

NORTHWEST
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION



Photo Credit: Adam Gajeski

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

www.nwrdc.org

*Serving the counties of Kittson, Marshall,
Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake and Roseau.*

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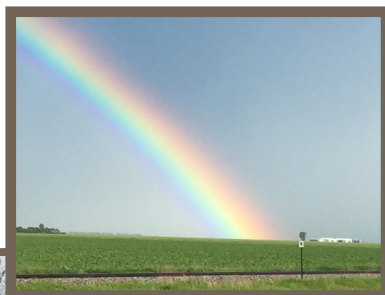
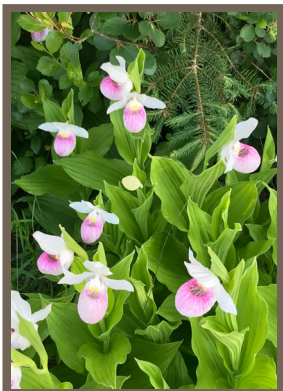
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TWO COMPANIES
IN CROOKSTON
PLAN FOR LOCAL
AGRICULTURE
PRODUCTS



VERTICAL MALT - PRODUCTION OF
CRAFT MALT BARLEY

EPITOME ENERGY - SOYBEAN
PROCESSING PLANT



IN 2020, SOCIAL DISTANCING WAS
ENCOURAGED. MOTHER NATURE DID
HER PART, AS MINNESOTANS ENJOY
ALL THAT SHE HAD TO OFFER



NWRDC STAFF AND LOCAL
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS
PACKAGED MEALS AND PREPARED
THEM FOR TRANSPORT

A MESSAGE FROM OUR INTERIM CHAIRPERSON

Dear Friends,

To say that 2020 has been an “interesting” year would probably be the understatement for the ages!

Certainly, the Covid-19 pandemic raised havoc with everything... from safely going to the grocery store for a carton of milk to flying on a plane to see family members and everything in between.

Not to mention the staff transition to ZOOM Meetings by the bushelful, acclimating to hygiene measures at home and office, and even changing the way we do business and our daily lives: working from home, steering clear of in-dining restaurants and in-attendance churches, driving less,

homeschooling our kids, seeing friends and parents less, no sports on TV, deciding whether to attend funerals/weddings/birthdays/graduations/etc! The list is endless.

With the advent of vaccines, I am hoping we can regain some normalcy and get back to doing what we do best here at Northwest Regional Development Commission meeting our customers, providing excellent assistance, and serving the public in any number of ways as we've done in the past.

This past year has seen significant changes: NWRDC lost its longtime Chairperson, Joe Bouvette, to a tragic accident this summer; several of our staff and Commission

members, including myself, lost their spouse, a parent or grandparent, and friends, and more than a few of our families were adversely affected by the pandemic and illness just as many of our customers and clients were. We hope that 2020 was an anomaly and the New Year will bring some renewed sense of a normal routine to our lives.

I can assure you that NWRDC staff will be ready to put 2020 in the rearview mirror and are eager to serve you on a more personal basis. We look forward to meeting in person with you soon. Thank you so much for your understanding and support during this trying time.

Sincerely,
Warren



WARREN STRANDELL,
INTERIM COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON



COMMISSION MEMBERS: (FRONT ROW, L TO R) RONALD WEISS,
KEITH SISTAD, GERALD AMIOT, WARREN STRANDELL, (BACK ROW, L TO R) KEVIN REICH, JIM DUCHAMP,
GERALD JACOBSON, GARY KIESOW, LOREN LUSIGNAN, KATHLEEN TWITE, GAIL YUTRZENKA, DAVE ERICKSON,
KIMBERLEY JOHNSON, DAVID TREUMER AND DR. JOE BOUVETTE.

A MESSAGE FROM NEWLY ELECTED CHAIRPERSON

Welcome...

Welcome to the NWRDC 2020 Annual Report!

It seems amazing that we've made it to the end of such a chaotic year in our history. I am proud of the resiliency and strength exhibited by our staff here at NWRDC as they transitioned into different ways of living their lives and doing their jobs in order to effectively serve you during this time of pandemic.

We were forced to refrain from most in-person meetings and switched to a more "electronic" method of delivering services with Zoom meetings, conference calls, or emails. Although tougher on some of our older populations due

to technology access, we were effective in doing what we could to fill the void of in-person service.

Our "dashboard" measurements showed we were highly successful in reaching our elder populations through our Aging program, but also showed our ability to provide services throughout our other programs to all of our customers. We were able to make loans to loan customers, do grantwriting, develop programming, and still do our mainstay work of outreach, facilitating meetings, bringing people together virtually, and providing unique and effective ways to get work done for the region.



GARY KIESOW, COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON

Earlier this summer, we were shocked and saddened to lose our longtime Chairperson, Joe Bouvette, to a tragic accident. We will miss his leadership, friendship and support over the past 47 years. We know that he was extremely proud of this organization and would have expected us to carry on in the spirit of serving others, and we will do that. We look forward to serving you in the coming year and beyond, and will maintain our high levels of expertise and competence in all of our programs. Thank you for your continued support and I hope you enjoy this annual report of NWRDC activities in 2020.

