauer

**Richland:** Gerald Cook; Ann Greenheck, (SWWRPC Chair);  
Robert Smith

### **Authorized Staff: 12**

#### **Staff Contacts:**

**Larry Ward**, Executive Director

**Tom Jackson**, Economic Development Planner

**Andrew Bremer**, GIS Manager

**Glenda Dye**, Office Manager

**Joni Graves**, Transportation Planner

**Mary Jenkins Penn**, Local Assistance Planner

**Amy Knox**, Project Manager

**Ron Niemann**, Project Manager

**Joyel Rounds**, Administrative Assistant

**Darlene Wilson**, Cartographer



- Bay Lake
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- Mississippi River
- North Central
- Northwest
- Southeastern
- Southwestern
- **West Central**



**West Central Wisconsin  
Regional Planning Commission**

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Website: [www.wcrpc.org](http://www.wcrpc.org)

**Counties Served:**

Barron, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire,  
Polk, St. Croix

**Year Created:** 1971

## Program and Activity Summary

### Economic Development:

The Commission prepares and maintains a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Region. It provides technical assistance to local governments regarding industrial park development and improvement, business finance, economic research and plan development, and coordinates area-wide development. It administers a regional revolving loan fund for business finance. The Commission manages numerous local and county revolving loan funds.

### Community Development:

The Commission provides community development assistance to local communities, including activities such as economic analyses, industrial site evaluations, tax increment finance district plans, special industry studies, grant assistance, and business financial packaging. The Commission is also active at the county and community levels in such activities as zoning ordinance revision, outdoor recreation plan development, and downtown revitalization. It provides housing grantsmanship and grant administration to counties and local governments.

### Land Use and Environmental Resources:

The Commission provides land use planning service to cities, villages, towns, and counties. It prepares urban sewer service area plans, prepares computerized land use maps for watershed plans, and participates on a land records management users group. The Commission provides assistance to local governments on comprehensive planning, including plan development. The Commission provides Geographic Information Systems services to its local governments.

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### Transportation:

In the area of transportation planning, the Commission has undertaken activities including road management planning, highway bypass impact analysis, highway relocation assistance, highway jurisdictional planning, rail line planning, airport review, and road numbering system development. In addition, the Commission serves as the administrative entity for the Chippewa-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Organization. This responsibility involves a range of planning, traffic analysis, land use studies, and technical assistance.

### Information and Data Systems:

The Commission serves as a State Data Center affiliate. In this capacity, it disseminates a wide range of economic, housing, land use, transportation, and general demographic data. The Commission prepares socioeconomic reports and profiles for the member counties and the Region.

### Operating Characteristics:

**2005 Budget:** \$808,664 (26% Federal, 10% State, 28% Local Levy, 35% Local Contracts, 1% Miscellaneous)

### Commission and Method of Selection:

The Commission consists of 21 Commissioners. Three Commissioners are appointed by the County Boards in each of the member counties.

### Current Commissioners are:

**Barron:** Arnold L. G. Ellison; Jess Miller; Ole Severud

**Chippewa:** LaVerne Ludwigson; Eugene Rineck; Doug Sandvick

**Clark:** Erin Dahl; Don Kirn; Robert Rogstad

**Dunn:** Calvin Christianson; Richard Creaser; Richard Johnson

**Eau Claire:** Roger Hahn; John Frank; Gordon Steinhauer

**Polk:** Thomas Nilssen, Jr.; Gene Sollman; Gail Tessman;

**St. Croix:** Leon Berenschot; Arthur Jacobson; Linda Luckey;

### Authorized Staff: 11

#### Staff Contacts:

**Jerry Chasteen**, Executive Director

**Jason Griepentrog**, Business Development Specialist

**Donald Kush**, Senior Transportation Planner

**Esther Moen**, Finance Coordinator

**Ann Raid**, Senior Economic Development Planner

**Carl Rosenquist**, GIS Coordinator

**Lisa Ruth**, Administrative Coordinator

**Michelle St. Clair**, Associate Planner

**Christopher Straight**, Associate Planner

**Jay Tappen**, Senior Natural Resources Planner

## Appendix A

### RECOMMENDATIONS TOWARD AN IMPROVED SYSTEM OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL LAND USE POLICY COORDINATION AND PLANNING IN WISCONSIN

The following statement was approved by the governing board of the Association of Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (AWROC) on May 1, 1998.

