

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

* 1. Type of Submission: <input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application <input type="checkbox"/> Changed/Corrected Application	* 2. Type of Application: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision	* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s): <input type="text"/> * Other (Specify): <input type="text"/>
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* 3. Date Received: <input type="text" value="05/18/2020"/>	4. Applicant Identifier: <input type="text"/>
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5a. Federal Entity Identifier: <input type="text"/>	5b. Federal Award Identifier: <input type="text"/>
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**State Use Only:**

6. Date Received by State: <input type="text"/>	7. State Application Identifier: <input type="text"/>
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**8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:**

* a. Legal Name: <input type="text" value="Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission"/>	
* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): <input type="text" value="23-7348812"/>	* c. Organizational DUNS: <input type="text" value="0939173180000"/>

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* City:	<input type="text" value="La Crosse"/>
County/Parish:	<input type="text"/>
* State:	<input type="text" value="WI: Wisconsin"/>
Province:	<input type="text"/>
* Country:	<input type="text" value="USA: UNITED STATES"/>
* Zip / Postal Code:	<input type="text" value="54601-4286"/>

**e. Organizational Unit:**

Department Name: <input type="text"/>	Division Name: <input type="text"/>
--	--

**f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:**

Prefix: <input type="text"/>	* First Name: <input type="text" value="Bob"/>
Middle Name: <input type="text"/>	
* Last Name: <input type="text" value="Gollnik"/>	
Suffix: <input type="text"/>	

Title: <input type="text"/>
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Organizational Affiliation: <input type="text"/>
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---	----------------------------------

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---

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

**\* 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:**

E: Regional Organization

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

\* Other (specify):

**\* 10. Name of Federal Agency:**

Department of Transportation

**11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:**

20.933

CFDA Title:

National Infrastructure Investments

**\* 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

DTOS59-20-RA-BUILD

\* Title:

FY 2020 National Infrastructure Investments

**13. Competition Identification Number:**

BUILD2-FY20

Title:

FY20 BUILD GRANT

**14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):**

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

**\* 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:**

A strategy for economic development and efficient goods movement in, to, and through the Mississippi River Region.

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments

Delete Attachments

View Attachments

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

**16. Congressional Districts Of:**

\* a. Applicant

\* b. Program/Project

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

**17. Proposed Project:**

\* a. Start Date:

\* b. End Date:

**18. Estimated Funding (\$):**

* a. Federal	<input type="text" value="140,000.00"/>
* b. Applicant	<input type="text" value="60,000.00"/>
* c. State	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* d. Local	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* e. Other	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* f. Program Income	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* g. TOTAL	<input type="text" value="200,000.00"/>

**\* 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on

b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.

c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

**\* 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)**

Yes  No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

**21. \*By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications\*\* and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances\*\* and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

\*\* I AGREE

\*\* The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

**Authorized Representative:**

Prefix:  \* First Name:

Middle Name:

\* Last Name:

Suffix:

\* Title:

\* Telephone Number:  Fax Number:

\* Email:

\* Signature of Authorized Representative:  \* Date Signed:

2020 USDOT BUILD  
Planning Grant  
Application

# MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MULTIMODAL FREIGHT STRATEGY

*A strategy for economic development and efficient goods  
movement in, to, and through the Mississippi River  
Region*



Submitted to: USDOT

Submitted by: Mississippi River Regional  
Planning Commission

5/18/2020



**MISSISSIPPI RIVER  
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

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Vicki Burke, Onalaska, WI  
Secretary & Treasurer  
Dave Bonifas La Crosse, WI  
Director

Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary of Transportation U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao,

Please consider the following BUILD Planning Grant application to develop a Regional Freight Strategy for our Region. The Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC) represents La Crosse County as well as eight surrounding counties in Western Wisconsin, and is tasked with economic, physical, and social development for the Region. The Region is a rural area with approximately 330,000 residents and a land area larger than Rhode Island and Connecticut combined.

Despite the rural nature, this area is at the confluence of major Highway, Railroad, and Waterway freight routes, and the proposed Strategy will help local communities address key transportation issues and optimize the benefits of having access to extensive connectivity to major markets. The Strategy is also unique in that it spans the jurisdiction of two MPOs and two WisDOT geographical planning units and can provide guidance for nine counties including 146 towns, 50 villages, and 22 cities in the Region.

The Strategy also supports elements of the 2017-2022 *Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy*, specifically in safety, economic development, quality of life, and tourism and recreational preservation for the Region's citizens.

MRRPC has on-staff expertise in freight planning and economic development and has assembled a cost-effective budget with in-kind matches for each task. **The total grant request is \$140,000**, and we believe the proposal achieves USDOT BUILD and ROUTES goals as well as providing valuable resources for our local communities

Thank you for your consideration,

Dave Bonifas, Director

---

**A NINE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

**PROVIDING PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

• Land Use Planning • Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances • Transportation Planning • Economic Development Planning

• GIS Mapping • Recreation Planning • Revolving Loan Fund Administration • Grant Writing • Socioeconomic Data Dissemination

• Assist Local Interests in Responding to State and Federal Programs • Advisory Service on Local Planning Issues

• Coordinating Agency for Programs and Activities • Public Advocacy on Issues Affecting Our Region

# Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	3
Table of Figures .....	4
1) Project Description .....	5
BUILD and ROUTES Initiative Compatibility. ....	5
About the MRRPC.....	6
2) Proposed Study Overview .....	7
Task 1: Demographics, Economics, Transportation .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Task 2: Importance of Freight Movement in the Region .....	8
Task 3: Business and System User Outreach.....	9
Task 4: Goods Movement Data Summary.....	9
Task 5: Growth Projections, Trends, System Performance.....	10
Task 6: Community, Environmental, and Economic Impacts.....	11
Task 7: Opportunities and Strategies.....	11
Task 8: Freight and Comprehensive Planning .....	14
3) Project Location and Background .....	15
Political Geography .....	16
MRRPC Region Transportation Assets .....	17
Highway.....	17
Railroad .....	18
Waterway .....	19
Air .....	19
NHS Infrastructure.....	20
4) Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of Project Fund .....	21
Other Sources of Funding.....	21
5) Merit Criteria.....	22
Criterion #1: Safety .....	23
Criterion #2: State of Good Repair .....	23
Criterion #3: Economic Competitiveness.....	24
Criterion #4: Environmental Protection.....	25
Criterion #5: Quality of Life.....	27
Criterion #6: Innovation .....	28
Innovative Financing .....	28

Partnership .....	28
Project Readiness .....	30
6) Project Schedule .....	30

## Table of Figures

FIGURE 1 GREAT LAKES MEGAREGION .....	5
FIGURE 2 FREIGHT VOLUME BY MODE .....	6
FIGURE 3 MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGION POPULATION .....	7
FIGURE 4 MRRPC EQUALIZED LAND VALUE, BY USE .....	8
FIGURE 5 EMPLOYMENT IN FREIGHT GENERATING SECTORS, 2018.....	8
FIGURE 6 BARGE OPERATIONS - FRENCH ISLAND, WI .....	10
FIGURE 7 BNSF RAIL YARD - LA CROSSE, WI .....	10
FIGURE 8 INDUSTRIAL SAND MINING FACILITIES .....	11
FIGURE 9 LOCATION QUOTIENT – MRRPC FREIGHT GENERATING INDUSTRIES .....	12
FIGURE 10 MRRPC FOOD PROCESSING CLUSTERS.....	13
FIGURE 11 MRRPC LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT .....	14
FIGURE 12 MRRPC REGION OVERVIEW .....	15
FIGURE 13 MRRPC POPULATION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT.....	16
FIGURE 14 VEHICLE MILES OF TRAVEL, 2018.....	17
FIGURE 15 WISCONSIN RAILROADS .....	18
FIGURE 16 MARINE HIGHWAY M-35 OVERVIEW .....	19
FIGURE 17 MIDWEST NHS NETWORK OVERVIEW.....	20
FIGURE 18 MRRPC DESIGNATED NHS CONNECTORS .....	20
FIGURE 19 PROJECT PLANNING BUDGET .....	21
FIGURE 20 MERIT CRITERIA COMPATIBILITY.....	22
FIGURE 21 WISDOT MAPSS DASHBOARD 2019.....	23
FIGURE 22 LOCAL ROAD CONDITIONS, 2015 .....	24
FIGURE 23 TOP INDUSTRY GRP .....	25
FIGURE 24 DAIRYLAND POWER PLANT – GENOA, WI.....	26
FIGURE 25 ENVIRONMENTALLY CONTAMINATED SITES SUITABLE FOR BUSINESS USE .....	26
FIGURE 26 PLACE OF WORK VS PLACE OF RESIDENCE .....	27
FIGURE 27 WISCONSIN TRUCK FREIGHT ROUTES .....	28
FIGURE 28 TOP COMPANIES IN THE MRRPC REGION.....	29

## 1) Project Description

This Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC) Multimodal Freight Strategy Planning Grant request is designed to support the analysis and development of a freight system strategy for the nine-county MRRPC region in Western Wisconsin. The region borders Minnesota and is at the confluence of major freight infrastructure in the Upper Midwest while also being within a day or less drive of all the most populated places in the Great Lakes Megaregion, including Minneapolis-St Paul, Chicago, Milwaukee, St Louis, and Indianapolis (Figure 1). The Region is also along major highway and railroad corridors linking East and West markets in the US; as well as the Mississippi River, linking the Midwest to Gulf Coast barge destinations.

Previous freight planning work has been done in the region but has been limited in scope and geography. These efforts are several years old and have not been updated to accommodate the present-day economy.

The purpose of the proposed strategy is two-fold: 1) to achieve goals set forth in the MRRPC 2017-2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), and 2) to transcend traditional planning boundaries and provide a strategy for **rural areas**

represented by the MRRPC – including portions of two separate WisDOT districts (Southwest and Northwest). The La Crosse area is home to the La Crosse Area Planning Commission, which overlaps a portion of the Southern MRRPC region, but there are multiple rural areas that lack resources

FIGURE 1 GREAT LAKES MEGAREGION



Source: America 2050

for specialized transportation planning and strategy development, which could be set forth by the following proposal.

### BUILD and ROUTES Initiative Compatibility.

This area is an ideal candidate for BUILD Rural criteria as well as ROUTES Initiative goals. The region is a source of agriculture, mining, energy, food production, and industrial commodities, and is proximate to major freight infrastructure in the upper Midwest. As shown in Figure 2, a substantial amount of freight tonnage also moves through the region via rail, highway, and waterway networks.



As with many other rural areas in the U.S., substantial truck vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT) occur on rural roads in the region. And many of the region's bridges are posted and limit heavy truck traffic, particularly during spring thaw. This strategy aims to quantify these issues and develop strategies that can benefit communities and industries alike.

## About the MRRPC

The MRRPC is a Commission of nine counties located along the Mississippi River in Western Wisconsin. The Commission was organized in 1964 under Wisconsin State Statutes to

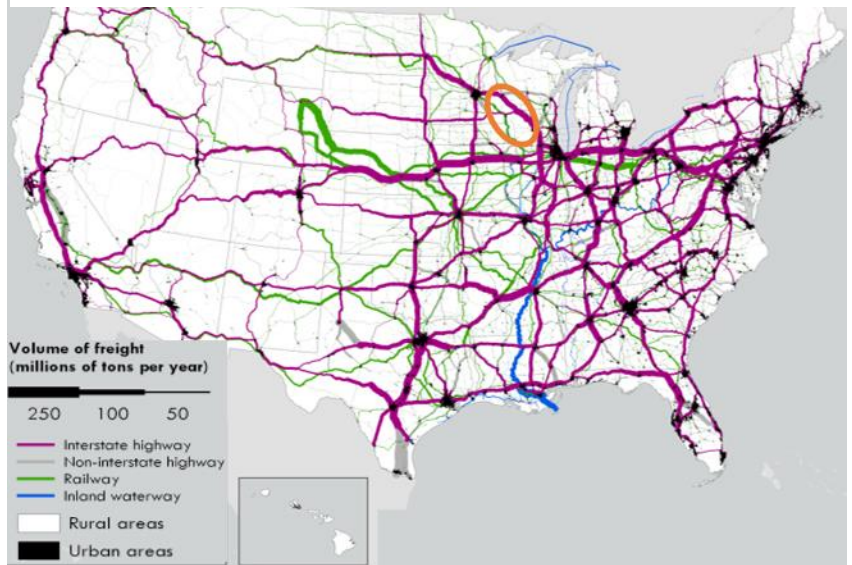
plan for the physical, social and economic development of the Region. Other authorized functions include providing advisory services on regional issues to local governments and other public and private agencies, acting as a coordinating agency for programs and activities and contracting with local units of government to create studies and offer advice on land use, thoroughfares, community facilities, public improvements, and the encouragement of economic and other developments.

MRRPC Services include comprehensive plans, zoning and subdivision ordinances, grant writing, geographic information system map production, revolving loan fund administration, economic development planning, economic data collection and dissemination and advocating public policy positions on issues affecting the region.

## Project Details

The project as proposed includes eight tasks, and has a funding request of \$140,000, described below.

FIGURE 2 FREIGHT VOLUME BY MODE



Source: Freight Analysis Framework/USDOT

## 2) Proposed Study Overview

The MRRPC updates the CEDS every five years and maintains up-to-date sociodemographic and economic data for the region. This task builds upon that information and will focus on developing background information for the context of freight transportation in the region, by assembling updated demographic, economic, and transportation datasets, using the most up-to-date publicly available information possible.

### Key Elements:

- Population by County and metro area, based on Census 2020 statistics, like Figure 3
- Business sector trends, employment, and cluster statistics, based on EMSI database, primary data collection, and individual County Resources
  - Identify major freight traffic generators in the region
- High-level transportation statistics by vehicle and trip type, using WisDOT counts and modeling data as well as individual County resources and projections
  - Calculate freight trips to, from, and through the region on major routes
  - Identify significant freight and passenger commuting patterns
  - Prepare base level understandings of barge and train trips
- Assemble updated land value and land use area statistics (Figure 4)

**FIGURE 3 MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGION POPULATION**

	2010	Rank in MRRPC Region (2010)	2015	Rank in MRRPC Region (2015)	% Change
<b>Buffalo</b>	13,587	8	13,192	8	-2.9
<b>Crawford</b>	16,644	7	16,391	7	-1.5
<b>Jackson</b>	20,449	6	20,554	6	0.5
<b>La Crosse</b>	114,638	1	118,212	1	3.1
<b>Monroe</b>	44,673	2	45,549	2	2.0
<b>Pepin</b>	7,469	9	7,290	9	-2.4
<b>Pierce</b>	41,019	3	40,889	3	-0.3
<b>Trempealeau</b>	28,816	5	29,550	5	2.5
<b>Vernon</b>	29,773	4	30,506	4	2.5
<b>Region</b>	317,068		322,133		1.6
<b>State of Wis.</b>	5,686,986		5,771,337		1.5
<b>Nation</b>	308,745,538		321,418,820		4.1

Source: U.S. Census, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5 year Estimates

**FIGURE 4 MRRPC EQUALIZED LAND VALUE, BY USE**

	Residential	Commercial	Manufacturing	Agriculture	Undeveloped	Ag Forest	Forest	Other	Total
Buffalo	574.2	74.8	9.3	27.3	14.7	121.2	77.3	171.0	1069.8
Crawford	600.9	173.9	29.4	28.6	12.7	46.2	38.2	161.6	1091.5
Jackson	820.1	134.2	94.7	21.1	20.3	81.8	184.1	129.5	1485.8
La Crosse	5708.2	2205.6	182.6	14.6	10.3	67.1	69.0	125.2	8382.6
Monroe	1752.9	469.3	215.6	28.2	22.8	87.1	115.6	221.0	2912.5
Pepin	365.9	56.2	4.2	11.1	4.3	30.9	21.2	60.8	554.6
Pierce	2303.8	309.4	42.5	33.0	14.2	67.8	49.7	120.9	2941.3
Trempealeau	1204.0	186.1	110.4	31.9	22.9	112.0	67.0	186.5	1920.8
Vernon	1090.7	183.9	21.0	43.1	37.4	74.1	63.3	287.6	1801.1
MRRPC Region	14,420.7	3793.4	709.7	238.9	159.6	688.2	685.4	1464.1	22,160.0
Wisconsin	344,556.3	94,149.6	13,720.8	2051.7	1976.5	2902.5	7414.2	11,529.9	47,8301.5

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

## Task 2: Importance of Freight Movement in the Region

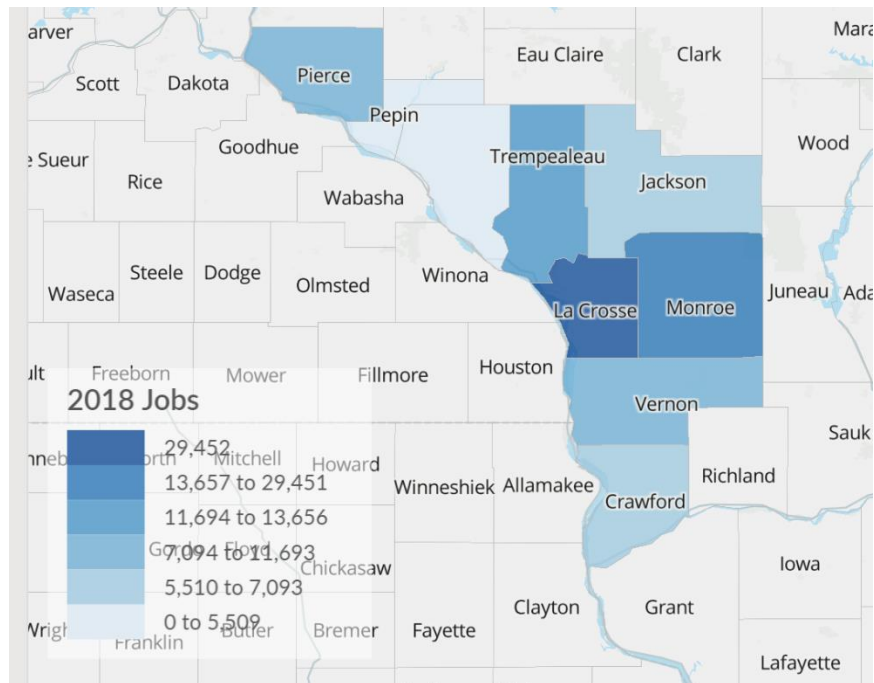
Task 2 will characterize the importance of freight transportation in the region, by tying major freight trends to everyday life in a series of easy-to-understand infographics for use on the MRRPC website and other sources. Preliminary sources will include EMSI (Figure 5) and InfoUSA business data.

### Key Elements:

The basis of this task is developing a dashboard of data and information for major regional businesses:

- Summarize goods movement-dependent industries in the region, based on 2-4 digit NAICS Codes. Typically, this includes Agriculture, Manufacturing, Wholesale and Retail Trade, Construction, Transportation and Warehousing, and Mining
  - Number of Firms by Sector
  - Employment

**FIGURE 5 EMPLOYMENT IN FREIGHT GENERATING SECTORS, 2018**



Source: EMSI Analysis

- Sales
- GDP by industry sector
- Identify Industry Clusters
- Growth/forecast for select industries
- Qualitative information for select industries in the region

**This Task will also address transportation system questions for the Region**

- How is the infrastructure used by various sectors?
- How is the infrastructure used by various modes?
- What are key sources of supply and demand for freight traffic in the region?
- What are concerns/conflict areas for freight in the region?

### Task 3: Business and System User Outreach

Based on findings in the first two tasks, this task will focus on reaching out to freight users in the region to determine specific needs, opportunities, and potential strategies for the region. This task will also add a qualitative context to data gathered in Task 1 and 2.