Sincerely,
Gary

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Kittson County

Kimberley Johnson*	Kennedy	Townships
David Treumer	Hallock	Municipalities
Loren Younggren	Hallock	Counties

Marshall County

Gary Kiesow**	Goodridge	Counties
Loren Lusignan	Grygla	Townships
Richard Mosher	Grygla	Municipalities
Gail Yutzenka	Argyle	School Boards

Norman County

Sharon Josephson	Fertile	Townships
Nathan Redland*	Halstad	Counties
Crystal Stene	Ada	Municipalities
Lucas Spaeth	Halstad	School Boards

Pennington County

Elvera Cullen	Thief River Falls	Seniors
Dave Erickson	Thief River Falls	Townships
Brian Holmer	Thief River Falls	Municipalities
Bruce Lawrence*	Thief River Falls	Counties
Dante Steele	Thief River Falls	Minorities

Polk County

Gerald Amiot	Crookston	Labor
Norma Campos	East Grand Forks	Minorities
Gerald Jacobson	Fertile	Seniors
Keith Sistad	Fosston	Townships
Warren Strandell*	East Grand Forks	Counties
Toby Strom	McIntosh	Municipalities
Kathleen Twite	East Grand Forks	Business

Red Lake County

Jim DuChamp	Plummer	Municipalities
John Dudycha	Plummer	Counties
Kevin Reich	Red Lake Falls	Townships
Ronald Weiss*	Red Lake Falls	Watershed District

Roseau County

Daryl Wicklund*	Badger	Counties
Debra Wiskow	Greenbush	Townships

* Board Members

** Chairperson

A MESSAGE

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Supporters and Friends,

Sometimes people refer to tough times as “character-building.” 2020 has filled that bill more than I thought possible, but the one thing that tough people always do is pick themselves up, dust themselves off, and say, “...is that all you got?” Or maybe “I’ll be back.”

Northwest Minnesota is filled with those kinds of people, which is a good thing because a positive outlook is infectious, it inspires resilience, and it gives us all hope for a better future. Looking ahead to a new year is fun, because it allows us to dream and think about ways to do better and be better. Thinking about “what can be” is a good exercise in resilience and hope. After all, what is a New Year’s Resolution all about if not hope?

In 2020, NWRDC was able to make use of plans put in place years ago for Continuity of Operations, Working From Home, Pandemic Response, Workforce Protection/Production, and several other topics of concern to effective management. In other words, we were prepared. NWRDC management experienced things we hadn’t expected and things we didn’t even know about due to Covid, but we were flexible, faced the adversity, learned and came up with effective solutions.

We lost our long-time Chairman, Joe Bouvette, this summer in an accident, but we knew he and our new leaders would expect us to continue our work. Warren Strandell took over the leadership reins after Joe’s passing and was a calm, steady presence even when faced with the heartbreaking loss of his own



CAM FANFULIK, NWRDC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

wife from Covid-19. Gary Kiesow was elected as new Board Chair in December and he and the rest of our Board would expect nothing less than our best in carrying on the duties and programs as we’ve done in the past. And we WILL do that.

Yes, 2020 was a strong headwind of trials and tribulation, but our staff was resilient and strong. They were magnificent in their attitude, their flexibility, and how they dealt with change, but even more importantly, how they dealt with our clients and customers. We had to do things differently, but we were still successful in bringing services to you. We are looking forward to continuing that in the new year and years to come. I hope you enjoy the 2020 Annual Report!

Sincerely,
Cam

Major Changes for Arts Council

The Northwest Minnesota Arts Council began the year in partnership with the NWRDC, operating similarly to past years, with grant programs and services.

“Business as usual” changed in March as the pandemic caused extreme consequences to Arts with cancelations and postponements. Almost all Arts projects were delayed or amended. Staff worked long hours remotely from home. The McKnight Foundation provided funding that gave \$500 in disaster relief grants for artists’ lost shows. The Arts Council Board of Directors voted in June to switch financial programs to compliment the online grants system, employees working remotely, and allow staff to learn the program that nonprofit arts organizations use.

After internal discussions, the NWRDC and the Arts Council decided to hire an outside accounting firm for the Arts. The Arts leased the Westbridge Center’s northeast corner to serve as a grant writing hub, work sample creation area, and an enhanced listing gallery for artists. In July, staff moved into that section of the building.

Discussion continued throughout July, and a business decision was made to end the partnership between the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council and the NWRDC on September 1, 2020.

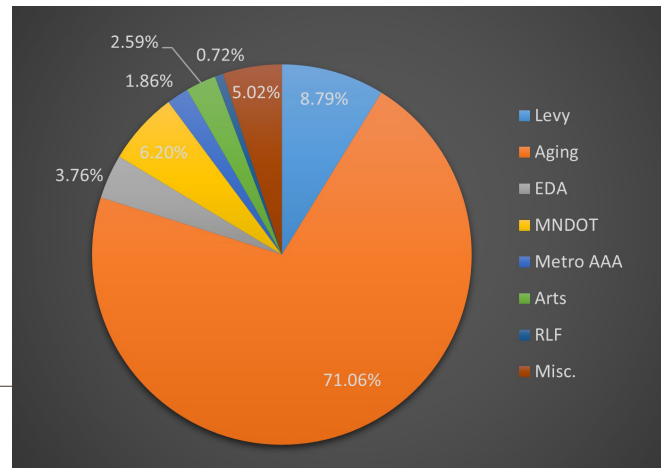
“The Arts Council board and I truly appreciate the RDC, Board of Directors, and the amazing NWRDC staff for all the assistance and collaborative work throughout my 27 years of service.”

Sincerely, Mara Hanel, Arts Council Director

FINANCIALS & 2021 BUDGET

CALENDAR YEAR 2021

Actual 2020 Revenue Sources



REVENUES	CY'2020 BUDGET	CY'2020 ACTUALS	CY'2021 BUDGET
Local Tax Levy	\$297,920	\$290,423	\$306,858
MN Board on Aging/Department Health	\$2,332,050	\$2,349,147	\$2,303,999
Economic Development Administration	\$94,611	\$124,299	\$377,016
MN Department of Transportation	\$189,639	\$204,947	\$213,187
NW Minnesota Arts Council	\$85,576	\$85,576	\$0
Dancing Sky AAA County Match	\$55,332	\$55,332	\$56,992
NW Minnesota Enterprise Fund	\$66,331	\$23,804	\$0
Metro Area Agency on Aging	\$63,925	\$61,560	\$63,500
Local Contracts/ Miscellaneous	\$115,224	\$110,596	\$89,000
Regrant Revenue	\$4,839,087	\$4,773,056	\$3,296,495
TOTAL	\$8,139,695	\$8,078,740	\$6,707,047

CY'2019 AUDIT

The CY'2019 Audit was conducted by Brady Martz, Certified Public Accountants and Consultants in Crookston, Minnesota. The auditor's report expresses an unqualified opinion on the General Purpose Financial Statements of the Northwest Regional Development Commission.

