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# Visions Northwest Quarterly Beacon

Illuminating the Path to Economic Growth in Northwest Wisconsin



Visions Northwest Regional Economic Development Group serves Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor and Washburn Counties and includes the five Native American Tribes of Bad River, Lac Courte Oreilles, Lac du Flambeau, Red Cliff and the St. Croix Chippewa.

## Local Economic Development:

[Ashland](#)[Bayfield](#)[Burnett](#)[Douglas](#)[Iron](#)[Price](#)[Rusk](#)[Sawyer](#)[Taylor](#)[Washburn](#)

## December, 2019

Happy Holidays!

Here we are again, fast approaching another New Year! Mother Nature has delivered an early healthy dose of Winter to most of our region over the past week, and many of us are still digging our way out from the snowbanks. Our area businesses can't help but look forward to the economic impact of area tourism that comes with a full blanket of snow! Bring your cross-country skis, snowmobiles, fat tire bikes, and snowshoes and join us for Winter fun #innorthwestwisconsin!

As we say goodbye to 2019, I'd like to sincerely thank our volunteer board members and many partners for your commitment to making our region a great place to live, work, and do business. In 2020, I look forward to our continued collaboration to address some of the challenges facing Northwest Wisconsin.

Cheers to a healthy, happy New Year!



Crystal Rohde  
Visions Northwest Administrator

## Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board Regional Employer Opioid Impact Survey

The NWWIB is conducting a survey with employers about



A proud partner of the [AmericanJobCenter](#) network

The hope is to build a robust picture of how employers are impacted by the opioid epidemic so regional organizations can provide the proper support and resources. Regional partners, please feel free to share this [survey link](#) with your area business owners, or if you are an employer and would like to weigh in, please take the survey by clicking the graphic below.



## Visions Northwest holds Planning Session for Upcoming Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Members of the Visions Northwest group, serving as the CEDS Committee, and Northwest Regional Planning Commission board members gathered on October 9th to participate in a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) exercise to determine priorities for the next five-year (2020-2024) CEDS for the region.



The CEDS is prepared to guide the economic growth of

district; defines the vision, goals, and objectives of the district; and designates and coordinates strategies and/or activities to accomplish and implement its goals. Some of the top priorities identified through the session in the region include: workforce strategies (attraction of new and utilization of existing), the need for more workforce housing, ongoing drug issues and the need to identify partnerships across region to address this challenge, as well as broadband/cellular infrastructure. The current 2019 CEDS can be viewed and downloaded from our [website](#). The SWOT results will be incorporated into the 2020 CEDS, to be adopted next October by the NWRPC Executive Committee.

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## **Wisconsin Economic Development Academy to Host Workforce Housing Series**



### **Workforce Housing Series - Session 1 - Framing the Issues and Opportunities**

This [FREE webinar](#) - scheduled for Thursday, December 12, 2019 from 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM - is an introduction to a broad 2020 Workforce Housing Series offered by the Academy that will include a combination of both in-person, classroom style workshops and other webinars. The introductory webinar aims to provide participants with a clear understanding of issues surrounding the Wisconsin workforce housing shortage and opportunities for reform, including potential legislation initiatives.

### **Workforce Housing Series- Sessions 2-4:**

Wisconsin's workforce housing shortage is impacting communities and employers across the state. The shortage makes it more difficult to attract or retain workers, impacting the economic competitiveness of communities, regions and businesses. The Wisconsin Economic Development Academy is hosting a series of four programs on workforce housing that will provide participants with an understanding of the causes and impacts of the shortage, initiatives for addressing the shortage, best practices in workforce housing

Visit <http://www.weda.org/housing-series/> to learn more about the series and to register!

## Join the Wisconsin Supplier Network



[Wisconsin Supplier Network](#) (WSN) is a two-pronged online tool that connects buyers and Wisconsin suppliers, making sourcing easy. WSN online directory provides companies with a convenient avenue to find Wisconsin suppliers in a simple to use system that delivers results and supplier solutions. Similarly, WSN offers suppliers a dynamic platform to get their information out to a broader customer base. Suppliers get access to RFPs, RFQs, and CFIs with an opportunity to respond to the requests and access new markets.

Participation in the Wisconsin Supplier Network is FREE, so don't wait to [register](#) as a supplier or search for a new supplier partner.

### Visions Northwest Key Initiatives

- Infrastructure Needs Analysis and Funding
- High Potential Workforce Attraction and Retention Strategies
- Expand Wood Products Potential

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