



# 2019

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9



## PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS



# Issues Important to LA CROSSE Businesses

## SPONSORED BY



ISG



# PROSPECT

# OUR TRI-STATE ECONOMY



## THINKING BEYOND BORDERS

Because of La Crosse's location along Wisconsin's western border, our labor shed comes from a tri-state area to fuel our businesses. Our workers travel as far as 60 miles to their positions in the La Crosse area. Combining our workforce opportunities with our retail options, La Crosse is an economic destination, pulling in individuals who come to earn and spend their income. Our economy does not recognize borders.

## A WELL POSITIONED COUNTY

### MADISON

143 miles - 2 hours 18 minutes

### MINNEAPOLIS

160 miles - 2 hours 31 minutes

### MILWAUKEE

210 miles - 3 hours 30 minutes

### DES MOINES

272 miles - 3 hours and 53 minutes

### CHICAGO

283 miles - 4 hours and 43 minutes



**118,274**

LA CROSSE METRO  
POPULATION

**51,834**

LA CROSSE CITY  
POPULATION

**35.5**

MEDIAN AGE

**3**

HIGHER EDUCATION  
INSTITUTIONS

**2**

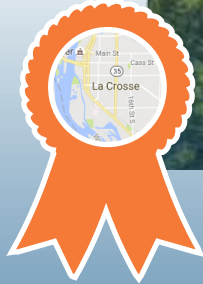
MEDICAL  
INSTITUTIONS

2

LA CROSSE AT GLANCE



# ABOUT LA CROSSE COUNTY



## RETAINING OUR TOP TALENT

### TOP 10

Ranked number for small cities in the US where business is thriving

### FORBES #50

Forbes ranks La Crosse #50 in the nation in "Best places for business and careers."

### FOURTH BEST SMALL CITY

*Inc. Magazine* named La Crosse the nation's Fourth Best Small City for Doing Business

### 15TH BEST CITY

Named the 15th Best City in America to Do Business by *Inc Magazine*

## EASY TO RETAIN, WORKING TO ATTRACT - EMPLOYMENT

From those who grew up in the area to those who came here for school, La Crosse is a place where people want to raise their children. They value our scenic beauty, our outdoor recreational opportunities, our high-quality education system and our close proximity to larger metropolitan areas. Once people come to La Crosse to work, go to school or play, they have a hard time leaving.

With the tight labor market, the La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce is working to overcome our region's "hidden gem" pride. We cannot afford to be one of the state's best kept secrets. With a thriving young professional climate and businesses prepared to work together, watch for La Crosse to set the bar for attracting a talented workforce that choose to live in Wisconsin and take advantage of its four-seasons of splendor.

## TOP PRIVATE EMPLOYERS IN GREATER LA CROSSE

Organization	Business Type
Gundersen Health System	Healthcare
Kwik Trip	Convenience Store
Mayo Clinic Health System	Healthcare
Logistics Health Inc. (LHI)	Military Health Service Provider
Fort McCoy	Government
Kaplan Professionals	Education
TRANE Co.	Manufacturing
Chart Energy & Chemicals, Inc.	Manufacturing



3,053

NUMBER OF  
BUSINESSES

61,882

NUMBER OF  
EMPLOYEES

2.7%

UNEMPLOYMENT  
RATE

\$54,127

AVERAGE  
HOUSEHOLD  
INCOME

4%

JOB GROWTH  
2017-2019

LA CROSSE AREA - A WORKING COMMUNITY

3

# Keep Tourism Thriving

## KEEP SEPT. 1 SCHOOL START DATE

The September 1 school start date benefits Wisconsin's economy and families without adversely impacting the education of our students. It provides the workforce needed during peak summer months **We oppose any attempt to change current law.**

## IMPACT: Less State Revenue & Less Jobs

Changing the date results in lower business revenue for Wisconsin businesses and less tax revenue for Wisconsin state government. We remain competitive with Minnesota and Michigan that have schools starting after Labor Day. Repealing Wisconsin's law puts the state's tourism industry at a competitive disadvantage as there would be fewer employees available to serve our visitors.

## Parents Support September 1 Start

A 2016 survey conducted by St. Norbert College Strategic Research Institute found that 68 percent of Wisconsin parents support the September 1 school start date law, many commenting the need for more family time; a preference for a post-Labor Day start; and that summers in Wisconsin are already short enough. August also has warmer temperatures than June, which is perfect for family vacations, but can create uncomfortable learning environments in schools not equipped with air conditioning.

