



## Annual Report | 2010



# LETTER FROM THE COMMISSION CHAIR & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Welcome

Region Nine Development Commission (RNDC) is pleased to present its 2010 annual report. This report represents the efforts of local elected officials who serve as the board of RNDC and staff over the course of the past 12 months. Information presented in this report illuminates the activities and resources used throughout the region to make a difference in the lives of youth, families, seniors, workers, businesses, non-profits, governments and citizens at large.

The nine county area covered by Region Nine experienced increased unemployment, business shut-downs, floods, and cut-backs in government funding to local communities. While being confronted by those challenges RNDC has been engaged in the South-Central Economic Growth Collaborative, Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging (27 counties collaborative), Southern Minnesota Competiveness Grant, Highway 169 Corridor Coalition, Renewable Energy Task Force, Brown County Economic Collaborative, Fiscal Hardship and many other collaborative efforts as a means of operating differently during these challenging times. The ability, willingness, foresight and courage to operate in different ways is one aspect of the road map toward Region Nine prospering in a new world.

Over the past 12 months RNDC has consciously helped sound the alarm for addressing regional challenges in a systematic way, but more importantly it has committed its efforts to trying to be part of the solution needed to address the challenges. This report illuminates stories in the areas of transportation, aging,

business development, community development and economic development where RNDC has worked to help others create solutions.

Beyond the stories of helping veterans live at home, communities access resources to better serve their downtown businesses and citizens participate in redesigning their government; this report articulates RNDC budget stability. RNDC closed the 2010 financial book within 2% of its budget. RNDC accessed some additional funds for veteran services, transit coordination and hazard mitigation. However, much of the funding for these programs will be expended in the 2011 fiscal year. Nevertheless, RNDC has had a successful year of seeking better and more creative ways of doing business, while holding down its financial expenditures or living within its means.

RNDC will continue the efforts started this past year in the upcoming 12 months. If RNDC can lead by example and assist others with finding better ways of doing business in a new world then the region will be better positioned to prosper for years to come. We hope you enjoy reading the Region Nine Development Commission's 2010 Annual Report.

Respectfully yours,

**Timothy Strand,**  
Commission Chair

**Reginald M. Edwards,**  
Executive Director

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## AREA AGENCY ON AGING

### Return to Community Initiative

#### What is the Return to Community Initiative?

A new initiative that includes federal and state long-term care rebalancing efforts, known as Return to Community, passed during the 2009 Minnesota Legislative session. The initiative is targeted to nursing home residents who express a desire to return to the community and/or have a support person to assist with their transition from the nursing home to the community. It is a comprehensive initiative across multiple programs of the Minnesota Department of Human Services Continuing Care Administration in partnership with the federally designated Aging and Disability Resource Center initiative, known as the MinnesotaHelp Network™ which is administered by the Minnesota Board on Aging.

#### Who is the focus of Return to Community?

Return to Community is targeted to nursing home residents who:

- Are early in their nursing home stay (90 days or less from admission)
- Have the desire and/or support to return to the community
- Fit a community discharge profile that indicates a high probability of community discharge; and
- Would otherwise become long stay residents

#### Who provides the Return to Community service?

Return to Community is an evidence based, consumer driven service provided locally by MinnesotaHelp Network™ Community Living Specialists. The specialists are part of the network that includes the Minnesota Board on Aging Senior LinkAge Line® and [www.MinnesotaHelp.info](http://www.MinnesotaHelp.info). Both are part of the broader MinnesotaHelp Network™ which is the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) model for Minnesota that also includes the Disability Linkage Line®, Veterans Linkage Line™, and other community based partners.

Each Area Agency on Aging has a dedicated Community Living Specialist. For the counties served by the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc. (AAA) the Community Living Specialist is Heather Lincoln. Heather is a licensed Social Worker with experience working with older adults in long-term care settings.

MinnesotaHelp Network™ Community Living Specialists target private pay residents of nursing homes to avoid duplication of services already being completed by counties and managed care organizations.

MinnesotaHelp Network™ Community Living Specialists assist nursing home residents with transitioning from the nursing home to the community. They provide intensive support activities including: long-term care options counseling; evaluation; support planning; and service coordination. A unique feature of the Return to Community initiative is that follow-up assessments will be conducted for up to five years in order to track the status of individuals who are transitioned from the nursing home to the community.

If you have any questions about the Return to Community initiative, please contact the Senior LinkAge Line® at 1-800-333-2433.

