



NORTHWEST
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

www.nwrdc.org

*Serving the counties of Kittson, Marshall,
Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake and Roseau.*

www.nwrdc.org

CONTENTS

Introduction

A Message from our Chairperson 1
A Message from our Executive Director2
Commission Membership 2

Financials & 2022 Budget3

Economic Development4

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Region One

Northwest Regional Enterprise Loan Fund5

CARES Act and Legacy Loan Funds Assist Businesses

Northwest Regional Economic Resiliency6

Economic Resiliency Becomes A Permanent Program

Emergency Operations Planning7

HSEM Region 3 Joint Powers Board

Dancing Sky Area Agency On Aging8

Senior LinkAge Line Continues Important Work

Dancing Sky Area Agency On Aging, Cont.....9

Development Team Increases Outreach

2022 Aging Grantees

Transportation Planning 10

Interest In Transportation Alternatives Increases

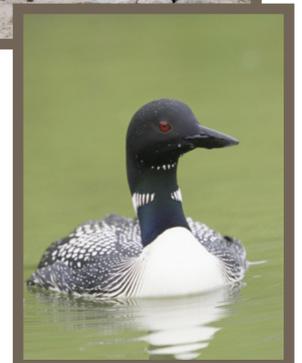
Northwest Regional Transportation Coordination Council. 11

RTCC Mobility Manager Increases Outreach

Plans & Publications 12

NWRDC Team 13

THE BEAUTY OF REGION ONE



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

Welcome...

The Northwest Regional Development Commission (NWRDC) exists because of active commission members, in combination with dedicated and valued local businesses, educational, healthcare and governmental entities, private citizens and private and public sector agencies. These partnerships in the communities throughout the seven (14 & 21) counties make us stronger.

At the NWRDC, 2022 was quite a year. The organization went through a significant transition in 2021 as several long-term members of the NWRDC leadership retired from public service. Building upon the legacy of previous leadership, regional development commission staff came together to focus on organizational capacity and visioning for the opportunities of innovation and growth within local programs and services.

With the partnerships listed above, Northwest Minnesota pushed through its goals to enhance regional housing, address workforce challenges, build organizational sustainability, emergency & resiliency

planning and focus on opportunities to build rural communities of equity.

Here are the NWRDC program highlights in 2022:

- Completed the 5-Year Local Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan.
- American Rescue Act funding awarded to the city of Fosston for expansion of the Industrial Park and airport (\$5.8 million to support business growth). NWRDC offered technical assistance for the application to the US EDA's Economic Adjustment Assistance Program.
- Facilitated a Market Rate Housing Study with support through the Northwest Minnesota Foundation in collaboration with the Northwest Multi-County HRA. Research was provided on the lack of market rate housing and impacts to the business community.
- Aging Department welcomed many new staff throughout 2022 and are excited for the numerous years of experience and innovative skill-sets added to the team. Dancing Sky Area



GARY KIESOW, COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON

Agency on Aging continues to be a strong advocate for increased state nutrition funding to address food insecurities in Northwest Minnesota, transportation inequities and in-home supports.

- Assisted with the completion of a successful Family Assistance Center Seminar for Northwest Minnesota, along with members of the Region 3 Joint Powers Board, NW Health Services Coalition, NW Minnesota Foundation, and other partners. We look forward to future events and updated plans for 2023.
- The Revolving Loan Fund program made 12 loans totaling \$1,365,000.00: leveraging \$7,167,451.00 in private funding and \$300,000.00 in additional public funding.

Thank you for the support, participation and assistance towards the local programs that assist Northwest Minnesota. The NWRDC looks forward to celebrating 50 years of public service with you in 2023.

Sincerely,
Gary Kiesow



COMMISSION MEMBERS: FRONT ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT) – LOREN LUSIGNAN, KATHY TWITE, RON WEISS, DEBRA WISKOW, NORMA CAMPOS, GERALD AMIOT, WARREN STRANDELL, NATHAN REDLAND, DAVID TREUMER. BACK ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT) – DAN FABIAN, GARY KIESOW, DARYL WICKLUND, KEVIN REICH, JIM DUCHAMP, KEITH SISTAD, LOREN YOUNGGREN.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



DARLA WALDNER
NWRDC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on my first year as the Executive Director of the Northwest Regional Development Commission, I feel a sense of gratitude for the amazing staff and Commission members that have been a shining example of professional leadership during a season of transition.