## SUPPORT SENATE BILL 82/ASSEMBLY BILL 66 - CREATIVE ECONOMY GRANT PROGRAM

Arts and cultural experiences account for a significant number of small businesses that help stimulate Wisconsin's economy through tourism and community development, as well as creating community assets that improve Wisconsin's quality of life. We support legislation that would create a \$500,000 creative economy development grant program that would award matching grants of up to \$40,000 to businesses, arts organizations, local arts agencies, and business development organizations that promote creative industries, job creation, or economic development.

# Workforce:

## PROBLEM

The 7 Rivers Alliance Workforce Development Plan identified the shortage of childcare as a major factor keeping parents out of the workforce or limiting them to working part-time.

## In Wisconsin, 54% of all residents live in a childcare

**desert** defined as any census tract with more than 50 children under age five that contains no childcare providers or three times as many children as licensed childcare slots.

In Wisconsin's rural areas, 68% of families live in areas without enough licensed childcare providers. There are parts of the 7 Rivers Region, such as Jackson County, with 68 children per licensed childcare slot. Even worse, some areas do not have any childcare providers.

The major factors:

1. Rising wages and costs are driving up the cost of quality childcare and
2. Parents are not willing to commute far for childcare services which limits workforce options.

Labor is the most significant cost for childcare center operations. Efforts to hold down costs means keeping wages low, which reduces quality and the number of qualified childcare workers willing to work for low wages — to the point that providers cannot attract candidates with the higher degrees required for meeting YoungStar quality standards and higher childcare subsidy reimbursement.

Some childcare facilities are closing because the financial balance is too challenging, while others close because they cannot find qualified employees.

The solutions to this multi-layered challenge are not easy. They will require a collaborative approach involving childcare facilities, businesses and regulators.

Childcare reform is needed on a federal and state level, from a regulatory review of the rules to consideration of additional tax credits for lower-income parents or businesses.



# Childcare Crisis

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase adult/child ratios for certified childcare. Currently there is no financial benefit to becoming certified. Increasing the number of children a certified provider can care for provides incentives.
- Provide hefty tax credits for all regulated childcare providers, both in-home and group centers. Do not tie the tax credit to registry levels.
- Eliminate the decrease in childcare subsidy reimbursement for 2 star programs.
- Restructure the subsidy bonus for YoungStar rated programs. Currently a 2 Star rated childcare business receives a decrease in childcare subsidy removing motivation to go through the rating process. Increase the subsidy bonus allowing a business to offer pay that is comparable to school districts.



## LA CROSSE AT A GLANCE

2.7%

UNEMPLOYMENT

-5,000

WORKER  
SHORTFALL  
BY 2025

87

REGISTERED  
DAY CARE  
BUSINESSES  
VS 330 IN  
2009

\$2.5 M

IN LOST  
PRODUCTIVITY  
DUE TO CHILD  
ISSUES

68%

FAMILIES LIVE  
IN RURAL AREAS  
WITHOUT CHILD  
CARE PROVIDERS

68

CHILDREN PER  
LICENSED CHILD  
CARE SLOT IN  
JACKSON COUNTY



# Support SB 440/LRB 1243:

## The Wisconsin Opportunity Zones Development Act Sweetens the Pot to keep Wisconsin Investors Investing in Wisconsin

*Introduced by Reps. Nancy VanderMeer (R ), Jill Billings (D) and Sens. Dan Feyen (R) and Janis Ringhand (D). It has more than 40 co-sponsors.*

The innovative Opportunity Zones program offers tax incentives to encourage investors to re-invest their unrealized capital gains into Opportunity Zone projects, including residential development and business expansion.

