

# REGION FIVE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION 2015 Annual Report

Five Counties. One Vision. One Source.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



2015 was a year of highs for R5DC. As a public entrepreneur in that only one third of our income is derived from a state set levy, and the remaining income is generated from contacts and grants, funding services that achieve our mission. The Commission takes our fiduciary responsibility quite seriously and we are delighted to report that the FY2014 net profit was modest but satisfies our intent to offer maximum benefit to our communities.

In efforts to help newly elected officials navigate through our regional organizations and vast program offerings, R5DC hosted an "Elected Official

Summit" in November 2015, in partnership with the National Joint Powers Alliance and the Initiative Foundation whereas we clarified alignment and differences of the three organizations. In 2016 the Commissioners will take a regional Bus Tour to see projects and meet local businesses and community members who utilize the R5DC programs.

In 2015 R5DC received a USDA Rural Business Development Grant to learn and disseminate information about the newly passed MNVest legislation for securities crowdfunding, we refer to as "Community Public Offerings." This legislation is currently in the rule making process with the MN Dept. of Commerce. Following a trip to Oregon to learn more about crowdfunding, R5DC contacted the MN Director of Securities to offer recommendations that would allow the MNVest legislation to maximize its potential benefit to rural MN small businesses. In 2016, R5DC will work with MN DOC, security brokers and rural MN small businesses to share the specifics of this new law in a user friendly format.

This is an exciting time for R5DC and for our region. I can't wait to see what 2016 brings!

Sincerely,

Chuck Parins



Index
Commission MembersPage 4
Staff MembersPage 5
Financial ReportPage 7
TransportationPage 8
Economic DevelopmentPage 9
Community DevelopmentPage 10-11
LendingPage 12-13
OutreachPage 14-15

#### MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Greetings to our partners and regional collaborators.

Our organizational culture values humility but my pride is bursting as the 2015 body of work from our small team exhibits high quality and impressive volume of benefit to the region. The R5DC team managed a lending portfolio and delivered planning and project management in the areas of Transportation, Economic & Community Development.

Through the leadership of the Resilient Region Champions (including all of the R5DC team members) and several partnerships, the implementation of our highly acclaimed regional Resilient Region Plan (www.resilientregion.org) has impacted Broadband development, scenic

by-way planning around Mille Lac's Lake, construction of a local food processing facility, planning for a Service Member housing development, local food programs that tie directly to grower incomes through the Choose Health program, new regional initiatives around Education & Workforce Development and SO MUCH MORE!.

R5DC participated in organizing and fund raising for the regions first TedXGullLake event held at Maddens Resort in Oct 2015. <a href="www.tedxgulllake.com">www.tedxgulllake.com</a> I encourage you to take a minute to listen to any of the talks, they are inspiring. This Annual Report discloses how the R5DC staff authored/administered several grants for partner organizations as well as author regional applications that were submitted by partners such as the BUSH Foundation grant of \$500k awarded to Lakewood Health System.

After several classes and help from our sister RDC's (R9DC and UMVRDC) the staff and a Commission taskforce completely rewrote the R5DC Personnel Policies. Staff and another Commission taskforce created evaluation metrics and success measures that allow for transparency and accountability to the region that will be tracked on the R5DC website beginning in 2016.

We look forward to new challenges ahead, and opportunities to partner and achieve regional benefit.

Humblest regards, Cheryal Lee Hills

The Region Five Development Commission's mission is to enhance the vitality and quality of life in Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd and Wadena counties.

#### REGION FIVE COMMISSION MEMBERS

#### **Cass County**

John Benson, *Township Board*Bob Kangas, *County Commissioner*John Poston, *County Municipalities* 

#### **Crow Wing County**

Rosemary Franzen, County Commissioner
Tom Lillehei, County Municipalities
Mark Platta, Township Board

#### **Morrison County**

Duane Johnson, County Commissioner
Andrea Lauer, County Municipalities
Paul Nieman, Jr., Township Board

#### **Todd County**

Alan Perish, Township Board

Alex Weego, County Municipalities

Barb Becker, Todd County Commissioner

#### **Wadena County**

David Anderson, County Municipalities

Bill Kern, Township Board

Sheldon Monson, County Commissioner

#### Schools

Chris Hadfield, Higher Education
Sharon Ballou, School Board Rep.
Katy Botz, School District Rep.

