

Annual Report

2010-2011



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LEADING PLANNING CONNECTING

ARROWHEAD REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
221 W. FIRST ST., DULUTH, MN 55802 PHONE 218.722.5545 1.800.232.0707 www.ardc.org

ARDC has been serving NE Minnesota for more than 30 years.

ARDC holds a notable place in Minnesota history. It was the first of 11 multi-county regional development organizations created in Minnesota following the Regional Development Act of 1969. This landmark legislation recognized that challenges related to growth and development transcend county lines. The legislation encouraged local governments to cooperate in finding solutions for everything from transportation and natural resource issues to economic development and delivery of human services.

ARDC connects public and private interests.

Regional development commissions are complex relationships of interests from the public and private sectors. ARDC's membership includes both elected officials and citizen representatives from throughout the region. Programs are funded through the combinations of federal and state dollars, grants, and fees paid for services. This unique structure gives ARDC programming flexibility that other governmental agencies do not share.

The forty member Commission meets quarterly to discuss regional priorities and to set overall policy. The twelve member governing board meets monthly to monitor programs, revise budgets, approve contracts and expenditures and to deal with other policy issues as they arise.

As outlined in the Minnesota statute, ARDC Board and Commission membership ensures representation by a cross section of elected officials and regional interests:

- ◆ Communities over 10,000 in population
- ◆ Communities under 10,000 in population
- ◆ County commissioners from the seven county region
- ◆ Tribal councils
- ◆ School boards
- ◆ Township officials
- ◆ Advisory committees
- ◆ At-large positions

Arrowhead Region of Minnesota:

The seven counties of Cook, Lake, St. Louis, Carlton, Koochiching, Itasca and Aitkin



The Region

The Arrowhead Region is among the most beautiful and diverse areas of Minnesota. Bordered on the east by Lake Superior and Wisconsin, and on the north by Ontario, Canada, the region is blessed with a wealth of scenic beauty and natural resources. The people of the Arrowhead have built a resource-based economy around the three Ts—timber, taconite, and tourism—while also developing high quality education, health care and human services. With a fourth T—Technology—generating exciting opportunities and erasing geographic barriers to growth, northeastern Minnesota is poised to enter a new era of growth.

GOVERNMENTAL UNITS

7 counties
70 cities
180 townships
3 reservations

EDUCATION

34 school districts
1 university—University of MN—Duluth
1 private college—College of St. Scholastica
10 community/technical colleges
2 environmental learning centers

PUBLIC LAND OWNERSHIP

63% of the region's land is held in public ownership

2010 CENSUS REGION POPULATION

326,225 people

NATIONAL/STATE PARKS and FORESTS

1 national wilderness area—BWCAW
1 national park—Voyageurs
1 national monument—Grand Portage
2 national forests—Superior and Chippewa
NE MN covers 19,946 sq. miles, 23% of state's land area,
26 state forests, 16 state parks, and 23 county parks

Other Facts about the Region:

57% of Minnesota's commercial forest land
4,621 miles of shoreline
43% of Minnesota's peat land
25% of Minnesota's lake and river access
25% of Minnesota's state resorts
5 commercial ports
13,650 miles of highway
Major regional fiber optics transmission network
Second largest metropolitan area in state—Duluth, MN/
Superior, WI

ARDC Divisions

REGIONAL PLANNING

ARDC provides communities with professional planning and development services to meet long-term housing, infrastructure, environmental, economic and human needs.

DULUTH-SUPERIOR METROPOLITAN INTERSTATE COUNCIL (MIC)

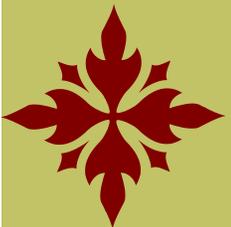
ARDC administers and staffs the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) which is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Twin Ports area. The MIC provides guidance and leadership on transportation and planning issues in the metropolitan area.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING (AAA)

As the designated Area Agency on Aging, ARDC promotes efforts and coordinates funding for programs that serve seniors and caregivers. The AAA is the regional agency for the MN Board on Aging.

AMERICA'S BYWAYS RESOURCE CENTER (ABRC)

ABRC staff provide technical and training services to citizens interested in establishing or maintaining scenic byways in their states. ARDC houses the nationwide program.



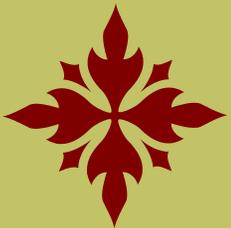


In addition, ARDC provides planning services for:

- ◆ Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- ◆ Federal Economic Development Administration Funding and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- ◆ Federally funded Revolving Loan Fund administered by ARDC and serviced by The Northspan Group
- ◆ Natural resource planning and management
- ◆ Livable community programs in the region
- ◆ Safe Routes to School programs
- ◆ Studies related to regional freight movements
- ◆ Wildfire Mitigation programs
- ◆ Planning for alternative energy in the region

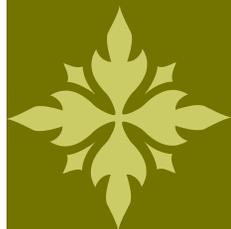
ARDC is the place local governments and community-based groups can turn for programs, services, and staffing assistance. ARDC's professional planners and project coordinators help clients improve their communities by:

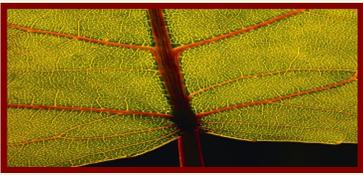
- ◆ Identifying and providing access to available resources
- ◆ Encouraging inter-governmental cooperation
- ◆ Providing a forum for issues that cross jurisdictions
- ◆ Gathering, analyzing, and disseminating data
- ◆ Formulating and implementing regional strategies
- ◆ Analyzing and developing regional systems
- ◆ Facilitating decision-making and strategic planning
- ◆ Identifying and instituting innovative practices
- ◆ Assuming a leadership role on regional matters
- ◆ Delivering technical assistance



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COMMENTS by Pat Henderson, ARDC Executive Director

I am pleased to introduce the 2010-2011 overview of the work of Arrowhead Regional Development (ARDC) staff and the 2010-2011 initiatives. I find it rewarding to work in an agency that assists elected officials and citizens in planning for current and future needs.

