

# NCWRPC NEWS

The official newsletter of North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC).

Spring 2013, Number 50

Serving: Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, and Wood counties since 1973.



## Director's Welcome

This year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission; which is not only a time for celebration, but also a time for reflection of the past and more importantly to look toward the future.

In 1973 Richard Nixon was President and the Patrick Lucey was the Governor, when the ten counties of our region passed resolutions to create the NCWRPC. Four decades later we are still here assisting the counties and communities of North Central Wisconsin, one of the best examples of intergovernmental cooperation.

Over the years we have directly or indirectly assisted every town, village, city and county in the region. We were the first regional planning commission in the state to prepare a Regional Comprehensive Plan under the new law, not to mention all of the various planning, transportation and mapping projects completed at the local level. We have helped to secure funding to build the Business and Industrial Parks in Crandon and Mauston, and many places

in between. Over \$20 million dollars have been brought to the region for economic development projects alone. In addition we have lent over \$1.5 million to twenty businesses in our region to help create over 400 jobs.



Although this newsletter looks at the accomplishments of the last four decades, there are also announcements for some projects soon to start. County level Specialized Transit Plans will begin later this year as will road rating and reporting compliance with the WISLR program. Our assistance to our members and the region never ends.

On behalf of the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, I'd like to thank all of you for your support over the years. As long as we work together North Central Wisconsin will continue to be a great place!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dennis Lawrence'.

Dennis Lawrence, AICP  
Executive Director

**Commission Meetings**  
**See our website for future dates and locations.**  
**The public is always welcome.**

## NCWRPC Leadership

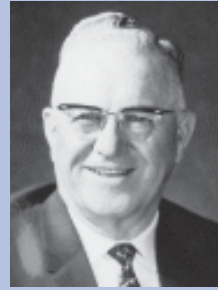
The first Chairperson was Norman Walters, followed by Charlotte Quick, Neil LeMay, and Erhard Huettl.



Norman Walters  
1974 to 1976



Charlotte Quick  
1976 to 1980



Neil LeMay  
1980 to 1984



Erhard Huettl  
1984 to today

## Milestones and Major Awards

- 1973 Executive Order No. 58 creates NCWRPC
- 1975 Designated Rural Transportation Organization
- 1980 Designated Economic Development District
- 1981 Adopted "A Framework for Regional Development"
- 1989 Completed Upper Wisconsin River Valley Recreational Assessment
- 1995 Established North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation
- 1998 Received Top Rural Initiative Award for Regional Revolving Loan Fund
- 2003 Adopted "Regional Comprehensive Plan"
- 2006 Received Best in State Award for Wisconsin Regional Orthophotography Consortium
- 2010 Received APA-WI Recognition for Comprehensive Planning Assistance in Region
- 2012 Received NADO Innovation Award for Wood Technology Center
- 2013 Received Government Achievement Award from WLIA

## Cost of Living

	1973	2013
Average House Value	\$32,500	\$131,800
Average Monthly Rent	\$175	\$651
Average Annual Income	\$12,900	\$43,460
Gallon of Gasoline	40 Cents	\$3.75
Dow Jones Average	850	14,500

## Culture and Sports, 1973

Best Movie	The Godfather
Number One Song	Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Old Oak Tree
World Series Champion	Oakland A's
Super Bowl Winner	Miami Dolphins
Men's NCAA BB Tournament Winner	UCLA



## 40 Years Of Assistance

Over the years the NCWRPC has been involved in a variety of planning efforts, however, most relate to the core programs: Economic Development, Geographic Information Systems, Land Use, and Transportation. Each of these areas is highlighted below:

### ■ Economic Development

Our role in Economic Development has changed over the last forty years, as you would imagine. In the beginning the bulk of our efforts related to collecting and disseminating economic data, preparing reports, and other economic studies for the region. In 1980 we sought and were designated as an economic development district by the US Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration. Annually we prepare a document called the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to maintain that designation, which provides access to all member communities for public works funding, mainly to develop business and industrial parks. Over the years the NCWRPC has secured funding for a dozen such parks in our region. Working with our communities these parks today provide homes to hundreds of businesses and thousands of jobs.

In the 1990s the NCWRPC sought designation from the State to allocate the tax credit program and for nearly ten years we administered that program, which provided tax credits to numerous of businesses in our region. The program was eventually phased out as it moved from the regional level to become a statewide program. During that same period business financing was tightening up throughout the region and that's when NCWRPC started exploring solutions. In 1996 an application was made to USDA-Rural Development and working in partnership with numerous area banks, public utilities, and others the North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation was established, which brought additional revolving

loan fund dollars to the region. Another effort was undertaken in 2006 to secure additional funds from HUD. Over the years these funds have complimented county level revolving loan funds to help area businesses grow and prosper.