#### **Additional Units of Government**

Sally Fineday, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
Chuck Parins, Area Council of Government
Diane Jacobson, SWCD
Dave Pritschet, City of Brainerd

#### **Allied Interests**

Steven Hall, Camp Ripley
Craig Nathan, Workforce Development
Erich Heppner, Emerging Leaders



#### REGION FIVE STAFF



Cheryal Lee Hills

Executive Director

218.894.3233 x1



Sandy Voigt

Regional Business Specialist
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Dawn Espe
Regional Development Planner
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Regional Development Planner
218.894,3233 x5



Nichole Larson
Finance Director
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NEW STAFF IN 2016
Staci Headley, Reg. Dev Planner
Sharon Gottwalt, Controller

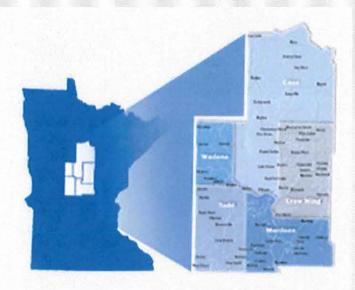
R5DC addresses regional critical issues, and sometimes these issues are BIG. When we feel as though our challenges seem astronomical and out of our control, we ask "who else cares about this" and we bring those folks together to help create solutions that drive change. Turns out that a lot of people "care" and want to work in innovative and inclusive ways; our residents, businesses, our partner foundations, the numinous national associates including our state & federal agency allies. We are blessed in Region Five to have so very many partners that are willing to work together to get the work done, and this 2015 Annual Report shares initiatives whereas in some instances R5DC was the main driver and in other instances we participated in a subservient leader role.

## SERVING CASS, CROW WING, MORRISON, TODD AND WADENA COUNTIES

5 counties, 65 communities, 151 townships, 1 tribe and 1 military camp

#### **R5DC** Role

To "fill the holes" without duplication of efforts by the private, public or non-profit sectors. Our intent is to identify work that addresses regional critical issues and that will allow for collective shared outcomes.



#### FIND US ON THE WEB

www.regionfive.org

www.resilientregion.org

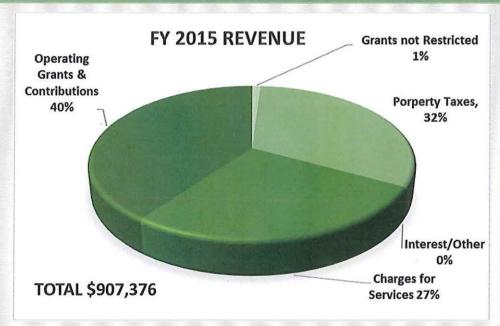
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COMING IN 2016- www.northcentraleda.org

#### **Annual Report Purpose**

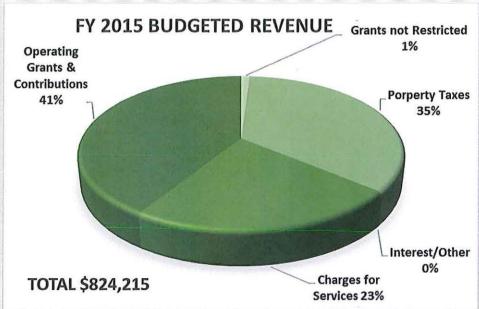
To inform the Commission and the region of all staff's success in meeting the goals summarized in the Commission approved FY2016 Work Plan. It's a way for the region to measure our value through the achievement of outlined objectives, benchmarks, and goals.

