

Lincoln County Fairgrounds

Market Demand Assessment, Facility Recommendations and Financial Analysis Report for the Lincoln County Fairgrounds

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Submitted by:



MARKIN CONSULTING ■ MAPLE GROVE, MINNESOTA

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Exhibits

- Exhibit A – Current Fairgrounds Facility List
- Exhibit B – Keffer/Overton Fairgrounds Facilities Analysis
- Exhibit C – Comparable Fairgrounds
- Exhibit D – Potential Events/Activities Summary

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

This report was prepared for the County of Lincoln, Wisconsin by Markin Consulting. It details the results of our market analysis and financial and economic assessment for the future of the Lincoln County Fairgrounds (Fairgrounds). In recent years, the Fairgrounds, located in Merrill, has been the focus of discussions and plans for its future (by multiple governmental jurisdictions and key stakeholder) – especially since its grandstand structure was destroyed during a storm in June 2012.

As owner of the Fairgrounds, Lincoln County (the County) received approximately \$1.27 million in insurance proceeds for the grandstand. Since receiving the insurance proceeds, those funds have been set aside as planning for the future of the Fairgrounds has been taking place. For the Lincoln County Board of Supervisors, in addition to assessing the type of seating structure that could replace the grandstand, it is also interested in understanding (1) how to increase the overall usage of the Fairgrounds, (2) what other facility improvements/changes are required (in addition to the grandstand replacement), (3) what is the range of capital costs for the grandstand and other improvements and (4) what will be the ongoing annual costs and approach to operating the Fairgrounds to insure its success.

In the past year, the City of Merrill expressed interest in taking control of the Fairgrounds from the County and using it to further promote the City and generate economic activity in the tourism sector – benefiting local hotels, restaurants, retail outlets and the like. Other stakeholders – principally major users of the Fairgrounds – have expressed the need to the County to replace the grandstand, in some fashion, as well as to make other improvements to the existing facilities in order for the Fairgrounds to continue to be a viable event facility in Lincoln County.

Key questions that were being asked by the County and other interested stakeholders include:

- What is the general market and financial viability of existing facilities and structures for year-round use? How can the year-round uses and net revenue generation of operating existing facilities be maximized?
- What facilities and structures at the Fairgrounds are in compliance with code and which ones need modifications to achieve code compliance?
- What new/expanded local, state and regional markets for events and activities are accessible by the Fairgrounds based on competitive factors, demographic/economic trends and other demand factors?



- What changes need to be made to Fairground facilities, amenities, infrastructure, services, rental policies, marketing, ownership, management, staffing and other operational aspects to successfully attract and grow the identified market opportunities?
- What are the financial implications of implementing the recommended facilities? What are the impacts to revenues, staffing costs, marketing, utilities, maintenance and the like?
- What are the potential economic benefits to the Merrill/Lincoln County area that could result from new business and activities held at the Fairgrounds?

To help answer the questions posed by the Board of Supervisors and address the interest and concerns of the City and key stakeholders, Markin Consulting was hired in the late summer 2014 to conduct a comprehensive feasibility study and business plan that provides direction for the future operations, management, finances and facilities of the Lincoln County Fairgrounds (the Feasibility Study). Joining Markin Consulting in the Feasibility Study was Keffer/Overton Associates (Fairground Planners/Designers) who focused primarily on the facilities assessment and capital cost estimates.

The objectives of the study were to:

- Refine/develop the purpose of the Fairgrounds for the County/City and a vision for the future operations of the Fairgrounds, and address ownership options, management and operating policies
- Identify desired usage (felt needs) of the Fairgrounds by the County, City, business community, local residents, users and key stakeholders
- Identify market supportable events, activities and uses for the Fairgrounds (along with marketing strategies to successfully attract and retain users)
- Assess the current Fairgrounds location and facilities, including facility and layout uses associated with staging the annual Lincoln County Fair and year-round events
- Recommend facility and infrastructure requirements and priorities to successfully attract and retain the identified potential events, activities and uses, as well as to effectively stage the annual Lincoln County Fair
- Assess the long-term financial implications and economic benefits of operating the Fairgrounds based on the identified market and community needs and recommended facilities, layout, management structure, staffing and operating approaches

APPROACH

Markin Consulting and Keffer/Overton, in conducting the market demand, financial feasibility and economic impact analysis for an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds, performed the following work steps:

- Toured the Fairgrounds and the general area of Merrill and surrounding area to assess location factors and their impacts on potential events, activities and facility needs
- Attended the 2014 Lincoln County Fair, reviewing Fair programming, layout and operating issues with a representative of the Lincoln County Fair Association (LCFA)
- Keffer/Overton conducted a detailed review of the conditions of existing facilities of the Fairgrounds and identified needed code compliance upgrades, as well as options for general facility upgrades
- Researched and analyzed the impact of demographic and economic trends of Merrill, Lincoln County, and surrounding counties on potential event demand for an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds
- Researched and assessed the quality and quantity of community resources (lodging, retail outlet, restaurants, attractions, etc.) in Merrill and surrounding areas that would appeal to, and support, potential users of an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds
- Identified, researched and assessed facilities that would be considered competition for events and activities at an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds
- Conducted research, analyses, interviews and surveys of potential users of an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds to identify opportunities for hosting/staging events at an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds – including event size and duration, time of year and facility/service needs
- Developed estimates of potential uses of an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds and recommended facility components necessary to successfully attract and retain the identified target markets (the Recommended Facilities)
- Prepared estimates of the revenues and expenses associated with operating and maintaining an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds, as well as the potential economic benefits to the City and County associated with events held at an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds
- Identified alternative operating models for fairgrounds in general and for the Lincoln County Fairgrounds
- Prepared cost estimates for the Recommended Facilities and assessed the funding impacts related to implementing the Recommended Facilities

CONDITIONS OF THE STUDY

This report is to be used for facility planning of an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds only. It is not to be used for any other purpose. This report may not be referred to or included in any prospectus, or as a part of any offering or representation made in connection with the sale of securities to the public.

Although we believe that the information and assumptions set forth in this report constitute a reasonable basis for the estimates of usage, the achievement of any estimate may be affected by fluctuating economic conditions and the occurrence of other future events that cannot be anticipated. Therefore, the actual results achieved will vary from the estimates and such variations may be material.

The terms of our engagement are that we have no responsibility to update this report or to revise the estimates because of event and transactions occurring subsequent to the date of this report.

FAIRGROUNDS VISION/PURPOSE

In planning for the future of an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds, it is imperative to have a vision for the future of the Fairgrounds – its purpose in the community (City and County). A vision/purpose for the Fairgrounds, as well as its future planning, is directly tied to three principal factors: felt needs, current facility issues/constraints and event/usage potential.

To assist in addressing and understanding each of these three factors, as a part of the Feasibility Study, our study team (1) conducted interviews with key stakeholders and held public meetings to identify felt needs, (2) performed a detailed review of the Fairgrounds site location, facility conditions and competitive factors to evaluate current facility issues/constraints and (3) researched and assessed potential new events and uses for an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds.



FELT NEEDS

To discover the felt (and real) needs of the County, City, users, stakeholders and Lincoln County residents, our study team engaged representatives from these organizations and local residents in a series of work sessions, interviews and public meetings. Those organizations involved in the work sessions and interviews were:

- Lincoln County
- City of Merrill
- Lincoln County Fair Association
- Lincoln County Rodeo Association
- Merrill Chamber of Commerce
- Merrill Riders
- Lincoln County 4-H Extension
- Private Food Booth Owners

In addition, two public meetings were held (one in Merrill and one in Tomahawk) to gather input from local residents. Following are summaries of the work sessions, interviews and public input.

Lincoln County

Based on discussions with various representative of Lincoln County (administration and maintenance), review of the County's operational approach to the Fairgrounds and readings of Board of Supervisor meeting minutes and local newspaper articles concerning the Fairgrounds, the Fairgrounds is viewed by the County as an under-utilized facility with significant deferred maintenance and in need of large amounts of capital to improve and operate. The County Board of Supervisors is split on the interest and want to invest in and continue to operate the Fairgrounds, including using the grandstand insurance proceeds.

City of Merrill and Chamber of Commerce

The City's Mayor, Administrator, some Councilmen and representatives of the Chamber of Commerce all expressed a view that the Fairgrounds is an important asset to the City – a possible growing piece of the economic pie for Merrill business. It is also viewed as a part of the overall quality of life factors for Merrill residents. Representatives of the City voiced a great interest in taking over the Fairgrounds from the County, improving key aspects of the Fairgrounds (including replacing the grandstand seating) and folding in the operations under its Parks and Recreation Department – with a plan to hire someone to jointly market the Fairgrounds and the Merrill Area Recreation Complex (MARC). To accomplish this, the City insists that the County sell the Fairgrounds to the City for a minimal amount and give the City the remaining grandstand insurance proceeds so the City can construct replacement seating at the Fairgrounds. In addition to replacing the grandstand seating, the City indicated that it would also need to invest in upgrading other aspects of the existing Fairgrounds, such as the bathrooms.

Lincoln County Fair Association, Inc.

The Lincoln County Fair Association, Inc. (the Fair Association) is a non-profit organization that stages the annual Lincoln County Fair (the Fair) at the Fairgrounds. Prior to the loss of the grandstand in 2012, the Fair Association used the then 2,100-seat grandstand (approximate) grandstand for concert and demo derby entertainment. According to the president of the Fair Association, the grandstand entertainment was a major attendance draw for the Fair; even as a paid event (Fair admission is free). Records of the Fair Association indicate that in 2011, the year prior to the loss of the grandstand, attendance was estimated at about 29,500 over the five-day Fair and in 2014 attendance had declined to about 18,250 – a 38 percent decline. The Fair Association has replaced the grandstand with an entertainment and beer tent. Below are pictures of the grandstand prior to its destruction and the entertainment tent since its loss.



Along with the loss of the grandstand, Fair Association representatives cited significant deferred maintenance with the Fairgrounds bathroom facilities as reasons for declines in attendance and sponsorship opportunities – all negatively impacting the financial and operational sustainability of the Lincoln County Fair. The attached Keffer/Overton report details the conditions of the current bathrooms referenced by the Fair Association.

Lincoln County Rodeo Association, Inc.

Each June, the Lincoln County Rodeo Association, Inc. (the Rodeo Association) produces and stages a 3-day Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) rodeo at the Fairgrounds – the Wisconsin River Pro Rodeo (the Rodeo). In addition to three performances, the Rodeo also has vendor booths, live music, a tractor pull and other entertainment for attendees. Since the loss of the grandstand, the Rodeo has used portable seating for this event, with resulting diminished attendance. The Rodeo Association representatives indicated that it needs a minimum 2,500-seat replacement structure for the long-term sustainability of the Rodeo event. The picture below shows the current seating along the south side of the arena for the Rodeo.



Merrill Riders

The Merrill Riders organization is a local non-profit horse club that stages horse speed shows during the summer months at the Fairgrounds – using the outdoor arena and surrounding grass areas for trailering, portable food booth and the entries/announcer booth. Merrill Riders holds 6 gymkhanas (timed speed events and games for riders) and one all day speed event at the Fairgrounds. These events include barrel racing, plug races (one barrel), flag races, pole bending and the like. According to Merrill Riders president, the organization owns the entry/announcer booth. This organization has no need of large grandstand seating, but does need some portable seating.

Lincoln County 4-H Extension

Representatives of the Lincoln County Extension office and volunteers with the 4-H dog and horse projects participated in interview sessions to share perspectives of the Fairgrounds and needs for programming (Fair and non-Fair). The horse group representatives cited a need for limited portable seating for the Fair horse show, as well a few clinics, along with a larger arena (200' x 300') and a sound system that reaches the other areas of the grounds (beyond the arena area). For the dog group representatives, the need/desire to stage the dog show during the Fair, rather than before the Fair (due to lack of ground space when the Fair is operating), was cited. While there are no dog clubs in the County, discussion of the possible attraction of the State 4-H Dog Show indicated the need for a larger indoor exhibition building than currently available at the Fairgrounds.

Private Food Booth Owners

Though the County owns the Fairgrounds, there are 9 privately owned structures on the grounds that serve as food booths for local non-profit organizations during the Fair and, for a few, at other events held at the Fairgrounds. These organizations/owners are Our Saviour's, Knights of Columbus, St. John's, St. Francis, Eagle Club, VFW, Lions Club, St. Paul's and Optimists Club. The operation of these food operations serve as funding raisers for these organizations. We interviewed 7 of the 9 organizations to understand their operations and issues with the Fair and Fairgrounds. Representatives of the VFW and St. Paul's did not respond to our interview phone calls. All of the 7 organizations cited three consensus issues with the Fair and Fairgrounds – (1) the loss of the grandstand seating and subsequent drop in attendance has negatively affected food sales and profits, (2) a dislike to have to sell Pepsi products as mandated by the Fair Association and (3) would like more events at the Fairgrounds throughout the year as possible way to operate and generate more revenue for their organization.

Public Input

In September 2014, separate public meetings were held in Merrill and Tomahawk to allow local residents to share ideas on “How to Better Utilize the Fairgrounds.” Those in attendance were asked about events, operations and facility ideas that would be of interest to the public. The table below presents a summary of the responses at the public meetings.

Lincoln County Fairgrounds

Public Meeting Comments - "How to Better Utilize the Fairgrounds"

Bands in Park Type of Setting	Moto Cross
Bicycle Racing	Multi-Purpose Use
Big Name Acts - Festivals	Music Festival
Continue Agriculture Heritage - via 4H, etc.	Operational Management Board to run grounds
Farmers Market	Polka Festival
Flea Market, Gun Shows	Rabbit Shows
Ground Coordinator Position	Seating Facility for Events - like Grandstand
Homemaker Club in Lincoln County	Showcase History of Region
How to Reserve	Shows, Events every weekend
Improve Accessibility to Building and Grounds	Strawberry Festival
Input from Tomahawk	Update Facilities
Look at How Name is Marketed - Ground vs Fair	Upgrade Facilities (bathrooms, seating/stadium)
Make Fairground a destination (for festivals)	Wedding Receptions
Marketed Better	Year Round Camping
More Events	Year Round Enclosed Building

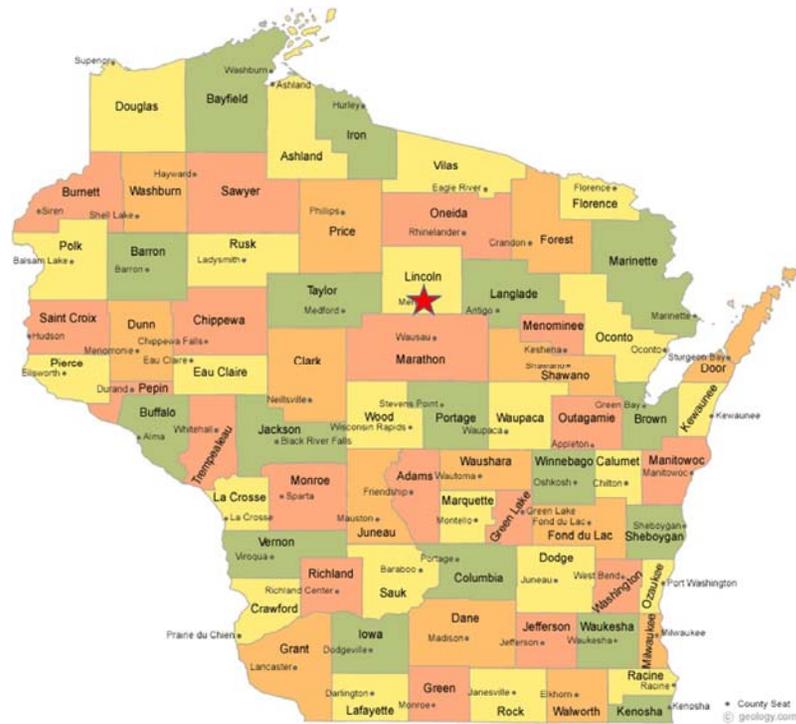
The ideas expressed included new events and activities, building changes and improvements and approaches to marketing and operating the Fairgrounds. In addition, the overall consensus of those in attendance was that the Fairgrounds is an important community asset that needs to continue to operate and to improve in both facilities and operations.

CURRENT FAIRGROUNDS ISSUES/CONSTRAINTS

The potential for event facilities such as the Fairgrounds, is dependent on a number of factors – location, facility conditions, demographic and economic trends, community resources comparable and competitive facilities and potential events. This section presents an overview of these factors in relation to an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds.

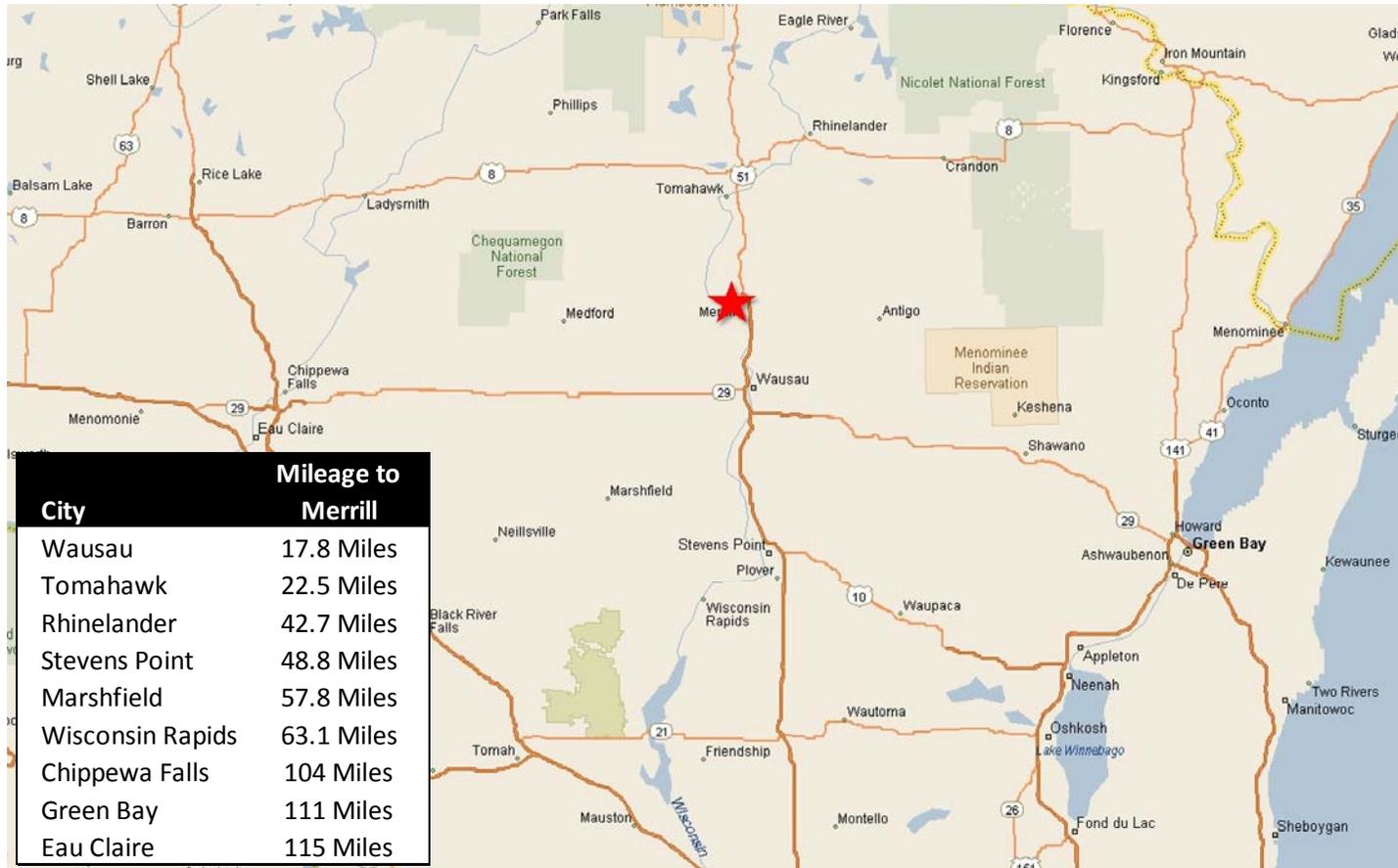
SITE LOCATION ASSESSMENT

Lincoln County is located in the upper central portion of Wisconsin.



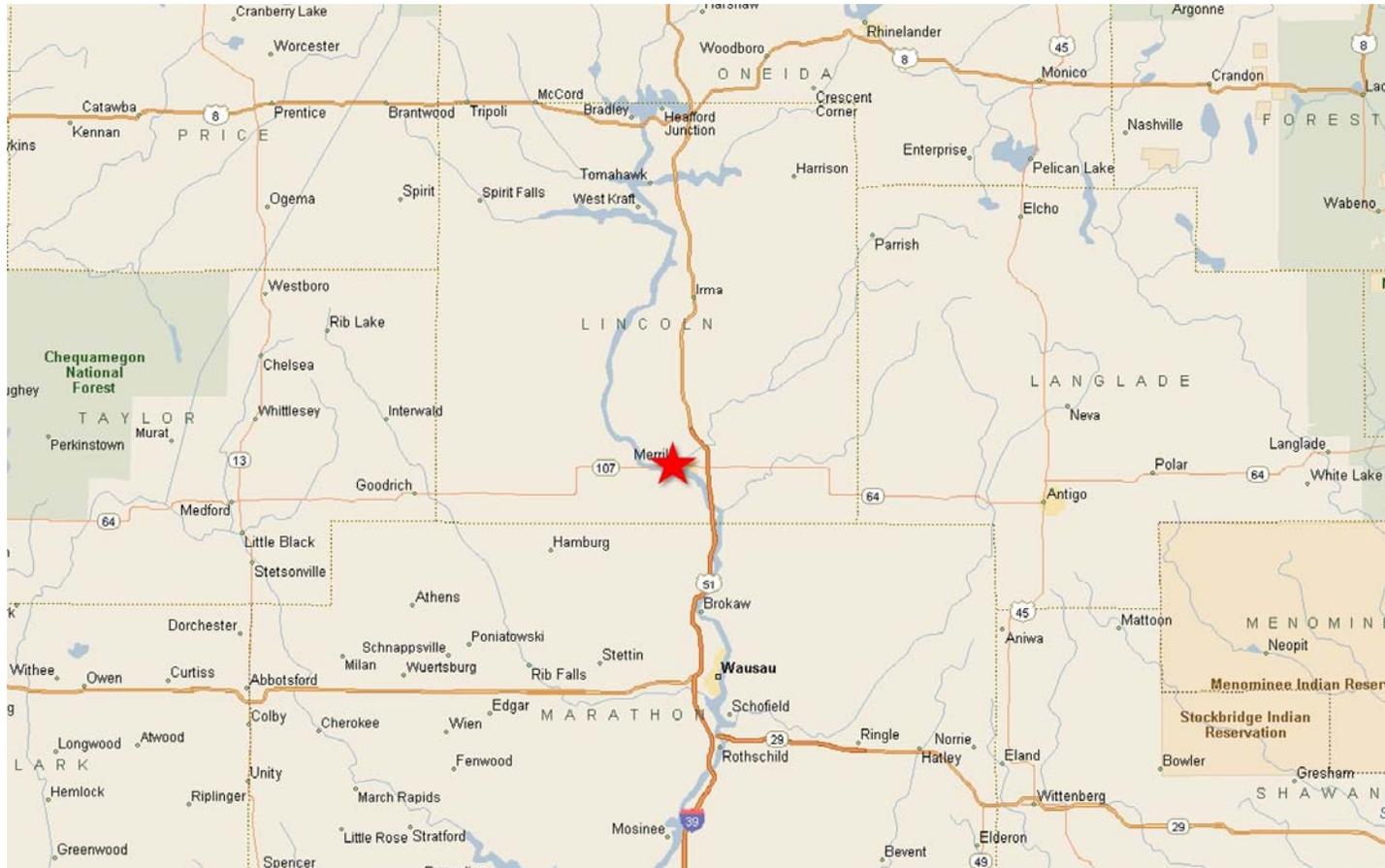
Regional Access

Access to Lincoln County via major highways within the region includes US Highway 51 from the north and south and US Highway 8 from the east and west, as shown in the map below. Mileage to Merrill from various larger population centers in the region is shown in the table below.