### Veteran Directed Home & Community Based Services

(VD-HCBS) program is for Veterans of any age that are enrolled in the Sioux Falls Veterans Administration Medical Center, need nursing facility level of care, and live in one of the following counties: Cottonwood, Jackson, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Rock or Yellow Medicine. VD-HCBS is a flexible service option that offers special funds to qualified Veterans so that they can directly buy the services and support they determine they need. It provides flexibility and choice and gives control and responsibility to the Veteran. The Veteran decides what help they need, when they need it and who provides it. Veterans can hire people they know and trust (such as family, friends or neighbors) to provide the care. In 2010, 5 Veterans utilized VD-HCBS. VD-HCBS is a partnership between the Veterans Health Administration, Minnesota Board on Aging and the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc.



## COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### South Central Minnesota Regional Energy Study

One of Region Nine Development Commission's (RNDC) strategic priorities is to position the region at the forefront of the renewable energy industry. To meet this priority, RNDC has advanced a number of energy initiatives throughout the region. However, as various projects advanced, it became apparent that there existed a need for specific information concerning the region's current energy consumption patterns and the region's potential for renewable energy generation. To fill this need, RNDC sought and received funding from the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation and the Clean Energy Resource Teams to complete a regional energy study.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the South Central Minnesota Regional Energy Study is to assess the energy consumption and the renewable energy potential within the region. In addition, the region's annual carbon dioxide emissions, or carbon footprint, and the annual amount of money spent on energy were also calculated. The study is envisioned to aid entrepreneurs and planners in the development of the renewable energy industry, as well as the regional economy as a whole.

#### What is Included in the Report

The inventory portion of the study relied on the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute's (AURI) Template for Estimating County Level Energy Use and Renewable Energy Potential. The template consisted of a pre-formatted Microsoft Excel spreadsheet containing the formulas necessary to calculate energy use and consumption. The template also contained a written guide, which instructs the user on where to obtain the correct data to populate the spreadsheet, which cells to enter the data into, and how to read the results. The primary data sources were the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Once the use and potential estimates were identified, they were then used to calculate the region's carbon dioxide emissions and annual energy costs using a methodology designed by RNDC.

#### Status of Report

The study was completed in December of 2010. The final report will be released in summer 2011. The report is divided into two parts. Part I will outline the study's background, setting and methodology, and will include both regional and county level summaries. Part II will contain all of the formulas, calculations and estimates prepared as part of the study. The posting of the final report will be accompanied by a press release. The intent is to use the report to stimulate a series of discussions throughout the community regarding the region's renewable energy industry and its affect on the regional economy.

If you are interested in this study please contact Region Nine at 507-389-8863.



## TRANSPORTATION

### U.S. Highway 169 Corridor Coalition

From Mankato to Interstate 694, the U.S. Highway 169 (US-169) corridor plays a key role in moving goods produced in south-central and southwestern Minnesota to regional and international markets. This major freight route accesses principal highways, rail lines and the largest intermodal inland waterway grain facility in the upper Midwest (the Ports of Savage). In the last two decades, the highway has also grown in importance as a corridor for commuter traffic.

For US-169 to remain a viable, efficient conduit in the movement of goods and people, congestion in the corridor must be successfully addressed. Increases in traffic have resulted in longer, more hazardous travel times. This, in turn, has a negative effect on the corridor's ability to connect with other parts of the state and the region, as well as to national and international markets. Maintaining the viability and efficiency of the corridor mandates a long-term commitment to a series of improvements designed to enhance the flow of traffic, both commuter and commercial, along this increasingly congested highway system.

#### Enter the U.S. Highway 169 Corridor Coalition

While the coalition was organized in 2009, the real work of the coalition began in 2010. The mission of the coalition, "Working together to enhance safety, reduce congestion and maximize economic development along the US Highway 169 interregional corridor", is evident in the projects that have been identified along the corridor.

By working together, this group of cities, counties, and private businesses have efficiently and effectively used their expertise and dollars to their maximum potential. An example of this is the recent success by the coalition is garnering funds for the Highway 169/494 interchange.

The US-169/I-494 interchange is one of the most significant bottlenecks in the southwest metro resulting in higher than average crash and severity rates and significant daily motorist delay.

