



Wisconsin Rural Regional Housing Summit Series Presents

THE DRIFTLESS REGION

MAY 6, 2025

Summit Schedule

REGISTRATION	8:30 AM
WELCOME	9:00 AM
THE DRIFTLESS STORY	9:10 AM
BREAK & EXPLORE EXHIBITORS	9:40 AM
BREAKOUT SESSIONS	10:00 AM
BREAK & EXPLORE EXHIBITORS	11:00 AM
LUNCH & HOUSING UPDATES	11:30 AM
HOUSING FLASH TALKS	12:00 PM
BREAK & EXPLORE EXHIBITORS	1:15 PM
STATE OF HOUSING IN THE DRIFTLESS REGION	1:30 PM
CALL TO ACTION SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY	2:15 PM
CLOSE & OPTIONAL HOUSING TOUR	3:00 PM



Session Overview

THE DRIFTLESS STORY

This presentation will highlight key housing challenges and opportunities, focusing on six dimensions of housing access: availability, affordability, accessibility, acceptability, accommodation, and awareness. It will explore rural housing trends, including population shifts, housing gaps, and affordability concerns.

We'll also look at how employment, health, education, and transportation intersect with housing needs, and discuss the importance of housing literacy to empower communities. The session will emphasize collaborative strategy development and end with practical guidance for implementing and adapting housing solutions to fit local needs.

FINANCIAL LAYERS: A SUPPORT TO EQUITABLE HOUSING

This session explores how community housing data, trends, and needs influence the development of multi-family housing projects. It discusses the utilization of funds for workforce, senior, and other housing types, identifies current funding programs, and addresses barriers to housing development, particularly in rural areas.

HOMEGROWN DEVELOPERS: ADDRESSING GAPS TO INNOVATIVE AND COLLABORATIVE HOUSING SOLUTIONS

This session focuses on how developers use community housing data to understand trends and needs for single-family housing projects. It examines the gaps and barriers in housing, strategies to overcome them, and the importance of collaboration with communities, local developers, funding institutions, and other partner agencies.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES – HOUSING IN WISCONSIN

This session provides an overview of recent introductions or changes to legislation affecting housing in Wisconsin. It aims to highlight proposed new laws, regulations, and policies set on improving housing affordability, availability, and quality across the state.

MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

This flash talk explains the concept of Missing Middle Housing, which includes diverse housing types such as duplexes, fourplexes, and bungalow courts that are compatible with single-family homes. It emphasizes the importance of these housing types in creating inclusive and affordable communities.

CLTS 101

This flash talk introduces Community Land Trusts (CLTs), explaining their purpose and how they help maintain affordable housing. It covers the steps to form a CLT and the benefits they provide to communities by ensuring long-term housing affordability.

CLT EXAMPLES IN THE DRIFTLESS REGION

This flash talk showcases various housing projects in the Driftless Region, highlighting successful developments and the programs that support them. It provides insights into innovative housing solutions tailored to the unique needs of the region.

ZONING & DENSITY

This flash talk discusses the impact of zoning and density regulations on housing development. It explores how these regulations can either facilitate or hinder the creation of diverse and affordable housing options in different communities.

BUILDING FOR COMMUNITY SUPPORT

This flash talk emphasizes the importance of achieving diverse participation and collaboration in local housing discussions. It provides examples of successful community engagement strategies that have led to more inclusive and supportive housing initiatives.

STATE OF HOUSING IN THE DRIFTLESS REGION

Join us for an insightful session dedicated to understanding and advancing housing initiatives in the Driftless Region. This session will delve into the shared housing goals and actionable strategies that local leaders are championing to address critical housing issues. This is an excellent opportunity to learn about the efforts of local leaders and collaborate on solutions that can make a real difference in our communities. Learn how to build a more inclusive and sustainable housing environment in the Driftless Region.