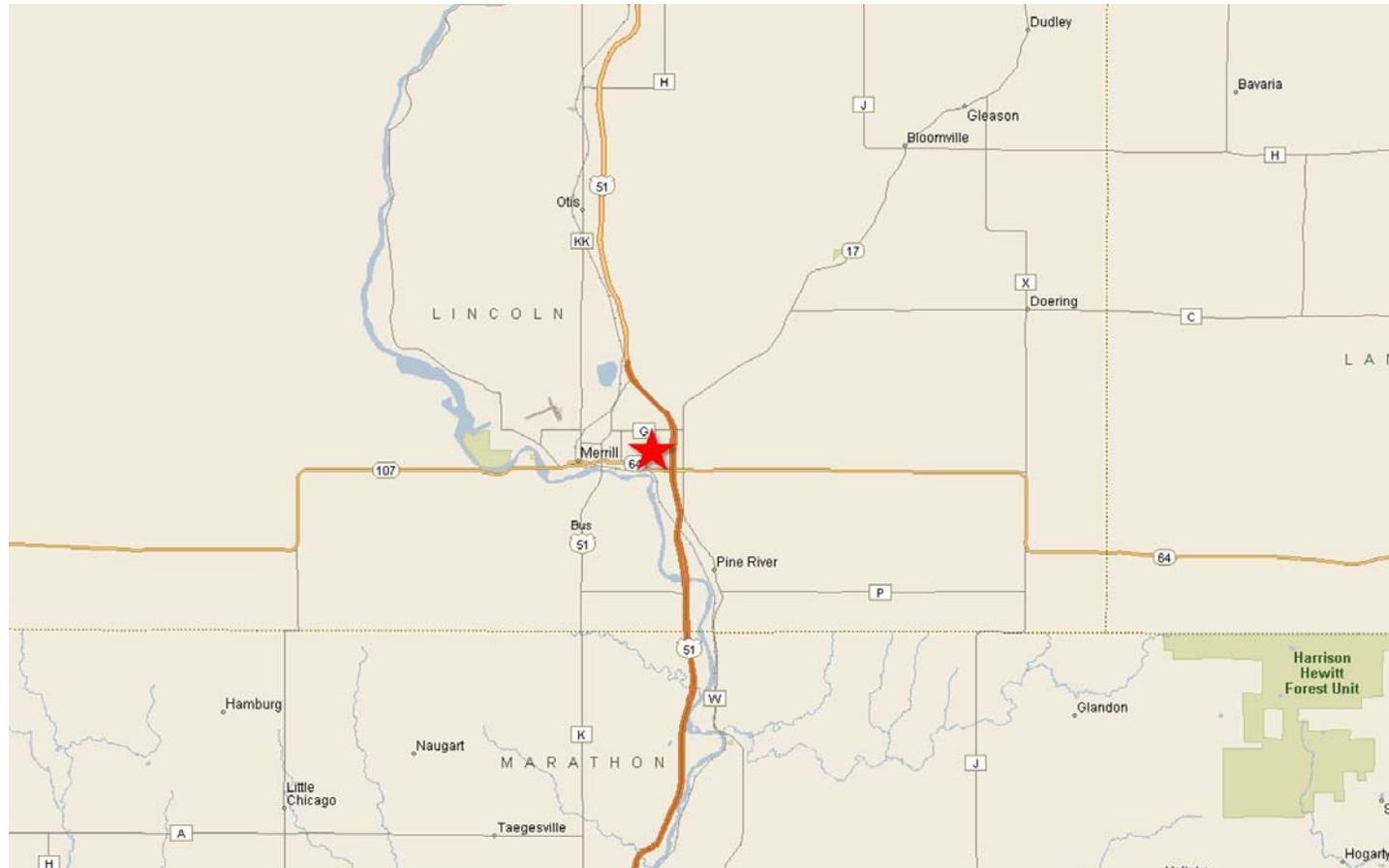
Area Access

The map below shows the proximity of the City of Merrill and location of the Fairgrounds in relation to surrounding counties and to the population centers of Tomahawk, Rhinelander, Antigo, Wausau and others.



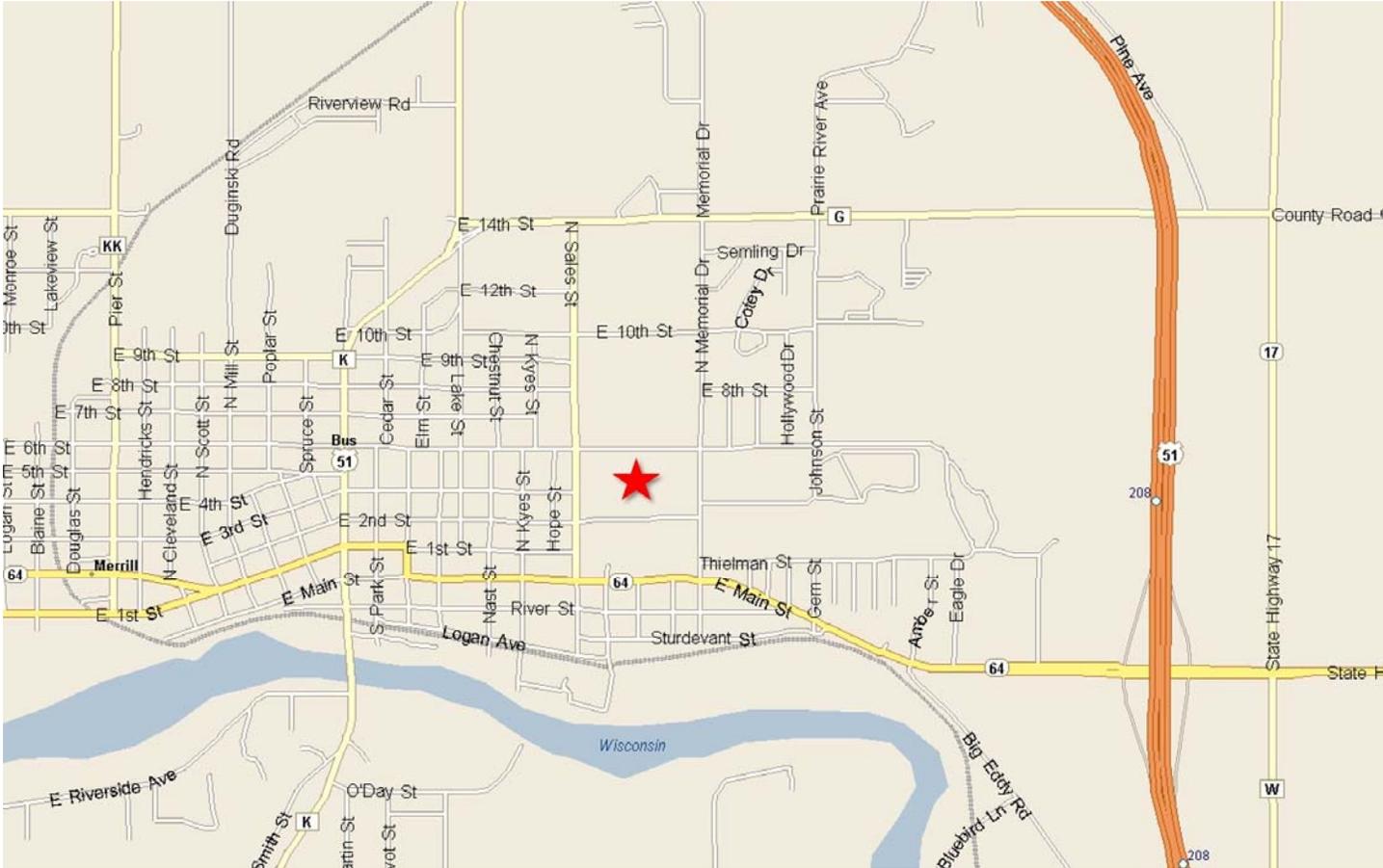
Local Access

The City of Merrill is accessed principally off State Road 64 from the east and west and Business 51 from the north and south. It was noted that there is no way finding signage for the Fairgrounds on Highway 51, at exits from Highway 51 or along State Road 64/East Main Street.



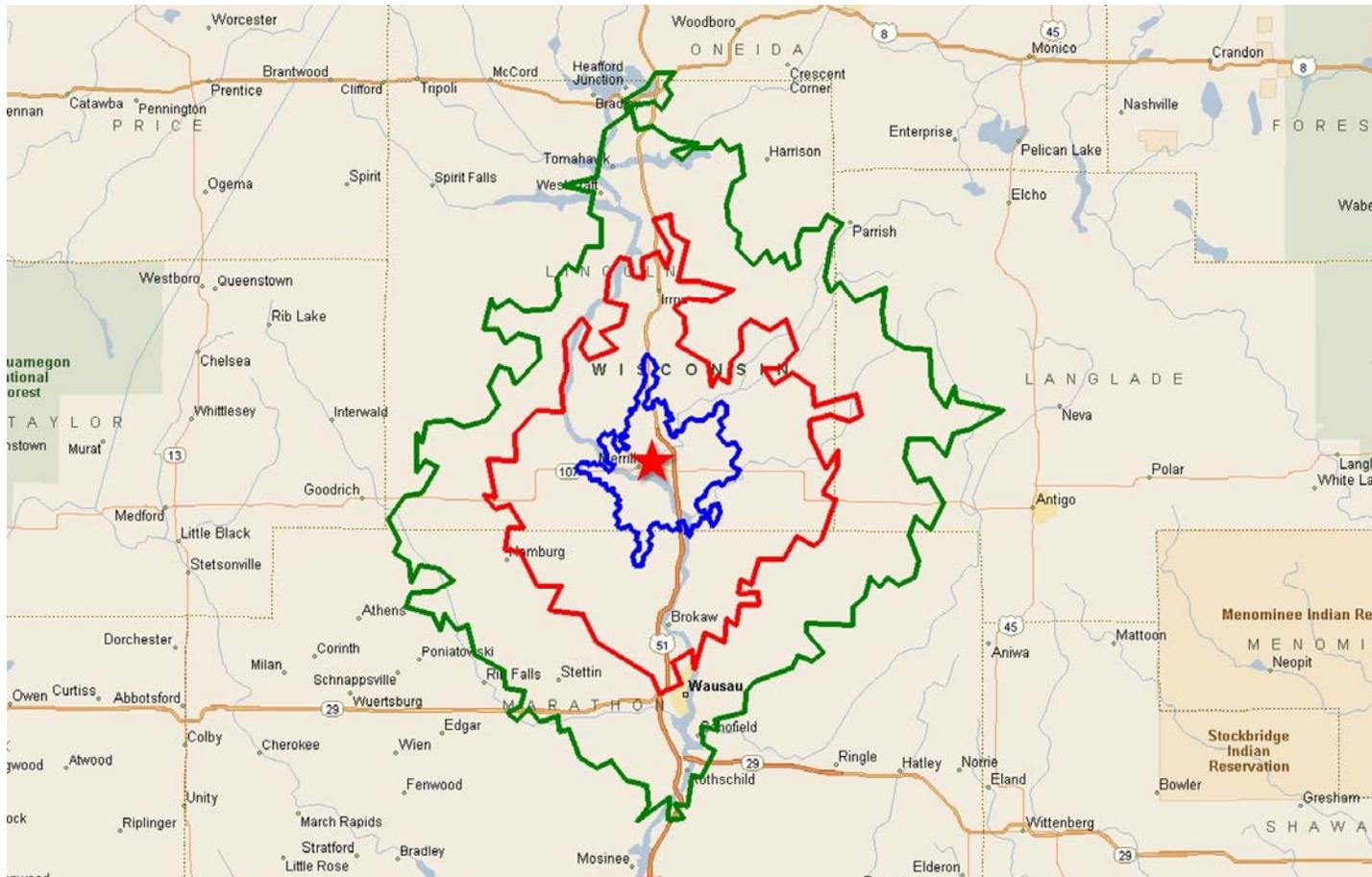
Site Location

The Lincoln County Fairgrounds is located just off State Road 64/E Main Street, accessed via N. Memorial Drive to its east side and N Sales Street to its west side.



Drive Time

The map below shows the relationship of the Fairgrounds to the County and surrounding areas, in terms of drive times of 10 minutes, 20 minutes and 30 minutes.



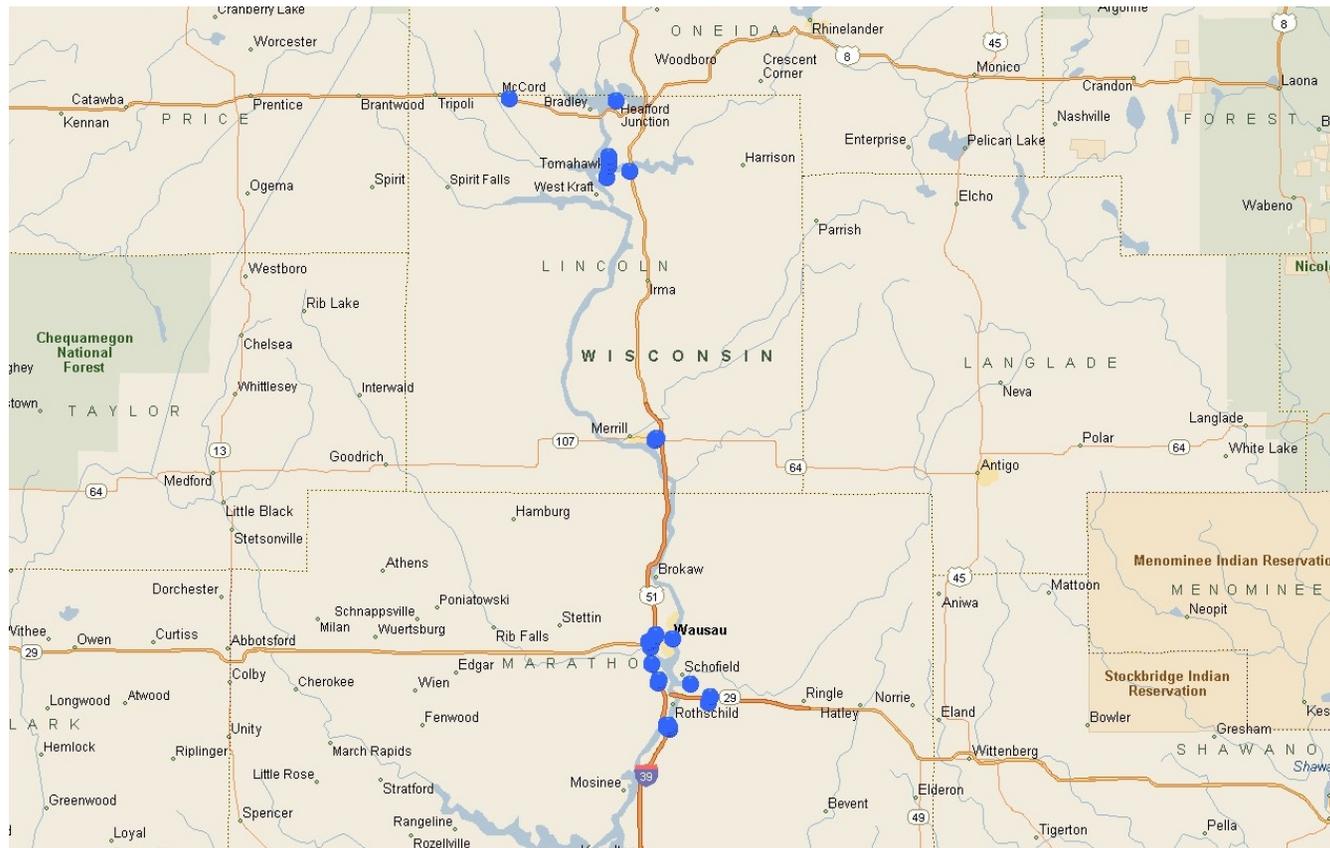
Source: MapPoint, 2012

Community Resources

This section presents an overview of the availability of lodging, restaurants and retail services available in the Merrill/Lincoln County area that would serve as support services to potential users of an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds.

Lodging Facilities

There are three motels located within one mile of the Fairgrounds with about 140 rooms. According to Trip Advisor, there are another 190 rooms in the Tomahawk area and just over 2,000 rooms in the Wausau area. The map below shows the location of lodging facilities in Merrill, the Tomahawk and Wausau areas.



The table below shows the locations, names and number of rooms of lodging facilities within the Merrill market area.

Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study

Lodging in Market Area

City	Name	Number of Rooms	City	Name	Number of Rooms
Merrill	AmericINN Lodge & Suites	45	Schofield	Country Inn & Suites	50
	Badger Motel	57	Tomahawk	Rodeway Inn & Suites	46
	Econo Lodge	38		Bridge Inn	15
Wausau	Plaza Hotel and Suites	233		Super 8 Tomahawk	56
	Days Inn Wausau	122		Best Western Lake Aire	25
	La Quinta Inn	95		Four Seasons Motel	20
	Super 8 Wausau	88	Moose Run Motel	20	
	Hampton Inn	89	Wild North Saloon and Motel	10	
	Jefferson Street Inn	100	Weston	Holiday Inn Express	103
	Courtyard Wausau	84		American Lodge & Suites	67
	Howard Johnson Inn & Conference Center	119		Fairfield Inn & Suites	80
	Best Western Midway Hotel	98	Rothschild	Grand Lodge Water Park Resort	139
	Days Inn and Suites Wausau	50		Econo Lodge	60
Stoney Creek Hotel	107	Apen Hotel and Suites		83	
Holiday Inn	148	Motel 6		39	

Source: Trip Advisor

Restaurants and Retail

There are a few food establishments – both fast food and dine-in – within 1.5 miles of the Fairgrounds site, including McDonalds, Subway, Los Mezcales and Culver’s. Retail outlets in close proximity to the Fairgrounds include Walmart, Piggly Wiggly and gas stations.

FACILITY CONDITIONS

The Lincoln County Fairgrounds consists of approximately 28 acres of property, bordered on the east, west and north by city street and to the south by Lincoln County Highway Department and National Guard Building. The Lincoln County Humane Society is sited on the southeast corner of the Fairground property.



Relocation of the Lincoln County Humane Society to the northeast corner of the Fairgrounds was approved in 2014 and will occur once funds are obtained to do the relocation. At that time the current location of the Humane Society will be available for use by the Fairgrounds.

The Fairgrounds consists of a number of buildings and structures owned by the County, the Fair Association, Merrill Riders and local non-profit organizations, as shown in the key below and in *Exhibit A*.



The Fair Association owns the Fair Association Office (1), the Lokemoen Building (2), Sell Building (9) and Fair Building (5). The Entries/Announcer Booth (north of the horse arena) is owned by the Merrill Riders. Buildings 7 and 11-18 are food stands owned by local non-profits and churches. All other buildings and features (3, 6, 8, 10, 19, 20, 22) are owned by the County.

Facilities Conditions Analysis

Keffer/Overton of our study team conducted a detailed conditions analysis of the Fairgrounds buildings and structures. The facility analysis that was undertaken included the evaluation of all built facilities on the Lincoln County Fairgrounds. This included 21 contributing items as indicated on site plan on the next page. Of these 21 items only 12 are physical structures under the direct control of the County. The others are privately maintained or owned by other parties but exist on the Fairgrounds site. As a general rule of thumb, the privately controlled properties are in better condition than the County-owned properties. That is not to say that the privately owned structures are not in need of several routine maintenance items and upkeep but they are in general better off than those controlled by the County. Our conditions assessment focused only on the County owned/controlled facilities.

The Fairground Buildings for the most part can be separated into three groups of use – Display, Livestock, and Restroom. Predominantly, the facilities in the poorest condition are the Restrooms. It is no coincidence that these buildings are also the most difficult from a maintenance side, as well as the most expensive to up-keep. This perfect storm of circumstances often adds up to deferring maintenance – which is what has happened here.

The other common theme among the buildings in the toughest shape is that most have, for the most part, a wood frame and several exposed areas of wood on the exterior if the entire exterior is not wood siding. Once again, this is no surprise as wood has a tendency to deteriorate quickly if not maintained properly. The lack of paint or the lack of a recent ongoing painting on the wood structures is what has led to the continued deterioration of the exposed wood structures.

Other common elements of deficiency noted were that none of the buildings met current accessibility guidelines, either from a building code standpoint or from a site planning standpoint. Additional hard surface around entry doors and flush-to-grade door thresholds would go a long way to remedying this issue site-wide. Also, making sure each structure has adequate exit capacity, exit doors, and exit hardware on all man doors would solve most code compliance problems in this area.

Another comment that repeats throughout the analysis is the lack of gutters and downspouts on most of the buildings (some of the buildings lack a proper fascia to attach a gutter system – this would need to be added as well). Not having gutters allows any water sheeting off the roof system to run down the face of the wall; promoting unnecessary moisture intrusion along the wall surface as it makes its way to the ground. This shortens the life span of a wall. Also, the water is able to immediately enter the ground at the top of the foundation system. Allowing a path for water to settle against the foundation promotes excessive moisture under the building perimeter which can lead to premature frost heave and subgrade washout of walls and slabs. Downspouts should be used to divert water away from the structures.