#### Prioritizing Projects

The redesign and reconstruction of this interchange has been in and out of Mn/DOT's plan for years as priorities shifted due to decreasing funding levels. However, the coalition relentlessly advocated the need to prioritize this critical improvement project and as a result the project was elevated as a major metropolitan transportation improvement with dedicated funding. The redesign is in process and the procurement for construction is expected in the Fall of 2010. Construction is expected to begin in the Spring of 2011.

#### Role of Region Nine Development Commission

Region Nine Development Commission has been an active member in the U.S. Highway 169 Corridor Coalition from the beginning. Improvements such as the 169/494 interchange are important to the Region Nine area. The thirteen counties that make up Mn/DOT District 7 (Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Nobles, Rock, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan counties) produce 1/3 of the state's corn and soybean crop, 1/2 of the state's total hog production, and 1/2 of Minnesota's ethanol. 89% of these commodities are transported by truck. Improving our interregional corridors is important to maintaining our economic viability.

Participating in the coalition affords the region a great opportunity to partner with other units of government along the corridor, to share information, expertise and ideas. This results in the ability to more effectively improve the quality of life of our residents while being more efficient with financial resources.



Mankato is located in the heart of the State's corn and soybean growing areas, though the farming sector's share of jobs is declining. Mankato has a larger manufacturing sector than the State as a whole primarily in food processing, feed preparation, and farm machinery. Manufacturing is more dependent on freight transportation than most other sectors. The Highway 169 Corridor is the main artery that connects southern Minnesota to the Ports of Savage.

## SOUTH CENTRAL SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER (SBDC)

### Southern Minnesota Surgical

Dr. William Lee, a board certified general surgeon who also specializes in the adjustable gastric band procedure for weight loss, decided to make a fresh start and open a solo surgical practice in 2009. The next year the Iowa native opened Southern Minnesota Surgical, Inc. in Blue Earth with outreach locations in Fairmont and St. Peter.

His patients—becoming big winners by being the biggest losers in the process—have lost a total of more than 11,000 pounds as a result of weight-loss procedures he has performed.

“Our small practice—myself, our clinical staff, the dietitian and business office team—offers a personal atmosphere,” he said. “It’s important for me to get to know my patients, see them frequently, and help them on this journey. Surgery and weight loss are such personal situations.”

Good care involves more than good medicine. The care they took in building the practice encompasses years of relationship-building with area physicians, patients and their families. The practice also built relationships with site selector Ankeny Builders and other local businesses and contractors that designed the new location, as well as the South Central Minnesota SBDC.

Dawn Fellows, Operations Specialist/Office Manager at Southern Minnesota Surgical, began meeting with professional business consultants Nancy Pehling and Wendy Anderson on business planning, marketing strategies, plan reviews and financing availability in 2009. At the same time, Lee and Fellows met with Wells Federal Bank in Blue Earth, hoping to keep the financing local.



Southern Minnesota Surgical, Inc.—like many entrepreneurs—faced challenges obtaining financing to start the practice during a time when the country’s banking community tightened its lending practices. “We were able to find solutions to startup obstacles each step of the way,” Fellows said. And good news came in April 2010: Southern Minnesota Surgical, Inc. was approved for a Small Business Administration loan.

## REGION NINE AREA, INC. (RNAI)

### Mission: Help develop a successful, prosperous region

To serve citizens of the region by accessing resources in support of Region Nine Development Commission, local governments and other community organizations that serve those in need.

### Outcomes: Serve immediate needs, sustain rural communities

- Immediate Outcome – Serve as a mechanism for Region Nine Development Commission, local units of government and small organizations. Access resources to support the mission of Region Nine Area Inc.
- Short-term Outcome – Partner with regional organizations to access resources for programs, projects and endeavors that support the mission of Region Nine Area Inc.
- Long-term Outcome – Develop a regional community fund that can receive gifts for sustaining small rural communities, and give grants to community organizations that support the mission of Region Nine Area Inc.

### What RNAI does

- Develop strategies to better retain, sustain, develop and improve small rural communities in the region.
- Build on and grow regional community capacity.
- Create dialogue with community and business leaders in the region.
- Increase philanthropic giving throughout the region.

### RNAI Contact

Sarah at RNAI: 507-389-8880 or sarah@rndc.org

*RNAI is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that can act as a fiscal agent for local communities and other philanthropic groups.*

## Lucky's Popcorn Dressing

How lucky can you get? It's less about luck and more about "know how", persistence, mobilizing resources and just getting in there and doing the hard work that it takes to launch a new business. Just ask Mark Porisch. His new venture, Lucky's Popcorn Dressing is a great story on what it takes to launch a new business in Minnesota.



