



NWRDC NEWSLINE

Your news & updates

109 S Minnesota Street, Warren MN, 56762 | (218) 745-6733 | www.nwrdc.org

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Executive Director - Darla Waldner

As we enter this season of gratitude, I want to take a moment to reflect on the many reasons I am thankful for the people and partnerships that make NWRDC thrive.

Each day, I have the privilege of witnessing the dedication, creativity, and collaboration that define our work across Northwest Minnesota. Whether it's connecting communities through transportation planning, supporting aging services, fostering economic development, or strengthening local capacity, our team continues to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

This month, I also want to recognize the incredible efforts of our Minnesota Aging Pathways team (formerly the Senior LinkAge Line). They are experiencing the highest call volumes to date because of a large Medicare Advantage Plan no longer providing coverage in our region. Older adults and caregivers may experience longer wait times when calling in, but please know that our staff—and teams across the state—are working diligently to assist those who need to make timely and informed decisions about switching their health insurance plans. Their professionalism, compassion, and commitment during this challenging period embody the very best of public service.

To our staff: thank you for your commitment to excellence and your willingness to step up for each other. Your teamwork, flexibility, and integrity make NWRDC a place

where ideas grow into action. To our partners, board members, and community collaborators: thank you for your trust, engagement, and shared vision for a stronger, more connected region.

This time of year, reminds us that progress doesn't happen alone, it happens when people come together with purpose and heart. I am grateful for the opportunity to do this work alongside all of you.

Wishing you and your families a wonderful Thanksgiving season filled with gratitude, good health, and connection.

Warm regards,

Darla Waldner

Executive Director

Northwest Regional Development Commission



Front Office - Amanda Russell

We will be adding a text-message notification service to help keep you updated. Please download the Remind App before the annual meeting, and we'll walk you through how to use it.



Aging - Heather Pender



November 1st - January 15th

Open enrollment is an annual period when you can sign up for, change, or renew health and other insurance plans. This window of opportunity typically occurs in the fall, but specific dates vary depending on the plan, such as the Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplace, employer-sponsored plans, or Medicare. Outside of this period, you can generally only enroll or make changes if you have a qualifying life event, which grants access to a special enrollment period.

During this time our phone staff are busier than ever helping individuals find a plan that suits them!



AGING PATHWAYS

The program formerly known as the Senior LinkAge Line has been rebranded as Minnesota Aging Pathways.

The service remains operated by the Minnesota Board on Aging in partnership with Minnesota's Area Agencies on Aging.

The contact phone number remains the same: 1-800-333-2433.

While the name and branding have changed, the "same great service" message is emphasized.

Economic Development - Sean Ranum

The City of Crookston accepted the EDA award of \$3,312,233.15 for the Industrial Park and are now working on an application to the State for additional match funds. These matching funds will not be available until the next bonding bill is passed.

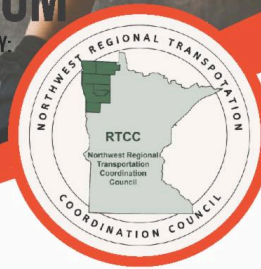


Transportation - Tim Finseth

Pennington County Transportation Forum

JOIN US FOR THE
PENNINGTON COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION FORUM

HOSTED BY:



ABOUT THE FORUM:

Northwest Regional Transportation Community Council is bringing together providers, riders, and community members to talk about transportation. This forum will provide a space to share what's working, what isn't, and explore solutions to improve mobility across Pennington County.

WHY IT MATTERS


Gaps in transportation can lead to isolation and barriers to opportunity. This forum is our chance to build solutions that fit Pennington County.


JOIN US: *Transportation Providers (Public, Private, Volunteer) • Riders • Healthcare & Social Services • Elected Officials • County & City Staff • Community & Faith-Based Organizations • Employers & Business Leaders • Anyone Invested in Stronger Mobility Options.*



THE MISSION OF THE NWRDC IS TO SUPPORT IMPROVED ACCESS AND OPTIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES IN NORTHWESTERN, MN THROUGH COMMUNICATION AND CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS.

MONDAY 
24 November, 2025

START TIME 
1:00PM

JOINT FACILITIES BUILDING 
250 125th Ave NE, TRF, MN 56701

TORI PETERSON, RTCC 
MOBILITY MANAGER
(218) 745-9114 - tori@nwrdc.org

FOR MORE INFO



SCAN ME

[More Information](#)

Community Development - James Retka

NWRDC attended a workshop on October 23rd at UMC hosted by Fresh Energy focused on Renewable Energy and Economic Development in Northwest Minnesota. This event featured a full day of workshops, conversations, and presentations about renewable energy as an economic development tool in Northwest Minnesota. The desired outcomes of the conference will be more renewable energy projects and partnerships in the Northwest region.