I hope citizens in the Arrowhead Region of NE Minnesota have had the occasion to meet and work with our extremely capable and professional staff who are providing services to seniors, and services related to comprehensive planning, transportation planning, community and economic development, loan financing, hazard mitigation, planning and zoning, and health and wellness. Our staff often serve a facilitative function in community initiatives and it is gratifying to hear the results of the work of ARDC's staff who are making a difference in the region.

We are pleased to include the results of the agency's 2011 assessment in this annual report. As per legislative mandate, each of the nine regional development commissions in the State of Minnesota is charged with completing a five year assessment. We have highlighted a few of the topics and results from the ARDC 2011 assessment in this annual report. If you are interested in receiving a copy of the entire assessment, please contact the ARDC office or go to www.ardc.org.

This two year period has been a landmark timeframe for making improvements in the ARDC owned building at 221 W First Street in Duluth. We contracted for a new roof on the building as well as installed new carpet and made other upgrades to the building during the period.

As the recessionary veil appears to be lifting, ARDC staff have been actively engaged with communities that are planning for the future as well as with individual entrepreneurs and business owners who are looking for funding opportunities for their endeavors. ARDC is a member of the Arrowhead Growth Alliance which is developing an initiative to encourage entrepreneurship in the region and ARDC offers gap financing for businesses in the region through the Economic Development Administration Revolving Loan Fund.

Due to a need expressed by counties and other constituents, ARDC transit planning staff will be evaluating the needs of transit for veterans and for senior medical appointments. Although the problem of aligning riders and transit providers has been a thorny problem over the years, it appears the problem is becoming more difficult in some parts of the region. Another exciting transportation opportunity is approaching with the Metropolitan Interstate Council staff coordinating three unique, new, consultant-led transportation planning projects.

ARDC has been a MN Intelligent Rural Communities Broadband Grant partner with the other nine regional development commissions throughout the state. Other partners in this Blandin Foundation initiative to promote and demonstrate the value of high speed broadband access are the cities of Grand Rapids and Grand Marais, two demonstration communities in the Arrowhead region.

The executive directors of the nine Minnesota Regional Development Organizations (RDOs) have been meeting to further pursue steps toward a more unified statewide effort regarding economic development. This evolving process has been expedited by the visit of RDO directors with the Governor's staff and with the Commissioner of the Department of Employment and Economic Development.

I appreciate the cooperation, dedication and involvement by members of the ARDC Board and Commission in this 2010-2011 period and as we address new and exciting challenges in the future.

We welcome your feedback regarding this report, the 2011 assessment results and/or how we can be of assistance to you or to your organization.

Pat Henderson
Executive Director

ARDC 2011 Agency Assessment



The agency is mandated by State law to conduct an assessment every five years. The 2011 assessment was developed by a team of one representative from each of the agency's four divisions working with the Executive Director. The joint effort focused on ARDC's roles of leading, planning and connecting in the region and what can be done to enhance each of these roles.

The four divisions provided mailing lists of people and organizations that have been recipients of services or have served in some capacity in furthering the work of the agency.

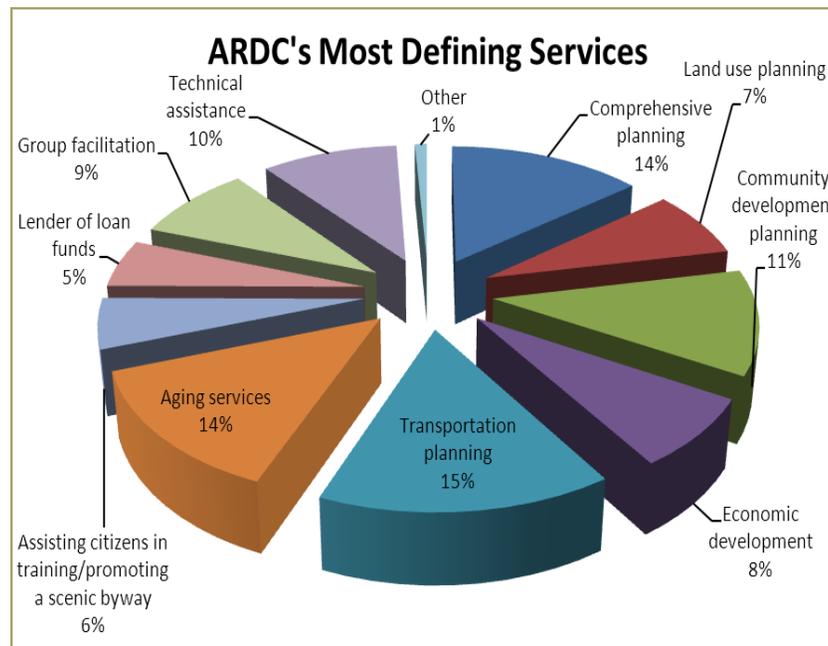
A total of 248 respondents were sent the survey electronically or via U.S. mail. The survey allowed respondents to provide multiple answers to questions as well as an option to provide open-ended comments. The response rate was 52% with 130 or the 248 surveys returned.

The following are excerpts from the 2011 Assessment. The entire assessment can be viewed at www.ardc.org. Hard copies are available by contacting the ARDC office.

ARDC's Most Defining Services

ARDC provides a wide range of services as the designated planning organization for the northeast region of Minnesota and as a partner in providing transportation planning in Douglas County, Wisconsin.

Throughout the 2011 survey, respondents emphasized the need to increase marketing of the agency's services. They expressed an interest in learning more about the wide range of services the agency offers. A survey question asked respondents to identify services they felt best defined ARDC. The responses highlighted in the chart to the right indicate the diversity of the agency's services.

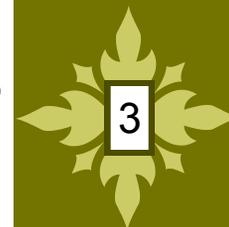


Respondent Profiles

The agency serves the seven county Arrowhead region comprised of Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake and St. Louis counties. Many of the respondents serve in multiple roles within their communities and in the region, which results in their use of one or more services offered by ARDC.