### A little bit of Mark Porisch's story...

As he and friends were relaxing after a softball game at Big Dog Sports Cafe in North Mankato nearly a decade ago, Porisch noticed the Tabasco sauce being passed around the table. Someone asked Porisch—who was known among friends for using the produce from his garden to make various homemade concoctions—if he would ever try making his own batch.

He'd already been growing chilies in his North Mankato garden for years, a skill passed down from a green-thumbed, preacher-man grandfather who survived the Great Depression on a meager wage from the congregation and a bountiful harvest from his garden. Plus, as a self-confessed "knucklehead who wants to re-invent the wheel," Porisch thought maybe he could do better.

Mark produces hot sauces, barbecue sauces and five varieties of mustard, including his best-selling fire-roasted jalapeno and garlic honey mustard. Porisch admits that when he started his venture, there was a lot he didn't know about the business side of owning a business such as finding ways to get loans and secure capital.

He found help at the Small Business Development Center in Mankato. The center provides a number of programs that offer counseling and assistance to small-business owners and entrepreneurs. Through a federal program jointly administered by the center and the state called (GATE) Growing America Through Entrepreneurship, Porisch was able to find the help he needed.

GATE Coordinator Nancy Pehling mobilized resources such as Quick Books training from Nancy Frederickson (the Bookkeeping Center) and financial consulting with Wendy Anderson. He wrote his own business plan with some guidance and a little bit of outside perspective. He was also able to receive help with ideas on marketing initiatives, securing loans and acquiring capital.

Today Lucky's Popcorn Dressing is found in Kowalski's Markets, the Enchanted Forest, Hilltop Meat Market in Mankato, Cub Foods West, the St. Peter Food Coop and many other locations!

### SBDC Data for Service Provided in 2010

Counseling hours delivered .....	3,223
Businesses served .....	330
Businesses purchased/started.....	17
Investments/Loans completed .....	\$8,909,824
Investments/Loans in progress.....	\$5,389,250

*Figures include GATE*

### 2010 Overview

- Staff presented for the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, Southern Minnesota group. The presentation was on Fiscal Agent Guidelines.
- Staff met with several area organizations to discuss fiscal agent referrals. This included the Greater Mankato Area United Way, the Mankato Area Foundation and the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits. The Mankato Area Foundation is the only other local organization in this geographic area providing fiscal agent services.
- Staff continued to attend monthly Council of Local Organization for Volunteer Enhancement meetings. These monthly meetings have presentations on different topics pertaining to nonprofit organizations.
- Staff attended four Minnesota Council of Nonprofit workshops. These have included funding and legislative workshops.

- Staff met with 10 different individuals and community groups for nonprofit development and fiscal agent assistance. RESULTS: Three groups have begun their application for nonprofit status, two groups chose to utilize RNAI as Fiscal Agent and five individuals and organizations are deciding which would work best for their project before moving forward with either step.
- Staff continued to provide guidance and support for new nonprofits
- One board member retired after many years of dedicated service. Many thanks to Roger Oldfather! He will be greatly missed!
- Welcome to two new board members: Terry Genelin from Le Sueur and Gary Owens from Waseca.



## REVENUES & EXPENDITURES

### Revenue Sources:

Federal	702,064	37.3%
State	266,768	25.3%
Tax Levy	475,583	25.3%
Other Sources	252,586	13.4%
RLF	2,000	0.1%
Charges for Services	90,200	4.8%
Interest	93,183	5.0%
	<b>1,882,384</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Expenditures By Department:

Aging	839,358	44.6%
Community Development	191,174	10.2%
Economic Development	93,583	5.0%
RLF	366,448	19.5%
SBDC	97,029	5.2%
Transportation	82,906	5.2%
General Fund	87,792	15.3%
RNAI	7,000	0.4%
	<b>1,882,384</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Expenditures by Line Item:

Personnel	878,153
Fringe	368,052
Copying/Printing	29,399
Public Notice	3,782
Postage	9,634
Telephone	19,937
Travel - Staff	65,735
Travel - Other	27,988
Registration	9,050
Supplies	17,834
Membership/Dues	12,756
Miscellaneous	100
Storage Costs	2,500
Insurance	9,079
Errors & Omissions Insurance	11,300
Maintenance	7,270
Legal/Audit	31,950
Capital Outlay/Equipment	22,800
Staff Development	10,413
Marketing	15,478
Office Space	83,222
Fund Balance Recovery	7,500
Total Expenditures	1,882,384
Pass Thru	212,708

