



NCWRPC NEWS

A Newsletter of the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC). Serving Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas and Wood Counties for over 30 years.

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Welcome

As summer fades into fall, we continue to work on a variety of projects for many communities throughout the Region, including comprehensive plans in Adams, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Oneida, and Portage Counties; economic development efforts in Juneau and Lincoln Counties; Land & Water Conservation Plans in Forest and Oneida Counties; rural addressing in Langlade County; Outdoor Recreations Plans in Forest, Juneau, Langlade and Lincoln; and Wildfire Prevention Planning in Adams County; to mention a few. We also continue to develop and manage several regional programs for the benefit of our Region, including Northeast Wisconsin Public Safety Communication (NEWCOM), Northern Advantage Technology Zone, and the NCWDC. In fact, the NEWCOM effort was recently highlighted at the Wisconsin Counties Association Conference.

Although we are busy, we encourage communities to contact us if they have a project that they need help with. At the very least we can meet with you to identify your options. After all, our job is to help you!

Please feel free to contact me at (715) 849-5510, Ext. 304, or at dlawrence@ncwrpc.org if you have any question .

Dennis Lawrence, AICP
Executive Director

Commission Meeting Highlights

At its July meeting the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission was updated on a variety of topics including specialized transportation, NEWCOM, and economic development programs, and established the 2007 Levy Membership Rate

The Commission unanimously voted to reduce the 2007 Levy Rate from 0.00175% to less than 0.0015%. This is the fourth decrease in a row. This action is possible as the Commission moves toward more project based revenues.

Over the summer the NCWRPC coordinated countywide meetings to develop specialized transportation plans for each of the ten counties in the region. Each county is required to have a plan in place to maintain state and federal transportation funding for certain activities.

The NEWCOM effort is moving along and will include sixteen counties total. The group has had its first organizational meeting and officers were selected. The NCWRPC will provide staff services to this group. The goal of the group is to develop a better communication system in the region.

Economic development is a major function of the NCWRPC. Staff provided an update on several

Quarterly Quote:

Long-range planning does not deal with future decisions, but with the future of present decisions.

Peter Drucker

Commission Meeting Highlights Continued. . .

programs, such as the North Central Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, the Regional Technology Zone program, and Angel Investment Network. Staff is busy with many local projects as well around the region.

In addition, five projects were reviewed through the Federal-State Referrals process totaling almost \$1.4 million dollars and were approved.

The next NCWRPC meeting will be held in Wausau on September 27, 2006. The 2007 Budget will highlight the next meeting.

Land & Water Resource Plans

The NCWRPC assisted Forest and Oneida Counties in developing Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM) plans; which are 5-year plans created for Land and Water Conservation Departments to guide their activities by using the goals and objectives, and to coordinate their activities with other county, state, and federal departments.

LWRM plans outline how each county will meet state performance standards and prohibitions (NR 151 and ATCP 50) to reduce runoff and protect water quality, as well as address other local land and water resource management concerns. The LWRM plan requires counties to develop local strategies to address local concerns, provide for coordination of various department and agency activities, and develop a variety of implementation tools.

Forest and Oneida Counties have worked with NCWRPC to coordinate creation of their plans over the summer. Both plans have been submitted to the Land and Water Resources Board for approval.

For more information contact Fred Heider at (715) 549-5510, Extension 310, or fheider@ncwrpc.org.

October is National Community Planning Month

County Transit Plans

This summer, the NCWRPC conducted meetings to plan for the coordination of human-services transportation in each of our ten counties. The meetings were designed to help the counties meet new federal requirements. The NCWRPC facilitated the meetings at the request of WisDOT.

The meetings yielded good discussion in each county and identified a range of possible actions for the counties to improve human-services transportation coordination. Discussion also revealed factors beyond the control of individual counties, which must be addressed for full coordination to be realized. The counties look to WisDOT and the federal government to address these issues, including:

- Break down barriers within funding sources that limit coordination such as restrictions on sharing of vehicles or trip purpose.
- Available resources are not adequate to provide levels of services needed for expanding service areas and non-traditional times (evening, weekend). Increased demand due to Family Care is a major concern.
- Insurance and liability issues are concerns of county boards with regard to sharing vehicles between counties and programs.
- Technology to facilitate coordination such as scheduling and trip tracking software, payment systems (i.e. smart cards, scanners) and communications equipment are expensive to obtain and maintain. The counties do not have financial resources available to invest in transportation technology.

