
Wisconsin LocationOne Information System (LOIS)

Project Summary

Forward Wisconsin, the Department of Commerce and the state's investor-owned electric utilities have joined forces to develop and implement Wisconsin's first-ever statewide system, which makes available comprehensive building, site and community information. The system provides an easy-to-use, Internet-accessed marketing tool that puts Wisconsin on a level playing field with the most sophisticated economic development organizations in the country.

LocationOne Information System (LOIS) is a web-based searchable database platform that provides demographic and economic profiles for communities, counties and the state. A Geographic Information System (GIS) component allows that data to be aggregated, layered into customized maps, and printed in report form. The system also provides information and photos of available industrial/commercial sites and buildings.

Background:

While the Department of Commerce has statutory responsibility for maintaining a building and sites database, Forward Wisconsin agreed to accept that responsibility several years ago as part of its marketing services contract with the state. In March 2002, Forward Wisconsin launched **SitesWI.com**, a stand-alone web-based database of buildings and sites available throughout the state. Anyone who has an available building or site can register as an agent and populate an unlimited number of listings on the site. Each listing includes contact information for one local representative, the appropriate Department of Commerce Area Development Manager, and a Forward Wisconsin consultant.

The Problem

While **SitesWI.com** initially fulfilled a longtime need for a single statewide resource of available buildings and sites, the architecture and technical underpinnings of the site do not have the expansion capabilities needed to meet the requirements of the sophisticated web users seeking such information – primarily site selection consultants, corporate real estate executives, and business owners. Here are the major drawbacks of the current site:

- ✳ **SitesWI.com** does not provide information on Wisconsin communities nor can it provide a hotlink to that information. Community information is a critical component of the site selection process and is a requirement of any serious site seeker.
- ✳ **SitesWI.com** does not address the numerous site selection factors in a one-stop web site. Decision-makers must hunt in several locations to find the information they require.
- ✳ **SitesWI.com** does not offer the controls necessary to maintain accuracy and non-redundancy of information. Anyone can enter data thus allowing duplication of information and inaccuracies.

➤ **SitesWI.com** is unique to Wisconsin and does not meet the National Data Standards now required for such sites. Data obtained on the Wisconsin site cannot be easily compared with data from other states. There is simply a lack of relevant information on the site.

➤ **SitesWI.com** does not provide any statewide data or financial program information or any link to this information.

The Solution

For Wisconsin to attract new facilities in today's highly competitive environment, it needs reliable, comprehensive data that can be quickly provided to corporate location professionals. LocationOne Information System is an easy-to-use, easy-to-maintain database platform that gives communities the confidence of data ownership while providing location professionals one point of entry for all the information they need. LOIS benefits include:

➤ **One point of entry.** A community need only enter building, site and community data in one place. It can then be used by state economic development agencies, utilities and by communities on their own website. No other system offers this feature.

➤ **Easy of use.** Alliant Energy and Forward Wisconsin have been offering LOIS to communities in its service and users say this is an extremely easy system to use.

➤ **Competitive Advantage.** The system puts small communities on an equal playing field with large communities and metro area.

➤ **National Data Standards compliant.** The data fields in LOIS are based on the Site Selection Data Standards Guidelines developed by the International Economic Development Council. LOIS meets those standards with 25 tables containing approximately 1,200 data elements.

➤ **Site locator approved.** Professional site locators have expressed their strong approval of the LOIS system and its GIS mapping/data display capabilities.

➤ **Cost effective.** Once the initial data is entered, the LOIS system does not require much administration on the part of communities. They do not have to add any personnel to administer LOIS.

➤ **Customization.** LOIS can take on the look and feel of the new Forward Wisconsin web site do those using the site will experience a seamless information portal.

➤ **Data storage.** All data is stored on a secured server at LocationOne eliminating the need for Forward Wisconsin to purchase and maintain costly server equipment.

➤ **Training and technical assistance.** LocationOne facilitates "train the trainer" sessions and provides unlimited access to technical assistance.