

ANNUAL REPORT

06 - 0324

Calendar Year 2005

MID-MINNESOTA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

*Serving the People of Kandiyohi, McLeod,
Meeker, and Renville Counties
Since 1974.*



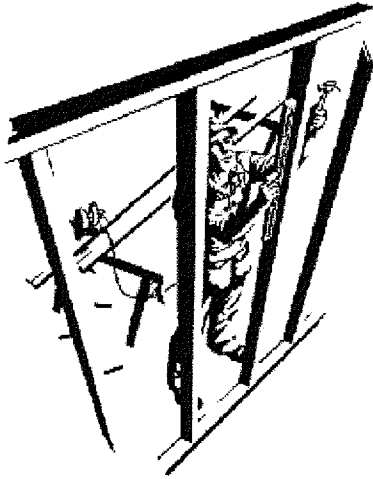
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State Certified Building Inspection Services

The Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) had two fully certified state building officials on its staff that provide in-



spection and plan review services for communities that have adopted the State Building Code during 2005. The Commission's Economic Development Director is also a fully licensed Certified Building Official. This gives the Department the added ability to use his assistance on occasions when work gets very busy. The State Building Code sets construction standards to assure the health, safety, comfort, and security of building occupants.

MMDC had contracts with 19 local units of government in providing this service during the calendar year. These jurisdictions included: in Kandiyohi County: Atwater, Blomkest, Dovre Township, Kandiyohi, New London, Pennock, and Spicer; in McLeod County: Brownton and Stewart; in Meeker County: Cosmos, Darwin, Dassel, and Grove City; in Renville County: Bird Island and Fairfax; in Wright County: Cokato and Stockholm Township; in Stearns County:

Paynesville and Richmond. The combined population for these jurisdictions served is over 20,000 persons. The Department also assisted the City of Cold Spring with commercial plan reviews and inspections.

Additional inspections are being made in the communities of Buffalo Lake, Sacred Heart, Hector, and Lake Lillian under the State Hazardous Building Act. Staff also provides accessibility inspections on occasion for Renville County.

Department staff have received training and provided service with

lead-based paint inspections and risk assessments. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations require these inspections in housing projects that they participate in. As few persons have both the training and equipment to provide this service in Southwest Minnesota, MMDC provides this service within and outside of our four-county Region. Analysis of asbestos concerns is another service the Department offers. Lastly, the Building Inspectors provide housing rehabilitation inspection services for both the Hutchinson and Willmar HRAs.

Administering the Minnesota State Building Code

Mid-Minnesota Development Commission provides inspection services and plan review services for communities that have adopted the State Building Code.

Administering the Minnesota State Building Code involves the following activities:

- Responding to questions, concerns, and other inquiries about building code requirements.
- Issuing permits, collecting fees, answering inquiries about particular Projects and related activities.
- Reviewing the building plans for compliance with applicable requirements of the Building Code.
- Carrying out the field inspections for each building project. The number of field inspections varies from a couple of field inspections to many, depending on the project. Most of the building inspectors' time is devoted to this activity. Associated activities include notifying builders of problems, arranging for corrective measures, and so on.
- Enforcement activities related to building without required permits and issues that arise when permits are not in compliance.
- Preparing reports required as part of the Building Code.

Community Development and Planning Technical Assistance

The Community Development Department is able to provide a wide array of community development, planning projects, and miscellaneous activities for local units of government. This particular program area is not tied to any State or Federally funded program, but funded through service charges that are subsidized by the use of the Commission's general fund. Consequently, the Commission primarily provides technical services where they are most needed to local units of government.

Emergency Response Cycle



Each year the staff offers assistance to local units of government on a wide range of services, including comprehensive land use plans, zoning and subdivision ordinances, ordinance codification, grant and loan writing, community surveys, public facilities planning, housing studies, and mapping projects, as well as many other technical services. As one of Minnesota's State Data Centers, the MMDC regularly provides businesses, non-

profit agencies, private citizens, and units of government data from the Census and other informational sources free of charge. Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping services are highlighted in another section of this report.

