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# East Central Regional Development Commission



## *Five Year Performance Assessment*

December 2006

East Central Regional Development Commission  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

During 2006, the East Central Regional Development Commission (ECRDC) conducted a performance assessment to determine how well it had performed during the preceding 5 years. This assessment was performed as required by Minnesota Statute 462.393 Subd. 2, which states "In 2001 and every five years thereafter the commission shall review its activities and issue a report assessing its performance in fulfilling the purposes of the Regional Development Act. The report shall address whether the existence of the commission is in the public welfare and interest."

This report will include information gathered by means of a survey, analysis of the survey results, reports on accomplishments in various program areas, setbacks, and financial information for the past five years. At the conclusion of this report, we will discuss possible next steps as the East Central Regional Development Commission positions itself for the future.

The East Central Regional Development Commission sent out a total of 306 Performance Assessment Surveys during April 2006. Of the 306 surveys mailed, the Commission received 72 responses or a 23.5%. A copy of the Performance Assessment Survey and its results follow.

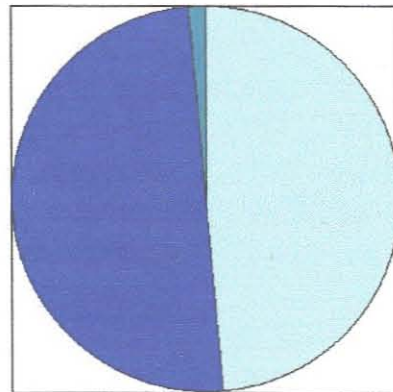
### **SATISFACTION**

The ECRDC asked its various constituencies to rate their satisfaction with the quality and quantity of assistance provided. Overall, the local units of government rated the ECRDC as successful in providing services throughout the region. The key question in this section and perhaps the key question on the survey "Do you feel the Commission is currently fulfilling its role?" was answered "yes" with 61% of the respondents indicating such. Only 22% of the respondents answered "no" indicating that they did not feel the Commission was fulfilling its role. The result of this question seems to demonstrate that the "existence of the commission is in the public welfare and interest," as required by the Regional Development Act.

### **PROGRAM PRIORITIES AND PERFORMANCE**

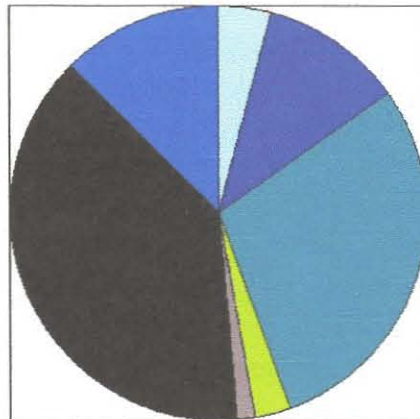
Each year the ECRDC develops an overall work program that addresses specific objectives to be accomplished during the upcoming fiscal year. Many of the objectives vary little from year to year, and reflect the ongoing operations of the ECRDC. Respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of the Commission's major work program areas and rate the performance. Below are these areas and the associated responses:

Please indicate whether you are an elected official?



Yes - 35  
 No - 36  
 No Answer - 1

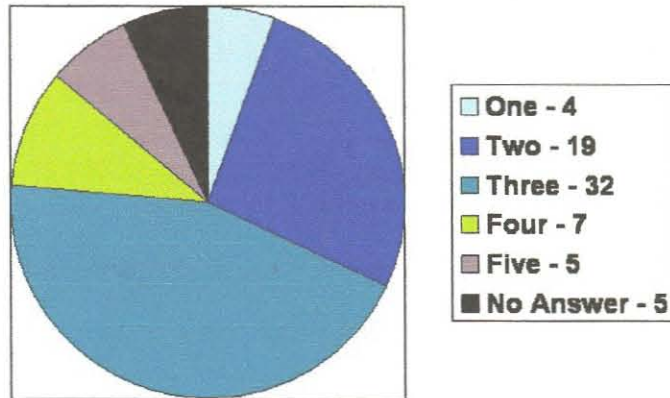
Elected office?



Mayor - 3  
 Co. Comm. - 8  
 Township Officer - 21  
 City Council - 2  
 School Board - 1  
 Not elected - 28  
 No Answer - 9

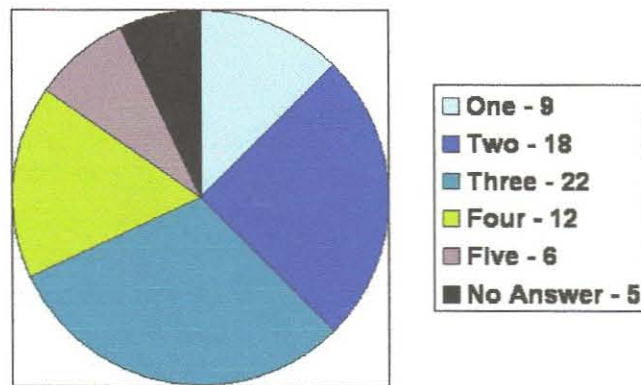
Not Elected - TAC Member, Community Member CMCOA, Committee Member, State Agency, City Planner/Zoning Admin., City Clerk, Community Dev. Director, Volunteer, Former AAA Committee Member, Arts Council Member, Work for Gov't Unit represented on Board, TAC, Community Organization, State agency staff, Chamber of Commerce, Public Interest, RLF Board Member, City Manager, Non-profit organization, Past member AAA, RLF Committee, Clerk, School Supt., City clerk/treasurer, Assisted Living Community, Partner Organization, Volunteer, Not at this time

How satisfied are most of the local governments and organizations with the amount of assistance the Commission has provided?



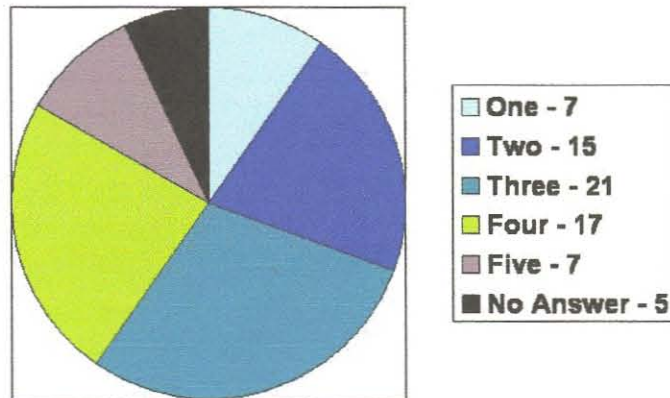
One – being very satisfied / Five - being not satisfied.