Another challenging year has come and gone, together with our staff and partners we shifted our focus from recovery to resiliency. Remembering the valuable lessons that the pandemic taught us, we became inspired by rural communities coming together to solve complex problems that have been around the region since before the pandemic. However, like never before there is a renewed sense of urgency and a willingness to

come together, publicly and privately, to tackle our biggest challenges.

The pandemic illuminated the many underlying challenges that face our region for individuals, families, businesses, and our communities. But it also brought the people of the region together. Fiercely independent, self-reliant individuals came together to aid and assist those in need and identify new approaches to age-old rural issues: food access, healthcare, and digital connectivity. Strategies for economic prosperity, active living, and establishing how the region can seize on market opportunities have been at the forefront of our regional planning.

We continue to strive to focus our efforts on empowering communities and their people through sustainable

partnerships; promoting equity and inclusivity; and providing services to enhance the quality of life in the region.

This year's annual report showcases the amazing work, in collaboration with our partners, we have accomplished throughout 2022. As our team continues to meet the needs of our stakeholders in the 21st century, I want to thank everyone who has been involved with the NWRDC for your unique contributions to where we stand today as an organization. Our future is bright thanks to your support.

All the best,
Darla Waldner
Executive Director

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Kittson County

Kimberley Johnson*	Kennedy	Townships
David Treumer	Hallock	Municipalities
Loren Younggren	Hallock	Counties

Marshall County

Gary Kiesow**	Goodridge	Counties
Loren Lusignan	Grygla	Townships
Lindsay Oslund	Grygla	Municipalities
Gail Yutrzecka	Argyle	School Boards

Norman County

Nathan Redland*	Halstad	Counties
Crystal Stene	Ada	Municipalities
Lucas Spaeth	Halstad	School Boards

Pennington County

Elvera Cullen	Thief River Falls	At Large
Dave Erickson	Thief River Falls	Townships
Judy Jones	Goodridge	Municipalities
Bruce Lawrence*	Thief River Falls	Counties

Polk County

Gerald Amiot	Crookston	Labor
Norma Campos	East Grand Forks	Minorities
Gerald Jacobson	Fertile	Seniors
Keith Sistas	Fosston	Townships
Warren Strandell*	East Grand Forks	Counties
Toby Strom	McIntosh	Municipalities
Kathleen Twite	East Grand Forks	Business

Red Lake County

Jim DuChamp	Plummer	Municipalities
John Dudycha	Plummer	Counties
Kevin Reich	Red Lake Falls	Townships
Ronald Weiss*	Red Lake Falls	Watershed District

Roseau County

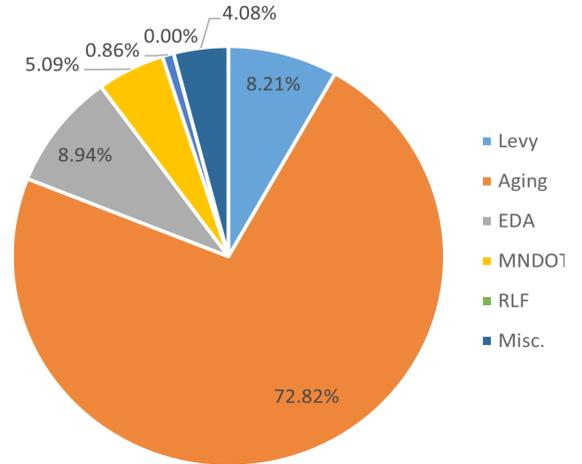
Daryl Wicklund*	Badger	Counties
Debra Wiskow	Greenbush	Townships
Dan Fabian	Roseau	Municipalities
Robin Wisner	Roseau	Minorities

* Board Members ** Chairperson

CALENDAR YEAR 2022 FINANCIALS & 2023 BUDGET

CALENDAR YEAR 2022

Actual 2022 Revenue Sources



REVENUES	CY'2022 BUDGET	CY'2022 ACTUALS	CY'2023 BUDGET
Local Tax Levy	\$ 316,064	\$313,003	\$325,546
MN Board on Aging/Department Health	\$2,751,336	\$2,753,967	\$2,388,552
Economic Development Administration	\$252,151	\$245,778	\$70,000
MN Department of Transportation	\$221,392	\$217,909	\$248,550
NW Minnesota Enterprise Fund	\$142,840	\$141,280	\$143,179
Dancing Sky AAA County Match	\$58,702	\$58,588	\$60,464
Local Contracts/ Miscellaneous	\$125,350	\$116,020	\$95,800
Regrant Revenue	\$5,087,721	\$4,646,192	\$3,727,521
TOTAL	\$8,955,556	\$8,492,737	\$7,059,612