Key Elements:

- Staff will work with organizations such as the La Crosse Area Development Company (LADCO), the Wisconsin Economic Development Agency, Local Chambers of Commerce, 7 Rivers Alliance, industrial parks in the region and other stakeholders to survey and interview major freight system users in the region.
- This will include a series of one-on-one discussions that can include relevant City and County staff. Information gathered will include how the businesses (and affiliated businesses, suppliers, customers, etc.) use the system, perceived strengths, and weaknesses, projected future usage from the company.
- Interview transportation companies that represent each of the modal user groups: BNSF Railway, CP Rail, CN Railroad, Brennan Marine, Ashley Distribution, and others.

### Task 4: Goods Movement Data Summary

Task 4 will provide an analysis and summary of goods movement by mode, value, and tonnage for freight to, from, and through the region. Qualitative information will supplement quantitative analysis where necessary.

Key Elements:

- Review previous studies, including State Freight Plan, State Rail Plan, State Long-Range Plan, and the State Aviation System Plan
- Summarize modal flows based on FAF4 (mode, value, tonnage, origin/destination)
- FRA train counts

- WisDOT Truck Counts
- Other primary and secondary data, as available

## Task 5: Growth Projections, Trends, System Performance

Task 5 will create 5, 10, and 20-year projections for major freight commodities in the region. This task will also summarize roadway capacity for major corridors in the region, as well as identification of local roads operating beyond capacity due to freight activity. Lastly, trends that could impact MRRPC industries and transportation system demand will be summarized.

### Key Elements:

- Apply high, medium, and low growth factors for important freight generating commodities in the area.
- Identify AADTT, Rail Volumes, Barge Flows.
- Physical infrastructure summary: pavement condition, bridges on major local corridors, local road capacity concerns.
- Discuss State, National, and Global Trends that could impact MRRPC Region Freight Flows in the foreseeable future.

**FIGURE 6 BARGE OPERATIONS - FRENCH ISLAND, WI**



**FIGURE 7 BNSF RAIL YARD - LA CROSSE, WI**



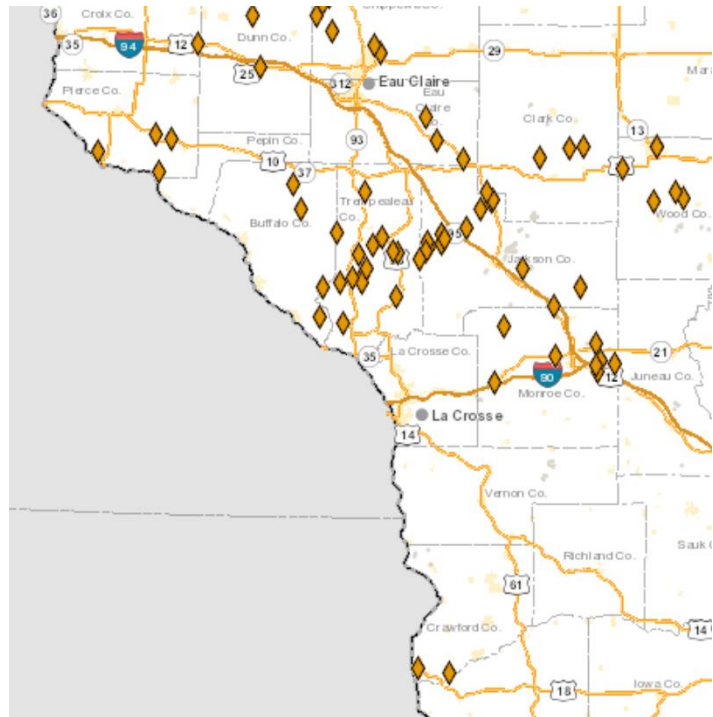
## Task 6: Community, Environmental, and Economic Impacts

A significant portion of the MRRPC's work involves preserving and enhancing recreational opportunities, Wisconsin "Legacy Places", and ecological landscapes. Task 6 will identify community and environmental impacts of freight transportation in the region, along with economic impacts of major freight-generating activities. Examples include: Industrial sand mines (Figure 8), conflict points between freight and passenger or bike/ped activity, problematic transportation geometry, and last-mile connections to manufacturing, distribution, and industrial centers of activity.

### Key Elements:

- Identify modal-specific areas of improvement, conflict points (passenger and freight traffic, bike ped, etc.), transportation geometry issues (turning radii, roundabouts, etc.).
- Identify key last-mile connections.
- Overlay major bike/ped routes with freight routes.
- Hold workshops, survey communities, and interview freight system users for input on each of these topics.
- Summarize key chokepoints and limitations.

FIGURE 8 INDUSTRIAL SAND MINING FACILITIES



Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

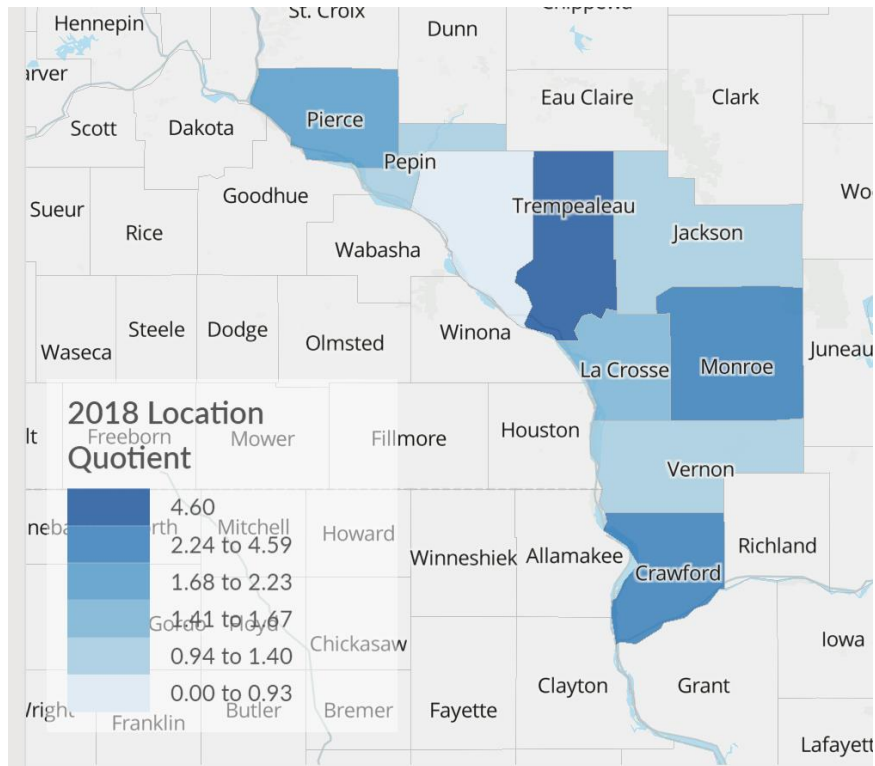
## Task 7: Opportunities and Strategies

This task will build upon findings, data, discussions in the previous seven tasks to devise a list of implementable strategies for each mode. Key points will include location quotients (Figure 9) and major clusters (Figure 10), along with housing, socioeconomic, economic development, and freight and passenger transportation opportunities. The team will hold a series of workshops and webinars to collaborate with stakeholders and rank strategies across several objective criteria.

Key Elements:

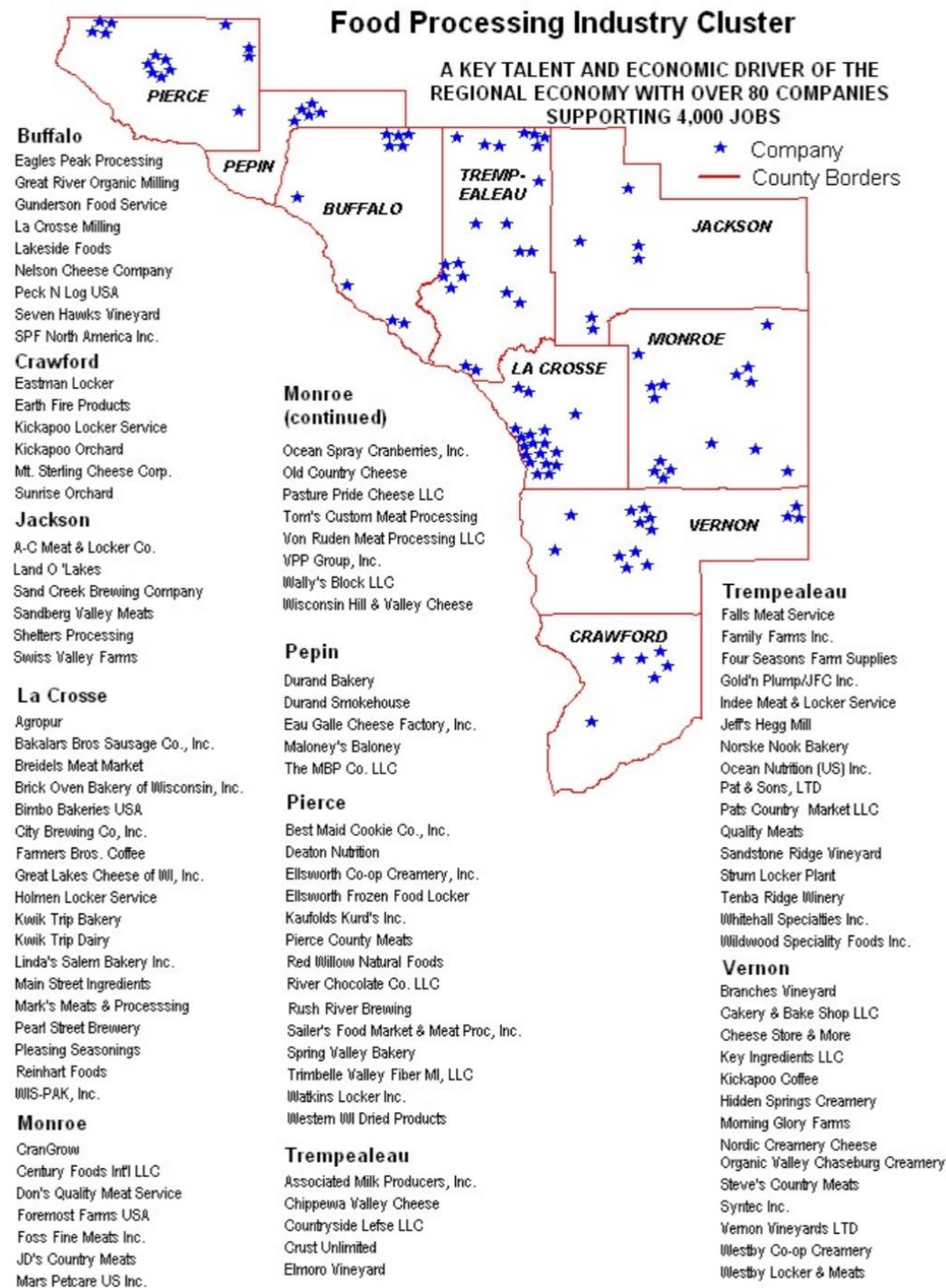
- Prioritized list of projects, investments, and other strategies on the local system.
- Identify available land/potential intermodal sites/freight uses. For example, a soon-to-be closing coal Power Plant in the Southern portion of the region.
- Identify planned improvements for previous plans.
- Opportunities for economic expansion, new services, and fluidity.
- Identify Federal, State, Local, and private funding sources.
- Identify corresponding performance measures for each strategy.

**FIGURE 9 LOCATION QUOTIENT – MRRPC FREIGHT GENERATING INDUSTRIES**



Source: EMSI Analysis

FIGURE 10 MRRPC FOOD PROCESSING CLUSTERS





## Task 8: Freight and Comprehensive Planning

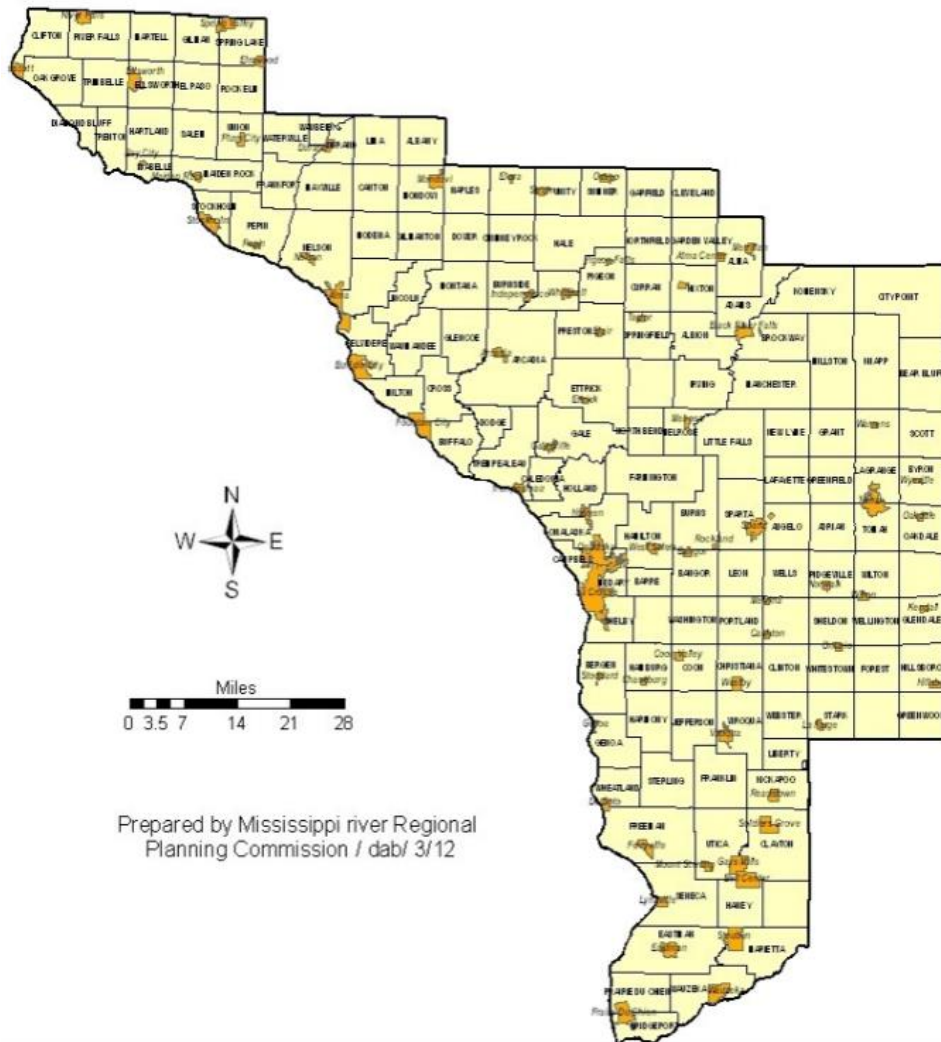
MRRPC Staff is heavily involved in updating and maintaining local Comprehensive Plans. This task will create freight-related land use, economic development, and other content for incorporation into County and local comprehensive plans (and other related planning efforts). All told, the Task will provide Comprehensive Plan content for use by: nine counties of the, 146 towns, 50 villages, and 22 cities in the Mississippi River Region (Figure 11).

### Key Elements:

- Create an online resource for local jurisdictions to access and download freight content from.
- Scalable maps and graphics via Tableau.
- Summary-level information for inclusion in area Comprehensive Plans, 20-year projections.
- Other Transportation Element information and data to be determined, based on stakeholder

FIGURE 11 MRRPC LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT

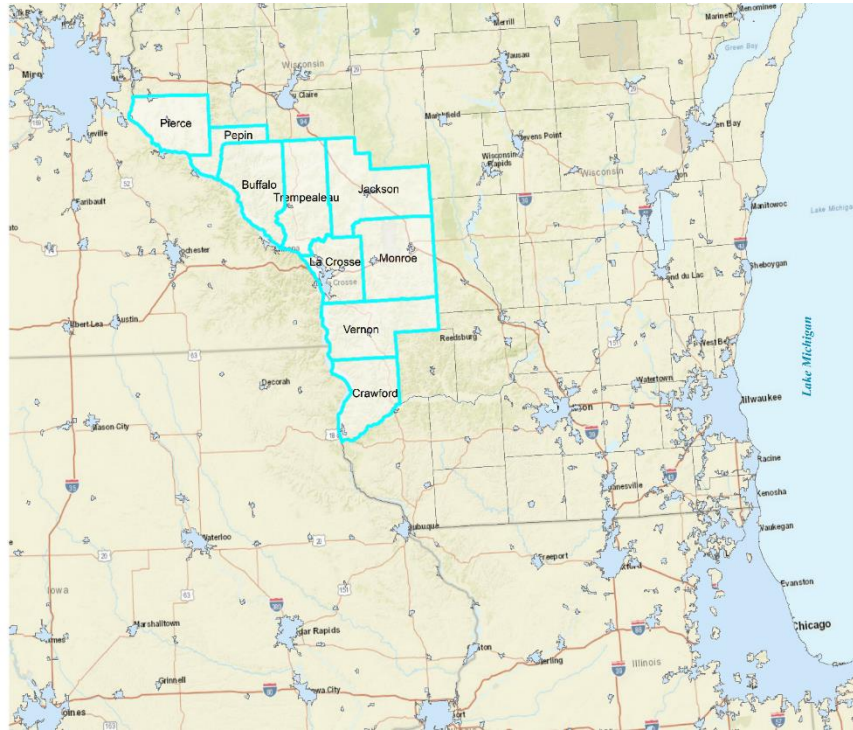
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### 3) Project Location and Background

As mentioned, the project location is comprised of nine primarily rural counties in Western Wisconsin, and the majority of the geography comprising the grant request will be used outside of the only Urbanized area (La Crosse) in the region, making it a **Rural Project** (Figure 12). The MRRPC service area is within a unique area of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa known as the Driftless Area, so named because it was not covered by glaciers in the last Ice Age and lacks glacial drift (rocks and other debris left behind by retreating glaciers). This unique situation left the area with a more rugged topography, characterized by hills, valleys, bluffs, and rivers prone to flooding that time and time again has led to personal and economic losses to individuals and businesses. The geography also presents certain transportation challenges.