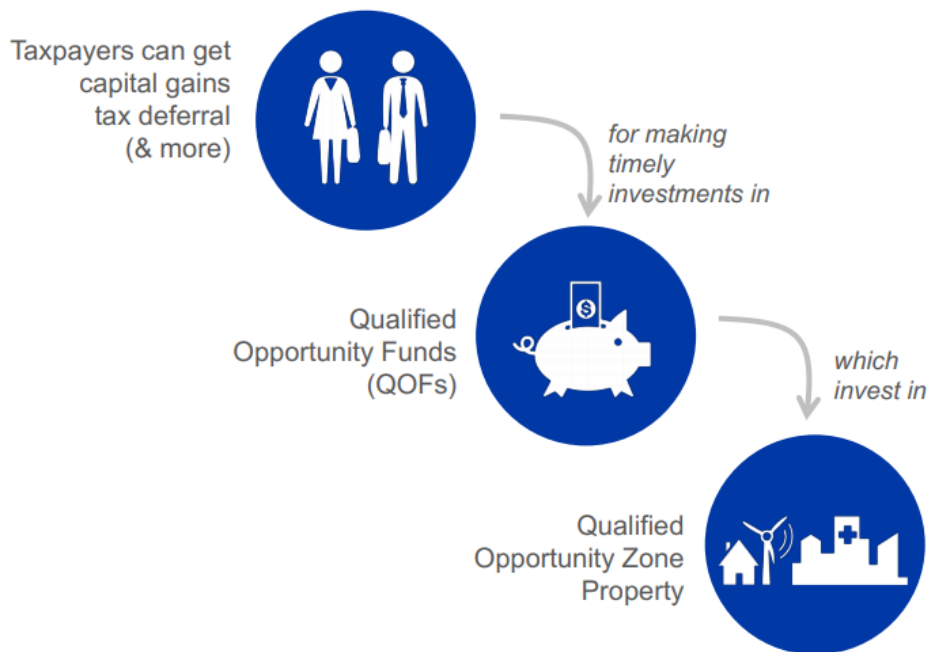
Under the program, low-income community census tracts were used to determine eligible Opportunity Zones to ensure the program drives private investment to the nation's most economically challenged communities. Wisconsin has 120 Opportunity Zones, which are in both urban and rural areas of the state.

Ultimately, the program strives to unlock billions of dollars in unrealized capital gains in the United States. Individuals who invest in Opportunity Zones – through qualified Opportunity Funds – receive tax incentives including tax deferral on the invested capital gains and tax-free growth on the Opportunity Fund investment earnings if the investment is held for at least 10 years. In addition, investors receive a 10% reduction in the original capital gains tax if the Opportunity Fund investment is held for at least five years and a 15% reduction after seven years.

Last session, Wisconsin incorporated the federal Opportunity Zones tax provisions into state law, which means the deferral and exclusion treatments apply when calculating state income taxes.

SB 440/LRB 1243 would double the Opportunity Zones tax reduction at the state level for investors who invest in Wisconsin Qualified Opportunity Funds – which are required to hold at least 90% of their assets in Wisconsin Opportunity Zone projects. Under the bill, investors would receive a 20% state capital gains tax reduction if they hold an investment in a Wisconsin Qualified Opportunity Fund for at least five years, and a 30% reduction after seven years.

The legislation will encourage Wisconsin investors to keep their investment dollars in Wisconsin, strategically directing much-needed private capital to communities across the state and accelerating economic growth and job creation.