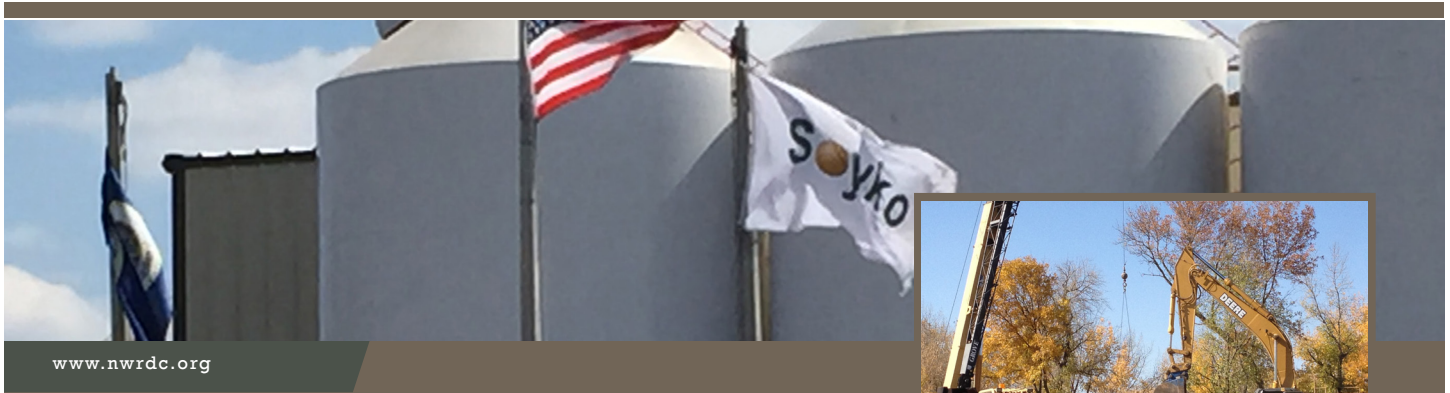
EXPENDITURES	CY'2020 BUDGET	CY'2020 ACTUALS	CY'2021 BUDGET
Salaries and Fringe	\$2,690,013	\$2,664,373	\$2,679,117
Professional Services	\$177,472	\$164,436	\$105,457
Travel	\$49,786	\$50,278	\$255,080
Printing/Postage	\$57,149	\$55,509	\$79,315
Supplies	\$57,638	\$68,924	\$51,672
Rent/Maintenance	\$55,362	\$59,608	\$62,383
Equipment	\$35,480	\$29,994	\$870
Other	\$177,708	\$212,562	\$176,658
Grants/Contracts	\$4,839,087	\$4,773,056	\$3,296,495
TOTAL	\$8,139,695	\$8,078,740	\$6,707,047

COST ALLOCATION

CY'2020 Actual
Leave Rate:
18.96%

CY'2020 Actual
Fringe Rate:
40.19%

CY'2020 Actual
Indirect Rate:
10.84%



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE:

To maintain and increase the population level and job base in the seven counties of Northwest Minnesota.

SERVICE PRIORITIES:

Business development, labor force development, renewable energy, promotion and planning.



Value-Added Agriculture Processing Continues

Last year at this time, we reported on our activities that centered around Value-Added Agriculture Processing. Although 2020 and Covid-19 brought some hurdles, for the most part these activities continued. Project planning, grant-writing, financial planning, construction activities, permitting, partnerships, and many other aspects of project development continued.

- As of winter 2020, Riverview Dairy in Norman County is ready to begin construction of a \$52M, 10,000 cow dairy in Spring 2021 near Gary, MN. One hundred eighty construction jobs and 40-60 permanent jobs will result.
- A \$21M local swine production facility in Norman County, near Gary, has met its permitting and financing goals and began construction in the Fall of 2020. The production plant will concentrate on research and development of swine traits and characteristics that improve and increase production.
- Edible bean (Kidney, Dark Red, Pink, Navy, Pinto, etc.) processing plants in Norman and Polk counties are undergoing expansions to increase plant capacity and meet product demand throughout the USA and areas in Central America. Innovative packaging

and transport options play a role in market growth.

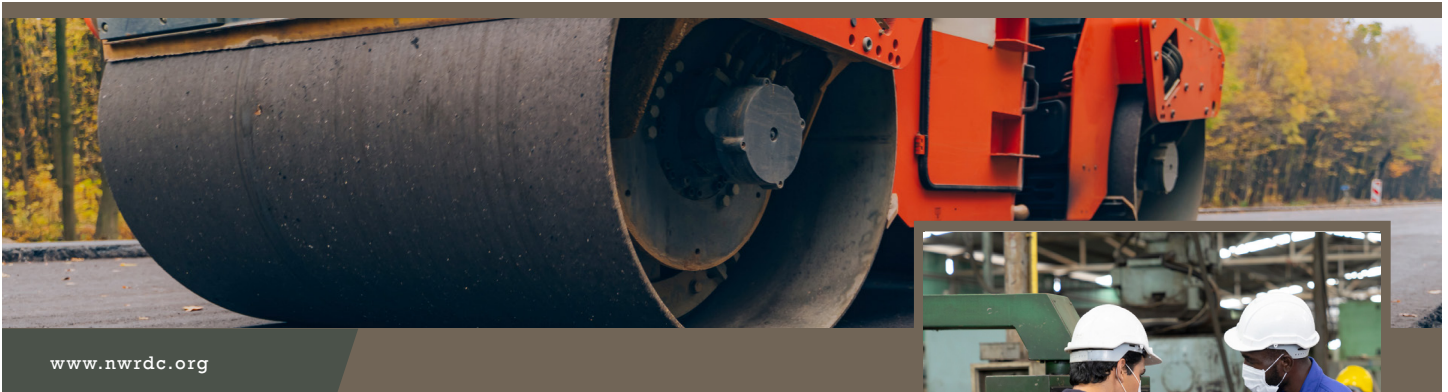
- Soyko International, a Korean-born, female-owned company that produces food-grade soybeans for Korea, Japan, Ukraine, and other overseas markets, is beginning a \$3M+ plant expansion to meet demand.
- Epitome Energy and the City of Crookston are ready to begin 2021 construction on a \$230M soybean processing plant for meal and biodiesel production. Included is an expansion of city infrastructure.
- Vertical Malt will begin construction in 2021 on a \$4M plant expansion for the production of craft malt barley in Crookston.
- Other expansions include an EDA application for additional industrial park space in Fosston.