FIGURE 12 MRRPC REGION OVERVIEW



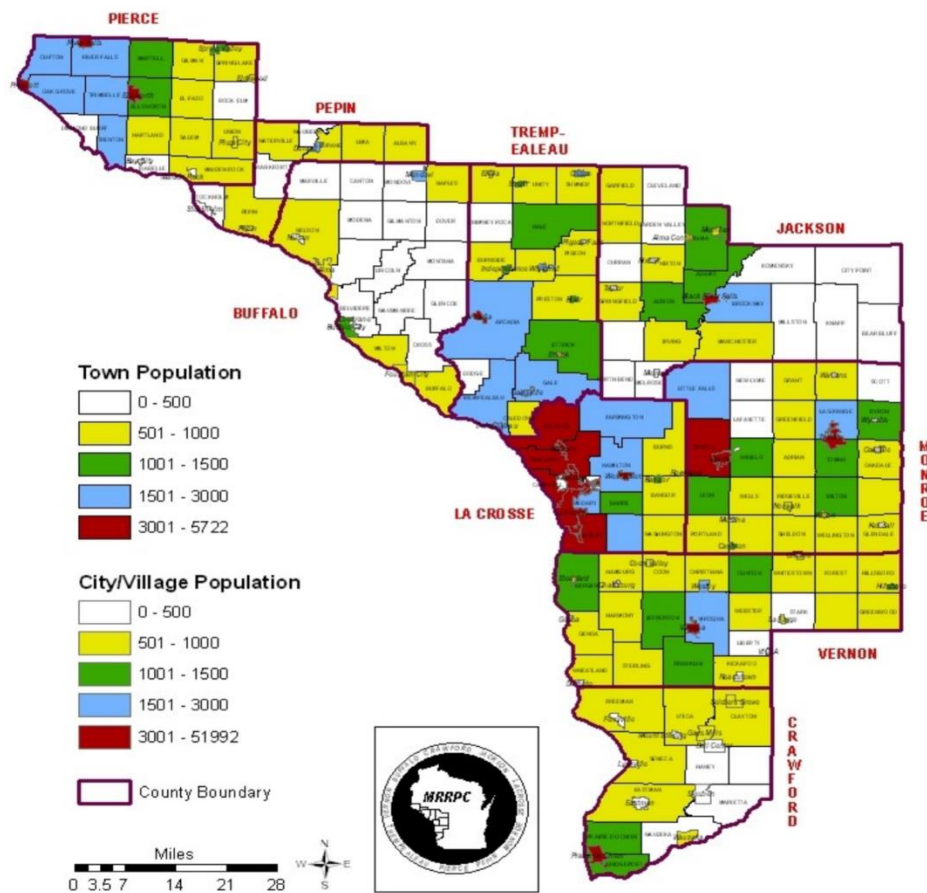
The Region has extensive roots in trading and commerce. The first human settlement of the Region occurred about 11,000 years ago, as the glaciers in surrounding regions retreated. By the time Native peoples made first contact with Europeans, they had developed agriculture, extensive trade networks, and burial earthworks. French explorers and fur traders established trading posts along the Mississippi River and its tributaries, leaving behind many French place-names today (e.g., Pepin and Trempealeau Counties, the City of Prairie du Chien, etc.). Permanent white settlement in the Mississippi River Region began in the late 18th century and centered first around fur trading. By the middle of the 19th century, the area was being developed for its timber. Railroad connections grew up in the last third of the 19th century to serve the timber industry and the growing agricultural economy in the Region. By the 20th century, agriculture was a major part of the economy, as timber was giving way as the forests diminished. In the first half of the 20th century, manufacturing of many kinds developed, especially in the City of La Crosse, where several internationally known companies were headquartered. In the last third of the 20th century, both agriculture and manufacturing suffered a decline, and this nation-wide trend affected those industries in the Mississippi River Region. By the beginning of the 21st century, the Region was shifting to more service-oriented industries, just like much of the United States, while agriculture and manufacturing remained the major drivers of the Regional economy. Today, the Mississippi River Region's top five employment classifications are government; manufacturing; retail

trade; health care and social assistance; and farming. While these are the classifications with the most employees, they are not all the classifications with the highest earnings. The top five classifications grouped by earnings per employee are utilities; management of companies and enterprises; transportation and warehousing; wholesale trade; and manufacturing. The economic challenge for the Mississippi River Region in the coming generation is how to grow more businesses in those industry classifications that tend to pay higher, family-supporting wages, through high-knowledge, value-added products and services. The MRRPC has identified several economic driver industries that should be encouraged to expand in this Region: manufacturing; tourism; agribusiness and food processing; wood and forest products and biofuels. These are industries that already exist at some level in the Region, but which could be expanded due to a competitive advantage that can help build high-knowledge, value-added industries and jobs.

## Political Geography

In Wisconsin, there are three types of sub-county full service local government units: towns, which are unincorporated; and villages and cities, which are incorporated. Within the nine counties of the Mississippi River Region, there are 146 towns, 50 villages, and 22 cities. By population, the smallest town in the Region is Scott, in Monroe County, with 104 people, and the largest is the Town of Onalaska, in La Crosse County, with 5,699 people, according to the 2015 American

**FIGURE 13 MRRPC POPULATION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT**



Community Survey 5-year estimates. Of the 50 villages, Stockholm, in Pepin County is the smallest, with a population of 78. The Village of Holmen, in La Crosse County, is the largest village with a 2015 population of 9,432. The cities range in size from La Crosse, in La Crosse County, with 51,993 people, to Alma, in Buffalo County, with 678 (Figure 13).

## MRRPC Region Transportation Assets

Transportation Assets: 5 NHS Intermodal Connectors, M-35 Marine Highway, The MRRPC region is transected East-West by Interstate 90 and North-South by Interstate 94; with an intersection of the two in Monroe County. The region includes over 500 miles of railroad, and is served by BNSF Railway, CP Rail, and CN Railway.

### Highway

The public roads in the region consist of approximately 115 miles of Interstate Highway (I-90 and I-94), 230 miles of State Roads, and 170 miles of U.S. Highways. There are 12,211,293 daily VMT and 4,457,121,945 annual VMT (Figure 14)

**FIGURE 14 VEHICLE MILES OF TRAVEL, 2018**

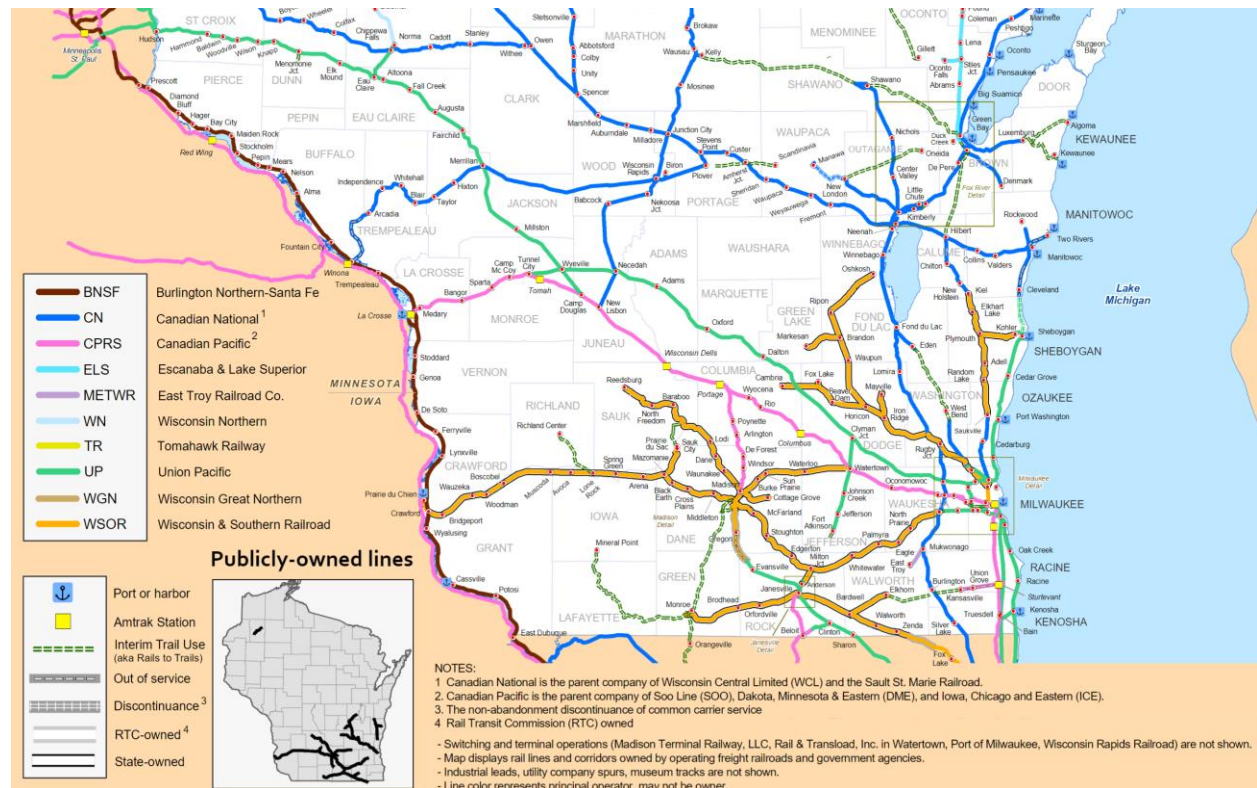
County	Daily	Annual
<b>Buffalo</b>	659,258	240,629,170
<b>Crawford</b>	750,611	273,973,015
<b>Jackson</b>	1,901,400	694,011,000
<b>La Crosse</b>	2,958,965	1,080,022,225
<b>Monroe</b>	2,286,336	834,512,640
<b>Pepin</b>	268,339	97,943,735
<b>Pierce</b>	1,068,300	389,929,500
<b>Trempealeau</b>	1,322,293	482,636,945
<b>Vernon</b>	995,791	363,463,715
<b>MRRPC Region</b>	<b>12,211,293</b>	<b>4,457,121,945</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>180,504,283</b>	<b>65,884,063,295</b>

Source: HPMS Universe Data

## Railroad

The region includes approximately 500 miles of railroad and over 560 rail crossings. Three Class I railroads (BNSF Railway, Canadian Pacific Railway, Canadian National Railway), one short line (Wisconsin & Southern), and a daily Amtrak route (Empire Builder) provide rail service (Figure 15).

FIGURE 15 WISCONSIN RAILROADS

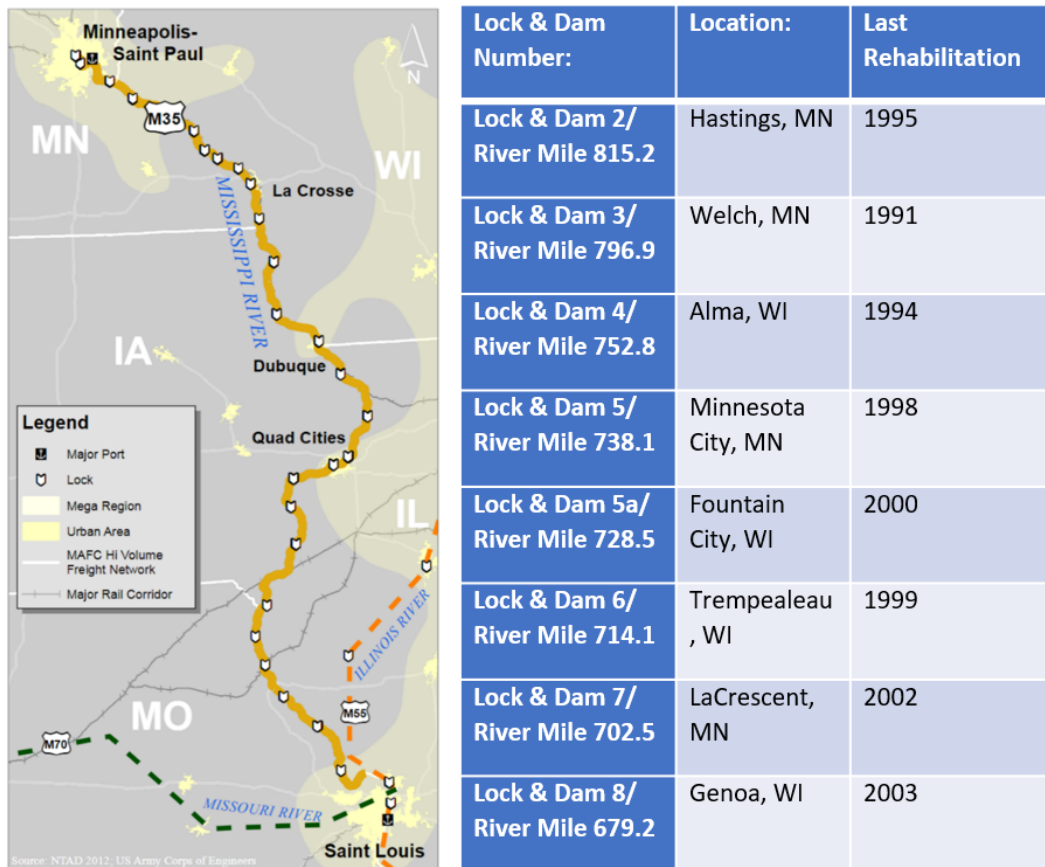


Source: Wisconsin State Rail Plan

## Waterway

The Mississippi River parallels the entire region and includes the Northern portion of Federally Designated Marine Highway 35 (M-35). Seven Lock and Dams are also along this segment (Figure 16).

**FIGURE 16 MARINE HIGHWAY M-35 OVERVIEW**



## Air

La Crosse Regional Airport (LSE) is the largest commercial airport in the region, with a number of smaller General Aviation airports spread throughout the 9 counties. Air cargo service is limited in the region and is principally achieved through regular truck service from larger nearby airports such as Rochester, MN (RST) and Minneapolis, MN (MSP).

## NHS Infrastructure

The region has a number of NHS assets, shown in Figure 17 and Figure 18. The proposed strategy will also identify additional candidates for Federal designation.

**FIGURE 17 MIDWEST NHS NETWORK OVERVIEW**



Source: US DOT

**FIGURE 18 MRRPC DESIGNATED NHS CONNECTORS**

Facility	Type	Connector Description	Facility ID
<b>Port Operators of La Crosse #1</b>	Port Terminal	Front St between Cass St and the Port Facility	WI14P
<b>Port Operators of La Crosse #1</b>	Port Terminal	King St between Front St and 3rd St (US 53)	WI14P
<b>Port Operators of La Crosse #2</b>	Port Terminal	Clinton St, Bainbridge St between Rose Ave and the Port Facility	WI15P
<b>Port Operators of Prairie Du Chien #1</b>	Port Terminal	Main St and Blackhawk Ave between US 18 and the Port Facility	WI16P
<b>Port Operators of Prairie Du Chien #2</b>	Port Terminal	Main St, Blackhawk Ave, Villa Louis St between US 18 and the Port Facility - Ext. of Connection to Prairie Du Chien #1	WI17P

## 4) Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of Project Fund

The MRRPC Multimodal Freight Strategy budget is shown in Figure 19 below. The components account for all necessary planning items described above and includes MRRPC Staff time as in-kind match for each task. MRRPC has extensive on-staff freight planning and implementation expertise to expedite several tasks in the proposal.

**FIGURE 19 PROJECT PLANNING BUDGET**

	<b>MRRPC IN-KIND MATCH</b>	<b>ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL COST</b>	<b>TASK COST</b>
<b>TASK 1: DEMOGRAPHICS, ECONOMICS, TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM</b>	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$15,000
<b>TASK 2: IMPORTANCE OF FREIGHT MOVEMENT IN THE REGION</b>	\$5,000	\$15,000	\$20,000
<b>TASK 3: BUSINESS AND SYSTEM USER OUTREACH</b>	\$5,000	\$25,000	\$30,000
<b>TASK 4: GOODS MOVEMENT DATA SUMMARY</b>	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$15,000
<b>TASK 5: GROWTH PROEJCTIONS, TRENDS, SYSTEM PERFORMANCE</b>	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
<b>TASK 6: COMMUNITY, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS</b>	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$25,000
<b>TASK 7: STRATEGIES AND OPPORTUNITIES</b>	\$10,000	\$25,000	\$35,000
<b>TASK 8: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES</b>	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$140,000</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>

### Other Sources of Funding

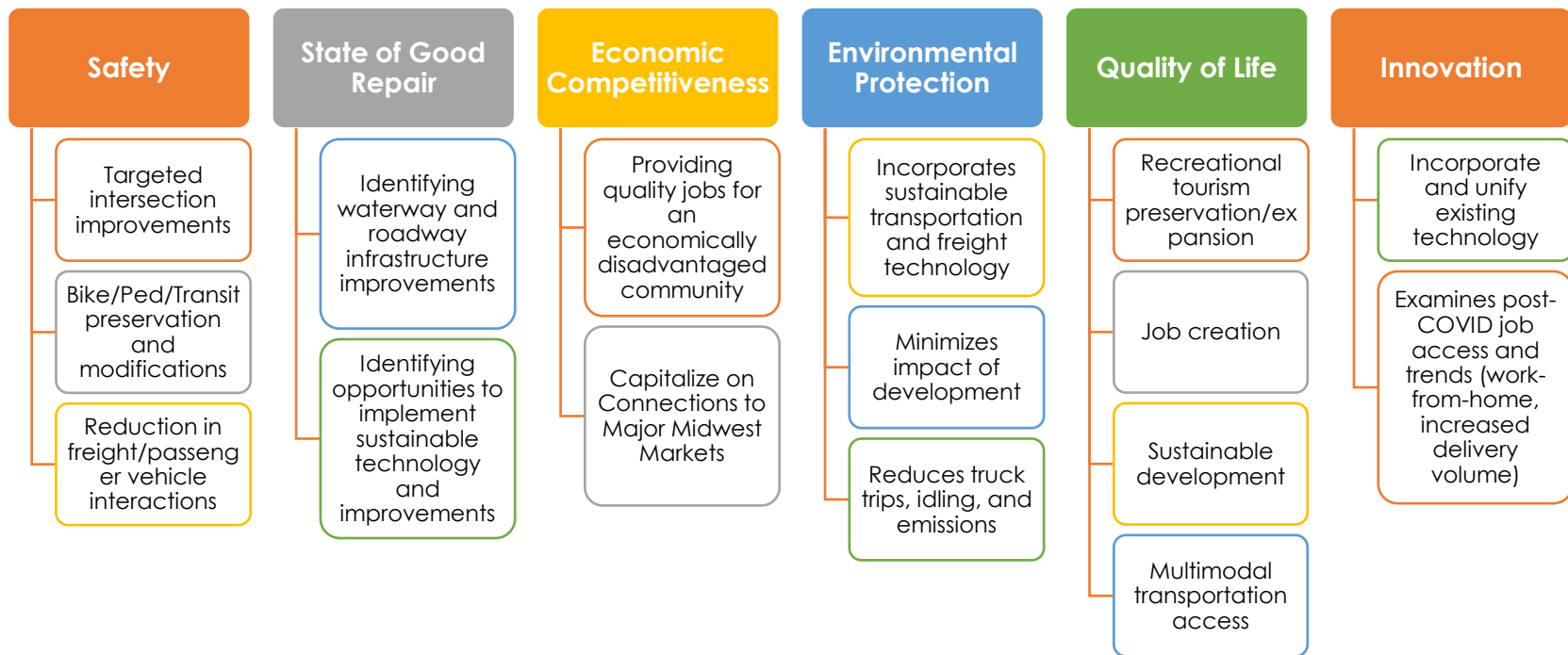
All sources of funding will be considered, including new opportunities becoming available in the wake of COVID-19. MRRPC is an Economic Development District designation conferred upon it by the U.S. Department of Commerce-Economic Development Administration (EDA). This district designation qualifies the Region's counties, communities, institutions, and businesses to be eligible for EDA assistance under its public works and economic development facilities program, technical (research) assistance programs, loan programs, and planning programs. Throughout the years, millions of dollars in Federal EDA grants have funded industrial parks, economic research studies, public facility projects and business loans through this partnership regularly administers and facilitates EDA and RLF grants for local jurisdictions as well as other public and private funding sources.



## 5) Merit Criteria

As noted earlier, the completed MRRPC Multimodal Freight Strategy will address and exceed each of the merit criteria set forth by the DOT. This section describes how the objectives of this undertaking will benefit the community, region, and state by contributing to safety, state of good repair, economic competitiveness, environmental protection, quality of life, and innovation. A high-level summary is shown in Figure 20.