OCT. 23
RENEW
Highway 2 Tour:
Crookston
Renewable Energy and
Economic Development
in Northwest
Minnesota



Advance Thief River, NWRDC, and the University of Minnesota Extension have been hosting a series of community input sessions in support of “Thrive in Thief River” housing for older adults. The series started with a community kick off meeting on September 3rd at NCTC and was followed by small, in-person focus group sessions. The focus groups took a deep dive into specific housing characteristics most desired by older adults as they age. A third meeting was held on November 5th to present the information gathered during the focus groups and to present several possible concepts with the guidance of Craig Clark, from EAPC Architects, Bemidji. A second community meeting is planned for January 14, 2026, with a refined action plan for the project. This Age Friendly MN initiative will conclude in May 2026.

Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION

On October 15th, NWRDC Community and Economic Development participated in an ESMC Futures Workshop hosted by the University of Minnesota Northwest Regional Sustainable Development Partnership in Warroad. Cities from the highway 11 corridor, including Badger, Warroad, and Baudette gathered in a World Cafe format for smaller group discussions, to discuss three rough categories of infrastructure:

1. Social infrastructure (social connections, institutions)
2. Natural infrastructure (ag/food systems, water and green infrastructure)
3. Built infrastructure (energy, transport, industry)

For each small group, discussion centered around:

--- **Assets, Challenges, Opportunities - Identify and explore these for each system (social, natural, built).**
--- **What is a regional strategy that might take shape in different ways in different communities?**

Upcoming Events

December Annual Commission Meeting: EGF American Legion



Are you coming to the NWRDC Annual Meeting?

LOCATION

1009 Central Ave NW, East Grand Forks, MN 56721

DATE AND TIME

12/06/25 10:00am - 12/06/25 1:00pm America/Chicago

The Annual Meeting is a great opportunity to connect with other Commission members who help guide and support our regional efforts.

I'll Be There!

Maybe

I Can't Make It

Past Events

*September Commission Meeting & Tour
9/2/2025 Red Lake Falls*



The September Commission Meeting took place in Red Lake Falls, beginning with a 4:00 p.m. tour of Voyageur's View Campground, followed by the meeting at the Red Lake Falls Community Hall. The event was well attended.



Service Spotlight:



DISCOVERY PLACE

EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Discovery Place Early Learning Center in Thief River Falls celebrated the grand opening of their second location with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and community open house on August 6th. The new location is adjacent to Valley Assisted Living and has a capacity of 156 additional childcare slots to serve the community. Future plans include inter-generational programming between the residents of Valley Assisted Living and Discovery Place students.

This was made possible by a collaboration of First Children's Finance, Discovery Place, Valley Assisted Living, Digi Key Corp., Advance Thief River, private donors, community foundations, and several local businesses and individuals who donated their time to make this project a success. NWRDC is proud to support this effort over the past three years and looks forward to their continued growth.

"Thank you to our Community Development team for their work on this project!"



From Our Team To Yours, We Would Like To Wish You Happy Holidays This Season!



Commission Membership

***Board Member **Chairperson**

Kittson County

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

Marshall County

Gary Kiesow** - Goodridge - Counties
Loren Lusignan - Grygla - Townships
Loyal Lefrooth - Grygla - Municipalities

Norman County

Darin Johnson - Halstad - Municipalities
Jesse Lee* - Ada - Counties

Pennington County

Bruce Lawrence* - Thief River Falls - Counties
Jason Bitzer - Thief River Falls - Townships
John Syvertson - Thief River Falls - School Board
Judy Jones - Goodgridge - Municipalities

Polk County

Gerald Amiot - Crookston - Public Interest
Johny Barbosa - Public Interest
Kathleen Twite - East Grand Forks - Public Interest
Keith Sistad - Fosston - Townships
Norma Campos - East Grand Forks - Public Interest
Sarah Finseth - Warren - Public Interest
Toby Strom - McIntosh - Municipalities
Warren Strandell* - East Grand Forks - Counties

Red Lake County

Anthony "Chuck" Flage* - Red Lake Falls - Counties
James DuChamp - Plummer - Municipalities
Kevin Reich - Red Lake Falls - Townships
Ronald Weiss - Red Lake Falls - Public Interest

Roseau County

Dan Fabian - Roseau - Municipalities
Daryl Wicklund* - Badger - Counties
Debra Wiskow - Greenbush - Townships
Gus Booth - Warroad - School Board

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Northwest Regional Development Commission | 109 S Minnesota Street | Warren, MN 56762 US

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