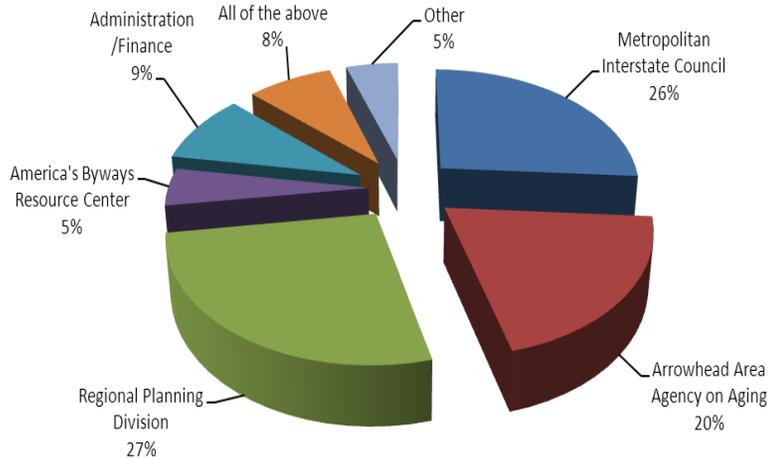
Results

This year's results indicate 89% of the respondents were satisfied with the services they received from ARDC, as compared to 84% in 2006 and 75% in 2001. This response indicates a continuous improvement of services by the agency's dedicated staff.



ARDC 2011 Agency Assessment, continued...

Primary Connection to ARDC

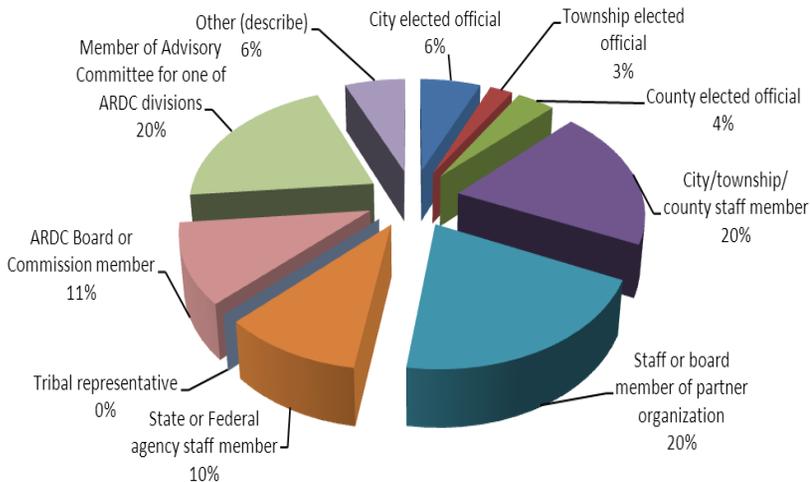


ARDC as a Leader

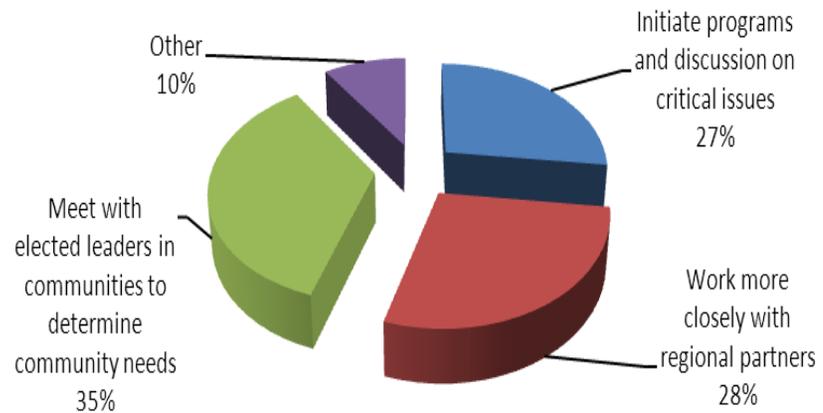
Nearly 70% of the respondents said they had experienced ARDC as a leader in the agency's many diverse services. Staff led efforts in regional and local planning, transportation issues, senior services and economic development. America's Byways Resource Center staff have been leaders in assisting citizens who are interested in developing scenic byways throughout the United States.

The survey results suggested three areas to focus on in the future. Respondents indicated they would like to see ARDC staff increase interaction with communities to determine community needs. Respondents also recommended that agency staff take a more defined leadership role in initiating programs, discussing critical issues in the region and working with agency partners.

Relationship to ARDC



Leadership Role Enhancement





ARDC REGIONAL PLANNING DIVISION 2010-2011 ANNUAL REPORT

The vision of ARDC's Regional Planning Division focuses on helping communities with all facets of the community planning process from comprehensive planning and zoning ordinance development to planning for specific community improvements. The Division also does planning on a regional basis with the intent to improve the quality of life for all residents of the area.

Regional Planning works primarily on a fee-for-service basis, but also receives funding for regional transportation planning. Regional planning also administers the Northeast Minnesota Economic Development District (NEMEDD), which allows ARDC staff to assist communities in planning for economic development. For more information, visit our website: www.arrowheadplanning.org.

2011 REGIONAL PLANNING DIVISION HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

By Andy Hubley, Division Director



City of Orr Comprehensive Plan

ARDC staff worked with the City of Orr, its citizens, and interested stakeholders to craft a community vision. The planning process included ample public input, direct discussions with housing and economic development stakeholders, and meetings with City officials. The final plan includes several action steps and recommendations for a community revitalization process. ARDC is now working with the City to undergo a design project for its downtown and waterfront.

City of Ranier Planning

ARDC continues to work with the City of Ranier. After completing a community plan and an annexation, Ranier began developing a new zoning code in 2011. The City also sent a team of leaders to the Heart of the Continent Community Congress in October 2011. ARDC staff participated on the team and helped the group advance an important community project—a new community map that shows the newly annexed areas and its destinations and businesses.

Lake Vermilion Trail Plan

The Lake Vermilion Resort Association, the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, active citizens, ARDC staff, and other interested stakeholders planned a new paved, non-motorized trail in northern St. Louis County in 2011. The Lake Vermilion Trail Plan outlines a general trail route, estimates project costs, and recommends action steps that can make the trail a reality. Public meetings were held with nearly all attendees showing support of a trail. ARDC is now helping to get the initial phases of the trail funded.