# Opportunity Zones

## GOAL

SPUR PRIVATE  
INVESTMENT  
IN DISTRESSED  
COMMUNITIES  
THROUGH TAX  
INCENTIVES

120

ECONOMIC  
OPPORTUNITY  
ZONES (EOZ)  
IN WISCONSIN

44

COUNTIES  
REPRESENTED

60 + 2

AVAILABLE IN  
MUNICIPALITIES  
+ TRIBAL  
RESERVATIONS

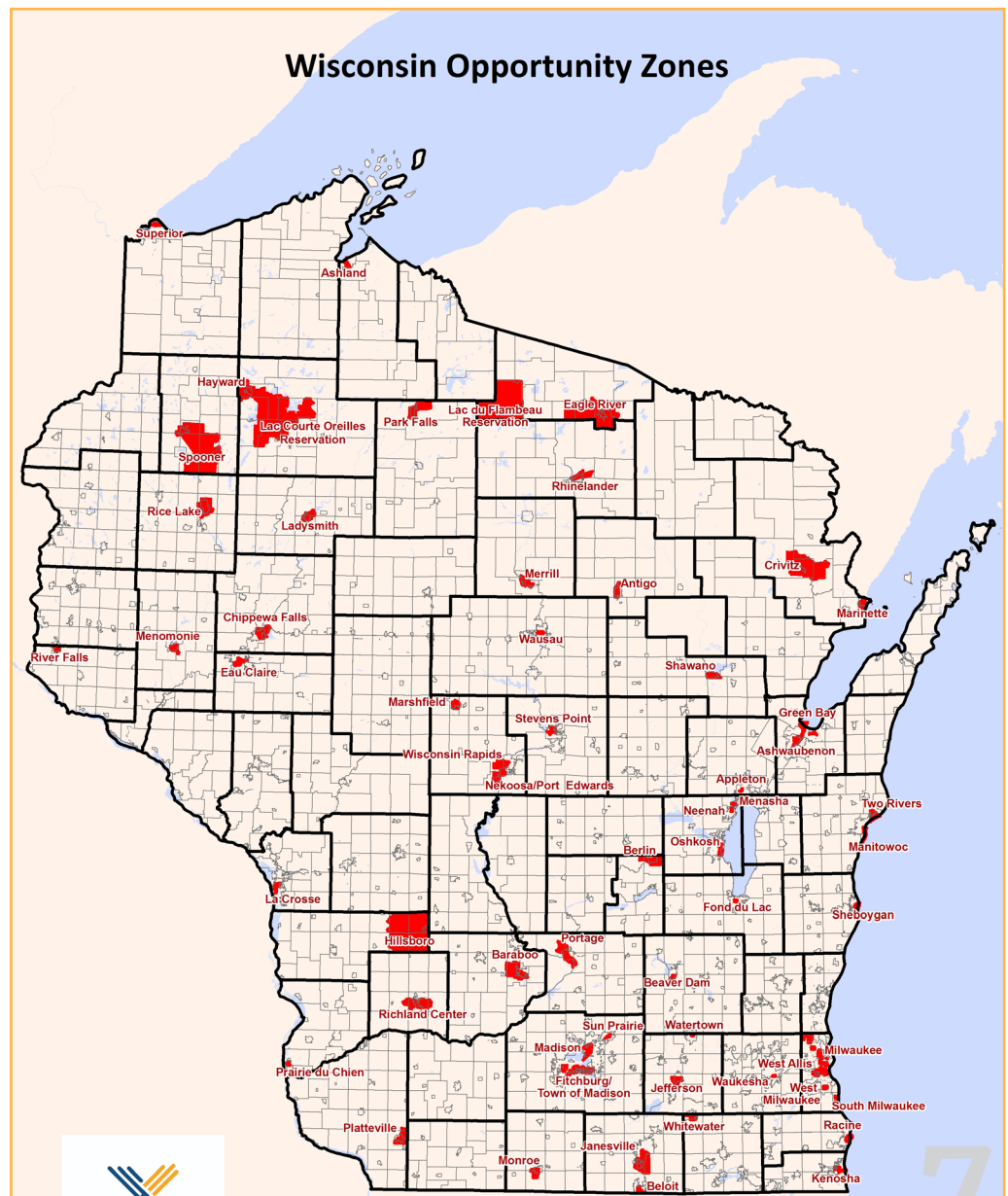
## FUNDING MECHANISM

FULL TO  
PARTIAL  
FORGIVENESS  
OF CAPITAL  
GAINS TAX

## Counties in Wisconsin with Opportunity Zones

Adams, Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Brown, Buffalo, Burnett, Calumet, Chippewa, Clark, Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Dodge, Door, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Florence, Fond du Lac, Forest, Grant, Green, Green Lake, Iowa, Iron, Jackson, Jefferson, Juneau, Kenosha, Kewaunee, La Crosse, Lafayette, Langlade, Lincoln, Manitowoc, Marathon, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Milwaukee, Monroe, Oconto, Oneida, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Portage, Price, Racine, Richland, Rock, Rusk, Sauk, Sawyer, Shawano, Sheboygan, St. Croix, Taylor, Trempealeau, Vernon, Vilas, Walworth, Washburn, Washington, Waukesha, Waupaca, Waushara, Winnebago, Wood

[CDFIUND.GOV/PAGES/OPPORTUNITY-ZONES.ASP](http://CDFIUND.GOV/PAGES/OPPORTUNITY-ZONES.ASP)



# Complete UWL's Science Center

## BACKGROUND

The Prairie Springs Science Center was designed to be a single project to fuel the quality and number of students graduating into in-demand fields

To allow other UW projects to proceed simultaneously, UWL agreed to build the project in two phases over two Wisconsin budgets. Prairie Springs Science Center I was constructed to replace a portion of the aging 1965 structure - a time when enrollment in the sciences was half the size of today.

As the time came to develop Prairie Springs Science Center II, other projects moved ahead of this development.



## WHY THIS MATTERS

- The University of Wisconsin — La Crosse is renowned for its science program.
- The school fuels Wisconsin companies with in-demand graduates in the health science and technology degrees.
- Improvements to this building lead to higher-skilled graduates and more competitive Wisconsin companies.

## IMPACT OF NOT DOING THIS PROJECT

- Delayed students graduations, particularly in the in-demand fields.
- Deferring the project costs the state more. 4% increase in cost of project every year it's deferred

## BOOST OUR ECONOMY

Construction of this project creates and sustains local jobs. This project is estimated to create 1,411 jobs in the area and \$159.4 million in total economic impact.

## Wisconsin Careers Fueled Through Prairie Spring Science Center II

### HEALTHCARE

- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Nuclear Medicine Technology
- Medical Technology
- Radiation Therapy
- Physician Assistants and
- Social Work

### RENOWNED EDUCATION & RESEARCH PROGRAMS

- River Studies
- Biology