#### FINANCIAL REPORT



Total Expenditures \$812,574
FY 2015 Net Income \$94,802

Budgeted Expenditures \$713,902 Budgeted FY 2015 Net Income \$110,313



Region Five Development Commission's financial statements for fiscal year 2015 were audited by Conway, Deuth & Schmiesing, PLLP. An unqualified opinion was expressed.

#### **FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS:**

\*The assets of the Commission exceeded its liabilities at the close of the fiscal year by \$1,472,017 (net position) of which 99% is restricted in use.

\*The Commission's capital assets (net of accumulated depreciation) at the close of the fiscal year were \$4,334.

\*At the close of the fiscal year, the General Fund reported an ending fund balance of \$549,449, an increase of \$124,480 in comparison with the prior year. Of this balance \$12,211 is nonspendable, \$45,817 is assigned, and \$491,421 is available for spending at the Commission's discretion (unassigned fund balance).

#### TRANSPORTATION

#### **Annual MnDOT Contract Work Plan**

Throughout 2015 Region Five Staff has executed the responsibilities identified in the annual MnDOT contract work plan. Responsibilities identified in the work plan include:

- -Area Transportation Partnership (ATP) Coordination and Involvement
- Transportation Advisory Council (TAC) Administration
- Minnesota Association of Development Organizations (MADO) Planners Meeting attendance and Involvement
- Statewide Planning
- Regional Planning
- Transportation Conference Attendance



#### Safe Routes to School

Region Five also contracts separately with MnDOT to conduct Safe Routes to School Planning (SRTS) for communities throughout the region. In 2015 Region Five Staff completed SRTS plans for two communities and 7 School sites:

- Little Falls (6 school sites)
- Cass Lake Bena (1 school site)







#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**



#### Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Through a planning grant provided by the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Economic Development Administration develops and maintains the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region. A group of local leaders from all sectors of the population guides the process.

2015 CEDS Vital Projects	
The Purple Carrot Market	Little Falls Food Co-op
Rural Broadband	TCDC
Cows for Clean Water	Happy Dancing Turtle
Home-Based Business Enhancement	BLADEC
Teaching Artists and Art Org Training	Screen Porch Productions
Bridges Service Learning Project	Brainerd Chamber
Dower Lake Rec Area	Staples Park and Recreation
Rural MN SME Crowdfunding	NCEDA
Choose Health Pine River	Happy Dancing Turtle
CACFP Enhancement	R5DC

#### Crowdfunding

NCEDA received a \$98,000 grant from USDA to acquire knowledge and develop training modules aimed at informing Economic Development Professionals and small and medium enterprises throughout the region and state around MNVest, the recently passed legislation allowing investment crowdfunding in Minnesota.

The RBDG will allow R5DC to create and host a web portal, create train-the-trainer materials and develop training curriculum that offers information around investment crowdfunding to help businesses, investors and economic development practitioners understand the pros and cons of investment crowdfunding and make a well informed decision on whether it is a good fit for their business or the businesses that ED Pros are working with. In addition to the training materials and website, R5DC will identify up to five new or emerging small to medium enterprises to target for pilot projects.



R5DC was the recipient of a NADO mini grant which was used to build the capacity of the coach and coordinator, working on the local foods value chain, through peer-to-peer learning with other WealthWorks coaches and coordinators nationwide. R5DC and partners like "Sprout MN" have expanded our knowledge to the current value chains and deepened our impacts in all forms of wealth in the local food value chain.

#### **Community Asset Profiles**

Region Five was awarded a grant from BUSH Foundation in the amount of \$50K to fund a deeper dive into the 22 completed community asset profiles (CAPs). We started the CAPs workshops in 2012 and decided after completing the first 22 that we needed to think a little deeper on what each of these communities need to be successful. We are reviewing all completed profiles and **co-creating** with the communities individual work plans to help them move to the next stage of



Go North CAP Meeting

implementation. The ultimate goal is to build the capacity of community members in all 67 communities to be become leaders of their respective towns. Profiles and photos of the 22 completed communities can be found on the Resilient Region website, www.resilientregion.org/quality-of-place/.