Although food processing appears to be driving much of the region's industrial expansion, we have seen that much of the area's manufacturing has maintained its base business and is expanding. One result of Covid-19 is that people are getting outdoors more and are investing in equipment to accomplish that. The sale of snowmobiles, ATVs, and outdoor recreational equipment is growing nationwide.

Larger manufacturers in Region One are looking for even more workers to finish production goals for this year, while subsidiary manufacturers and suppliers look for a labor force to sustain their operations and train workers for fabrication and manufacturing needs.

NWRDC continues its RLF activities with Federal CARES Act funds designed for assisting small businesses with 0% loans, expanded terms, and reduced regulatory requirements. NWRDC assisted Norman and Red Lake counties with CARES Act grant distribution to small business and non-profits, helping to distribute more than \$600,000 in grants. NWRDC also provided a seven-county regional Zoom meeting to share best practices and status of CARES Act distributions.

Border crossing issues remain, in part due to the international border closing for much of the year. This has brought border hours, tourism, regional branding efforts, and cross-border interaction into the public-interest limelight. Issues of cross-border job commuting, emergency services, family interaction, and day trips/border crossing hours are under public scrutiny.



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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE:

To assist communities in maintaining the services and infrastructure needed to support a robust economy and an attractive quality of life.

SERVICE PRIORITIES:

Community planning and zoning, tourism and promotions, recreational development and geographic information system (GIS) mapping.

Pandemic Leads to Innovation and Resourcefulness

In March, the country first experienced Covid-19. Restrictions were put in place by the state to “slow the spread.”

Initially, Region One did not suffer the high infection rates hitting other parts of the country. Still, businesses suffered as they complied with state mandates to close. High infection rates did not affect our region until late summer/early fall and rose quickly into the early winter.

Some retail establishments have suffered because of the mandated closings, including the tourism and hospitality industries and personal care service industries.

Not all businesses suffered. Some retail sectors were able to pivot and offer takeout or delivery. Some changed their business plans to accommodate flexible work hours, reduced staffing, menu deviations, and shortened hours. Large and small companies introduced enhanced hygiene requirements to protect their workforce (plastic workstation shields, masks, handwashing, social distancing). Some set up work-

from-home stations. Businesses did whatever they needed to protect employees and the public and keep their businesses open.

The federal and state governments provided funds through CARES ACT business grants, the Payroll Protection Act, MN DEED Small Business Emergency Loans, and SBA Loans and Grants.

NW Minnesota was affected by Covid-19 and the state-mandated shutdowns through the loss of tourism income. Several communities lost the benefits of Canadian tourism dollars at their golf courses, campgrounds, state parks, and their special events (concerts, sports, travel). However, resorts received an influx of business from US residents interested in getting away from larger cities, being outdoors, and utilizing recreational opportunities.

Construction and building material businesses remained busy. Projects continued, although wait times for materials and prices increased.

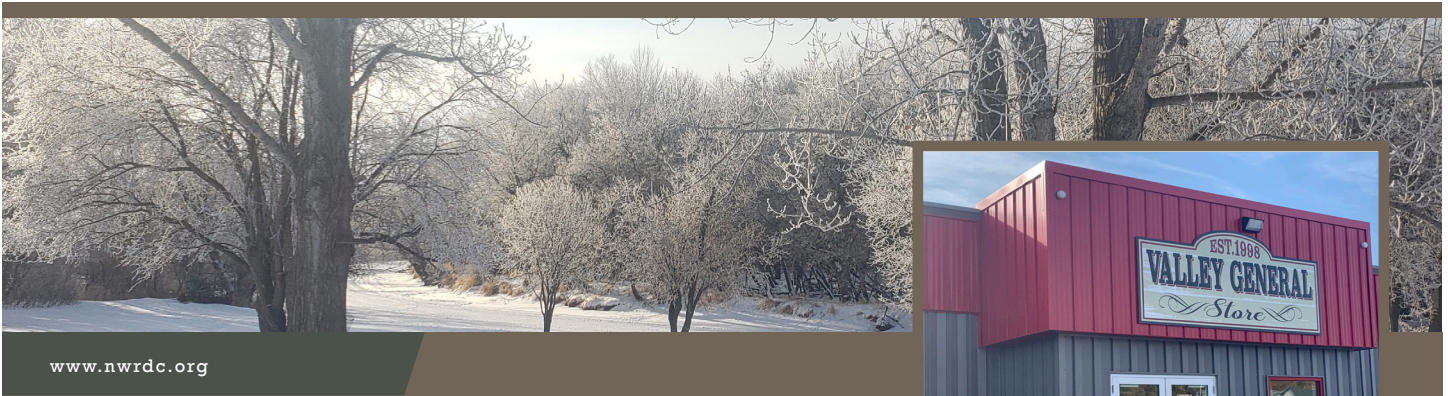
Counties and communities continued to make improvements to infrastruc-

ture. Road construction projects, improvements to recreational trails, and rural water infrastructure planning or expansion continued. Many businesses chose to start-up or expand due to lower interest rates, better loan terms, and attractive loan or grant packaging.