<http://arrowheadplanning.org>



ARDC REGIONAL PLANNING 2010 & 2011 PROJECTS

<http://arrowheadplanning.org>

2010

Aitkin Safe Routes to School Routing Plan
Area Transportation Partnership Facilitation Assistance
Beaver Bay Parcel Development Process
Big Falls Trails Plan
Greenway Safe Routes to School Coordinator
North Shore Cairn Sign Construction
Cascade River Design Project
Arrowhead Region Energy Survey
Cook County Enhancements Plan
Deer River Safe Routes to School
Economic Development Administration Planning Grant
Edge of Wilderness Corridor Management Plan Implementation
Ely Safe Routes to School Coordinator
Esko Safe Routes to School Plan
Fond du Lac Safe Routes to School Plan
Helmet Hero
Highway 169 Completion Coalition
Iron Range Housing Expeditor
Iron Range Geographic Information Systems
Lake County Comprehensive Wildfire Protection Plan
Moose Lake Safe Routes to School Assessment
Mountain Iron Safe Routes to School Plan
Mountain Iron Trails Plan
Northern Aviation Industries Project
Northland Connection GIS
North Shore Management Board Facilitation
North Shore Management Board Water Forums
North Shore Management Board Oblique Photo Analysis
Rural Energy Development Initiative
Regional Housing Advisory Group
Regional Transportation Advisory Committee
State Health Improvement Project
Active Living Assistance
Wildfire Sprinkler Installation
Superior National Forest Scenic Byway Management Plan Update
Two Harbors Planner on Retainer

2011

Area Transportation Partnership Facilitation Assistance
Babbitt Comprehensive Plan
Cascade River Design Project
Chisholm Safe Routes to School Plan
Big Fork Comprehensive Plan
Ranier Zoning Code Development
Ranier Transportation Plan
Economic Development Administration Planning Grant
Floodwood Depot Use Plan
Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan
Helmet Hero
Hibbing Area Transit Plan
International Falls Bike and Pedestrian Plan
Lake Vermilion Trail Plan
Local Transit Coordination Plan
Northern Aero Alliance Branding Plan
North Shore Environmental Website
North Shore Management Board
Orr Comprehensive Plan
Regional Housing Advisory Group
Regional Transportation Advisory Committee
State Health Improvement Program
Active Living Assistance
Superior National Forest Scenic Byway Assistance
Wildfire Sprinkler Installation
St. Louis County Sprinkler Project
Two Harbors Planner on Retainer
Two Harbors Comprehensive Plan
Virginia Safe Routes to School
Western Iron Range Animal Control Plan



**ARDC AREA AGENCY ON AGING
2010-2011 ANNUAL REPORT, by Catherine Sampson, Division Director**

<http://www.arrowheadaging.org>

ARDC's Area Agency on Aging serves as the designated Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for seven counties—Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake and St. Louis—of the Arrowhead Region of Northeastern Minnesota. The role of an AAA is to foster networks of organizations, units of government and service providers to cooperatively address the human services needs, especially of the elderly, in the region. Following its mission of serving as a “source of leadership in comprehensive planning, development assistance and grant funding,” the AAA annually distributes approximately \$1.6 million in Federal Older Americans Act (OAA) funding to agencies and organizations that provide vital services. In 2009, twenty (20) agencies received funding and served almost 10,000 persons.

Senior LinkAge Line®:

The ARDC-Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging is the region's Senior LinkAge Line® (SLL) provider. The SLL is a telephone information, assistance and counseling service that makes it easy for seniors and their families to find community services.

In 2010, the Senior LinkAge Line® staff answered 7,017 calls from 4,831 unduplicated callers. 24% of all calls (1,661) were 30 minutes or longer.

In 2011, the Senior LinkAge Line® staff answered 9,523 calls from 5,549 unduplicated callers. 24% of all calls (2,288) were 30 minutes or longer and 6% of calls (575) were 60 minutes or longer.



2010 Key Accomplishments—Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging

FUNDING

- ◆ 17 agencies and 2 county HHS Departments received \$445,698 in Older Americans Act funds to support services to seniors.
- ◆ Non-profit nutrition provider received \$1.2 million (Older Americans Act funds plus some state funding) to provide almost 340,000 meals, both congregate dining and home delivered meals serving the entire 7-county Arrowhead region and the City of Duluth.



CAREGIVER SUPPORT

- ◆ In 2010, the Arrowhead AAA continued to support the growth and development of programs that help support people engaged in this important and often demanding work of caring for a frail older family member or friend. This was accomplished by:
- ◆ Granting 9 agencies a total of \$161,000 of Older Americans Act funding to provide one on one advice and guidance to family caregivers (caregiver counseling), respite options for caregivers, support groups, and education for caregivers on a broad range of topics.

In 2010, a special caregiver support service called the “Family Memory Care Program” was expanded. This program is targeted toward a husband or wife caring for and living with a spouse with Alzheimer’s disease or related dementia. The intent of this program is to provide to each spousal caregiver education about the disease, referral to services and help with building personal support networks. This service was available in Carlton and Lake Counties in 2009 and was expanded to Northern St. Louis County in 2010.

CAREGIVER PROGRAMS HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2010

- ◆ 146 family caregivers across the region participated in 868 counseling sessions. Of those completing a survey about the service, 98% said the service helped them cope better (48% said they were coping *much* better).
- ◆ 116 caregivers across the region also got a break from their caregiving responsibilities by accessing respite services (totaling 14,799 hours of respite). Of those completing a survey about the respite service, 98% said it was helping them cope better (66% said *much* better).



2011 Key Accomplishments—Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging

<http://www.arrowheadaging.org>



FUNDING:

- ◆ 15 non-profit agencies in the region and 2 county HHS Departments received \$486,668 in Older American Act funds to support services to seniors.
- ◆ Non-profit nutrition provider received \$1,174,000 (Older Americans Act and state funds) to provide 323,336 meals, both congregate dining and home delivered meals serving the entire region.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT:

- ◆ 7 agencies received \$123,976 in Older Americans Act funds to provide caregiver support programs. Six respite programs provided almost 12,000 hours of respite care so caregivers could receive a break.



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC)

Ron Chicka, Division Director

<http://www.dsmic.org>



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2011 PLANS & STUDIES

As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), for the Duluth-Superior area, the MIC provides the leadership for a cooperative transportation planning process that represents all local units of government.

