

West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

2021-2024 Annual Report



1. COORDINATE

COORDINATING REGIONAL PLANNING: A STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE

The concept of "coordinate" is central to the mission and operations of the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC). As a regional entity, WCWRPC serves as a vital facilitator of collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including municipalities, counties, state agencies, and private organizations. Coordination in this context refers to the deliberate alignment of planning efforts, resources, and policies to achieve cohesive and sustainable regional development.

Effective coordination ensures that infrastructure projects, land use planning, environmental initiatives, and economic development strategies are not pursued in isolation. Instead, they are harmonized across jurisdictional boundaries to maximize impact, reduce redundancy, and promote long-term resilience. For example, coordinating transportation planning across multiple counties can lead to more efficient transit systems, improved connectivity, and better access to services for residents.

WCWRPC plays a pivotal role in this process by convening regional forums, facilitating data sharing, and supporting multi-jurisdictional grant applications. Through these efforts, the Commission helps local governments align their plans with broader regional and state objectives. This not only enhances the effectiveness of individual projects but also fosters a shared vision for the future of West Central Wisconsin.

In 2021, WCWRPC continued to strengthen its coordinating role by expanding partnerships, enhancing communication channels, and integrating new planning tools. One such example was the administration and coordination of the Main Street Bounceback Program. Funded by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), this grant program allowed WCWRPC to award \$10,000 grants to 860 new or expanding businesses and nonprofit organizations, for a total of \$8.6 million. This and other initiatives underscore the importance of coordination as a strategic imperative for regional success and sustainability.

As we look ahead, WCWRPC remains committed to fostering collaboration and ensuring that the region's planning efforts are unified, forward-thinking, and responsive to the evolving needs of the region's communities.

2. PARTNER

PARTNERING FOR REGIONAL SUCCESS: A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

The belief in being a "partner" is integral to the work of WCWRPC. As a regional planning entity, WCWRPC relies on strong partnerships to advance its mission of fostering sustainable development, economic vitality, and community resilience across the region.

A partner, in this context, is any organization—public, private, or nonprofit—that collaborates with WCWRPC to achieve shared objectives. These partnerships are essential for implementing comprehensive plans, securing funding, and delivering impactful projects that benefit multiple jurisdictions. Whether working with local governments, state agencies, or community organizations, WCWRPC emphasizes mutual trust, shared vision, and coordinated action.

WCWRPC partners with municipalities to update sewer service area plans, ensuring that infrastructure development aligns with environmental standards and future growth. In transportation planning, the Commission has worked closely with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), technical advisory committees, and elected officials to develop long-range strategies that enhance mobility and connectivity. In 2022, WCWRPC's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) partnered with several school districts and communities to create plans to make it safer and easier to walk and bike to school throughout the region. This included SRTS plans for Amery, Bloomer, Osceola, and Thorp, plus a new initiative of a "Safe Routes to Parks" plan for the City of Altoona.

Partnerships have also been central to community development efforts, including housing initiatives, emergency preparedness planning, and downtown revitalization. These collaborative projects often involve joint grant applications, shared data analysis, and inclusive public engagement processes.

By cultivating and sustaining these partnerships, WCWRPC ensures that regional planning efforts are not only technically sound but also broadly supported and locally relevant. As the region continues to evolve, the Commission remains committed to expanding its network of partners and deepening collaborative efforts to meet the dynamic needs of West Central Wisconsin.

3. ADVOCATE

ADVOCATING FOR REGIONAL PRIORITIES: A VOICE FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN

The function of "advocate" is a cornerstone of the WCWRPC's commitment to advancing the interests of the region it serves. Advocacy, in this context, involves actively promoting policies, initiatives, and investments that address the needs and aspirations of communities across West Central Wisconsin.

WCWRPC's advocacy efforts are grounded in strategic engagement, data-informed planning, and collaborative action. The Commission serves as a trusted voice for the region, ensuring that local concerns are represented in broader policy discussions and funding opportunities. This role is especially critical in areas such as broadband expansion, transportation planning, and economic development.

In 2023, through the West Central Wisconsin Broadband Alliance, WCWRPC advocated for improved internet access by connecting local champions, educating decision-makers, and providing actionable tools for community advancement. These efforts have helped elevate the visibility of underserved areas and attract support for infrastructure improvements. This led to receiving the Momentum West 2023 Regional Impact Award for our leadership with the West Central Wisconsin Broadband Coalition.

In transportation, WCWRPC works with the Chippewa-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to advocate for long-range mobility solutions that enhance connectivity and support economic growth. Similarly, as an Economic Development District, the Commission champions regional strategies that stimulate job creation, attract investment, and promote resilience.