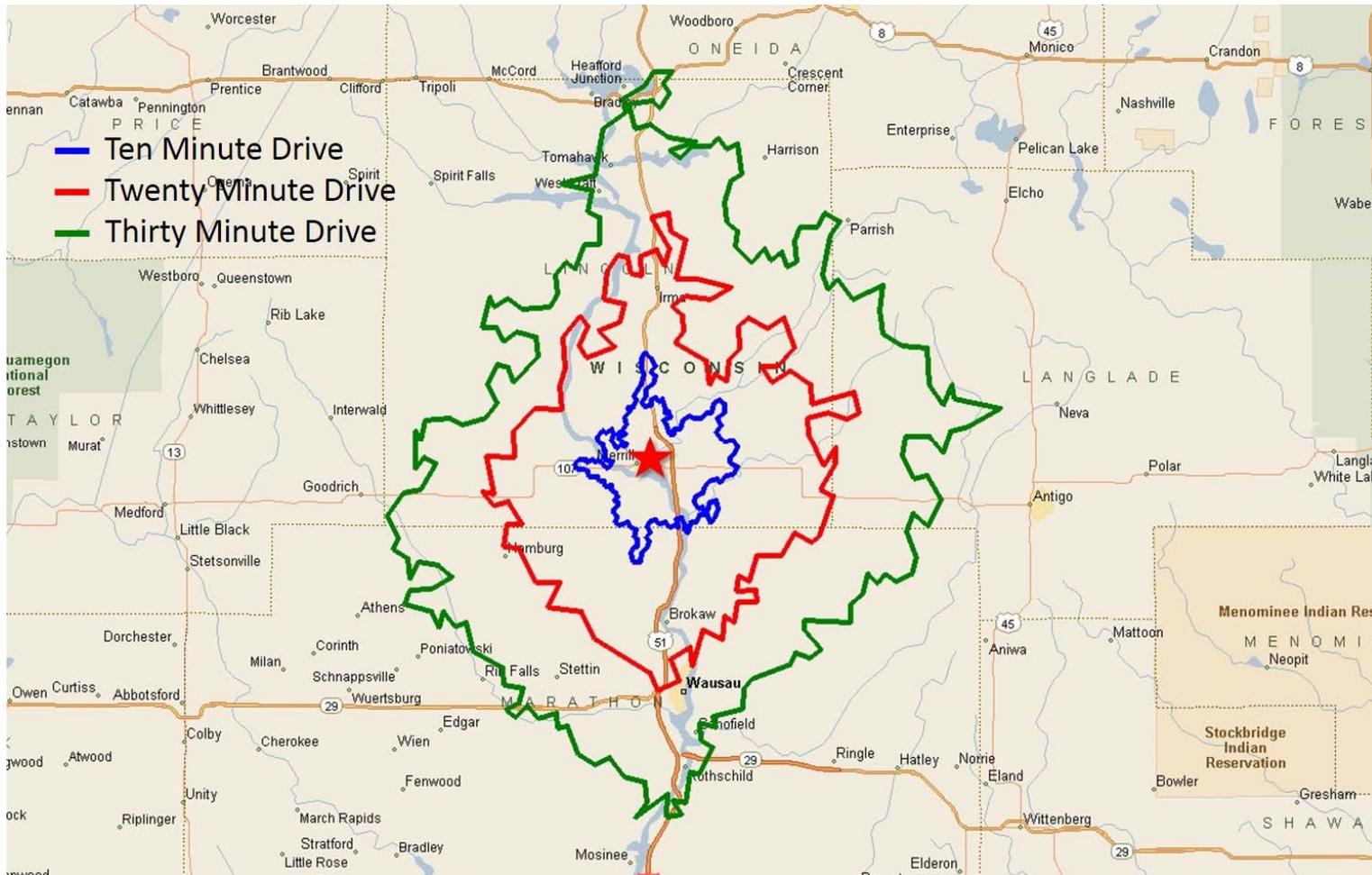
The complete details of the facility conditions analysis are presented in Exhibit B.

K/O prepared an estimate of the cost of upgrading/improving the facilities as detailed in its Facilities Analysis, presented in Exhibit B. The estimates of costs are shown in the tabel below, with matching color coding to the map and graphic on the previous page.

Name	Number of Building	SF	\$/SF	\$ Budget Costs
1 Fair Office		1,300	\$15	\$19,500
2 Lokemoen Building		3,200	\$20	\$64,000
3 Livestock Barn		16,000	\$75	\$1,200,000
4 School House		1,100	N/A	N/A
5 Storage and First Aid Shed		500	\$125	\$62,500
6 Schultz Building		5,800	\$150	\$870,000
7 Our Saviour's Food Stand		840	N/A	N/A
8 Steckling Building		6,000	\$12	\$72,000
9 Sell Building		4,500	\$15	\$67,500
10 North Restroom		1,000	\$180	\$180,000
11-18 Food Stands		600	N/A	N/A
19 East Rest Rooms		600	\$200	\$120,000
19 West Rest Rooms		600	\$200	\$120,000
20 Dirt Arena		24,000	\$2	\$48,000
21 Announcer's Stand		150	\$75	\$11,250
Total Budget for Repairs All Buildings				\$2,834,750

DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC TRENDS

For purposes of the study, based on the location of the Fairgrounds site, access to the site and estimated drive times and other transportation access, the primary market area for events and activities at the Fairgrounds that appeal to local residents would be within a 10-minute drive of the Fairgrounds. The secondary market area extends between 20 minutes and 30 minutes of the Fairgrounds, as shown in the map below.



A review of recent and prospective trends in demographics for the primary and secondary markets shows that:

- The population of the primary market is projected to decline slightly between 2014 and 2019, following a decrease between 2010 and 2014.
- The population of the secondary market within 20 minutes of the Fairgrounds is also projected to experience declines in population between 2014 and 2019. The population of the secondary market between 20 minutes and 30 minutes of the Fairgrounds (principally the Wausau area) is projected to grow slightly during that same time period.
- The average age in 2014 of the primary market area (41.7) was slightly higher than the secondary market population.

**Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study
Demographics/Economics Trends**

	Lincoln County Fairgrounds		
	10 Minute Drive	20 Minute Drive	30 Minute Drive
Population			
2010	12,739	47,582	106,519
2014	12,466	47,070	106,614
2019	12,250	46,696	107,060
Households			
2010	5,386	19,931	40,356
2014	5,341	19,990	44,219
2019	5,306	20,053	44,846
Median Age			
2010	41.7	39.4	39.5
2014	42.5	40.0	40.2
2019	43.2	40.5	40.7
2014 Age Distribution			
0-14	18.1%	18.5%	19.4%
15-24	12.2%	12.8%	10.1%
25-34	10.7%	13.0%	12.6%
35-44	11.9%	11.4%	12.3%
45-54	14.8%	13.9%	14.8%
55-64	13.3%	13.4%	14.0%
65+	19.0%	17.0%	16.8%

Source: The Nielson Company, 2014

A review of the economic trends of households within the primary and secondary market areas shows:

- The median household income of the primary market area, in 2014, was \$43,848; slightly more than those households within 20 minutes of the Fairgrounds, but more than 10 percent less than the households located between 20 minutes and 30 minutes of the Fairgrounds.
- The 2014 average income of household within 10 minutes of the Fairgrounds was substantially less than that of households of the secondary market.
- For households within the primary market area (within 10 minutes of the Fairgrounds), both average and median household incomes are projected to decline substantially between 2014 and 2019.

**Lincoln County Fairgrounds
Demographics/Economics Trends**

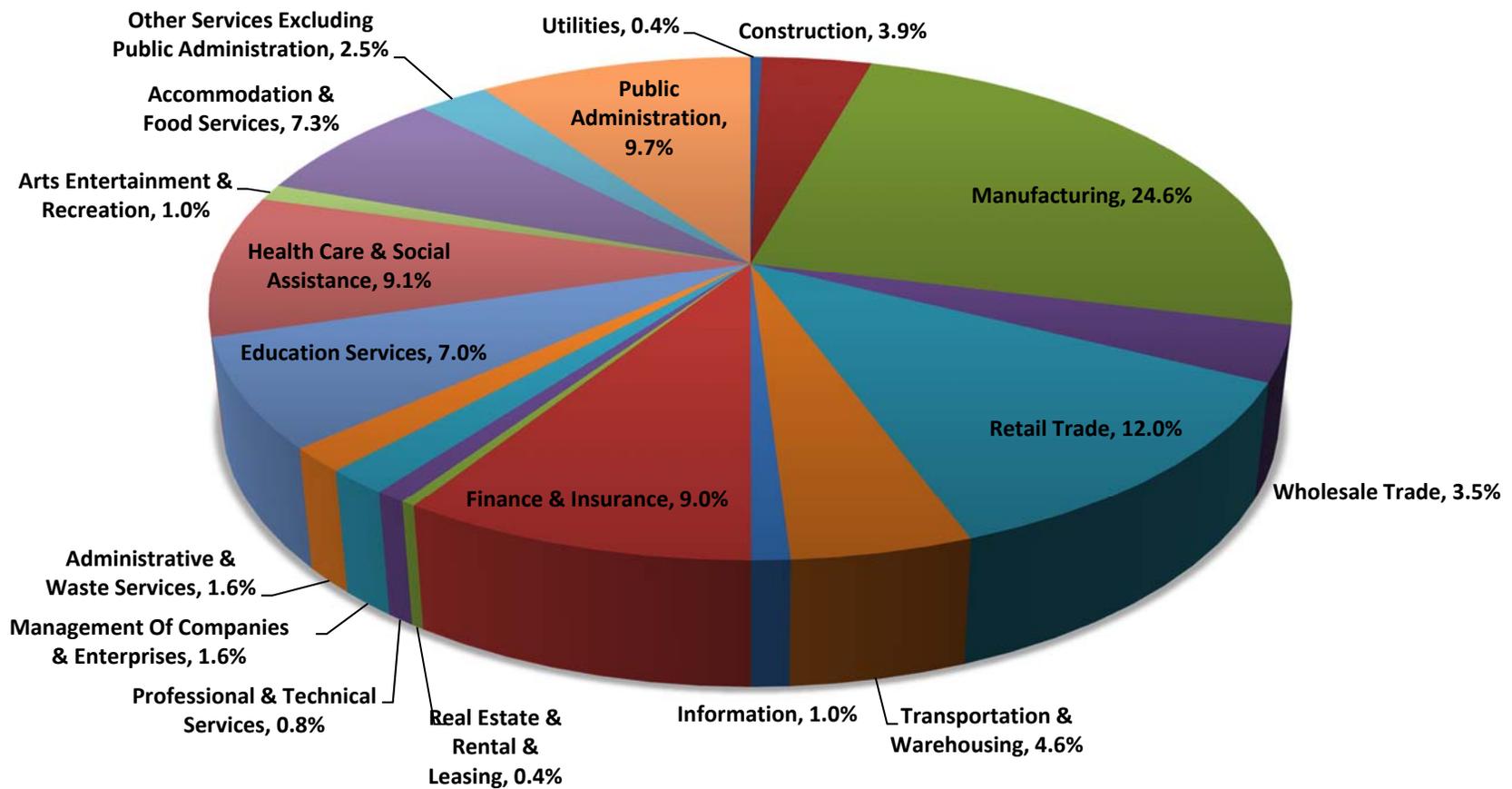
	Lincoln County Fairgrounds		
	10 Minute Drive	20 Minute Drive	30 Minute Drive
Median Household Income			
2014	<u>\$43,848</u>	<u>\$43,716</u>	<u>\$48,544</u>
2019	<u>\$36,908</u>	<u>\$42,922</u>	<u>\$49,098</u>
Average Household Income			
2014	<u>\$51,295</u>	<u>\$54,752</u>	<u>\$61,225</u>
2019	<u>\$43,456</u>	<u>\$55,261</u>	<u>\$64,605</u>

Source: The Nielson Company, 2014

Labor and Employment Trends

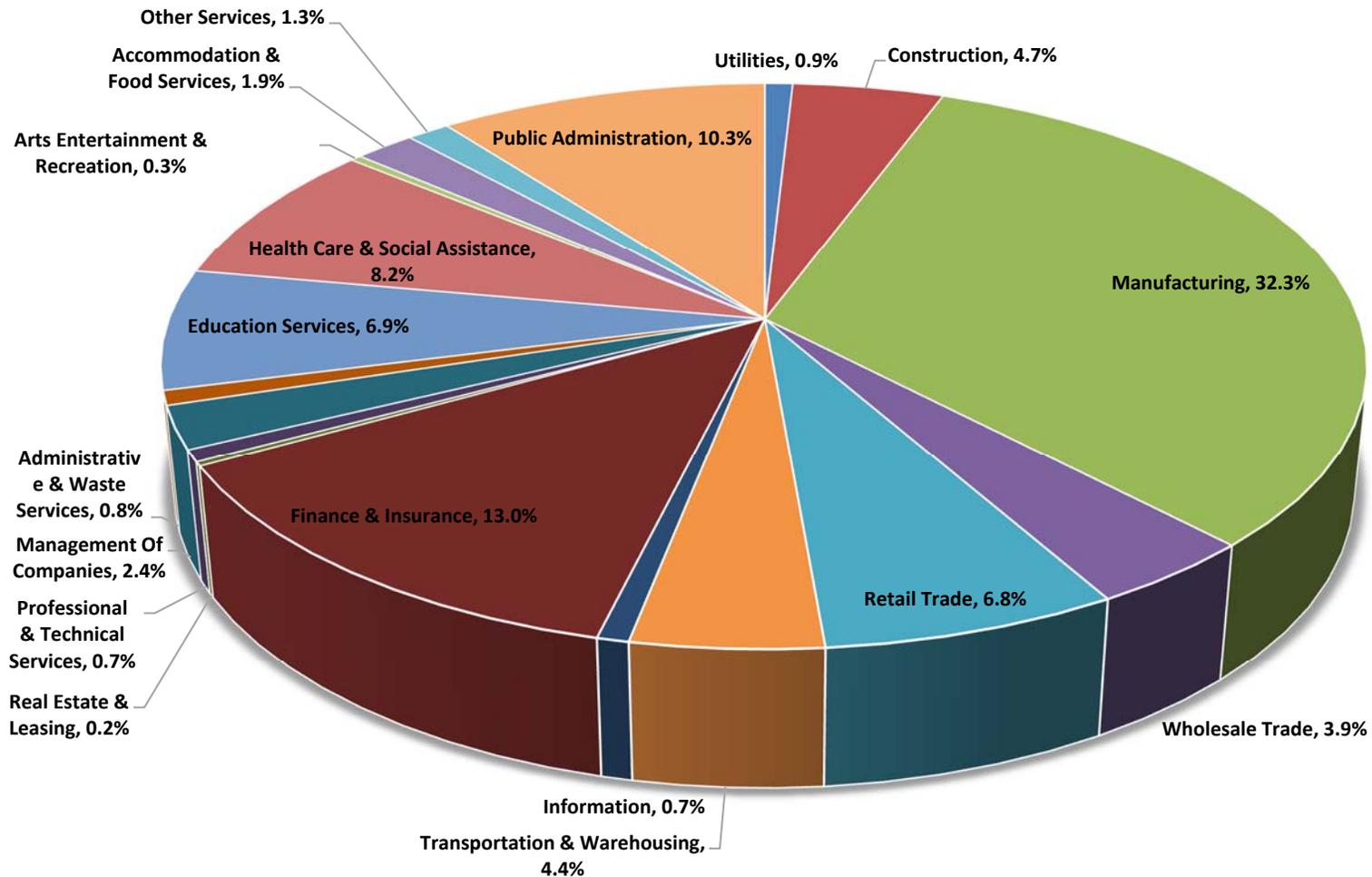
Lincoln County, as all areas of the country, has been impacted by the national recession that began in 2007/2008. The following charts show the percent of jobs and wages paid, by industry, as compiled by the Wisconsin Employment Department, for 2013.

Lincoln County 2013 Number of Employees by Industry



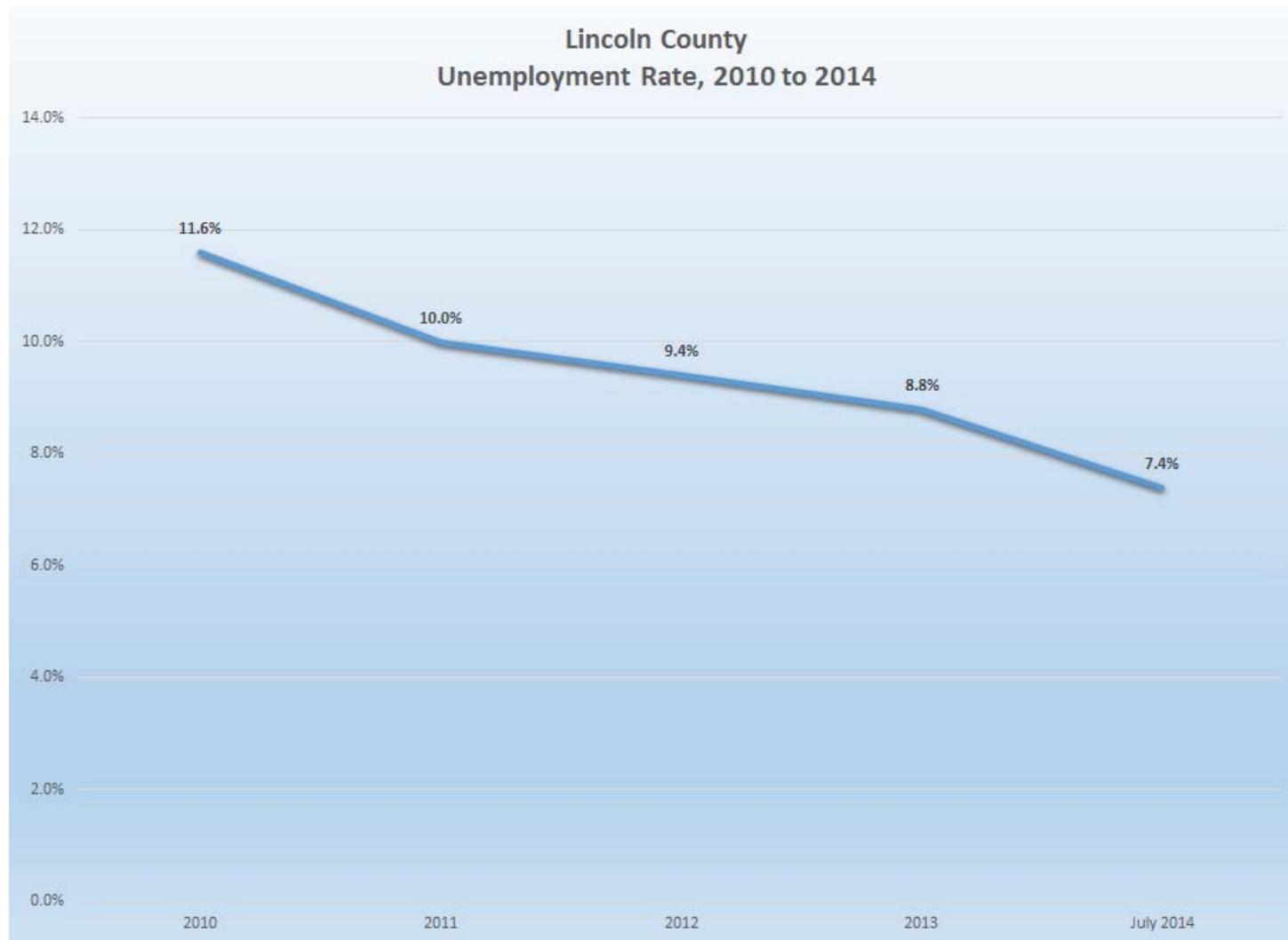
Manufacturing jobs lead the percentage of total jobs (24.6%), followed by retail (12.0%), public administration (9.7%) and finance and insurance (9.0%).

Lincoln County 2013 Total Annual Wages by Industry



Similar to the percent of jobs by industry, manufacturing leads the percent of total wages paid in Lincoln County (32.3%).

The chart below presents the 2010 to July 2014 unemployment rates of the County of Lincoln. Lincoln County has consistently reported lower unemployment rates since the height of the national recession, though the rates are still higher than the Wisconsin average. The higher unemployment rates can have a continued negative impacts on spending by local residents on discretionary items, such as events that could be held at the upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds.



COMPARABLE AND COMPETITIVE FACILITIES

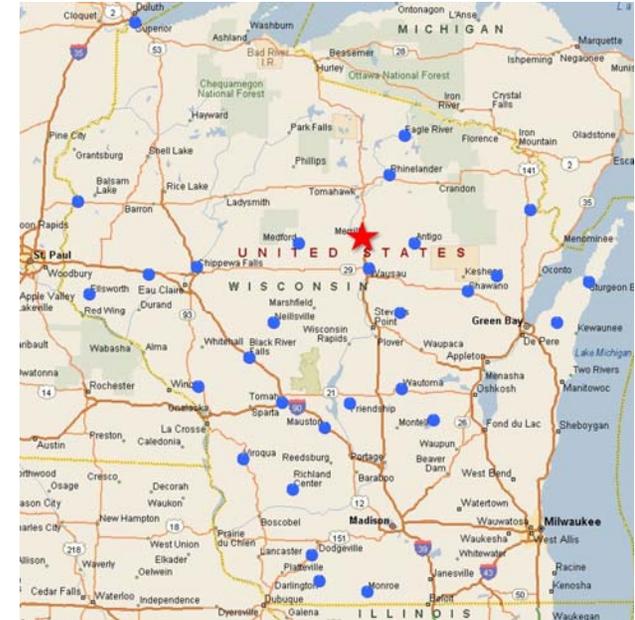
A part of the evaluation of the current issues and constraints for the Fairgrounds, we completed research and assessment of comparable fairgrounds and competitive facilities (including fairgrounds) in Wisconsin. This research and assessment served to identify characteristics of successful fairgrounds/event venues and the competitive market forces affecting the Lincoln County Fairgrounds.

Comparable Fairgrounds

To identify potentially comparable Wisconsin fairgrounds for the Lincoln County Fairgrounds, we used the 2013 population rankings of counties in Wisconsin, per the US Census. Lincoln County ranked 44th in population of Wisconsin counties. The next lower 13 Wisconsin counties in population (ranking 45 to 57) and the 13 counties with the next higher populations (ranking 31 to 43) were identified, along with the location of each county's fairgrounds or fair location. In addition, we included Marathon County, Portage County and Chippewa County in this research and assessment due to their proximity to the Lincoln County Fairgrounds and/or being mentioned by some of the key stakeholders during the study process.

Exhibit C presents the listing of fairgrounds included in this assessment and aerial views for each location. Using research results of information found at each of the Comparable Fairgrounds (or Fair) website, along with our knowledge of the fair and fairgrounds industry, we identified the following characteristics of "successful" fairgrounds:

- Year-round facilities are multi-use and include, at a minimum:
 - ✓ Indoor, fully climatized exhibition-style building
 - ✓ Entertainment venue customized for specific market demand in the form of a grandstand, race track, indoor arena, amphitheater, etc.
 - ✓ Defined and improved camping facilities
 - ✓ Dedicated livestock facilities
 - ✓ Up-to-date restrooms and patron amenities
- Two key operational/positional characteristics for successful fairgrounds/event venues are:
 - ✓ Pro-active marketing and management of the facilities – This includes creating marketing materials, establishing co-marketing relationships with local/regional tourism organizations and businesses, conducting travel and tours for prospective clients and , in some cases, self-promoting of events and activities.
 - ✓ High community and political support – This is especially important in smaller markets to insure sustainability of the public asset through public investments and operational assistance.



Competitive Facilities/Venues

During the study process, using input from client representatives, Fairground users and key stakeholders, a number of facilities located within the Fairground's market area were identified. This section presents an overview of those event facilities.

The competitive event facilities include local facilities, area fairgrounds, exhibition facilities and concert facilities.