MIC works closely with elected officials, planners, engineers, residents and businesses to determine local priorities and to help lay the groundwork for projects that meet transportation needs, now, and into the future.

Here are some planning successes from the past year:

Like MIC on Facebook and Subscribe to the OpenMIC Blog

The MIC launched two new social media initiatives in an effort to reach out to the community to educate them about the MIC's work and to gain public input into planning initiatives. The MIC's new Facebook page (www.facebook.com/dsmic) and OpenMIC blog (www.duluthsuperiorOpenMIC.org) expanded the MIC's online presence and created a much improved reach and broader name recognition, in keeping with the goal of improving exposure, influence and engagement with planning stakeholders and community members.

The use of social media tools to augment public involvement strategies is relatively rare in government and planning and Rondi Watson, the MIC's Planning Assistant, was invited to speak at several conferences about strategies and recommendations to implement these new initiatives. She presented at the annual MPO/Department of Transportation (DOT)/Regional Planning Commission (RPC) Conference in LaCrosse, WI, in late August, at the Duluth-Superior Social Media Breakfast in early September, and at the Minnesota APA (American Planning Association) conference in St. Cloud at the end of September, 2011.

Identifying Low-Cost Improvements to Traffic Safety and Operations

MIC staff conducted a **Transportation Systems Management (TSM)** assessment of the intersections in both Duluth and Superior. The MIC's TSM plans aim to optimize the safety and efficiency of existing transportation system with lower-cost, yet effective solutions in lieu of more expensive capital improvements. Some examples of TSM related actions include: restriping pavement markings to improve intersection geometries; adjusting traffic signals to optimize traffic operations; and applying access management techniques to reduce the number, variety, and/or density of turning movements allowed in a specific area.

In consultation with county and city engineers, locations with potential deficiencies in either safety or operations were identified by analyzing crash and Level of Service (LOS) data. The resulting Superior and Duluth TSM Studies put forward site-specific recommendations to reduce the number of vehicle crashes and to improve the operational efficiency at 58 intersections on the MN side of the MIC area and 31 intersections on the WI side.

Award-Winning Bike Map

The Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Bike Map, a guide to the best on-and off-street bike routes in and through this region, has long been the MIC's most popular product. In 2011, the updated version was a hit with map-making professionals as well. Kody Thurnau, the MIC's GIS Specialist, won two awards from juries of his peers at the 2011 Esri International User Conference in San Diego, CA.

The map was awarded first prize in the category, Best Cartographic Design Single Map Product—Large Format Press Copy. Judged by 38 Esri staff members for general and specific cartographic quality, entries in this category had to be a single map product larger than 11 in. x 17 in. but not exceeding 48 inches, and printed professionally on a printing press.

The map was also one of three overall winners of the Cartography Special Interest Group (Carto SIG) Map Awards, out of 1,200 conference Map Gallery entries. Judging criteria included 'efficiency in communication of intended message' and 'maximization of the user's cognitive experience.' More specifically, the judges appreciated its compact size; design, layout and strategically-placed folds; scale and legibility; topographical information; easily identified green space destinations; urban area destinations, including local bike shops; information about different riding surfaces; and information about designated bike routes.

You can pick up your own copy of the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Bike Map at local bike shops, tourist information outlets or email us at dsmic01@gmail.com, and a copy will be mailed to you.



DULUTH - SUPERIOR METROPOLITAN 2011 BIKE MAP



Provided by:
Duluth - Superior
Metropolitan Interstate Council
Guiding the Future of Transportation
for the Twin Ports Area

Overcoming Obstacles to Innovation and Implementation

A perennial issue for any working waterfront is disposing of the sand and silt that is dredged from the harbor channels to allow ships to access its commercial docks.

The MIC's **Erie Pier Management Plan** created a blueprint for creating a cost-effective and environmentally sound facility for recycling these dredged materials from the Duluth-Superior harbor. By transitioning Erie Pier from a traditional Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) to a first-of-its kind Processing and Reuse Facility (PRF), this innovative Plan will help save taxpayers the millions of dollars it would cost to develop a new CDF. It also established a multi-agency process for testing the materials to certify them as clean and safe for construction uses.

A working group of the MIC's Harbor Technical Advisory Committee, or HTAC, finalized the Plan in 2007, but reconvened in 2011 to address misperceptions about contamination levels, resolve concerns about financial liability and overcome institutional processes that created barriers to utilizing the reclaimed materials in large-scale public works projects. Officials from federal and state regulatory agencies worked closely with representatives from the local port authority and industries to identify specific issues and resolve them.

As a result, the Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with the Sea Grant Program, is now promoting the HTAC as a model for cooperative problem-solving in other U.S. port communities and is highlighting the MIC's Erie Pier Management Plan as an efficient, environmentally friendly and cost-effective strategy to deal with dredge materials.

MIC List of Completed Projects 2010 and 2011

- ◆ Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (Sub-committee establishment)
- ◆ Duluth Trails and Bikeways Plan
- ◆ Proctor Kirkus Street Land Use Plan
- ◆ Superior East 2nd Street Access Management Plan
- ◆ I-35 Congestion Mitigation Ridership Study
- ◆ Human Services Coordinated Transit Plan
- ◆ MIC Long Range Plan 2035 Update
- ◆ 2012-2015 Duluth Urbanized Area Transportation Improvement Program
- ◆ 2012-2015 Superior Urbanized Area Transportation Improvement Program
- ◆ Duluth Safe Routes to School Site Assessments
- ◆ Superior Bong Bridge Closure Study



<http://www.dsmic.org>



**AMERICA'S BYWAYS RESOURCE CENTER
2010 AND 2011 ANNUAL REPORT
Michelle Johnson, Division Director**

The America's Byways Resource Center is a division of the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission, in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Resource Center operates under a cooperative agreement with FHWA to help build successful America's Byways® through positive, proactive, hands-on assistance in planning, preserving, promoting, and managing scenic byways.

**2011: The Year in Review
By Michelle Johnson, Division Director**

As we prepare the Resource Center's Annual Report for 2011, a quote from one of my favorite authors comes to mind: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..." (*A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens). The Resource Center had one of its best years in 2011!