By amplifying local voices and advancing strategic priorities, WCWRPC ensures that West Central Wisconsin remains a vibrant, connected, and forward-looking region. Advocacy is not just a function—it is a responsibility that the Commission embraces to help communities thrive.

4. SERVE

SERVING COMMUNITIES WITH PURPOSE: WCWRPC'S COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT

The core value of "serve" is fundamental to the mission of WCWRPC. To serve, in this context, means to provide responsive, expert assistance to the counties, municipalities, and regional stakeholders that rely on the Commission for planning, coordination, and resource development.

WCWRPC serves its communities through a wide range of technical and strategic services. These include long-range transportation planning, sewer service area plan management, grant writing and administration, and community development support. As a designated local planning agency for several state and federal programs, WCWRPC ensures that local governments have access to the tools and expertise needed to implement effective and sustainable solutions.

In 2024, the Commission also served by helping communities secure and manage grants through programs like the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which supports housing, public facilities, and planning initiatives for low- and moderate-income residents. Through this service, the Town of Fremont was able to construct a new fire station and community center to serve residents of southeastern Clark County.

Ultimately, WCWRPC's service is defined by its responsiveness, professionalism, and dedication to the well-being of West Central Wisconsin. By providing trusted guidance and practical support, the Commission empowers communities to thrive and adapt in a changing regional landscape.

2021 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



**Chippewa Valley Bike
Routes - Planning,
Signage & Web Mapping**



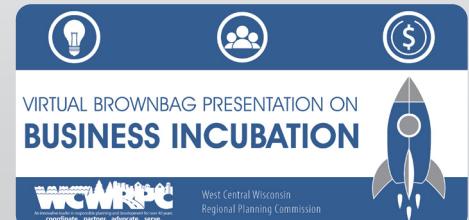
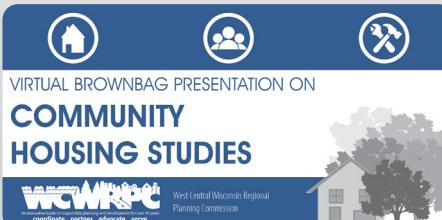
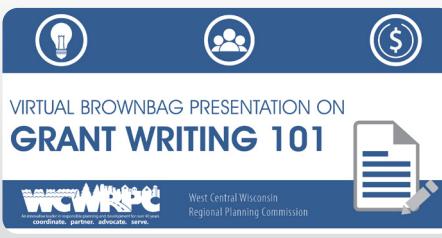
**City of Neillsville
Comprehensive Plan
Update 2021-2041**



EXPAND YOUR BUSINESS AND HELP WISCONSIN'S MAIN STREETS BOUNCE BACK.

**Main Street Bounce
Back Grant Program -
Launched August 18**

Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grant - Virtual Brownbag Luncheons



**Economic Development
Administration (EDA)
Short Term Planning
Grant - Video Series**

PRODUCTION OF FOUR SHORT VIDEOS ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

- Volunteerism & Community Champions
- Downtown Revitalization
- Federal & State Grants & Loans for Infrastructure
- Tax Increment Financing

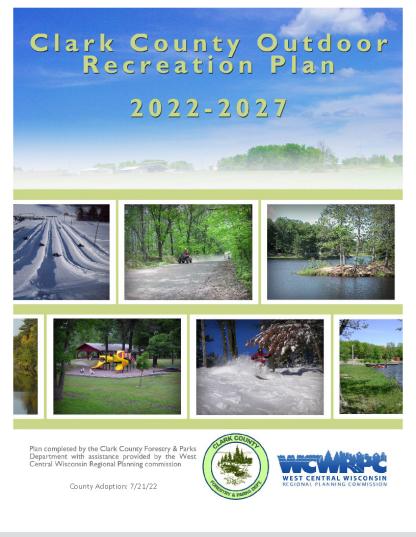
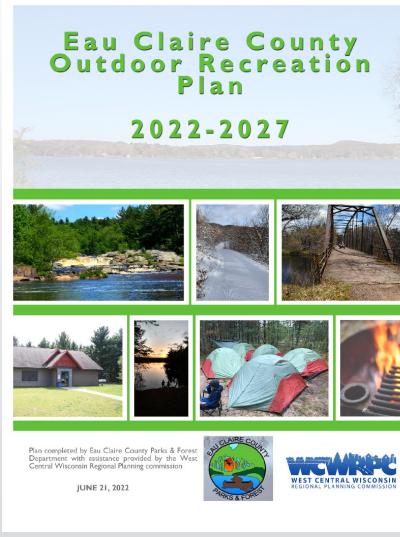
<https://www.youtube.com/@westcentralwisconsinregion1502>