How satisfied are most of the local governments and organizations with the quality of assistance which the Commission has provided?



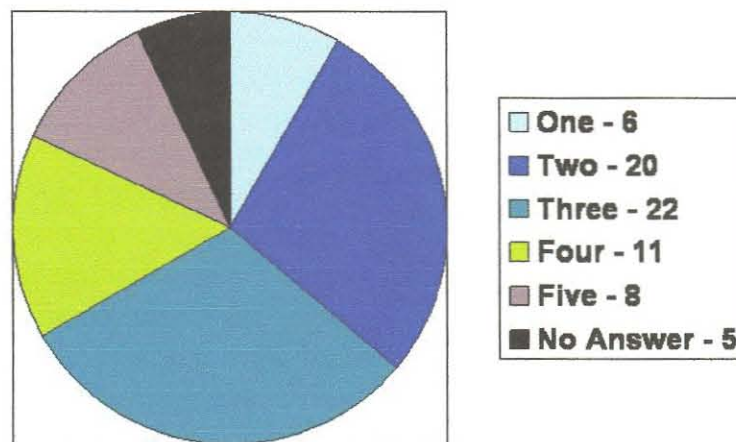
One – being very satisfied / Five - being not satisfied.

How useful has the Commission been to local units of government in helping the units carry out their functions and responsibilities?

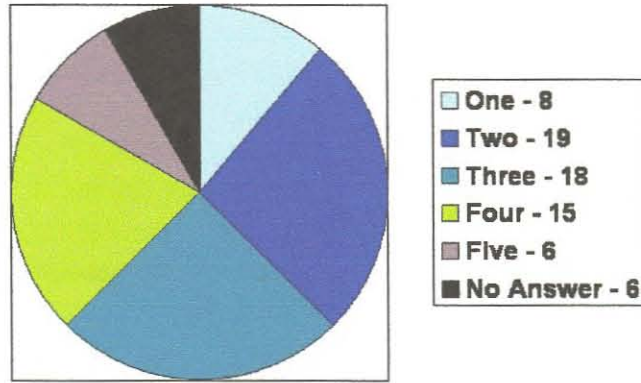


One – being very satisfied / Five - being not satisfied.

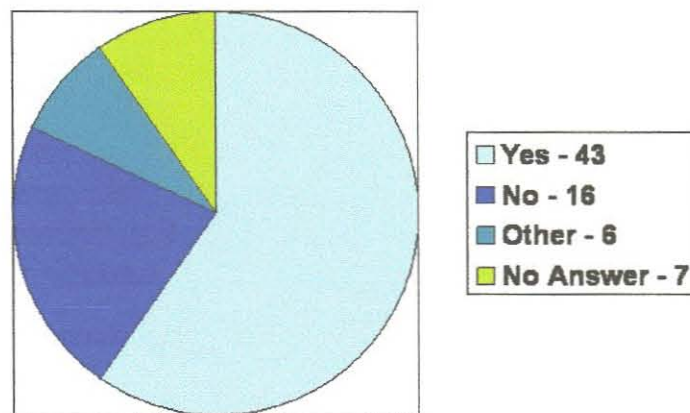
How useful has the Commission been in communicating local concerns to state and federal agencies?



How knowledgeable is the Commission concerning your local government's challenges and needs?



Do you feel that overall the Commission is currently fulfilling its role?

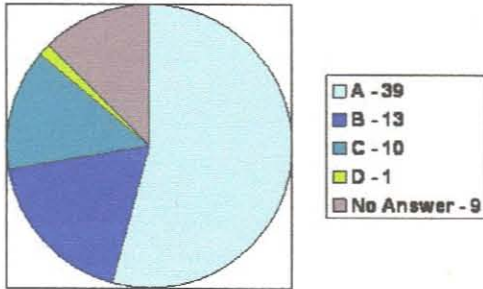


Other – Answered unknown, marked between Yes/No.



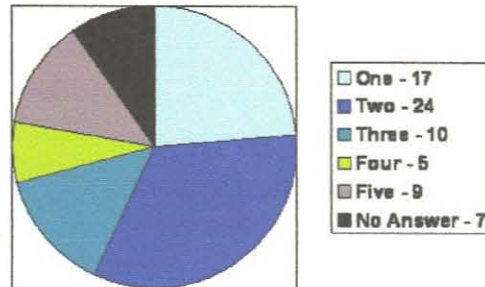
# East Central Senior Resource Center

Importance of having this program.



- A – Program is very important to the region
- B – Program is very important to particular jurisdictions
- C – Program is beneficial
- D – Program is not essential to the region

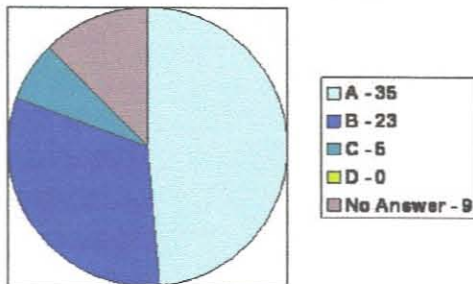
Commission performance



- 1 – RDC performing very well
- 2 – RDC performing good – room for improvement
- 3 – RDC needs significant improvement
- 4 – RDC should not attempt to perform service
- 5 – unknown or no familiarity

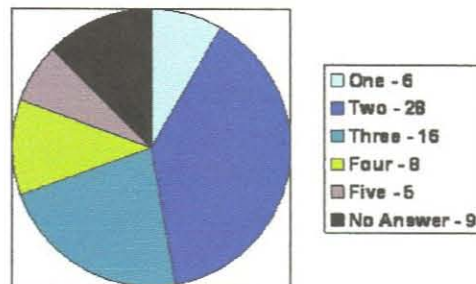
# Economic Development Program

Importance of having this program.



- A – Program is very important to the region
- B – Program is very important to particular jurisdictions
- C – Program is beneficial
- D – Program is not essential to the region

Commission performance

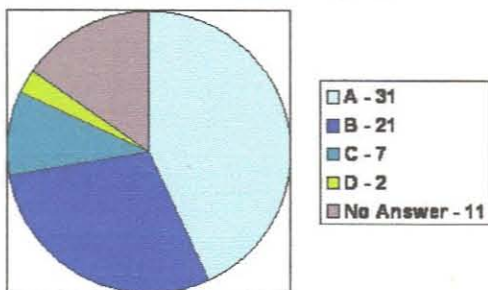


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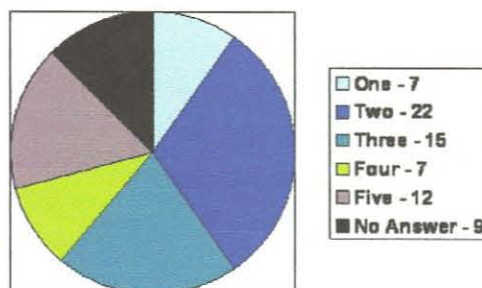
# Community Development & Planning

Importance of having this program.