In 2005, the Commission provided a wide variety of assistance to the Region's counties and cities. One of the largest projects was the continuation of work in developing Hazard Mitigation Plans for Kandiyohi, Meeker and Renville Counties. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, passed by the United States Congress, requires that all states and counties prepare comprehensive All-Hazard Mitigation plans to identify risks and develop strategies to reduce losses. These plans are based on prioritizing the likelihood of damage to life and property from natural or technological disasters, then laying out steps to minimize those risks. In preparing these plans, staff is working with county, city and township officials, emergency managers, police chiefs, fire fighters, planners, and others. Grants were received to conduct these plans. During the year, the Commission has also submitted an application for a grant to conduct a Hazard Mitigation Plan for McLeod County. The funding decision for this grant will occur sometime in 2006.

Other principal accomplishments and activities that have been undertaken by the Community Planning/Development Department over the course of the past calendar year are highlighted below:

- The Meeker County Comprehensive Plan Update was completed, as was a Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lester Prairie. A proposal to assist the City of Litchfield with preparing a Comprehensive Plan as well as updating their zoning ordinance was approved to begin work in 2006.
- Infrastructure project assistance, including applying for grant funds was given to the cities of Lake Lillian and Blomkest.
- Assistance was given to the newly formed Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District.
- A taskforce in Renville County was assisted with preparing a Jail and Human Resource Study. A report that summarized this taskforce's final recommendations was prepared.
- The Commission assisted both Meeker and Kandiyohi Counties with six different EAWs.

The Commission also took the lead in planning and implementing a very successful Minnesota Aggregate Conference held in St. Cloud on March 30 - 31, 2005.



Economic Development Assistance and Revolving Loan Fund

The Mid-Minnesota Development Commission's economic development program is designed to assist local units of government and business in the Region with activities that create or support the creation of jobs and investment. Program activities are funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, and the local tax levy. The Commission operates a \$1.4 million Revolving Loan Fund program within the Region's four counties. Two separate advisory committees assist the Commission with the economic development activities. The first committee provides recommendations to the Commission on the priorities and goals of economic development in the Region. The second advisory committee provides review and recommendations on the Commission's Revolving Loan Fund program.

A major portion of the staff time in economic development is devoted to technical assistance and administering the Revolving Loan Fund. Businesses, individuals, and governmental units can request and receive economic development technical assistance. Requests

range from business assistance information to business finance analysis, infrastructure improvements, tax increment financing, and grant and loan writing.

The Revolving Loan Fund was established to assist businesses within the Region with gap financing. Businesses must be deemed viable and involve job creation or retention. Loans are made for working capital, land, buildings, and equipment. The amounts given out as loans range from \$5,000 to a maximum of \$100,000. The Revolving Loan Fund was originally capitalized primarily through Economic Development Administration funds, but also from funds from the four counties, the State of Minnesota, the Southwest Minnesota Foundation, and from the Mid-Minnesota Development Commission.

Economic development activities during the past fiscal year include:

- Provided technical assistance on the State of Minnesota Job Opportunity Building Zone (JOBZ) Initiative. More specific assistance was given to Winsted Township regarding JOBZ program and a manufacturing business wanting to locate within their jurisdiction.
- Continued to serve as the fiscal agency and provided technical assistance to the West Central Growth Alliance. The Alliance decided to disband its operations in March.
- Authored annual update of the Comprehensive Economic De-

velopment Strategy as required by the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA).

- Received invitation and authored Economic Development Planning Grant Application. The application was approved and funded.



- Provided ongoing grant administration assistance to Buffalo Lake regarding its tornado recovery grocery store/bakery project.
- Staff served as a co-chair of a Kandiyohi County Economic Development Partnership Revolving Loan Fund Committee.
- Staff gave a presentation to a business capital seminar for Kandiyohi County.
- Staff served on Ridgewater College's Small Business Advisory Committee.
- Approval was given to two Commission Revolving Loan Fund loans and the RLF received ongoing management.
- Staff provided technical assistance to the City of Hutchinson-Housing Redevelopment Authority for home rehabilitation efforts.

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Area Agency on Aging

The Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging (MNRAAA) is dedicated to helping older people in Southwest Minnesota, which includes Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, and Renville Counties, lead comfortable, independent lives. MNRAAA is governed by a Joint Powers Board of the four Regional Development Commissions in a 27 county region of Southwest Minnesota. The goals of the AAA are to enhance service offerings and ensure that the needs of the senior population are met. The 2005 AAA budget for MMDC is \$165,141. This budget supports program development, senior outreach specialist, health insurance counseling, and medication management assistance functions. There are two MMDC staff that work for MNRAAA. The positions are a Program Developer and Senior Outreach Specialist.

