

MINNESOTA PLANNING, 1999

GUIDE TO

MINNESOTA

*Minnesota
Planning*

1999

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November 1998

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STATE OF MINNESOTA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
130 STATE CAPITOL
SAINT PAUL 55155

ARNE H. CARLSON
GOVERNOR

Dear Director:

Welcome to state government and to the Office of Strategic and Long-Range Planning. This agency has a varied and interesting history, having at one time served as an extension of the Governor's office — helping develop policy, plan legislative strategy and even lobbying for administration causes.

So I am especially proud of what Minnesota Planning has become since its abolition and rebirth in 1991. Recognizing a need for a strong information-gathering presence in state government, we sought to establish a research and development atmosphere where ideas, good and bad, could be examined, analyzed, discarded or developed into comprehensive public policy studies and proposals for a better future for Minnesota.

The primary agenda at Minnesota Planning is quality information. The agency has studied government spending, the cost of higher education, animal agriculture, welfare reform, sustainable development, crime and criminals, demographic and economic trends and the wise use of geographic information technology.

With the State Demographer, the Land Management Information Center, the Environmental Quality Board, the Criminal Justice Information Center and the Critical Issues and Local Planning Assistance teams, the agency is uniquely positioned to produce and integrate the kinds of information decision-makers and planners need to address current issues and think strategically about the future.

I have always respected, as I hope you will, the independence of mind and clear thinking so characteristic of the staff at Minnesota Planning.

You have a challenging new position. I wish you much success.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Arne H. Carlson".

ARNE H. CARLSON
Governor



Dear Director:

Welcome to Minnesota Planning. You have the privilege of leading a unique state agency consisting of several diverse teams that come together in an organization much stronger than its individual parts.

You will find a research atmosphere filled with the spirit of inquiry, curiosity, study and exposure to ideas. The people here are bright and well-read, with an amazing range of backgrounds and expertise. They are dedicated to quality through the accuracy, timeliness and reliability of their projects. Internet and computer skills are vital for everyone in this research environment. We have used telecommuting, flexible schedules, alternative transportation and other progressive policies as carefully managed tools for creating a working environment where everyone can perform at their maximum.

The core values of the agency are reflected in how staff members go about their work, as well as how they interact with each other and personnel from other agencies. They hold each other accountable through lively discussion and debate. Unsolicited opinions are freely shared in this climate of exploration and healthy skepticism. When one team shines, all shine. When one team is under fire, all rally. Other agencies are viewed in a collegial spirit. They are often enlisted to provide data, contribute to analysis and question assumptions and findings.

The employees of Minnesota Planning especially prize neutrality and objectivity. To remain a trusted source, they approach their work with concern for fairness and breadth of perspective. They attempt to identify all the relevant facts and all the options. They also value clear, plain communication – no exaggeration, no hedging or hiding. They have an excellent ability to explain things. The products of the agency range from talking points to major reports to complex maps to huge databases. It is an information-rich agency.

There is much more to know about Minnesota Planning. The next few months will be filled with interesting twists and turns as you navigate through this wonderfully complex agency. May you find it as rewarding and challenging as I have. I wish you the very best. The agency you will be leading is an invaluable resource for all those charged with moving Minnesota into the 21st century.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann Schluter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ann Schluter
Director

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Overview

Minnesota Planning keeps the state focused on the future, drawing on many different fields of knowledge to deliver sound information and good ideas to policy-makers and the public.

Information and ideas are the agency's main products. These are delivered through printed reports, the Internet, helplines, personal consultation, presentations and testimony in legislative hearings and meetings.

The Governor and the Legislature rely heavily on Minnesota Planning for research, analysis and policy options. Of the agency's 50-plus reports in 1998, roughly a dozen were undertaken for the Governor and another dozen for the Legislature. These projects also reach other interested customers, including public agencies, local governments, federal officials, service organizations, businesses, the news media and Minnesotans from all walks of life.

The number of reports published by Minnesota Planning increased 40 percent in 1998. Even with this higher workload, the agency continued to win national and state awards and recognition from major government, communications and design organizations.

"A valuable tool for state policy-makers as well as ordinary citizens to monitor the health of the state and its programs, to measure progress and to hold government accountable."

— Steve Dornfeld, *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, August 28, 1998, on *Minnesota Milestones*

"Models of excellence in a new era of communication and knowledge ... They show us what is possible when human creativity embraces the power of a networked world."

— Global Information Infrastructure Awards, commending the agency web site

"An authoritative source of reliable data on a wide range of issues."