# Assisted organizations in grant writing and/or promotion of their events:

#### Co-Promoted:

- Got Skills? LSS
- Telehealth BLADEC
- Sprout Holiday
   Marketplace

#### Authored:

- Lakewood Choose
   Health- wrote and
   advocated for \$500,000
   awarded grant.
- USDA-LFPP
- Broadband:

NJPA \$100,000 DEED \$1,000,000





#### **Hazard Mitigation**

Throughout 2015 Region Five Staff has been working with Emergency Managers from both Wadena and Morrison Counties to update their Hazard Mitigation plans. Hazard Mitigation

plans are the basis for community's eligibility for FEMA Mitigation funding for projects such as safe-rooms, acquisition of properties in floodplains, power line burial, generators, and wild fire sprinkler systems.

#### Comprehensive Planning

In 2015 Region Five completed comprehensive plans for St. Mathias Township, and the city of Hewitt. We have also begun conversations with two other communities that are interested in updating their plans in the

near future. Consistent with its policy of not competing directly with the private sector, Region Five directs communities to seek proposals from private sector firms first. Only when communities are unable to have their needs met privately does Region Five submit a proposal.





#### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

#### **NWAF-Building New Models of Regional Resilience**

R5DC received a grant from the Northwest Area Foundation to do a deeper dive into the Resilient Region plan that was developed in 2012.

We have two goals that we would like to accomplish with this grant opportunity:

- 1. to archive evaluation of the Resilient Region process and impacts and make adjustments from what we have learned.
- 2. Through framework and evaluation of the Resilient Region initiative, we will drill down even deeper to the impacts of the social enterprise, Sprout Marketplace, and use our learnings to accelerate and shift future of local food hub activities given what we learn.



#### **Resilient Region Storytelling**

In an effort to highlight our accomplishments as a region since the inception of the Resilient Region Plan, Champions in each of the 10 theme areas told a story, showcasing how their work is helping to meet regional goals. Visit www.resilientregion.org to read these stories.

#### **Hunger Impact Partners-Afterschool Meals Program**

Due to a grant R5DC received from Hunger Impact Partners, 9 daycare centers and schools in the region were awarded \$5000 each to purchase equipment needed to allow them to provide students with a snack or meal during after school hours. These grant recipients were:

- YMCA, Brainerd
- Kidz Zone, Garrison
- Learning Tree, Brainerd
- Browerville School, Browerville
- Staples Elementary School, Staples
- Staples/Motley High School, Staples
- Sacred Heart, Staples
- Bertha-Hewitt School, Bertha
- Tiny Adventures, Browerville



In addition to equipment upgrades, these child care providers will be meeting biannually to discuss best practices with regards to child and youth nutrition.

#### **BUSINESS LOANS**

Revolving Loan Fund (RLF): The application process for a Revolving Loan Fund involves several partners and major commitment on the part of the business owners to work with staff to prepare a viable and fundable project that contributes to the economic vitality of the region. Even with limited capital funds available, \$165,500 was approved and disbursed in 2015 through six (6) loans providing 37 jobs created and 20 jobs retained. Interest continues to increase and several projects are pending in the pipeline. We are managing 38 active RLF business loans with over \$1.2 million dollars in loan balances.

#### Rural Microenterprise Assistance Program

(RMAP): 2015 was another great year for the RMAP loan program with over \$79,000 being loaned to four (4) businesses creating 22 new jobs and retaining 10 jobs. All original funds have been disbursed and these loans were made with repaid dollars. During the entire course of the program only one (1) loan has been charged off. Additional financing partners were invited to participate in loan packages due to limited funding available. We have 16 active loans with a total of \$365,000 in balances. Loans are provided in ten (10) counties which include our region plus Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs and Pine. Discussions and opportunities for recapitalization are always being explored!