- A – Program is very important to the region
- B – Program is very important to particular jurisdictions
- C – Program is beneficial
- D – Program is not essential to the region

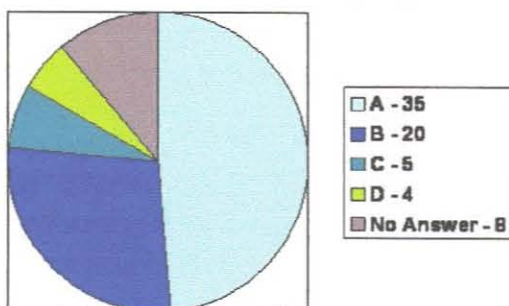
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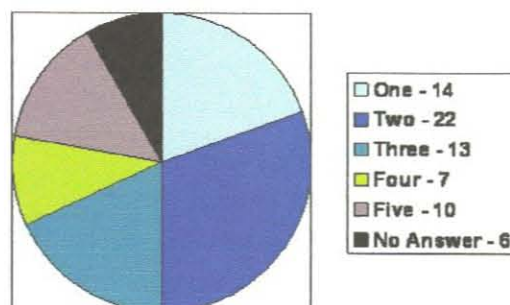
# Transportation Planning

Importance of having this program.



- A – Program is very important to the region
- B – Program is very important to particular jurisdictions
- C – Program is beneficial
- D – Program is not essential to the region

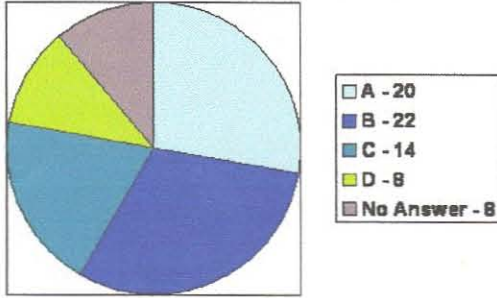
Commission performance



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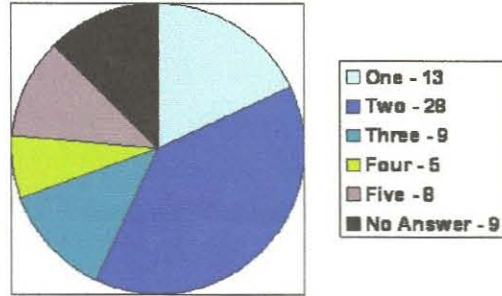
# East Central Arts Council

Importance of having this program.



- A – Program is very important to the region
- B – Program is very important to particular jurisdictions
- C – Program is beneficial
- D – Program is not essential to the region

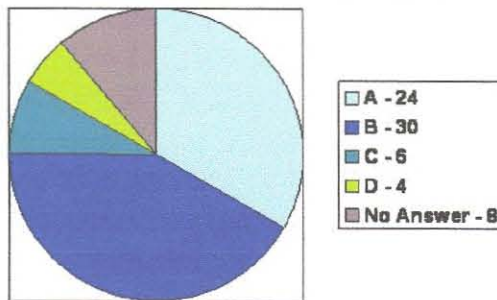
Commission performance



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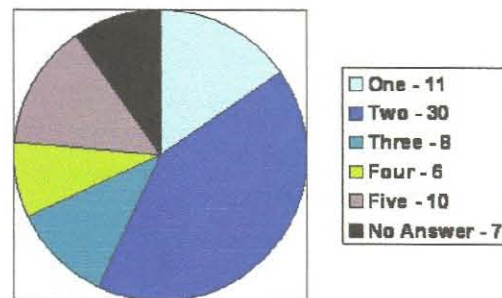
# General Information and Referral

Importance of having this program.



- A – Program is very important to the region
- B – Program is very important to particular jurisdictions
- C – Program is beneficial
- D – Program is not essential to the region

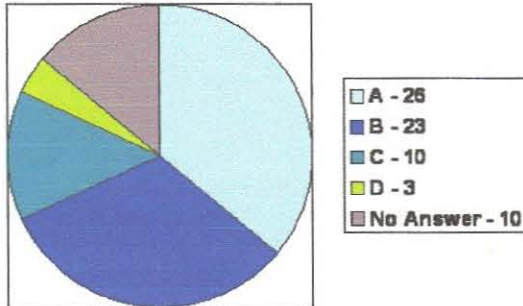
Commission performance



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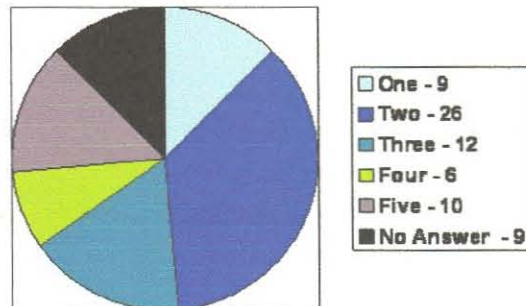
# Intergovernmental Relations

Importance of having this program.



- A – Program is very important to the region
- B – Program is very important to particular jurisdictions
- C – Program is beneficial
- D – Program is not essential to the region

Commission performance



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## PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT COMMENTS RECEIVED

At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were invited to provide written comments regarding possible changes the ECRDC might undergo to become more efficient and effective. Listed below are the comments received from the survey:

- Art is not important to a govt. It should be on its own "starving artist". Focus less on GIS, it is an important tool, but not as critical in a rural area. Transportation screening needs help. i.e. CSAH 127 in Mille Lacs. It is really a local lake rd.
- Communicate benefits, communicate progress on issues, attend local events and be more proactive on issues that affect the region.
- ECRDC has not helped our township in the 9 years I have been the clerk.
- Have more PR - articles in newspapers etc. - the expedition is great but does it go to the entire population??
- Have only used the ECRDC for help w/ zoning ordinance & comp plan. Cost was very high. Haven't sought help from Commission since that time.
- I don't believe local governments, organizations or individuals know anything about the Commission. The Commission should do a "marketing campaign" to communicate what it has to offer and its various functions. Send mailers out and/or visit with local government & organizations to communicate the Commission function.
- Lack of funding has hurt the ECRDC as well as local gov't. We need to be heard.
- Let the public know what you do. Be more Visible.
- Make more of an effort to let communities know what services are offered and available.