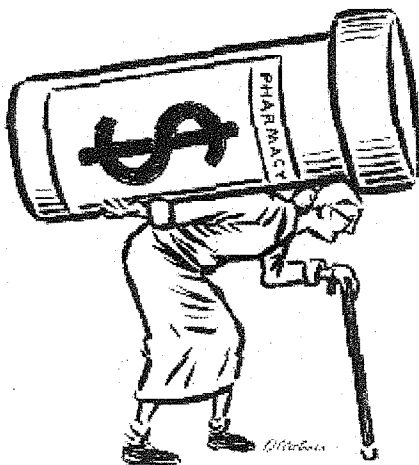
Family Caregiver Support

The Older Americans Act was reauthorized in November 1999, which resulted in new federal funding to states for the development of resources for family caregivers. Mid-Minnesota AAA received \$80,000 from the National Caregiver Support Program. The successful bidder for this program was Lutheran Social Services (LSS) of Moorhead. LSS hired Jan Novotny from Willmar as the program director for this region. The focus of the program is to develop support services for caregivers. Caregiver support groups and respite services are now available in all four counties as a result of this program. In the fourth quarter of

2004, LSS received a grant from Bremer to add a component to this program that promotes a consumer-directed option available to caregivers who are interested. An example of this option is that a family member may hire respite to be provided by a certified nursing assistant (CNA). In this case, the family acts as the employer; and the CNA is a subcontractor.

Long Term Care Activities

Minnesota's goal to re-balance long-term care continues to be a pri-



mary focus for the Minnesota Board on Aging and the Area Agencies on Aging. The development of services that support people who wish to remain in their own homes if they choose continues to be a priority for policymakers. The Gaps Analysis conducted in 2001 was updated by counties in 2003 and focused on housing. Additionally, the Regional Analysis conducted in December 2002 identified overall aging population characteristics for the region. In general, it was found that services rated as high priority included transportation, and services that foster independence for persons choosing to remain in their homes.

Other AAA Activities

Staff also provides a wide variety of technical assistance to various aging organizations and causes. Some of the activities of the past calendar year include:

- Conducted numerous Medicare Part D information sessions throughout the region for both consumers and professionals. Assisted 290 people with medication plan comparisons.
- Volunteers provided 566 hours between October and December for Part D assistance.
- Facilitated local White House Conference on Aging event in conjunction with National White House Conference on Aging. Event focus to identify national reforms.
- Made numerous presentations about AAA services including information on health insurance counseling topics such as Medicare Approved Drug Discount Cards and Senior LinkAge Line®.
- Participated in the Life Connections Expo and other area Senior Health Fairs.
- Participated in the Medicare FYI Robert Wood Johnson Medicare Savings Programs.
- Participated on the Advisory Committee of the West Central Integration Collaborative.
- Co-sponsored 4th Annual Caregiver Event held in Willmar, October 2005.

(Continued on page 8)

Transportation Planning

The Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) receives an annual grant from the Minnesota Department of Transportation, matched with the local tax levy, to provide transportation planning services within the Region's four counties and to participate in the South-west Minnesota Area Transportation

Partnership (ATP) process. The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) makes recommendations to the Commission on these transportation activities.