#### **PERSONAL LOANS**

#### Household Well Water System

(HWWS): We were able to provide financing for city water line connection/replacement for residents in the City of Wadena infrastructure project through repaid funds. This helped residents of the Southeast section of town enormously. Additionally, we were awarded a new grant allocation for re-capitalization of the existing loan program used for repair/replacement of an existing water well for rural landowners. This program truly contributes to mission of Region Five to improve the quality of life for its citizens. We completed eight (8) loans totaling \$27,526 during 2015 and have an active portfolio of 11 loans with an outstanding total balance of \$44,000.

#### Individual Septic Treatment System

(ISTS): ISTS loans topped the charts again this year with a record breaking 26 loans closed for \$121,373. Several approved loans are pending waiting for "spring thaw." As displayed on the attached map, these loans have reached all corners of the Region Five Development Commission area. 71 loans with outstanding total balance of \$269,000 complete the lending portfolio. The ISTS loans have leveraged BOWSER grant funds through partnerships with all five Counties of Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd and Wadena. Additional loans are provided to Beltrami County through this program.

#### LENDING

#### Loans Closed in 2015

Wadena	Wadena	\$2,019
Pillager	Cass	\$7,264
Verndale	Wadena	\$1,500
Little Falls	Morrison	\$2,960
Wadena	Wadena	\$6,250
Wadena	Wadena	\$4,400
Wadena	Wadena	\$3,100
Royalton	Morrison	\$2,950
Wadena	Wadena	\$4,000
Motley	Morrison	\$2,798
Pine River	Cass	\$5,663
Deerwood	Crow Wing	\$5,495
Wadena	Wadena	\$4,000
Wadena	Wadena	\$3,000
Hillman	Morrison	\$5,400
Grey Eagle	Todd	\$7,790
Longville	Cass	\$7,606
Bemidji	Beltrami	\$4,770
Sebeka	Wadena	\$3,718
Little Falls	Morrison	\$8,030
Verndale	Wadena	\$2,200
Brainerd	Crow Wing	\$5,000
Holdingford	Morrison	\$5,854
Sebeka	Wadena	\$2,218
Brainerd	Crow Wing	\$4,388
Pine River	Cass	\$9,000
(\$11°	1,390 LY Total)	\$121,373

#### **HWWS**

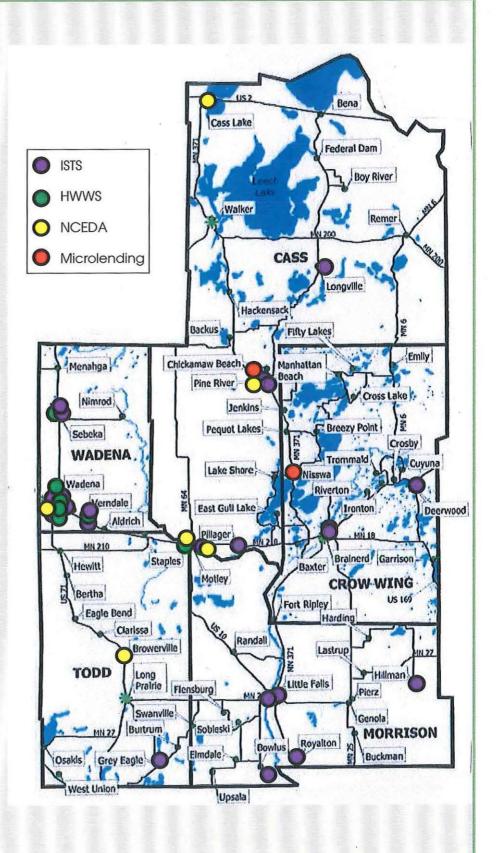
Staples	Todd	\$4,869
Wadena	Wadena	\$943
Wadena	Wadena	\$3,389
Wadena	Wadena	\$453
Verndale	Wadena	\$5,289
Wadena	Wadena	\$1,000
Sebeka	Wadena	\$10,000
Pequot Lakes/Crow Wing		\$1,583
(\$34,153 LY Total)		\$27,526