- Maybe ECRDC could provide reports for county commissioners, council members, township officers, and mayors to give at their meetings. ECRDC seems too detached from local units. How come Chisago County is out of revolving loan?
- My impression is positive re the functioning of the ECRDC - Avoids duplication and enables coordination/effectiveness of program. Etc.
- Please don't take this as a criticism, but I would venture a guess that if a pole were taken of various local government officials, organizational members, and private individuals, less than 50% would have heard of the Commission, with less than 10% being able to name a single function or resource the Commission provides. I am a member of the RLF and I am unable to offer a significant description of the resources the Commission has to offer. I would suggest the Commission provide regular communication through direct mail, print advertising and direct visits to provide information on the resources available to the service area. If you believe I am presenting a negative opinion of the Commission, which is not the case, just call the city halls of the communities served and ask various city representatives if they have heard of the Commission and to describe the functions the Commission offers. That is not a recommendation, it is a challenge.
- Seems like it is a niche organization funding off grants may not be needed. The question is would a tax payer want to pay for the RDC services if they could check off on a tax service list and I say for the most part would not. Bob this is just my opinion.
- The most frustration we have is the lack of stability of the Economic/Planner position.
- Under Aging Program, why is Minority and Cultural Awareness here?
- We felt we could not answer these questions to your liking because we have not had much contact with your office or received any help that we know of.
- We have never used your service.
- We have no interest or position with the ECRDC and really have no way of assessing strengths or weaknesses. Bob Sundberg, Administrator, Cambridge Health Care Center
- We have very little contact with or knowledge of the ECRDC and what it does. It would be very helpful if the ECRDC would provide information on what services they provide and what they have currently accomplished.
- We use ECRDC as a resource. We do have a JOBZ district.
- Would like RDC to become more involved in transportation matters affecting the region, i.e. development and implementation of long-range plan, corridor planning, etc. While local agendas are important politically, should not lose sight of reg. component.
- Come to our city board meetings and explain some options we can help our citizens with.
- I have only dealt with them one time on zoning in our township and was very pleased with their performance.

## **Economic Development**

The ECRDC represents Region 7E as a federally designated Economic Development District (EDD). The Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce provides planning funds to the ECRDC to work with local units of government to develop and implement a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) that addresses economic distress. Listed below are some of the activities that the ECRDC has engaged in during the past 5 years relating to economic development:

***Job Opportunity Building Zone (JOBZ) Program:*** Submitted Region 7E's application to the MN Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) for the JOBZ program. JOBZ is a State of Minnesota initiative that provides substantial tax relief to companies starting up or expanding in designated locations. The program began on January 1, 2004 and will sunset on December 31, 2015. A total of 12 cities participated with a total of 1,486 acres being awarded JOBZ status.



To date approximately half of the JOBZ acreage has been utilized with a total of six projects that includes Polaris Industries (Wyoming), Anderson Windows (North Branch), Advance Design Systems (Pine City), DAKA (Pine City), and Creative Marketing (Mora), Lake Superior Laundry (Pine City). The JOBZ effort has resulted in retaining 100 existing jobs and creating 310 new jobs in the region. The estimated annual payroll from this initiative is over \$16.7 million and with private investments totaling nearly \$38 million.

The ECRDC worked extensively with local units of government, the Northern Technology Initiative (NTI), and the Initiative Foundation on JOBZ marketing efforts. Examples have been articles in the Twin Cities Business Monthly, posting State approved signage at the entrances of the JOBZ cities, and the development of a website – [www.eastcentralmn.com](http://www.eastcentralmn.com) – dedicated to attracting JOBZ projects.

**Revolving Loan Fund (RLF):** The ECRDC operates a regional revolving loan fund established in 1994 with federal and local dollars. It offers gap financing for fixed assets and working capital for new and expanding businesses in Pine, Isanti, Kanabec, and Mille Lacs Counties. As of June 30, 2006, the fund had loan balances of \$319,175 with \$120,264 remaining available for loans. Businesses in Chisago County unfortunately are not eligible to take advantage of this program because the county is not considered distressed by federal standards.

The purpose of the RLF program is to accommodate the more risky segments of the business financing packages. Therefore, the RLF experiences a higher-than-usual delinquency and default rate. Since 2001, a total five new loans totaling \$350,000 have been made. During this same time period, only one loan balance in the amount of \$7,136 was written off because of default. The ECRDC continually struggles with following up on delinquent payments on some of its existing loans as well.

**Small Business Development Center (SBDC):** In May of 2006, the ECRDC entered into an agreement with the regional Small Business Development Center (SBDC) office located at Central Lakes College in Brainerd to operate a SBDC satellite office for the region. Services available include business planning assistance, financial analysis, and small business loan packaging. The contract is for \$35 per hour and requires a one to one match from other sources. The number of hours available for the initial contract is 335 because of a partial year but hours are expected to increase to 500 annually in coming years. Staff is exploring a number of options to offset the cost of the financial match including utility companies, area community development corporations, foundations, etc. Twelve companies have approached the ECRDC inquiring about SBDC services since May.

**Business Assistance Directory:** The ECRDC developed and maintains a database of technical and financial resources available to small businesses. This information is assembled into the East Central Business Assistance Directory and is available in a printed version or on-line at [www.ecrdc.org](http://www.ecrdc.org).

**EDA Infrastructure Grants:** The ECRDC is currently assisting the cities of Sandstone and Princeton in developing EDA Infrastructure grant applications to expand their industrial parks.

**Partnerships:** The ECRDC also partners with a number of outside organizations to further the mission of the regional economic development strategy. Examples of this include participation in the East Central Workforce Partnership (ECWFP), the Northern Technology Initiative (NTI), chambers of commerce, local economic development authorities, and the Central Minnesota Housing Partnership (CMHP).