#### Introduction

The purpose of this paper is twofold:

- (1) To describe a function that is crucial to improving land use management in Wisconsin. That function is the integration of policies that are administered by various levels of government and that impact land use planning; and
- (2) To describe how integrated policies need to be translated into comprehensive land use plans at appropriate levels within the government hierarchy. This paper makes the case for state government leadership in intergovernmental policy integration, and regional-level leadership through regional planning commissions (RPCs) in creating framework plans reflecting integrated policies, and for more detailed planning by county and local governments consistent with the regional plans.

#### Coordination of Policy

It is recommended that the State identify the many State policies that relate to development in the State. Some policies are in statutes. Others are articulated in administrative rules and agency programs. Others will be found in agency and interagency strategic plans, policies, and programs.

Conscious focus is needed on the land use impacts of State policies that are not necessarily viewed as land use policies. Some activities of the State are expressly intended to have land use impacts. An example is farmland preservation. Many State policies, however, are single-purposed, with land use side-effects. Examples include the State's programs relating to on-site waste disposal and many economic development financial incentive programs.

It is recommended that these various policies and policy impacts that relate to land use and development in the State should be compiled and analyzed. As part of the analysis, instances of conflicts among State policies or conflicts between State policies and impacts of other State programs should be highlighted for reconciliation. Gaps within the fabric of policy should be identified and filled. The result of this process should be a set of documented State land use policies.

State land use policies should relate to issues including:

- Conservation and management of natural, cultural, historical, archeological, and environmental resources, including wetlands, woodlands, wildlife habitat, water resources, agricultural lands, and mineral resources;
- Definitions, as well as policies and criteria for location and design, of urban, suburban, and rural development patterns;
- The provision of an appropriated level of public facilities in support of rural and urban development, including transportation, sanitation, drainage and flood control, and water supply facilities.

The aforementioned is not an exhaustive or totally inclusive list, but is illustrative of the types of topics that should be covered by articulated State policies.

It is recommended that an entity such as the Wisconsin Land Council be responsible to coordinate the policy analysis and formulation process described above.

State land use policies should primarily concern themselves with the achievement of State-level objectives. However, to contribute toward the ultimate goal of intergovernmental coordination discussed in the remainder of this paper, the body that compiles the set of policies should include input from the State's regional planning commissions (RPCs), from counties and from local units of government.

#### Regional Framework Planning

The next set of needs is to make the State policies operational through the translation of the policies into framework plans for the many aspects of development in the State of Wisconsin, among them being land use, transportation, wastewater treatment and disposal, drainage and flood control, and parks and open space.

Framework plans should be relatively broad and general in scope, defining the location and approximate quantities of various land uses, intensities of use on an average basis, and identifying the approximate location and capacity of needed public facilities to address transportation, sanitation, drainage and flood control, and water supply needs. The framework plans should be sufficiently articulate to give a clear guide to the local planning work that will carry the framework to a level of detail that relates to individual communities and neighborhoods.

The appropriate vehicles for achievement of the framework plans are the State's Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs). The nine RPCs in Wisconsin have strong ties with county and local units of government through commission membership, participation on advisory committees, contractual relations, and funding for general regional planning work and specific projects in support of particular units of local government. Through the Wisconsin Land Council and participation by key individual State agencies within the advisory committee structures that are heavily used by RPCs, improved linkages should be established between regional planning commissions and State government.

RPCs have a strong, direct public and fiscal accountability to local governments due to the presence of local and county elected officials who serve on the RPC. Because of their size, structure, and diverse areas of responsibility, RPCs are able to address intergovernmental issues in a comprehensive, yet efficient and cost-effective manner. RPCs also recognize that counties and communities are very different from one another, each with its own unique set of challenges and opportunities. Although an RPC may not be able to address every

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\* At that time, the AWRPC was known as CORPO, the Wisconsin Council of Regional Planning Organizations.

planning challenge facing its member governments, the benefits afforded the region by the existence of a strengthened RPC would be unmatched by any other governmental entity. Furthermore, the mission of the RPCs is crucial to the State's ability to implement sound policies successfully and cost-effectively.