Here are a few of our best times: We added (and promoted) great staff to our existing talented group. We planned and delivered one of the best national conferences (Minneapolis!) and added several critical publications (Wayshowing Manual), training (National Program Coordinator Training) and services (Peer Advisor Network) to our well rounded collection.

And then the worst news: In June we received notice that the Secretary of Transportation had withdrawn our funding. We had anticipated using those funds for 2012 and 2013. Instead we had to create a plan to close the Resource Center. During the summer we balanced our time between planning the national conference and re-writing our work plan to include a closure plan. In addition, we completed several projects during 2011 in order to provide them to the byway community with enough time for implementation. Those projects include the Byway Self-Assessment Tool and the Peer Advisor Network.

Unfortunately, 2012 will be a short year for the Resource Center. We will provide as many services as we can before our final closing date of June 30. Our website is loaded with tools, publications and other materials for byways to request copies, download pages or find links to other sites. We will make every effort to find homes for some of our more critical materials and we will communicate regularly with the byway community.

<http://www.bywaysresourcecenter.org/>

Training & Education **Marketing Boot Camp for Byways**

Fourteen participants from around the country came to America's Byways Resource Center's Marketing Boot Camp for Byways, which was held October 17-20. Presenters were Peggy Bendel and Hank Todd of Bendel Communications International and Mike Malone of Swim Creative. Ryan Matara and Michelle Johnson from the Resource Center provided topical information, and interactive learning opportunities were available.

Long Distance Trainings Offered

Webinars for National Scenic Byway Grant Program:

- ◆ Tips for Reviewing National Scenic Byways Program Grant Applications (2 webinars)
- ◆ FY 2011 National Scenic Byways Program Grants Outreach for State Coordinators and FHWA Staff, Byway Community and Tribal Coordinators (4 webinars)

Publications **Some of the Publications Distributed**

- ◆ Vistas
- ◆ Journal for America's Byways
- ◆ E-News/Updates
- ◆ Economic Impact Tool
- ◆ Making the Grassroots Grow: Building and Maintaining Effective Byway Organizations
- ◆ From Milestones to Milemarkers: Understanding Historic Roads
- ◆ Scenic Byways: Design Guide for Roadside Improvement
- ◆ Conserving Our Treasured Places: Managing Visual Quality on Scenic Byways
- ◆ Wayside Exhibits: A Guide to Developing Outdoor Interpretive Exhibits
- ◆ Jacob's Ladder Trail: Vegetation Management Plan
- ◆ Community Guide to Planning and Managing a Scenic Byway
- ◆ Byway Beginnings: Understanding, Inventorying, and Evaluating a Byway

Technical Assistance

The Resource Center offers specialized technical assistance to byway organizations, state and tribes. Assistance varies from day to day requests and coaching to more intensive on-site facilitating or training. The following are examples from 2011 of onsite technical assistance provided by Byway Specialists and Tribal Liaison:

- ◆ Passionate Hawaiians on the Fast Track with Byways
- ◆ From Indian Country: Planning with the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa
- ◆ Ohio Byway Meeting Highlights Marketing Initiatives
- ◆ New Mexico Byways and Byways Specialist Both Gain Insights
- ◆ Strategic Planning for Historic Route 66— Illinois
- ◆ Blue Ridge Parkway Takes the "High Road" in Planning and Partnering for the Future
- ◆ Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin (Keshena) Sokaogon Chippewa Community (Mole Lake, Crandon).

Technical Assistance (continued)

- ◆ From Indian Country: National Tribal Transportation Conference
- ◆ Self-Assessment and Planning at Louisiana State Scenic Byway Workshops
- ◆ Technical Assistance to Colorado's Grant Applicants

2011 Scenic Byways Awards

The 2011 National Scenic Byways Awards dinner and presentation honored eight outstanding byway projects and one exceptional byway leader. Sponsored by the America's Byways Resource Center, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the event featured introductory remarks by John Horsley, Executive Director, AASHTO.



2011 Project Highlights Continued...

Tools and Resources **Byway Assessment Tool**

The Resource Center developed a Byways Assessment Tool to assist byway organizations with a variety of challenging responsibilities and opportunities. The tool is specifically intended for byways and the organizations that implement byway efforts and activities. State and tribal byway coordinators may also find the tool useful when working with the byways within their jurisdictions. The Byway Assessment tool is organized around topics of fundamental importance—where byway knowledge, skills and abilities can make a great difference in the health, strength and sustainability of the organization. The selection of these categories was based on research from the survey conducted in the early part of 2011.

Measuring the Economic Impact Along Byways: Case Studies

For years, byways have faced the daunting task of proving their worth to elected leaders and citizens. The majority of byways have modest budgets, limited staff and little or no economic expertise, making the measurement of economic impact a difficult process. As part of its Congressionally designated function of providing technical assistance to local byways groups, America's Byways Resource Center commissioned the development of an economic impact tool that allows local byway staff and/or volunteers to measure the impacts of byways and byway-related activities in their communities. The tool was presented for use in 2010. This past spring, the effectiveness of the tool was measured through a user survey and by testing its sensitivity. However, the most exciting part of the project is the creation of byway economic impact case studies. Staff at the Resource Center will assist five byways in measuring and documenting their economic impact through the use of this tool. As a result, these byways will have a report quantifying the economic impact derived from byway designation.

Public Awareness Efforts:

Rand McNally and the Best of the Road

The Resource Center established a marketing alliance partnership with Rand McNally during 2011. The partnership allows a marketing opportunity for byways to share information on their points of interest along the byway. One of the benefits of this partnership to the Byways is the opportunity for them to showcase their byway on Rand McNally's website via the Best of the Road promotional page.

The Goodyear Rubber and Tire Company

The Goodyear Rubber and Tire Company continued to be a good partner, building on their Top 50 Most Comfortable Drives from 2011. Goodyear executives scheduled various interviews with our unofficial byway representative, Derrick Crandall, American Recreation Coalition.

American Road Magazine

American Road Magazine joined with the Resource Center as an official partner in August.



ARDC's Economic Development Administration Revolving Loan Fund

Purpose

The purpose of the ARDC/RLF is to support business activities for which credit is not otherwise available on terms and conditions which would permit completion and/or the successful operation or accomplishment of the project in the seven county region of Northeast Minnesota.