## **Community Development**

The ECRDC has provided community planning assistance to local units of government throughout Region 7E for many years. For most of that time, the State of Minnesota, through its planning agency, made available planning assistance funding to the region. This helped provide full-time community development staffing at the ECRDC and had a great impact on encouraging local units of government to develop comprehensive land use plans for their communities by making the process affordable. The local planning assistance program was discontinued in the late 1990s due to budget constraints at the State level. This prompted the ECRDC to combine the offices of community and economic development. In 2003, the State abolished MN Planning which eliminated another valuable technical resource to the ECRDC's community planning function. Despite these setbacks, a number of projects have moved forward as time and resources permit. Since 2001, the ECRDC has accomplished community development work in the following areas:

**Comprehensive Planning:** The ECRDC assisted a number of local units of government in preparing and/or updating their comprehensive land use plans. Among them were City of Finlayson, the City of Sandstone, Knife Lake Township, and Pokegama Township. Potential future projects include land use plan updates for the City of Mora, the City of Pease, and Brunswick Township.

**Zoning Ordinance Updates:** Reviewed and updated zoning ordinances for Birch Creek Township, Pokegama Township, Knife Lake Township, and the City of Finlayson. Assisted the City of Ogilvie in developing and implementing a Shoreland Management Ordinance to cover areas of the city adjacent to the Ground House River.

**Hazard Mitigation Planning:** With funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the ECRDC assisted Kanabec, Isanti, Chisago, and Mille Lacs Counties in developing county-wide all hazard mitigation plans. An Emergency Operation plan update for the Chisago County was also accomplished.

## **East Central Arts Council**

The East Central Arts Council (ECAC) has been a program of the ECRDC since 1979 and is one of two in the State of Minnesota remaining under the auspices of a regional development commission. The mission of the ECAC is to improve the quantity and quality of arts experiences in Region 7E by facilitating the production, presentation, and dissemination of art development for arts organizations and by promoting the growth of individual artists. Funding for the ECAC programs comes primarily from a direct appropriation of the State Legislature and the McKnight Foundation.

The programs included in the ECAC do not require a financial or in-kind match contribution from other sources. In 2005, however, the ECRDC initiated a 3 year "phased-in" financial match for the ECAC to contribute an amount commensurate with the average of the financial contributions being realized by other programs of the ECRDC. This show of financial support for the program demonstrated, in part, the ECRDC's desire to continue its designation as the ECAC.

During the late 1990's the MN Legislature doubled its monetary appropriation to the arts programs in the State. This allowed the ECAC to increase available grants, staffing, and visibility of the program to include a full-time Arts Council Director. In 2004, however, the State reduced funding to the arts by nearly 30% causing the ECAC and the ECRDC to re-examine the arts program and its priorities. This cutback impacted the ECAC operations in a number of ways including the reduction of available staff hours of the Arts Council Director. In addition to lessening available dollars for grants, the funding cuts translated into reduced technical assistance for grantees, curtailment of the workshop series, and a 50% reduction in the number of application deadlines for the various grant categories. Further it became necessary to reduce and/or eliminate printing and postage costs for such things as newsletters, applications packets, etc. relying more on electronic means (i.e. internet, e-mail). The funding cuts also impacted staff travel making it difficult for staff to participate in various statewide community development initiatives to develop connections between the arts and community/economic development – ex. the Arts Council Director stepped down from the Minnesota Rural Partners board. Notwithstanding these challenges, the ECAC has had continued success in achieving a proportionate level of grant making outcomes. Below are some of the grant programs and services available through the ECAC:

***ECAC Services for Artists - Funding for these artist programs is provided by The McKnight Foundation.***

***Artist Grants & Fellowships:*** Individual Artist grants are for artists in the region wanting to expand their artistry. The Fellowship Program is designed to recognize, reward, and encourage outstanding professional artists.

***Art Scholarships for K-12 Students:*** The ECAC found that the region is flourishing with young, talented, and energetic artists deserving recognition. As a result, the ECAC, with funding through the McKnight Foundation, decided to offer these young artists a scholarship opportunity to assist their promising futures as artists. The kids experience a wide range of art activities with ECAC assistance including jazz camp, show choir camp, dance camp, theatre festivals, and visual art residencies.

***IMAGE Art Show:*** In October of 2005 the ECAC sponsored the 19th annual IMAGE Art Show hosted by Onamia Community Education and the Mille Lacs Area Community Education Consortium at the new Rolf Olsen Center in Onamia, MN. The ECAC makes an effort to move this annual event around the region for greater exposure and accessibility. Recent locations have included the Kanabec History Center, the NW Company Fur Post Interpretive Center, the Isle Recreation, Education, and Community Center, and the ECRDC Offices in Mora. Each year the Art Show and cash awards honor some of the finest art and artists in the region.



***ECAC Services for Organizations - Art In Our Schools, Small & Organization Grants are made possible with funds appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature.***

**Art In Our Schools Grants:** Schools may apply to the ECAC for art projects funding. The funds can support artist residencies, arts related field trips, or any arts focused project. Thousands of children benefit from this funding each year.

**Small Grants:** ECAC Small Grants provide funds for arts and cultural projects and are awarded on a matching funds basis. Small Grants of up to \$500 are considered. Types of projects funded have included a modern dance troupe, the Children's Theatre tour, Shakespeare Live, poetry readings, a concert series in the park, and ethnic music programs.

**Art Organization Project Grants:** This grant program awards funding for local or regional arts projects sponsored/coordinated by organizations such as non-profits or local units of government. Funds are available for a variety of arts projects that develop or enhance local arts organizations, artists, or art audiences. A wide variety of arts events have been financially assisted such as: sponsoring the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and the Continental Ballet; Lindstrom's Harmony in the Parks; Braham Pie Day; a dance residency in Sandstone; the St. Croix Valley Orchestra; mural projects; Blacklock Nature Sanctuary Region 7E Artist Retreats, and community theatre.

**Minnesota Artists On-line:** Minnesota Artists On-line ([www.mnartists.org](http://www.mnartists.org)) is an online database of MN artists from all disciplines. This tool was developed by the McKnight Foundation through a partnership with the Walker Art Center's New Media Initiative group in 1999. It offers to MN based artists a central gathering place on the web, and is an artistic market place and community hub. In addition to providing artists with a Web page containing images and information, mnartists.org provides news and features about the MN arts Scene from a variety of sources. The East Central Arts Council is a designated Regional Arts Center equipped to help an artist or art organization scan images and uploads them onto the site.

