



# 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.  
 Photo: Wikipedia, by Skye Marthaler

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## Quarterly Quote

"It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan."

- Eleanor Roosevelt

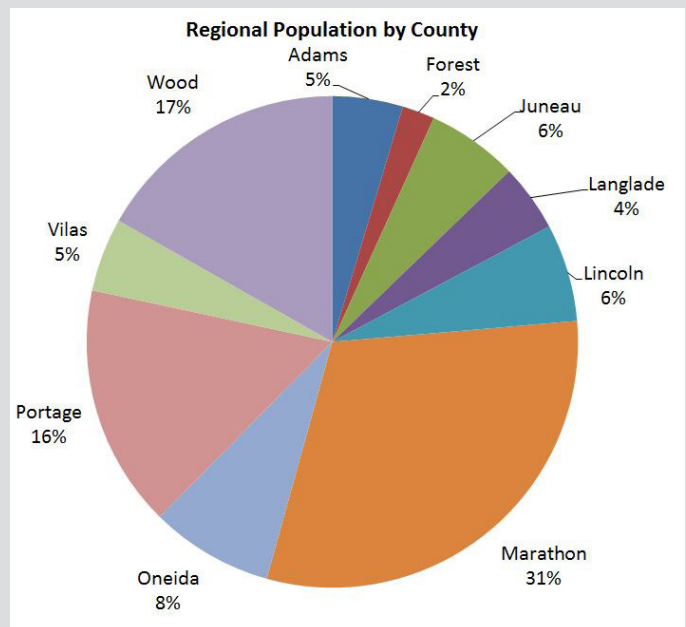
## Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Draft Available

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update is ready for review. The Ad Hoc Committee has finished its work and the CEDS is now moving on to the Commission for final adoption. The NCWRPC was designated an Economic Development District by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) in 1980. Updating the CEDS maintains that designation for the region.

The CEDS provides an assessment of economic development conditions in the region, identifies an economic development strategy, and establishes a work program. To view the CEDS, go to [www.ncwrpc.org/CEDS2017](http://www.ncwrpc.org/CEDS2017). Following adoption an executive summary will be prepared.

The CEDS covers a variety of topics, including basic demographic data and economic analysis. The region's 2015 population was 444,941 or about 7.7 percent of the state's population. Meanwhile, the region's total employment was 199,725 or about 7.2 percent of the total state employment.

The CEDS also identified economic industry clusters in the region. Clusters were identified using economic analysis techniques, such



as location quotients and industry employment projections. Several regional clusters were identified, including: Food Processing & Manufacturing, Transportation & Logistics, Paper & Packaging, Insurance Services, Footwear, Production Technology & Heavy Machinery, and Recreational & Small Electrical Goods. Several threats to regional

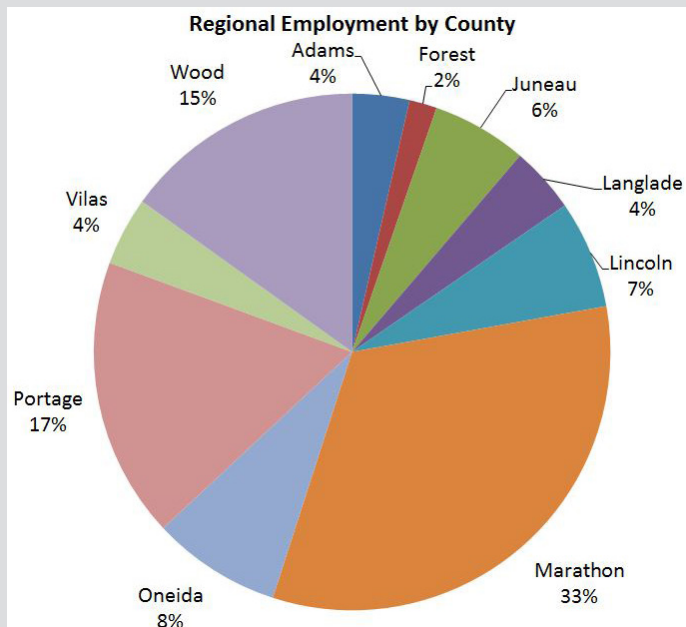
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*Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Draft Available continued.*