Smith Center at MARC

The nearest facility to the Fairgrounds that hosts/stages events that would typically be held at a fairgrounds is the Smith Center at the Merrill Area Recreation Complex (MARC). The MARC is a large outdoor and indoor recreation complex located on the northwest side of Merrill – owned by the City of Merrill and operated by the Parks and Recreation Department. The complex is comprised of multiple soccer and ball fields, outdoor ice skating rink, walking paths and an indoor ice/hockey rink (Smith Center). Smith Center has a 17,000 square foot ice arena area, a small multi-purpose community room, restrooms, lockers and public foyer.

Between the middle of October to mid-March, the Smith Center has ice in the arena and is used exclusively for hockey and public skating. When the ice is not in the arena, the Smith Center has been used for a number of trade expos, festivals and community uses – most of which have been single day (or even partial day) events. According to the City of Merrill, if the City had control/ownership of the Fairgrounds, it would hire a marketing person to jointly market both the Fairgrounds and Smith Center.



Marathon Park

Located in Wausau and home to the Wisconsin Valley Fair, Marathon Park consists of a 78 acre parcel on the west side of Wausau with multiple buildings and structures available for rental and use. Principal event facilities include:

- 4,100-seat amphitheater – including 1,200 seats under cover, along with a bermed grass area for another 1,100 people. Total capacity including seating/standing between the permanent seating and the permanent stage is up to 10,000 people. The Amphitheater is used mostly during the annual Wisconsin Valley Fair for concerts and wheel events.
- East Gate Hall – an 800-capacity exhibit hall is available for rent throughout the year for business meetings, sales shows, wedding receptions, class reunions and other small to medium sized events.
- Exhibit Hall - Marathon Parks' signature structure and centerpiece is the Exhibition Building. Built in 1924, the Exhibition Building was originally intended for agricultural exhibits. Today, it serves as a vendor center for produce, cookery, crafts, and services during the annual Wisconsin Valley Fair every August.



Spaces in the non-heated Exhibition Building are available for rental from early May through September (except during the week of the Fair) for events such as flea markets or other sales, shows or exhibits where individual stalls are needed. In winter months, the space is rented for boat and trailer storage.

- Multi-Purpose Building #1 and # 2 – These are metal buildings that are converted to indoor ice from the first week in October to the beginning of March annually. These sheets of ice can be rented for organized hockey or figure skating events. There are also designated public skating hours each season. When the ice is not in, the buildings are rented for consumer shows and expos.

Other amenities at Marathon Park include camp sites, splash pad, dog exercise area, miniature train, basketball and tennis courts, baseball diamonds and walking paths.

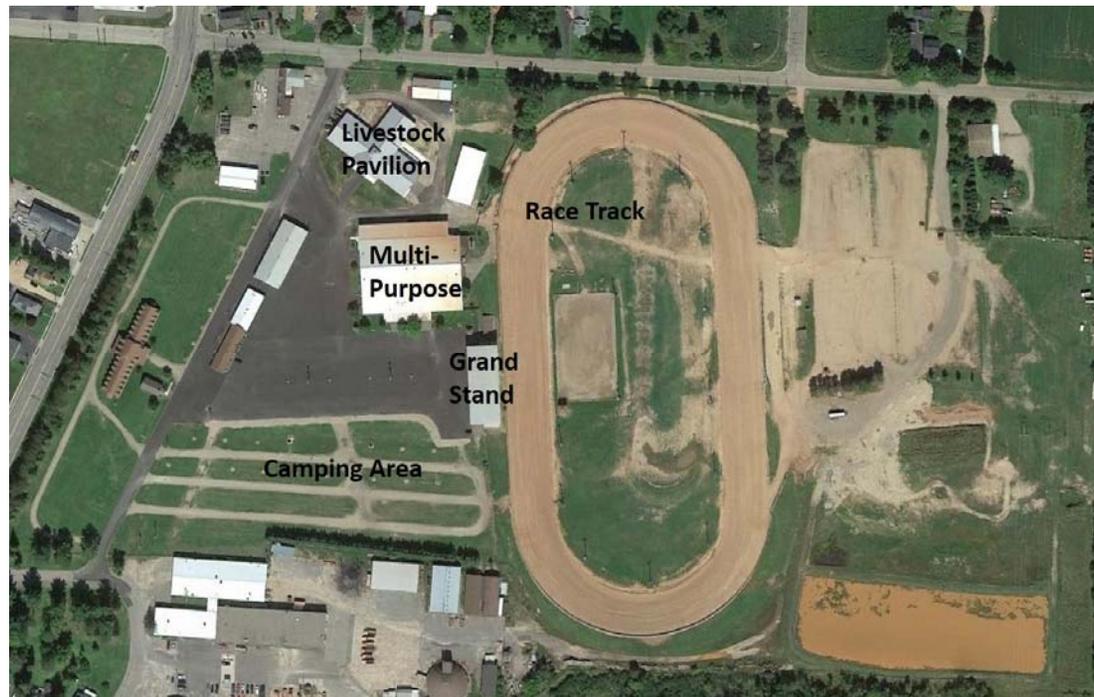


Central Wisconsin Convention and Expo Center

Formerly the Patriot Center, the Central Wisconsin Convention and Expo Center is located in Rothschild, Wisconsin, approximately 25 miles south of Merrill of Highway 51. This facility has over 50,000 square feet of contiguous exhibit and meeting space and is attached to a Holiday Inn. Events held at this facility include sports show, home show, deer classic and hunting expo, RV show, bridal show and many more. It is the largest exhibit space within the Wausau market area (which extends to Merrill).

Langlade County Fairgrounds

The Langlade County Fairgrounds is located in Antigo, Wisconsin in a county adjacent to Lincoln County. Rental facilities at the Langlade County Fairgrounds includes a covered grandstand, multi-purpose building with 25,000 square feet exhibit hall, livestock pavilion, camping area and race track. Events held at this fairgrounds each year include the Langlade County Fair, snow mobile racing, demo derby, sprint car racing, hockey and hockey camp, RV rallies, motorcycle rally, gun shows, craft fairs, 4-H events and festivals.



Surrounding Fairgrounds

The table below presents a summary of the location, building types, event types and relevant population comparisons for the Lincoln County Fairgrounds and fairgrounds in the counties surrounding Lincoln County (see map below).

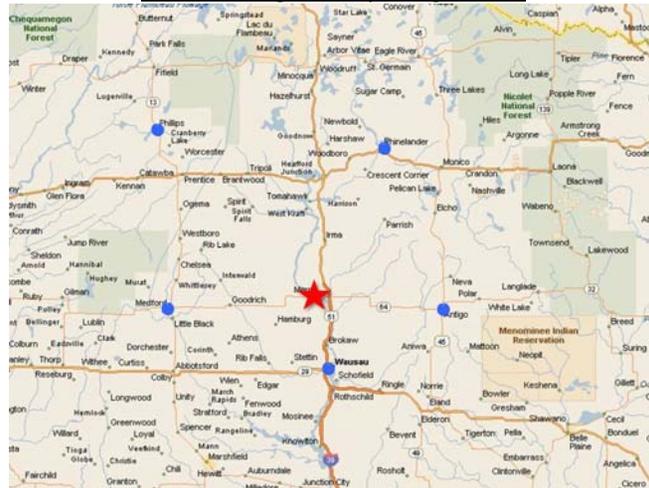
Lincoln County Fairgrounds

Select Characteristics of Surrounding County Fairgrounds

Characteristic	Fairgrounds					
	Lincoln County	Marathon County	Taylor County	Price County	Oneida County	Langlade County
City	Merrill, WI	Wausau, WI	Medford, WI	Phillips, WI	Rhineland, WI	Antigo, WI
Building Types	Livestock Barn, Exhibit Buildings	Exhibit Building, Historical Museum, Ampitheater, Agricultural Buildings	Livestock Barn, Exhibit Building, Grandstand, Multipurpose Building	Livestock Barns, Exhibit Buildings, Grandstand, Chapel,	N/A	Livestock Barn, Exhibit Buildings, Grandstand, Multipurpose Building
Event Types	HS, F, O	CS, F, C, O	CS, HS, LS, F, C, O	CS, HS, LS, F, C,	N/A	CS, HS, LS, F, C, SM, O, MS
2010 City Population	9,661	39,106	4,326	19,977	7,798	8,234
2013 County Population	28,743	135,416	20,610	13,802	35,689	19,575

A=Auctions, CS=Consumer Shows, HS=Horse Shows, LS=Livestock Shows, MS=MotorSports, F=Festivals, C=Concerts, TP=Tractor Pulls, RV= RV Rallies, SM=Swap Meet, O=Other

Surrounding County Fairgrounds



Expo/Trade/Public Show Facilities

In conjunction with a review of competitive facilities, we research and identified the location of other facilities in the Merrill/Wausau area that are rented for expos, trade and public shows, shown in the table below. **Exhibit D** presents a listing of the events and activities held at these facilities in 2014.

Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study
Expo/Trade/Public Show Facilities

Facility Where Held	City
MARC	Merrill
American Legion Hall	Iola
Central Wis. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild
Dale's Weston Lanes	Weston
DC Everest High School	Weston
Faith Christian Academy	Wausau
Grand Lodge Waterpark Resort	Rothschild
Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites	Rothschild
Langlade County Fairgrounds	Antigo
Marathon Park	Wausau
Shepherd & Schaller Sporting Goods Inc.	Wausau

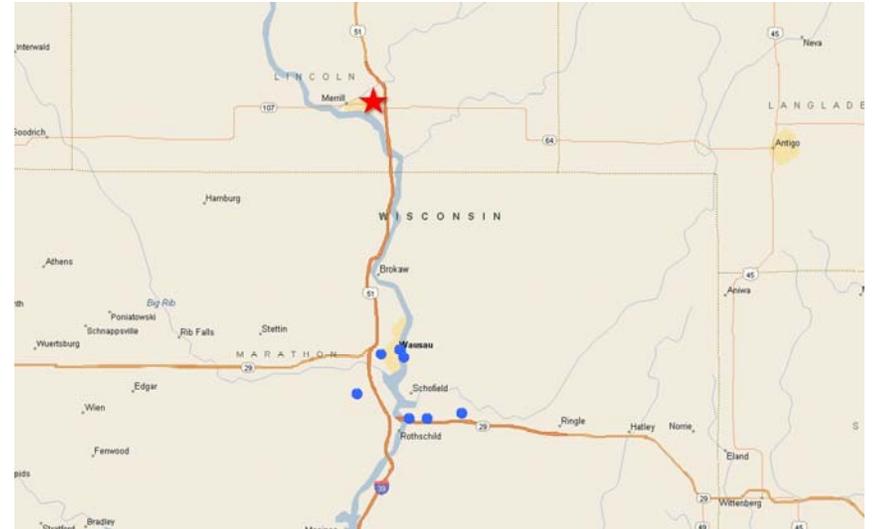
Concert Venues- Wausau Area

The Wausau area has a number of both indoor and outdoor concert facilities that operate throughout the year and attract patrons from the surrounding areas. These facilities and a listing of the events held in 2014, along with a map of their locations, are presented below.

Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study
Wausau Area Events Calendar - Concerts

Dates	Event Description	Facility Where Held	City
1/7/2014	Green Day's American Idiot	The Grand	Wausau
1/10/14	B.J. Thomas	The Grand	Wausau
1/11/2014	Elvis Birthday Bash	Dale's Weston Lanes	Weston
1/17/2014	Annie Moses Band	The Grand	Wausau
1/31/2014	Marty Stuart	The Grand	Wausau
2/19/2014	Aaron Neville	The Grand	Wausau
3/8/2014	Spring Instrumental Concert	Rothschild Pavilion	Rothschild
3/8/2014	Blues Café	Rothschild Pavilion	Rothschild
3/8/2014	Area Jazz Festival Concert	DC Everest High School	Weston
3/20/14	One Night of Queen	The Grand	Wausau
3/24/2014	Women of Ireland	The Grand	Wausau
4/6/2014	Wausau Symphonic Band	Rothschild Pavilion	Rothschild
4/11/2014	Rhythm & Brews	Dale's Weston Lanes	Weston
4/23/14	The Texas Tenors	The Grand	Wausau
5/14/2014	The 5 Browns	The Grand	Wausau
5/15/2014	Big Top Chautauqua	The Grand	Wausau
6/7/14-6/8/14	Central Wisconsin Music Festival	Rothschild Pavilion	Rothschild
6/8/2014	Wausau Lyric Choir: Summer Serenade	The Grand	Wausau
6/18/2014	Concerts on the Square	400 Block	Wausau
6/25/2014	Concerts on the Square	400 Block	Wausau
6/28/2014	Concerts in the Clouds: Chris Kokesh	Rib Mountain State Park	Wausau
7/9/2014	Concerts on the Square	400 Block	Wausau
7/16/2014	Concerts on the Square	400 Block	Wausau
7/19/2014	Concerts in the Clouds: I Like You	Rib Mountain State Park	Wausau
7/23/2014	Concerts on the Square	400 Block	Wausau
7/30/2014	Concerts on the Square	400 Block	Wausau
8/6/2014	Concerts on the Square	400 Block	Wausau
8/9/2014	Concerts in the Clouds: Richard Wiegel	Rib Mountain State Park	Wausau
8/13/2014	Concerts on the Square	400 Block	Wausau
8/20/2014	Concerts on the Square	400 Block	Wausau
8/22/2014	Rock the 400 Block	400 Block	Wausau
9/28/2014	33rd Annual Faculty Gala Concert	Wausau Conservatory of Music	Wausau
11/1/14-11/2/14	Hmong New Year Celebration	DC Everest High School	Weston

Source: Wausau/Central Wisconsin Convention and Visitors Bureau



Summary of Key Issues and Constraints

A number of key issues and constraints related to the current Lincoln County Fairgrounds were identified:

- Loss of the grandstand has contributed to significant declines in attendance and operating revenue potential for the Fair and the Rodeo, as well as revenues of local food booth owners/operators
- Deferred maintenance of the bathrooms, livestock barn and other Fairground buildings and structures impact the appearance, appeal and sponsorship potential for the Fair and the Rodeo, as well as the ability to attract other events
- The Fairground's market area population is relatively stable, with projections that indicate a potential slight decline in population over the next 5 years
- Incomes of the primary and secondary market area households, projected to decline over the next 5 years, will limit demand for events and activities at the Fairgrounds
- The Wausau area has a substantial number of event facilities that would compete with event facilities at an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds; limiting the number, size and type of events that could be successfully (in terms of attendance and revenues) at the Fairgrounds

ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL USES

APPROACH TO POTENTIAL USE ASSESSMENT

To develop estimates of market demand for event facilities at an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds, in addition our assessment of the identified issues/constraints of the Fairgrounds (presented in the previous report section, the following work tasks were conducted:

- Discussed event potential with Lincoln County representatives, stakeholders, City of Merrill and Merrill Chambers of Commerce representatives and others (see Felt Needs section).
- Reviewed recent calendar of events held at competitive event facilities and conducted interviews with select event promoters and organizers to discuss interest in staging an event(s) at the Fairgrounds site and facilities needed; as well as overall assessment of the market area for events and activities.
- Researched the presence and location of events and event facilities, beyond those assessed in the Comparable and Competitive Facilities section of this report, including community festivals, music festivals, tractor and truck pulls, motor sports, gun shows, snowmobile races, motocross, BMX, horse shows/events and State 4-H events. See **Exhibit D** for an overview of these events, activities and locations. Select event promoters were interviewed to assess interest in Merrill as a location for an event.
- Evaluated the overall market potential for additional events and activities, as well as impacts to the Fair and Rodeo, with upgrade/improved facilities, based on our knowledge of fairground and similar event facility operations.

POTENTIAL EVENTS/USES

Based on the Felt Needs and current issues/constraints of the Fairgrounds (including facility conditions, economic and demographic trends of the Fairgrounds' market area, comparable and competitive facilities) and our assessment of additional event potential at an upgraded/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds, we identified the following potential for the Fairgrounds:

- Spectator Events
 - ✓ Tractor pull weekend event (2 days)
 - ✓ Snowmobile race weekend event (2 days)
 - ✓ Demo derby weekend event (2 days)
- Expo/Trade/Public Shows
 - ✓ Gun shows
 - ✓ Craft shows
 - ✓ Sports/recreation show
 - ✓ Seasonal sales
- Dances/receptions/banquets
- Small animal shows
- Small RV rallies

In addition to the above potential for the Fairgrounds, with the construction of an entertainment/seating structure, both the annual Lincoln County Fair and the Wisconsin River Pro Rodeo could recover their attendance losses from over the past 3 years.

FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPTIONS

FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on Felt Needs of Fairground users, stakeholders and local residents and the event potential at the Fairgrounds presented on the previous page, the following approaches to facility improvements and upgrades at the Fairgrounds are recommended (in order of priority):

- 1) Construct a replacement of the grandstand seating structure destroyed in June 2012, with 2,500 to 3,000 seats, along with new restrooms to replace the East Restrooms and a concessions area. This structure should have covered seating. Without this structure, the Fair and the Rodeo may continue to see declines in attendance and, thus, threaten their long-term sustainability as community events.
- 2) Upgrades to the West and North Restrooms to provide for ADA compliance, accessibility and aesthetic improvements. Along with the grandstand replacement, the upgrades to the West and North Restrooms are imperative to the financial and operational sustainability of the Fair and the Rodeo and the future marketing of the Fairgrounds.
- 3) Safety and accessibility improvements in various buildings highlighted in the K/O analysis (Exhibit B). These improvements will not only satisfy code requirements but can also improve the overall patron experience at an event held at the Fairgrounds.
- 4) Perimeter fencing to provide for better facility security and control of events and to possibly allow changes in fee structure for current events held at the Fairgrounds.
- 5) Improved/expanded camp sites along the Fairgrounds' perimeter regions. As additional events are staged at the Fairgrounds, as a result of the grandstand replacement, additional demand will arise for camp sites at the Fairgrounds.
- 6) New year-round, climate controlled building (between 12,000 and 18,000 square feet of net rentable, clear space space), including indoor restrooms and catering/warming kitchen.

We recommend that items 1, 2 and 3 occur immediately and at the same time. The remaining items 4, 5 and 6 should be considered as part of a long-term plan that is event and market dependent.

FACILITY OPTIONS

This section presents some options for the Recommended Facilities, including estimates of their costs.

Grandstand Replacement

The recommended 2,500 to 3,000-seat structure to replace the grandstand has a couple of options, from a design/layout perspective. One option would be a structure similar to the original grandstand – bleacher style seating all under a roof structure. Another option that has been the focus of a number of stakeholders is a “bermed” structure similar to the Marathon County Amphitheater. The “bermed” structure is really designed for concerts and similar events but is not very utile for tractor pulls and snowmobile racing due the configuration of the wings on that type of structure. We do not see a market for large concerts at the Fairgrounds. Officials of the Wisconsin River Rodeo Association also expressed concerns about the layout, spectator seating and sightlines of the “bermed” structure. A traditional grandstand structure may be more usable and marketable for the types of events that could be staged at the Fairgrounds. There are, however, ways to design the layout of the wings to “straighten” them out a bit more to better accommodate non-concert uses. Again, it is imperative that new restrooms (replacing the East Restrooms) and a concessions area needs to be a part of either option.

Keffer/Overton prepared cost estimates of both of these options, shown in the table below:

Description of Improvements		Budget Costs			
Grandstand and Entertainment Area Options					
B1	Berm Grandstand Seating for 2,500 (1,500 of the seats are covered)	SF	10,750	\$91	\$978,250
B2	Berm Grandstand Seating for 3,000 (1,500 of the seats are covered)	SF	13,500	\$80	\$1,080,000
B3	Bleacher Seating for 2,500 (all seats covered w/ standard cover)	SF	10,500	\$66	\$693,000
B4	Bleacher Seating for 3,000 (all seats covered w/ standard cover)	SF	13,000	\$63.5	\$825,500
RC	Restroom and Concession Building	SF	3,300	\$200	\$660,000

Source: Keffer/Overton Architects

Restroom Upgrades

Keffer/Overton has prepared a budget estimate to upgrade the West and North Restrooms to improve accessibility and aesthetics – at a cost of \$120,000 per restroom (see Exhibit B).

Accessibility and Code Compliance Upgrades

As detailed in Exhibit B, in addition to the restrooms, a number of buildings have accessibility and code compliance problems that need to be addressed with upgrades to doors and entrance areas. The buildings include the Fair Office, Lokemoen Building, Livestock Barn, Schultz Building, Steckling Building, Sell Building and Announcer’s Stand. Budget estimates for the cost of these fixes are presented in the table below.

Building Number and Name	Area (Square Feet)	Occupant Load factor of 5sf/occupant	Required Exit Width in inches	Number of 3'-0" man door exits required	Existing Man Doors	New Man Doors Req'd	New 6x6 conc pad	Man Door Cost/Unit	6x6 Walk Pad Cost/Unit	Total Budget Costs for Life/Safety Accessibility Updates
Name Number of Building										Budget Costs
1 Fair Office	1,300	260	52	1.63	2	0	1	\$1,150	\$420	\$420
2 Lokemoen Building	3,200	640	128	4.00	2	2	2	\$1,150	\$420	\$3,140
3 Livestock Barn	16,000	3,200	640	20.00	1	21	21	\$1,150	\$420	\$32,970
5 Storage and First Aid Shed	500	100	20	0.63	1	1	1	\$1,150	\$420	\$1,570
6 Schultz Building	5,800	1,160	232	7.25	4	8	8	\$1,150	\$420	\$12,560
8 Steckling Building	6,000	1,200	240	7.50	6	8	8	\$1,150	\$420	\$12,560
9 Sell Building	4,500	900	180	5.63	2	6	6	\$1,150	\$420	\$9,420
21 Announcer's Stand	150	30	6	0.19	1	1	1	\$1,150	\$420	\$1,570
Total Budget for All Repairs to All Buildings										\$74,210

Perimeter Fencing

The table below presents estimates, in current dollars, of the cost of perimeter fencing for the Fairgrounds, as prepared by Keffer/Overton.

Item Key	Description of Improvement or Area	Unit Applied	Unit Quantity	Budget Cost per Unit	Total Budget Costs for Market Analysis Recommended Improvements
Description of Improvements			Budget Costs		
Fencing and gate Options					
F1	Perimeter Fencing - 6'H Black Chainlink	LF	4,860	\$15	\$72,900
F2	Perimeter Fencing - 200'L x 6'H Decorative look around 3 entries	LF	600	\$30	\$18,000
G	Vehicle Entry Gate (decorative look with locking swing gates)	EA	5	\$2,200	\$11,000

Source: Keffer/Overton Architects

Improved/Additional Camp Sites

The cost of additional improved campsites, with water and 30 and 50 amp service, will vary based on the location of the campsites, as presented in the table below (per Keffer/Overton).

