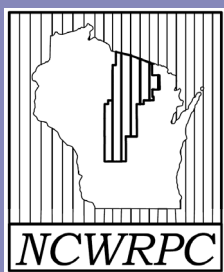




NCWRPC News

The official newsletter of the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
Serving Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, and Wood Counties since 1973.

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“Quarterly Quote”

“Good plans shape good decisions. That’s why good planning helps to make elusive dreams come true.”

- Lester R. Bittel

Regional Livability Plan Nears Completion

NCWRPC has recently completed work on the update of its Regional Comprehensive Plan – now titled the Regional Livability Plan (RLP). Last month the RLP Steering Committee recommended approval of the RLP. Following a public hearing the plan will be adopted by the NCWRPC.

This Regional Livability Plan updates the 2003 Regional Comprehensive Plan and lays the foundation for the principles of livability throughout our Region. The planning effort included the preparation of a variety of reports, including: a Regional Demographic Report and four Assessment Reports: Housing, Economic Development, Transportation, and Land Use. All of these documents form the foundation for the Regional Livability Plan.

Several livability issues were identified while developing the Housing Assessment Report. One of the larger issues is the lack of housing options in the region. In 2010, single family homes (includes duplexes) accounted for over 82 percent of the region’s housing stock, compared to 77.5 percent for the state. Only 10.2 percent of the housing units in the region are multifamily units, while multifamily units account for 18.6 percent of the housing units for the state. An increase in home values and rent, combined with a decrease in median household incomes between 2000 and 2010, has increased the percentage of people spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing. In 2000, 11.2 percent of owners and 29.8 percent of renters spent greater than 30 percent of their income on housing. In 2010, 29.8 percent of owners and 45.8 percent of renters spent greater than 30 percent of their income on housing. The significant



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U.S. Department of Transportation's (US DOT) Six Key Livability Principles:

- Provide more transportation choices
- Promote equitable, affordable housing
- Enhance economic competitiveness
- Support existing communities
- Coordinate policies and leverage investment
- Value communities and neighborhoods.

We Want To Hear From You:

A Public Hearing has been scheduled to receive comments on the Regional Livability Plan. The hearing will take place on January 28, 2015 at the Wausau Business Incubator - Entrepreneurial & Education Center - 100 North 72nd Avenue, Wausau, Wisconsin. The Public Hearing is scheduled for 11:00 AM

The Recommended RLP can be found at www.ncwrpc.org/rlp. A paper copy is on file at our offices for review. Written comments can be sent to our office, submitted on the RLP website or via email at info@ncwrpc.org. All comments are welcome.

Regional Livability Plan Nears Completion continued.

increase in the amount of income spent on housing decreases the amount of disposable income in the community used to support local businesses.

The Economic Development Assessment Report identified that the region will lack the necessary labor force to meet the needs of the region's businesses. The increase in population over the age of 65 over the next 20 years, combined with the negative net migration of population between the ages of 20 and 29 will result in a workforce shortage for the region. The creation of new jobs, and open positions as a result of retirements, will outpace the labor force. The economic development assessment also identified that the region's workforce is less educated compared to state averages. In 2010, 88.7 percent of the population had completed four years of high school, compared to 90.1 percent for the state. Only 19.8 percent of the population had completed four or more years of college, compared to 26.3 percent for the state. Research predicts that knowledge based occupations will be the fastest growing occupations over the next 20 years. The region will need to increase the knowledge of the existing workforce and attract an educated labor force to compete with surrounding areas for businesses opportunities in the future.

While developing the Transportation Assessment Report, the committee identified several livability issues. In 2010, over 80 percent of the region's workforce drove alone to work on a daily basis while 10 percent carpooled. Commute times in the region are generally less than 20 minutes on average, however, more rural counties like Adams and Forest experience longer commute times. The region is experiencing a reduction in drivers aged 18 and 16 while increasing drivers aged 65 and over. With the increase in the region's median age due to the aging baby boomer generation, the region will continue to increase the number of drivers who are over the age of 65 and 85.

Meanwhile, the Land Use Assessment Report identified that with the reduction in median household sizes; more housing units are being constructed in close proximity to one another. Housing density and population density both increased over the past 30 years, but are still well below the state density levels. The increase in housing needs also created a 365 percent increase in residential land cover over the same time period while agricultural land use decreased 30 percent.

The Regional Livability Plan examines numerous regional trends, from population changes to labor force to broadband. The RLP identifies trends and develops strategies to make the region more livable for all residents. Livability is most often used to describe the diverse aspects of society, surroundings, and

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Regional Livability Plan Nears Completion continued. shared experiences that shape a community. It includes an interrelated set of economic, spatial, and social components that together are challenging to understand and measure. These livability issues are examined in detail for the entire region as well as the three sub-sectors of the region.