**New Safe Routes to Schools
(SRTS) Planner Position
Filled - July**

2022 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Completion of Several Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans



MUNICIPAL PARTICIPATION IN COUNTY PLANS:

- Village of Fairchild
- Town of Seymour
- Town of Pleasant Valley
- Town of Fairchild
- Town of Washington

- City of Owen
- City of Thorp
- City of Abbotsford
- City of Colby
- City of Loyal
- Village of Withee

Main Street Bounceback Grants

County	Applications Approved	Amount
Barron	131	\$1,310,000
Chippewa	105	\$1,050,000
Clark	49	\$490,000
Dunn	49	\$490,000
Eau Claire	236	\$2,360,000
Polk	116	\$1,160,000
St. Croix	174	\$1,740,000
TOTAL	860	\$8,600,000

ADDITIONAL PLANS/PROJECTS:

- Staples Lake Comprehensive Lake Management Plan
- City of Altoona Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan + Safe Routes to Parks Plan
- Safe Routes To Schools Plans Adopted by Amery, Bloomer, Osceola, and Thorp
- Rain to Rivers Stormwater Pond & Vegetation Maintenance Training
- Lake & Demo Farm Tours in Clark and Eau Claire Counties
- Stout Technology & Business Park EDA Grant

2023 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Dunn County, Wisconsin
2023



West Central Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission

Dunn County Housing Needs Study

CITY OF BARRON

OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN
2023 - 2028



City of Barron Outdoor Recreation Plan

CHIPEWA COUNTY

OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN
2024 - 2029



MUNICIPAL PARTICIPATION INCLUDES:

- Village of Lake Hallie
- Town of Anson
- Town of Wheaton
- Town of Lake Holcombe
- Town of Lafayette



Momentum West 2023 Regional Impact Award

*West Central Wisconsin
Regional Broadband Coalition*



TWO OPTIONS TO ATTEND	June 7, 2023 Wednesday	9 - 3 AM - PM	101 W 3rd Street Owen, WI	Owen Old School Gym
	June 8, 2023 Thursday	9 - 3 AM - PM	560 5th Street Clear Lake, WI	Clear Lake Area Community Center

Many rural communities in west-central Wisconsin are struggling with the condition of old downtown commercial buildings built in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

This workshop will provide strategies and resources to help identify and address the many challenges of aging and deteriorating commercial buildings in your downtown.

Our Presenters

Nathan K. Miller, Attorney
Weld Riley, S.C.

Joe Lowniczak, Downtown Design Specialist
Wisconsin Main Street Program, WEDC

Erin Wetyl, Senior Downtown Development Director
Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

Shane White, Project Manager
Hanson Masonry & Concrete, LLC

Downtown Renovation Building Workshops (Owen & Clear Lake)



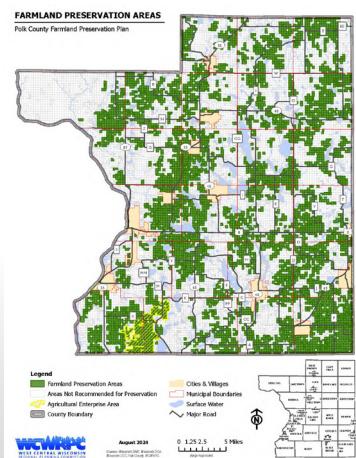
SRTS PROGRAM PLANS & STUDIES COMPLETED:

- School District of River Falls
- Stanley-Boyd Area School District
- Turtle Lake School District
- Eau Claire Area School District
- Traffic Calming Demonstration Project - Amery

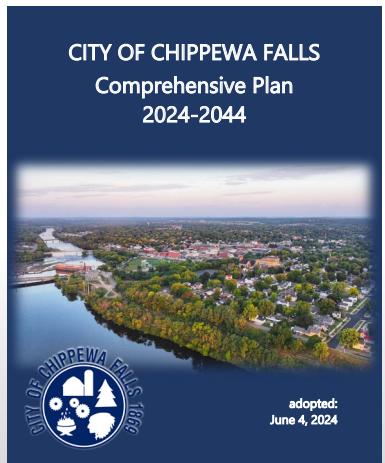
2024 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