Item Key	Description of Improvement or Area	Unit Applied	Unit Quantity	Budget Cost per Unit	Total Budget Costs for Market Analysis Recommended Improvements
RV Area Locations and Options					
RV1	RV Hook-ups on South side of Site between E/W Restrooms	EA	15	\$3,250	\$48,750
RV2	RV Hook-ups on NW corner of site	EA	15	\$5,550	\$83,250
RV3	RV Hook-ups near North Entry	EA	15	\$7,450	\$111,750

Source: Keffer/Overton Architects

Future Exhibition Building

As market conditions are opportune, at some time in the future, the construction of a year-round exhibition building could be an attractor for a variety of events and activities, including expos/trade shows, dances, receptions, banquets, 4-H uses and small animal shows. The building could range between 12,000 square feet and 18,000 square feet on net rentable exhibit space that include public foyer, restrooms, catering kitchen and storage. The table below presents a range of costs for this type of building, presented in current year dollars.

Item Key	Description of Improvement or Area	Unit Applied	Unit Quantity	Budget Cost per Unit	Total Budget Costs for Market Analysis Recommended Improvements
Description of Improvements			Budget Costs		
Future Exhibition Building Options					
E1	Net 12,000SF Rentable - Exhibition Building	SF	18,450	\$150	\$2,767,500
E2	Net 18,000SF Rentable - Exhibition Building	SF	25,750	\$150	\$3,862,500

Source: Keffer/Overton Architects

Offsite Improvements

During the course of our study, we noted that there are no way finding signs for the Fairgrounds on any roadways into Merrill or along Main Street that would direct visitors to the site. We recommend that signage be erected on Highway 51 (north and south of the State Highway 64 exit), as well as along E Main Street.

OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This section presents (1) our recommended vision/mission for the Fairgrounds, based on Felt Needs, Current Fairground Issues and Constraints and Event Potential for the Fairgrounds, (2) ownership options for the Fairgrounds, (3) operational approaches for the Fairgrounds, (4) potential impacts to the County and (5) financial and economic impacts of events held at the Fairgrounds.

VISION/MISSION FOR THE LINCOLN COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

As a result of our review and assessment of felt needs, current Fairground issues and constraints and event potential for the Fairgrounds, we recommend the following vision/mission statement for the Lincoln County Fairgrounds:

The Lincoln County Fairgrounds, as a vital community asset, serves as:

- *A gathering place for area residents for entertainment, social and educational opportunities;*
- *A destination for regional events and activities; and*
- *A contributing economic driver for the local business community*

The importance of the vision/mission for the Fairgrounds, regardless of its ownership or operator, is to provide guidance on the vital focus and deployment of resources to marketing, operations and uses of the Fairgrounds to achieve its mission.

OWNERSHIP/OPERATING OPTIONS FOR THE FAIRGROUNDS

Discussions with both County and City representatives, as well as other fairground and event facility ownership/operating model, offer a number of different options for ownership and operation of the Lincoln County Fairgrounds.

- 1) Continued ownership and operation by Lincoln County
- 2) Continued ownership by Lincoln County and operation by the City of Merrill
- 3) Transfer of ownership and operations from Lincoln County to the City of Merrill
- 4) Joint ownership, investment and operation by the County and City

While Options 1 and 3 have been discussed at length in recent months by the County and City, Options 2 and 4 offer alternatives that may mitigate possible negative public perception of any County decision to divest itself of the Fairgrounds, as well as establish the public joint efforts that will be needed to successfully improve and operate the Fairgrounds in the future (see Operational Considerations on the next page).

OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

For the Fairgrounds to be successful, regardless of ownership, certain operational considerations and approaches need to be in place. First, the grandstand/restroom/concessions and restroom upgrade recommendations need to be implemented. Otherwise there is nothing at the Fairgrounds to operate or market – only old buildings and grounds to be maintained (as is now done by the County). With a grandstand structure, the operator of the Fairgrounds can begin to “market” the Fairgrounds.

To be able to stage the events that are possible for the Fairgrounds with a grandstand replacement (page 40), we recommend the creation of a community-based organization tasked with marketing/producing those types of spectator events. The organization should have representatives of the County, City, Chamber and business community serving to create/attract those events. This will require targeted and focused efforts.

FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS FROM INVESTMENT AND OPERATION OF THE FAIRGROUNDS

Overall Economic Impacts

Regardless of the ownership/operating model for the Fairgrounds, without the recommended capital investment to replace the grandstand, new restrooms and concessions area, along with the restroom upgrades and code compliance changes, the long-term financial sustainability (and resulting economic impacts) of the annual Fair and the Rodeo will be in question. Using recent financial results of the Fair and the Rodeo, interviews of Fair and Rodeo officials and local food booth owners and economic multipliers for Lincoln County (prepared by the Bureau of Economic Analysis – RIMS II), it is estimated that the annual economic benefits to Lincoln County from the operation of the Lincoln County Fair and the Wisconsin River Prop Rodeo (reflecting the loss of the grandstand and sub-standard restrooms) currently range between \$615,000 and \$670,000. These annual impacts could be lost without reinvestment in the Fairgrounds to replace the grandstand and upgrade restrooms.

With those investments, the Fair and the Rodeo would have the ability to regain attendance and financial returns that would boost the annual economic impacts to levels experienced prior to the loss of the grandstand, estimated at between \$785,000 and \$845,000. In addition, the potential new spectator events identified for the Fairgrounds, consisting of a tractor pull weekend event, a snowmobile race weekend event and a demo derby weekend event, is estimated to generate between \$175,000 and \$205,000 in economic activity in Lincoln County.

**Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study
Estimated Minimum Economic Impact Potential**

	Range of Impacts	
Fair with replacement seating	\$535,000	\$565,000
Rodeo with replacement seating	250,000	280,000
New events with replacement seating	<u>175,000</u>	<u>205,000</u>
Total annual potential impacts	<u>\$960,000</u>	<u>\$1,050,000</u>

The table to the right presents the total annual economic impact potential for the upgrades/improved Lincoln County Fairgrounds – about \$1 million per year.

Estimated Annual Operating Costs

With the replacement of the lost grandstand seating structure, new restrooms and concessions and upgrades to the north/west restrooms, the Fairgrounds would still have minimal operating costs that would not be covered by rental fees or revenues generated by produced events. Over the past few years, the County has budgeted about \$25,000 per year for general maintenance and utilities at the Fairgrounds, though the County has not spent the budget amount in those years, according to the Maintenance Department Director. Using a community-based organization (volunteers) to market/stage the additional spectator events at the Fairgrounds, any additional costs related to the marketing and possible County staff time would be minimal and either by covered by rental fees or event revenues. Any additional cost of maintaining the new seating structure and new/upgraded restrooms. For purposes of this assessment, it is assumed that operational costs could range between \$25,000 and \$50,000 per year – some of which would be offset by rental fees, utility reimbursements or event revenues.

Rental rates for the seating structure could range between \$1,500 and \$2,500 per day, depending on the type of structure built and the type of event held. Those fees would include the concessions area and restrooms.

INVESTMENT COSTS AND FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Using the estimated range of costs for two different seating structure options, new restrooms/concessions building, restroom upgrades and accessibility and safety upgrades (per Keffer/Overton) and the amount of available insurance proceeds from the grandstand loss, additional capital investment requirements range from \$473,000 to \$860,000, as detailed in the table below.

**Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study
Investment Requirements Options**

Option	Budget Estimate	Option	Budget Estimate
<u>Option A</u>		<u>Option C</u>	
2,500 Seat Berm Grandstand	\$978,250	2,500 Seat Bleacher Grandstand	\$693,000
Restroom and Concession Building	660,000	Restroom and Concession Building	660,000
East/North Restroom Upgrades	240,000	East/North Restroom Upgrades	240,000
Accessibility and Safety Upgrades	<u>75,000</u>	Accessibility and Safety Upgrades	<u>75,000</u>
Total	<u>\$1,953,250</u>	Total	<u>\$1,668,000</u>
<u>Option B</u>		<u>Option D</u>	
3,000 Seat Berm Grandstand	\$1,080,000	3,000 Seat Bleacher Grandstand	\$825,500
Restroom and Concession Building	660,000	Restroom and Concession Building	660,000
East/North Restroom Upgrades	240,000	East/North Restroom Upgrades	240,000
Accessibility and Safety Upgrades	<u>75,000</u>	Accessibility and Safety Upgrades	<u>75,000</u>
Total	<u>\$2,055,000</u>	Total	<u>\$1,800,500</u>
Option	Amount	Option	Amount
Option A Budget Estimate	\$1,953,250	Option C Budget Estimate	\$1,668,000
Less Available Insurance Proceeds	<u>(1,220,000)</u>	Less Available Insurance Proceeds	<u>(1,220,000)</u>
Required additional funding	<u>\$733,250</u>	Required additional funding	<u>\$448,000</u>
Option B Budget Estimate	\$2,055,000	Option D Budget Estimate	\$1,800,500
Less Available Insurance Proceeds	<u>(1,220,000)</u>	Less Available Insurance Proceeds	<u>(1,220,000)</u>
Required additional funding	<u>\$835,000</u>	Required additional funding	<u>\$580,500</u>

Assuming the County were to bond for the additional funding, annual debt payments would increase between \$40,000 and \$70,000.

In addition to the capital costs necessary for the recommended facility additions and improvements, it is recommended that a reserve be established to provide for future replacement/maintenance of the seating structure, new and upgraded restrooms and concessions building. Using a 20 year life for these improvements, the annual depreciation/reserve amount would range between \$85,000 and \$104,000, depending on the four options shown in the table above.

The table below presents the estimated annual outlays, assuming the County borrows the amount of the additional funding required for each option (see table on previous page) and makes a contribution to a replacement reserve for the depreciation value of the original cost of each option.

Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study
Annual County Outlays for Fairgrounds Improvements

Amount		Amount	
<u>Option A</u>		<u>Option C</u>	
Annual debt payments	\$60,000	Annual debt payments	\$40,000
Replacement reserve payment	<u>99,000</u>	Replacement reserve payment	<u>85,000</u>
Total annual investment	<u>\$159,000</u>	Total annual investment	<u>\$125,000</u>
<u>Option B</u>		<u>Option D</u>	
Annual debt payments	\$68,000	Annual debt payments	\$50,000
Replacement reserve payment	<u>104,000</u>	Replacement reserve payment	<u>91,000</u>
Total annual investment	<u>\$172,000</u>	Total annual investment	<u>\$141,000</u>

Note: The annual debt payments are for the following total debt amounts – Option A, \$800,000; Option B, \$900,000; Option C, \$500,000; and Option D, \$650,000. These amounts include the additional funding requirements above the amount of the remaining insurance proceeds plus additional amounts to cover debt issuance costs, legal fees and the like.

Exhibits

Lincoln County Fair Grounds Buildings and Structures

- #1 – Fair Association Office –Owned by Fair Association
- #2 – Lokemoen Building – Built 1974 – Owned by Fair Association
- #3 – Livestock Pavilion – Built 1927 – Square footage 18,224
- #4 – Old School House – Moved onto property 1960
- #5 – Fair Building – Owned by Fair Association
- #6 – Schultz Building – Built in 1880 – Square footage 4,595
- #7 – Our Savior Church Stand – Square footage 920
- #8 – Steckling Building – built 1965 – Square footage 6,150
- #9 – Sell Building – Owned by the Fair Association. – built 1980 – square footage 4,860
- #10 – Newest Bathrooms
- #11 – Knights of Columbus Food Stand – square footage 700
- #12 –St. John’s Church Concession stand – square footage 2,880
- #13 –County Owned Stand – they rent to various groups – square footage 1,232
- #14 – St. Francis Church Food Stand – square footage 1,409
- #15 – Eagles Club Food Stand – square footage 1,428
- #16 – VFW Food Stand – square footage 2,400
- #17 – Lions Food Stand – square footage 1,216
- #18 – Optimist Food Stand – square footage 783
- #19 – West Bathroom
- #20 – East Bathroom
- #21 – Former Grandstand Location
- #22 – Horse Arena – 90 x 220

Source: Lincoln County

Summary of Findings

This Facility analysis includes the evaluation of all built facilities on the Lincoln County Fairgrounds. This includes 21 contributing items as indicated on site plan on the next page. Of these 21 items only 12 are physical structures under the direct control of the County, the others still exist on the fairgrounds site but are privately maintained or owned by other parties. As a general rule of thumb the privately controlled structures are in better condition than the property managed or owned by the County. That is not to say that the privately owned structures are not in need of routine maintenance and upkeep, only that they are generally better off than those operated by the County. This report will focus most of its comments on the County managed structures.

The Fairground Buildings for the most part can be separated into three groups of use – Display, Livestock, and Restroom. Predominantly the facilities in the poorest condition are the Restrooms. It is no coincidence that these buildings are also the most difficult from a maintenance side as well as the most expensive to up-keep. This perfect storm of circumstances often adds up to deferring maintenance – which is what has happened here.

The buildings in the toughest shape have a wood frame and/or several exposed areas of wood on the exterior. This is no surprise, as wood has a tendency to deteriorate quickly if not maintained properly. The lack of paint or the lack of an ongoing painting program

for the wood structures is what has led to the continued deterioration of the exterior elements.

Other common areas of deficiency included a general lack of the buildings meeting current accessibility guidelines, either from a building code standpoint or from a site planning standpoint (this included both life/safety and barrier free access items). Simple hard surface walk-off areas around entry doors and flush to grade door thresholds would go a long way to remedying the life/safety issues site wide. Further, making sure each structure is equipped with adequate exit capacity, exit doors, and exit hardware on all man doors would solve most of the compliance problems in this category.

A lack of gutters and downspouts on most of the buildings (some of the buildings lack a proper fascia to attach a gutter system – this would need to be added as well) is a major contributor to premature deterioration of the structures. Not having gutters allows water sheeting off of a roof system to run down the face of the exterior wall promoting unnecessary moisture intrusion along the wall surface as it makes its way to the ground – this shortens the life span of a wall. Also, the water is able to immediately enter the ground at the top of the foundation system. Allowing a path for water to settle against the foundation promotes excessive moisture under the building perimeter which can lead to frost heave and subgrade washout of walls and slabs. Gutters and downspouts should be installed on all buildings to divert water away from the structures and prolong their lifespan.

Conditions Analysis Approach

One of the early steps involved in any functional master plan is to inventory and understand the existing conditions of the given infrastructure. Armed with this information one ensures that all future market based decisions are supported or determines if improvements to the existing facilities must take place.

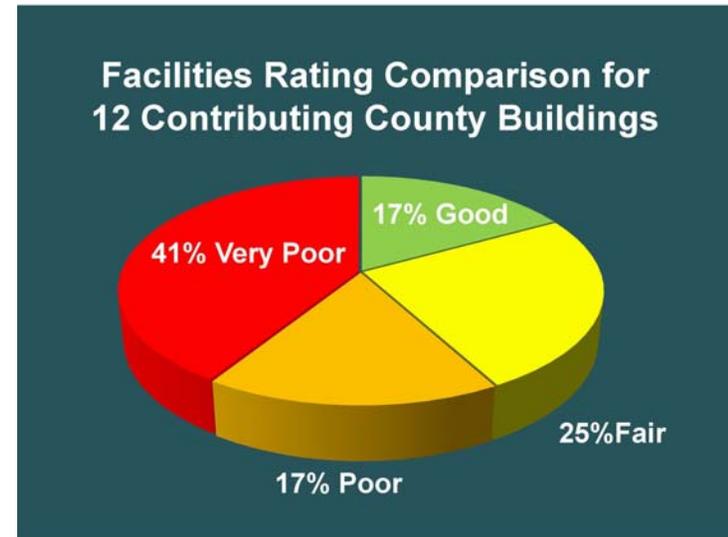
Process

The next several pages include a discussion of the facilities surveyed including a ranking based on a simple but objective scale. This ranking is included with the narrative and a Built Environment summary map at the end of this document on pages 25-26.

21 Facilities were reviewed – 12 were considered contributing, 8 Base Level Evaluation Criteria were considered:

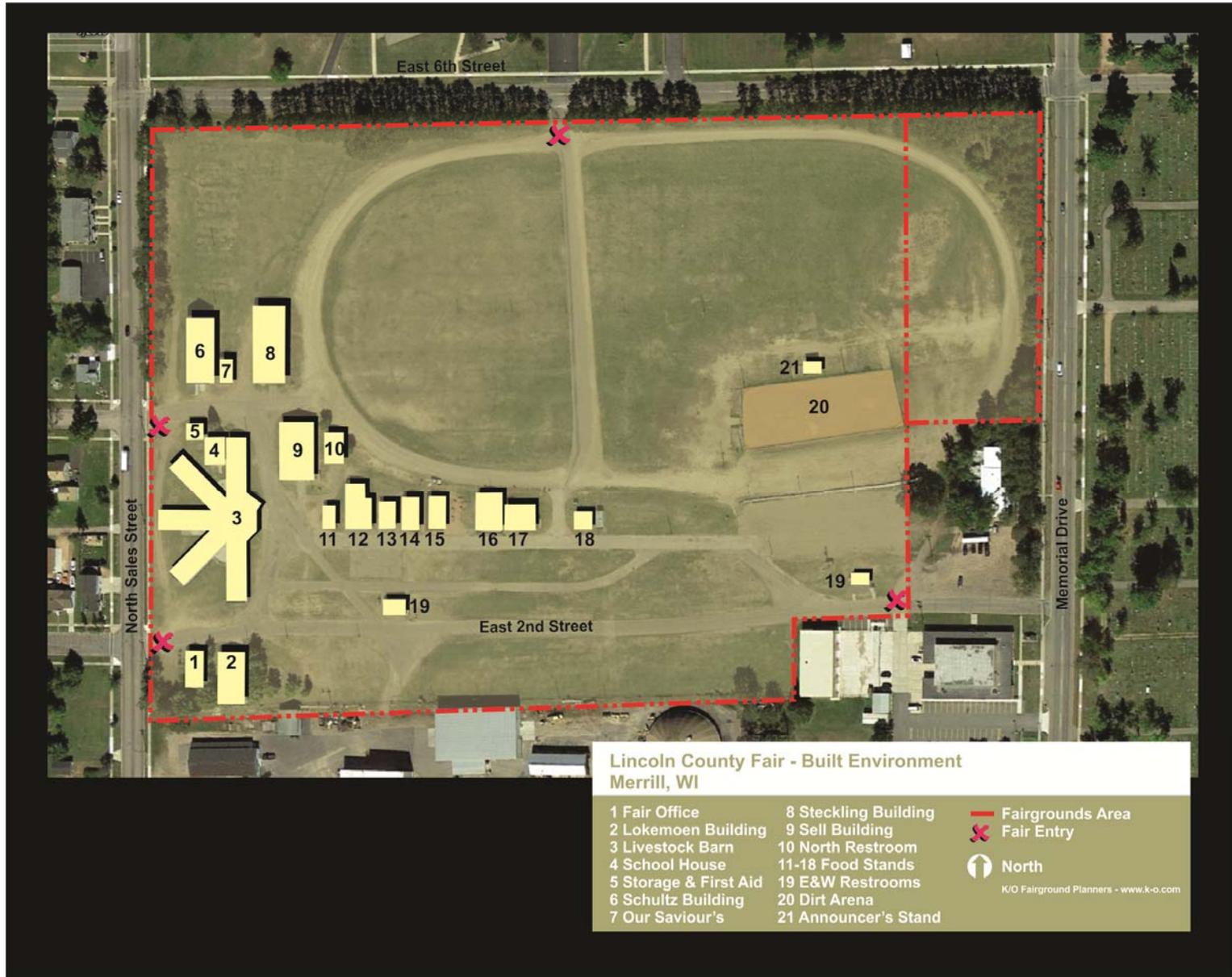
- Exterior Walls
- Interior/Finishes
- Roof
- Floor or Ground
- Doors/Windows
- Structural System
- Utilities
- Accessibility

The Built Environment summary map assigned a color to each building established by the conditions ranking (green = excellent, red = very poor) based on the SF magnitude of cost required for repairs.



Lincoln County Fairgrounds Existing Facilities

Exhibit B



1. Fair Office

The Fair Office building is approximately 1,300 square feet. It has a concrete formed foundation with a wood-framed residential type sub-structure. The building was moved to its current location in 1998 at a cost of \$25,000. Other important items to note in regard to this building are:

- Asphalt shingle roof
- Single glazed wood windows with storms
- Windows are protected with an aluminum siding panel for security reasons in the off season
- Wood frame
- Vinyl siding
- Wood panel interior with wood plank floor finish
- Interior toilet room
- Seems to meet current accessible requirements
- Building appears adequate in size for current use
- Water has frozen within the crawl space in the past
- Poured/formed concrete foundation

Conditions comments:

- Gutters and downspouts should be installed on eave edges of roof to prolong the life of the siding and to route water away from the foundation.
- Bushes should be cut back from the building exterior to prevent infestation and mold growth.
- Roof appears to have 10+ years of life left.
- Interior electrical could be reworked with more circuits added as several lights are plugged into each other.

An in depth architectural review of the occupancy use may show that a second means of exiting would be required from this structure.

An annual maintenance plan should be developed to review and repair vinyl siding deficiencies.



Lincoln County Fairgrounds Existing Facilities

Exhibit B



2. Rabbit & Poultry (Lokemoen Building)

This 3,200 square foot building was constructed in 1974. This building is a wood frame pole building with metal siding and roof. Other important items to note in regard to this building are:

- Roof was replaced two years ago
- Wood post frame
- Built-up Wood Trusses
- Horizontal wood girts for siding attachment
- Metal siding
- Metal roof
- Slab on grade concrete floor
- Single front facing sliding door
- 2 – 4'-0" man doors
- Lights/power
- Minimal venting

Conditions comments:

Gutters, downspouts, and fascia should be installed on the eave edge of roof to prolong the life, and route water away from the siding and foundation.

Vegetation should be cut back on the fence line of the building exterior to prolong the life of the siding.

Interior electrical could be reworked with more circuits and outlets added. The exposed panel by the exit door does not appear adequately protected from inadvertent damage.

Both accessible means of egress through the man doors have a step up/down at the threshold that exceeds ¼ inch. This should be remedied.

Damage was noted around the perimeter of the metal siding. An annual maintenance plan should be

developed to review and repair metal siding deficiencies. Repairs will prevent rodent and insect infestation as well as limit moisture intrusion.





3. Livestock Barn

The Livestock Barn houses Dairy, Beef, Horse, Sheep and Swine during the annual fair. Those interviewed mentioned that it is adequate in size for the number of entries during the fair so, no additions appear necessary to accommodate future growth. The building consists of 5 finger barns surrounding a central rotunda show ring. The approximately 16,000 square foot structure is wood framed with wood siding. The asphalt shingle roof on the rotunda portion of the building appears in good condition as does to roll roofing on the finger barns. That said, roll roofing is much harder to assess a visual condition of as you often times do not realize deficiencies until the roofing fails (roll roofing relies on the integrity of many seams, and the seams are what fails first). Other important items to note in regard to this building are:



- Wood frame, no insulation, wood siding, exterior paint is in poor condition
- Dry rot evidenced on exterior trim
- Roll roofing on wings – unable to determine condition
- Asphalt shingles on rotunda
- Gutters and Downspouts not present on barn
- Slab on grade concrete floors in cattle barn aisles only
- Slab on grade concrete floor in entire Horse and Sheep/Swine finger barns and Rotunda
- Aisle widths in barns ok, stall depths are narrow
- Beef and Dairy finger Barns have dirt stalls
- Overall light levels are low
- Electricity – many locations of insulated wiring not in conduit
- Dairy – 4 milk chutes

Lincoln County Fairgrounds Existing Facilities

Exhibit B

No windows just wood hopper hinged panels
Single large sliding or overhead doors at the end of each finger barn
Smaller sliding exterior access doors towards the rotunda side of each finger barn
Double sliding door to enter rotunda
No code legal egress man doors exist on building
7' wide aisle in horse barn 8'd X 10'w horse stalls
Approximate size of Beef, Dairy and Horse finger barns - 26' X 96'
Approximate size of Sheep/Swine finger barn - 26' X 84'
Concrete block wall and shingle roof milk parlor equip room is an annex addition. Room has a padlocked man door

Conditions comments:

Gutters and downspouts should be installed on eave edges of roof to prolong the life of the siding and to route water away from the foundation.