The primary objective of the program is the stimulation of private investment in order to create and maintain productive, permanent employment through the establishment of new businesses or the expansion of existing businesses.

Financing provided in conjunction with this program is intended to complement, not compete with private lending institutions. As such, securing private sector involvement is a critical factor in qualifying for this program. Loans will generally be subordinated to the interests of private sector lenders in order to encourage their involvement.

Eligible Businesses

Priority economic sectors that are eligible for assistance through this program include:

- ◆ Aviation/Aerospace
- ◆ Manufacturing
- ◆ Renewable Resources
- ◆ Technology
- ◆ Energy
- ◆ Other

Businesses must be located in Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake or St. Louis Counties.



Leveraging Requirements

Jobs

- ◆ Applicants must demonstrate that they will create or retain a minimum of one job per \$10,000 in ARDC/RLF Assistance.

Private Sector Investment

- ◆ Applicants must demonstrate that they will leverage a minimum ratio of two private sector dollars to one ARDC/RLF dollar (2 to 1).
- ◆ Applicants must demonstrate the minimum leveraging ratio, exclusive of owner's equity investment is one private sector dollar to one ARDC/RLF dollar (1 to 1).

Financing Policies

Allowable Use of Proceeds

- ◆ Minimum loan size—\$10,000
- ◆ Maximum loan size—\$250,000
- ◆ Fixed assets, including land and building purchases, building construction, leasehold improvements, and renovations (twenty year term max); and/or
- ◆ Acquisition, renovation or moving machinery and equipment (ten year term max); and/or
- ◆ Working capital (term loans only, five year max)



Application Process

- ◆ Pre-applications are available from the Northspan Group, Inc., contracted agent of ARDC for purposes of administering the RLF. Prepare and submit pre-application to the Northspan Group (see address below). Northspan will notify applicant of project eligibility.
- ◆ Northspan staff will discuss full details of application preparation with applicant and advise if a full application is warranted.
- ◆ Prepare full application with all applicable and required exhibits and submit to address below.
- ◆ Completed full applications received no later than the 15th day of each month will be acted upon during the following month.
- ◆ Technical Advisory Committee reviews application and make recommendations to the Loan Review Board.
- ◆ Loan Review Board reviews and makes final decision on application.
- ◆ *At any point in the review process, the application may be denied or sent back for further information.*

Bob Palmquist
The Northspan Group, Inc.
221 West First Street
Duluth, MN 55802
Phone: 800.232.0707
Direct: 218.529.7562
Fax: 218.529-7592
E-mail: bpalmquist@northspan.org





**Summary of Revenue, Expenditures & Changes
In Fund Balance
Year End December 31, 2010
By Sr. Mary Matthew Morrisroe, Finance Director**

<u>Revenues</u>	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Revolving Loan Fund</u>	<u>Grants & Contracts</u>	<u>Total</u>
Tax Levy	\$503,450			\$503,450
Grants & Contracts		\$462,000	\$5,373,300	\$5,835,300
Program Income		\$166,791		\$166,791
Interest Earned	\$2,352			\$2,352
Miscellaneous	\$40,088			\$40,088
Total Revenue	\$545,890	\$628,791	\$5,373,300	\$6,547,981
Expenditures	\$205,307	\$594,813	\$5,550,365	\$6,350,485
Revenue Expenditures Over (Under)	\$340,583	\$33,978	(\$177,065)	\$197,496
Other Financing Sources (Uses) Local Match	(\$177,065)		\$177,065	
Revenue and Other Sources (Uses) Local Match	\$163,518	\$33,978		\$197,496
Fund Balance 1/1/2010	\$740,588	\$415,002	\$9,420	\$1,165,010
Fund Balance 12/31/2010	\$904,106	\$448,980	\$9,420	\$1,362,506

Sr. Mary Matthew Morrisroe,
Finance Director

Linda Anderson,
Accountant

Josh Halvorson,
Network Administrator

ARDC Revolving Loan Fund: Loans Approved & Disbursed in 2010

Figgins Transport, LTD	\$150,000
Northstar Machine & Tool Co., Inc.	\$100,000
Big Sandy Holding, LLC & Members CCU	\$195,000
Fitgers Brands, LLC	\$75,000
Total	\$520,000



**Summary of Revenue, Expenditures & Changes
In Fund Balance
Year End December 31, 2011
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<u>Revenues</u>	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Revolving Loan Fund</u>	<u>Grants & Contracts</u>	<u>Total</u>
Tax Levy	\$519,504			\$519,504
Grants & Contracts	\$29,412	\$1,263,591	\$5,533,804	\$6,826,807
Program Income		\$308,692		\$308,692
Interest Earned	\$444			\$444
Miscellaneous	\$33,856			\$33,856
Total Revenue	\$583,216	\$1,572,283	\$5,533,804	\$7,689,303
Expenditures	\$261,578	\$1,646,420	\$5,791,023	\$7,699,021
Revenue Expenditures Over (Under)	\$321,638	(\$74,137)	(\$257,219)	(\$9,718)
Other Financing Sources (Uses) Local Match	(\$210,475)		\$257,219	\$46,744
Revenue and Other Sources (Uses) Local Match	\$111,163	(\$74,137)		\$37,026
Fund Balance 1/1/2011	\$904,106	\$448,980	\$9,420	\$1,362,506
Fund Balance 12/31/2011	\$1,015,269	\$374,843	\$9,420	\$1,399,532

Sr. Mary Matthew Morrisroe,
Finance Director

Linda Anderson,
Accountant

Josh Halvorson,
Network Administrator

ARDC Revolving Loan Fund: Loans Approved & Disbursed in 2011

Morningstar Woodworks	\$100,000
MNSTAR Technologies	\$235,000
WR Whiteside Equipment, Inc.	\$200,000
Granite Gear, Inc.	\$150,000
Meyer Group	\$40,000
Northshore Manufacturing	\$250,000
Wide Open Company	\$137,500
AG Thompson House	\$108,000
SMR, Inc.	\$90,000
SureFab, LLC	\$250,000
Total	\$1,560,500

2010 ARDC Board and Commission Membership

County Commissioners

Paul Bailey, Aitkin County
Dick Brenner, Carlton County
Robert Fenwick, Chair, Cook County
Catherine McLynn, Itasca County
Wade Pavleck, Koochiching County
Brad Jones, Lake County
Steve Raukar, St. Louis County
Peg Sweeney, St. Louis County