Chippewa Valley Bike Routes - Sign Installation



Polk County Farmland Preservation Plan



City of Chippewa Falls Comprehensive Plan Update

Town of Lake Holcombe 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan

Adopted March 25, 2024



Town of Lake Holcombe Comprehensive Plan

Village of Lake Hallie 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan

Adopted December 9, 2024



Village of Lake Hallie Comprehensive Plan

City of Colby 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan

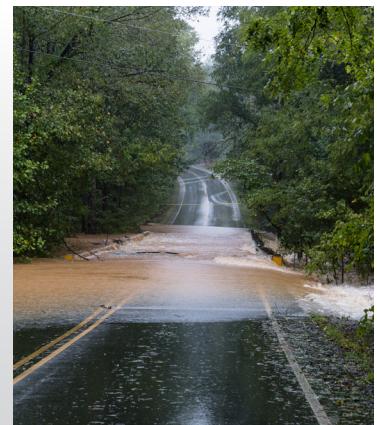
Adopted November 4, 2024



City of Colby Comprehensive Plan Update

LAUNCH OF NEW MIOVISION SCOUT PLUS CAMERA

Allows for the collection and analysis of traffic data for – safety studies, volume counts, TMCs, pedestrian/bicycle pathways, and speed data – with a single device.



Completion of Barron & St. Croix County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans



REGIONAL BUSINESS FUND, INC.

Regional Business Fund, Inc. (RBF, Inc.) is a non-profit economic development corporation whose purpose is to promote business and economic development in west central Wisconsin by providing business financing tools.

RBF, Inc. offers low-interest loan funds to businesses that expand within the region, diversify the economy, add new technology, revitalize buildings in the region's downtowns, create or retain quality jobs, and increase private capital investment in the region.

RBF, Inc. is managed by a Board of Directors consisting of representatives from each of the seven counties in the region and contracts with WCWRPC to administer the loan programs.

LOAN PROGRAMS

- » **Revolving Loan Fund**
- » **Growth Loan Fund**
- » **Micro Loan Fund**
- » **Façade Loan Fund**
- » **EDA Revolving Loan Fund**
- » **EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance Revolving Loan Fund**
- » **Technology Enterprise Fund**

SERVICE AREA & SUCCESS

2021 - 2024

Polk County

\$1,698,143 loaned
27 businesses
17 start-ups
81 jobs created

Barron County

\$2,557,273 loaned
56 businesses
37 start-ups
170 jobs created

Chippewa County

\$2,491,899 loaned
46 businesses
27 start-ups
153 jobs created

Region Totals

\$15,188,837 loaned

247 businesses

132 start-ups

1,020 total jobs created or retained

St. Croix County

\$4,425,813 loaned
48 businesses
23 start-ups
278 jobs created

Dunn County

\$677,200 loaned
16 businesses
8 start-ups
94 jobs created

Clark County

\$1,098,800 loaned
13 businesses
5 start-ups
69 jobs created

Eau Claire County

\$2,239,709 loaned
41 businesses
15 start-ups
175 jobs created

2021

FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance Sheet

(as of December 31, 2021)

ASSETS

Cash & Investments	\$1,925,016
Funds Earned but not Received	\$356,881
Prepaid Items	\$12,284
TOTAL ASSETS	\$2,294,181

LIABILITIES, DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES, & FUND BALANCE

Liabilities

Funds Received but not Earned	\$1,832
Accrued Payroll and Withholdings	\$56,784
Due to other Governments	\$43,130
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$101,746

Deferred Inflow of Resources

Unavailable Revenues	\$30,283
----------------------	----------

Fund Balance

Non-spendable - Prepaid Items	\$12,284
Restricted	\$826,969
Assigned	\$646,908
Unassigned	\$675,991
TOTAL FUND BALANCE	\$2,162,152

TOTAL LIABILITIES , DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES & FUND BALANCE

\$2,294,181

WCWRPC is funded by five basic sources including federal and state grants, administration of a regional business loan fund, local contracts, and a county membership fee (or levy) based on equalized valuations.

2022

FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance Sheet

(as of December 31, 2022)

ASSETS

Cash & Investments	\$1,202,008
Funds Earned but not Received	\$353,218
Prepaid Items	\$20,585
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,575,811

LIABILITIES, DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES, & FUND BALANCE

Liabilities

Funds Received but not Earned	\$1,940
Accrued Payroll and Withholdings	\$59,180
Due to other Governments	\$29,539
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$90,659

Deferred Inflow of Resources

Unavailable Revenues	\$73,599
----------------------	----------

Fund Balance

Non-spendable - Prepaid Items	\$20,585
Assigned	\$652,071
Unassigned	\$738,897
TOTAL FUND BALANCE	\$1,411,553

TOTAL LIABILITIES , DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES & FUND BALANCE

\$1,575,811

WCWRPC is funded by five basic sources including federal and state grants, administration of a regional business loan fund, local contracts, and a county membership fee (or levy) based on equalized valuations.