Interior electrical could be reworked with more circuits and outlets added. All exposed wires should be placed in conduit and panels should be out of public spaces.

Accessible means of egress should be added to meet occupancy requirements. Man doors with panic bar exiting should be added.

An annual maintenance plan should be developed to review and repair wood siding deficiencies. Several locations of wood trim need repaired or replaced.

New paint is needed on entire exterior.

Additional power ventilation should be considered.



Lincoln County Fairgrounds Existing Facilities

Exhibit B



4. School House

The interior conditions of this 1,100 square foot structure were not observed but the exterior appears to have recently been updated. The old school house was moved onto this site in 1960 and has been maintained as an example to showcase the one room school house. The siding and windows are new within the past three years and the exterior paint is in great condition. Other important items to note in regard to this building are:

Retired historical teachers society maintains building
Provided as an education walk-thru during fair
All the 3rd grade classes in Merrill tour every October
Wood frame on concrete block foundation with crawl space

The ramp at the entrance is too steep to meet accessibility guidelines – it should not exceed a 1:12 slope, ramp at rear exits onto grass
Air conditioning is provided by a single window unit
Asphalt shingle roof has a few years left

Conditions comments:

Gutters, downspouts, and fascia should be installed on the eave edge of roof to prolong the life, and route water away from the siding and foundation
Eave and rake boards are in poor condition and should be repaired and repainted



5. Storage and First Aid Shed

This Approximately 600 Square foot building is used for Storage and First Aid during the Fair. Access was not attained at the time of this survey but it appears that the building is a wood frame structure with wood siding that has been covered with vinyl siding. This is troublesome as what wood exterior is exposed appears to be in very poor condition – showing areas in need of complete repainting or trim that is showing signs of extensive dry rot. Also compounding the problems with structure is the fact that a metal roof and fascia assembly was installed directly over the existing shed roof below. Other important items to note in regard to this building are:

Concrete foundation

Exterior is in poor condition and thus the support structure should be fully evaluated

Single man door access does not meet accessibility guidelines

Wood windows are in poor condition

Conditions comments:

Gutters and downspouts should be installed on the eave edge of roof to prolong the life of the siding and to route water away from the foundation.

An in depth architectural review of the occupancy use may show that a second means of exiting would be required from this structure.

An annual maintenance plan should be developed to review and repair all deficiencies.

This building is in need of a complete replacement of all exterior finishes and openings or it should be considered for the wrecking ball.



6. Schultz Building Cultural Arts

The Shultz Building built 1880 is the oldest building on the grounds – used for displays during the fair and storage during the offseason. This structure is 5,800 square feet with about 2,000 square feet of that area in a second floor loft space. The loft does not meet accessible space standards and therefore should not be used for anything other than noncombustible storage. Other important items to note in regard to this building are:

- Perimeter concrete foundation
- Wood frame, with wood siding
- Plywood and fiberboard lined interior walls
- Slab on grade concrete slab
- Wood frame stairs, 7 inch risers and 11 inch treads
- Stair handrails do not meet code
- No ventilation
- Metal roof panels with no gutters and downspouts
- No snow guards on roof
- Open stairs need closed off
- 6'-0" head height upstairs
- Poor lighting levels
- Exterior doors need replaced with accessible doors
- Wood frame/siding annex on front, with shingle roof
- Exposed wiring throughout needs to be installed in conduit.

Conditions comments:

Gutters, downspouts, and fascia should be installed on the eave edge of roof to prolong the life, and route water away from the siding and foundation. Due to

the height of the roof edges snow guards are highly recommended on this roof as well.

An in depth architectural review of the accessibility and occupancy use will show that proper exit doors should be installed and the second floor is not useable as designed.

A power ventilation system should be installed.

An annual maintenance plan should be developed to review and repair all deficiencies.

All exterior wood and trim should be repaired and replaced as needed.

Building should be scraped primed and painted.

All doors on building should be replaced with fully accessible egress compliant doors.

All wiring and panels inside and outside the building should be replaced with code compliant wiring and panel circuiting.



Lincoln County Fairgrounds Existing Facilities

Exhibit B



Lincoln County Fairgrounds Existing Facilities

Exhibit B



7. Our Saviour's Lutheran Church Food Stand

This 840 square foot church operated food stand is a great example of the spirit of the fair. As a private structure not maintained by the fair access was not sought for this survey however since it is surrounded by a few significant contributing structures on the fairgrounds a few comments are worth noting. It appears to be a wood frame, wood siding building with a good condition asphalt shingle roof. The wood siding has been maintained but like most all wood sided structures on the grounds this one is no different and in need of miscellaneous trim pieces and extensive repair. The large overhangs help protect this building from the elements but gutters and downspouts should still be installed. Like most food stands on the grounds - the building has one single man door, and several transaction windows that appear in marginal condition. This study's purpose was not to review the interior of this building as it is a privately owned food operation so it should be noted the burden falls on the stand operator to vigilantly inspect the interior for safety concerns and code violations.



8. Steckling Building

The Steckling Building is a 6,000 Square Foot steel frame industrial style building constructed in 1965. The metal siding in several locations is in need of replacement due to age and wear. One location has a hole torn through to the exterior allowing the potential for unrestricted access of the elements and rodents to the interior. The addition of gutters and downspouts along the eave roof edge would help preserve the exterior. If the metal roof is the same age as the siding it is most likely at the end of it's useful life as well. The underside of the roof is covered with foil faced insulation so a survey of the condition from the underside was not achievable without destructive investigation. The building has a slab on grade floor that appears in decent condition. There are power outlets that are accessible around the interior perimeter of the building – which might be enough for the current use of the structure but at the time of this review that was not discernable. The light level inside the structure appeared the bare minimum for this type of structure. If the building is used on a year round basis without the exterior overhead doors opened during use additional lighting might be considered. Several man doors were noted around the perimeter probably meeting the code required exiting minimums however none of the doors met accessibility standards regarding minimum threshold heights and panic hardware. Exit signs were present. The overhead doors and power ventilation systems were not checked but given age and condition of the balance of the structure these may be in need of maintenance.



9. Sell Building

This wood frame pole building was built 1980 at a cost of \$32,000. It is 4,500 square feet and functions as a commercial exhibits building during the fair. The exterior metal siding appears rusty in spots and is in need of replacement. The roof also appears to be in marginal condition. The slab on grade concrete floor appears in decent condition given its age and past use as a salt storage building. There are two man doors each located next to the large sliding doors centered under the gables. The two man doors are in need of replacement as they are in rough shape and their associated trim is damaged or missing. A code search would need to be undertaken to determine if these two doors are enough to meet the occupancy demand for the building. As far as accessibility is concerned the thresholds should be flush with grade and at a minimum a 5 foot x 5 foot concrete landing surface should be placed at the exterior of each opening. Panic hardware should also be installed to meet exiting standards. Interior lighting and power seem adequate for the building's current use.



10. North Restroom

Considered the new bathroom on the grounds this approximately 1,000 square foot structure as we understand was built originally in the 1970's and updated in 1990. The Fair Association originally raised the money required to rebuild the structure, oversaw construction and when complete turned the building over to County ownership. The building is a slab on grade concrete block load bearing wall structure with a slab on grade concrete floor. The roof is framed with wood trusses and has an asphalt shingle roof. The exterior block walls are showing their age and in need of pointing, sealing, and paint. The roof appears in adequate condition but will need replaced in years to come. Venting is also a concern – power venting should be considered as an option. The main issue with this building is accessibility throughout the restrooms. The stall aisle needs to have a 4'-0" clear width at a minimum if certain approach requirements are to be met. Stall depths to meet accessibility standards, need to be approximately 5'-0" at a minimum. The overall width of each side of the restroom is 9'-0" clear. Once partition depths and required finishes are subtracted there is not enough width to meet accessibility without rebuilding the interior of the restroom on each side. Toilet accessories are also placed in areas of noncompliance – however this is easily remedied. For continued use on into the future a complete overhaul of these restrooms is recommended. There are 3 lavatories, 1 shower, and 6 toilet fixtures each for women and men (3 urinals & 3 wc's).



11-18. Miscellaneous Food Stand Buildings

Each of these structures is privately owned and maintained; thus, are not really a formal part of this study. That said these food stand buildings range in size from 600 to 2,200 square feet in size. Interior access was not sought for this survey however, like the Our Saviour's food stand since it is part of the grounds a few comments are worth noting. It appears that all of the stands (with the exception of building 16 – which has metal siding and a metal roof), are wood frame, wood siding buildings with asphalt shingle roofs. In most instances the wood siding has been maintained but there are several buildings in need of routine maintenance and paint. Like most all buildings on the grounds gutters and downspouts do not exist on these structures and should be installed to add life to the walls and foundations by keeping moisture away from their perimeters. All of these stands have man doors, and several transaction windows that appear in marginal condition. Accessibility is a theme that keeps repeating itself and attention should be paid to threshold heights, proper hardware, slab on grade landings on the exterior of man doors, and proper height transaction counters for disabled individuals. This study's purpose was not to review the interior of these buildings as they are privately owned food operations so it should be noted the burden falls on the stand operators to vigilantly inspect the interior for safety concerns and code violations.



Lincoln County Fairgrounds Existing Facilities

Exhibit B



Lincoln County Fairgrounds Existing Facilities

Exhibit B



19. East and West Restrooms

Both the East and West Restrooms are very similar in layout, construction and conditions, so it makes sense to discuss both of them at the same time. Both were built in 1952 and both are approximately 600 square feet in size. These buildings both have the same number of fixtures for both males and females - males: 2 lavatories, 5 urinals, 3 water closets; females: 3 lavatories, 5 water closets. The accessible clearances do not meet code standards in either building (even though it appears that the East Bathroom has an accessible stall on both the male and female side). The plumbing fixtures themselves are also out of date and based on their dimensions are not allowed for use within the current accessible guidelines. The only way to make these buildings compliant from an accessibility point of view is to completely gut and rework them. As for other building conditions thresholds, door widths, door hardware, light levels, ventilation, and turn clearances do not meet code standards. The interior slab on grade is showing its age and most likely should be removed and replaced. Ventilation is poor and power ducted venting should be considered with upgrades. The load bearing concrete block exterior walls need repointed, sealed and painted. The asphalt shingle roofs appear in adequate condition but might need replaced in the next 5-10 years. The boarded up exterior openings on both structures are odd and a more permanent concrete block infill solution should be explored. The interior gypsum board and plaster wall finish has deteriorated because of the lack of tempering the building through the cold season. Either an alternative interior finish should be studied or

heating the buildings to a level that would help preserve the interior finish should be considered. The light fixtures and wiring throughout both structures must be updated and replaced per current code standards.





20-21. Dirt Arena and Announcer's Stand

As the arena is not an actual building and the associated announcer's stand is a minor structure there are not many issues within these two areas. However, there are a few items are worth mentioning. The day the property was reviewed it was lightly raining. This event caused standing water to gather on the arena surface. This means the subgrade should probably be considered to be replaced in the near future, especially if surface water becomes a problem for future events. Although not tested it appears that the top layer of soil is has a heavy clay mixture – this may also add to the retention of water. The surrounding arena fencing appeared in adequate condition but should be reevaluated on an event by event basis. Arena lighting seemed adequately placed around the perimeter but the arena was not observed at night so no true illumination evaluation of this was made. A set of grandstands or aluminum bleachers would greatly enhance the patron experience during events and should be considered as a future project. When seating is added additional restrooms and concessions should be considered at that time as well. The announcer's stand appears to be a wood framed two story structure with metal siding and a metal roof. As access to the interior was not gained it is tough to get a gauge as to the structure's conditions. However, the metal siding was beat up on the lower level and in need of repairs and replacement in certain areas. The wood framed windows were showing signs of dry rot and were in need of a new coat of paint. The entry door did not have code compliant hardware and should be updated



Lincoln County Fairgrounds Existing Facilities

Cost Summary

The budget repairs cost summary included with this evaluation tried to include consideration for most of the reasonable repairs mentioned in the previous narrative portion of this document. These costs should be viewed as preliminary in nature and their resulting summary is included in this report for no other means than understanding the magnitude of elements and for a snapshot budget understanding of what needs to be considered as future projects move forward. These costs do not consider any improvements to utilities or other site infrastructure other than that mentioned. Costs are calculated in 2014 dollars and should have fees and contingencies added if they are to be considered as real projects. Items may have very well changed or been updated since the preliminary review took place – thus it should be understood that this is a living document that should be revised prior to undertaking any future work recommended in this report.

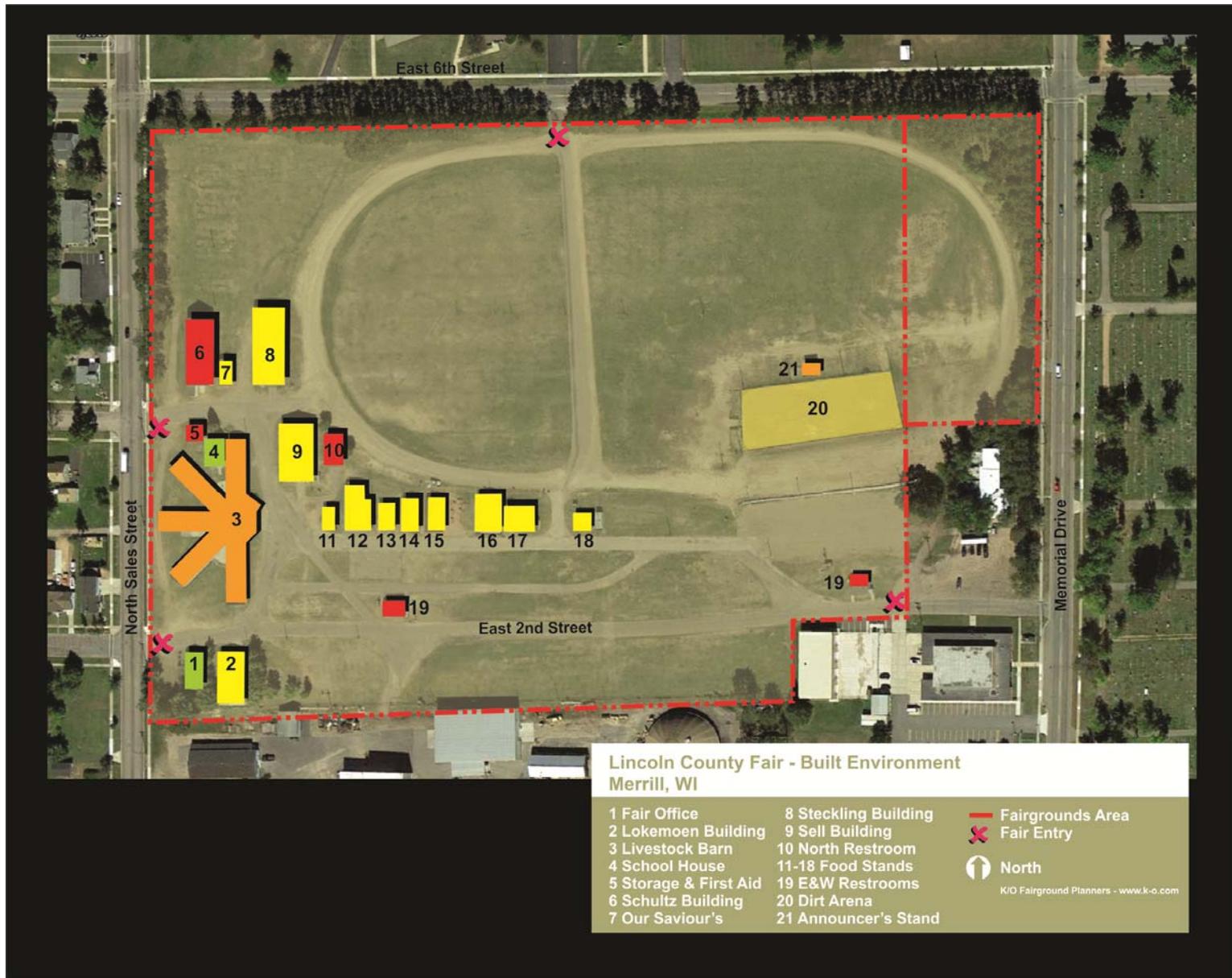
Lincoln County Fair Building Condition Assessment Summary
K/O Fairground Planners - www.k-o.com **November 13, 2014**

Condition Key		
Excellent		\$0 per SF need to be spent on improvements
Good		\$1-\$19 per SF - minimal improvement needs
Fair		\$20-\$74 per SF needs spent on improvements
Poor		\$75-\$124 per SF on improvements
Very Poor		\$125+ per SF needs spent on improvements

Building Number and Name	Area (Square Feet)	Exterior Area (Square Feet)	Man Doors	Large Doors	Small Sliding Windows	Windows/Openings	Budget Cost per SF	Total Budget Costs for Improvements discussed in narrative
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Name	Number of Building	Budget Costs						
1 Fair Office	1,300	1,500	2	-	-	11	\$15	\$19,500
2 Lokemoen Building	3,200	2,300	2	2	-	-	\$20	\$64,000
3 Livestock Barn	16,000	10,000	1	6	6	68	\$75	\$1,200,000
4 School House	1,100	850	2	-	-	10	N/A	N/A
5 Storage and First Aid Shed	500	700	1	-	-	4	\$125	\$62,500
6 Schultz Building	5,800	5,000	4	-	-	43	\$150	\$870,000
7 Our Saviour's Food Stand	840	700	1	-	-	-	N/A	N/A
8 Steckling Building	6,000	3,300	6	2	-	-	\$12	\$72,000
9 Sell Building	4,500	2,800	2	2	-	-	\$15	\$67,500
10 North Restroom	1,000	1,200	6	-	-	-	\$180	\$180,000
11-18 Food Stands	600	700	1	-	-	4	N/A	N/A
19 East Rest Rooms	600	900	2	-	-	-	\$200	\$120,000
19 West Rest Rooms	600	900	2	-	-	-	\$200	\$120,000
20 Dirt Arena	24,000	-	-	-	-	-	\$2	\$48,000
21 Announcer's Stand	150	750	1	-	-	6	\$75	\$11,250

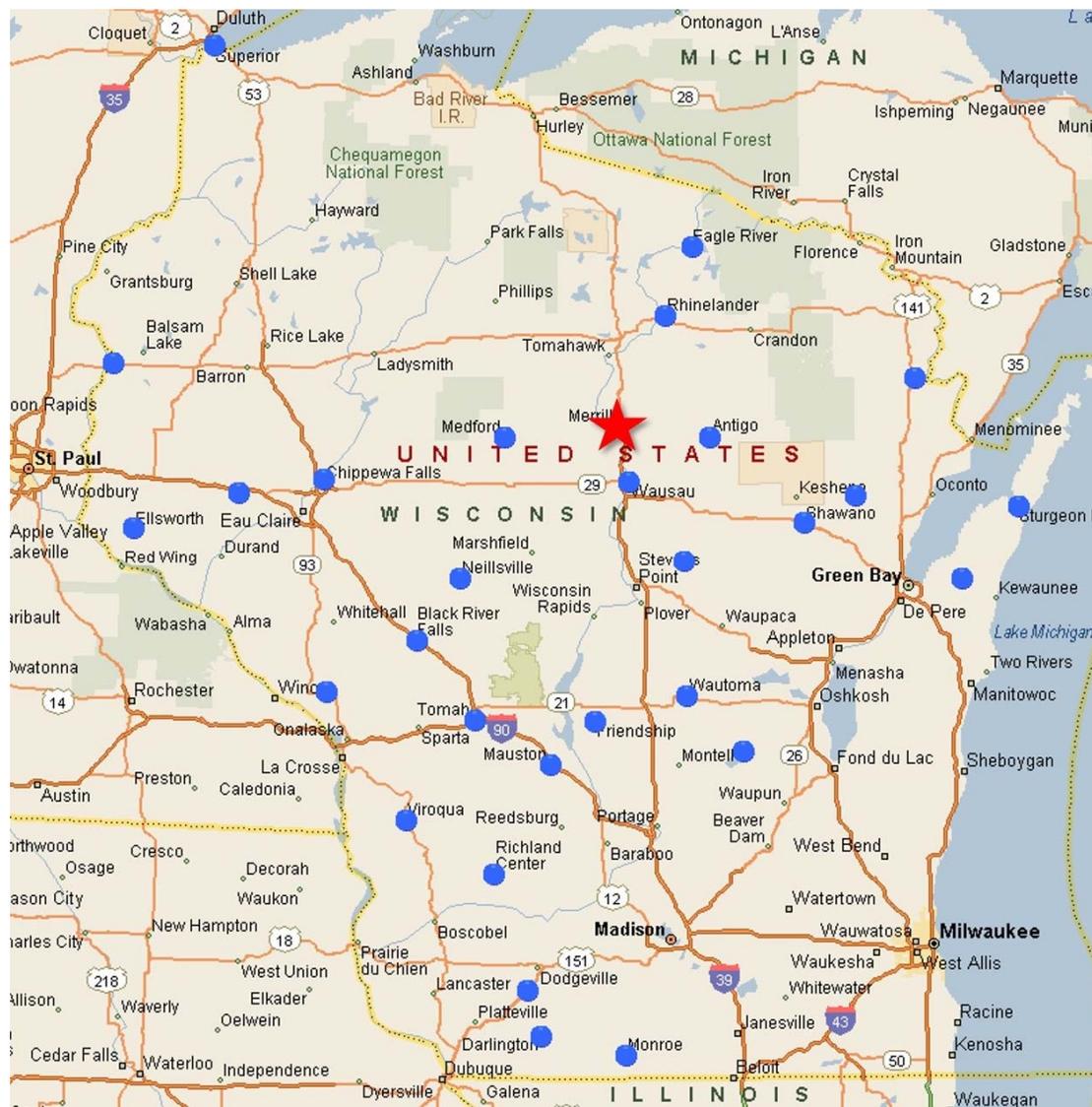
Total Budget for All Repairs to All Buildings **\$2,834,750**