**FIGURE 20 MERIT CRITERIA COMPATIBILITY**



## Criterion #1: Safety

The theme of safety resonates through several of the proposed tasks and is also a guiding principle for the MRRPC’s responsibility to its member communities. This strategy will consider safety concerns and improvements from freight, passenger, and bicycle and pedestrian perspectives. As noted, recreation and tourism are a major influence in the Region, and the strategy will promote improvements that will positively impact freight safety AS WELL AS preserving and improving the safety of the Region’s many recreational system users. This includes bike trails, safe routes to school, and passenger commutes. Examples include:

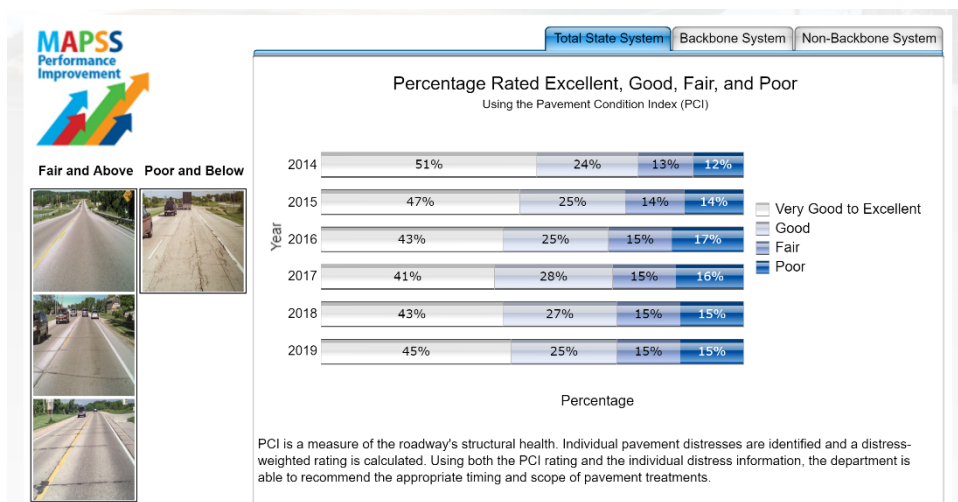
- Targeting opportunities for expanded truck parking and rest areas
  - Including truck and driver services available near these facilities
- Identifying areas with freight and passenger traffic conflicts, typically near rail yards and facilities with high volumes of truck traffic
- Explore areas with potentially unsafe freight and bike-ped interactions, particularly as the Region is home to a substantial portion of the Great River Road
- Identify dangerous Public Rail Crossings and quiet zone candidates
- Identify other safety improvement candidates, to include improvements such as roadway geometry, signage, and operational improvements
- Identify candidates for local truck routes in communities

## Criterion #2: State of Good Repair

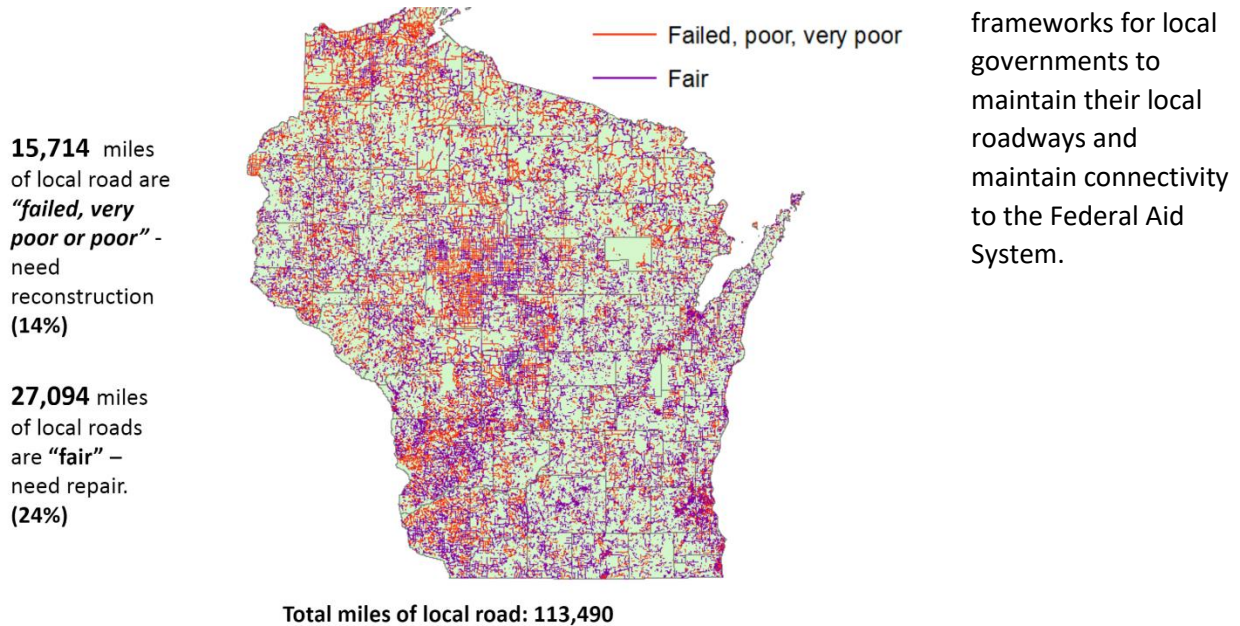
As with other rural areas of the U.S., many local roadways the MRRPC Region face a disproportionate amount of heavy vehicle usage due to large-scale manufacturing, mining, industrial, and agricultural operations. This strategy will identify

local roadways facing this challenge and will catalog and quantify roadway impacts as possible, using WisDOT’s MAPSS System (Figure 21) as well as resources assembled by organizations such as 1000 Friends of Wisconsin (Figure 22). It will further aim to identify funding sources and impact

**FIGURE 21 WISDOT MAPSS DASHBOARD 2019**



**FIGURE 22 LOCAL ROAD CONDITIONS, 2015**



Source: 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, 2015

### Criterion #3: Economic Competitiveness

The MRRPC’s primary role is to provide economic development resources for its local communities. The 2017 – 2022 CEDS serves as the strategy for this and includes up-to-date economic competitiveness resources for public and private agencies to incorporate into their efforts. The CEDS documents the Region’s conditions, economic challenges, and strategies to improve our Region’s environment, economy, and quality of life. Likewise, the proposed freight strategy will build upon the CEDS and provide detailed freight-related economic development components. The strategy will look toward supporting growing industries as well as traditional regional industries, shown in Figure 23.

**FIGURE 23 TOP INDUSTRY GRP**

Industry	2014 Jobs	2019 Jobs	Change in Jobs	% Change in Jobs	2019 LQ	2019 Earnings Per Worker	2019 GRP
Manufacturing	15,153	15,659	506	+3%	1.54	\$59,300	\$1.93B
Health Care and Social Assistance	19,758	21,194	1,436	+7%	1.30	\$65,008	\$1.63B
Government	20,337	20,654	317	+2%	1.08	\$64,479	\$1.60B
Wholesale Trade	4,845	4,634	-211	-4%	0.99	\$65,878	\$960.33M
Retail Trade	14,027	13,910	-117	-1%	1.09	\$31,397	\$817.95M
Finance and Insurance	4,249	4,780	531	+12%	0.93	\$69,557	\$767.25M
Transportation and Warehousing	6,241	6,270	29	+0%	1.31	\$64,712	\$539.63M
Construction	5,558	5,784	226	+4%	0.79	\$65,814	\$530.64M
Utilities	642	699	57	+9%	1.61	\$124,549	\$373.61M
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2,678	3,141	463	+17%	0.37	\$70,187	\$341.29M
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,001	1,046	45	+4%	0.48	\$46,359	\$304.73M
Accommodation and Food Services	10,127	10,516	389	+4%	0.95	\$17,130	\$298.61M
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2,798	2,790	-8	0%	1.87	\$42,126	\$279.40M
Information	1,290	1,283	-7	-1%	0.55	\$68,372	\$266.19M
Other Services (except Public Administration)	5,309	5,654	345	+6%	0.93	\$27,061	\$214.69M
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	4,164	3,736	-428	-10%	0.47	\$38,970	\$210.41M
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,942	2,199	257	+13%	1.19	\$78,529	\$194.31M
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	471	855	384	+82%	1.57	\$87,721	\$167.20M
Educational Services	1,920	1,957	37	+2%	0.59	\$35,559	\$86.73M
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,268	1,492	224	+18%	0.66	\$21,317	\$49.02M

Source: EMSI Analysis

### Criterion #4: Environmental Protection

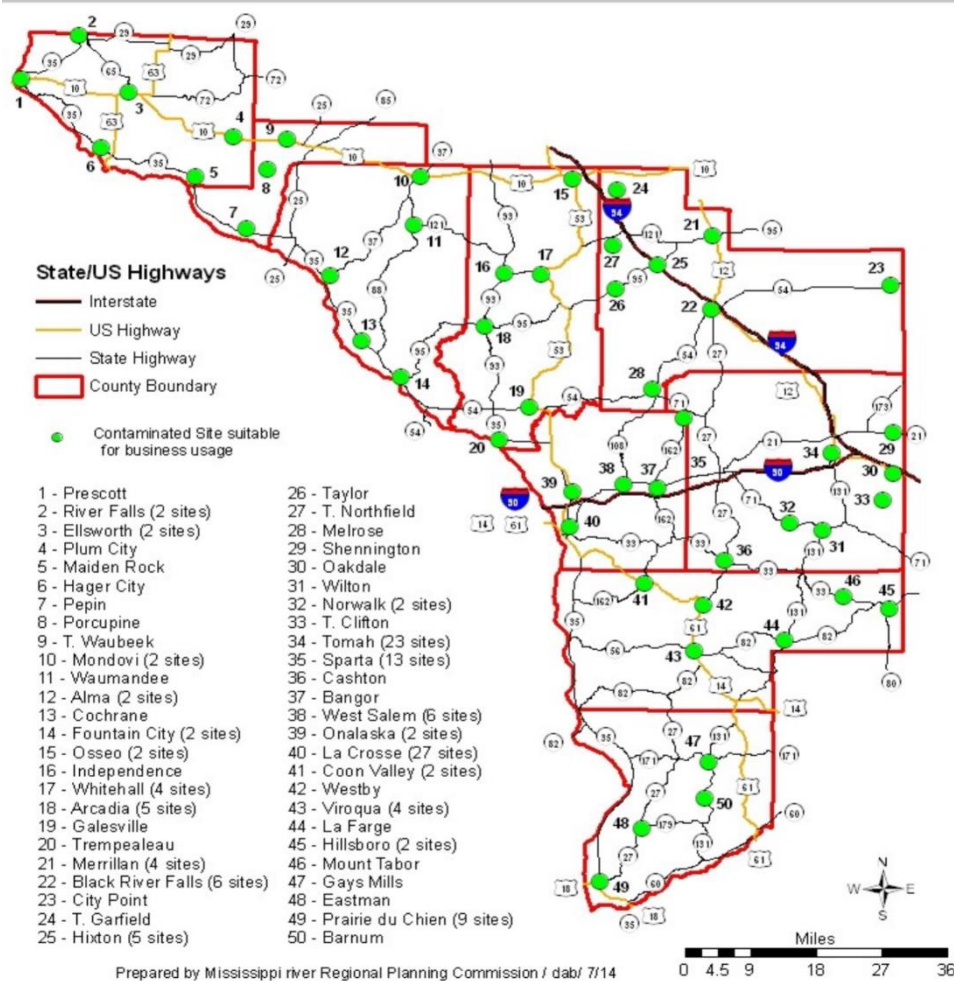
As noted, one of MRRPC’s responsibilities is environmental protection and hazard mitigation for the Region. Within this purview is preserving Legacy Places and preserving and promoting use of the 180 Mississippi River miles in the jurisdiction. In addition, the MRRPC preserves and promotes agriculture, forestry resources, and mining/mineral resources in the Region. With that in mind, this strategy will consider the importance of each of these factors to the Region’s success. Specifically, the Strategy will identify ways to incorporate content within local and regional Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMP), local Comprehensive Plans, identify ways to reduce truck idling, and look toward efficiencies in reducing truck miles to, from, and through the region. The Strategy will also build upon previous work in identify

adaptive re-use opportunities such as the soon-to-be closing Dairyland Power Coal Plant (**Error! Reference source not found.**) and for environmentally contaminated sites (Figure 25).

FIGURE 24 DAIRYLAND POWER PLANT – GENOA, WI



FIGURE 25 ENVIRONMENTALLY CONTAMINATED SITES SUITABLE FOR BUSINESS USE



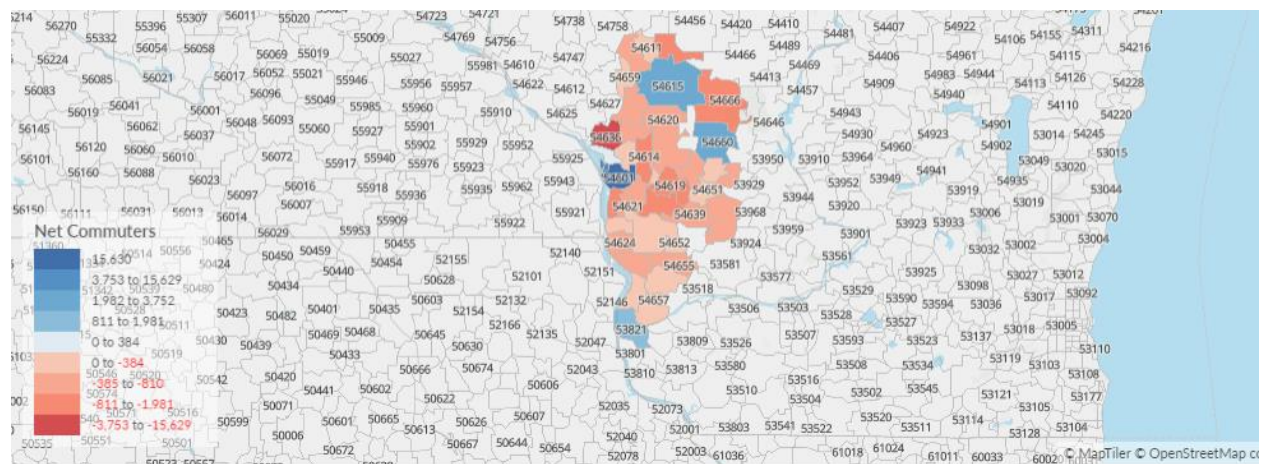
Source: MRRPC CEDS 2017-2022

## Criterion #5: Quality of Life

The region has long had a strong focus on recreation, and is a tourist destination for watersports, hiking, biking, and many other outdoor pursuits. The project will identify and target a number of quality of life improvements for the region’s citizens and visitors. Specifically, the planning process will:

- Identify major truck-passenger vehicle conflicts at intersections in the region to the manufacturing, industrial, and distribution areas.
- Identify opportunities to preserve, enhance, and establish truck routes through the region’s communities.
- Identify areas for improved geometry and traffic patterns.
- Maximize the development potential of targeted areas, to promote well-paying jobs for the area workforce.
- Explore expanded freight and passenger rail service to the site, potentially removing truck trips from the region to nearby freight hubs.
- Expand existing broadband service to underserved areas to retain existing businesses and promote growth.
- Explore innovative approaches for remote workers.
- Explore innovative approaches for parcel delivery options.

**FIGURE 26 PLACE OF WORK VS PLACE OF RESIDENCE**



Where Talent Works			Where Talent Lives		
ZIP	Name	2019 Employment	ZIP	Name	2019 Workers
54601	La Crosse, WI (in La Crosse co...	40,115	54601	La Crosse, WI (in La Crosse co...	24,485
54650	Onalaska, WI (in La Crosse co...	13,461	54650	Onalaska, WI (in La Crosse co...	13,282
54603	La Crosse, WI (in La Crosse co...	11,630	54656	Sparta, WI (in Monroe county)	9,929
54660	Tomah, WI (in Monroe county)	11,185	54660	Tomah, WI (in Monroe county)	8,675
54656	Sparta, WI (in Monroe county)	9,376	54636	Holmen, WI (in La Crosse cou...	7,907

## Criterion #6: Innovation

The plan aims to innovate wherever possible. Opportunities include building off Wisconsin State Freight Plan Recommendations and Truck Routes (Figure 27), incorporating emerging and existing technology (such as truck parking ITS technology), innovative financing packages, and exploring innovative public and private partnerships. Technological innovation such as use of alternative fuel powered cargo handling equipment, electric and hydrogen cargo logistics/drayage vehicles and market hinterland truck logistics equipment, electric vehicle charging infrastructure and efficient road and road design to provide for minimal idling for large sites will also be explored. The Strategy will also explore unique methods that the MRRPC can make data and information available to local communities.

### Innovative Financing

As noted, the MRRPC is designated as an EDA economic development district. This district designation qualifies the Region's counties, communities, institutions and businesses to be eligible for EDA assistance under its public works and economic development facilities program, technical (research) assistance programs, loan programs, and planning programs. This also affords the RPC to explore non-traditional sources for transportation projects and improvements. MRRPC staff regularly monitor public and private grant funding opportunities to assist local communities.

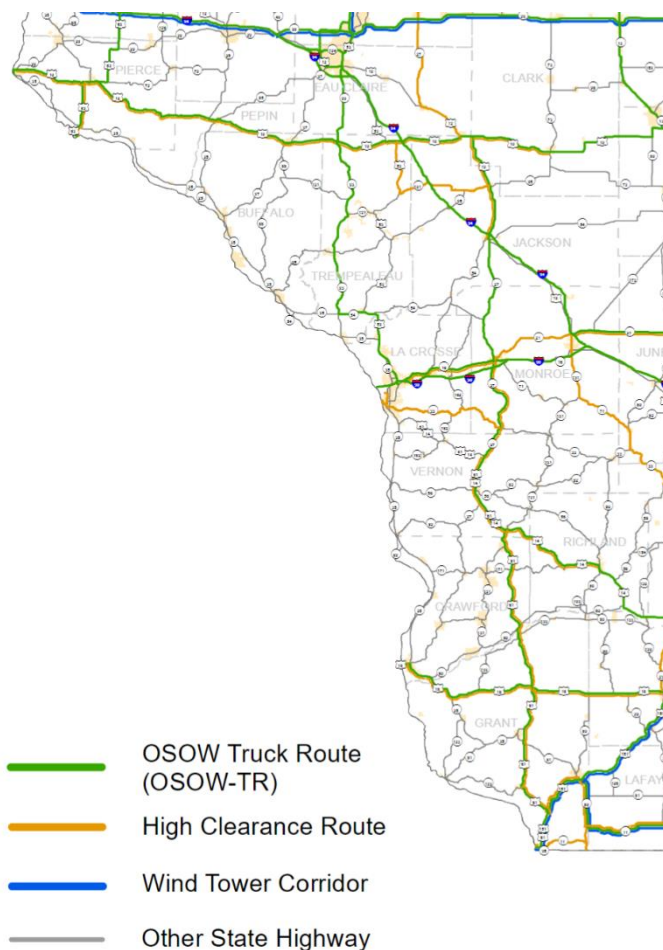
### Partnership

Successful completion of this strategy will require partnership across a wide cross-section of public and private stakeholders in the Region. MRRPC has an established network of collaborators throughout the Region and will seek to expand the group for this project. Examples include:

#### Representative Public Sector Partners

- State of Wisconsin – WisDOT,
- Metropolitan Council – Twin Cities area MPO that serves the Northern portion of the MRRPC region
- La Crosse Area Planning Council – La Crosse Area MPO that serves the Central portion of the MRRPC region
- US Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration

FIGURE 27 WISCONSIN TRUCK FREIGHT ROUTES























Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Local Business Associations
- Wisconsin Great River Road

Representative Private Partners and Supporters

- Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
- BNSF – Class One National railroad system company
- CP Rail – Class One National and Canadian railroad system company
- CN Railroad - Class One National and Canadian railroad system company
- Upper Mississippi River Barge Operators
- Upper Mississippi River Barge Shippers and Terminal Operators
- Select major employers in the region (Figure 28)

**FIGURE 28 TOP COMPANIES IN THE MRRPC REGION**

Top Companies	Profiles	Top Companies Posting	Unique Postings
Gundersen Health System	2,885 	CRST International, Inc.	3,202 
Mayo Clinic	1,222 	Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc.	2,600 
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse	1,162 	Oracle Corporation	2,584 
Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc.	698 	Platinum Supplemental Insurance, Ir	2,272 
Kwik Trip, Inc.	656 	Gundersen Health System	1,762 
Trane Inc.	587 	Roehl Transport, Inc.	1,301 
United States Department of the Ar	509 	Wal-Mart, Inc.	853 
Logistics Health, Inc.	508 	Kwik Trip, Inc.	836 
Western Technical College	499 	Telereach Inc	763 
University of Wisconsin-Madison	484 	U.S. Xpress, Inc.	728 



## Project Readiness

As noted, the Strategy will build upon previous MRRPC CEDS development, and will be ready to immediately begin on Notice-to-Proceed. MRRPC has in-house expertise in freight planning and will be able to begin a large share of the work without consultant assistance. The Strategy will also overlap with various plan updates, such as the WisDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan, and multiple Comprehensive Plan Updates and can synergize many elements with those.

