

Center for Land Use Education

A focal point for land use planning and management education

Annual Highlights • 2023-2024

Land use is impacted by a complex and changing set of issues. Center for Land Use Education (CLUE) specialists engage in teaching, outreach, and research to help future planners, individuals, and communities identify these issues, make well-informed land use decisions, and work towards sustainable outcomes.

Utility Scale Solar Education

Lynn Markham provided educational assistance to multiple groups about decision-makers and criteria used for utility-scale solar in Wisconsin. While land use decisions are made by local governments, large solar projects, 100 megawatts (~700 acres) or larger, are decided by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC). Local government has no legal authority and local government staff, officials and residents are struggling to understand the complex legal process and how to participate in a meaningful way, including understanding what weight the PSC will give to local governments or residents when they present at the one public hearing.

Markham provided educational assistance to the Town of Grant (Portage County) in revising their solar overlay map and rationale identifying land areas where the town feels solar projects greater than 100 MW are and are not compatible to adopt as part of their comprehensive plan. She has presented on decision-makers and criteria used for utility-scale solar in Wisconsin to over **350** participants from **23** counties:

- Portage County Leadership program
- Wisconsin Towns Association
- Ongoing discussions with local government officials and staff
- Ongoing discussions with nonprofits including: Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, Wisconsin Greenfire, RENEW Wisconsin, Midwest Renewable Energy Association, and local groups

Wisconsin Public Radio Manure Digester Interview

Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR) interviewed Lynn Markham as part of a story on manure digesters in Wisconsin. While the story focused on concerns about pollution from manure digesters in Keweenaw county, the article also provided an overview of manure digesters' potential pollution reduction.

Markham talked about current policies regarding digester electricity and natural gas production and their link to farm size. The [Wisconsin Anaerobic Digester Operations: Dairy Industry Case Studies](#) publication by CLUE and the Wisconsin Office of Energy Innovation was cited in the [article](#).



Photo: EnTech Biodigester by Ryan Michalesko



Center for Land Use Education
College of Natural Resources
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Stevens Point Community Transportation Academy

Becky Roberts, in partnership with 1,000 Friends of Wisconsin, helped plan and facilitate the Stevens Point Community Transportation Academy, a ten-week interactive course designed to equip students, professionals, local government officials, and community advocates with the fundamentals of local transportation planning and advocacy.

Participants were connected with local, state and national speakers, as well as readings, videos and discussions focused on land use, neighborhood design, and transportation planning. The group explored topics of public health, sustainability, equity, engagement, and advocacy and participated in an interactive land use game, community walk and roll audit, and local transit tour. The course provided 20 certification maintenance credits for professional planners and 1 college credit through UW-Stevens Point.



Final projects were presented to the mayor, city council, and neighborhood representatives and resulted in actionable outcomes including immediate replacement of burned-out cross signal, connections needed to install a bus shelter on campus, winter snow clearing of a riverfront walkway and curb cuts, commitment to install a sidewalk next to Madison Elementary School, and continued discussion of design options for Division Street.

“The class met my expectations and more. The course provided a forum to interact with leaders in the community who brought a wealth of knowledge to the experience. The hands-on activities (walk/roll audits, bus ride and more) brought us into the community in a visceral and impactful way.”

“I feel much more prepared to come to community discussions with a better sense of how to be an advocate and with knowledge of where to find resources to bolster my arguments in a public forum.”

“I found all of the classes and speakers informative and thought provoking. [They] provided a terrific overview of the challenges and some success stories in designing livable communities.”

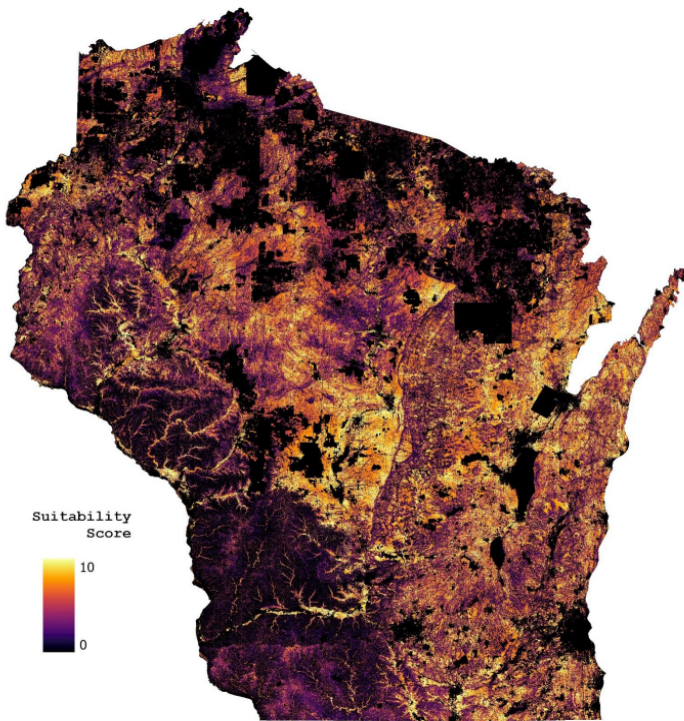
Eau Claire Neighborhood Zoning Workshop

Becky Roberts facilitated a modified version of the Land Use Game which uses building blocks to help communities visualize the impacts of land use, density and housing choice. Participants were presented with a variety of physical and political limitations and tasked with building a fictitious community up rather than building out.