Recently a major project completed to foster economic development in the region was the Wood Technology of Excellence, which was collaboration with Northcentral Technical College, Langlade County and EDA. The result was a state of the art facility in Antigo to address training needs for the forest products industry. This project was the recipient of the National Association of Development Organization's award for innovative approaches and program delivery.



Wood Technology Center, Antigo, WI

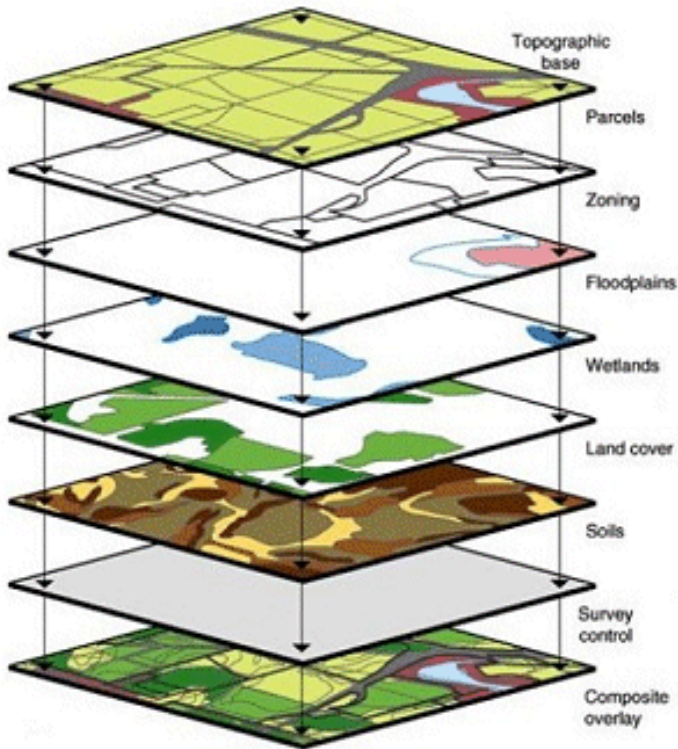
Another partnership currently underway is with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). This effort relates to providing economic data using a new software tool called *Analyst* by EMSI.

Economic development continues to be one of the major work areas of the NCWRPC, from preparing reports to lending funds, and everything in between.

### ■ Geographic Information System (GIS)

For over a decade and a half our efforts revolved around providing data and preparing hand drawn maps. That all changed in 1990 when the NCWRPC acquired a computer based GIS system. It was an Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) PC ArcInfo system running on

an IBM DOS platform. There was a large digitizing tablet that was used to trace paper maps to create digital GIS layers.



Throughout the 1990s the state began providing counties with funding for land records modernization and the NCWRPC has been providing assistance ever since. We have developed road centerlines, parcels, address points, building footprints, and other GIS layers to assist the counties with implementing local GIS. Since 1990, a layer we have continued to maintain is an existing land use layer for the region. Every 10 years this is updated to coincide with the US Census. This information is used by the planners at NCWRPC to track change and support planning activities throughout the region.

NCWRPC acquired aerial imagery of the region in 1990 & 1995. The images were 6 mile x 6 mile township tiles on mylars and could be reproduced on a blueprint machine. Beginning in 2005 imagery was scanned into a digital format that could be used in a GIS. In 2010 NCWRPC helped organize

the first statewide leaf-off full digital orthoimagery program in Wisconsin history. The Wisconsin Regional Orthoimagery Consortium (WROC) captured over 56,000 square miles of imagery in one flying season. This has become the standard for future efforts in the state. In 2012, WROC earned a Best in State Award from ACEC.

GIS has come a long way and the NCWRPC continues to update and improve its regional geographic information system by creating regional data layers like land use. NCWRPC also continues to assist with county and local GIS development.

### ■ Land Use

Land use planning has been a mainstay of the NCWRPC since day one. In the beginning, much of this was community level land use plans, mainly funded by federal planning grants. That funding source was eliminated by the end of the 1970s, but in 1980s several state programs began requiring certain types of plans, such as county farmland preservation plans and outdoor recreation plans. To assist our members we began doing those plans, which continue to this day. Over the years NCWRPC has provided assistance to many of our members in the form of Outdoor Recreation Plans, Land and Water Resource Management Plans, All-Hazard Mitigation Plans, Community Wildfire Protection Plans, Sewer Service Area Plans, Land Use Plans, Downtown Plans, Farmland Preservation Plans, Wellhead Protection Plans, and Flood Mitigation Plans. Some of these plans are prepared on five year cycles, and have been updated multiple times.

Land use planning in Wisconsin took a major step when the Legislature passed a revision of the planning statutes in 1999. Any local government that carried out certain land use regulations had to base those actions on an adopted comprehensive plan that meets the requirements of the statute. Over the decade, the NCWRPC has assisted nearly 70 communities develop plans. In fact, the NCWRPC was recognized by the American Planning



Association – Wisconsin Chapter in 2010 for its extraordinary efforts promoting comprehensive planning throughout the region.