RPCs provide a forum and mechanism by which county and local governments can avoid or resolve interjurisdictional conflicts and by which county and local governments and property owners are able to address growth management issues and search out joint solutions. This forum assures collaborative efforts and cooperation among all affected parties – an approach that should prove more successful than State directives and mandates.

RPCs serve as a bridge between all levels and units of government. They serve as a bridge in the sense that the RPC is at the place where representatives of various entities of government meet on "neutral ground" to find common values and mutual needs. It also means that RPCs are often proactive in facilitating agreement. Governments of all sizes and types share the technical expertise of RPC staffs, providing for a high degree of cost effectiveness.

RPCs can provide a staff of professionals with technical and programmatic expertise. For county and local governments, RPCs serve as a link to State agencies and other organizations, as well as facilitating intra-regional communication.

RPCs have a reasonably high degree of interest and respect among people in the private sector, particularly private utilities and people in the real estate market place, for the quality and comprehensiveness of data and reports produced by the regional commissions. This role is reflected in RPC enabling legislation (see Wisconsin Statutes §6.945(8)(a)), as well as in practice throughout the state.

The necessary framework plans should be prepared at the intergovernmental, regional level. In many parts of the State, daily living and travel patterns and environmental problems extend over many local jurisdictions and across county boundaries. This reality means that in order to address these issues in the proper manner, counties and local governments must come together to create the appropriate geographic unit. Moreover, proper framework planning requires many different technical staff skills – not just land use and zoning – which generally cannot be cost-effectively acquired and maintained by individual counties. Hence, it makes both technical and financial sense to accomplish comprehensive framework planning through an intergovernmental regional approach.

### **Local Land Use Plans**

It is intended that the regional framework plans which are cooperatively prepared with counties working through regional planning commissions, serve as county plans and be adopted by county boards. Those framework plans need to be carried to greater detail at the city, village and town levels, often with RPC and/or county assistance. Each of these local governments should be required to prepare plans consistent with the regional framework plans. Some flexibility needs to be maintained in how this more detailed planning workload is carried out. For example, in some areas it may be desirable for counties to help towns and smaller cities and villages to prepare the more detailed plans. Regardless of the approach taken all local plans needs to be fully coordinated with and reflect the regional framework plans.

The process for comparing and coordinating plans should involve a combination of persuasion, incentive and disincentives preceding the possibility of more stringent compliance remedies.

To make the interrelated system function, there will need to be a certification process. The State Land Council, upon the review by key individual State agencies should certify the regional framework plan as consistent with the adopted State policies. Such certification should constitute a commitment on the part of the State agencies to support the regional framework plans through State programmatic actions.

Each local unit of government should prepare and adopt a plan that incorporates the framework plans and, thereby, the integrated land use policies. RPCs, with input from the State and local governments, should be responsible for certifying county, city, village and town plans as consistent with the regional framework plans.

As indicated at the beginning, this paper addresses a system for planning. In the Wisconsin tradition, plans contain implementation programs that are internally consistent with the plans themselves. A next stage will be to ensure enactment of these implementation measures and review and, ultimately, certification of their consistency with the approved plans. This paper does not address the details of implementation consistency.

### **Concluding Remarks**

CORPO, the State association of the RPCs in Wisconsin, supports efforts to strengthen land use planning in Wisconsin. CORPO believes that State government must articulate State land use policies in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. Those policies should then be reflected statewide in intergovernmental, regional framework plans prepared by RPCs. Those framework plans should be adopted by county boards and be carried into greater detail at the county, city, village, and town levels of government.

CORPO acknowledges that there are some unresolved issues that will need to be addressed statewide.

They include the following:

- How to include Sauk, Columbia, Dodge, Jefferson and Rock counties into the regional planning system together with Dane County.
- How to achieve a stable and adequate fiscal base for the RPC and local government planning activities.