Speakers & Bios



Charlotte Peters is the Community Development Educator for La Crosse County. She is focusing her work on Community and Economic Development, and specifically in supporting childcare, broadband deployment, and community assessments. She is passionate about building community and ensuring that La Crosse County continues to move forward as a place that is welcoming to all its community members. Charlotte has a background working in manufacturing, healthcare as well as service industries and is working to build strong and supportive relationships within the County.



Jane Klekamp has been the La Crosse County Administrator since 2023. Her vision is to help lead La Crosse County in being a more inclusive, equitable and welcoming organization that fosters trust, attracts talented professionals, and is recognized as a great place to work and serve.

Jane has had the privilege of serving La Crosse County since 1989. Throughout her career, she has been involved in many innovative projects, including guiding the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors in determining the best use of almost \$23 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds.



Jamie Lutton, Community development leader with extensive background crafting and developing responsive community programs. Detailed knowledge of the Chicago nonprofit sector with direct grant management and non-profit relationship building experience, as well as a deep understanding of the socioeconomic conditions at the community level.

Demonstrated ability to apply quantitative and qualitative research methods to develop and create targeted programs in collaboration with nonprofit partners, as well as measure program impact.



Rebecca Giroux is a Community and Economic Development Officer (CED) at WHEDA (Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority). Rebecca is the regional contact for 19 counties in Central and Southwest Wisconsin. As part of WHEDA's CED team, Rebecca collaborates with local elected officials, businesses, developers, community organizations, and many others to expand affordable housing and economic development statewide.

Rebecca leads the authority's Rural Affordable Workforce Housing Pilot Initiative, or (RAWFHI), a program that seeks to remove barriers to developing and rehabilitating much-needed workforce housing and creating scalable solutions for rural communities across Wisconsin.

Rebecca brought her talents to WHEDA in May 2019. Prior to WHEDA, Rebecca spent 17 years developing her skills in retail banking, marketing, and community relations. As a lifelong resident of Wisconsin, she is passionate about WHEDA's mission of expanding access to affordable housing choices across the state.



Dustin Ingram is a senior community development specialist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. Prior to joining the Chicago Fed, he was business development director at Intersect Illinois, where he worked to attract jobs and new investment to the state. Before Illinois, he served in director roles at the Ames Economic Development Commission and Ackley Development Commission in Iowa, where he led initiatives on community outreach, housing, and commercial revitalization. His primary interest is in the economic advancement of communities that have faced long-term disinvestment.

Ingram received a B.A. in Philosophy & Religion from Piedmont University in Demorest, Georgia and a Master of Community & Regional Planning degree from Iowa State University.



Cory Cellmer was born & raised in Plainville, Kansas. He started working in manufactured housing at the Schult Homes Plant in Kansas in 1994. Cory ran a retail sales center in Hays, Kansas from 1998 – 2003. Later in 2003, Cory would work for Clayton Homes which is the parent company of Schult Homes. He transferred to his current location in Redwood Falls, Minnesota in 2013 to work for the manufacturing facility in the sales department. He currently serves as the Sales and Brand Experience Manager there.



Marvin Wanders is the co-owner of Three Sixty Real Estate Solutions, LLC with his wife Michelle. Marvin leads the Three Sixty team, makes connections and works behind the scenes of every project to ensure that each potential development positively impacts the team members, the customer, the neighborhood and the community.

Marvin is a passionate outdoor recreation enthusiast and a founding member of Outdoor Recreation Alliance (OAR) and the Character Lives initiative in our CESA 4 high schools. He also serves on many community committees and non-profit boards.



Hunter Clark, realtor for Gerrard-Hoeschler. He was born and raised in La Crosse, and has a true passion for helping others find their home in this beautiful community.

After graduating from Onalaska High School in 2014, he attended the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire where he received a B.S. in Legal Studies and Criminal Justice. Hunter then went on to receive his Masters of Public Administration degree from DePaul University in Chicago where he graduated in June of 2021. After graduating with his Masters, Hunter began studying for his Real Estate exam and became a fully licensed Realtor in February of 2022.