EXPENDITURES	CY'2022 BUDGET	CY'2022 ACTUALS	CY'2023 BUDGET
Salaries and Fringe	\$2,672,905	\$2,638,262	\$2,856,568
Professional Services	\$660,155	\$693,719	\$71,006
Travel	\$102,685	\$95,555	\$111,125
Printing/Postage	\$50,846	\$45,827	\$54,801
Supplies	\$40,544	\$42,240	\$50,423
Rent/Maintenance	\$75,282	\$75,307	\$59,302
Other	\$265,418	\$255,635	\$128,866
Grants/Contracts	\$5,087,721	\$4,646,192	\$3,727,521
TOTAL	\$8,955,556	\$8,492,737	\$7,059,612

CY'2021 AUDIT

The CY'2020 Audit was conducted by Brady Martz, Certified Public Accountants and Consultants in Crookston, Minnesota. The auditor's report expresses an unqualified opinion on the General Purpose Financial Statements of the Northwest Regional Development Commission.

COST ALLOCATION

CY'2022 Actual
Leave Rate:
17.61%

CY'2022 Actual
Fringe Rate:
37.52%

CY'2022 Actual
Indirect Rate:
11.79%

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE:

To maintain and increase the population level and job base in the seven counties of Northwest Minnesota.

SERVICE PRIORITIES:

Business development, labor force development, renewable energy, promotion and planning.

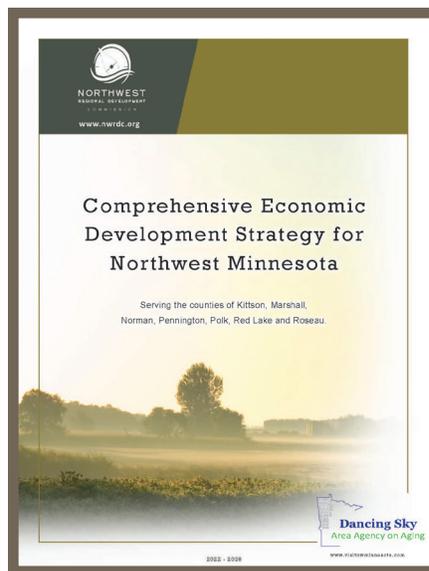
A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Region One

Region One has seen several of its major employers expand in recent years all while combating a labor force shortage that has been accelerated by the pandemic.

Whether it be through additional production facilities, acquisition, or diversification and retooling, Region One is fortunate to have manufacturers and other businesses making significant investments within the region. As a result, we should see further employment opportunities along with the potential for growth.

This growth potential is not without its challenges. The labor force shortage and subsequent support for the labor force such as housing and childcare will all play a role in the region's ability to realize this growth potential.

In early 2022, the 2022-2026 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was developed. The CEDS is a strategy aimed at improving the region's economy and labor force so the previously mentioned economic potential may be realized.



In addition to the new CEDS, the NWRDC and Headwater's Regional Development Commission have partnered with the EDA University Center at University of Minnesota, Crookston to gather regional partners in efforts to further implement the CEDS strategies within each region. By convening regional economic and community development partners for 4-6 meetings per year, we intend

to create a strategy that best aligns with the region's ability to implement the strategy and identify gaps in the region's resources where additional assistance may be needed.



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Ongoing efforts to improve "Quality of Place" continue throughout the region. One thing we learned from the pandemic is our traditional idea of the labor force in which our employers have to draw from has changed. As more companies continue to adopt telecommuting as an option for employees, the pool of eligible applicants expands, as does the potential competition for those applicants.



www.nwrdc.org

NORTHWEST REGIONAL ENTERPRISE LOAN FUND

PURPOSE:

To strengthen and diversify the economy by providing a source of low interest financing to businesses when credit is not otherwise available from other sources and to ensure the successful completion of activities to be financed.

SERVICE PRIORITIES:

Financing for-profit businesses which create or retain jobs, especially for the long-term underemployed or unemployed.

CARES Act and Legacy Loan Funds Assist Businesses

The Northwest Regional Enterprise Loan Fund closed out the disbursement phase of the CARES Act and have entered the revolving phase of the loan funds.

In 2022, we saw a sharp rise in interest rates creating several conflicting impacts to the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program. The rise in rates, makes the cheaper Revolving Loan Fund money look more appealing to borrowers and bankers alike but eventually the higher rates will reduce the number of people seeking financing.