The game was accompanied by visualizations demonstrating opportunities and impacts associated with expanded housing choices such as accessory dwelling units and multi-unit housing. The visualizations helped participants and staff to explore policy options and gain specific feedback on appropriate locations and physical factors to consider in the zoning code update. This was part of the Eau Claire Century Code Update, a community-wide effort to update the city’s 100-year-old zoning code to provide a more user-friendly, easy-to-read document that will guide the city into the future.



Solar Suitability at Universities of Wisconsin: Technical Report



Austin Holland and Jordan Campbell, a UW-Stevens Point Conservation & Community Planning student, investigated the suitability of renewable energy on Board of Regents (BOR) properties in hopes of aiding ongoing energy planning. This project will help facilitate future energy planning across the BOR properties and UW-System campuses. **246** views in six months.

The study was a collaboration between the Center for Land Use Education (CLUE) at the UW-Stevens Point and the UW-Madison Office of Sustainability.

<https://bit.ly/solarsuitabilityatUW>



Statewide Floodplain Management Education

Becky Roberts partnered with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to hold a series of three webinars to introduce local government officials, planning and zoning staff, and professionals to floodplain and coastal zone functions and management options.

Wisconsin is experiencing more frequent and intense storms resulting in increased flood events, property damage, and infrastructure challenges. Local governments play a key role in managing floodplains and coastal zones to absorb and store excess water, thereby reducing impacts to homes, businesses, individuals and communities.

The series provided 3 hours of professional development credits for certified planners, certified floodplain managers, and professional engineers. A resource page and recordings were shared with additional communities across the state. <https://bit.ly/FloodplainResourcesFY24>

46
participants

18
county governments

20
municipal governments

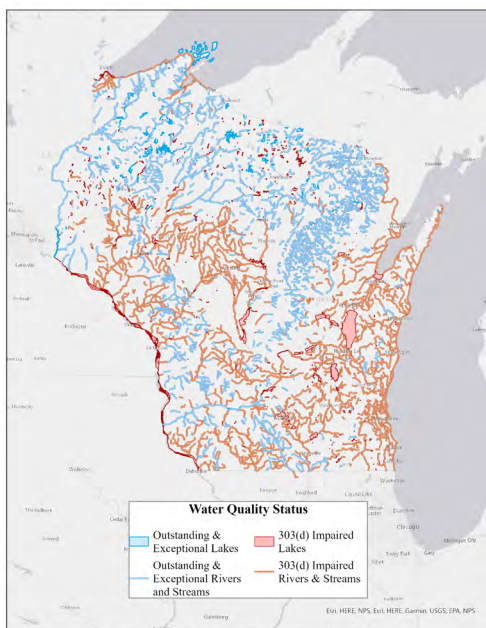
8
state, regional, or
consulting agencies

Watershed Interactive Web-Viewer

Austin Holland, in collaboration with Extension Lakes, developed an interactive online map for the Wisconsin public to gain a better understanding of land impacts on water resources. The map provides a simplified version of natural resource geospatial data that examines the vital role that land protection plays in maintaining water resources and the variety of sources that cause lakes, rivers, and streams to become impaired.

The first month saw over **144** views.

<https://bit.ly/watershed-web-viewer>



Data Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources



Our Lakeshore Connection Video



Lynn Markham and Karen Blaha in collaboration with Jill Zimmerman, graphic and motion designer, developed a fun and informative video animation that explores the connection between lakeshore choices and lake health. This video shows how lakeshore choices impact fish, wildlife, and water quality, and describes best practices. The video was introduced at the Wisconsin Lakes Convention in April 2024, and showcased at two other conferences. Over **785** people have viewed the video since it launched. Watch the [Our Lakeshore Connection](#) video.

Many Thanks!

Long-time CLUE Director Anna Haines moved onto preferment – whatever she PREFERS to do – in March 2024.

Many thanks to Anna Haines for her outstanding research, teaching, and leadership at CLUE from 2000-2024, including work to help communities with land use planning, sustainability, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and so much more!



Anna Haines with students in Iceland

Outreach By the Numbers...



Learn more about our outreach, research and teaching: <https://bit.ly/CLUE-Website>