#### NCEDA

Pine River	Cass	\$50,000
Browerville	Todd	\$50,000
Staples	Todd	\$27,500
Cass Lake	Cass	\$11,000
Motley	Cass	\$7,000
Wadena	Wadena	\$20,000
	38.000 LY Total)	\$165,500

#### MICRO-LENDING

Pine River	Cass	\$35,000
Mora	Kanabec	\$16,000
Princeton	Mille Lacs	\$8,000
Nisswa	Crow Wing	\$20,400
(\$1	79,000 LY Total)	\$79,400



### taff Training Crowdfur

- Crowdfunding/MNVest Staff: Cheryal, Sandy, Dawn
- Blandin Leadership Program Staff: Dawn
- Leadercast, NJPA Staff: Sandy and Dawn
- BR&E Training at U of M Staff: Melissa
- MN Transportation Conference Staff: Tad
- DEED Roadshow Staff: Sandy
- AgBMP Loan Training Staff: Sandy

#### Workshops/Webinars

- Blandin Border to Border Broadband Conference Staff: Dawn
- Placemaking, Little Falls Staff: Dawn, Cheryal, Melissa
- Post Harvest Handling Workshop Staff: Cheryal
- Facilitated Core Four Training Staff: Sandy, Nichole,
   Dawn
- Elected Official's Summit Staff: Cheryal, Dawn, Sandy, Nichole, Tad
- DevelopMN Staff: Cheryal, Dawn
- CERT's Renewable Energy Staff: Cheryal, Dawn
- NADO, New Orleans Staff: Cheryal
- R5DC Commissioner's Communication Workshop
- MADO Meetings for all staff-quarterly
- Housing Institute Workshop Staff: Cheryal
- NJPA R5 Summit Staff: Dawn, Melissa
- Design Party, Sprout Staff: Cheryal, Sandy
- ♦ bushCONNECT 2015 Staff: Dawn, Melissa



Farm at St. Mathias Barn Art



Sprout Marketplace Design Party



Arlene Jones, Cheryal Hills, Kate Bjorge and Carol Anderson

#### **Speaking Engagements**

- DEED Conference-Regional Relationships
- Rural Issues, MPR
- Rooting Opportunity Summit, Washington DC
- NGA Workforce Development, Kentucky
- Nebraska Community Foundation Visit
- NADO Coal Reliant Communities, West Virginia & Colorado
- Food Access Summit, Duluth
- NADO Annual Meeting, New Orleans

#### OUTREACH

#### **R5DC** Representation

#### LOCAL:

Happy Dancing Turtle, SPROUT MN, Central Lakes College Advisory Council, NJPA Cradle to Career Working Group

Staff: Cheryal

Brainerd Housing Institute Staff: Cheryal

Rural MN CEP Staff: Sandy

Friends in Field Staff: Sandy, Dawn

CLC President Search Advisory Committee Staff: Cheryal



UofM EDA Center Advisory Board Staff: Cheryal

Red Group Design Team Staff: Cheryal

#### NATIONAL:

RUPRI State Policy Panel, national panel on rural issues Staff: Cheryal



Cathee Pullman, Cheryal Hills, Arlene Jones, Colleen Landkamer and Jane Ray.

#### REGION FIVE SERVICE AND PARTNERSHIP AWARDS

Region Five believes it is important to honor our service providers and regional partners who have gone above and beyond their compensation in ways that have notably assisted in managing our operations and who has significantly made a difference in our ability to meet our mission. The Commission also feels it is important to honor companies who are improving our regions vital economy.

2015 is R5DC's fourth annual awards ceremony, with recognition of:

Outstanding Service Provider—JZP, L.L.C.

Outstanding Regional Partner—Blandin Foundation

NCEDA Borrower—Stern Companies, Inc.