The last of the CARES Act loan funds were lent out in June of this year. Under the CARES Act Revolving Loan Fund program, 24 loans were made totaling \$3,130,000. The CARES Act loans were offered at 0% interest for 24 months and 2% for the remainder of the term.

For 2022, 12 loans were made totaling \$1,365,000.00 between both the

Legacy Revolving Loan Fund and the CARES Act Revolving Loan Fund. Restaurants, grocery, manufacturing, and service industries were all recipients of Revolving Loan Fund funding.

In addition to opening new loans, other loan fund activities included loan restructuring, interest rate adjustments, payoffs, loan assistance to community economic development agencies (EDAs), and technical assistance.

We continue to provide technical assistance in the form of information and referral to other organizations and agencies, including, but not limited, to a Small Business Development Center, EDA University Center, Agricultural Utilization Research Institute, Department of Employment and Economic Development, Headwaters Regional Development Commission, NW Minnesota Multi-County HRA, Northwest Minnesota Foundation, and formerly the IDEA

Competition.

Historical Loan Activity

(period ending 12/31/2022):

Total Loans	246
Active Loans	63
Total Loan Amount	\$19,247,229
Other Financing Leveraged	\$97,364,592
Jobs Created/Retained	2,250
Total Project Costs	\$134,327,484

Historical Loan Activity by County

(period ending 12/31/2022):

County	# of Loans	Amount
Kittson	25	\$1,389,120
Marshall	45	\$3,112,045
Norman	21	\$1,239,248
Pennington	31	\$2,826,850
Polk	76	\$6,583,475
Red Lake	16	\$1,190,615
Roseau	32	\$2,905,875





www.nwrdc.org

NORTHWEST REGIONAL ECONOMIC RESILIENCY

PURPOSE:

To develop strategies to mitigate the impacts of the on-going global pandemic and its effects

SERVICE PRIORITIES:

Economic development planning and coordination to develop or update a disaster recovery and resiliency economic development plan



Economic Resiliency Becomes A Permanent Program

In January 2021, NWRDC assumed an additional role for regional resiliency in direct response to the Covid-19 pandemic. With funding from the Federal CARES Act, the Commission developed strategies to mitigate the impacts of the on-going global pandemic and its effects on communities, employers, higher education, childcare, workforce, and housing to name a few.

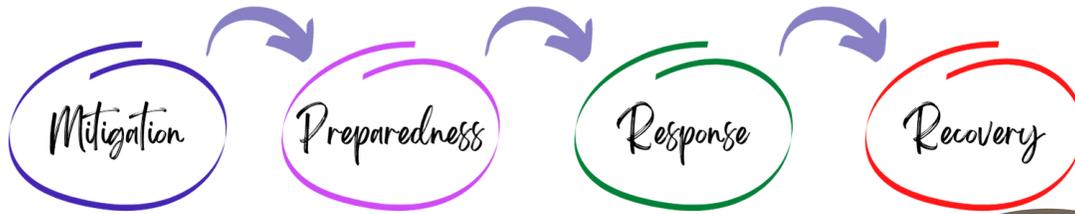
This year, the NWRDC made permanent the Director of Community Development in an effort to more broadly focus our resources on the region's community development needs. Community Development strives to assist regional efforts to build assets that go beyond core economic development efforts.

Region 1 benefits from a robust economy which continues to improve post-pandemic. However, several challenges still create headwinds for continued growth in the communities we serve. NWRDC is committed to multiple, regional efforts focused on developing solutions to advance regional prosperity.