Comparable Fairgrounds

Wisconsin Counties by Population Rank	County	Population	Fair City
10	Marathon County	135,416	Wausau
23	Portage County	70,380	Rosholt
25	Chippewa County	63,132	Chippewa Falls
31	Monroe County	45,298	Tomah
32	Dunn County	44,122	Menomonie
33	Douglas County	43,887	Superior
34	Polk County	43,476	St. Croix Falls
35	Shawano County	41,643	Shawano
36	Marinette County	41,610	Wausaukee
37	Pierce County	40,976	Ellsworth
38	Oconto County	37,318	Gillett
39	Green County	37,090	Monroe
40	Oneida County	35,689	Rhineland
41	Clark County	34,615	Neilsville
42	Vernon County	30,329	Viroqua
43	Trempealeau County	29,582	Galesville
44	Lincoln County	28,684	Merrill
45	Door County	27,896	Sturgeon Bay
46	Juneau County	26,547	Mauston
47	Waushara County	24,329	Wautoma
48	Iowa County	23,749	Mineral Point
49	Vilas County	21,368	Eagle River
50	Jackson County	20,644	Black River Falls
51	Taylor County	20,610	Medford
52	Kewaunee County	20,505	Luxemburg
53	Adams County	20,480	Friendship
54	Langlade County	19,575	Antigo
55	Green Lake County	18,959	Green Lake
56	Richland County	17,717	Richland Center
57	Lafayette County	16,766	Darlington

Map of Comparable Fairgrounds



Adams County Fairgrounds



Clark County Fairgrounds



Door County Fairgrounds



Douglas County Fairgrounds



Dunn County Fairgrounds



Green County Fairgrounds



Green Lake County Fairgrounds



Iowa County Fairgrounds



Jackson County Fairgrounds



Juneau County Fairgrounds



Kewaunee County Fairgrounds



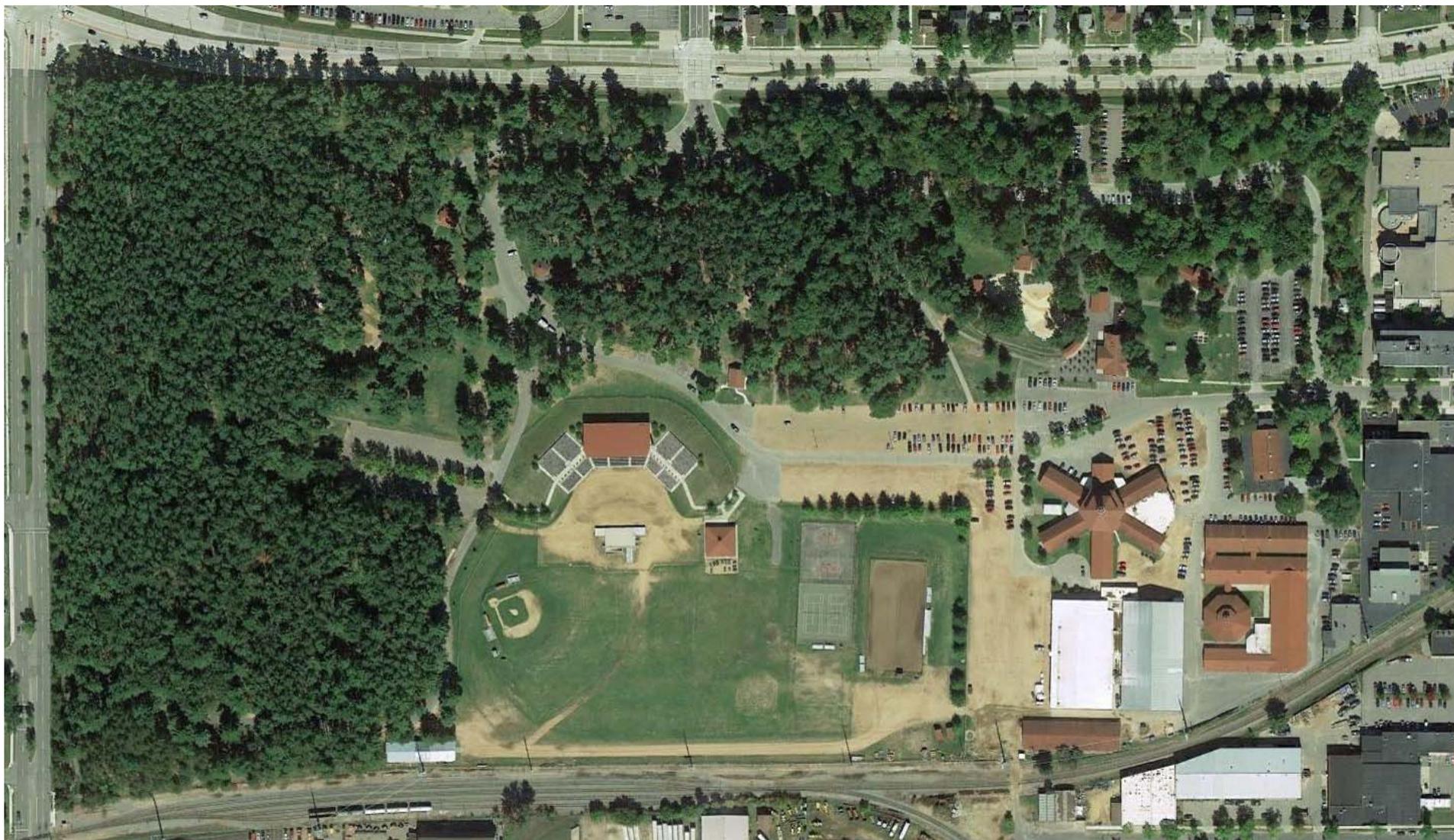
Lafayette County Fairgrounds



Langlade County Fairgrounds



Marathon County Fair Site



Marinette County Fairgrounds



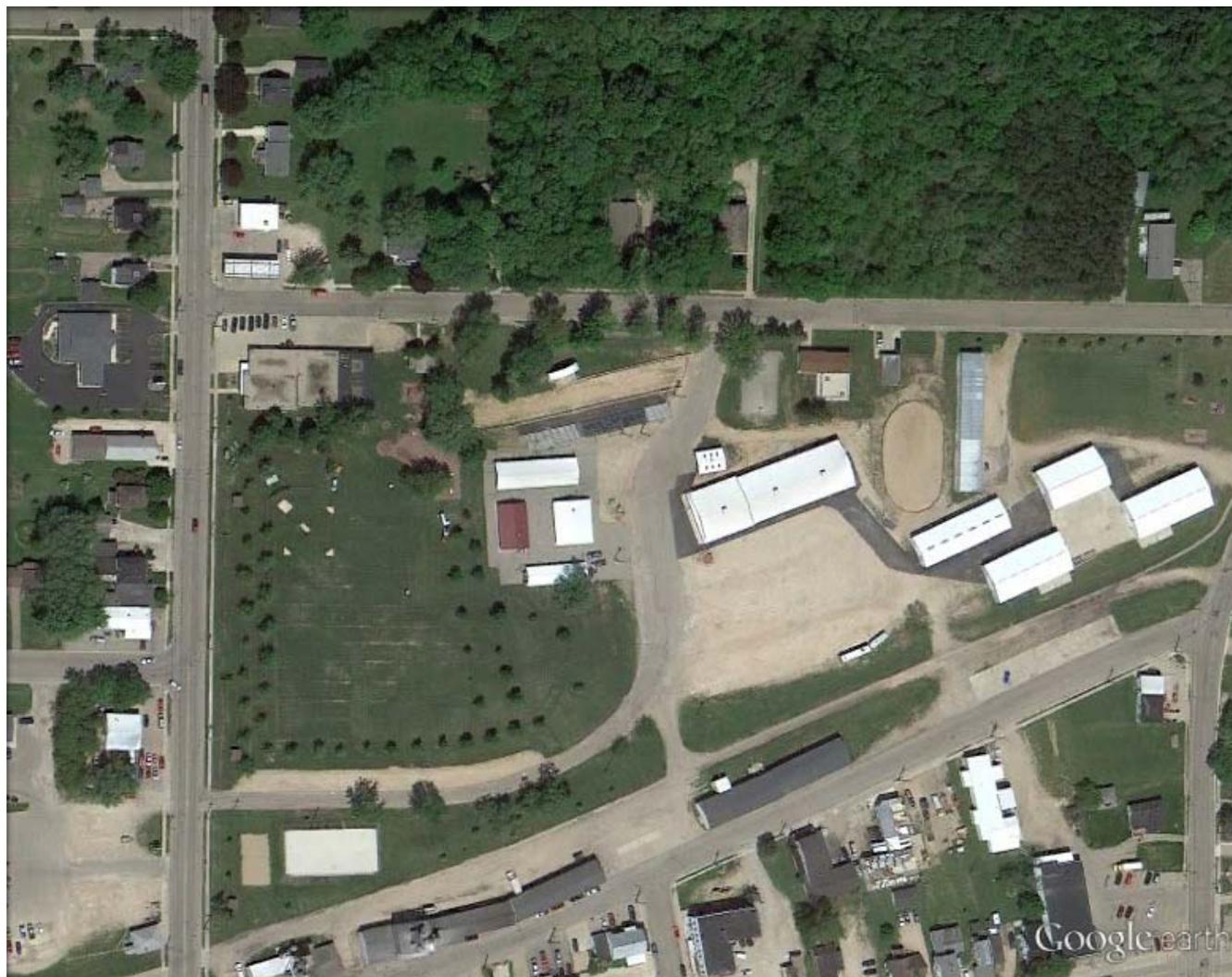
Monroe County Fairgrounds



Northern WI State Fairgrounds



Oconto County Fairgrounds



Oneida County Fair Site



Pierce County Fairgrounds



Polk County Fairgrounds



Portage County Fair Site



Richland County Fairgrounds



Shawano County Fairgrounds



Taylor County Fairgrounds



Trempealeau County Fairgrounds



Vernon County Fairgrounds



Vilas County Fairgrounds



Waushara County Fairgrounds



Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study

Wausau Area Events Calendar - Expos/Trade Shows/Sales

Dates	Event Description	Facility Where Held	City
1/26/2014	Mind and Body Expo	Central Wis. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild
2/7/14-2/9/14	Wausau Area Builders Association Home Show	Central Wis. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild
2/9/2014	Brides & Beyond Bridal Expo	Central Wis. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild
2/14/14-2/15/14	Central Wisconsin Sports Show	Central Wis. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild
2/15/14-2/16/14	Wausau Antique Show	DC Everest High School	Weston
2/21/14-2/23/14	Wisconsin Deer Classic and Hunting Expo	Central Wis. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild
2/28/14-3/2/14	Wisconsin Musky Expo	Central Wis. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild
3/7/14-3/9/14	Central Wisc. RV & Camping Show	Central Wis. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild
3/21/14-3/23/14	Lawn, Garden, Home & Recreation Show	Central Wis. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild
4/12/14-4/13/14	Central Wisc. Cat Club Show	Faith Christian Academy	Wausau
4/24/14	Wausau Area Business Expo	Central Wis. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild
5/3/2014	Spring Home Party Plan & Craft Show	Dale's Weston Lanes	Weston
5/8/2014	Senior Living Show	Central Wis. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild
5/8/14-5/10/14	City-Wide Rummage Sale	Various	Schofield
5/15/14-5/17/14	Mosinee Community Sales Days	Mosinee Area Chamber of Commerce	Mosinee
5/17/14-5/18/14	Central Wisc. Cat Club Show	Faith Christian Academy	Wausau
6/13/14-6/14/14	Annual Southside Rib Mountain Garage Sale	Various	Wausau
6/19/2014	Market Place Thursday	400 Block	Wausau
6/20/14-6/22/14	The Energy Fair	Midwest Renewable Energy Association	Custer
6/26/14-9/18/14	Market Place Thursday	400 Block	Wausau
7/10/14-7/13/14	Sidewalk Sale	400 Block	Wausau
7/10/14-7/13/14	Iola Car Show	American Legion	Iola
8/9/14-8/10/14	Iola Vintage Military & Gun Show	American Legion	Iola
8/23/14-8/25/14	N Cent. WI Antique Steam & Gas Engine Club Show	Show Grounds	Edgar
8/24/14	Mosinee Masonic Lodge Car & Truck Show	Mosinee Public Works Garage	Mosinee
9/6/14-9/7/14	Wausau Festival of Arts	400 Block	Wausau
9/6/14-9/7/14	Wausau's Artrageous Weekend	Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum	Wausau
9/6/14-9/7/14	Art Worlds 2014	Marathon Park	Wausau
10/10/14-10/12/14	Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show & Sale	Marathon Park	Wausau
10/11/14	Doll Show and Sale	Faith Christian Academy	Wausau
10/18/14	October Pre-Holiday Madness Craft Sale	Grand Lodge Waterpark Resort	Rothschild
10/22/14-10/26/14	Annual Dungeon Ski & Snowboard Sale	Shepherd & Schaller Sporting Goods Inc.	Wausau
11/8/14-11/9/14	The "PARK" Antique Show & Sale	Marathon Park	Wausau
11/8/14-11/9/14	Christmas On First Open House	West Side River District businesses	Wausau
11/8/14-11/9/14	Cedar Creek Mall Harvest Arts & Crafts Marketplace	Central Wis. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild
11/22/14	Wausau Area Jaycees Fall Craft Show	DC Everest High School	Weston
11/26/14-11/30/14	Festival of Trees	Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites	Rothschild
12/12/14-12/14/14	Wisconsin Ice Fishing Show	Central Wis. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild

Source: Wausau/Central Wisconsin Convention and Visitors Bureau

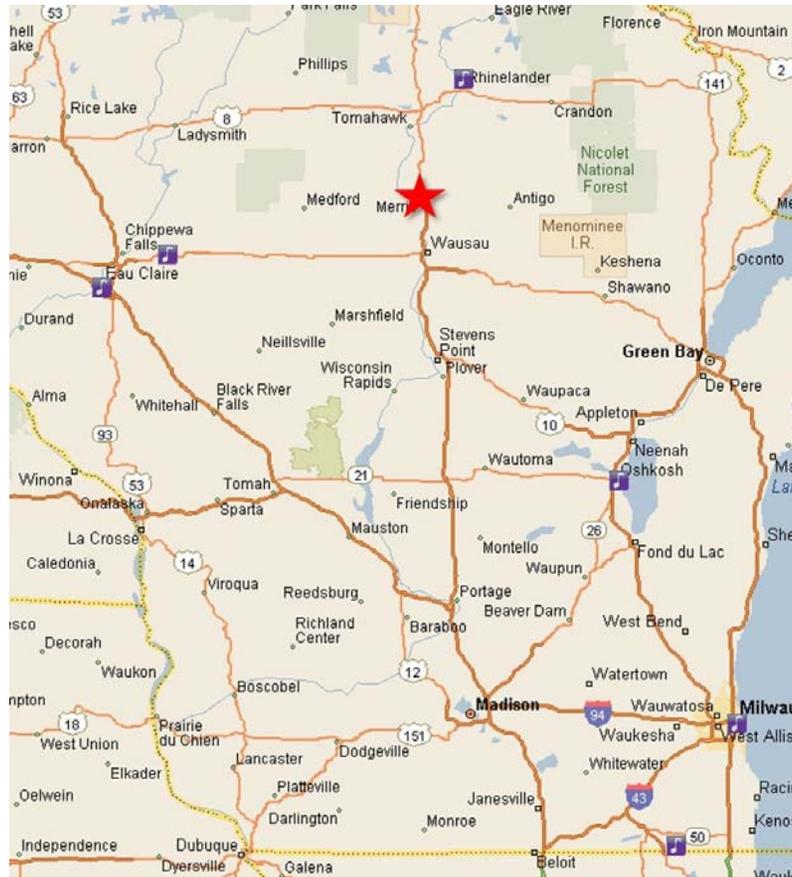
Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study

Wausau Area Events Calendar - Fairs and Festivals

Dates	Event Description	Facility Where Held	City
1/10/14-1/12/14	Granite Peak Family Festival Weekend	Granite Peak Ski Area	Wausau
1/17/14-1/20/14	Granite Peak Martin Luther King, Jr Weekend	Granite Peak Ski Area	Wausau
1/25/14-1/26/14	Granite Peak German Fest	Granite Peak Ski Area	Wausau
2/7/2014	Wausau's Winterfest	400 Block	Wausau
2/7/14-2/9/14	Granite Peak Family Festival Weekend	Granite Peak Ski Area	Wausau
2/22/14-2/23/14	Willow Springs Garden Winter Festival	Willow Springs Garden	Wausau
3/1/14	Granite Peak Mardi Gras Festival	Granite Peak Ski Area	Wausau
3/7/14-3/9/14	Granite Peak Family Festival Weekend	Granite Peak Ski Area	Wausau
3/22/2014	Bull Falls Brewery Bock Fest	Bull Falls Brewery	Wausau
3/24/14-4/6/14	Avalanche Days at Granite Park	Granite Peak Ski Area	Wausau
4/12/2014	Children's Festival	Marathon Park	Wausau
4/26/14-4/27/14	Willow Springs Garden Spring Festival	Willow Springs Garden	Wausau
5/10/2014	Bull Falls Brewery Manifest	Bull Falls Brewery	Wausau
5/24/2014	Wausau Memorial Day Parade	Marathon Park	Wausau
6/7/14-6/10/14	Stratford Heritage Days	Klemme Park	Stratford
6/13/2014	Summer Kick-Off Celebration	Oak Island & Fern Island Parks	Wausau
6/29/2014	Independence Day Celebration & Car Show	Willow Springs Garden	Wausau
7/3/14-7/6/14	Wausau Area 4th of July Celebration	Marathon Park	Wausau
7/4/2014	Mosinee July 4th Parade, Festival & Fireworks	Mosinee Public Works Garage	Mosinee
7/10/14-7/13/14	Balloon and Rib Fest	Wausau Downtown Airport	Wausau
7/12/14-7/13/14	Chalkfest	400 Block	Wausau
7/18/14-7/19/14	Summerfest	Lake DuBay Lions Club	Mosinee
7/25/14-7/26/14	Sid Kyler River Valley Jazz Festival	Bull Falls Brewery	Wausau
7/29/14-8/3/14	Wisconsin Valley Fair	Marathon Park	Wausau
8/8/14-8/10/14	Little Bull Falls Log Jam Festival	Mosinee Public Works Garage	Mosinee
8/10/2014	St. Therese August Fest	St. Therese Parish	Rothschild
8/15/14-8/16/14	Big Bull Falls Blues Fest	Oak Island and Fern Island Parks	Wausau
8/22/2014	Beirgarten Friday Night with The People's Choice	Bull Falls Brewery	Wausau
9/1/2014	Labor Day Parade	Central Wisc. School of Ballet	Wausau
9/6/2014	Irish Fest	Basil Restaurant	Weston
9/20/2014	United Way CommUNITY Fest	Marathon Park	Wausau
9/20/2014	Hoofbeats of the Heart Fundraiser	Marathon Park	Wausau
9/20/14-10/5/14	Great Dane Pub & Brew Co Oktoberfest	Great Dane Pub & Brew CO	Wausau
9/27/2014	Brewmasters Oktoberfest	Central Wisc. Convention & Expo Center	Rothschild
10/11/14	Zion's Annual Strassenfest Fall Festival	Zion Lutheran Church	Wausau
10/17/14-10/31/14	Wilke's Haunted House	Wilke's Extra Sweet Acres	Wausau
10/25/2014	Healthy Halloween Haunting	Mosinee High School	Mosinee
12/5/2014	Holiday Parade	Marathon Park	Wausau
12/6/2014	Mosinee Christmas Festival & Parade	Mosinee Highschool	Mosinee

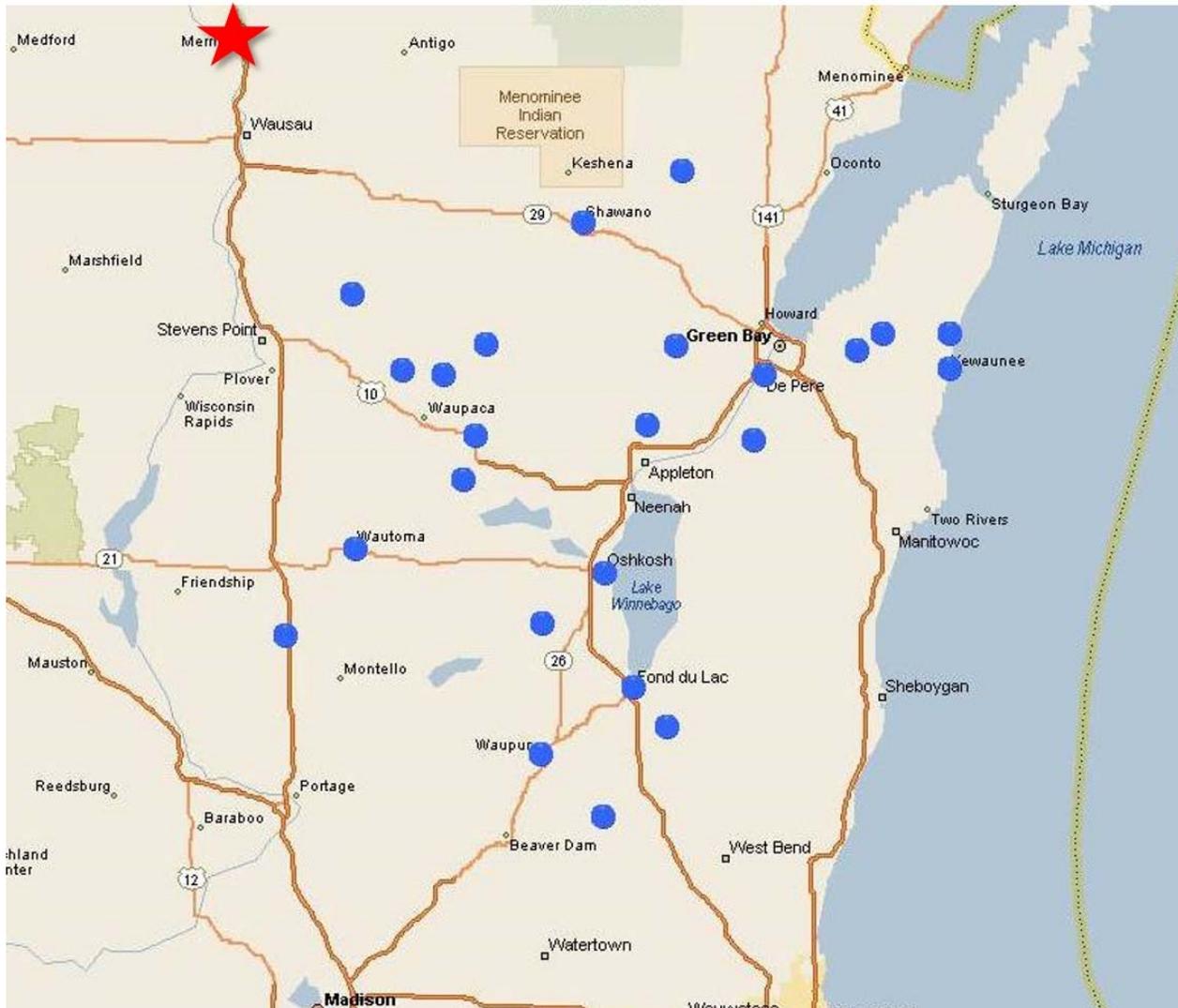
Source: Wausau/Central Wisconsin Convention and Visitors Bureau