growth were identified, such as low population growth combined with an aging population which will negatively impact the region's labor force. As a result, businesses looking to expand or relocate to the area will struggle to find an available and knowledgeable workforce. Another threat for the region identified, especially in the rural areas relates to the lack of or quality of broadband connections.

The regional economic development strategy includes seven overall goals to grow and foster economic development based on the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. These goals and identified objectives provide the basis for the NCWRPC work program. See the goals in the box below.

One of the more important reasons to maintain this designation is that it provides access to grant funds from EDA. Annually, EDA has over \$200 million dollars available nationally for public infrastructure to spur economic development. Some recent projects in our region include the Wood Technology Center of Excellence in Antigo, business park expansions in the cities of Adams and Mauston, and a wastewater treatment plant upgrade in Wisconsin Rapids.



For additional information, contact Dennis Lawrence at 715-849-5510, Extension 304, or [dlawrence@ncwrpc.org](mailto:dlawrence@ncwrpc.org).

**CEDS GOALS:**

1. Encourage business retention and expansion to maintain and increase employment opportunities in the Region.
2. Create an innovative and 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. Improve communication between regional and county economic development, workforce development and other organizations.

## Brownfields Redevelopment Opportunities for Your Community

Brownfields are abandoned, idled or underused industrial or commercial properties where redevelopment is hindered by known or suspected contamination. Brownfields vary in size, location, age and previous usage. They can be rural or urban, and can range from a closed corner gas station in a small village to a vacant industrial plant in a major urban area. In 2013, there were approximately 6,000 brownfields in the state of Wisconsin.

These properties create many problems for communities, including potential harm to human health and the environment; reduced tax revenue and economic growth, neighborhood deterioration and blight; and attraction of illegal activity, including vandalism and dumping. Brownfield investigation, cleanup and redevelopment can reduce many of these problems. Communities gain by recycling land infrastructure for new businesses and employment, housing, parks, athletics fields and other local needs. Additionally, residential property values near remediated sites increase anywhere between 4.9% and 32.2%.

Because of the importance of brownfield redevelopment, the Wisconsin State Legislature created liability exemptions

*Continued on page 3.*

*Brownfields Redevelopment Opportunities for Your Community continued.*

enacted in the Land Recycling Law of 1994 and subsequent legislation. Some of these exemptions include: environmental liability exemptions for local governments, lenders, representatives and for property owners affected by contamination migrating from other properties as well as for voluntary party liability exemptions for owners, operators, purchasers, businesses, governments and others who voluntarily clean up contaminated property. More information about liability exemptions can be found at [dnr.wi.gov/topic/brownfields](http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/brownfields).

A number of government entities offer monetary and technical assistance to municipalities large and small, including the Wisconsin DNR and DOA, WEDC, the U.S. EPA, and HUD. Grants can be used for a number of stages in the cleanup process and are often used simultaneously. Grants are available for initial site investigation and assessment, acquisition of property, underground storage tank removal, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment of property among other activities. Additionally, a number of reimbursement programs, lands and loan guarantees, and tax credits and incentives also exist. As a DNR partner, the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is able to assist your community with obtaining remediation and redevelopment assistance and funding.

Contact Megan Will if you would like more information at 715-849-5510, Extension 306, or [mwill@ncwrpc.org](mailto:mwill@ncwrpc.org).

## Work Continues on the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan



We are receiving responses from across the region for both our survey and our interactive mapping activity. We encourage you to distribute these public input opportunities to your citizens through any means you may have. We hope to receive as much input as possible so this document reflects the needs and desires of the residents and visitors in the region.