2023

FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance Sheet

(as of December 31, 2023)

ASSETS

Cash & Investments	\$1,076,775
Funds Earned but not Received	\$576,857
Prepaid Items	\$17,525
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,671,157

LIABILITIES, DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES, & FUND BALANCE

Liabilities

Funds Received but not Earned	\$1,940
Accrued Payroll and Withholdings	\$61,543
Due to other Governments	\$39,763
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$103,246

Deferred Inflow of Resources

Unavailable Revenues	\$104,627
----------------------	-----------

Fund Balance

Non-spendable - Prepaid Items	\$17,525
Assigned	\$659,119
Unassigned	\$786,640
TOTAL FUND BALANCE	\$1,463,284

TOTAL LIABILITIES , DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES & FUND BALANCE

\$1,671,157

WCWRPC is funded by five basic sources including federal and state grants, administration of a regional business loan fund, local contracts, and a county membership fee (or levy) based on equalized valuations.

2024

FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance Sheet

(as of December 31, 2024)

ASSETS

Cash & Investments	\$988,258
Funds Earned but not Received	\$680,184
Prepaid Items	\$22,892
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,691,334

LIABILITIES, DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES, & FUND BALANCE

Liabilities

Funds Received but not Earned	\$15,771
Accrued Payroll and Withholdings	\$74,463
Due to other Governments	\$35,236
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$125,470

Deferred Inflow of Resources

Unavailable Revenues	\$48,423
----------------------	----------

Fund Balance

Non-spendable - Prepaid Items	\$22,892
Assigned	\$153,770
Unassigned	\$1,340,779
TOTAL FUND BALANCE	\$1,517,441

TOTAL LIABILITIES , DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES & FUND BALANCE

\$1,691,334

WCWRPC is funded by five basic sources including federal and state grants, administration of a regional business loan fund, local contracts, and a county membership fee (or levy) based on equalized valuations.

WCWRPC

Staff



Scott Allen
Executive Director
sallen@wcwRPC.org



Susan Badtke
Deputy Director/Senior Planner
sbadtke@wcwRPC.org



Kim Zimmerman
Financial Manager
kzimmerman@wcwRPC.org



Erin Whyte
Office Manager
ewhyte@wcwRPC.org



Tobi LeMahieu
Fund Manager
tlemahieu@wcwRPC.org



Chris Straight
Senior Planner
chris@wcwRPC.org



Eric Anderson
Senior Planner/MPO Director
eanderson@wcwRPC.org



Ross Pietrzak
Senior Planner
rpietrzak@wcwRPC.org



Amanda Veith
Lending Specialist
aveith@wcwRPC.org



Landon Profaizer
Associate Planner/Creative Content Manager
lprofaizer@wcwRPC.org



Craig Johnson
Associate Planner
cjohnson@wcwRPC.org



Edwin Rothrock
Associate Planner
erothrock@wcwRPC.org



Jennifer Brixen
Loan Processor
jbrixen@wcwRPC.org



Hailee Bushman
Assistant Planner
hbushman@wcwRPC.org



Emily Huerta
Assistant Planner
ehuerta@wcwRPC.org

2024 Officers:

John L. Frank, *Chair*

Louie Okey, *Vice Chair*

Joe Waichulis, Jr., *Secretary/Treasurer*

Barron County

Patti Anderson
Craig Fowler
Louie Okey*

Chippewa County

Chuck Hull
George Rohmeyer*
Joel Seidlitz

Clark County

Peter Kaz
Chuck Rueth
Joe Waichulis, Jr.*

Dunn County

Diane Morehouse
Steve Rasmussen*
Carl Vandermeulen

Eau Claire County

Loralee Clark
John L. Frank*
Dane Zook

Polk County

Terry Hauer
Keith Karpenski
Sharon Kelly*

St. Croix County

Paul Berning
Daniel Hansen
Ryan Sicard*

**Together we make
a difference in the
region!**

*Executive Committee Members



**WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

Building D-2, Suite 401
800 Wisconsin St., Mail Box 9
Eau Claire, WI 54703

Phone
(715) 836-2918

Fax
(715) 836-2886

Email
wcwRPC@wcwRPC.org

Website
www.wcwRPC.org