<b>ECAC Grants Awarded</b>						
<b>Grant Program</b>	<b>FY 2002</b>	<b>FY 2003</b>	<b>FY 2004</b>	<b>FY 2005</b>	<b>FY 2006</b>	<b>Total</b>
Arts Scholarships for K-12 Students	\$ 2,850	\$ 2,925	\$ 2,497	\$ 1,215	\$ 1,500	\$ 10,987
Individual Artist Grants/Fellowships	\$ 4,800	\$18,449	\$12,355	\$12,727	\$10,079	\$ 58,410
Small Grants for Organizations	\$ 3,850	\$ 5,075	\$ 2,750	\$ 4,141	\$ 3,475	\$ 19,291
Art Organization Project Grants	\$ 53,081	\$58,394	\$27,980	\$34,473	\$31,138	\$ 205,066
Art in Our Schools Grants	\$ 9,195	\$ 7,942	\$ 6,980	\$ 4,750	\$ 5,000	\$ 33,867
<b>TOTAL GRANTS AWARDED</b>	<b>\$73,776</b>	<b>\$92,785</b>	<b>\$52,562</b>	<b>\$57,306</b>	<b>\$51,192</b>	<b>\$ 327,621</b>

<b>Total ECAC Grant Project Costs by Fiscal Year</b>	
2002	\$246,877
2003	\$238,156
2004	\$ 80,364
2005	\$ 93,132
2006	\$ 89,379
<b>TOTAL 02-06</b>	<b>\$747,908</b>

## Transportation

The ECRDC contracts with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) to provide transportation planning services within Region 7E. This involves a number of activities including the solicitation and prioritization of local candidate projects for federal funds, transit planning and programming, coordination of regional Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) activities, and developing and implementing a regional transportation plan.

Region 7E is located within three Mn/DOT Districts. Kanabec, Isanti, and Mille Lacs Counties are in District 3 (Brainerd); Pine County is located in District 1 (Duluth); and Chisago County is located in the Metropolitan District. Consequently, the ECRDC is responsible for participating in three different Area Transportation Partnership (ATP) processes for prioritizing projects eligible for federal funds. Below is a table illustrating the types of local projects and the amount funded in Region 7E between the years 2002 and 2006:

### Federal Funds for Region 7E through ATP Process 2002-2006

<b>District</b>	<b>Road/Bridge (Number of Projects)</b>	<b>Transit (Number of Projects)</b>	<b>Enhancement (Number of Projects)</b>
<b>District 1</b>	\$2,601,692 (5)	0	0
<b>District 3</b>	\$6,476,773 (9)	\$384,000 (7)	\$697,000 (2)
<b>Metro District</b>	\$2,708,000 (2)	\$156,000 (2)	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,786,465 (16)</b>	<b>\$540,000 (9)</b>	<b>\$697,000 (2)</b>
<b>Total Funding Through ATP Process - \$13,023,465</b>			
<b>Total Number of Projects Funded - 27</b>			

**High Priority Projects (HPP):** In addition to the ATP process mentioned above for local projects, the ECRDC also successfully advocated for a number of large projects that received funding under the federal transportation bill. Examples of these include North Branch T.H 95 Bridge at I-35, the Soo Line Trail pedestrian bridge project at Onamia, and a new interchange on CSAH 17 over I-35 in Chisago County.

**Toward Zero Deaths (TZD):** With financial assistance from the MN Department of Public Safety in 2002, the ECRDC responded to highway safety issues in Isanti and Mille Lacs Counties by implementing the *Toward Zero Deaths* program. A number of projects have been launched including development of a billboard, student traffic safety programs, advertising at local movie theater, an impaired driving program, liquor provider partnership with courts, bars, liquor stores, restaurants and others. Local governmental officials, law enforcement, and others participate in TZD Coalition activities. Recently, a Sober Cab program was developed with Cambridge Cab. The ECRDC is exploring ways to expand the TZD program to serve other areas within Region 7E.

**Transit:** Provided technical assistance to local transit programs in the region (Mille Lacs, Chisago, and Isanti). ECRDC also participates with a district committee reviewing grant applications for vehicles for programs serving elderly and disabled.

**Special Studies, Committees, Task Forces:** The ECRDC has been and continues to be involved in a number of special studies, committees, and task forces relating to transportation including:

- Highway 8 Task Force - focuses on traffic flow and safety improvements to TH 8 in Chisago County
- TH 23/65 Corridor - participated with Mn/DOT, Kanabec County, and City of Mora to develop a long term plan to address traffic flow and safety concerns along the TH 23/65 corridor through the City of Mora
- Active Living by Design – effort to develop a trail program in Isanti County. Funding has been secured for development of a trail between Cambridge and the City of Isanti
- Cambridge-Isanti Transportation Action Committee (CITAC) – to improve traffic flow and circulation in and around the Cities of Isanti and Cambridge
- North Branch TH 95/I-35 Bridge – identify funding for a major bridge expansion on TH 95 at the Junction of I-35 in North Branch
- Pine County Airport – Participating with Pine County Committee designated to explore and consider developing an airport facility
- Toward Zero Death (TZD) Statewide Planning Committee
- I-35 Rush Line Corridor Study
- T.H. 169 Corridor Study
- Human services transit study opportunity

## **Geographic Information Systems (GIS)**

The ECRDC applied for and received a special project grant from the EDA in 1998 to establish a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) program. The grant allowed the ECRDC to purchase the necessary equipment to provide GIS services in the region. During the 7 year life of the program a number of projects were accomplished including base mapping for the Cities of Cambridge, Mora, and Wyoming. The technology was used extensively during the hazard mitigation planning projects. The ECRDC also assisted the Area Agency on Aging in plotting senior services provided in the new 14-county service area to identify locations of existing services and where gaps may exist, etc.