Mosinee Downtown Future Land Use

One of the functions of a regional planning commission is to develop a master plan for the physical development of the region. Although advisory, the NCWRPC prepared the Framework for Regional Development, in 1981. That plan made recommendations on Natural Resource, Economic Development, Housing, and Transportation issues. In 2003 that plan was updated to comply with the new state law. The adopted plan was titled the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP). This was the first regional plan prepared in the state under the new comprehensive planning law. The Regional Comprehensive Plan contains nine elements, with a focus on economic development and transportation. Currently the NCWRPC is in the process of updating the RCP and broadening the focus within the plan.

Land use planning is continually changing. In recent years there has been movement to expand planning assistance to incorporate issues such as energy, health, livability and sustainability. Who knows what the future holds?

## ■ Transportation

The NCWRPC was designated as a rural transportation planning organization by WisDOT, in 1975, to coordinate transportation strategies on a regional basis. In this role, the Commission supports WisDOT programs and provides local technical assistance.

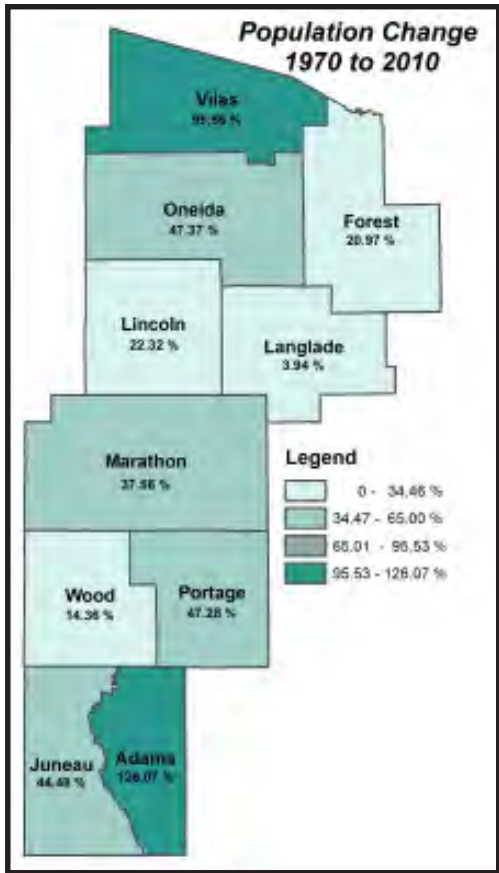
Over the years, state program activities include highway corridor planning assistance such as the U.S.H. 10 Freeway Conversion Study in a joint effort with East Central RPC. Other major corridor planning efforts in the past have included State Highway 29 expansion, State Highway 17 alternate route (bypass) study around Rhinelander, and a study of U.S. Highway 8 for the Potawatomi Tribe. In 2006, WisDOT asked the NCWRPC to conduct a major transit planning effort for each of our ten counties. The Commission arranged and facilitated planning sessions in each county. The results of these sessions were then used to draft the first Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plans.

In addition to rural transportation, the NCWRPC also deals with urban issues. Commission staff serves on the technical advisory committee for the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). In 2003, the Commission completed a long-range transportation plan for the Wisconsin Rapids urban area.

One of the cornerstones of the Commission's transportation planning program is the Transportation Element of the Regional Comprehensive Plan and the development of local transportation elements. The Regional Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element integrates state long-range and multimodal goals to facilitate incorporation into local transportation elements per state statute. Numerous county and local unit, both urban and rural, transportation elements have been completed from this framework.

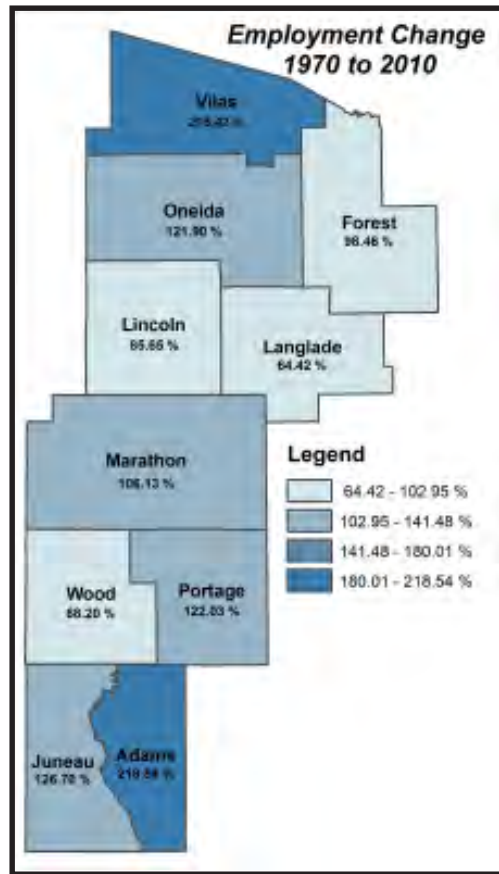
The Commission has also seen increasing involvement in planning for bicycle and pedestrian facilities including Safe Routes To School planning. Commission staff have developed regional, county and municipal level bike and pedestrian network plans and currently serves on the Marathon County Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Committee.