Music Festivals



- Hodag Country Festival – Rhinelander
- Rock Fest – Cadott
- Country Fest – Cadott
- Country Jam USA – Eau Claire
- Country USA – Oshkosh
- Lifest - Oshkosh
- Summerfest – Milwaukee
- Country Thunder USA – Twin Lakes

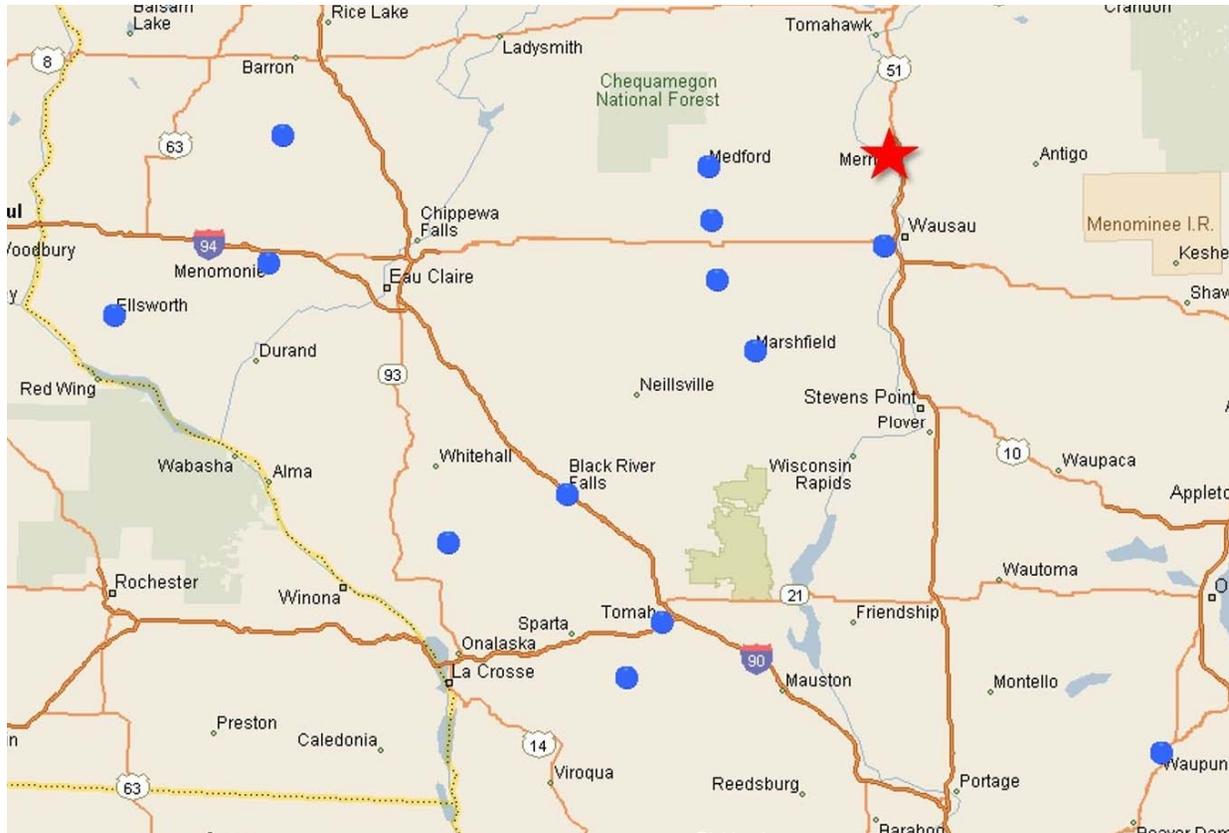
2014 Non-Sanctioned Tractor Pull Locations



Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study	
Non Sanctioned Tractor Pull Locations, 2014	
City	2014 Date
Weyauwega	5/17/2014
Kewaunee	5/24/2014
Ogdensburg	6/7/2014
Greenleaf	6/13/2014
Mackville	6/14/2014
Symco	6/21/2014
Pickett	6/28/2014
Gillett	7/3/2014
Sugar Bush	7/5/2014
Westfield	7/10/2014
West Bloomfield	7/11/2014
Fond du Lac	7/16/2014
Rosholt	7/18/2014
Mayville	7/20/2014
Seymour	7/22/2014
Scandinavia	8/2/2014
Oshkosh	8/7/2014
Waushara	8/14/2014
Brown	8/16/2014
Alaska	8/23/2014
Waupun	8/30/2014
Dickinson	9/1/2014
Eden	9/7/2014
Luxemburg	9/20/2014

Source: www.tractortrucks.net, 2014

2015 WTPA Tractor Pull Locations

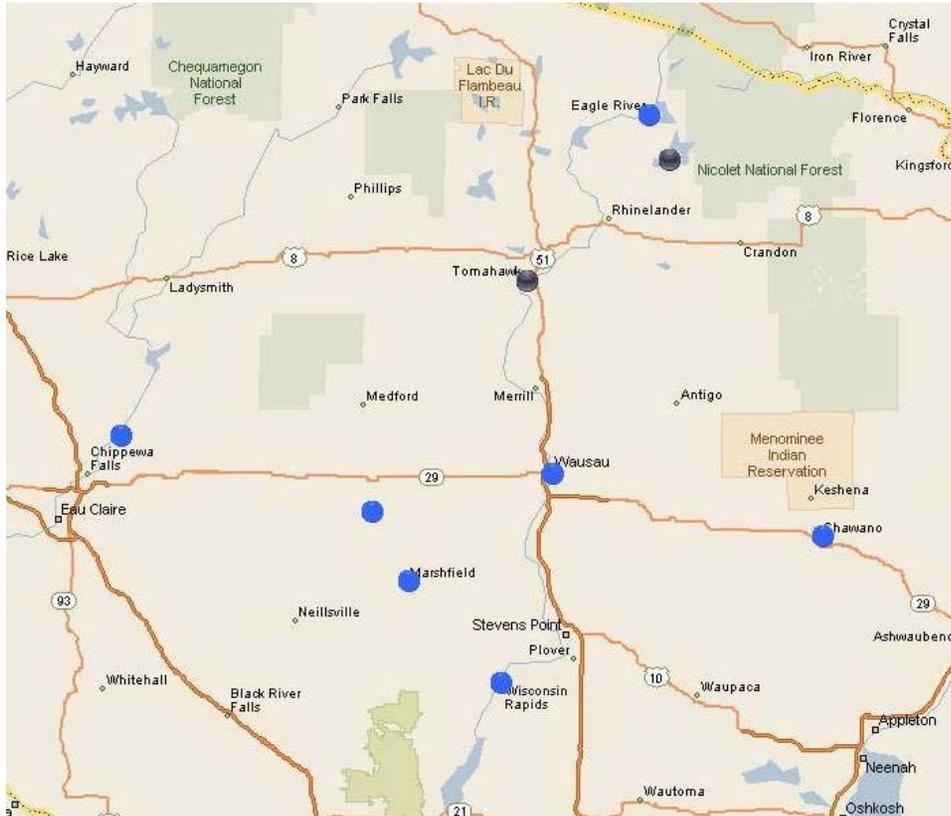


**Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study
Wisconsin Tractor Pullers Association Locations**

City	2015 Dates
Ettrick	5/31/2015
Ellsworth	6/7-6/8/2015
Dorchester	6/14/2015
Tomah	6/19-6/22/2015
Unity	6/28/2015
Waupun	7/5/2015
Medford	7/25/2015
Menomonie	7/26/2015
Black River Falls	8/2/2015
Norwalk	8/8-8/9/2015
Wausau	8/16/2015
Ridgeland	8/30-8/31/2015
Marshfield	9/1/2015

Source: WTPA, 2014

Regional Race Track Locations

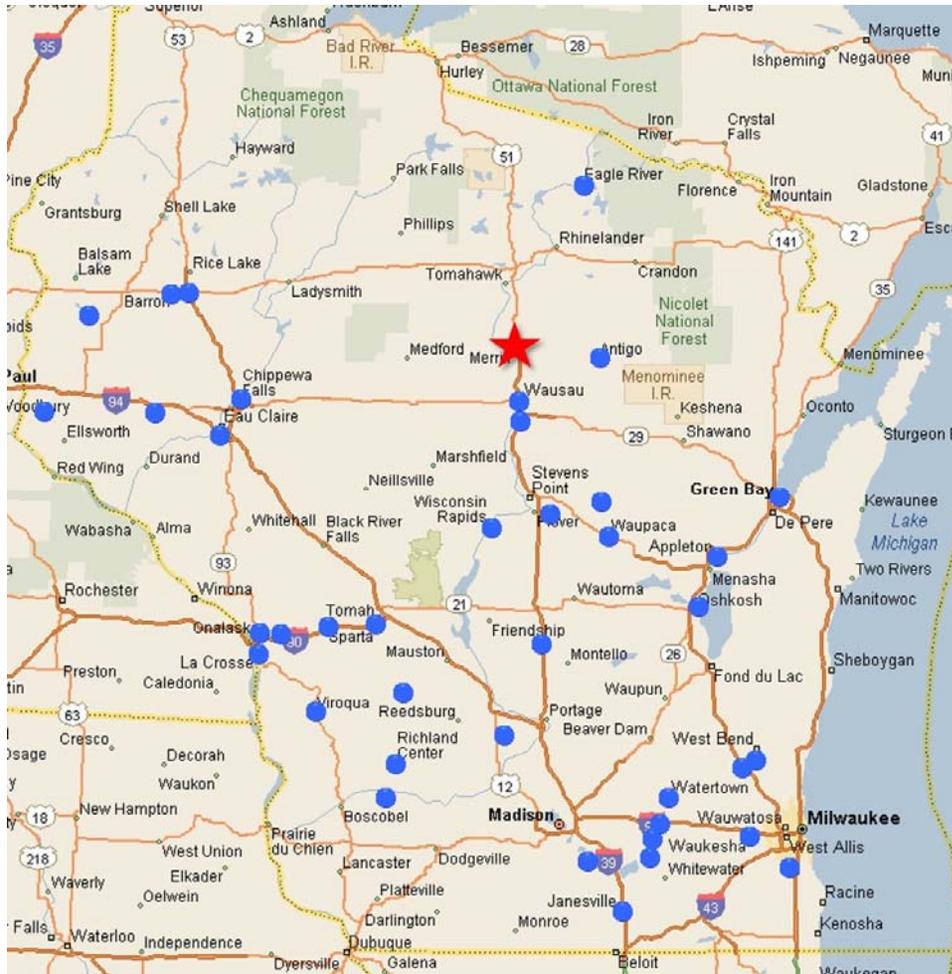


Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study
Regional Race Tracks in Market Area

Track Name	Location	Operational
Central Wisconsin Raceway	Unity	Yes
Eagle River Speedway	Eagle River	Yes
Eagle Valley Speedway	Jim Falls	Yes
Golden Sands Speedway	Wisconsin Rapids	Yes
Marshfield Motor Speedway	Marshfield	Yes
Shawano Speedway	Shawano	Yes
State Park Speedway	Wausau	Yes
TNT Speedway	Three Lakes	No
Tomahawk Speedway	Tomahawk	No

Source: Speedwaysonline.com

Wisconsin Gun Shows

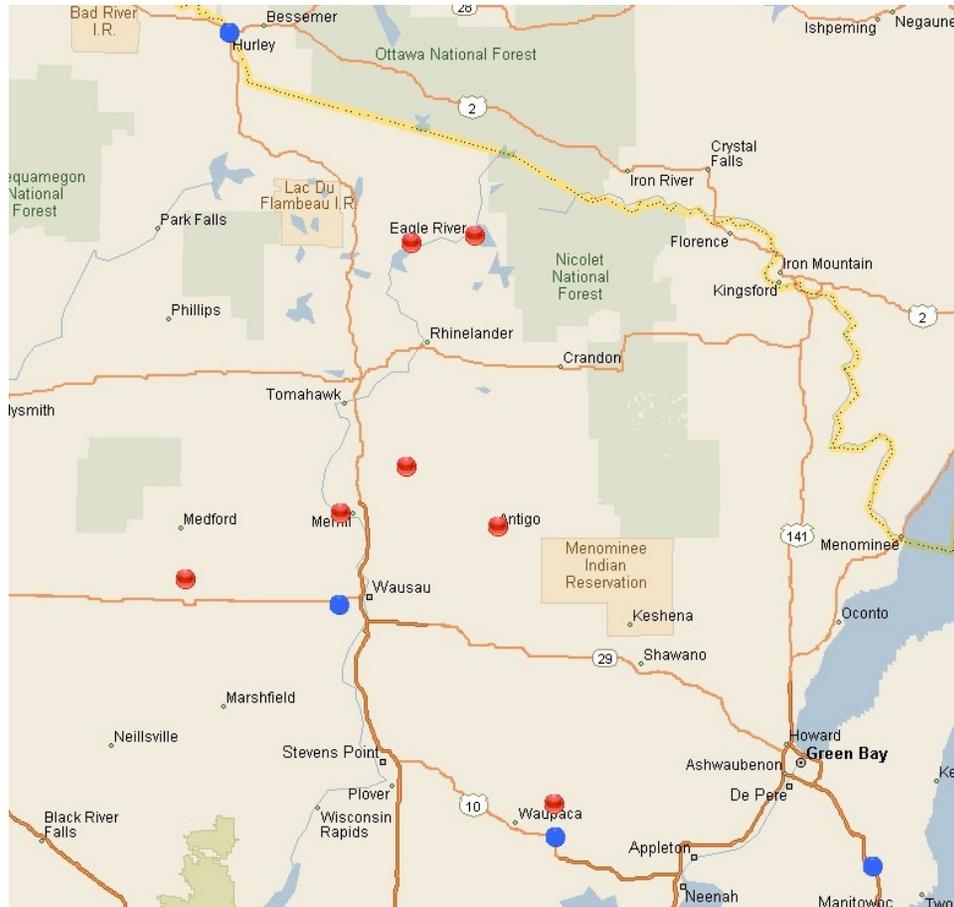


Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study
Wisconsin Gun and Knife Show Locations

City	Promoter
Antigo	Bob and Rocco
Appleton	Bob and Rocco
Arnott	Bob and Rocco
Baraboo	Gun Buyers Show
Barron	Bob and Rocco
Cameron	N/A
Chippewa Falls	Indianhead Firearms Gun Well
Eau Claire	Bearing Arms Gun Shows
Fort Atkinson	CR Promotions
Franklin	Bob and Rocco
Green Bay	Bob and Rocco
Hillsboro	Gun Buyers Show
Janesville	Rock County Rifle and Pistol Club
Jefferson	Mary Kraus Promotions
Johnson Creek	CR Promotions
La Crosse	Gun Buyers Show
Menomonie	Bearing Arms Gun Shows
Muscoda	Gun Buyers Show
Oshkosh	Bob and Rocco
Rice Lake	Mary Kraus Promotions
Richland	Don Stanke
River Falls	Bearing Arms Gun Shows
Slinger	Wisconsin Gun Collectors Assn
Sparta	Gun Buyers Show
Stoughton	Bob and Rocco
Tomah	Mary Kraus Promotions
Viroqua	Gun Buyers Show
Watertown	CR Promotions
Waukesha	Bob and Rocco
Waupaca	Gun Buyers Show
Wausau	Fred Yulga
West Bend	Bob and Rocco
Westfield	N/A

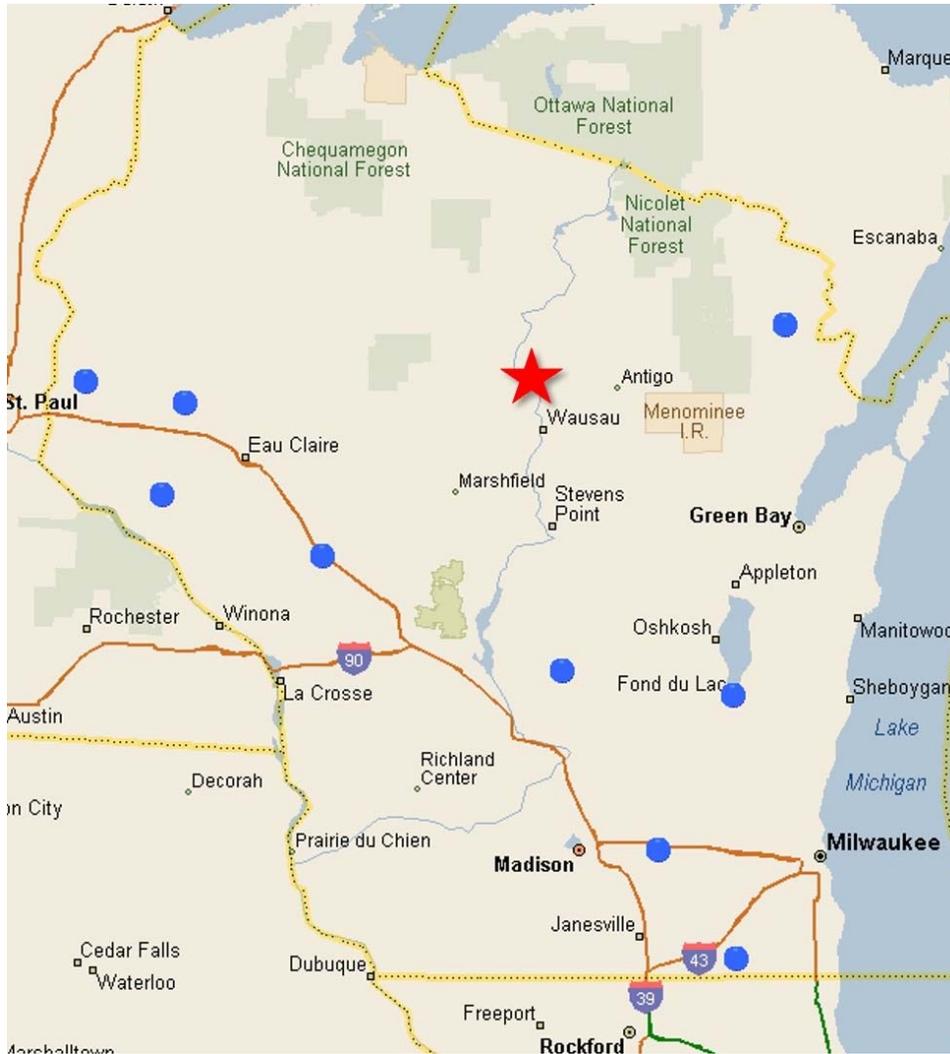
Source: Gunshows-USA.com

Snow Mobile Race Locations



USAA Sanctioned Races – Iron Mountain, Wausau, Weyauwega, Francis Creek
Others – Eagle River, Antigo, Council Grounds (Merrill), Gleason, Dorchester, Waupaca

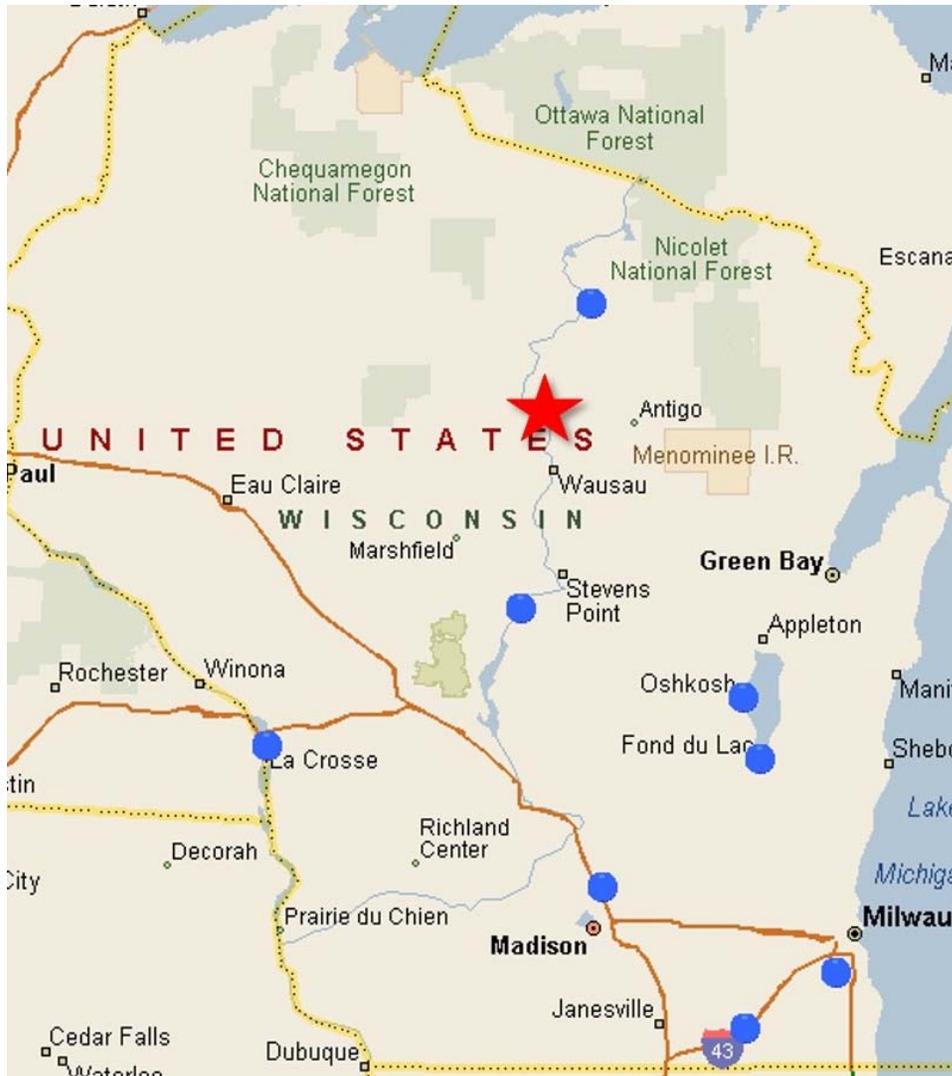
Motocross Track Locations



Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study Wisconsin Motocross Tracks	
Track Name	City
Great Lakes MX	Lake Geneva
Fond Du Lac OHV Park	Fond Du Lac
Sandbox Arena	New Richmond
Aztalan Cycle Club	Lake Mills
Pine Ridge Raceway	Athelstane
CMJ Raceway	Hixton
Arkansaw Cycle Park	Arkansaw
Wheeler MX Park	Wheeler
Smokey Hollow MX	Westfield

Source: Motocross Track Guide 2014

BMX Track Locations



**Lincoln County Fairgrounds Study
Wisconsin BMX Tracks/Parks**

Track Name	City
Madtown BMX	Deforest
The Rock Bike Park BMX	Franklin
Hodag BMX	Rhineland
Fond Du Lac BMX Club	Fond Du Lac
Central Wisconsin BMX	Wisconsin Rapids
Walworth Indoor BMX	Elkhorn
Winnebago BMX	Oshkosh
Toad's Cove Arena BMX	Lacrosse

Source: USA BMX 2014

Horse Show Event Locations