Microbusiness Borrower—C&C Consulting/Freedom Center

#### Coming in 2016-DevelopMN

In 2012, Minnesota Associations of Development Organizations began working on a greater Minnesota development strategy, which was named DevelopMN. The purpose is to create economic prosperity in greater Minnesota through an alignment of Regional Development Organizations and the communities they serve. As a group, we have worked on developing a document that links our assets, leverages our resources and aligns opportunities. This document will be made public in 2016.

#### 2015 Annual Report Addendum



#### Per Minnesota State Statute 462.393 Line 7

Region Five Development Commission recommendations on federal and state programs, cooperation, funding and legislative needs:

1. Funding of STATE Programs and Legislative needs: Progress made in 2015 with the MN Public Utilities Commission and Xcel Energy redirecting unused Renewable Development Fund program resources. In 2015 notice was given that R5DC may execute a grant with Xcel Energy for a \$1.9 million dollar grant that would provide solar PV systems on eight K-12 schools and the Leech Lake Tribal College. Regardless of the opportunity for this region, honoring the intent of the legislature with efficient use of RDF funds is worthy of praise.

Through efficient use of the Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development (DEED) grant dollars, as well as support from the Blandin and Bush Foundations, the Regional Development Commissions worked together to create a rural Minnesota economic development plan called DevelopMN.

- 2. R5DC has recommended several times to the State of Minnesota to utilize the Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development (DEED) data to set the states prevailing wage. R5DC is full against the invalid set prevailing wage rates set by the current survey system that is controlled by construction industry unions. Most other states in the nation set their prevailing wage thru data collected from businesses via the state mandated "new hire report" and housed at their State Economic Development Agencies. This alternative approach allows for competitive realistic wages paid for services and efficient use of tax payer funded projects such as the state funded Broadband projects. The prevailing wages set by metro unions are not realistic for rural areas and dramatically impact the ability for projects to secure and hire, retain local talent and contractors.
- 3. Funding of FEDERAL Programs and Legislative needs: R5DC has benefited the region through an annual planning grant from US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) for several years, and while the Commission is extremely grateful for these awards, the amount the Commission is able to apply for is set by EDA and is not equitable with the amounts awarded to other MN regions and there seems to be no consideration to the federally defined "distress" that is much higher in the R5DC region compared to other regions across the state.

In 2015 R5DC submitted a letter to the Chicago and DC EDA As a result of the additional federal investment of \$9mil slated for EDA via 2015 legislation, R5DC had inquired on the calculation of the partnership planning grants and was educated by EDA Chicago Regional Office (CRO) that approximately 15 years ago the funding levels were determined based on distress levels using a formula that considered unemployment, PCI and five year growth rate within each of the Economic Development Districts (EDD).

With the intent to utilize EDA investment in an efficient way, based on relevant data that reflects EDD regional conditions, R5DC locally elected and appointed Commissioners

respectfully requested that the US Department of Commerce EDA – CRO consider recalculating the partnership planning grants utilizing current data inputs.

By way of response of this request from the EDA Chicago Regional Office the Regional Director offered the idea of a flat/standard amount for partnership planning grants and additional funding based on distress criteria statistical levels. This idea was met with full support of R5DC and we offer our assistance to achieve this change. Fulfilling this request may require guidance, support and approval from the Legislature.

- 4. <u>State Legislative Needs:</u> Many partners throughout the state are convening in 2015- 2016 to craft "Good Food Access Fund" legislation for the 2017 session. The Good Food Access Fund campaign is to secure significant funding from the Minnesota Legislature for a healthy food financing policy to increase the availability of affordable and nutritious food in underserved areas across Minnesota. R5DC provides business loans and extensive Technical Assistance to small businesses in our rural 5 county region and see this resource as a means to further our mission and achieve greater outcomes in central Minnesota. R5DC staff are actively offering suggestions for the development of this campaign.
- 5. <u>Cooperation:</u> R5DC has no recommendations for improved State or National agency cooperation at this time.



POSTAGE

200 1st Street NE, Ste. 2 Staples, MN 56479