## 6) Project Schedule

The project schedule includes overlap of multiple tasks, as well as overlap with concurrent planning studies, which provides efficiencies. Estimated task length is shown in the table below, and the total project will take 18 months from Notice-to-Proceed until completion.

	<b>TASK COST</b>	<b>TASK DURATION</b>
<b>TASK 1: DEMOGRAPHICS, ECONOMICS, TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM</b>	\$15,000	3 Months
<b>TASK 2: IMPORTANCE OF FREIGHT MOVEMENT IN THE REGION</b>	\$20,000	4 Months
<b>TASK 3: BUSINESS AND SYSTEM USER OUTREACH</b>	\$30,000	9 Months
<b>TASK 4: GOODS MOVEMENT DATA SUMMARY</b>	\$15,000	3 Months
<b>TASK 5: GROWTH PROJECTIONS, TRENDS, SYSTEM PERFORMANCE</b>	\$30,000	6 Months
<b>TASK 6: COMMUNITY, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS</b>	\$25,000	5 Months
<b>TASK 7: STRATEGIES AND OPPORTUNITIES</b>	\$35,000	8 Months
<b>TASK 8: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES</b>	\$30,000	TBD
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>18 Months</b>

# ATTACHMENTS FORM

**Instructions:** On this form, you will attach the various files that make up your grant application. Please consult with the appropriate Agency Guidelines for more information about each needed file. Please remember that any files you attach must be in the document format and named as specified in the Guidelines.

**Important:** Please attach your files in the proper sequence. See the appropriate Agency Guidelines for details.

1) Please attach Attachment 1	<input type="text" value="1234-20200518BUILDFinal.pdf"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
2) Please attach Attachment 2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
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15) Please attach Attachment 15	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>

2020 USDOT BUILD  
Planning Grant  
Application

# MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MULTIMODAL FREIGHT STRATEGY

*A strategy for economic development and efficient goods  
movement in, to, and through the Mississippi River  
Region*



Submitted to: USDOT

Submitted by: Mississippi River Regional  
Planning Commission

5/18/2020



**MISSISSIPPI RIVER  
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

1707 Main Street, Suite 435  
La Crosse, WI 54601  
Phone: (608) 785-9396  
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James Kuhn, Cashton WI  
Chairman  
Margret Baecker, Independence WI  
Vice Chairman  
Vicki Burke, Onalaska, WI  
Secretary & Treasurer  
Dave Bonifas La Crosse, WI  
Director

Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary of Transportation U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao,

Please consider the following BUILD Planning Grant application to develop a Regional Freight Strategy for our Region. The Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC) represents La Crosse County as well as eight surrounding counties in Western Wisconsin, and is tasked with economic, physical, and social development for the Region. The Region is a rural area with approximately 330,000 residents and a land area larger than Rhode Island and Connecticut combined.

Despite the rural nature, this area is at the confluence of major Highway, Railroad, and Waterway freight routes, and the proposed Strategy will help local communities address key transportation issues and optimize the benefits of having access to extensive connectivity to major markets. The Strategy is also unique in that it spans the jurisdiction of two MPOs and two WisDOT geographical planning units and can provide guidance for nine counties including 146 towns, 50 villages, and 22 cities in the Region.

The Strategy also supports elements of the 2017-2022 *Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy*, specifically in safety, economic development, quality of life, and tourism and recreational preservation for the Region's citizens.

MRRPC has on-staff expertise in freight planning and economic development and has assembled a cost-effective budget with in-kind matches for each task. **The total grant request is \$140,000**, and we believe the proposal achieves USDOT BUILD and ROUTES goals as well as providing valuable resources for our local communities

Thank you for your consideration,

Dave Bonifas, Director

---

**A NINE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

**PROVIDING PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

▪ Land Use Planning ▪ Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances ▪ Transportation Planning ▪ Economic Development Planning

▪ GIS Mapping ▪ Recreation Planning ▪ Revolving Loan Fund Administration ▪ Grant Writing ▪ Socioeconomic Data Dissemination

▪ Assist Local Interests in Responding to State and Federal Programs ▪ Advisory Service on Local Planning Issues

▪ Coordinating Agency for Programs and Activities ▪ Public Advocacy on Issues Affecting Our Region

# Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	3
Table of Figures .....	4
1) Project Description .....	5
BUILD and ROUTES Initiative Compatibility. ....	5
About the MRRPC.....	6
2) Proposed Study Overview .....	7
Task 1: Demographics, Economics, Transportation .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Task 2: Importance of Freight Movement in the Region .....	8
Task 3: Business and System User Outreach.....	9
Task 4: Goods Movement Data Summary.....	9
Task 5: Growth Projections, Trends, System Performance.....	10
Task 6: Community, Environmental, and Economic Impacts.....	11
Task 7: Opportunities and Strategies .....	11
Task 8: Freight and Comprehensive Planning .....	14
3) Project Location and Background .....	15
Political Geography .....	16
MRRPC Region Transportation Assets .....	17
Highway.....	17
Railroad .....	18
Waterway .....	19
Air .....	19
NHS Infrastructure.....	20
4) Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of Project Fund .....	21
Other Sources of Funding.....	21
5) Merit Criteria.....	22
Criterion #1: Safety .....	23
Criterion #2: State of Good Repair .....	23
Criterion #3: Economic Competitiveness.....	24
Criterion #4: Environmental Protection.....	25
Criterion #5: Quality of Life.....	27
Criterion #6: Innovation .....	28
Innovative Financing .....	28

Partnership .....	28
Project Readiness .....	30
6) Project Schedule .....	30

## Table of Figures

FIGURE 1 GREAT LAKES MEGAREGION .....	5
FIGURE 2 FREIGHT VOLUME BY MODE .....	6
FIGURE 3 MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGION POPULATION .....	7
FIGURE 4 MRRPC EQUALIZED LAND VALUE, BY USE .....	8
FIGURE 5 EMPLOYMENT IN FREIGHT GENERATING SECTORS, 2018.....	8
FIGURE 6 BARGE OPERATIONS - FRENCH ISLAND, WI .....	10
FIGURE 7 BNSF RAIL YARD - LA CROSSE, WI .....	10
FIGURE 8 INDUSTRIAL SAND MINING FACILITIES .....	11
FIGURE 9 LOCATION QUOTIENT – MRRPC FREIGHT GENERATING INDUSTRIES .....	12
FIGURE 10 MRRPC FOOD PROCESSING CLUSTERS.....	13
FIGURE 11 MRRPC LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT .....	14
FIGURE 12 MRRPC REGION OVERVIEW .....	15
FIGURE 13 MRRPC POPULATION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT.....	16
FIGURE 14 VEHICLE MILES OF TRAVEL, 2018.....	17
FIGURE 15 WISCONSIN RAILROADS .....	18
FIGURE 16 MARINE HIGHWAY M-35 OVERVIEW .....	19
FIGURE 17 MIDWEST NHS NETWORK OVERVIEW.....	20
FIGURE 18 MRRPC DESIGNATED NHS CONNECTORS .....	20
FIGURE 19 PROJECT PLANNING BUDGET .....	21
FIGURE 20 MERIT CRITERIA COMPATIBILITY.....	22
FIGURE 21 WISDOT MAPSS DASHBOARD 2019.....	23
FIGURE 22 LOCAL ROAD CONDITIONS, 2015 .....	24
FIGURE 23 TOP INDUSTRY GRP .....	25
FIGURE 24 DAIRYLAND POWER PLANT – GENOA, WI.....	26
FIGURE 25 ENVIRONMENTALLY CONTAMINATED SITES SUITABLE FOR BUSINESS USE .....	26
FIGURE 26 PLACE OF WORK VS PLACE OF RESIDENCE .....	27
FIGURE 27 WISCONSIN TRUCK FREIGHT ROUTES .....	28
FIGURE 28 TOP COMPANIES IN THE MRRPC REGION.....	29

## 1) Project Description

This Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC) Multimodal Freight Strategy Planning Grant request is designed to support the analysis and development of a freight system strategy for the nine-county MRRPC region in Western Wisconsin. The region borders Minnesota and is at the confluence of major freight infrastructure in the Upper Midwest while also being within a day or less drive of all the most populated places in the Great Lakes Megaregion, including Minneapolis-St Paul, Chicago, Milwaukee, St Louis, and Indianapolis (Figure 1). The Region is also along major highway and railroad corridors linking East and West markets in the US; as well as the Mississippi River, linking the Midwest to Gulf Coast barge destinations.

Previous freight planning work has been done in the region but has been limited in scope and geography. These efforts are several years old and have not been updated to accommodate the present-day economy.

The purpose of the proposed strategy is two-fold: 1) to achieve goals set forth in the MRRPC 2017-2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), and 2) to transcend traditional planning boundaries and provide a strategy for **rural areas**

represented by the MRRPC – including portions of two separate WisDOT districts (Southwest and Northwest). The La Crosse area is home to the La Crosse Area Planning Commission, which overlaps a portion of the Southern MRRPC region, but there are multiple rural areas that lack resources

FIGURE 1 GREAT LAKES MEGAREGION



Source: America 2050

for specialized transportation planning and strategy development, which could be set forth by the following proposal.

### BUILD and ROUTES Initiative Compatibility.

This area is an ideal candidate for BUILD Rural criteria as well as ROUTES Initiative goals. The region is a source of agriculture, mining, energy, food production, and industrial commodities, and is proximate to major freight infrastructure in the upper Midwest. As shown in Figure 2, a substantial amount of freight tonnage also moves through the region via rail, highway, and waterway networks.

As with many other rural areas in the U.S., substantial truck vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT) occur on rural roads in the region. And many of the region's bridges are posted and limit heavy truck traffic, particularly during spring thaw. This strategy aims to quantify these issues and develop strategies that can benefit communities and industries alike.

## About the MRRPC

The MRRPC is a Commission of nine counties located along the Mississippi River in Western Wisconsin. The Commission was organized in 1964 under Wisconsin State Statutes to

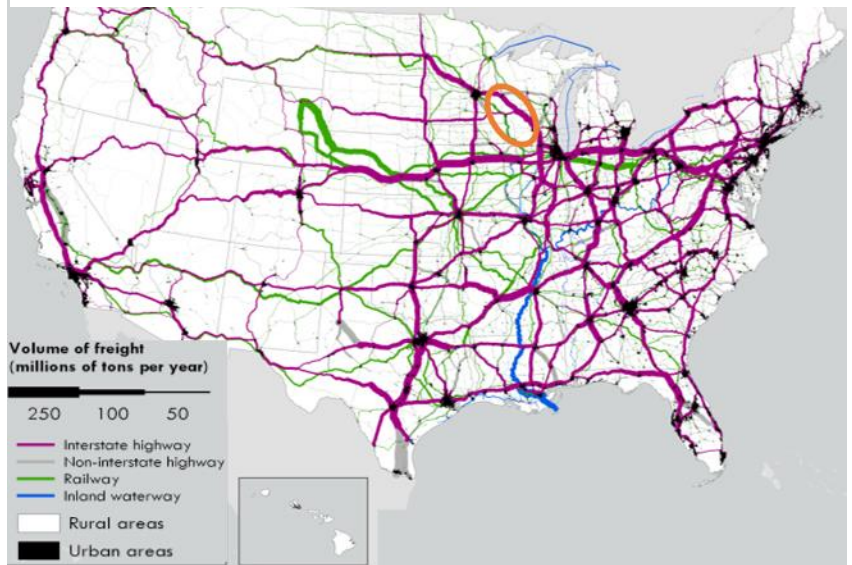
plan for the physical, social and economic development of the Region. Other authorized functions include providing advisory services on regional issues to local governments and other public and private agencies, acting as a coordinating agency for programs and activities and contracting with local units of government to create studies and offer advice on land use, thoroughfares, community facilities, public improvements, and the encouragement of economic and other developments.

MRRPC Services include comprehensive plans, zoning and subdivision ordinances, grant writing, geographic information system map production, revolving loan fund administration, economic development planning, economic data collection and dissemination and advocating public policy positions on issues affecting the region.

## Project Details

The project as proposed includes eight tasks, and has a funding request of \$140,000, described below.

FIGURE 2 FREIGHT VOLUME BY MODE



Source: Freight Analysis Framework/USDOT



## 2) Proposed Study Overview

The MRRPC updates the CEDS every five years and maintains up-to-date sociodemographic and economic data for the region. This task builds upon that information and will focus on developing background information for the context of freight transportation in the region, by assembling updated demographic, economic, and transportation datasets, using the most up-to-date publicly available information possible.

### Key Elements:

- Population by County and metro area, based on Census 2020 statistics, like Figure 3
- Business sector trends, employment, and cluster statistics, based on EMSI database, primary data collection, and individual County Resources
  - Identify major freight traffic generators in the region
- High-level transportation statistics by vehicle and trip type, using WisDOT counts and modeling data as well as individual County resources and projections
  - Calculate freight trips to, from, and through the region on major routes
  - Identify significant freight and passenger commuting patterns
  - Prepare base level understandings of barge and train trips
- Assemble updated land value and land use area statistics (Figure 4)

**FIGURE 3 MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGION POPULATION**

	2010	Rank in MRRPC Region (2010)	2015	Rank in MRRPC Region (2015)	% Change
<b>Buffalo</b>	13,587	8	13,192	8	-2.9
<b>Crawford</b>	16,644	7	16,391	7	-1.5
<b>Jackson</b>	20,449	6	20,554	6	0.5
<b>La Crosse</b>	114,638	1	118,212	1	3.1
<b>Monroe</b>	44,673	2	45,549	2	2.0
<b>Pepin</b>	7,469	9	7,290	9	-2.4
<b>Pierce</b>	41,019	3	40,889	3	-0.3
<b>Trempealeau</b>	28,816	5	29,550	5	2.5
<b>Vernon</b>	29,773	4	30,506	4	2.5
<b>Region</b>	317,068		322,133		1.6
<b>State of Wis.</b>	5,686,986		5,771,337		1.5
<b>Nation</b>	308,745,538		321,418,820		4.1

Source: U.S. Census, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5 year Estimates

**FIGURE 4 MRRPC EQUALIZED LAND VALUE, BY USE**

	Residential	Commercial	Manufacturing	Agriculture	Undeveloped	Ag Forest	Forest	Other	Total
Buffalo	574.2	74.8	9.3	27.3	14.7	121.2	77.3	171.0	1069.8
Crawford	600.9	173.9	29.4	28.6	12.7	46.2	38.2	161.6	1091.5
Jackson	820.1	134.2	94.7	21.1	20.3	81.8	184.1	129.5	1485.8
La Crosse	5708.2	2205.6	182.6	14.6	10.3	67.1	69.0	125.2	8382.6
Monroe	1752.9	469.3	215.6	28.2	22.8	87.1	115.6	221.0	2912.5
Pepin	365.9	56.2	4.2	11.1	4.3	30.9	21.2	60.8	554.6
Pierce	2303.8	309.4	42.5	33.0	14.2	67.8	49.7	120.9	2941.3
Trempealeau	1204.0	186.1	110.4	31.9	22.9	112.0	67.0	186.5	1920.8
Vernon	1090.7	183.9	21.0	43.1	37.4	74.1	63.3	287.6	1801.1
MRRPC Region	14,420.7	3793.4	709.7	238.9	159.6	688.2	685.4	1464.1	22,160.0
Wisconsin	344,556.3	94,149.6	13,720.8	2051.7	1976.5	2902.5	7414.2	11,529.9	47,8301.5

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

## Task 2: Importance of Freight Movement in the Region

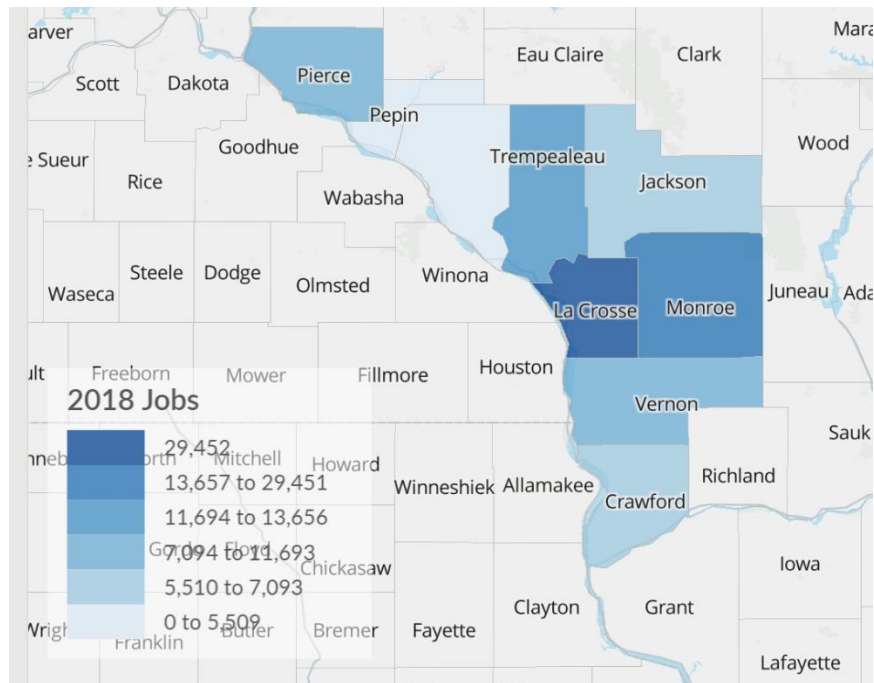
Task 2 will characterize the importance of freight transportation in the region, by tying major freight trends to everyday life in a series of easy-to-understand infographics for use on the MRRPC website and other sources. Preliminary sources will include EMSI (Figure 5) and InfoUSA business data.

### Key Elements:

The basis of this task is developing a dashboard of data and information for major regional businesses:

- Summarize goods movement-dependent industries in the region, based on 2-4 digit NAICS Codes. Typically, this includes Agriculture, Manufacturing, Wholesale and Retail Trade, Construction, Transportation and Warehousing, and Mining
  - Number of Firms by Sector
  - Employment

**FIGURE 5 EMPLOYMENT IN FREIGHT GENERATING SECTORS, 2018**



Source: EMSI Analysis

- Sales
- GDP by industry sector
- Identify Industry Clusters
- Growth/forecast for select industries
- Qualitative information for select industries in the region

**This Task will also address transportation system questions for the Region**

- How is the infrastructure used by various sectors?
- How is the infrastructure used by various modes?
- What are key sources of supply and demand for freight traffic in the region?
- What are concerns/conflict areas for freight in the region?

### Task 3: Business and System User Outreach

Based on findings in the first two tasks, this task will focus on reaching out to freight users in the region to determine specific needs, opportunities, and potential strategies for the region. This task will also add a qualitative context to data gathered in Task 1 and 2.

Key Elements:

- Staff will work with organizations such as the La Crosse Area Development Company (LADCO), the Wisconsin Economic Development Agency, Local Chambers of Commerce, 7 Rivers Alliance, industrial parks in the region and other stakeholders to survey and interview major freight system users in the region.
- This will include a series of one-on-one discussions that can include relevant City and County staff. Information gathered will include how the businesses (and affiliated businesses, suppliers, customers, etc.) use the system, perceived strengths, and weaknesses, projected future usage from the company.
- Interview transportation companies that represent each of the modal user groups: BNSF Railway, CP Rail, CN Railroad, Brennan Marine, Ashley Distribution, and others.

### Task 4: Goods Movement Data Summary

Task 4 will provide an analysis and summary of goods movement by mode, value, and tonnage for freight to, from, and through the region. Qualitative information will supplement quantitative analysis where necessary.

Key Elements:

- Review previous studies, including State Freight Plan, State Rail Plan, State Long-Range Plan, and the State Aviation System Plan
- Summarize modal flows based on FAF4 (mode, value, tonnage, origin/destination)
- FRA train counts

- WisDOT Truck Counts
- Other primary and secondary data, as available

## Task 5: Growth Projections, Trends, System Performance

Task 5 will create 5, 10, and 20-year projections for major freight commodities in the region. This task will also summarize roadway capacity for major corridors in the region, as well as identification of local roads operating beyond capacity due to freight activity. Lastly, trends that could impact MRRPC industries and transportation system demand will be summarized.