— Lester Collins, executive director, Council on Black Minnesotans

The cross-disciplinary advantage

Six teams engage in long-range and strategic planning, each within its own specialty. Since innovative thinking about the future requires crossing traditional boundaries of expertise, members of these teams frequently work together. This cross-pollination produces exceptional results and sets Minnesota Planning apart from other government agencies. Staff backgrounds include planning, statistics, engineering, law, geography and many other areas of professional expertise.

The Criminal Justice Center studies crime statistics and the justice system in Minnesota, including public spending, juvenile crime and criminal history records. It also helps communities set up teen court programs.

The Critical Issues team handles a broad range of research, analysis, policy and strategic planning projects, often leading collaborative efforts that draw on experts from several other teams plus other state agencies, local government and the public.

The Environmental Quality Board develops policy and reviews the environmental impact of proposed projects. Staffed by Minnesota Planning, the board's responsibilities include the current major study of animal agriculture and review of projects touching on other hot issues such as nuclear waste storage, wind power, genetic engineering, power plants and transmission lines and airport expansion proposals.

The Land Management Information Center promotes coordination among public and private organizations that use geographic information, manages and provides access to costly geographic data, develops technology to meet special analysis needs and conducts mapping and analysis projects for other agencies and organizations in Minnesota.

The Local Planning Assistance team coordinates funding and assistance for community-based planning and operates an assistance center for all Minnesota communities undertaking local comprehensive planning.

The State Demographic Center delivers data and analysis on Minnesota's population and economy, including long-range trends. The center is Minnesota's link to the U.S. Census Bureau. It leads a network of data centers that deliver information throughout the state.

Resource teams

Minnesota Planning also has five resource teams with professional skills that enable the agency to serve its customers well:

- The Clerical Support team helps all the other teams achieve their goals.
- The Information Technology Support team takes care of hardware and software.
- The Communications, Publishing and Library team helps the agency reach audiences effectively and provides agency staff members with access to information.
- The Financial Services staff ensures the responsible use of public funds.
- The Legislative Services staff coordinates the process for the entire executive branch.

History

Minnesota Planning was created in July 1991, after the Legislature abolished the State Planning Agency and created the Office of Strategic and Long-Range Planning, known as Minnesota Planning.

The Legislature has charged Minnesota Planning with preparing a long-range plan for the state; coordinating activities among all levels of government; stimulating public interest and participation in the future of the state; and coordinating with the commissioner of Finance, affected state agencies and the Legislature in planning and financing major public programs.

Three directors have led the agency since 1991:
 Linda Kohl, January 1991 to June 1995
 Ron Youngren, July 1995 to September 1995
 Linda Kohl, October 1995 to July 1997
 Ann Schluter, July 1997 to present

Examples of cross-team collaboration

	Criminal Justice	Critical Issues	Demography	EQB	Local Planning	LMIC
Minnesota Milestones plan	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Local Planning Assistance			✓	✓	✓	✓
Minnesota IssueWatch newsletter	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Government spending studies	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

Mission

Continually scan the horizon, identifying and evaluating the critical and emerging issues that will keep Minnesotans focused on the future, provide policy-makers and the public with accurate information and analysis, influence policy decisions through long-range planning, and coordinate activities among all levels of government.

Accomplishments

During the past two years, Minnesota Planning:

- Championed government accountability and focused thousands of Minnesotans on the future through *Minnesota Milestones* — a citizen-based vision for the state, with far-reaching goals and 70 measures of progress toward those goals.
- Developed an award-winning World Wide Web site that has about 90,000 hits a month, delivering information and services such as reports, maps, databases, helpline service and electronic ordering.
- Helped seven Minnesota communities set up teen courts, an innovative approach that develops youth leadership, keeps young offenders out of the court system for minor offenses and links offenses to relevant consequences.
- Gave policy-makers solid information on crime and the justice system, helping them sort out facts and perceptions about this perennially hot political issue.
- Delivered local data to help Minnesota communities understand and deal with trends affecting their children, public health, land use, demographics, local economy and natural resources.
- Alerted policy-makers and the public to emerging issues and ideas through the monthly electronic *Minnesota IssueWatch* newsletter.
- Prompted a close look at the future of higher education in Minnesota through a series of meetings and reports dealing with financing, efficiency, technology, work force preparation and other aspects of higher education policy.
- Prepared Minnesota to respond to federal welfare reform, hosting a major conference in January 1997 that brought together legislators, welfare recipients, business leaders and service organizations; and through the highly regarded *Work in Progress* report.
- Led in the development and siting of wind-powered electric generation in Minnesota.
- Developed, updated and delivered powerful databases of information about geography, demography, criminal justice and local conditions.
- Provided environmental leadership by launching a scientific study of the volatile feedlot issue, publishing

clearer guidelines for users of Minnesota's environmental rules, and handling the evaluation of hundreds of development projects with environmental implications.

