

# West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

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2021-2024 Annual Report





# 1. COORDINATE

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## 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

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## 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

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## 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

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## 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**

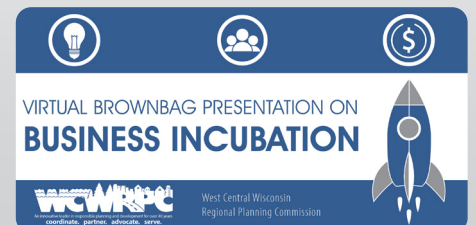
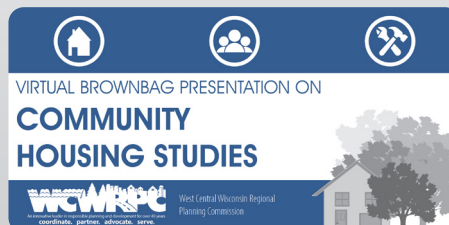
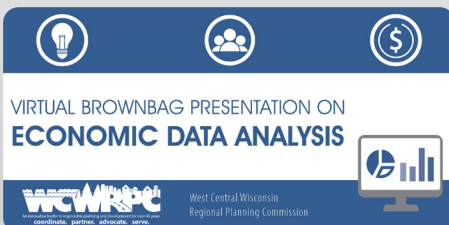
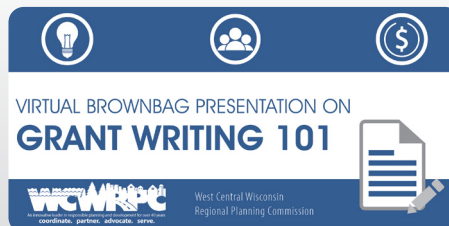


**City of Neillsville Comprehensive Plan Update 2021-2041**



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

## Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grant - Virtual Brownbag Luncheons



## Economic Development Video Series



**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>

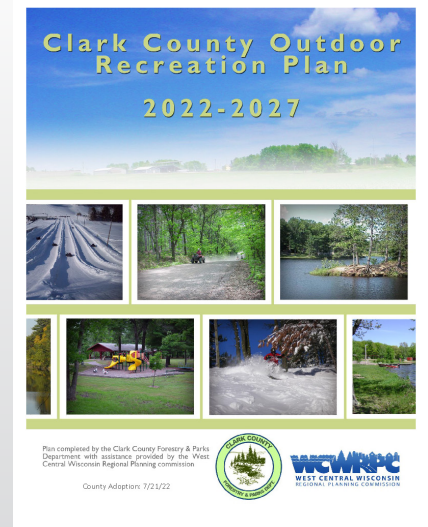
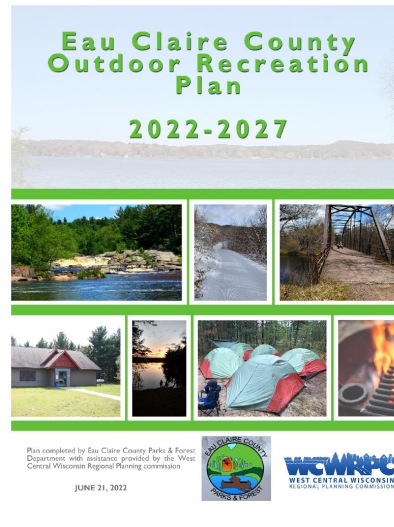


**New Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Planner Position Filled - July**



# 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        |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>860</b>            | <b>\$8,600,000</b> |

### 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



## Dunn County Housing Needs Study

## Chippewa County Outdoor Recreation Plan



### MUNICIPAL PARTICIPATION INCLUDES:

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

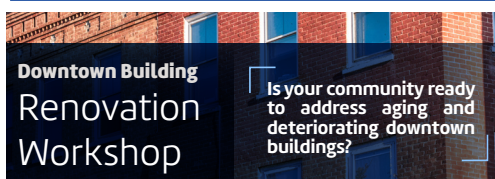


## City of Barron Outdoor Recreation Plan



## Momentum West 2023 Regional Impact Award

*West Central Wisconsin Regional Broadband Coalition*



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

Many rural communities in west-central Wisconsin are struggling with the condition of older 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 Lawmick, Downtown Design Specialist  
Wisconsin Main Street Program, WEDC

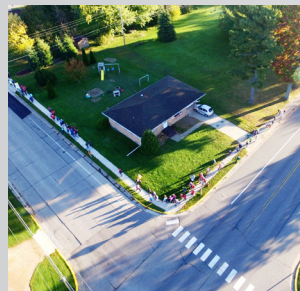
Erin Wetty, Senior Downtown Development Director  
Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

Shane White, Project Manager  
Hanson Masonry & Concrete, LLC

**Main Topics**

- ✓ Construction & Renovation Challenges in Older Downtown Buildings
- ✓ Avoiding & Preventing Building Damage
- ✓ Legal Alternatives to Address Deteriorating & Unsafe Buildings
- ✓ Understanding Vacancy & Barriers to Rehabilitation
- ✓ Building Renovation Programs, Tools, & Resources

## Downtown Renovation Building Workshops (Owen & Clear Lake)



## SRTS PROGRAM PLANS & STUDIES COMPLETED:

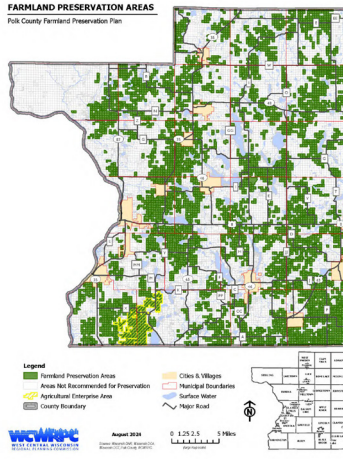
- School District of River Falls
- Stanley-Boyd Area School District
- Turtle Lake School District
- Eau Claire Area School District
- Traffic Calming Demonstration Project - Amery