Eleven goals were developed as part of this effort, based in part on the US DOT Six Livability Principles. In addition, several objectives and policies are identified for each goal.

Working as a region, we can make all of our communities more livable. When residents are able to live near their place of employment, it helps reduce travel costs, transportation maintenance, pollution, and congestion. Efficient use of land that supports walking, biking, and access to transit also reduces energy consumption, which saves money for individuals, communities, and the region. The successful implementation of this plan will save tax dollars, create more housing options, provide more transportation choices, increase economic development, accommodate an aging population, retain and attract a knowledgeable workforce, improve community health, protect the regions rural character, and enhance the region’s scenic beauty.

If you have any questions about the RLP contact Dennis Lawrence at (715) 849-5510, Extension 304 or at dlawrence@ncwrpc.org. The Recommended Draft and other information is available at www.ncwrpc.org/rlp/.

RLP Goals:

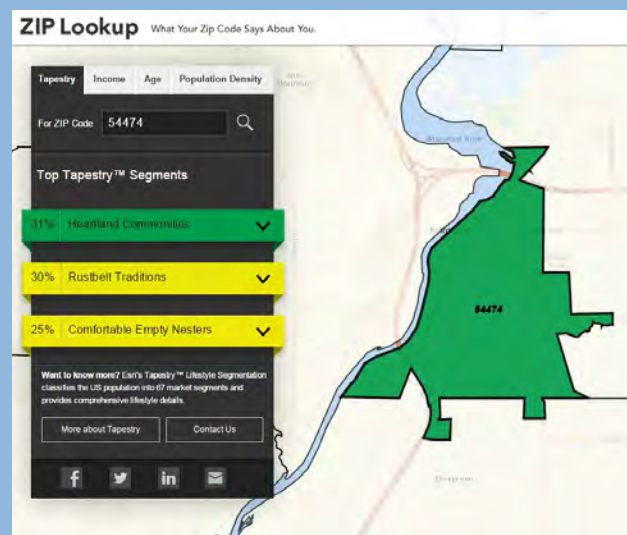
1. Promote a variety of safe and affordable housing options that meet the needs of all community members.
2. Ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce.
3. Support and develop a diverse economic base ensuring economic resiliency and growth.
4. Support infrastructure needed for economic development.
5. Develop tourism and knowledge based economy into leading economic sectors.
6. Provide and improve access and transportation to people of all ages and abilities ensuring lifelong mobility and accessibility to the community.
7. Fund the maintenance and expansion of the transportation system.
8. Enhance the regional economy by reinforcing airports and freight rail.
9. Preserve and protect the region’s landscape, environmental resources, and sensitive lands while encouraging healthy communities.
10. Promote the reuse of vacant and underutilized buildings and land.
11. Monitor and update the Regional Livability Plan.

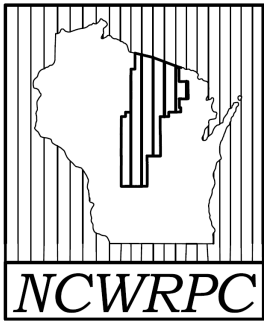
What Your ZIP Code Says About You:

Esri’s Tapestry tool “classifies US residential neighborhoods into 67 unique segments based on demographic and socioeconomic characteristics.” This data is useful to marketers and developers interested in how a community spends their time and money. It is available through a subscription to ArcGIS Online, or for free at their ZIP Lookup website.

When you enter a ZIP Code into ZIP Lookup, you find a map of that area, the top three Tapestry Segments found there, and descriptions of those Segments. Tabs allow you to also access data on income, age, and population density. Try it out to learn more about where you live and work.

http://www.esri.com/data/esri_data/ziptapestry





**North Central Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission**

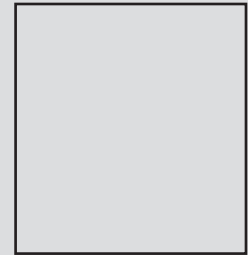
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Is It Time To Update Your Comprehensive Plan?

Every ten years your comprehensive plan needs to be updated. So every plan completed in 2005 or earlier is due for an update. An update can range from a total rewrite to a simple map amendment.

NCWRPC staff has substantial experience working with communities to develop and update comprehensive plans. Since 2000, we have completed nearly 90 comprehensive plans in our ten county region. All of our planners have Masters Degrees and /or are nationally certified planners (AICP) by the American Planning Association. The NCWRPC website provides a variety of information and contains links to many of the plans that have been completed. Visit www.ncwrpc.org.

We can help. Give our office a call and we can discuss the best approach for your community. Contact Dennis Lawrence at 715-849-5510, Extension 304 or at dlawrence@ncwrpc.org.

NCWRPC News has recently been given a design overhaul. We'd love to hear your thoughts on the new look!

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