Communities Under 10,000 Population

John Larson, Aitkin County
Nancy Graham, Carlton County
Bill Lenz, Cook County
Mary Fragnito, Itasca County
Carlene Perfetto, Lake County
Cynthia Jaska, Koochiching County
Vacant, St. Louis County

School Boards

Harlan Tardy, ISD #319, Itasca County
Martha Lentz, ISD #2, Aitkin County

Township Officials

Dorothy Biskey, Aitkin County
Clayton Kauppila, Carlton County
Diane Parker, Cook County
Dennis Young, Itasca County
Kevin Adee, Koochiching County
Michael Hoops, Lake County
Steven Kniefel, St. Louis County

Communities Over 10,000 Population

Darby Sater, Hibbing
Louis Russo, Virginia
Sharla Gardner, Duluth
Vacant, Cloquet

North American Tribal Council (NATC)

Jason Holliday, Fond du Lac
Lorraine Wipson, Grand Portage
Dave Anderson, Bois Forte

At Large Members

Gordy Anderson, Two Harbors
Kevin Downey, Two Harbors
Wayne Dupuis, Cloquet
Lars Kuehnow, Duluth,
Allen Rasmussen, International Falls
Margaret Sherman, Palisade
Paul Nevanen, International Falls
Fr. Bogdan Zjalic, Chisholm

Advisory Committees (One Year Terms)

Earl Elde, Duluth, (MIC)
Michael Duffy, Cloquet, (AAA)

Officers

Robert Fenwick, Chair
Peg Sweeney, Vice Chair
Allen Rasmussen, Treasurer
Margaret Sherman, Secretary

Board of Directors

Robert Fenwick, Cook County
Peg Sweeney, St. Louis County
Allen Rasmussen, At Large
Margaret Sherman, At Large
Jason Holliday, NATC
Gordy Anderson, At Large
Paul Nevanen, At. Large
Dick Brenner, Carlton County
Catherine McLynn, Itasca County
Paul Bailey, Aitkin County
Brad Jones, Lake County
Steve Raukar, St. Louis County
Wade Pavleck, Koochiching County
Earl Elde, MIC Advisory
Doug Grindall, RTAC
Michael Duffy, Aging Advisory



www.arrowheadplanning.org



www.dsmic.org



www.arrowheadaging.org



www.bywaysresourcecenter.org

2011 ARDC Board and Commission Membership

County Commissioners

Don Niemi, Aitkin County
Dick Brenner, Carlton County
Sue Hakes, Cook County
Catherine McLynn, Itasca County
Wade Pavleck, Koochiching County
Brad Jones, Lake County
Steve Raukar, St. Louis County
Peg Sweeney, Chair, St. Louis County

Communities Under 10,000 Population

John Larson, Aitkin County
Nancy Graham, Carlton County
Bill Lenz, Cook County
Mary Fragnito, Itasca County
Carlene Perfetto, Lake County
Darlene Koski, St. Louis County
Cynthia Jaska, Koochiching County

School Boards

Judy Seliga-Punyko, ISD #709,
St. Louis County
Sonya Pineo, ISD #706, St. Louis
County

Township Officials

Dorothy Biskey, Aitkin County
Clayton Kauppila, Carlton County
Diane Parker, Cook County
Gary Rosato, Itasca County
Kevin Adee, Koochiching County
Michael Hoops, Lake County
Steven Kniefel, St. Louis County

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Heather Rand, Duluth
Lars Kuehnow, Duluth
Connie Christenson, Virginia

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Michael Duffy, Aging Advisory



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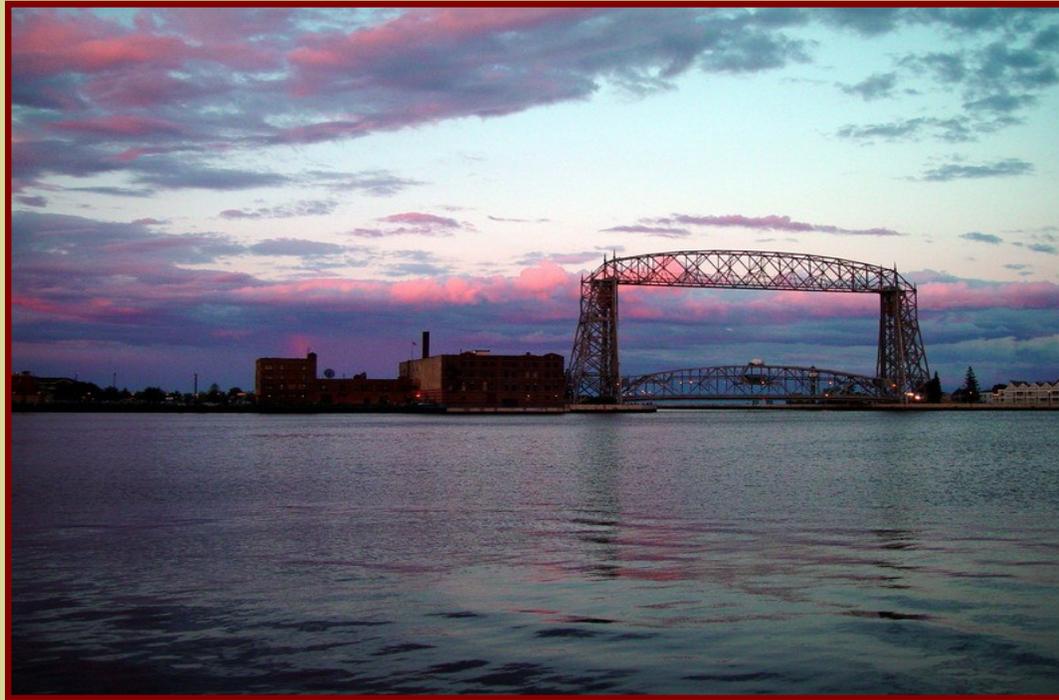
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LEADING PLANNING CONNECTING

ARROWHEAD REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
221 W. FIRST ST., DULUTH, MN 55802 PHONE 218.722.5545 1.800.232.0707 www.ardc.org