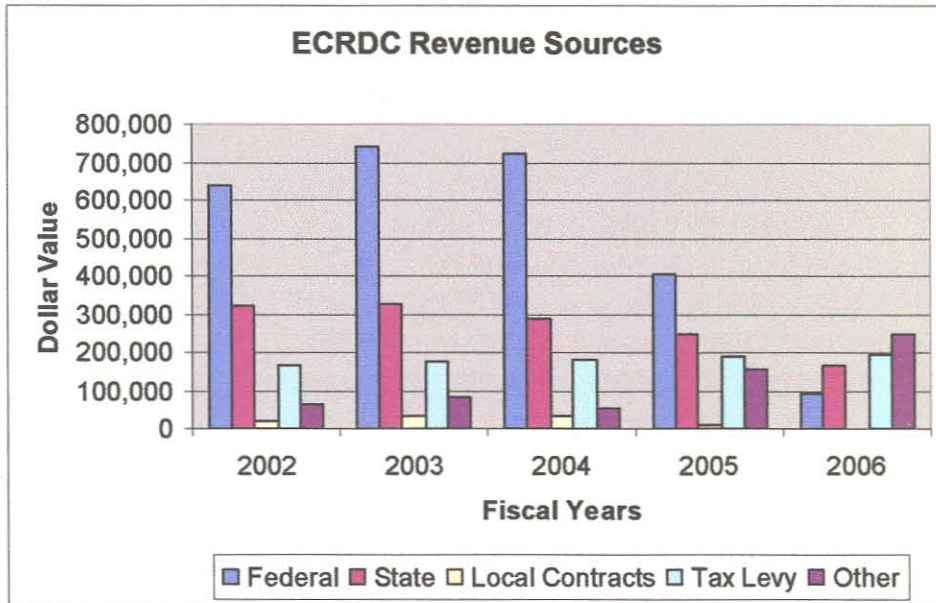
The GIS program began to struggle financially during the last few years as demand for the service diminished despite vigorous efforts to market the program to local units of government. In 2001, the ECRDC applied for and received a planning grant from the Initiative Foundation in 2001 with hopes of "jump-starting" the GIS program. Also, federal and state projects which made use of GIS technology at the regional level (i.e. Hazard Mitigation Planning) became more scarce. Most local units of governments were unable to afford GIS services as local government aid amounts stagnated or were reduced. In April 2005, the ECRDC made the decision to discontinue the program and provide GIS services by way of a partnership arrangement with the Arrowhead RDC in Duluth.

## **Area Agency on Aging**

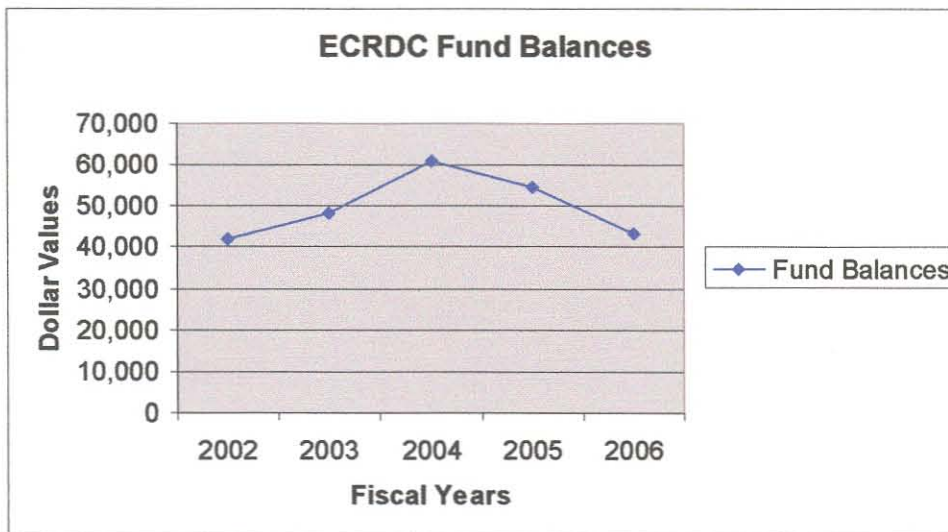
The East Central Area Agency on Aging (ECAAA) underwent a significant transformation during the past 5 years. At the urging of the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA), Area Agencies on Aging around the state were asked to develop aging services around new and larger planning and service areas. As a result, the ECRDC participated in the process of merging three separate Area Agencies on Aging (Regions 7W, 7E, and 5) into one 14 county planning and service area with a centralized administration and representative governance structure. The new structure went into existence in January 2005 and is coordinated through the Central Minnesota Council on Aging (CMCOA) located in St. Cloud, MN. The ECRDC appoints board members from each of our five counties to represent East Central Minnesota on the CMCOA Board of Directors. The administrative functions of the aging program are now managed through CMCOA. The ECRDC branded the East Central Senior Resource Center (ECSRC) in 2004.

The ECSRC continues to operate the programs that were in existence prior to the merger. For example, the Senior LinkAge Line (SLL) program, established in 2001, has grown to include two full-time staff. The SLL staff provides information and referral services on a wide range of services available to seniors. Most recently, they were actively involved in assisting seniors in signing up for the new Medicare Part D program. The SLL staff also trained 20 volunteer staff that assists in providing information and referral services. The Program Development and Coordination (PD&C) program continues to operate as well. Also, efforts are underway to develop new programs to educate and coach caregivers of seniors in the region.

## ECRDC Financial Information

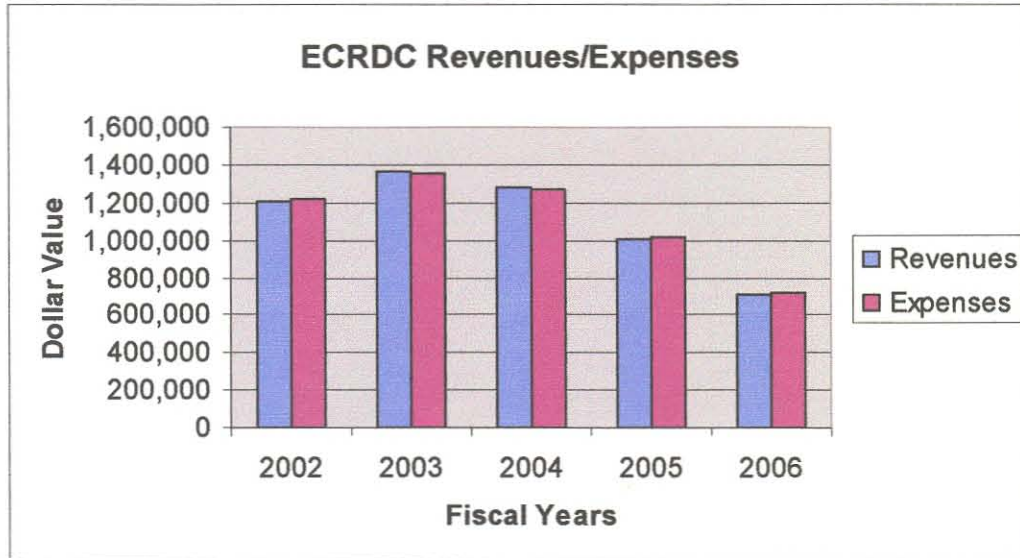


<b>ECRDC REVENUE SOURCES</b>					
	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Federal</b>	638,861	739,585	720,975	405,904	92,830
<b>State</b>	319,731	328,916	287,166	249,003	167,748
<b>Local Contracts</b>	21,731	34,457	34,208	7,526	807
<b>Tax Levy</b>	167,777	175,850	182,851	190,560	196,653
<b>Other</b>	64,404	84,338	55,852	155,063	248,371
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>1,212,504</b>	<b>1,363,146</b>	<b>1,281,052</b>	<b>1,008,056</b>	<b>706,409</b>