NCWRPC is also working on public meetings tentatively scheduled in early spring 2017 to provide information and another opportunity for public input. Stay tuned for more information on these meetings as details are developed. Check the project website at [ncwrpc.org/bikepedplan](http://ncwrpc.org/bikepedplan) and sign up for our email newsletter to stay up to date.

Some preliminary results from the survey suggest the improvements that are most likely to encourage bicycling and walking in the region. At this point the top three selected issues that prevent people in the region from bicycling are motorist behavior, weather, and poor road or path surfaces. As of today, the most important ways to improve bicycling in the region are through bike lanes and paved shoulders on main roads, off-road multi-use paths, and road surface maintenance. The survey also provides insight into compatible trail uses and the plan will seek to maximize trail usage through multi-use applications.

There are two primary ways for the public to provide input for the plan, a web survey and an interactive web mapping activity.

**Survey Link**

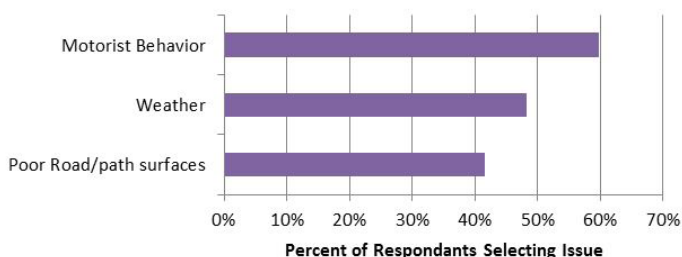
[www.ncwrpc.org/bikepedsurvey](http://www.ncwrpc.org/bikepedsurvey)

**Map Activity Link**

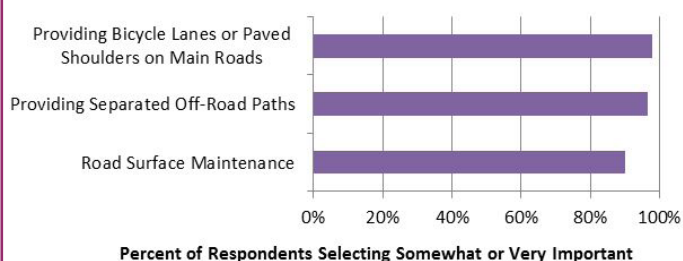
[www.ncwrpc.org/bikepedmap](http://www.ncwrpc.org/bikepedmap)

Contact Brad Sippel at [bsippel@ncwrpc.org](mailto:bsippel@ncwrpc.org) or 715-849-5510, Extension 307, for more information.

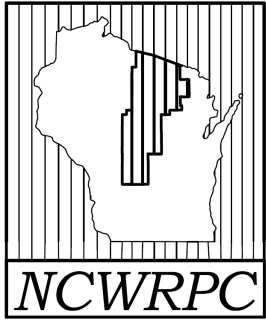
**Top Three Issues that Discourage Bicycling in the Region**



**Most Important Ways to Improve Bicycling in Region**







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## 2017 Work Plan Being Finalized

Every year NCWRPC develops its Work Plan over late fall and into winter. There are numerous projects already scheduled, but there is always room for more. Staff can provide assistance with comprehensive plan updates, outdoor recreation plans, and more. We urge your community to contact us if you are thinking of a project or planning effort. Staff are always available to answer a phone call, respond to an email, or attend a meeting any time during the year.

Not only do we help do the work, we can also help identify possible funding sources to offset the cost of your project. Unfortunately, grants are more and more difficult to secure as state and federal budgets shrink for these programs. Our goal is to keep the cost as low as possible and still provide high quality professional service to our members.

Contact Dennis Lawrence at [dlawrence@ncwrpc.org](mailto:dlawrence@ncwrpc.org) or 715-849-5510, Extension 304, to discuss a possible project.

## NCWRPC Commissioners

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*Appointment Pending*  
*Appointment Pending*