Agriculture and manufacturing, always the region's strengths, were not as affected as other businesses. Manufacturers have maintained their workforce and are looking to expand their workforce to meet customer demand. The region's recreational vehicle manufacturers saw increased demand for their products.

The “Stay-At-Home” directives meant less travel and fewer events and activities. But demand increased in those industries as people made their own kind of fun; getting outdoors, enjoying fishing, hunting, boating, and trail riding.

The pandemic exposed weaknesses in the economic system and some sectors of the economy. Still, it led to innovative ways of responding to adversity and helped bring families closer together.



NORTHWEST REGIONAL ENTERPRISE LOAN FUND

PURPOSE:

To strengthen and diversify the economy by providing a source of low interest financing to businesses when credit is not otherwise available from other sources and to ensure the successful completion of activities to be financed.

SERVICE PRIORITIES:

Financing for-profit businesses which create or retain jobs, especially for the long-term underemployed or unemployed.



VALLEY GENERAL STORE IN HALSTAD.
COMPLETED SPRING OF 2020.

CARES Act Funding Provides Assistance to Businesses

The Northwest Regional Enterprise Loan Fund activities consisted mostly of providing technical assistance to existing borrowers as they sought relief from COVID-19 related shutdowns during the first half of the year.

Staff also assisted the Northwest Minnesota Foundation in underwriting applications for the DEED Small Business Emergency Loan program funded by the State of Minnesota.

The Northwest Regional Enterprise Loan Fund was awarded \$3.1 million in CARES Act funding through the Federal Economic Development Administration. New loan processing began during the second half of the year. These funds provided more flexible terms for potential borrowers, including 0% interest rates. The new fund closed four loans for a total of \$605,000 and committed an ad-

ditional four loans totaling \$727,500 to be closed in 2021. Loan recipients included retail, value-added agriculture, and manufacturing industries.

In addition to opening new loans, other loan fund activities included loan restructuring, interest rate adjustments, payoffs, loan assistance to community economic development agencies (EDAs), and technical assistance.

We continue to provide technical assistance in the form of information and referral to other organizations and agencies, including but not limited to Small Business Development Center, EDA University Center, Agricultural Utilization Research Institute, Department of Employment and Economic Development, Headwaters Regional Development Commission, NW Minnesota Multi-County HRA, Northwest Minnesota Foundation, and the IDEA Competition.

Historical Loan Activity

(period ending 12/31/2020):

Total Loans	216
Active Loans	49
Total Loan Amount	\$15,505,229
Other Financing Leveraged	\$70,321,658
Jobs Created/Retained	2,315
Total Project Costs	\$98,856,055

Historical Loan Activity by County

(period ending 12/31/2020):

County	# of Loans	Amount
Kittson	24	\$1,349,120
Marshall	41	\$2,847,045
Norman	19	\$1,039,248
Pennington	20	\$1,795,850
Polk	69	\$5,294,975
Red Lake	14	\$953,115
Roseau	29	\$2,225,876



DANCING SKY AREA AGENCY ON AGING



PURPOSE:

The Dancing Sky is 1 of 7 Minnesota Area Agencies on Aging. Our goal for the people of Minnesota is simple, to work with rural communities to help older adults stay in control of their choices. We envision vibrant communities invested in their elders as well as older adults and caregivers planning for the future. Together, older adults and communities thrive.

SERVICE PRIORITIES:

Nutrition - congregate and home delivered meals, legal services, homemaker and chore services, home modification, assisted transportation services, health promotion and prevention programs, medication management, dementia friendly and age friendly communities.

COVID-19 Changes “Business As Usual”

The Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging was awarded a \$100,000 Coronavirus Response Grant from the St. Paul Foundation/MN Council of Foundations.

These funds were designated to support the work of non-profits and small businesses during the pandemic. Twenty-five agencies were awarded grant funds that ranged from \$1,000 to \$10,000 to support their efforts to remain open and operational. Grants supported the work of local senior centers and community centers, provided funding for the technology that would allow for virtual visits. They also assisted in meeting seniors' food and/or grocery delivery needs.

“Can you hear me now?”

Title III providers switch to virtual services

The Covid-19 pandemic required immediate and significant modifications to the traditional methods of providing services to support older adults. In-person services were put on hold. Providers converted to delivering services virtually, where possible.

Telephone reassurance and grocery delivery became vital lifelines for seniors who may have become more isolated due to the pandemic. Providers reached over 2,892 seniors through telephone reassurance and 599 seniors with grocery and/or medication delivery.

Caregiver programs received additional funding to expand their virtual capacity. The funds allowed for the purchase of iPads and tablets that allowed caregivers to connect virtually. Providers utilized virtual platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and GoTo Meeting to help caregivers connect with their loved ones. Evidence-Based Health Promotion programs expanded their capacity to offer classes through Zoom and via telephone. Some agencies are offering virtual classes, allowing people to participate regardless of their physical location.

PICTURES: HOSPICE OF THE RED RIVER VALLEY IPAD PURCHASE FOR VIRTUAL FAMILY VISITS; EAST GRAND FORKS SENIOR CENTER DONATIONS FOR SENIORS. MEAL PREPARATION FOR MEALS DELIVERED THROUGHOUT THE REGION; DRIVER PREPARED TO RESUME HIS VOLUNTEER WORK; GROCERY DELIVERY FOR SENIORS.

Senior LinkAge Line®

The Senior LinkAge Line® (SLL) is a free statewide service of the Minnesota Board on Aging in partnership with Minnesota's Area Agencies on Aging. SLL assists older Minnesotans and caregivers by connecting them to local services, finding answers, and getting the help they need. In 2020, SLL phone staff served 21,129 clients.

