



DATE: September 9, 2020
TO: Dunn County Board Members & Staff
FROM: Lynn Nelson, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
(WCWRPC) Executive Director
RE: 2019 Work in Dunn County

Every year Tobi LeMahieu and I try to provide an in-person update presentation to the seven County Boards in our region on the work completed by the Regional Planning Commission in the prior year. This year the COVID 19 pandemic has made that type of presentation more difficult and we are instead providing you with an electronic update packet. Please look it over and be in touch if you have questions. I can be reached at 715-836-2918, Ext. 17 or lnelson@wcrpc.org.

We are working on similar projects in 2020, plus new ones related to COVID recovery, and look forward to continuing our strong partnership with Dunn County!

2019 in Review – Dunn County

- Provided units of government (inclusive of Dunn County and its communities) with updated state and federal guidelines on programmatic and infrastructure funding. Without this work, much of the information would not be disseminated.
- Upon request, provided economic development corporations, communities, and Dunn County staff with information from EMSI and ESRI Community Analyst, two web-based tools that provide employment and local labor market data analysis.
- Updated the Dunn County economic profile as well as community profiles for each of the cities and villages. These profiles are provided to units of government and found on the WCWRPC website. Collected and analyzed information is inclusive of population, housing, real estate values, income, labor force, transportation, utilities, taxes, and industrial parks.
- Maintained a standard set of region-wide maps and produced custom maps for both public and private agencies.
- Met with communities, county departments and committees, non-profit entities, and businesses. Assistance was provided informally over the telephone, all the way to more formal attendance at meetings and more extensive follow up.
- Assisted the Economic Development Administration (EDA), Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Wisconsin Department of Administration, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, USDA Rural Development, state representatives and others in identifying Dunn County projects for programmatic funding.
- Maintained the region's Economic Development District designation. The seven-county geographic area covered by WCWRPC is designated as an Economic Development District (EDD) by the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) because of efforts to secure and maintain the designation by WCWRPC staff. The EDD designation allows all units of government in the region to be able to secure EDA planning and public works funding, something that would not be possible without the designation.
- Was authorized to act as a disaster recovery microloan lender by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). In the event of an emergency, microloan funds can be deployed as no-interest loans to area businesses.
- Staffed the Regional Business Fund, Inc., the non-profit consolidated Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) loan pool available to regional businesses. In 2019 eight loans were provided to Dunn County businesses for a total of \$529,380, creating and/or retaining 53 jobs and leveraging \$4,362,517 in private investment.
- Staffed a Regional Rural Transportation Program offering advice and assistance on a variety of transportation related issues.

- Prepared a Dunn County Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan. The plan is required of every county in the state by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.
- Prepared a regional Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Application for development of a 2021 Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program inclusive of plans for Amery, Bloomer, Cumberland, Fall Creek, and Thorp; staffing for SRTS implementation activities in Altoona, Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, and Osceola; and regional SRTS mapping and materials.
- Completed a Dunn County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The plan was coordinated with those completed for Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties, and one previously completed in St. Croix County.
- Continued work on the “Commute to Careers” project in coordination with the Dunn County Economic Development Corporation and Dunn County Transit. WCWRPC is assisting with implementation of parts of the project such as survey development and distribution, model development, etc.
- Assisted the Dunn County Economic Development Corporation with draft outreach/marketing materials/ideas.
- Participated on the West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition supporting future passenger rail service to the Chippewa-Eau Claire Urban Area.
- Staffed the Storm Water Outreach Coordinator position for the Rain to Rivers Coalition. Members of the coalition include Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties; Cities of Altoona, Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, Menomonie, Rice Lake, and River Falls; Village of Lake Hallie; and Towns of Eagle Point, Lafayette, Seymour, Union, and Washington.
- As the sponsor of applications to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers to fund work on the Red Cedar Basin Assessment Water Quality Improvement Project, continued an ongoing financial and administrative role for the project.
- Provided water quality management planning review and consultation for the Menomonie Urban Area as required by the sewer service area plan.
- Completed a hazard mitigation plan update for Dunn County which was approved by Wisconsin Emergency Management and FEMA. The update will allow the county to maintain eligibility for FEMA mitigation grant funding when a hazard or natural disaster arises.
- In coordination with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, completed a trails brochure inclusive of the Old Abe, Chippewa River, and Red Cedar trails.
- Provided general support to Disaster Ready Chippewa Valley (DRCV) in Chippewa, Eau Claire, and Dunn counties.
- In coordination with the Public Service Commission, continued to provide administration and outreach to the region’s Broadband Implementation Group.

- Assisted the Village of Boyceville in developing a community brand and identified placemaking strategies for five key public place in the community.
- Provided funding information to Dunn County communities eligible for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) public facility and planning funds inclusive of Boyceville, Colfax, Knapp, Menomonie, and Wheeler.
- Met with Health Dunn Right to discuss housing needs and options for the City of Menomonie and the county as a whole.