### Key Elements:

- Apply high, medium, and low growth factors for important freight generating commodities in the area.
- Identify AADTT, Rail Volumes, Barge Flows.
- Physical infrastructure summary: pavement condition, bridges on major local corridors, local road capacity concerns.
- Discuss State, National, and Global Trends that could impact MRRPC Region Freight Flows in the foreseeable future.

**FIGURE 6 BARGE OPERATIONS - FRENCH ISLAND, WI**



**FIGURE 7 BNSF RAIL YARD - LA CROSSE, WI**



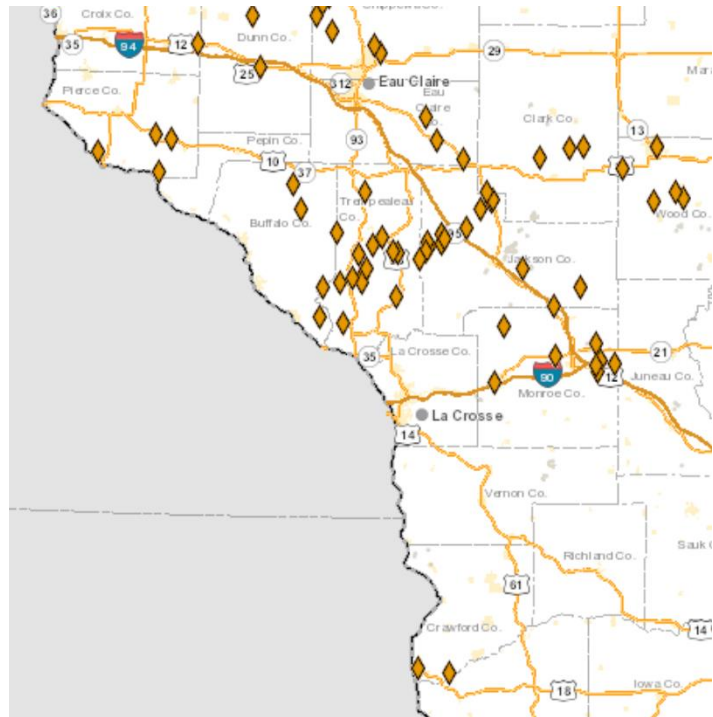
## Task 6: Community, Environmental, and Economic Impacts

A significant portion of the MRRPC's work involves preserving and enhancing recreational opportunities, Wisconsin "Legacy Places", and ecological landscapes. Task 6 will identify community and environmental impacts of freight transportation in the region, along with economic impacts of major freight-generating activities. Examples include: Industrial sand mines (Figure 8), conflict points between freight and passenger or bike/ped activity, problematic transportation geometry, and last-mile connections to manufacturing, distribution, and industrial centers of activity.

### Key Elements:

- Identify modal-specific areas of improvement, conflict points (passenger and freight traffic, bike ped, etc.), transportation geometry issues (turning radii, roundabouts, etc.).
- Identify key last-mile connections.
- Overlay major bike/ped routes with freight routes.
- Hold workshops, survey communities, and interview freight system users for input on each of these topics.
- Summarize key chokepoints and limitations.

FIGURE 8 INDUSTRIAL SAND MINING FACILITIES



Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

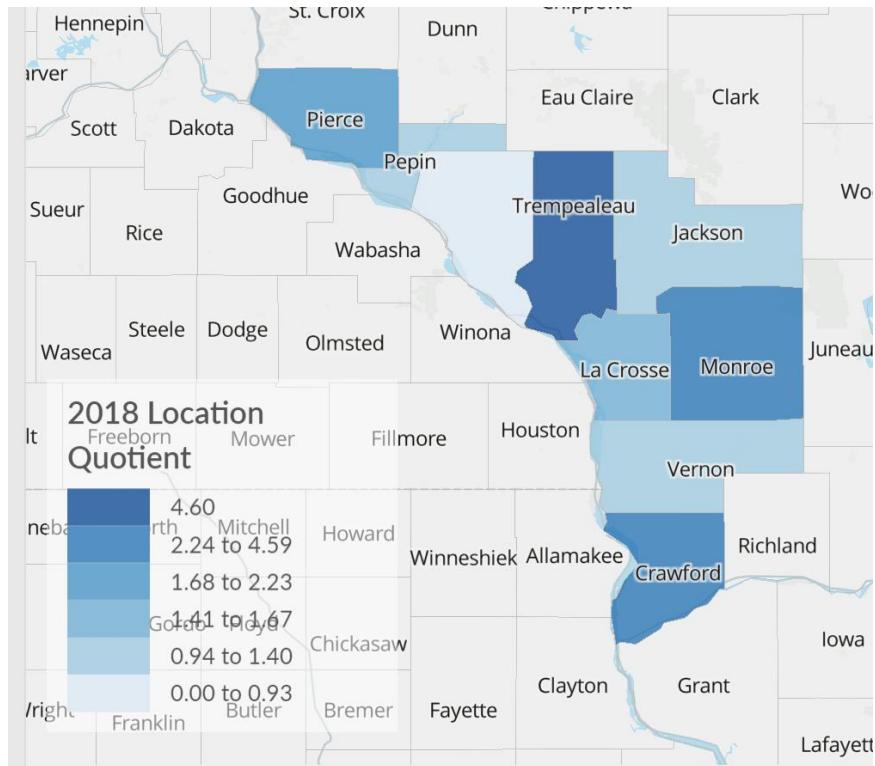
## Task 7: Opportunities and Strategies

This task will build upon findings, data, discussions in the previous seven tasks to devise a list of implementable strategies for each mode. Key points will include location quotients (Figure 9) and major clusters (Figure 10), along with housing, socioeconomic, economic development, and freight and passenger transportation opportunities. The team will hold a series of workshops and webinars to collaborate with stakeholders and rank strategies across several objective criteria.

Key Elements:

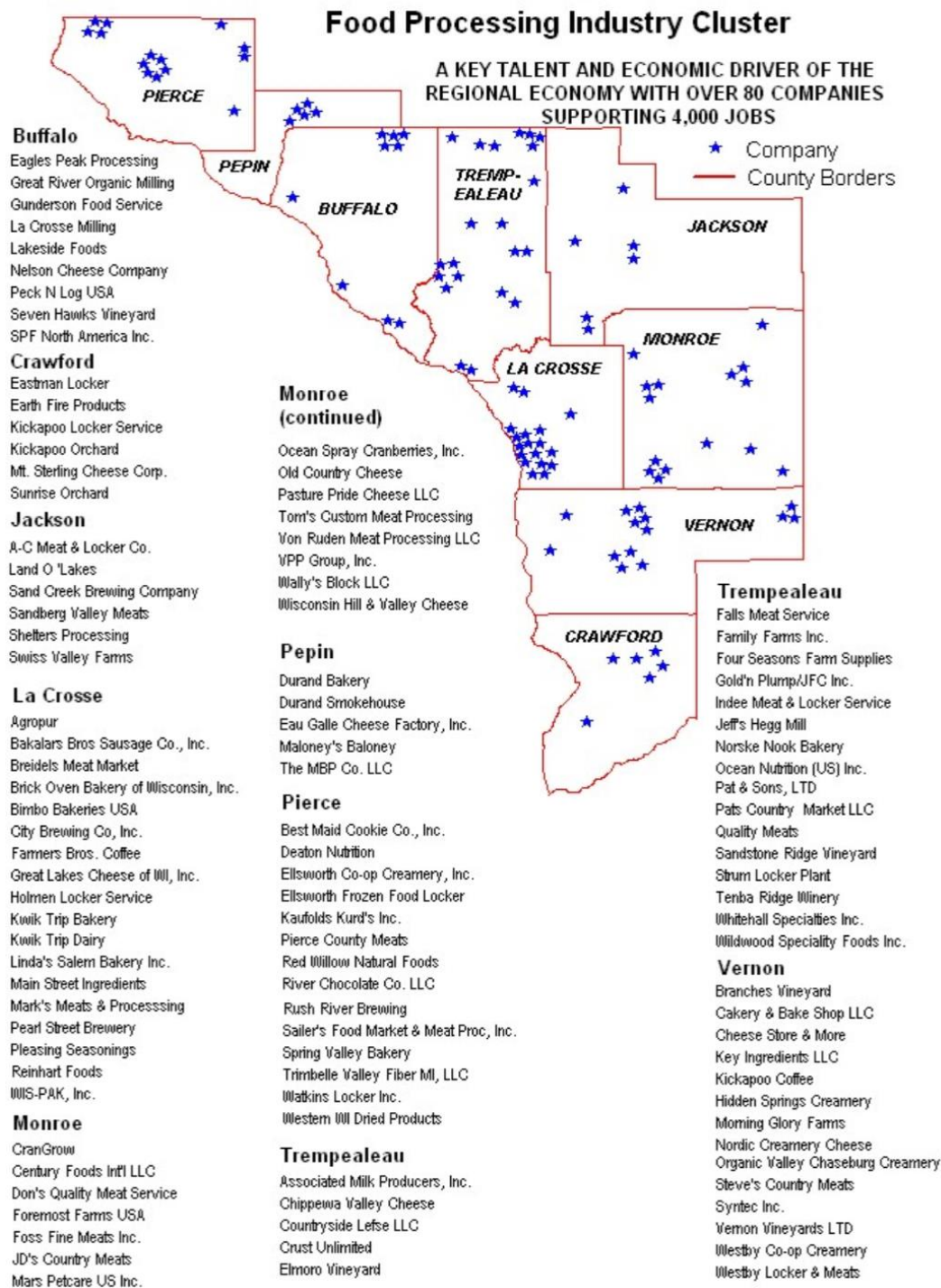
- Prioritized list of projects, investments, and other strategies on the local system.
- Identify available land/potential intermodal sites/freight uses. For example, a soon-to-be closing coal Power Plant in the Southern portion of the region.
- Identify planned improvements for previous plans.
- Opportunities for economic expansion, new services, and fluidity.
- Identify Federal, State, Local, and private funding sources.
- Identify corresponding performance measures for each strategy.

**FIGURE 9 LOCATION QUOTIENT – MRRPC FREIGHT GENERATING INDUSTRIES**



Source: EMSI Analysis

FIGURE 10 MRRPC FOOD PROCESSING CLUSTERS



## Task 8: Freight and Comprehensive Planning

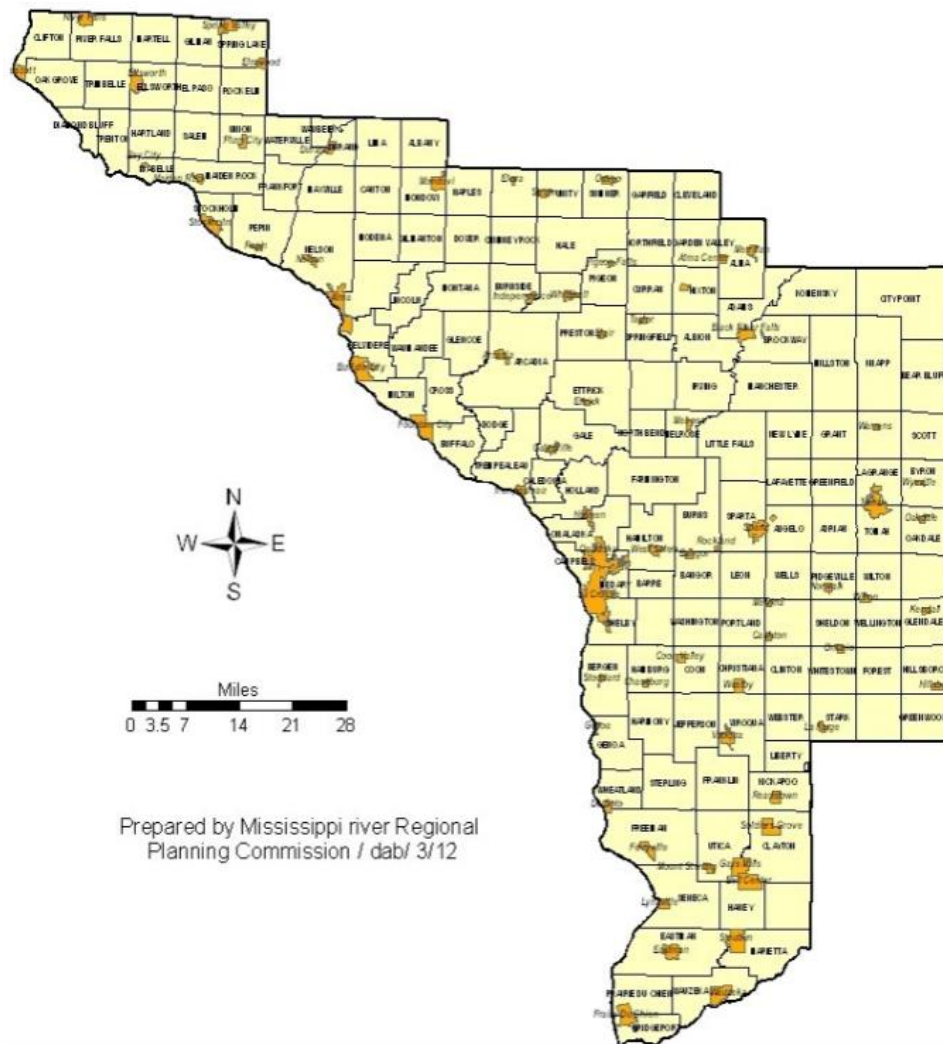
MRRPC Staff is heavily involved in updating and maintaining local Comprehensive Plans. This task will create freight-related land use, economic development, and other content for incorporation into County and local comprehensive plans (and other related planning efforts). All told, the Task will provide Comprehensive Plan content for use by: nine counties of the, 146 towns, 50 villages, and 22 cities in the Mississippi River Region (Figure 11).

### Key Elements:

- Create an online resource for local jurisdictions to access and download freight content from.
- Scalable maps and graphics via Tableau.
- Summary-level information for inclusion in area Comprehensive Plans, 20-year projections.
- Other Transportation Element information and data to be determined, based on stakeholder

FIGURE 11 MRRPC LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT

input.

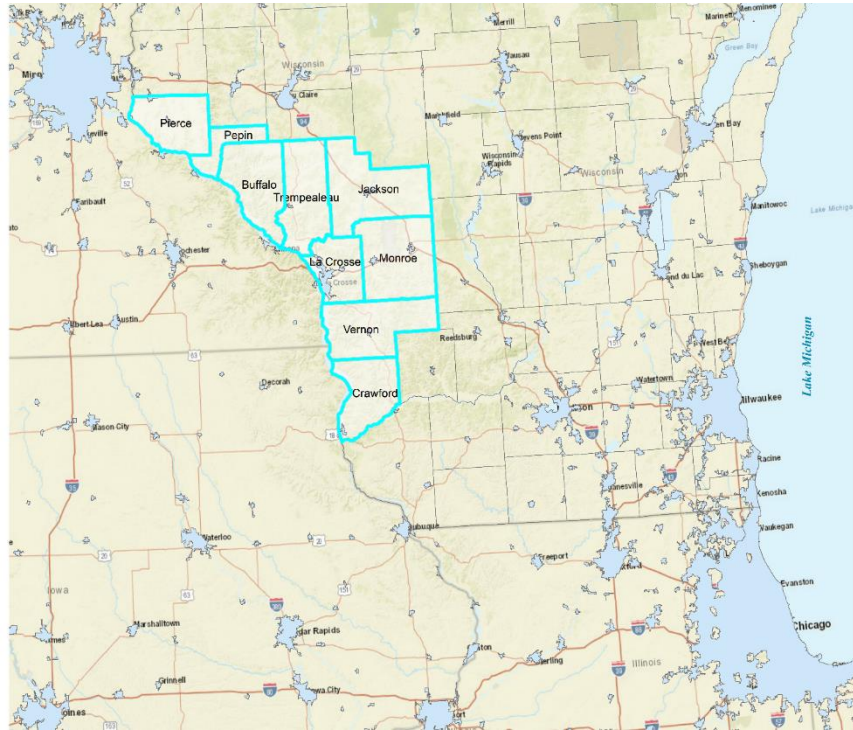




### 3) Project Location and Background

As mentioned, the project location is comprised of nine primarily rural counties in Western Wisconsin, and the majority of the geography comprising the grant request will be used outside of the only Urbanized area (La Crosse) in the region, making it a **Rural Project** (Figure 12). The MRRPC service area is within a unique area of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa known as the Driftless Area, so named because it was not covered by glaciers in the last Ice Age and lacks glacial drift (rocks and other debris left behind by retreating glaciers). This unique situation left the area with a more rugged topography, characterized by hills, valleys, bluffs, and rivers prone to flooding that time and time again has led to personal and economic losses to individuals and businesses. The geography also presents certain transportation challenges.

FIGURE 12 MRRPC REGION OVERVIEW



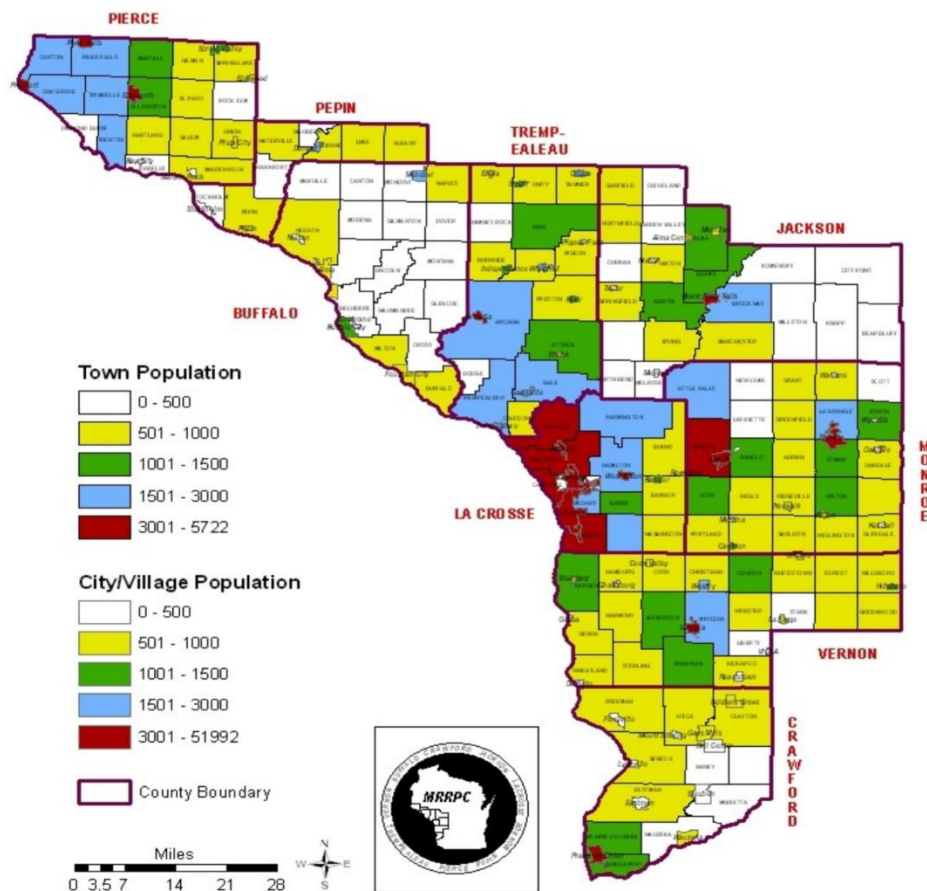
The Region has extensive roots in trading and commerce. The first human settlement of the Region occurred about 11,000 years ago, as the glaciers in surrounding regions retreated. By the time Native peoples made first contact with Europeans, they had developed agriculture, extensive trade networks, and burial earthworks. French explorers and fur traders established trading posts along the Mississippi River and its tributaries, leaving behind many French place-names today (e.g., Pepin and Trempealeau Counties, the City of Prairie du Chien, etc.). Permanent white settlement in the Mississippi River Region began in the late 18th century and centered first around fur trading. By the middle of the 19th century, the area was being developed for its timber. Railroad connections grew up in the last third of the 19th century to serve the timber industry and the growing agricultural economy in the Region. By the 20th century, agriculture was a major part of the economy, as timber was giving way as the forests diminished. In the first half of the 20th century, manufacturing of many kinds developed, especially in the City of La Crosse, where several internationally known companies were headquartered. In the last third of the 20th century, both agriculture and manufacturing suffered a decline, and this nation-wide trend affected those industries in the Mississippi River Region. By the beginning of the 21st century, the Region was shifting to more service-oriented industries, just like much of the United States, while agriculture and manufacturing remained the major drivers of the Regional economy. Today, the Mississippi River Region's top five employment classifications are government; manufacturing; retail

trade; health care and social assistance; and farming. While these are the classifications with the most employees, they are not all the classifications with the highest earnings. The top five classifications grouped by earnings per employee are utilities; management of companies and enterprises; transportation and warehousing; wholesale trade; and manufacturing. The economic challenge for the Mississippi River Region in the coming generation is how to grow more businesses in those industry classifications that tend to pay higher, family-supporting wages, through high-knowledge, value-added products and services. The MRRPC has identified several economic driver industries that should be encouraged to expand in this Region: manufacturing; tourism; agribusiness and food processing; wood and forest products and biofuels. These are industries that already exist at some level in the Region, but which could be expanded due to a competitive advantage that can help build high-knowledge, value-added industries and jobs.