Clients
Served

21,129

Medicare Open Enrollment

The Senior LinkAge Line is Minnesota's federally designated State Health Insurance Program and provides comprehensive, unbiased Medicare counseling. We do not market or sell any product. During our 2020 Medicare Open Enrollment, we served people over the phone. Senior LinkAge Line answered 1,657 calls. We are grateful to our Senior Coordinators and Mahube-Otwa for their partnership during Open Enrollment.

Open
Enrollment
Calls

1,657

Pre-Admission Screening

A Pre-Admission Screening (PAS) is for anyone making plans for admission into a nursing home. It is required to measure a person's need for nursing home level of care and to connect them with supportive services. Health care providers submit a PAS to the Senior LinkAge Line. Specialists completed 4,353 screens. Our team also completed 709 care transition calls for older adults returning home after a short nursing home stay.

Pre-Admission
Screens

4,353

Return to Community

Community Living Specialists (CLS) visit eligible people in nursing homes or those considering a nursing home stay to discuss whether the person is interested in getting help to move back or stay home.

Return to
Community

189

Working with providers and older adults, Community Living Specialists will develop a list of services that people can consider having at home to help them after they leave the nursing home. The Community Living Specialist provides counseling to help people look at all long-term care options based on where and how they want to live.

While in the community, the Senior LinkAge Line provided follow-up in person and over the phone to 2,025 adults this year. This follow-up ensures that the person remains successful for as long as possible in the home of their choice.

Loved Ones and Going Home Made All The Difference

SLL Community Living Specialist from Dancing Sky AAA shared the following story:

I received a referral from a facility requesting Return to Community (RTC) services for someone who wanted to return home after an extended stay due to back surgery. During my initial conversation, the consumer stated she has PTSD and depression that was exacerbated by her facility stay during COVID. She said she felt locked-in, lonely and that her depression was "through the roof."

Since no one (including her husband) was allowed to visit, her health went downhill quickly. She had decided to stop eating and wanted to die. She had gotten so ill; the facility started her on hospice. After a week, she had gotten to the point that hospice felt it was crucial to allow the husband to visit. That was all it took to lift her spirits enough that she decided to start eating again. Her husband was allowed to visit daily at this point, and she stated she "regained the will to live." She has since recovered fully and is at home. She is still dealing with the PTSD of her stay in the facility but says she is in a better state of mind now that she is home.

Outreach Events

SLL successfully completed virtual Medicare classes serving 138 people this year in partnership with Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging. Specialists take pride in supporting the nursing homes, clinics, and hospitals during Covid-19. We reached 144 professionals checking in and sending messages of support to our health care partners.

Persons
Reached

282

2020 AGING GRANTEES

Productive Alternatives Assisted Transportation [\$25,500]

Clearwaters Life Center Assisted Transportation [\$10,223]

Northwest Sentencing to Service Chore Program [\$13,157]

Tri-County Community Corrections Chore Program [\$13,489]

Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota Legal Assistance [\$72,000]

West Central Community Action Home Modification [\$25,670]

Lake Region Healthcare Medication Management [\$13,000]

Lutheran Social Services Caregiver & Respite [\$166,799]

Northwoods Caregivers Caregiver & Respite [\$40,880]

Park Rapids Living at Home Caregiver & Respite [\$46,643]

Central MN Elder Network Caregiver & Respite [\$36,816]

Nutrition Services Inc. Congregate/Home-delivered Meals [\$2,189,749]

Lutheran Social Services Congregate/Home-delivered Meals [\$1,267,923]

Title III-D Grants

Warren Serving Our Seniors

[\$4,800]

Tri Community Living at Home

[\$4,800]

Barnesville Helpers

[\$2,400]

Living at Home - Park Rapids Area

[\$2,400]

First Lutheran of Detroit Lakes

[\$4,800]

PARTNERS of Rothsay

[\$4,800]

REACH of Hawley

[\$4,800]

Northwoods Caregivers

[\$4,800]

East Grand Forks Senior Center

[\$4,800]

OAKS of Pelican Rapids

[\$2,400]

Trinity Lutheran Church

of Detroit Lakes

[\$1,200]



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

FLOODING AT OSLO, SPRING 2020

PURPOSE:

To ensure safe and efficient movement of people and commodities and provide an on-going forum for important transportation issues in the region. To assist MnDOT and provide input with planning and programs.

SERVICE PRIORITIES:

Direction setting, comprehensive regional planning, legislative advocacy and MnDOT project coordination.

Flood Battle in Oslo

NWRDC staff have organized meetings with representatives from the federal government and with North Dakota and Minnesota representatives to discuss Oslo, MN flooding.

The options are either a bridge rehabilitation or the construction of a new bridge. The Border Township Association Group (BTAG) has raised money and held meetings to get a flood report completed. Houston Engineering modeled the river from Grand Forks to north of Oslo and developed a 3-phase proposal to alleviate Oslo's flooding.

The \$97 million project consists of three phases. Phase one: Fixing the bridges at Oslo and MN Highway 317. Phase two: Raise the Shane road to protect the interstate and raise the road south of Oslo to protect MN Highway 1. Phase three: Remove the minor obstructions, (i.e. driveways) to allow water to flow without backing up. BTAG hired Widseth Engineering to develop a video that describes the

flooding situation. You can view it at <https://fixtheflood.org/>

Grygla to Gully 10-Ton Corridor Improvements

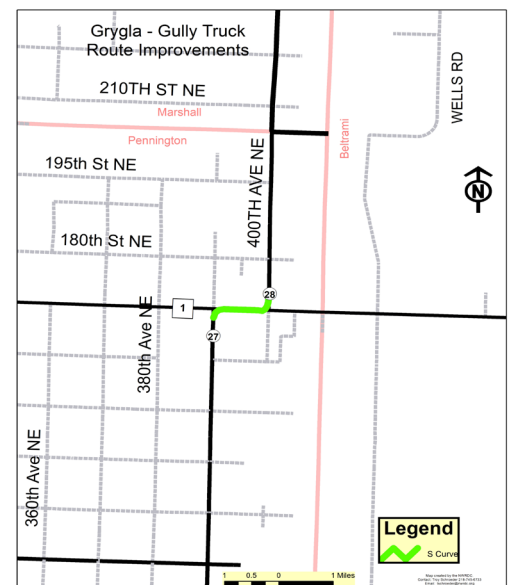
The Transportation Advisory Council (TAC) started a discussion with engineers from Roseau, Marshall, Pennington, and Polk counties, MnDOT, and the city of Roseau to develop an efficient shipping corridor that promotes the use of the Grygla to Gully 10-ton truck corridor.