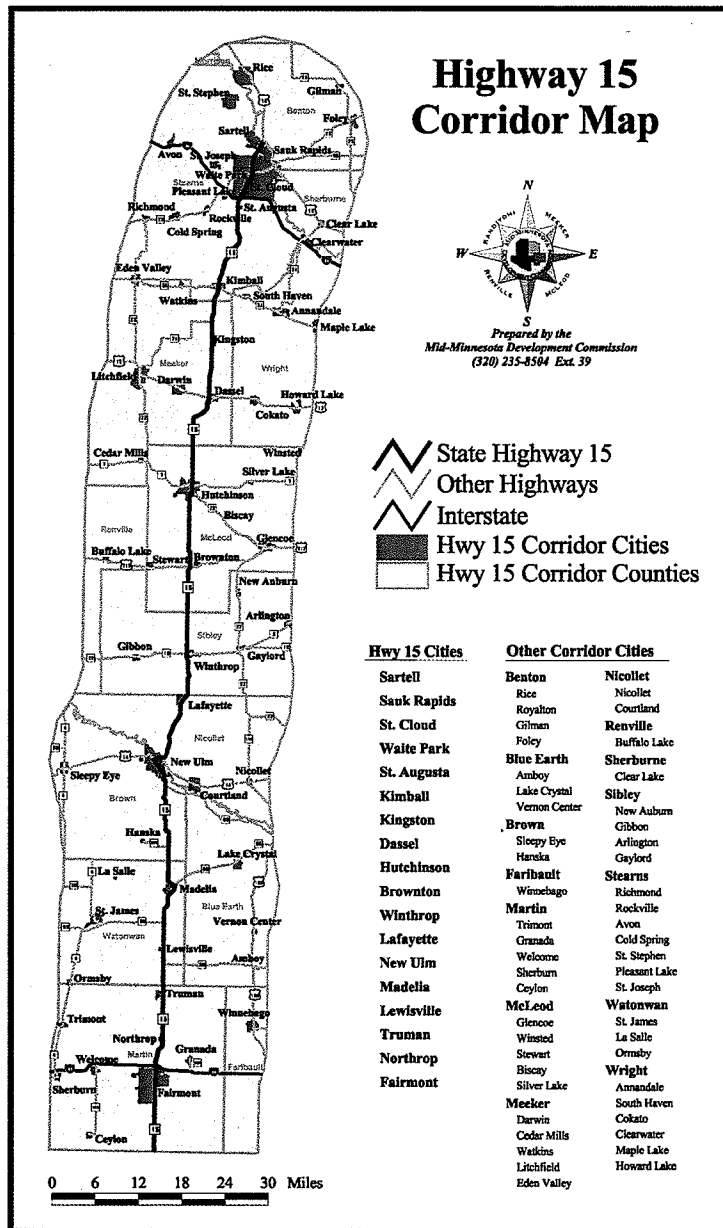
The Commission annually participates in the Area Transportation Partnership's decision-making process of which projects receive Federal funding

through the State's Transportation Improvement Program. MMDC's voting members on the ATP are Sheldon Nies and Ron Kutzke. The TAC scores projects based on their "regional significance" as part of the ATP's project ranking process. The Commission also holds an annual public informational meeting on the proposed Area Transportation Improvement Program. Staff provides assistance for these activities as well as serving on an ATP Committee that makes Enhancement Project funding recommendations.

The Commission has provided assistance to the Highway 15 Coalition. The new Coalition was formed, with MMDC assistance, to work towards raising awareness of the access, safety, and capacity challenges facing the Highway 15 Corridor. In 2005, much of the work that was done was working on getting the Coalition up and running. One of the primary first goals of the Coalition is to seek a Congressional allocation of dollars to be able to conduct a corridor study to identify specific safety and access needs along the corridor.

Kandiyohi County is conducting a roadway jurisdictional study to be completed in 2006. The Commission is assisting the county with this study. The project involves the examination of each roadway segment and objectively determining which level of jurisdiction should logically own and maintain it. Roadway significance, tax capacity, and spacing, among other variables, are all being examined to make the determinations.

Another major transportation project that has begun in 2005 and will be completed in 2006 is Meeker County's Pedestrian and Bicycle Trail Plan. Staff is assisting the Meeker County Trails Committee in preparing this plan. The plan sets in place goals, policies, and implementation steps for future trails. Major trail corridors are identified as an ideal countywide future trail network to work towards. In addition, the plan is also intended to provide guidance to those groups and localities