2022 Project Highlights

- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding:** NWRDC staff worked with several regional project submissions to seek funding. These were highly competitive grant rounds with submissions exceeding available funds by a ratio of 3:1. Fosston was selected to receive nearly \$6 million in federal funds to expand their existing Industrial Park and develop a new hangar at the adjacent municipal airport. When complete, this project will provide infrastructure to create eleven new industrial sites and expand and improve operations at the airport. EDA funding will be matched with 25% local funds.
- Increase the region's childcare capacity:** Childcare capacity is constrained in NW Minnesota which is impacting job growth. A recent study completed by First Children's Finance (FCF) indicated the need for up to 593 additional slots, ages birth – age 5 in School District #564 (Thief River Falls) alone. NWRDC is actively engaged in a Strategic Supply Plan effort guided by FCF to create additional capacity across the community. This effort will identify options for an additional daycare center, combined with expansion of in-home or pod-model daycare availability.
- Incentivize the need for affordable Market Rate Housing:** NWRDC in partnership with Northwest Minnesota Multi-County HRA received funding from the Northwest Minnesota Foundation to study the impacts of Market Rate Housing disparities in Region 1. Working with the Grand Forks Community Land Trust, the project is focused on the communities of Roseau, Red Lake Falls, Thief River Falls, and Warroad with in-depth research on workforce housing availability versus identified need. The project is also aligned with and supporting Minnesota Housing Partnership's Emerging Developer Initiative.
- Expand access of high-speed internet to rural and remote areas of NW Minnesota:** Access to reliable broadband is a challenge for several areas in Region 1. NWRDC is supporting Warroad's efforts led by a Blandin Broadband Communities grant to plan for and fund the installation of broadband throughout School District #690. This remote rural area struggles with equitable access which impacts commerce, education, and other aspects of daily life for residents.

Emergency Management



www.nwrdc.org

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANNING

PURPOSE: To aid Homeland Security & Emergency Management (HSEM) Region Three in the preparation, planning and implementation of activities related to regional preparedness, response and recovery.

SERVICE PRIORITIES: Utilize a specifically geared, annually evolving work program to support existing emergency management capabilities throughout Northwest Minnesota, as approved by the Emergency Management Joint Powers Board and HSEM staff.



HSEM Region 3 Joint Powers Board

The Northwest Regional Development Commission continued its planning partnership with the HSEM Region 3 Joint Powers Board by providing planning services for the fourteen counties and two tribal nations located in North-western Minnesota. This year's focus was on homeland security and terrorism.

With an ever-evolving work program combined with an active array of hazards present in Minnesota, it takes many individuals active in emergency preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery in order save lives, reduce property damage and decrease/eliminate future effects. Government, local agencies, volunteers, businesses and emergency response personnel all work together and lend efforts and resources to keep our communities safe. The following points highlight a few of the successes that the Northwest Emergency Manager's Joint Powers

Board's regional planning program has accomplished in 2022, thanks to a grant funding opportunity through Minnesota Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM):

- Partner Information Coordination Planning
- Recovery Planning Related to Hostile Action Scenarios
- Regional/Local Emergency Operations Center Planning
- Family Assistance Center Regional Seminar
- Regional Badging & Credentialling
- Involvement with the Upper Red River Valley COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster), Regional Radio Board/Radio Advisory Committee and the Northwest Health Services Coalition.
- Assistance to Northwest Minnesota Foundation – Philanthropic Preparedness, Resiliency and Emergency Partnership (PPREP)
- Exercise Planning & Assistance

- BCA Threat Liaison Training
- Quarterly and Joint Powers Board Meeting Attendance
- Local & Regional Exercise Involvement

Additional projects (not part of the above-mentioned grant) were also undertaken including:

- Resiliency Planning in Coordination with the Community Development Director
- Supply Chain – Resiliency Planning with the University of Minnesota Crookston and the Northwest SBDC
- Assistance to the NW Regional Transportation Coordination Council
- Northwest Minnesota Tourism Directory
- IT Support
- Survey Project with Blue Cross / Blue Shield
- Strengths at Work Training
- Minnesota Association of Development Organizations (MADO) – Conference
- Workplace Well-Being Collaborative



DANCING SKY AREA AGENCY ON AGING

PURPOSE:

The Dancing Sky is 1 of 7 Minnesota Area Agencies on Aging. Our goal for the people of Minnesota is simple, to work with rural communities to help older adults stay in control of their choices. We envision vibrant communities invested in their elders as well as older adults and caregivers planning for the future. Together, older adults and communities thrive.



ALL STAFF ASSISTING SENIOR DURING OPEN ENROLLMENT

SERVICE PRIORITIES:

Nutrition - congregate and home delivered meals, legal services, homemaker and chore services, home modification, assisted transportation services, health promotion and prevention programs, medication management, dementia friendly and age friendly communities.

Senior LinkAge Line Continues Important Work

Return to Community

Our Community Living Specialists help older adults remain in their home by connecting them with housing options, assistance programs, providers of community-based services, healthy aging workshops, caregiving support, and more. They also provide follow up visits and phone calls to aid in the success of the older adult living safely out in the community.

Pre-Admission Screening

Our Specialists receive and process assessments to ensure that it is appropriate for a person to be placed into a skilled nursing facility. These assessments are required in the state of Minnesota to measure a person's need for nursing home level of care and to connect people with supportive services.