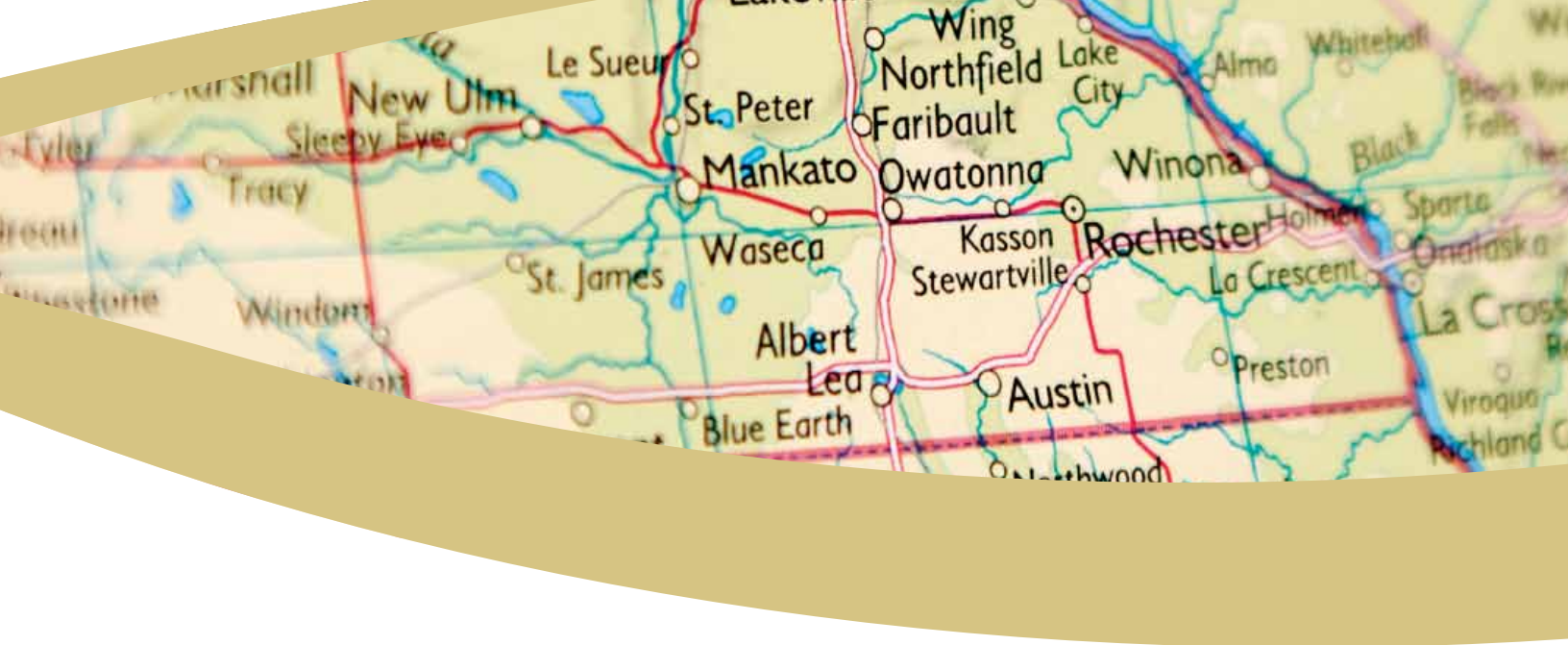
\*Indirect Rate Of 25.13%

\*\*Conservative expense figures have been used with respect to possible adjustments to revenue.

## REGION 9 DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION LEVY HISTORY

Year Payable	Percent Base	Levy Increase	Percent Amount	Increase
2011	461,733	3%	475,583	3%
2010	448,284	3%	461,733	3%
2009	435,227	3%	448,283	3%
2008	422,550	3%	435,227	3%
2007	410,243	3%	422,550	3%





## HISTORY AND MISSION

### The Creation of Regional Development Commissions

"The legislature finds that problems of growth and development transcend the boundary lines of local government units and not a single unit can plan for their solution without affecting other units in the region; and assistance is needed to make the most effective use of local, state, federal and private programs in serving the citizens of urban and rural regions."