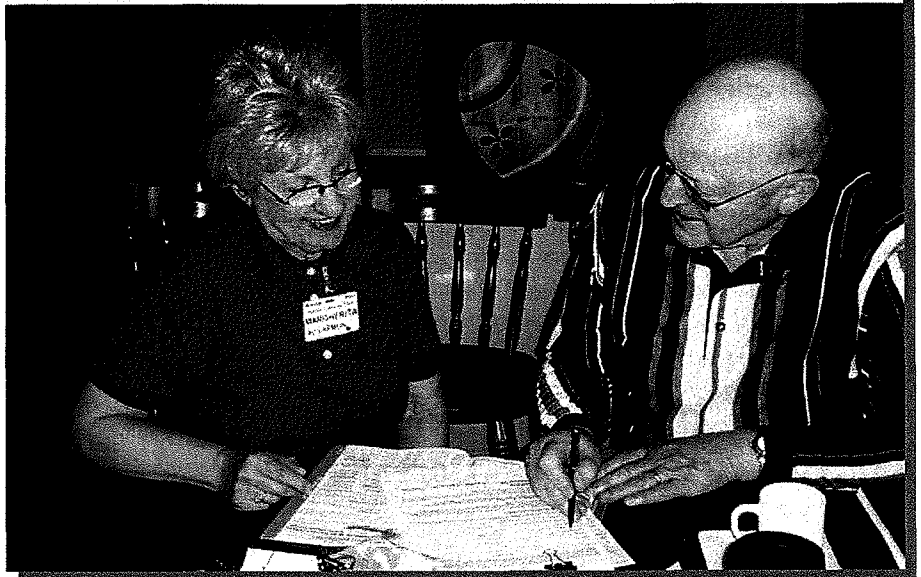
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Area Agency on Aging

- Provided grant writing assistance for Community Service Development grants to various organizations.
- Secured Alzheimer's Demonstration Grant for region; focus on consumer directed model of service.
- Facilitated Eldercare Development Partnership Long Term Care Coordinating Council for 13 counties. Goals focused on supporting community development of services to support elderly persons living independently.
- Established a Memorandum of Understanding with Rice Memorial Hospital Health Insurance Counseling Program to share volunteer and training activities.
- Established Health Insurance Counseling Program sites at Willmar Senior Center and Hutchinson Event Center.

The AAA has an advisory council composed of eleven possible representative consumers and organizations chaired by Richard Brooks of rural Darwin. The advisory council meets up to seven times per year and has a primary responsibility of establishing priorities and reviewing and recommending projects for funding. In 2005, MNRAAA established a Funding Task Force comprised of Advisory Council members representative of the four RDCs. This committee reviewed applications, conducted interviews, and made final project awards to the Joint Powers Board. Although priorities and projects change, the following list of priority areas and projects funded during cal-

Health Insurance Counseling Volunteer Jim Schnell assists a client with Medicare Part D options at the Willmar Senior Center.



endar year 2005 is representative of a typical year:

Transportation: Meeker, Kandiyohi, and Renville Counties

Legal Services/Education: Western Minnesota Legal Services

Congregate Dining and Home Delivered Meals: Nutrition Services, Inc. (NSI) provides both congregate and home delivered meal service.

Respite Care/Living at Home Block Nurse Program: Counties of Kandiyohi, McLeod, and Meeker (Lutheran Social Services, Grove City CARE)

Medication Management: Minnesota River AAA direct service Regions 6E, 6W, and 8

EDP—ElderCare Development Partnership, formerly known as SAIL (Seniors Agenda for Independent Living) MMDC receives state funds from Region Nine AAA to address housing with services needs in the

region. MMDC contracts a portion of the funds to Schneider Consulting Services, Inc. to implement this strategy. A primary activity of this funding is to provide technical assistance to agencies seeking Community Service Development Grants from the Minnesota Department of Human Services, or other funding sources.