Information & Assistance

Phone staff received calls from older adults and/or their caregivers who were seeking information and resources on things such as: housing, transportation, Medicare, financial services, community supports, assistance with complex issues and decisions, reducing prescription drug costs, resolve billing errors, compare health and/or drug plans, fighting fraud and abuse, and many more miscellaneous topics.

Medicare Open Enrollment

Through free, unbiased, comprehensive assistance, our trained Senior LinkAge Line® staff along with our Senior Coordinators and temporary staff can assist older adults save money by doing plan comparisons to see what plan is right for them based on their health and medication needs for the coming year.

Outreach Events

Staff partnered up with Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging to present a virtual Medicare 101 class. These classes are for people who are new to Medicare, agency providers, and/or County Social Workers.

In 2022, in the 21 counties the Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging serves, they provided assistance to approximately 21,072 people.

By County in the NWRDC Region:



**These totals do not include the month of December

Development Team Increases Outreach

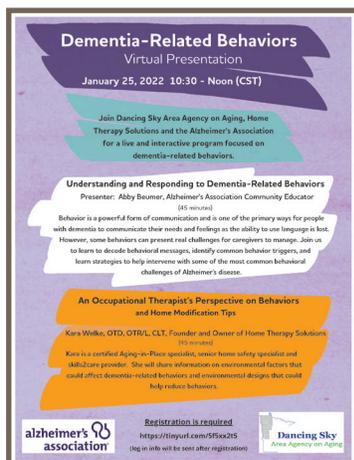
The Development Team has been increasing their outreach in creative ways. Since the pandemic halted many of the activities of the Development Team, they continue to increase outreach, virtually and in-person.

MONTHLY WEBINARS

- Dementia-related Behaviors
- Advance Care Planning
- Financial Planning
- Spring Cleaning/Reducing Clutter
- Funeral Planning
- Hospice and Palliative Care
- Medication Storage and Disposal
- Parkinson's Foundation
- Stroke Awareness & Prevention
- Weatherization and Energy Assistance
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
- State Service for the Blind.

Webinars reach: 420 individuals.

*A YouTube channel hosts the recorded webinars. An additional 140 people have viewed the webinars online. (Search "Northwest Regional Development Commission")



WEBINAR WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF ATTENDEES (64)

IN-PERSON PRESENTATIONS

Topics Included **"The File"** (organizing legal and financial documents), **Falls Prevention Bingo** (includes traditional bingo with fall prevention tips and movement added in), **Living Well in Your Home** (covers general service options as we age, how much they cost, and how to pay for them).

In-Person Presentation Reach: 361

RADIO INTERVIEWS

- Nijji Radio out of Callaway
- KXRA out of Alexandria

Radio Reach: 1,000's of listeners

DEMENTIA EDUCATION EVENTS

Including Dementia Friends Info Sessions, Teepa Snow Training, The Remember Project Events, Dementia Capability Training, Dementia Friendly Communities, Dementia Friendly Libraries, etc.

Dementia Education Reach: 485 people

HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMUNITY EVENTS

Community Events Reach: 550+

FACEBOOK CAMPAIGNS

- 37,399 Individual Reached
- 2,082 Visited Our Facebook Page

Interaction with:

- 87.3% Female
- 12.7% Male

PROFESSIONAL TRAININGS

Led by Development Team staff: Matter of Balance Leader Trainings (2), Living Well with Chronic Conditions Leader Training, Caregiver Consultant Training (in partnership with Trellis) and Caregiver Coaching Training.