Hunter currently resides on the Northside of La Crosse where his family has had its roots for the last 100+ years! In his free time, he enjoys utilizing the driftless region by hunting, fishing, and spending time on the river. Being an active member of the community through organizations such as the Rotary Club or Chamber of Commerce is also a large passion of his.



Kahya Fox has been the Executive Director at Habitat for Humanity of the Greater La Crosse Region since 2016. With over 20 years of affordable housing experience, she has worked with a variety of housing and community development programs, including neighborhood revitalization, rehabilitation, weatherization, housing counseling, flood assistance, and land trust housing.



Delores Spies from Spies Construction LLC. A small family-owned (wife, husband and three sons), general contractor from La Crosse. They have been in business for 40+ years. They do new construction and rehab, whether private, Coulee Cap, or city. They have built approximately 30+ homes on city lots in the last 10 years. Along with private projects, some have qualified for La Crosse Promise. Developed the first pocket neighborhood in the former Naval Reserve site on Green Bay St. in La Crosse. Many of these projects would not have been possible without La Crosse County grants, which are great programs. We focus on residential redevelopment. There is a need in La Crosse and the surrounding area for single family housing. Her role in the company is designing, coordinating and client involvement.



Senator Brad Pfaff is a proud son of the rolling hills, coulees, and valleys of northern La Crosse County. He learned the value of hard work, resilience, appreciation for the land, and respect for his community while growing up on his family's dairy farm.

Brad has spent the majority of his career working for the people of Wisconsin. He served in senior positions with the US Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency in the Obama Administration, and as the Secretary-designee of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Previously, Brad held positions in the Offices of US Representative Ron Kind and US Senator Herb Kohl.

Brad met his wife, Betty, a West Salem native, while he was a senior in high school at a 4-H leadership luncheon. They are proud parents of their two adult children.



Tara J. Johnson is an American Democratic politician and retired nonprofit executive from La Crosse County, Wisconsin. She has represented Wisconsin's 96th Assembly district in the State Assembly since January 2025, following two decades of service on the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors, where she became the first female chairperson in 2011. As Executive Director of the United Way of La Crosse, she spent 15 years funding organizations across Wisconsin to help communities thrive.

She was also an AFSCME member, contributing to contract negotiations. During her tenure on the county board, Johnson worked to maintain low taxes, strengthen emergency services, expand mental health and substance abuse funding, and secure environmental conservation grants. She and her husband, Tim Padesky, reside in the Town of Shelby, where they raised their two children.



Kelly Westlund currently serves as the Housing Educator for UW–Madison Division of Extension, based in Bayfield County, where she focuses on developing replicable strategies to promote housing development and affordability in rural communities. In this role, she helped bring a new 40-unit housing development to fruition in the City of Washburn and was a founding board member of CheqBUILT, a new community land trust serving Ashland and Bayfield Counties. She worked previously as the Northwestern Representative for U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin's office and was recently hired as Deputy Administrator for Bayfield County.



Scott Hinig is the Village of Holmen Administrator. He is the Village's CEO and is responsible to the Village Board as the community's leader, for overseeing, developing, implementing and maintaining the Village's overall municipal government operations.

The Administrator is the direct supervisor of all Village Department Heads and managerial staff. Additionally, the Administrator also serves as the Village's Human Resource Director; serves as the Village's Planning and Community, Economic Development Director; negotiates and oversees all Village contracts; and ensures the enforcement of all Village ordinances, policies and procedures adopted by the Village Board.



Dr. Kristin Runge is the Program Manager for the Community Economic Development Program at the Division of Extension. Her work is in the broad area of community development with a focus on housing, community vitality, public perception of issues at the intersection of the economy and the environment, and how public discourse around these issues affects rural Wisconsin.