Minnesota River AAA Joint Powers Board

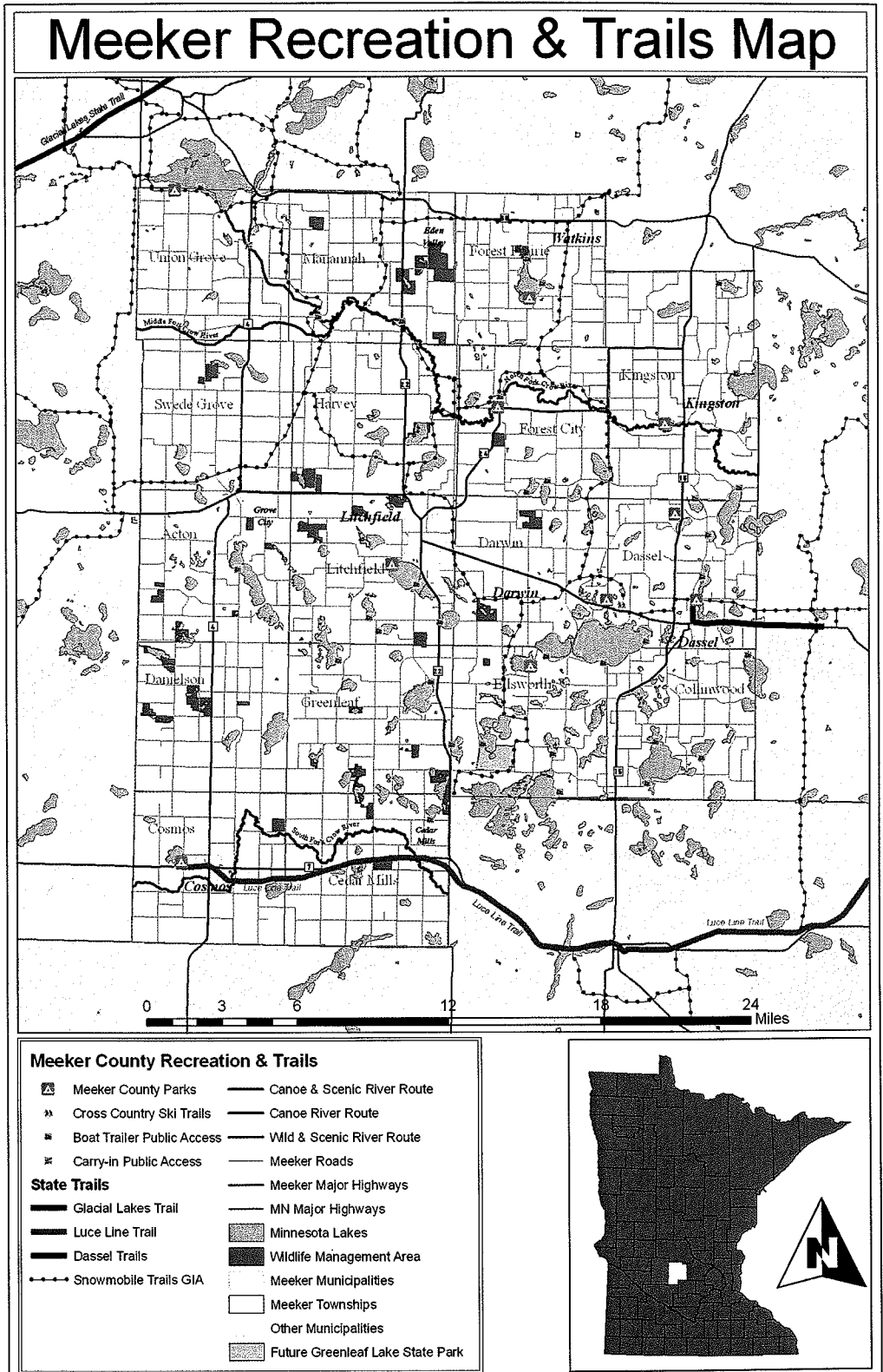
Established September 2004, with the signing of the Joint Powers Board Interagency Agreement. The objective of this agreement was to serve as the legal entity effective January 1, 2005 for the anticipated new AAA. The MNRAAA Joint Powers Board was in full operation during calendar year 2005 with DuWayne Underthun as the Chairperson. Richard Brooks and Dorothy Lindstrom also served as voting members. Marilyn Schafer was appointed as a non-voting member and represented the Advisory Council. Underthun and Schafers' terms terminated December 31, 2005.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

MMDC has been providing GIS mapping services since 1996. In 2005, MMDC hired its second full time GIS staff person to keep pace with the demand for these Commission services. Through the years of operation, the Commission has always provided a means of assisting clientele with their mapping needs. Since that time the Commission has made over 500 specialty maps for a variety of clients. By moving into GIS, the Commission offers a much more sophisticated level of computer map-making that is tied to databases. Not only can staff quickly and easily update maps, but they can use the software program to make in-depth analysis on a variety of topics. GIS is a "computer-based tool for mapping and analyzing things that exist and events that happen on earth. GIS technology integrates common database operations such as query and statistical analysis with the unique visualization and geographic analysis benefits offered by maps." (ESRI)

GIS has become widely used in recent years. There are limitless applications for where and how it can be used. Major areas of application include: urban planning, zoning, plan reviews, transportation planning, environmental impact and management analysis, vehicle routing, public facilities management, and business location analysis to name just a few.

