

# North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

## 2015 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

### Executive Summary



# What is the CEDS?

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) is designated as an Economic Development District (EDD) by the U. S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). Current members of the EDD are Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, and Vilas Counties, as well as parts of Portage and Wood Counties. The EDA provides financial assistance to designated districts in part, for the purpose of developing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), the Region’s economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen the regional economy.

The purpose of the CEDS is multifaceted. The CEDS is designed to provide baseline information on demographics and economic data, development of strategies, and identify potential projects within the Region. Preparation and adoption of the CEDS maintains both the Region’s EDD designation, but also maintains grant eligibility for those participating units of government. The CEDS document is a working document used by both the public and private sectors to provide leadership with a current picture of the economic state of the Region.

## Region’s Projected Industry Concentrations

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting Cluster
Manufacturing Cluster
General Merchandise Stores and Non-store Retailers Cluster
Transportation and Warehouse Cluster
Finance and Insurance Cluster
Health Care and Social Assistance Cluster

## Regional

	2012	2013	Change	Result
Employment	217,022	217,862	0.4%	
Labor Force	235,283	235,570	0.12%	
Unemployment	7.8%	7.5%	0.3%	
	2012	2013	Change	Result
Job Growth	220,469	220,863	0.18%	
Population	443,067	443,597	0.12%	

## Regional Statistics

Population (2013)	<b>443,597</b>
Labor Force (2013)	<b>235,570</b>
Employment (2013)	<b>217,862</b>
Per Capita Income (2010)	<b>\$25,012</b>
Median Household Income (2010)	<b>\$45,045</b>

## CEDS Committee

The CEDS Strategy Committee includes representatives from a variety of organizations from both the public and private sector. CEDS Committee members include Richard Bakovka, Tom Haferman, Craig McEwen, Bucky Dailey, Ron Nye, Thomas Rudolph, Doug Williams, Ken Winters, Bruce Trimble, Susan Ryman, Christine Berry, Naletta Burr, Jim Warsaw, Peggy Sullivan, Bob Egan, and Daric Smith.



The CEDS Committee recommended adoption of the document. In January 2014, the CEDS was adopted by the NCWRPC.

# Regional SWOT Analysis

## Strengths

- Strong Manufacturing Base
- Access to quality Interstates
- Access to Regional airport
- Regional economic development efforts and communication
- Innovative population
- Tourism
- Knowledgeable and hardworking workforce
- Competitive wages for businesses
- Lower Cost of Living
- Quality education system
- 2 year and 4 year college programs
- Access to natural resources
- Quality freshwater resources
- Quality of life/place
- Quality healthcare options
- Wealth of recreational activities
- Low state taxes for businesses

## Opportunities

- Industry specific 2 year training programs
- Innovative workforce
- Creative new uses for existing infrastructure i.e. paper mills
- Emerging healthcare sector
- Better use of the Regional airport
- Access to Federal Lands timber
- Specialized manufacturing clusters
- Access to freshwater
- Natural resources and environment
- Entrepreneurial support
- Increasing number of incubators and seed accelerators
- Increase Regional collaboration
- Capitalization of educated, active retiree population

## Weaknesses

- Lack of access to broadband
- Roads limits for heavy transportation
- Unprepared future workforce
- Lack of skilled labor for specialties
- Lack of knowledge of manufacturing careers
- Location to major markets
- Limited freight rail access in North
- High dependence on traditional manufacturing industries
- Waste disposal/ solid waste issues
- Declining young population
- Aquatic/ natural and terrestrial invasive species
- Lack of national forest access for timber cutting
- Lower wages for workers
- Availability of diverse affordable housing options

## Threats

- Slow population growth
- Shrinking workforce
- Unprepared workforce
- Low wages result in low quality workers
- Aging population
- Manufacturing dependency
- Paper manufacturing dependency
- Lack of diversity in industries
- Shortage of older woods supply
- Shrinking manufacturing workforce
- Aquatic and terrestrial invasive species
- Lack of creative industry clusters
- Decreasing population under 17 years of age
- Aging/ retiring workforce
- Growing healthcare costs

# Regional CEDS Goals

1. Encourage business retention and expansion to maintain and increase employment opportunities in the Region.

2. Create an innovative atmosphere to foster an entrepreneurially supportive environment.

3. Promote and attract new business to the Region.

4. Encourage the reuse of existing commercial and industrial sites for more sustainable economic development.

5. Ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce prepared to meet the needs of both existing and emerging industries and technologies.

6. Meet the full range of business' infrastructure needs with emphasis on transportation, utilities and communications.

7. Promote and increase communication between Regional and county economic development, workforce development and other organizations.

## Recent EDA Grants

- 2007– NCWRPC Grow North Project—\$25,000
- 2007– City of Wisconsin Rapids Wastewater Treatment Facility- \$1,500,000
- 2008– NCWRPC Flood Recovery Coordinator- \$104,592
- 2008– Heart of Wisconsin Entrepreneur Boot Camp - \$100,000
- 2009– Langlade County Wood Technology Center—\$1,280,000
- 2010– City of Adams Business Park Development—\$608,935
- 2010– City of Mauston Industrial Park Expansion- \$1,246,500



Photo: Langlade County Wood Technology Center