### Background on Region Nine

The Region Nine Development Commission was authorized by the Regional Development Act of 1969, and was organized by local officials in 1972. The purpose of regional development commissions "is to work with and on behalf of local units of government to develop plans or implement programs to address economic, social, physical and governmental concerns of each region of the state". Working regionally, being challenged by the rapid changes in our communities. Finding ways to help citizens navigate those changes. Focus on problem solving and creating value.

Region Nine is comprised of nine south central Minnesota counties including: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan. The area includes 72 cities and 147 townships. Their combined population is approximately 222,790 of the State's 4,919,479 people, according to the 2000 Census.

### Region Nine Development Commission

Forty-three leaders from across the region serve on the Commission including:

- Thirty-four elected officials representing nine counties, 72 cities, 147 townships, school districts and soil and water conservation districts.
- Eight representatives of special interest groups, including agriculture, commerce, crime prevention, environmental quality, health and human welfare, minority populations, tourism and recreation and transportation. The Minnesota Valley Council of Governments is also represented.

Because of the strategic and collaborative approach to planning over the years, Region Nine Development Commission is well positioned to be a valuable resource for small business growth. RNDC's vision and leadership will work to ensure the economic vitality of this region into the future.

### Mission and Vision

The mission of the RNDC is to promote the development of the region through intergovernmental cooperation, community and human development, long-range planning, and technical assistance. We will maintain a future-oriented perspective that helps to facilitate decisions which result in healthier and more prosperous communities that are better equipped to move forward into the future.

### What We Value

- We are accountable to the public, our funding agencies and to each other for the quality of our work, promoting development of the region and being fiscally responsible.
- We promote, encourage and provide opportunities for development, leadership and mentoring at all levels of participation within the organization. We expect professionalism to be demonstrated by our behavior, conduct and loyalty. We value timely, open and honest communication to enhance organization effectiveness.
- We embrace change and celebrate new challenges, are able to identify problems, look at the options and evaluate the consequences with a sense of purpose and future.
- We value and respect the diversity of the region and of our organization.
- We support teamwork across the organization, lending knowledge and skill as needed to be successful and efficient.

## REGION 9 DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEMBERS

### Blue Earth County

Drew Campbell, County Commissioner  
Juanita (Janie) Flores, Minority Populations  
Charlie Hurd, Mankato City Council  
Alvis More, Agriculture  
Doug Schaller, Township Board  
Doug Westphal, Cities Under 10,000

### Brown County

Jim Berg, County Commissioner  
James Broich, Cities Under 10,000  
Frederick Juni, Township Board  
Charles Schmitz, New Ulm City Council

### Faribault County

Tom Loveall, County Commissioner  
Roger Oldfather, Cities Under 10,000  
Darwin Olson, Township Board

### Le Sueur County

Chris Collins, Mn Valley Council of Gov'ts  
Alvin Dietz, Environmental Quality  
Kermit Heldberg, Township Board  
Mick McGuire, Cities Under 10,000  
Mary Jean Rohlfing, School Board  
Bill Stangler, County Commissioner

### Martin County

Jerry Boler, County Commissioner  
Harlan Gorath, Fairmont City Council  
Bob Roesler, Cities Under 10,000  
Phil Schafer, Township Board

### Nicollet County

Terry Genelín, Township Board  
Judy Hanson, County Commissioner  
Diane Norland, N. Mankato City Council  
Bob Schabert, Cities Under 10,000  
Tim Strand, City of St. Peter

### Sibley County

Peggy Evenson, Township Board  
Brenda Pautsch, Cities Under 10,000  
Jim Swanson, County Commissioner

### Waseca County

Cindy Coy, Cities Under 10,000  
Jack Fitzsimmons, Transportation  
Daniel Kuhns, County Commissioner  
Gary Owens, Township Board

### Watsonwan County

Lance Mikkelson, Township Board  
Candace Fenske, Health & Human Welfare  
Denny Jahnz, Cities Under 10,000  
Dwayne Krenz, County Commissioner

## REGION 9 DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION STAFF

### Administration

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### Small Business Development Center

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Wendy Anderson, Sr Business Consultant  
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## THANK YOU

### Thank you from the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc.

On behalf of the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc, I would like to thank the Board, Advisory Councils on Aging, Senior LinkAge Line volunteers, other volunteers and staff for the work they do on behalf of older adults and caregivers. Each of you is very much appreciated.