(Continued on page 10)



(Continued from page 5)
Economic Development Assistance

- Staff served as an ex-officio member of Kandiyohi County Economic Development Partnership Operations Board.
- Staff prepared a successful grant application to the Minnesota Historical Society for the City of Litchfield's historic Opera House to stabilize the structure to prevent any further deterioration.
- Staff prepared a marketing plan for the new Willmar Regional Airport.

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Geographic Information Systems

The Commission has purchased software that will allow staff to set up internet mapping within the Region. The ability to publish spatial data and maps to the internet allows MMDC and each county in the Region to create dynamic web sites reflecting certain mapping purposes.

In 2005, staff wrote and received a \$3,750 grant to complete metadata documentation for many of the Commission's data sets and to provide training in each of the four counties on how to create the metadata for datasets GIS users have. "Metadata makes spatial information more useful to all types of users by making it easier to document and locate data sets. The growing availability of data of all kinds from many different sources has helped GIS technology become more useful and widely adopted. With metadata support, data producers can publish information about data, and data consumers can search for the data they need." (ESRI)

From two Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) grants the Commission helped receive in 2004, staff have digi-

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Transportation Planning

interested in pursuing the construction of a new trail or the expansion of an existing trail.

Commission staff was also active in the following transportation activities during the 2005 Calendar Year:

- Serving as a member of the Kandiyohi Area Transit (KAT) Operation Committee.
- Working with Mn/DOT to process functional classification changes on a case-by-case

basis.

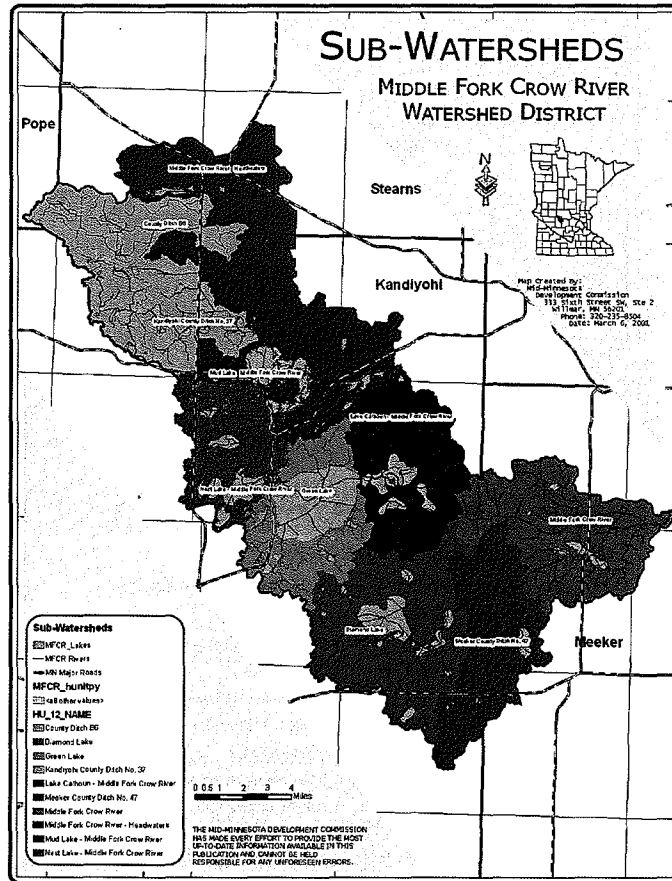
- Preparing comprehensive plans that include transportation components and issues.
- Attending RDC Transportation Planners meetings during the past year. These quarterly meetings allow the planners to share information and coordinate planning efforts.
- Participating in this past year's ATP Enhancement Committee project review process.

tized all the drainage ditches in Meeker County and Kandiyohi County during 2005. Another \$25,000 BWSR Challenge grant was written by staff successfully for Renville County in 2005 for digitizing both the surface and subsurface ditches within the county. Initial stages of this project began in December of 2005.

MMDC started working in 2005 with both Meeker County and Pipestone County with creating county parcel maps. These county parcel map projects are very time consuming endeavors.

Staff has assisted the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District in creating their legal boundary and the parcels included in the district. The watershed needs to define their legal boundary so they can move ahead in getting funds from taxes applied to the district. This undertaking was a shared project with the Auditors of the four counties the watershed district is part of.

In addition to these projects, GIS staff have created a variety of maps for projects MMDC worked on. In particular, a number of maps have been created for EAW projects and Hazard Mitigation Plan maps.