The committee members inquired as to the process to get Google Maps to identify and recommend one route over another. For the most part, the Grygla to Gully corridor is unknown to Google Maps as a heavy commercial shipping corridor.

The NWRDC is working with MnDOT personnel to connect with GIS personnel at Google Maps to get the preferred route identified for travel. The county engineers will hold conversations with county boards and MnDOT to address a speed increase of the designated route to 60-MPH.

The counties and MnDOT will also discuss improving the snow removal maintenance plan on the route, which will improve the frequency and timing of snow removal.

The engineers also discussed designing curves in Pennington County to keep the speed at 60-MPH around the MN Highway 1 intersection. There was also discussion on which road is the best route through Roseau County. The County engineer will recommend a preferred corridor.



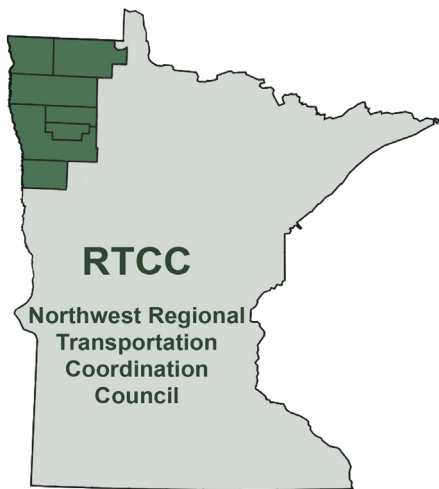
Border to Border Trail Update

The RDC's TAC has kept in contact with Border to Border trail. The Trail is in the final stages of designation and awaits the signature by the MN DNR Commissioner. The scenic backroad route will connect the North Dakota border to the shores of Lake Superior, traveling minimum asphalt, providing connections to communities who can then inform visitors on local camping,

museums, food, fuel and scenic stops. The route will create an opportunity for a community to enhance visitor experiences, such as marketing and promoting festivals or cultural events and activities like nature or bird watching. The Border to Border Trail was created by four wheel drive clubs from within the state.



Northwest Regional Transportation Coordination Council Updates



The Northwest Regional Transportation Coordination Council (NWRTC) has finished both Phase One and Phase Two in their initiative to provide better transit services to the elderly, low-income, veterans, and people with disabilities in the region.

In 2020, Phase Three kicked off with a board meeting. NWRTC has partnered with Headwaters Regional Transportation Coordination Council, Tri-Valley Transit, and the Senior Linkage Line® to continue planning transit services. NWRTC received

a planning grant from the National Center for Mobility Management to chart the planning process for the Transportation Mobility Call Center (TMCC), a “one-call/one-click” transportation resource for our region.

NWRTC staff participated in the state-wide planning of the TMCC, working with the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA) to develop the technological infrastructure needed for the transit programs to communicate with each other. This technology is to move forward with the TMCC.

Staff created a Transportation Provider Directory to be used to connect residents to resources. In the future, it will be available on the NWRDC website and will be a resource for the Transportation Mobility Call Center. Currently, revisions are in process to bring it to the standards needed for sharing data across regions.

Staff are currently developing a NWRTC webpage that will be part of the NWRDC website. The public will soon be able to access this information. Also, NWRTC staff meet monthly with the Volunteer Driver Coalition of MN to advance policy changes to support volunteer drivers. Topics included, but were not limited to, mileage reim-

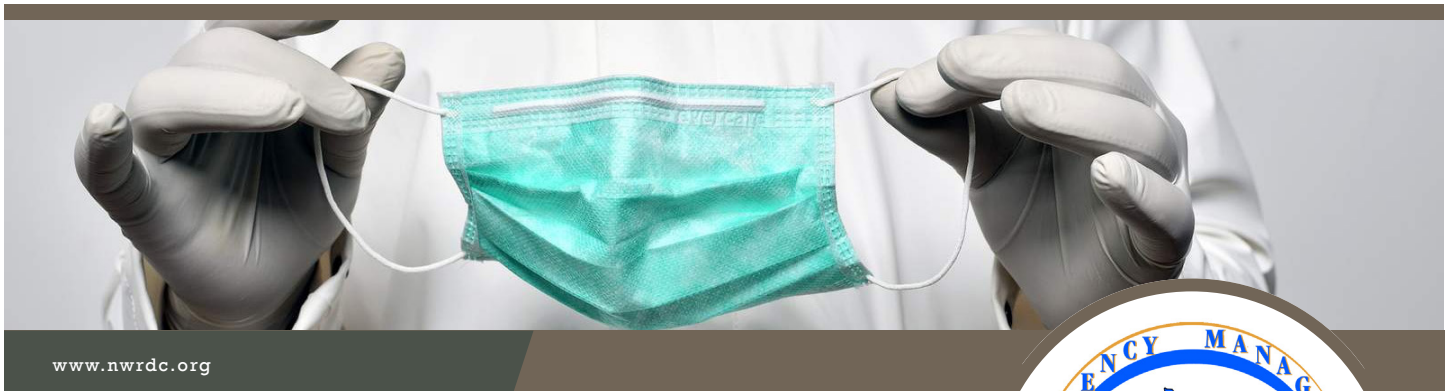
bursement, insurance concerns, and tax issues.

As this Coalition continues to work on some of the issues, legislation is included in the Governor's annual legislative priorities for 2020/2021 to define a “volunteer driver.”