– Linda Giersdorf, MnRAAA Executive Director

### Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC):

Lisa Bigham, MN/DOT  
Jim Broich, Region Nine Commissioner  
Drew Campbell, Region Nine Commissioner  
Alvin Dietz, Region Nine Commissioner  
Jack Fitzsimmons, Region Nine Commissioner  
Al Forsberg, Blue Earth County Engineer  
Terry Genelin, Region Nine Commissioner  
Doug Haeder, MN/DOT  
Jeff Johnson, Mankato City Engineer  
Steve Koehler, New Ulm City Engineer  
Dwayne Krenz, Region Nine Commissioner  
Dan Kuhns, Region Nine Commissioner  
Tom Loveall, Region Nine Commissioner  
Brian Malm, Bolton and Menk  
Michael McCarty, Mankato City Engineer  
John McDonald Faribault County Engineer  
Darrell Pettis, Le Sueur County Administrator/Engineer  
Nathan Richman, Waseca County Engineer  
Phil Schafer, Region Nine Commissioner  
Mark Scheidel, MN/DOT

### Thank you from Community & Economic Development Department

Rob Anderson	Tom Loveall
Jerry Boler	Bob Schabert
Cindy Coy	Charlie Schmitz
Michael Fischer	Karen Wagner
Jamie Flores	Linsey Warmka
Diane Halvorson	Molly Westman
Connie Ireland	Russ Wille

### Thank you from Revolving Loan Fund Committee

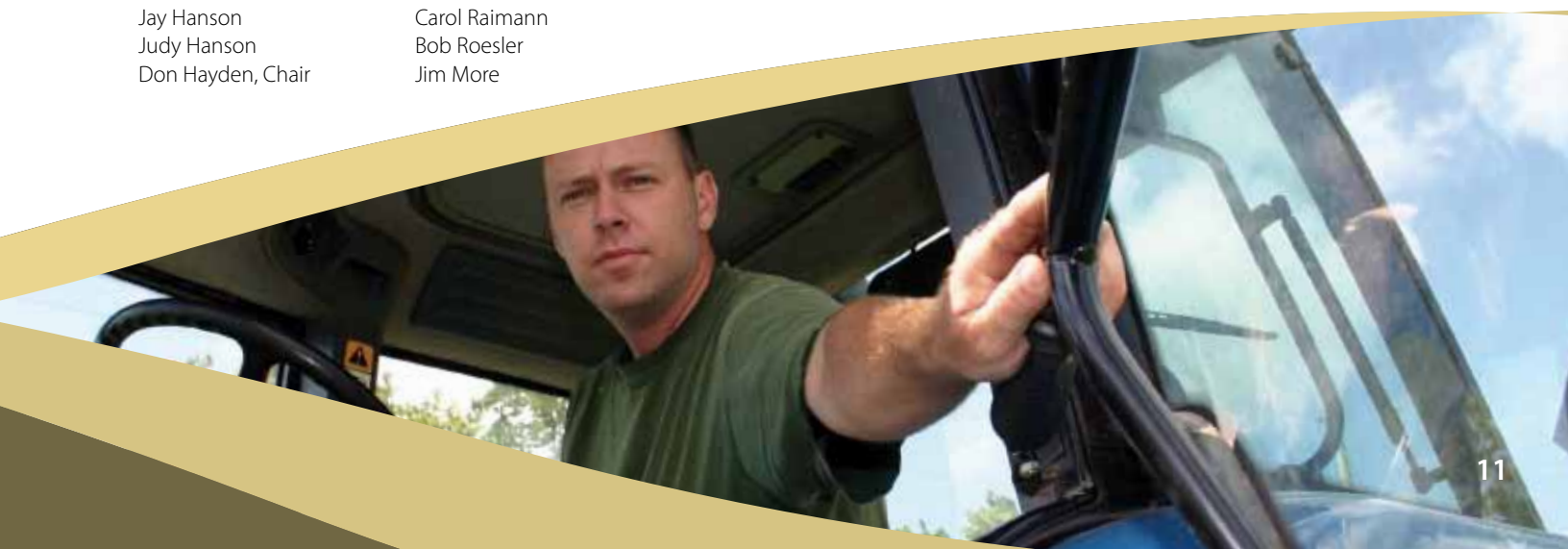
Jim Broich	Jim Paulson
Jay Hanson	Carol Raimann
Judy Hanson	Bob Roesler
Don Hayden, Chair	Jim More

### A very special thank you to the SBDC Board, that served tirelessly to guide the organization.

Pam Bishop, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation  
Shane Bowyer, Minnesota State University, Mankato  
Marsha Danielson, South Central College  
Diane Halvorson, South Central WorkForce Council  
Bob Hoffman, Minnesota State University, Mankato  
Chuck Klimmek, Gaylord EDA  
Jill Klinger, Greater Mankato Growth, Inc.  
Karen Wagner, DEED  
Jonathon Zierdt, Greater Mankato Growth, Inc.