Fiscal Report

- Recap - Revenue and Expenditure Fiscal Year 2005

Revenues	
FEDERAL	\$ 401,484
Economic Development Administration	\$ 49,796
HHS – Area Agency on Aging	241,141
Department of Employment & Economic Development	<u>110,547</u>
STATE	\$ 180,052
Agricultural Credit	\$ 20,889
Department of Transportation	50,000
State Nutrition	81,532
State LTC/SLL I&A	16,721
Department of Employment & Economic Development—EBL	<u>10,910</u>
LOCAL	\$ 776,328
Property Taxes	\$ 205,475
Interest Earnings	8,230
In-kind	25,746
Building Inspections	317,601
Revolving Loan Fund – Administration	30,617
Small Cities Repayment Monies	3,193
Technical Assistance Contracts/ Miscellaneous	91,237
Other	<u>94,229</u>
TOTAL REVENUES	<u>\$1,357,864</u>

Expenditures	
PERSONAL SERVICES	\$ 571,268
SUPPLIES & PRINTING	10,868
COMMUNICATIONS	19,952
DIRECT CONTRACTS	299,103
SERVICES	65,746
TRAVEL & TRAINING	73,321
COMMISSION	16,588
INDIRECT	189,148
IN-KIND	25,746
CAPITAL OUTLAY	7,223
VOLUNTEERS AND OTHER USES	5,050
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>\$1,284,013</u>

- Recap - Current Budget Fiscal Year 2006

Revenues	
FEDERAL	\$ 139,241
Economic Development Administration	\$ 52,628
HHS – Area Agency on Aging	<u>86,613</u>
STATE	\$ 76,624
Agricultural Credit	\$ 21,032
Department of Transportation	50,000
State LTC/SLL I&A	<u>5,592</u>
LOCAL	\$ 885,241
Property Taxes	\$ 212,054
Interest Earnings	1,250
In-kind	21,610
Building Inspections	324,400
Revolving Loan Fund – Administration	30,542
Technical Assistance Contracts	223,412
Other	<u>71,973</u>
TOTAL REVENUES	<u>\$1,101,106</u>

Expenditures	
PERSONAL SERVICES	\$ 631,541
SUPPLIES & PRINTING	10,281
COMMUNICATIONS	22,205
DIRECT CONTRACTS	-0-
SERVICES	8,597
TRAVEL & TRAINING	54,350
COMMISSION	18,002
INDIRECT	214,805
IN-KIND	21,610
CAPITAL OUTLAY	12,820
VOLUNTEERS AND OTHER USES	4,810
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>\$ 999,021</u>

Mid-Minnesota Development Commission

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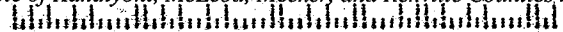
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Commission Members

Kandiyohi County Representatives

DuWayne Underthun, Chairperson..... Townships
Les Heitke..... City of Willmar
Dennis Peterson..... County
Charly Leuze..... Public Interest
Shawn Mueske..... Public Interest

McLeod County Representatives

Bill Schaeve..... Townships
Charles Warner..... Municipalities
Bill Arndt..... City of Hutchinson
Sheldon Nies..... County

Meeker County Representatives

Archie Peters..... Townships
Vernon Madson..... Municipalities
Ron Kutzke..... County
Sherron Reilly..... Public Interest
Richard Brooks, Vice-Chairperson..... Public Interest
Dorothy Lindstrom, Treasurer..... Public Interest

Renville County Representatives

Delbert Wetzel..... Townships
Ronald Degner, Secretary..... Municipalities
John Stahl..... County
Richard Loftness..... Public Interest
James Schafer..... Public Interest
Francis Schweiss..... Public Interest
Ken Anderson..... Public Interest

Commission Staff

Executive Director..... Donn Winckler
Office Manager..... Kristen Rosenboom
Financial Director..... Sue Gimse
Aging Program Director..... Kate Selseth
Senior Outreach Specialist..... Taryn Sietsema
Economic Development Director..... Les Nelson
Community Development Director..... Matthew Johnson
GIS Planner..... Rick Moore
GIS Planner..... Natalie Hayenga
Planning & Administrative Assistant..... Kim Hawkenson
SCDP Grants Administrator/
Building Inspector..... Bernard "Butch" Schulte
Building Inspector..... Jim Solheid

