

For Immediate Release
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Note to Editors: Training sessions in your area for this new statewide program are included at the end of this release.

Wisconsin Communities Have New Business Recruitment Tool

Madison – Wisconsin communities can now showcase their assets to growing businesses with a glitzy new Internet marketing tool developed by Forward Wisconsin and a consortium of economic development groups. Best of all, it's free.

Location One Information System, or LOIS, is a powerful online database that contains state and county-level demographic data as well as building, site, and community profile information that users can access 24-hours a day. The interactive system provides the ability to quickly search for and find available industrial properties and buildings throughout the state as well as detailed information about any Wisconsin municipality.

LOIS also features a Geographic Information System (GIS) component that allows users to retrieve economic, geographic, and site-specific demographic data as well as labor force data. That GIS feature enables users to create and print customized maps, reports and aerial photos of any Wisconsin location.

"This new system is an extension of Gov. Doyle's Grow Wisconsin Plan and will put Wisconsin on par with the most sophisticated economic development organizations in the country," according to Forward Wisconsin President Pepi Randolph. "With the click of a mouse, a CEO or site consultant can instantly customize and print out a fact-filled report on any combination of available industrial buildings, sites or communities in the state."

The LOIS system is vital to the state's ongoing economic development effort, Randolph says, because site selection consultants and corporate real estate professionals now go directly to the Internet as their first source of site selection information.

"Research indicates that as much as 80% of the initial site selection process is now being done via the Internet," Randolph said. "Those communities and states that do not have comprehensive online data available are not even being considered. They're not even in the game. This system makes Wisconsin a player."

A team of economic development organizations is responsible for the new LOIS system. The Department of Commerce provided a grant to help purchase the software platform and statewide data. Additional financial and resource support is being provided by We Energies, Alliant Energy, Wisconsin Public Service Corporation, Madison Gas & Electric, Xcel Energy and Dairyland Power Cooperative.

More than 30 members of the Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA) have been trained to teach local officials how to populate the LOIS database with their community profile information. The Technical College System is hosting the training at campus computer labs around the state. UW-Extension is conducting several online training sessions. The Commercial Association of Realtors-Wisconsin serves on the statewide LOIS Steering Committee and is exploring broker involvement options.

“LOIS would not be a reality in Wisconsin without that team of organizations,” according to Sharon Seffrood, the Web Marketing Specialist Forward Wisconsin hired in December to administer and maintain the system. “But we still have a major challenge to get all the local data into the system.”

Seffrood said Forward Wisconsin has purchased and entered all the state, MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area) and county-level demographic data into the LOIS system. Locality information, however, must either be entered by representatives of each municipality or by county-wide economic development organizations.

Forward Wisconsin has scheduled training sessions at technical college campuses around the state to teach local representatives how to enter data and how to create a seamless link between their local website and LOIS. The 2-hour training session must be completed before a local representative receives a password to use the administrative portion of the system.

A complete list of scheduled LOIS training sessions can be accessed on the homepage of Forward Wisconsin's website at www.forwardwi.com. Additional training sessions are being added on an ongoing basis. There is no charge for the classroom sessions but there is a \$30 charge for the online programs to cover access line fees.

UW-Extension is also offering a one-hour online informational session about LOIS at 10 am on Friday, March 25 as part of its Building Your Community series. To register for that program, call 715.479.3648 or email your request to john.gartner@ces.uwex.edu by March 23rd.

You can also preview the new LOIS system by visiting Forward Wisconsin's website at www.forwardwi.com and clicking on *Wisconsin Sites*. Communities in south central Wisconsin that are serviced by Alliant Energy are already part of the LOIS system and all of their data can be accessed online at the Forward Wisconsin website. For additional information, contact Sharon Seffrood at 608.261.2501 or by email at sseffrood@commerce.state.wi.us.

Forward Wisconsin is the state's public-private marketing organization. Its job is to recruit new businesses to the state by marketing Wisconsin's business advantages outside the state. Gov. Jim Doyle is Chairman of the Forward Wisconsin Board.

**Forward Wisconsin
LOIS Training Schedule
3-14-05**

- ☑ **Tuesday, March 29, 10 am – Waukesha (Workforce Development Center Bldg.)**
- ☑ **Tuesday, March 29, 1 pm – Waukesha (Workforce Development Center Bldg.)**
- ☑ **Tuesday, March 29, 1 pm – Eau Claire (Chippewa Valley Technical College)**
- ☑ **Tuesday, March 29, 1 pm – UW-Extension Online Session**
- ☑ **Wednesday, March 30, 1 pm – River Falls (CVTC-River Falls Campus)**
- ☑ **Friday, April 1, 10 am – La Crosse (Western Wis. Technical College)**
- ☑ **Friday, April 1, 10 am – UW-Extension Online Session**
- ☑ **Tuesday, April 5, 10 am – Tomah (Western Wis. Technical College-Tomah Campus)**
- ☑ **Tuesday, April 5, 1 pm – Tomah (Western Wis. Technical College-Tomah Campus)**
- ☑ **Wednesday, April 6, 1 pm – Milwaukee (MATC-Downtown Campus)**
- ☑ **Thursday, April 7, 10 am – Milwaukee (MATC-Downtown Campus)**
- ☑ **Thursday, April 7, 1 pm – Milwaukee (MATC-Downtown Campus)**
- ☑ **Friday, April 8, 10 am – Superior (Indianhead Technical College-Superior Campus)**
- ☑ **Friday, April 8, 1 pm – Superior (Indianhead Technical College-Superior Campus)**
- ☑ **Friday, April 8, 10 am – UW-Extension Online Session**
- ☑ **Tuesday, April 12, 1 pm – Green Bay (Wis. Public Service Corp.)**
- ☑ **Thursday, April 14, 1 pm – Eau Claire (Chippewa Valley Technical College)**
- ☑ **Friday, April 15, 1 pm – La Crosse (Western Wis. Technical College)**
- ☑ **Wednesday, April 20, 10 am – Stevens Point (Wisconsin Learning Center)**
- ☑ **Wednesday, April 20, 1 pm – Stevens Point (Wisconsin Learning Center)**

For additional information or to register for a training session, visit Forward Wisconsin's website at www.forwardwi.com or call Sharon Seffrood at 608.261.2501.