## Political Geography

In Wisconsin, there are three types of sub-county full service local government units: towns, which are unincorporated; and villages and cities, which are incorporated. Within the nine counties of the Mississippi River Region, there are 146 towns, 50 villages, and 22 cities. By population, the smallest town in the Region is Scott, in Monroe County, with 104 people, and the largest is the Town of Onalaska, in La Crosse County, with 5,699 people, according to the 2015 American

**FIGURE 13 MRRPC POPULATION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT**



Community Survey 5-year estimates. Of the 50 villages, Stockholm, in Pepin County is the smallest, with a population of 78. The Village of Holmen, in La Crosse County, is the largest village with a 2015 population of 9,432. The cities range in size from La Crosse, in La Crosse County, with 51,993 people, to Alma, in Buffalo County, with 678 (Figure 13).

## MRRPC Region Transportation Assets

Transportation Assets: 5 NHS Intermodal Connectors, M-35 Marine Highway, The MRRPC region is transected East-West by Interstate 90 and North-South by Interstate 94; with an intersection of the two in Monroe County. The region includes over 500 miles of railroad, and is served by BNSF Railway, CP Rail, and CN Railway.

### Highway

The public roads in the region consist of approximately 115 miles of Interstate Highway (I-90 and I-94), 230 miles of State Roads, and 170 miles of U.S. Highways. There are 12,211,293 daily VMT and 4,457,121,945 annual VMT (Figure 14)

**FIGURE 14 VEHICLE MILES OF TRAVEL, 2018**

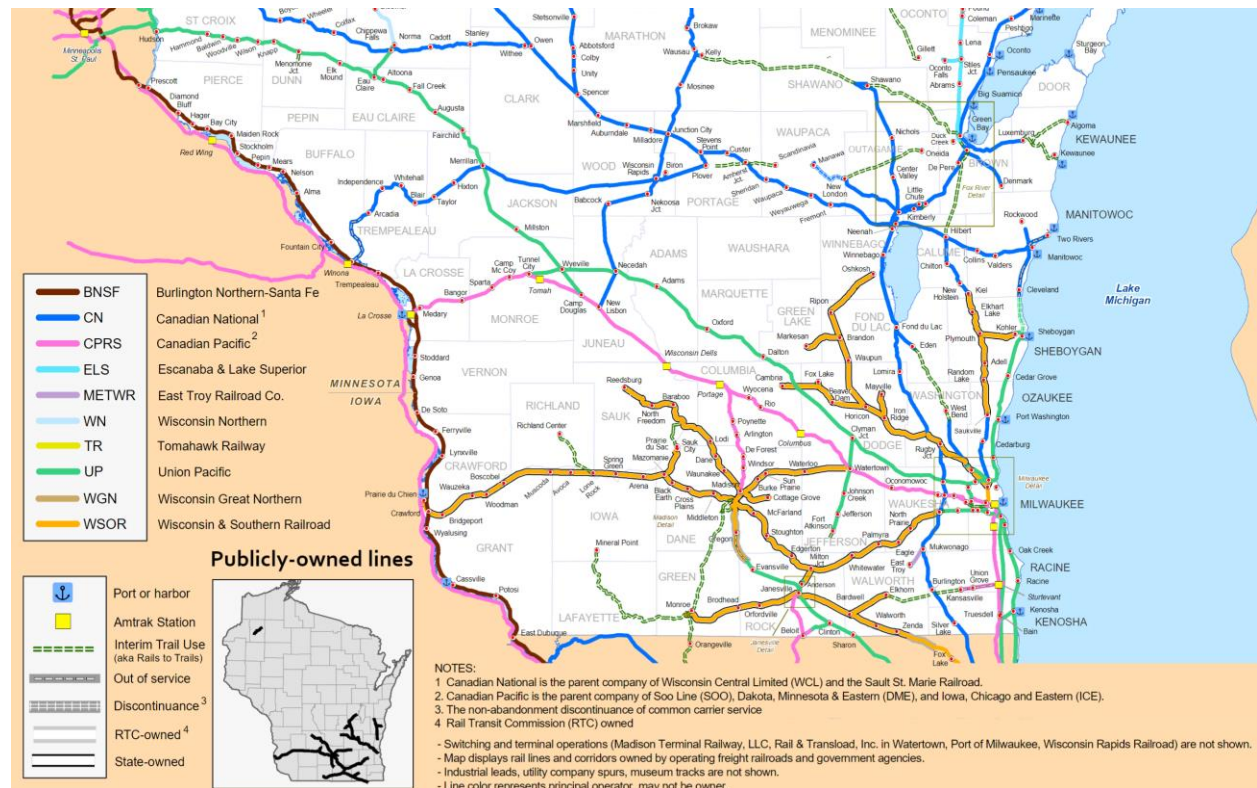
County	Daily	Annual
<b>Buffalo</b>	659,258	240,629,170
<b>Crawford</b>	750,611	273,973,015
<b>Jackson</b>	1,901,400	694,011,000
<b>La Crosse</b>	2,958,965	1,080,022,225
<b>Monroe</b>	2,286,336	834,512,640
<b>Pepin</b>	268,339	97,943,735
<b>Pierce</b>	1,068,300	389,929,500
<b>Trempealeau</b>	1,322,293	482,636,945
<b>Vernon</b>	995,791	363,463,715
<b>MRRPC Region</b>	<b>12,211,293</b>	<b>4,457,121,945</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>180,504,283</b>	<b>65,884,063,295</b>

Source: HPMS Universe Data

## Railroad

The region includes approximately 500 miles of railroad and over 560 rail crossings. Three Class I railroads (BNSF Railway, Canadian Pacific Railway, Canadian National Railway), one short line (Wisconsin & Southern), and a daily Amtrak route (Empire Builder) provide rail service (Figure 15).

**FIGURE 15 WISCONSIN RAILROADS**

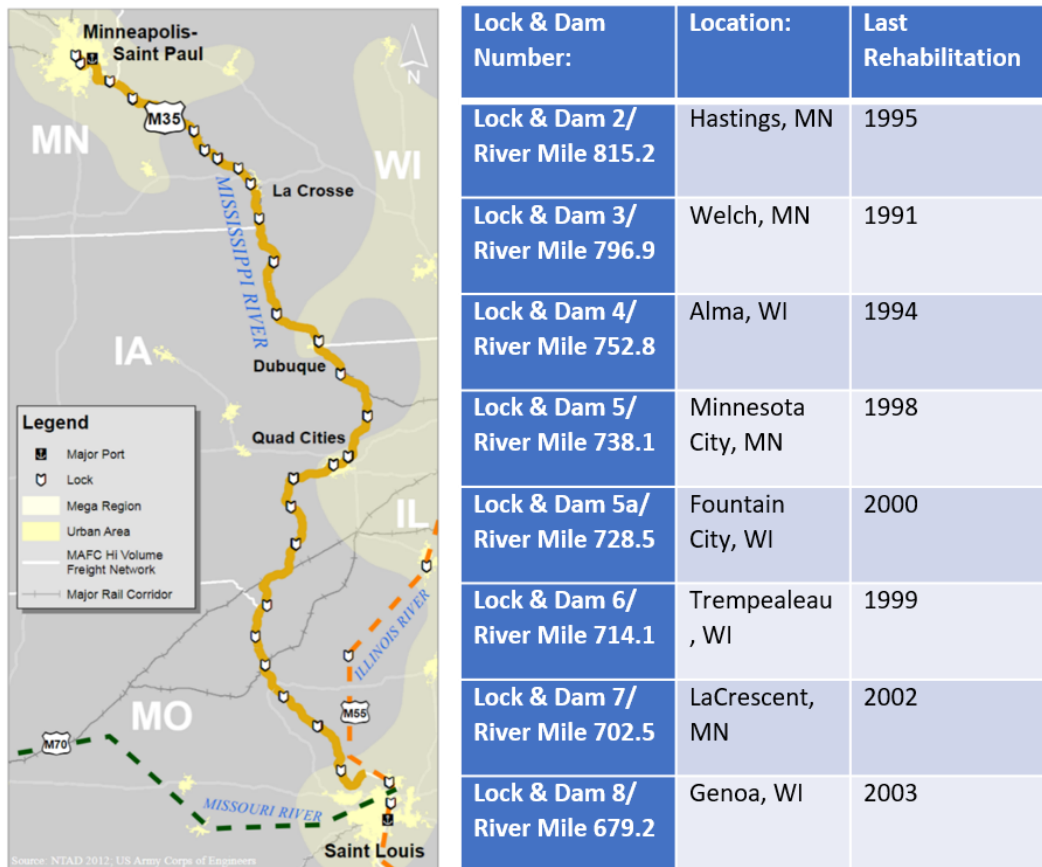


Source: Wisconsin State Rail Plan

## Waterway

The Mississippi River parallels the entire region and includes the Northern portion of Federally Designated Marine Highway 35 (M-35). Seven Lock and Dams are also along this segment (Figure 16).

**FIGURE 16 MARINE HIGHWAY M-35 OVERVIEW**



## Air

La Crosse Regional Airport (LSE) is the largest commercial airport in the region, with a number of smaller General Aviation airports spread throughout the 9 counties. Air cargo service is limited in the region and is principally achieved through regular truck service from larger nearby airports such as Rochester, MN (RST) and Minneapolis, MN (MSP).

## NHS Infrastructure

The region has a number of NHS assets, shown in Figure 17 and Figure 18. The proposed strategy will also identify additional candidates for Federal designation.

**FIGURE 17 MIDWEST NHS NETWORK OVERVIEW**



Source: US DOT

**FIGURE 18 MRRPC DESIGNATED NHS CONNECTORS**

Facility	Type	Connector Description	Facility ID
<b>Port Operators of La Crosse #1</b>	Port Terminal	Front St between Cass St and the Port Facility	WI14P
<b>Port Operators of La Crosse #1</b>	Port Terminal	King St between Front St and 3rd St (US 53)	WI14P
<b>Port Operators of La Crosse #2</b>	Port Terminal	Clinton St, Bainbridge St between Rose Ave and the Port Facility	WI15P
<b>Port Operators of Prairie Du Chien #1</b>	Port Terminal	Main St and Blackhawk Ave between US 18 and the Port Facility	WI16P
<b>Port Operators of Prairie Du Chien #2</b>	Port Terminal	Main St, Blackhawk Ave, Villa Louis St between US 18 and the Port Facility - Ext. of Connection to Prairie Du Chien #1	WI17P

## 4) Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of Project Fund

The MRRPC Multimodal Freight Strategy budget is shown in Figure 19 below. The components account for all necessary planning items described above and includes MRRPC Staff time as in-kind match for each task. MRRPC has extensive on-staff freight planning and implementation expertise to expedite several tasks in the proposal.

**FIGURE 19 PROJECT PLANNING BUDGET**

	<b>MRRPC IN-KIND MATCH</b>	<b>ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL COST</b>	<b>TASK COST</b>
<b>TASK 1: DEMOGRAPHICS, ECONOMICS, TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM</b>	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$15,000
<b>TASK 2: IMPORTANCE OF FREIGHT MOVEMENT IN THE REGION</b>	\$5,000	\$15,000	\$20,000
<b>TASK 3: BUSINESS AND SYSTEM USER OUTREACH</b>	\$5,000	\$25,000	\$30,000
<b>TASK 4: GOODS MOVEMENT DATA SUMMARY</b>	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$15,000
<b>TASK 5: GROWTH PROEJCTIONS, TRENDS, SYSTEM PERFORMANCE</b>	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
<b>TASK 6: COMMUNITY, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS</b>	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$25,000
<b>TASK 7: STRATEGIES AND OPPORTUNITIES</b>	\$10,000	\$25,000	\$35,000
<b>TASK 8: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES</b>	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$140,000</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>

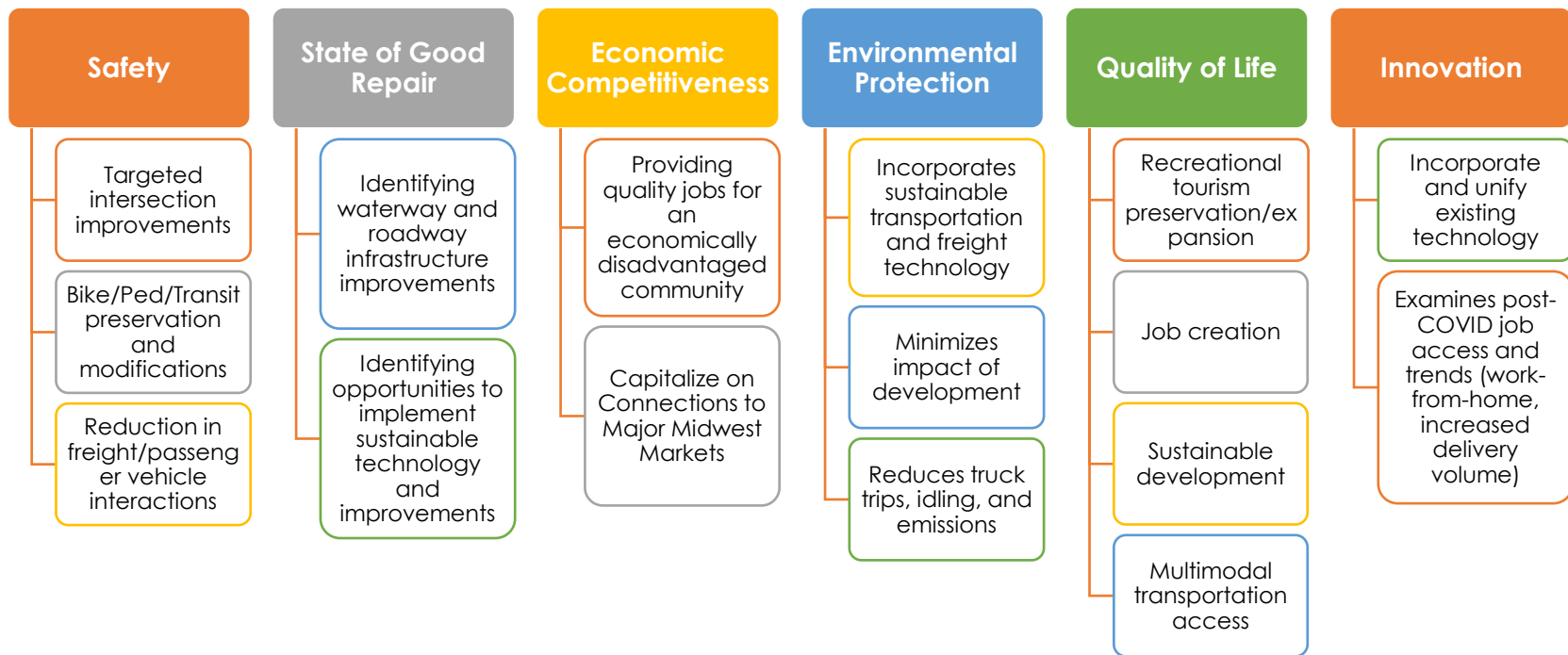
### Other Sources of Funding

All sources of funding will be considered, including new opportunities becoming available in the wake of COVID-19. MRRPC is an Economic Development District designation conferred upon it by the U.S. Department of Commerce-Economic Development Administration (EDA). This district designation qualifies the Region's counties, communities, institutions, and businesses to be eligible for EDA assistance under its public works and economic development facilities program, technical (research) assistance programs, loan programs, and planning programs. Throughout the years, millions of dollars in Federal EDA grants have funded industrial parks, economic research studies, public facility projects and business loans through this partnership regularly administers and facilitates EDA and RLF grants for local jurisdictions as well as other public and private funding sources.

## 5) Merit Criteria

As noted earlier, the completed MRRPC Multimodal Freight Strategy will address and exceed each of the merit criteria set forth by the DOT. This section describes how the objectives of this undertaking will benefit the community, region, and state by contributing to safety, state of good repair, economic competitiveness, environmental protection, quality of life, and innovation. A high-level summary is shown in Figure 20.