Staff also participated with the work team that developed the Volunteer Driver Forum Series offered by MCOTA. The series was presented throughout the region, and topics included policy issues, ADA concerns, volunteer recruitment, best practices for retention, and trauma-informed practice. The series has been offered online, free-of-charge, and has been well attended throughout our region.

The staff of the NWRTC also provided outreach to educate the public about free transportation for Covid-19 patients to and from medical appointments.





EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANNING

PURPOSE: To aid Homeland Security & Emergency Management (HSEM) Region Three in the preparation, planning and implementation of activities related to regional preparedness, response and recovery.

SERVICE PRIORITIES: Utilize a specifically geared, annually evolving work program to support existing emergency management capabilities throughout Northwest Minnesota, as approved by the Emergency Management Joint Powers Board and HSEM staff.



HSEM Region 3 Joint Powers Board Planning Services

The Northwest Regional Development Commission continued its planning partnership with the Minnesota Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) Region 3 Joint Powers Board by providing planning services for the 14 counties (includes two tribal nations) located in Northwestern Minnesota. This year's focus was on homeland security and terrorism.

With an ever-evolving work program, combined with an active array of hazards present in Minnesota, it takes many individuals engaged in emergency preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery to save lives, reduce property damage, and decrease/eliminate future effects. Government, local agencies, volunteers, businesses, and emergency response personnel all work together and lend efforts/resources to keep our com-

munities safe. The following points highlight a few of the successes that the Northwest Emergency Manager's Joint Powers Board regional planning program has accomplished in 2020, thanks to grant funding through HSEM:

- Access and Functional Needs Planning
- Terrorism Regional Resource Manual
- Cross-Border Coalition Planning
- Critical Infrastructure Planning
- Emergency Operations Center Position Assessment
- Terrorism-Based Regional Exercise
- Regional Badging & Credentialing
- Regional Strategic Plan Update
- Involvement with the Upper Red River Valley Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD), Regional

Radio Board/Radio Advisory Committee, and the Northwest Health Services Coalition.

- Quarterly and Joint Powers Board Meeting Attendance
- Local and Regional Exercise Involvement

Additional projects that were not part of the grant mentioned above included:

- Emergency Operations Planning with the city of Moorhead
- Emergency Operations Planning with the city of Dilworth
- Safe Routes to School Planning with the Warren-Alvarado-Oslo School District.
- Pandemic-Related Economic Development planning

PLANS & PUBLICATIONS

PREPARED BY THE NWRDC

PLANS:

2021 Aging Area Plan – Includes senior and provider input as well as demographic data to establish priorities for the use of Title-III Older Americans Act funds. Includes information on the unique characteristics of our region, demographics, accomplishments, program outcomes and budget information.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) –

The 2017–2021 CEDS has taken a little different shape to more closely resemble that of each of the other Economic Development Regions of Greater Minnesota. The Economic Development Regions have agreed upon four key cornerstones to economic development: Human Capital, Economic Competitiveness, Community Resources and Foundational Assets. Each region has based their CEDS on these cornerstones and developed their own unique goals and strategies. The 2017-2021 CEDS does maintain previous priorities of Planning, Promotion, Business Development, Labor Force Development and Renewable Energies with added emphasis on workforce related issues such as housing, childcare, training and business succession planning.

Revolving Loan Fund Plan – Consists of program elements and guidelines.

PUBLICATIONS:

SeniorNews – A newsletter for senior citizens and service providers of Northwest Minnesota.

Government Units of Service Directory – A listing of service agencies and government offices from the township and legislative levels.

2020 Annual Report – A report sent to local officials and legislators on funding and work activities of the NWRDC.

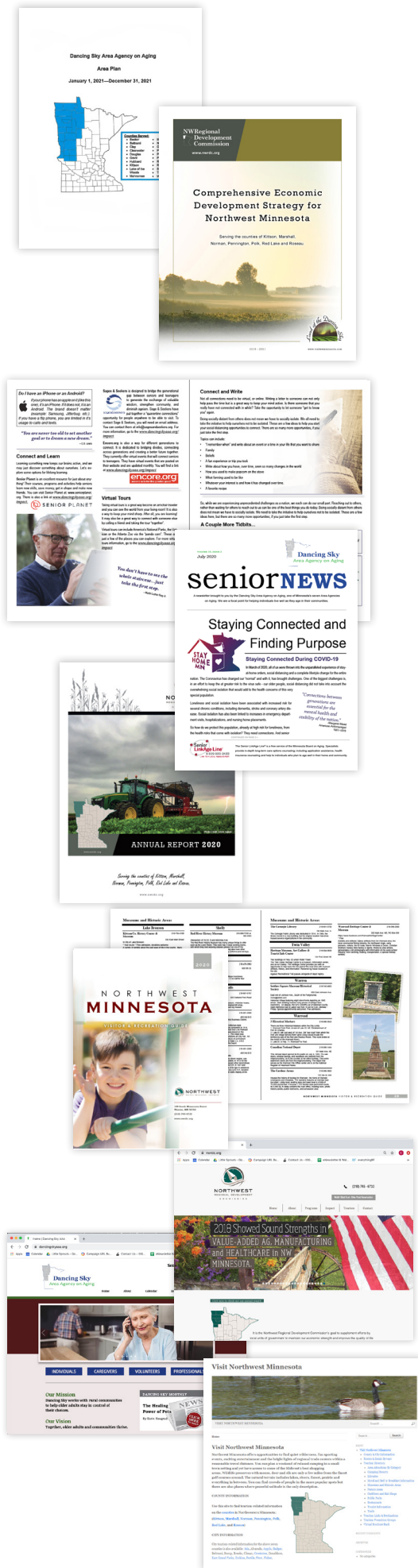
NW MN Visitor & Recreation Guide – A guide of attractions highlighting services and recreational opportunities in Northwest Minnesota communities.

WEBSITES:

www.nwrdc.org

www.dancingskyaaa.org

www.visitnwmnnesota.com



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