### Thank You On The Renewable Energy Initiatives:

John Baerg, Watonwan County  
Gerald Boler, Martin County  
Jeff Brand, Midwest Realty  
Lisa Buckner, Three Rivers RC&D  
Drew Campbell, Blue Earth County  
James Dontje, Gustavus Adolphus College  
John Frey, MSU  
Rick Goemann, Goemann Insurance Company  
Troy Haefner, Concepts In Power  
Judy Hanson, Nicollet County  
Rich Huelskamp, Sunswarmth  
Kyle Hulbert, Gustavus Adolphus College  
Connie Ireland, Department of Economic Development  
Bob Johnson, Private Consultant  
Byron Jost, Pettipiece & Associates  
Mark Kluender, South Central College  
Paul Lindfors, MSU  
Jamie Lorentz, Today's Alternatives, Inc.  
Nancy Pehling, Bend of the River Consulting  
Leigh Pomeroy, MSU  
Sam Roy, Easy Energy Systems  
Bob Schabert, City of Courtland  
Dave Sunderman, BENCO Electric  
Brian Tohal, New Ulm Economic Development Corporation  
Patty Woodruff, City of Mapleton  
Katy Wortel, Citizen Representative



## Fiscal Hardship

Two years ago RNDC began hosting dialogues with local communities regarding facing a future of financial woes. Local communities were experiencing difficult financial times that were national (i.e. U.S. \$14 trillion debt) and even global (i.e. the deterioration of Greece's financial stability) in scope. It became apparent to regional leaders that two years ago was not the beginning nor was it the end of financial trouble. This understanding led to a deeper dialogue over the past year including discussions on "gearing up for action".

There were three areas of innovation that leaders deliberated on, which will drive innovation, including transforming local government's purpose, structure and functions. The examining of these critical areas may or may not determine that local government will be the same tomorrow as it was yesterday. The deliberation of these topics are not issues of right or wrong—good or bad, but rather a practical look at what is needed for prosperity in the years to come.

Leaders outlined what holds them back or what elements of a "safe container" would need to be present for change to occur across communities throughout the region.

- First and foremost, citizens need to be aware of and understand the tough challenges facing their communities, including their local units of government. They too must be ready to be part of the change.
- Leadership asked for a way to communicate the situation with citizens.
- Finally, the need for leadership/support of leaders was strongly articulated. The need for an initial risk taker was eminent.

## Renewable Energy Valley (REV)

REV is one innovative way by which RNDC can help in addressing "fiscal hardship." The Region Nine area and surrounding areas from Northern Iowa, South-east South Dakota and North-east Nebraska are among the richest areas in the world when it comes to renewable energy resources, ingenuity, and skilled labor force. By being a catalyst for bringing these resources together, promoting these resources and providing technical assistance, Renewable Energy Valley can become a "Magnet to the World for Renewable Energy."

Within Region Nine, area businesses that have been assisted include wind, solar, cellulosic ethanol, and bio-gas. RNDC has worked with organizations on talent development and taken a lead in starting the promotion of the brand "Renewable Energy Valley." What RNDC knows about renewable energy within the Region Nine area is:

- citizens and businesses in the region consume 102.6 trillion BTU's of energy annually.
- spend \$1.59 billion on energy consumption per year.
- have a carbon footprint of 6.7 million tons of estimated carbon dioxide emitted annually.
- have the capacity to produce over 765 trillion BTU's in energy annually.
- have the capacity to produce 7 times its energy consumption annually.
- 50% of all energy cost from the region are driven by electricity and gasoline.
- 90% of the renewable energy capacity potential in the region are in the areas of electricity and bio-fuel.

In the years to come Region Nine and partners will build upon the development, research and efforts of businesses to make REV the "silicon valley" of renewable energy.