The NCWRPC is currently distributing summary reports for each meeting. The State is planning a conference for early 2007 to provide feedback on the county reports including an analysis of the action plans. Major conclusions will be discussed and a statewide model for coordination devised. The NCWRPC will bring all the county concerns to the State's attention during this process.

For more information, contact Darryl Landeau at (715) 849-5510, Extension 308, or dlandeau@ncwrpc.org.

Langlade Transit Coordination

The NCWRPC recently completed a Coordinated Transportation Services Study for Langlade County. Langlade is ahead of most counties in that it has an active Transportation Coordinating Committee working on coordination issues. The NCWRPC was brought in to help focus the effort and bring closure to the project.

Existing services were reviewed along with budgets and staff time committed to providing transportation. The NCWRPC found that over \$200,000 is spent annually for vehicles, fuel and other hard costs by six different departments and agencies. An additional \$15,500 is spent scheduling trips and another \$6,400 is spent completing the reporting and other administrative activities associated with providing “trips”. From a staffing perspective, the equivalent of a half-time staff person is spent on administrating the transportation function.

The NCWRPC recommended that Langlade County create and/or designate a half-time position of County Transportation Coordinator. The coordinator responsibility being coordination of services, elimination of duplication and savings of County financial resources. This single point-of-contact streamlines transportation service provision for users while directing them to the most cost-effective option for the County. The position would also focus on pursuing additional grant dollars to reduce the County’s cost and expand the program to meet the public’s needs. As the program grows, the position may have to be expanded by the Board beyond half-time. The Board and its Committees are currently debating the details of how this position should be structured.

Langlade County’s efforts are timely since recent federal regulations require planning for coordination of public human-services transportation. See related article, *County Transit Plans*, in this newsletter.

For more information, contact Darryl Landeau at (715)849-5510, Extension 308, or dlan-deau@ncwrpc.org.

Obey Wins Approval of \$300,000 to Help Finance Business Development in North Central Wisconsin

Congressman Dave Obey announced in July that the House has approved his request for \$300,000 in next year’s Housing and Urban Development budget to assist the NCWRPC to capitalize a Technology Revolving Loan Fund intended to help new and existing area companies acquire new technologies to enhance their competitiveness.

“The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has a track record of helping local businesses find the tools they need to succeed. Hopefully these federal funds will help them expand their efforts to enhance economic development in our community,” said Obey. “The bill must still be approved by the Senate and signed by the President before it becomes law, but having these funds included in today’s House approved version means that a major hurdle has been cleared.”

“We are excited to work with Representative Obey in capitalizing a fund that is specifically tailored to early-stage and seed-stage businesses competing in the new economy” said James Hanke, Economic Development Planner for the NCWRPC. “Through his support of this effort, Rep. Obey has once again demonstrated his commitment to enhancing this region’s economic competitiveness.” Hanke also indicated “Developing a loan fund that can be used alongside local angel investors and venture capitalists will go a long way toward attracting and retaining entrepreneurial talent in the region. We perceive this loan fund as one of many critical assets that Central Wisconsin maintains to support employment growth, cultivate innovation, and encourage new company formations in our region.”

For more information contact James Hanke at (715) 849-5510, Extension 306, or jhanke@ncwrpc.org.

You've Adopted a Comprehensive Plan...So Now What?

The NCWRPC, along with the Center for Land Use Education and the Wisconsin American Planning Association, will host a workshop on Thursday, November 9th from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm at the Midway Hotel in Wausau. The focus will be on implementation strategies for your comprehensive plan. Many communities have recently adopted comprehensive plans, and many more will before 2010. The next steps that communities should take is the subject of this workshop.

Featured speakers:

- **Dan Miller**, Zoning Administrator for Lincoln County, will talk about the process of revising the County's Zoning Ordinance to respond to what has been described as Wisconsin's first Smart Growth Plan.
- **Susan Greenfield** from the Town of Caledonia will discuss Conservation Subdivisions and how they can meet the demands of the marketplace and preserve valuable open space.
- **Tom Harnisch** from the Wisconsin Towns Association will address the "consistency" requirement.

Admission is free, but an RSVP is requested. Coffee and donuts will be provided.

To RSVP contact Bernie Lewis at (715) 849-5510, Extension 301, or blewis@ncwrpc.org

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