2022 AGING GRANTEEES

Park Rapids Living at Home - Caregiver, Respite & Homemaker, Evidence Based Classes	\$71,814
West Central Community Action - Home Modification, Evidence Based Classes	\$29,420
Northwoods Caregivers - Caregiver & Respite, Evidence Based Classes	\$50,608
Western Prairie Human Services - Caregiver & Respite, Evidence Based Classes	\$26,737
Wilkin County Public Health - Homemaker, Evidence Based Classes	\$26,325
Tri-County Community Corrections - Chore Program	\$13,454
Northwest Sentence to Service - Chore Program	\$15,412
Clearwaters Life Center - Assisted Transportation & Homemaker	\$33,809
Productive Alternatives - Assisted Transportation	\$35,250
Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota - Legal Assistance	\$100,000
Lutheran Social Services - Caregiver & Respite	\$177,454
Central MN Elder Network - Caregiver & Respite	\$36,064
Lake Region Healthcare - Medication Management	\$14,500
Community Resource Connections - Telephone Reassurance	\$31,833
Nutrition Services Inc. - Congregate/Home-delivered Meals	\$1,224,150
Lutheran Social Services - Congregate/Home-delivered Meals	\$1,100,000
Warren Serving Our Seniors - Evidence Based Classes	\$5,000
First Lutheran of Detroit Lakes - Evidence Based Classes	\$4,800
East Grand Forks Senior Center - Evidence Based Classes	\$3,750
Perham Area Community Center - Evidence Based Classes	\$5,000
Barnesville Helpers - Evidence Based Classes	\$5,000
PARTNERS of Rothsay - Evidence Based Classes	\$5,000
REACH of Hawley - Evidence Based Classes	\$5,000
Alexandria HRA - Evidence Based Classes	\$2,500
Mahube-Otwa - Evidence Based Classes	\$3,750
Wellness in the Woods - Evidence Based Classes	\$4,400



www.nwrdc.org

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

PURPOSE:

To ensure safe and efficient movement of people and commodities and provide an on-going forum for important transportation issues in the region. To assist MnDOT and provide input with planning and programs.

SERVICE PRIORITIES:

Direction setting, comprehensive regional planning, legislative advocacy and MnDOT project coordination.

Interest In Transportation Alternatives Increases

The NWRDC Region had a record year for Transportation Alternative funding through the Area Transportation Partnership (ATP). Staff visited Argyle, Twin Valley, Crookston, Thief River Falls, Fosston, Roseau County, and Marshall County. Other communities having an interest include Lengby and Warren.

The Argyle project needs to purchase right of way and a new trail alignment was recommended to keep the trail out of the floodplain. They were encouraged to apply next year when they are more ready to deliver.

The Twin Valley project is located on the north end of city limits across from the City Park. They were planning a multi-use trail along the river that wasn't going to be paved and had a much better appeal to the DNR Regional Trails Grant and they were encouraged to seek funding through the DNR program.

Crookston submitted two applications and were encouraged to partner

between the city and school district to submit an application for a safe routes to school plan and partner on connecting the elementary to the high school and other points of interest.

The projects encouraged to fill out the complete application include:

- The Marshall County Park at Florian.
- The Roseau County sidewalk project connecting the school to MNTH 11 along the county road.
- The Crookston trail that connects the northeast portion of town with existing sidewalks that connect to the high school.
- The Thief River Falls project will connect the east end of the residential portion of town to Digikey and the existing trails that travel on Greenwood.
- The Fosston project will connect a new trail system on the east side of town with the trails around the fitness complex.

The Area Transportation Partnership has \$1.1 million to designate to the Transportation Alternative projects and it looks very favorable for several communities in the NWRDC Region to be funded for construction in 2027.





www.nwrtcc.org

Northwest Regional Transportation Coordination Council

PURPOSE:

To support improved access and options for transportation services in northwestern Minnesota through communication and creative partnerships

SERVICE PRIORITIES:

The workplan consists of seven tasks identified by the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access. The link is at www.nwrtcc.org

RTCC Mobility Manager Increases Outreach

To meet the goal of involving constituents of the counties we represent, the NWRCC Mobility Manager made presentations to each county commission and recruited new members to the Regional Transportation Coordination Council (RTCC).

Presentations were made to all the Living-at-Home programs in the region. During a talk in Polk County, an attendee decided to be a representative for volunteers in Polk County and began attending the RTCC meetings.

Work teams met to focus on a few of the primary goals:

- Volunteer driver
- Shared mobility
- Communications
- Emergency Management

RTCC members have been working diligently to plan activities that will make progress.

To provide outreach we launched a website, www.nwrtcc.org and started

a Facebook page. Regular posts with updates and news related to transportation keep our constituents informed.

Members of the RTCC attended the Marshall County Fair and passed out provider directories to the public. Social service and non-profit organizations were able to access transportation information easily through an on-line provider directory.

The Mobility Manager attended the Community Transportation Association of America's annual meeting and learned about national mobility trends.

Staff participated in Easter Seal's Mobility Manager training sponsored by the MCOTA Volunteer Driver Work Team. Staff also took part in MCOTA sponsored facilitator's training and attended multiple webinars sponsored by the AARP, AAA, Area Agencies on Aging, Council on Disability and others.