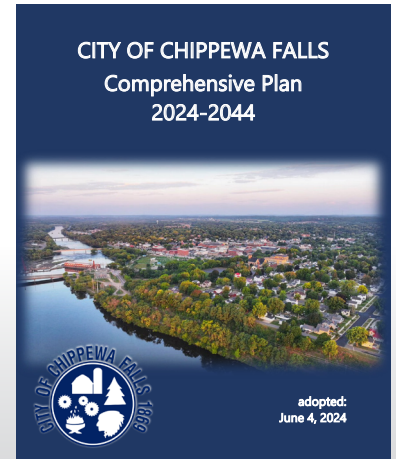
# 2024 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



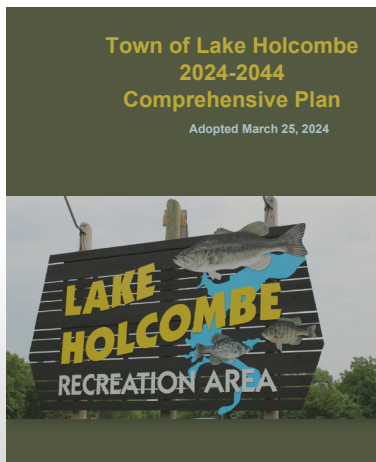
**Chippewa Valley Bike  
Routes - Sign Installation**



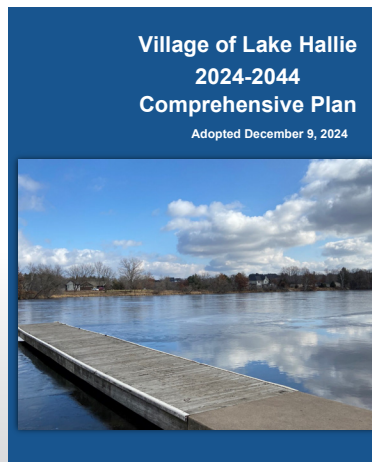
**Polk County Farmland  
Preservation Plan**



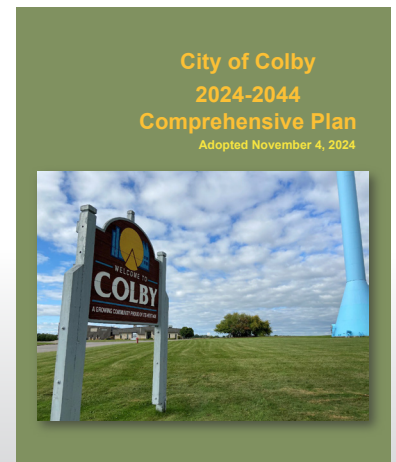
**City of Chippewa Falls  
Comprehensive Plan Update**



**Town of Lake Holcombe  
Comprehensive Plan**



**Village of Lake Hallie  
Comprehensive Plan**

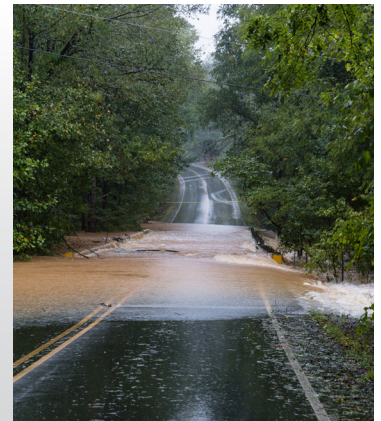


**City of Colby  
Comprehensive Plan Update**



## 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

### Clark County

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

### 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           |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>           | <b>\$2,294,181</b> |

#### **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         |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>         | <b>\$101,746</b> |

##### **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          |
| <b>TOTAL FUND BALANCE</b>     | <b>\$2,162,152</b> |

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES , DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES &amp; FUND BALANCE</b> | <b>\$2,294,181</b> |
|---|--------------------|

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           |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>           | <b>\$1,575,811</b> |

#### **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        |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>         | <b>\$90,659</b> |

##### **Deferred Inflow of Resources**

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

##### **Fund Balance**

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

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES , DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES &amp; FUND BALANCE</b> | <b>\$1,575,811</b> |
|---|--------------------|

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           |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>           | <b>\$1,671,157</b> |

#### **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         |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>         | <b>\$103,246</b> |

##### **Deferred Inflow of Resources**

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

##### **Fund Balance**

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

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES , DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES &amp; FUND BALANCE</b> | <b>\$1,671,157</b> |
|---|--------------------|

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           |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>           | <b>\$1,691,334</b> |

### 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         |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>         | <b>\$125,470</b> |

#### Deferred Inflow of Resources

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

#### Fund Balance

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

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES , DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES &amp; FUND BALANCE</b> | <b>\$1,691,334</b> |
|---|--------------------|

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.



**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 COMMISSISON**

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

**Phone**  
(715) 836-2918

**Fax**  
(715) 836-2886

**Email**  
[wccwrpc@wccwrpc.org](mailto:wccwrpc@wccwrpc.org)

**Website**  
[www.wccwrpc.org](http://www.wccwrpc.org)