Ashley Lacenski is the Community Development Director for Couleecap, Inc. Over the past seventeen years, she has administered a variety of homeownership programs and affordable housing projects to help families with low-income access housing. Ashley works to identify community needs and solutions, leveraging collaboration and support from the local stakeholders and funders. Ashley oversees affordable housing development and homebuyer assistance, the Coulee Community Land Trust, home rehabilitation programs, housing counseling services, and affordable rental properties. Ashley also serves on the Board of Directors for the Long Term Recovery Group for the Coulee Region.



Dillon Constant is an AICP certified land use planner. As County Planner for La Crosse County, he leads long-range community planning and plan implementation, primarily in unincorporated towns.

Dillon has public sector and private sector experience administering zoning and subdivision policies in a variety of communities across the Upper Midwest. His experience includes updating ordinances, comprehensive planning, community engagement, downtown revitalization, active transportation planning, farmland preservation, climate action planning, grant writing, and grant administration.

Dillon serves as Southwest District Representative on the Wisconsin Chapter Board of the American Planning Association (APA).



Jeff Wright is proud to serve as the superintendent of the Sauk Prairie School District. Jeff joined the Sauk Prairie team in 2012. In addition to his work in the schools, Jeff helped lead the effort to build the Great Sauk State Trail and was named the 2019 Sauk Prairie Riverway Citizen of the Year.

Prior to coming to Sauk Prairie, Jeff served as a high school principal on the south side of Chicago. He is a graduate of St. Olaf College and Harvard University. Jeff and his wife, Emily Benz, live on a farm north of Plain with their two children, where they raise chickens and turkeys.



Mark Lee is the Executive Director at Driftless Development, Inc. (DDI), the nonprofit (501c3) economic development organization for Crawford County and Prairie du Chien. Prior to joining DDI, Mark worked for iFLY as the Director of North American Real Estate, Berengaria Development, as a Director of Real Estate, Kohl's Department Stores, as a Sr. Real Estate Manager and Menard, Inc., as Corporate Counsel in their Properties Division. He brings decades of real estate development experience to his new career in the nonprofit sector.

A graduate of the University of Wisconsin Madison with a B.A. and the UW Law School with a J.D., Lee's journey into real estate was preceded by roles as a land surveyor, a dedicated US Marine. As a student Mark was a Varsity Oarsman on the University of Wisconsin Rowing Team, an intern at the Wisconsin legislature and a singer/songwriter in a band.

Mark, a Wisconsin native who calls the Driftless Area home. Mark lives in Crawford County and manages a Century Farm in nearby Sauk County. He enjoys live music, the outdoors and doing all manner of activities on and in the water. Mark is Big Brother and is an active volunteer for various philanthropic causes.



Josh Finch has served as the City Administrator for Hillsboro, Wisconsin since 2021, leading key initiatives in infrastructure, housing, downtown revitalization, and community development. He holds a Master of Public Administration from the University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh.



Tim Becker has been involved in municipal government for 36 years. The last five years Tim served as the City Administrator in the City of Reedsburg. In those five years Tim oversaw a population increase of over ten percent as well as an equalized value growth of over \$500MM.

Tim retired from that position in 2024 and is now the Vice President of Sales at Friede and Associates, a General Contractor with offices in Reedsburg and Madison. Tim has recently been elected to the Reedsburg City Council as an Alderperson at Large. Tim holds an MBA from Concordia University Wisconsin.



Alysha Basel is an experienced Community Health Educator with a demonstrated history of working in public health and biotechnology. Skilled in Microsoft Word, Data Analysis, Communication, Healthcare, Policy, and Leadership. A Certified Health Education Specialist with a Master's degree focused in Public Health from Indiana Wesleyan University.



Denise Wright is from Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, located in Manitoba Canada.

She has a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice. Denise is a proud Army Spouse of 20 years (retired). She lives in Tomah WI and currently works for The Ho-Chunk Nation as the Executive Director - Department of Housing.

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