The Mobility Manager partnered with MCOTA staff and the Mid-Minnesota Regional Development Commission's

RTCC Coordinator to provide a workshop on mobility management and how its mission is similar to the mission of the Regional Development Commissions.

Also, the Mobility Manager partnered with social service and elder care providers in Kittson County to produce a grant proposal for the National Center for Mobility Management, called Ready to Launch. This proposal would offer volunteer drivers \$1 per-mile reimbursement from their door and back, to provide medical transportation to Kittson County residents. The recommended donation for these rides is \$20 or more, if participants are able.

Currently, the volunteer driver program serving Kittson County has one driver and turns down an average of 20 ride requests from county residents per month due to lack of drivers. The goal is that this new model will increase the number of volunteer drivers, thus increasing access to non-emergency medical care.

PLANS & PUBLICATIONS

PREPARED BY THE NWRDC

PLANS:

2022 Aging Area Plan – Includes senior and provider input as well as demographic data to establish priorities for the use of Title-III Older Americans Act funds. Includes information on the unique characteristics of our region, demographics, accomplishments, program outcomes and budget information.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) –

The 2022–2026 CEDS has taken a little different shape to more closely resemble that of each of the other Economic Development Regions of Greater Minnesota. The Economic Development Regions have agreed upon four key cornerstones to economic development: Human Capital, Economic Competitiveness, Community Resources and Foundational Assets. Each region has based their CEDS on these cornerstones and developed their own unique goals and strategies. The 2022-2026 CEDS does maintain previous priorities of Planning, Promotion, Business Development, Labor Force Development and Renewable Energies with added emphasis on workforce related issues such as housing, childcare, training and business succession planning.

Revolving Loan Fund Plan – Consists of program elements and guidelines.

PUBLICATIONS:

SeniorNews – A newsletter for senior citizens and service providers of Northwest Minnesota.

Government Units of Service Directory – A listing of service agencies and government offices from the township and legislative levels.

2022 Annual Report – A report sent to local officials and legislators on funding and work activities of the NWRDC.

NW MN Visitor & Recreation Guide – A guide of attractions highlighting services and recreational opportunities in Northwest Minnesota communities.

WEBSITES:

- www.nwrdc.org
- www.dancingskyaaa.org
- www.visitnwminnesota.com
- www.nwrtcc.org



NWRDC TEAM



Darla Waldner
Dancing Sky AAA
Director



Carol Kilen
Financial Assistant



Kalen Wiseth
Financial Director



Judy Flaten
Administrative Support



Amanda Russell
Office Manager



Sean Ranum
Loan Fund Manager/
Economic Development



Troy Schroeder
Transportation
Planning Director



Jennifer Olson
Emergency Operations
Planning Director



**Lynnell Simonson
Popowski**
Regional Transportation
Coordinator



James Retka
Economic Resiliency
Specialist



Beth Budziszewski
Senior LinkAge Line®
Supervisor



Danica Robson
Development Supervisor



Connie Troska
Program Developer/
Marketing Manager



Judi Weiss
Grant & Contract
Manager/Program
Developer



Stephanie Aassness
Program Developer



Amy Dallmann
Program Developer



Nancy Finstrom
Community Living
Specialist



Heather Pender
Community Living
Specialist Lead



Deb Rapp
Community Living
Specialist



Sabrina Anderson
Community Living
Specialist



Mary Krueger
Community Living
Specialist



Jane Stumbo
Community Living
Specialist



Tanya Hagen
Pre-Admission
Specialist



Dana Kloeppner
Pre-Admission
Screening Specialist



Melissa Hoefl
Pre-Admission
Screening Specialist



Valerie Mattison
Pre-Admission
Screening Specialist



Kaela Wiskow
Pre-Admission
Screening/Case Aide
Specialist



Cindy Engelstad
Pre-Admission
Screening Specialist



Kristen Anderson
Pre-Admission
Screening Specialist



Helen Phalen
Senior LinkAge Line®
Phone Specialist Lead



Marlene Dahlquist
Senior LinkAge Line®
Triage Coordinator



Jennifer Hedrick
Senior LinkAge Line®
Phone Specialist



Lyn Pankratz
Senior LinkAge Line®
Phone Specialist



Kathy Dahl
Senior LinkAge Line®
Phone Specialist



Kim Anderson
Volunteer Coordinator/
Senior LinkAge Line®
Phone Specialist



Paul Baymler
Senior LinkAge Line®
Phone Specialist



Tami Miller
Senior LinkAge Line®
Phone Specialist