Road surface management planning has been a mainstay of the Commission's transportation program with over 85 plans completed since 1986. These plans provide a schedule for upgrading local roads and qualify local units for LRIP grant funding. We provide a variety of services relating to road surface management, including pavement rating and reporting for counties and local units to comply with state mandate.



USH 51 & Main St, Merrill Comprehensive Plan

The latest effort of the NCWRPC to advocate for more transportation resources for the Region, is the Northwoods Rail Transit Commission or NRTC. The NRTC consists of nine northern Wisconsin counties and is staffed by the NCWRPC to sustain and enhance safe, reliable and efficient rail service critical to the businesses, communities and economies in northern Wisconsin. The NCWRPC continues to assist with state and local transportation issues.



## Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Plan Updates

NCWRPC staff will soon be working to update County Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plans. These plans are required to qualify for Section 5310 (capital funds for county and non-profit elderly and disabled transportation).

Early in 2013, NCWRPC staff will assist our member counties with their plans. It is possible that two or more of these counties will also combine into a single plan. These plans were last updated in 2008. Counties need to have these plans in place by the end of the year.



Please contact Darryl Landeau, AICP, if you have questions, contact him at 715-849-5510, Extension 308, or at [dlandeau@ncwrpc.org](mailto:dlandeau@ncwrpc.org) for more information.



## Pavement Rating Assistance

It is time once again for local governments in Wisconsin to submit surface condition ratings for all local roads under their jurisdiction. State statute 86.302(2) requires that the ratings be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation every two years. In 2011, the NCWRPC submitted the mandated condition ratings for 18 communities. The next round of submissions will be due to WisDOT by December of this year.

Commission staff will be providing a variety of services to local units of government within the Region to assist in pavement rating and submitting the results to WisDOT. Most of these services will be provided free-of-charge to Commission members while non-members will be charged for assistance per our 2013-2014 fee schedule. If you think your community would like to utilize the services of the NCWRPC to help with this pavement rating mandate, please contact Matt Guptail at 715-849-5510, Extension 303 or email to [mguptail@ncwrpc.org](mailto:mguptail@ncwrpc.org).



## EMSI Update

The NCWRPC continues its partnership with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to provide economic development analysis data throughout the region. A comprehensive economic modeling program, called Analyst, developed by Economic Modeling Specialists International is a tool that provides industry/occupation data, impact assessments, and economic base analysis information.

Detailed economic reports have been prepared for each county for the fourth quarter of 2012 and first quarter of 2013, which are available on our website. Requests for additional data can also be made on the website at [www.ncwrpc.org/emsi](http://www.ncwrpc.org/emsi).

For more information, please contact Andy Faust, GISP, at 715-849-5510, Extension 305 or [afaust@ncwrpc.org](mailto:afaust@ncwrpc.org).



emsi





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## WLIA Awards

Earlier this year at the Wisconsin Land Information Association (WLIA) Annual Conference the NCWRPC received the Government Achievement Award for its assistance to Oneida County for hosting searchable survey documents. In addition, Matt Guptail received a second place award in the Black and White Map category for an entry of "Antigo Middle School Site Assessment". This marks the 11th consecutive year that NCWRPC's GIS Department has received an award.

WLIA is a grassroots organization representing professionals working to develop, maintain, and apply a network of statewide land information systems. For more information go to:

[www.wlia.org/](http://www.wlia.org/) 



## NCWRPC Commissioners

### Adams County

Richard Bakovka  
Glenn Licitar  
Ron Jacobson

### Forest County

Erhard Huettl  
Jimmy Landru, Jr.  
Paul Millan

### Juneau County

Edmund Wafle  
Kenneth Winters  
*Appointment Pending*

### Langlade County

George Bornemann  
Ronald Nye  
Paul Schuman

### Lincoln County

Robert Lussow  
Frank Saal, Jr.  
Doug Williams

### Marathon County

Virginia Heinemann  
Craig McEwen  
Bettye Nall

### Oneida County

Thomas Rudolph  
*Appointment Pending*  
*Appointment Pending*

### Portage County

Inactive

### Vilas County

Bob Egan  
Ralph Sitzberger  
*Appointment Pending*

### Wood County

Gerald Nelson  
Tom Haferman  
*Appointment Pending*