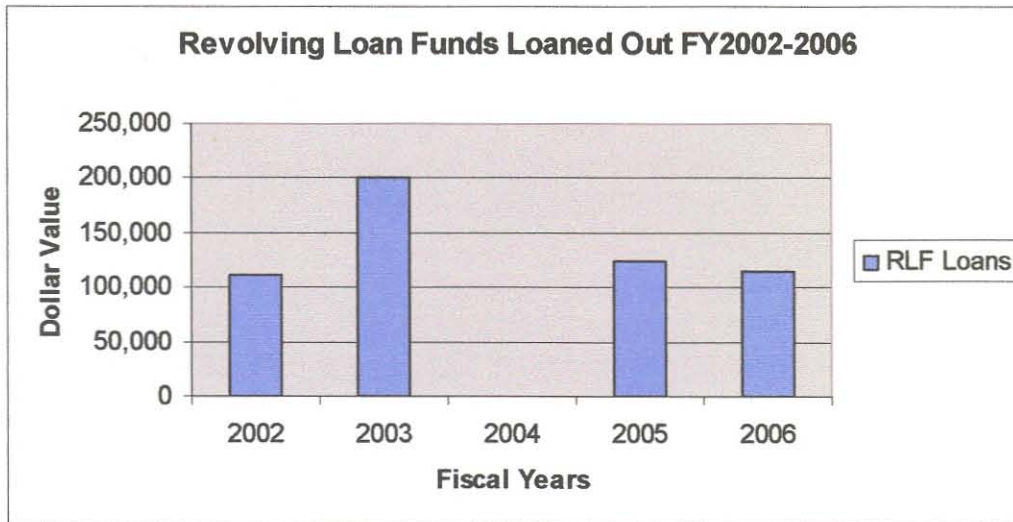


<b>ECRDC FUND BALANCES</b>					
	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Fund Balances</b>	42,097	48,462	60,839	54,516	43,522

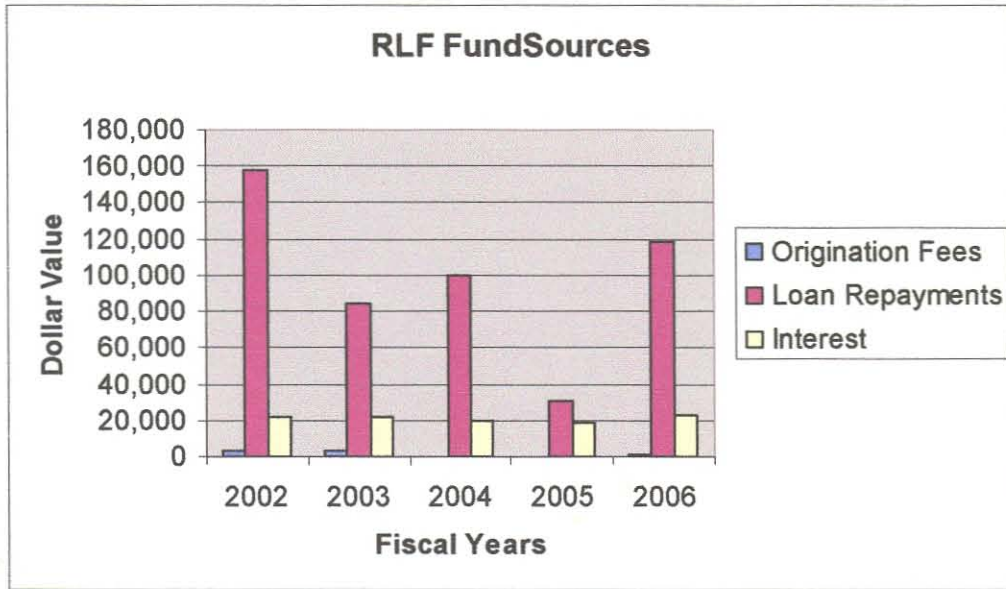




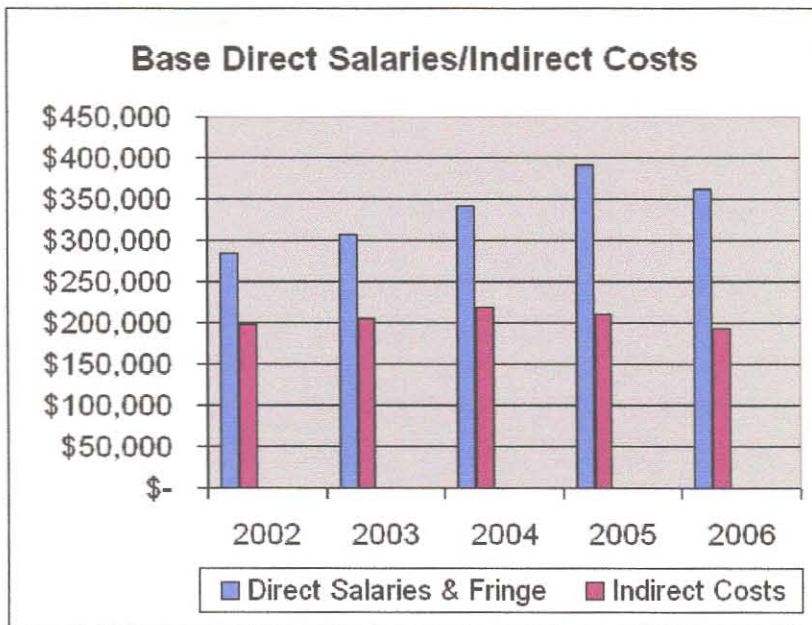
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Revenues</b>	1,212,504	1,363,146	1,281,052	1,008,056	706,409
<b>Expenses</b>	1,218,255	1,356,781	1,268,675	1,014,379	717,403



REVOLVING LOAN FUNDS LOANED OUT 2002-2006					
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>RLF Loans</b>	111,040	200,000	0	125,000	115,000



RLF FUND RESOURCES					
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Origination Fees	3,086	2,800	0	0	785
Loan Repayments	157,607	84,752	100,244	30,769	118,639
Interest	22,099	22,462	19,592	18,884	22,693



	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Direct Salaries & Fringe	\$ 284,264	\$ 307,597	\$ 341,760	\$ 391,223	\$ 362,740
Indirect Costs	\$ 198,853	\$ 204,710	\$ 218,142	\$ 210,417	\$ 193,684