**FIGURE 20 MERIT CRITERIA COMPATIBILITY**





## Criterion #1: Safety

The theme of safety resonates through several of the proposed tasks and is also a guiding principle for the MRRPC’s responsibility to its member communities. This strategy will consider safety concerns and improvements from freight, passenger, and bicycle and pedestrian perspectives. As noted, recreation and tourism are a major influence in the Region, and the strategy will promote improvements that will positively impact freight safety AS WELL AS preserving and improving the safety of the Region’s many recreational system users. This includes bike trails, safe routes to school, and passenger commutes. Examples include:

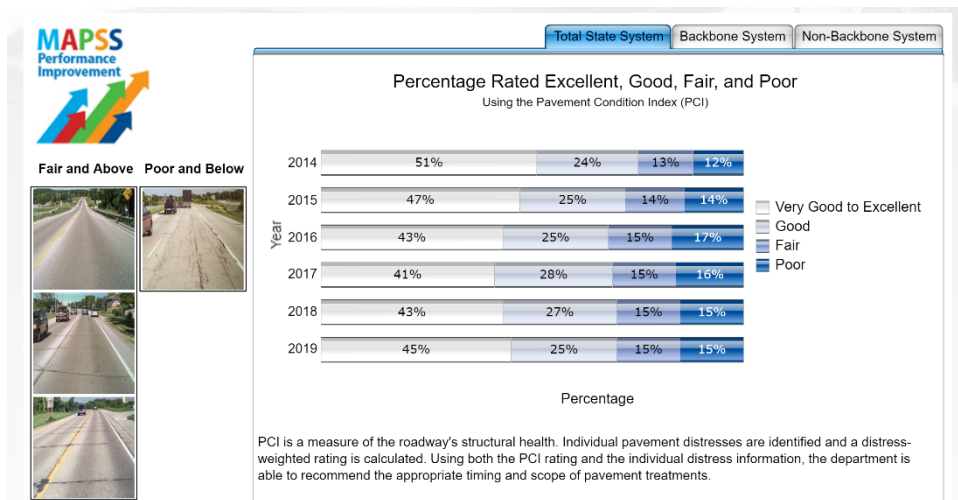
- Targeting opportunities for expanded truck parking and rest areas
  - Including truck and driver services available near these facilities
- Identifying areas with freight and passenger traffic conflicts, typically near rail yards and facilities with high volumes of truck traffic
- Explore areas with potentially unsafe freight and bike-ped interactions, particularly as the Region is home to a substantial portion of the Great River Road
- Identify dangerous Public Rail Crossings and quiet zone candidates
- Identify other safety improvement candidates, to include improvements such as roadway geometry, signage, and operational improvements
- Identify candidates for local truck routes in communities

## Criterion #2: State of Good Repair

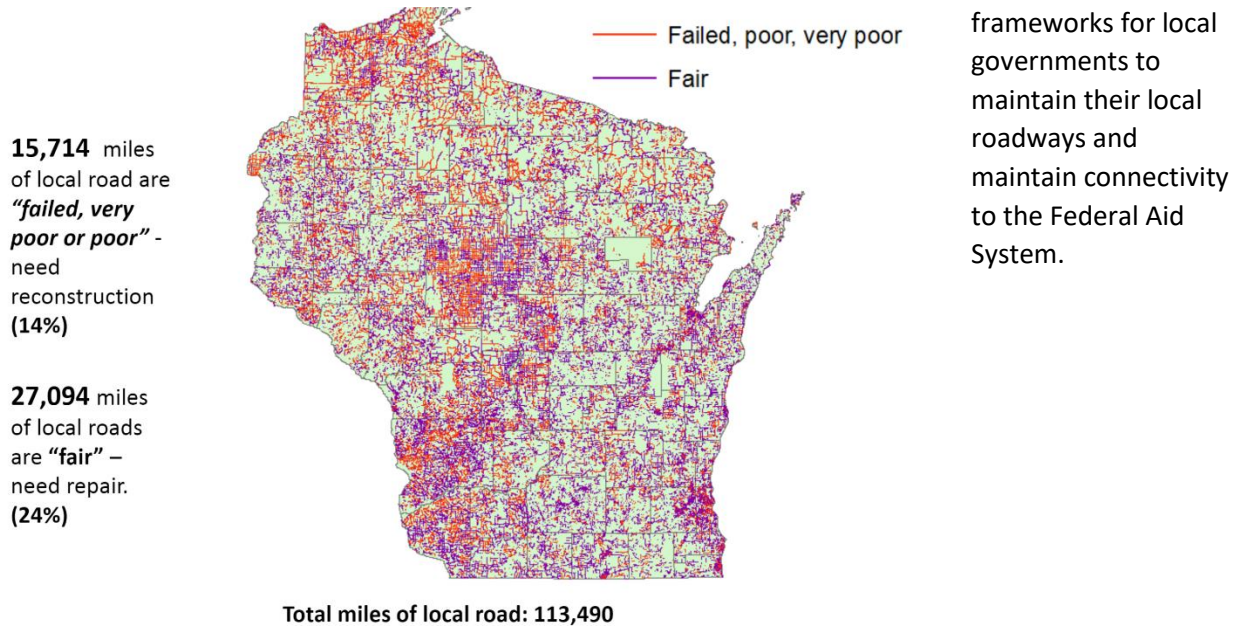
As with other rural areas of the U.S., many local roadways the MRRPC Region face a disproportionate amount of heavy vehicle usage due to large-scale manufacturing, mining, industrial, and agricultural operations. This strategy will identify

local roadways facing this challenge and will catalog and quantify roadway impacts as possible, using WisDOT’s MAPSS System (Figure 21) as well as resources assembled by organizations such as 1000 Friends of Wisconsin (Figure 22). It will further aim to identify funding sources and impact

**FIGURE 21 WISDOT MAPSS DASHBOARD 2019**



**FIGURE 22 LOCAL ROAD CONDITIONS, 2015**



Source: 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, 2015

### Criterion #3: Economic Competitiveness

The MRRPC's primary role is to provide economic development resources for its local communities. The 2017 – 2022 CEDS serves as the strategy for this and includes up-to-date economic competitiveness resources for public and private agencies to incorporate into their efforts. The CEDS documents the Region's conditions, economic challenges, and strategies to improve our Region's environment, economy, and quality of life. Likewise, the proposed freight strategy will build upon the CEDS and provide detailed freight-related economic development components. The strategy will look toward supporting growing industries as well as traditional regional industries, shown in Figure 23.

**FIGURE 23 TOP INDUSTRY GRP**

Industry	2014 Jobs	2019 Jobs	Change in Jobs	% Change in Jobs	2019 LQ	2019 Earnings Per Worker	2019 GRP
Manufacturing	15,153	15,659	506	+3%	1.54	\$59,300	\$1.93B
Health Care and Social Assistance	19,758	21,194	1,436	+7%	1.30	\$65,008	\$1.63B
Government	20,337	20,654	317	+2%	1.08	\$64,479	\$1.60B
Wholesale Trade	4,845	4,634	-211	-4%	0.99	\$65,878	\$960.33M
Retail Trade	14,027	13,910	-117	-1%	1.09	\$31,397	\$817.95M
Finance and Insurance	4,249	4,780	531	+12%	0.93	\$69,557	\$767.25M
Transportation and Warehousing	6,241	6,270	29	+0%	1.31	\$64,712	\$539.63M
Construction	5,558	5,784	226	+4%	0.79	\$65,814	\$530.64M
Utilities	642	699	57	+9%	1.61	\$124,549	\$373.61M
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2,678	3,141	463	+17%	0.37	\$70,187	\$341.29M
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,001	1,046	45	+4%	0.48	\$46,359	\$304.73M
Accommodation and Food Services	10,127	10,516	389	+4%	0.95	\$17,130	\$298.61M
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2,798	2,790	-8	0%	1.87	\$42,126	\$279.40M
Information	1,290	1,283	-7	-1%	0.55	\$68,372	\$266.19M
Other Services (except Public Administration)	5,309	5,654	345	+6%	0.93	\$27,061	\$214.69M
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	4,164	3,736	-428	-10%	0.47	\$38,970	\$210.41M
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,942	2,199	257	+13%	1.19	\$78,529	\$194.31M
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	471	855	384	+82%	1.57	\$87,721	\$167.20M
Educational Services	1,920	1,957	37	+2%	0.59	\$35,559	\$86.73M
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,268	1,492	224	+18%	0.66	\$21,317	\$49.02M

Source: EMSI Analysis

### Criterion #4: Environmental Protection

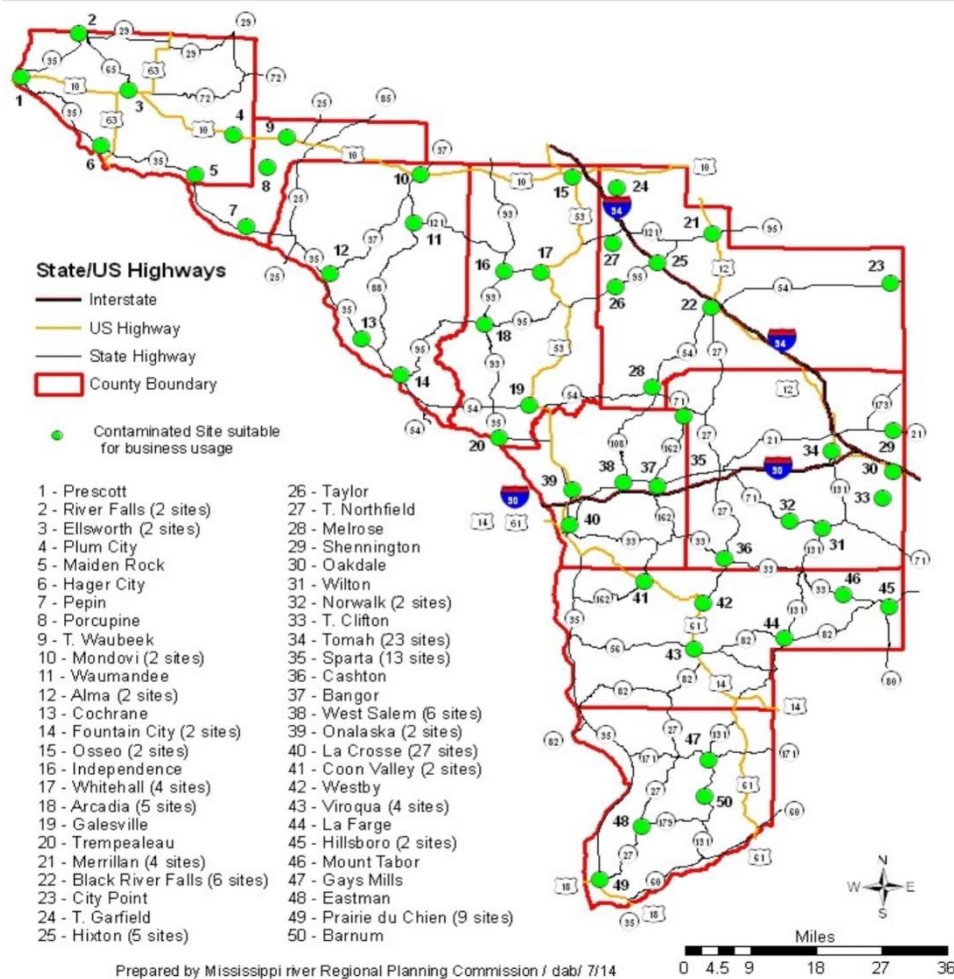
As noted, one of MRRPC’s responsibilities is environmental protection and hazard mitigation for the Region. Within this purview is preserving Legacy Places and preserving and promoting use of the 180 Mississippi River miles in the jurisdiction. In addition, the MRRPC preserves and promotes agriculture, forestry resources, and mining/mineral resources in the Region. With that in mind, this strategy will consider the importance of each of these factors to the Region’s success. Specifically, the Strategy will identify ways to incorporate content within local and regional Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMP), local Comprehensive Plans, identify ways to reduce truck idling, and look toward efficiencies in reducing truck miles to, from, and through the region. The Strategy will also build upon previous work in identify

adaptive re-use opportunities such as the soon-to-be closing Dairyland Power Coal Plant (**Error! Reference source not found.**) and for environmentally contaminated sites (Figure 25).

FIGURE 24 DAIRYLAND POWER PLANT – GENOA, WI



FIGURE 25 ENVIRONMENTALLY CONTAMINATED SITES SUITABLE FOR BUSINESS USE



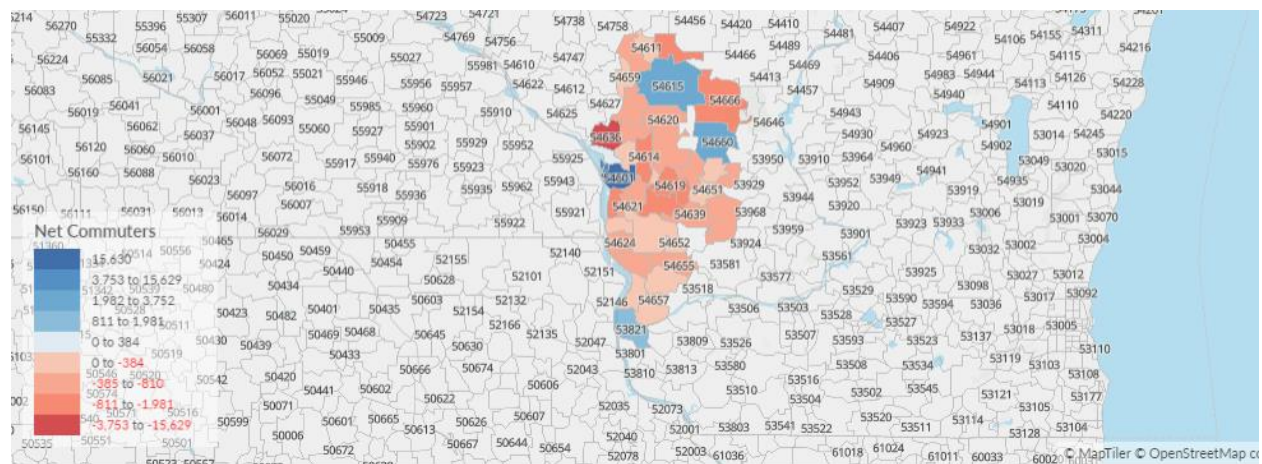
Source: MRRPC CEDS 2017-2022

## Criterion #5: Quality of Life

The region has long had a strong focus on recreation, and is a tourist destination for watersports, hiking, biking, and many other outdoor pursuits. The project will identify and target a number of quality of life improvements for the region’s citizens and visitors. Specifically, the planning process will:

- Identify major truck-passenger vehicle conflicts at intersections in the region to the manufacturing, industrial, and distribution areas.
- Identify opportunities to preserve, enhance, and establish truck routes through the region’s communities.
- Identify areas for improved geometry and traffic patterns.
- Maximize the development potential of targeted areas, to promote well-paying jobs for the area workforce.
- Explore expanded freight and passenger rail service to the site, potentially removing truck trips from the region to nearby freight hubs.
- Expand existing broadband service to underserved areas to retain existing businesses and promote growth.
- Explore innovative approaches for remote workers.
- Explore innovative approaches for parcel delivery options.

**FIGURE 26 PLACE OF WORK VS PLACE OF RESIDENCE**



Where Talent Works			Where Talent Lives		
ZIP	Name	2019 Employment	ZIP	Name	2019 Workers
54601	La Crosse, WI (in La Crosse co...	40,115	54601	La Crosse, WI (in La Crosse co...	24,485
54650	Onalaska, WI (in La Crosse co...	13,461	54650	Onalaska, WI (in La Crosse co...	13,282
54603	La Crosse, WI (in La Crosse co...	11,630	54656	Sparta, WI (in Monroe county)	9,929
54660	Tomah, WI (in Monroe county)	11,185	54660	Tomah, WI (in Monroe county)	8,675
54656	Sparta, WI (in Monroe county)	9,376	54636	Holmen, WI (in La Crosse cou...	7,907

## Criterion #6: Innovation

The plan aims to innovate wherever possible. Opportunities include building off Wisconsin State Freight Plan Recommendations and Truck Routes (Figure 27), incorporating emerging and existing technology (such as truck parking ITS technology), innovative financing packages, and exploring innovative public and private partnerships. Technological innovation such as use of alternative fuel powered cargo handling equipment, electric and hydrogen cargo logistics/drayage vehicles and market hinterland truck logistics equipment, electric vehicle charging infrastructure and efficient road and road design to provide for minimal idling for large sites will also be explored. The Strategy will also explore unique methods that the MRRPC can make data and information available to local communities.

### Innovative Financing

As noted, the MRRPC is designated as an EDA economic development district. This district designation qualifies the Region's counties, communities, institutions and businesses to be eligible for EDA assistance under its public works and economic development facilities program, technical (research) assistance programs, loan programs, and planning programs. This also affords the RPC to explore non-traditional sources for transportation projects and improvements. MRRPC staff regularly monitor public and private grant funding opportunities to assist local communities.

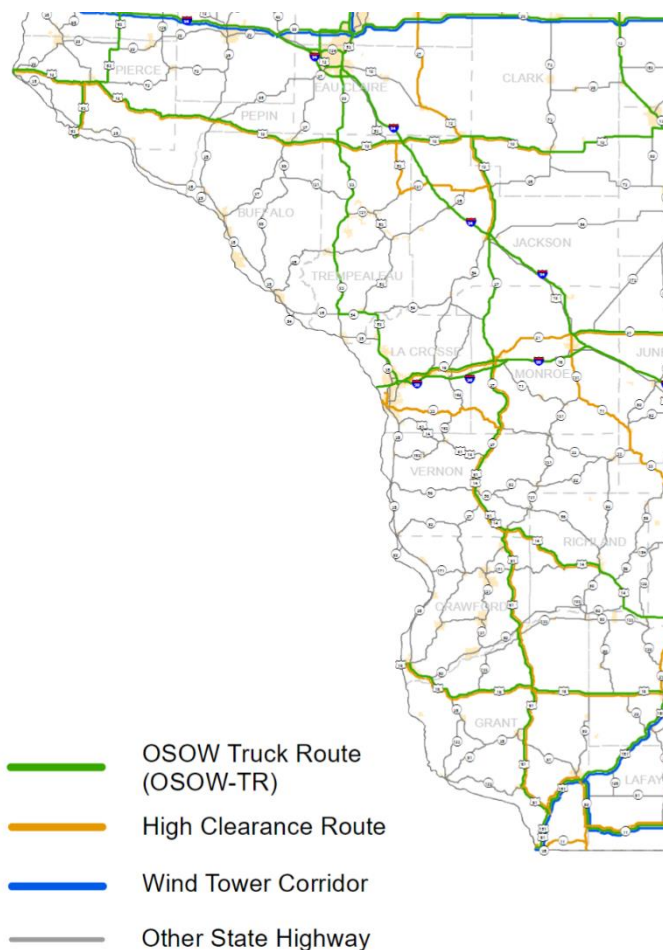
### Partnership

Successful completion of this strategy will require partnership across a wide cross-section of public and private stakeholders in the Region. MRRPC has an established network of collaborators throughout the Region and will seek to expand the group for this project. Examples include:

#### Representative Public Sector Partners

- State of Wisconsin – WisDOT,
- Metropolitan Council – Twin Cities area MPO that serves the Northern portion of the MRRPC region
- La Crosse Area Planning Council – La Crosse Area MPO that serves the Central portion of the MRRPC region
- US Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration

FIGURE 27 WISCONSIN TRUCK FREIGHT ROUTES























Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Local Business Associations
- Wisconsin Great River Road

Representative Private Partners and Supporters

- Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
- BNSF – Class One National railroad system company
- CP Rail – Class One National and Canadian railroad system company
- CN Railroad - Class One National and Canadian railroad system company
- Upper Mississippi River Barge Operators
- Upper Mississippi River Barge Shippers and Terminal Operators
- Select major employers in the region (Figure 28)

**FIGURE 28 TOP COMPANIES IN THE MRRPC REGION**

Top Companies	Profiles	Top Companies Posting	Unique Postings
Gundersen Health System	2,885 	CRST International, Inc.	3,202 
Mayo Clinic	1,222 	Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc.	2,600 
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse	1,162 	Oracle Corporation	2,584 
Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc.	698 	Platinum Supplemental Insurance, Ir	2,272 
Kwik Trip, Inc.	656 	Gundersen Health System	1,762 
Trane Inc.	587 	Roehl Transport, Inc.	1,301 
United States Department of the Ar	509 	Wal-Mart, Inc.	853 
Logistics Health, Inc.	508 	Kwik Trip, Inc.	836 
Western Technical College	499 	Telereach Inc	763 
University of Wisconsin-Madison	484 	U.S. Xpress, Inc.	728 

## Project Readiness

As noted, the Strategy will build upon previous MRRPC CEDS development, and will be ready to immediately begin on Notice-to-Proceed. MRRPC has in-house expertise in freight planning and will be able to begin a large share of the work without consultant assistance. The Strategy will also overlap with various plan updates, such as the WisDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan, and multiple Comprehensive Plan Updates and can synergize many elements with those.

## 6) Project Schedule

The project schedule includes overlap of multiple tasks, as well as overlap with concurrent planning studies, which provides efficiencies. Estimated task length is shown in the table below, and the total project will take 18 months from Notice-to-Proceed until completion.

	<b>TASK COST</b>	<b>TASK DURATION</b>
<b>TASK 1: DEMOGRAPHICS, ECONOMICS, TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM</b>	\$15,000	3 Months
<b>TASK 2: IMPORTANCE OF FREIGHT MOVEMENT IN THE REGION</b>	\$20,000	4 Months
<b>TASK 3: BUSINESS AND SYSTEM USER OUTREACH</b>	\$30,000	9 Months
<b>TASK 4: GOODS MOVEMENT DATA SUMMARY</b>	\$15,000	3 Months
<b>TASK 5: GROWTH PROJECTIONS, TRENDS, SYSTEM PERFORMANCE</b>	\$30,000	6 Months
<b>TASK 6: COMMUNITY, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS</b>	\$25,000	5 Months
<b>TASK 7: STRATEGIES AND OPPORTUNITIES</b>	\$35,000	8 Months
<b>TASK 8: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES</b>	\$30,000	TBD
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>18 Months</b>