- Provided leadership and coordination for Minnesota's fast-growing geographic information technology field, including the development of data standards and strategies for providing access to data.
- Worked with the U.S. Geological Survey to develop state-of-the-art digital photographs for the entire state, making Minnesota a national leader.
- Helped other state agencies accomplish goals that required geographic information technology, including the departments of Public Safety, Agriculture, and Children, Families & Learning.
- Fostered unprecedented coordination of geographic information technology among Twin Cities area governments by cosponsoring the MetroGIS project, a model of regional collaboration.
- Led the state to consider the critical links among environmental, economic and social issues and the needs of current and future generations, through the Minnesota Sustainable Development Initiative.
- Helped shape public policy to prevent and treat fetal alcohol syndrome by publishing *Suffer the Children: The Preventable Tragedy of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome* in 1998 with the Department of Health and First Lady Susan Carlson.
- Implemented landmark, local planning legislation in 1997 that embraces sustainable development concepts and provides practical help to communities as they plan for the future.

Constituencies

A sharp focus on audience needs and preferences is a hallmark of Minnesota Planning. The agency's top customers include:

- Governor's office
- Minnesota Legislature and legislative staff
- State agencies
- Local governments
- Federal agencies
- News media throughout Minnesota
- Interested Minnesotans

In addition, special constituencies are listed in each team's detailed overview section.

Key legislative committees

This list includes committees that turn to Minnesota Planning for assistance as well as committees that regularly influence the agency's resources and assignments.

Government Operations

Chairs: Sen. James Metzen, Rep. Phyllis Kahn,
Budget and Finance subcommittee chairs:
Sen. Leonard Price, Rep. Tom Rukavina

Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources

Chair: Rep. Loren Solberg

Agriculture

Chairs: Sen. Dallas Sams, Rep. Steve Wenzel

Environment

Chairs: Sen. Bob Lessard, Rep. Willard Munger

Environment and Agriculture Budget Divisions

Chairs: Sen. Steve Morse, Rep. Tom Ostoff

Crime Prevention (Senate), Judiciary (House)

Chairs: Sen. Allan Spear, Rep. Wes Skoglund

Crime Prevention Budget Division (Senate), Judiciary Finance Division (House)

Chairs: Sen. Randy C. Kelly, Rep. Mary Murphy

Local and Metropolitan Government

Chairs: Sen. Jim Vickerman, Rep. Ann Rest

Important upcoming dates

March 1999

- Local Planning Assistance team reviews the *Metropolitan Council Planning Guide* for consistency with community-based planning, as required by the Legislature.
- Local Planning Assistance team and Sustainable Development Initiative publish a comprehensive guide to local planning in Minnesota.
- Authority for the Governor's Council on Geographic Information expires unless renewed by executive order.

June 1999

- Fiscal year 1999 ends.
- Minnesota Geographic Information Clearinghouse completes 100 documented data sets, its target for phase 1.

September 1999

- Criminal Justice Center releases Minnesota Crime Survey results.

December 1999

- Environmental Quality Board publishes the draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement on Animal Agriculture.
- Critical Issues team unveils interactive version of *Minnesota Milestones*.
- Municipal Board duties are transferred to Minnesota Planning.

April 2000

- Census 2000 is conducted.

June 2000

- Environmental Quality Board takes final action on animal agriculture study (target date).

September 2000

- Environmental Quality Board completes statewide 10-year water plan.

December 2000

- State Demographic Center begins delivering data from Census 2000.

Budget and personnel

Management structure

The director appoints the deputy director, assistant director, executive aide, legislative coordinator, fiscal officer and leaders for the agency's teams. The director also has the authority to appoint the state demographer and the director of the Land Management Information Center.

The deputy director reports to the director. This is an operations role, overseeing day-to-day management, budget activities and personnel decisions. The agency contracts with the Department of Employee Relations for professional assistance with human resource issues, including hiring, employment policies and administration of benefits. The deputy director also serves as a policy advisor to the director and as liaison for the director to the Land Management Information Center, Environmental Quality Board, Local Planning Assis-

tance, and Communications, Publishing and Library teams. In the absence of the director, the deputy has full authority to act on the director's behalf. The fiscal officer also reports to the deputy director.

The assistant director reports to the director and serves as agency legislative liaison and special projects manager. This includes staffing or overseeing the staffing of various task forces, committees and councils. The assistant director advises the director on policy and legislative matters and serves as the director's liaison with the State Demographic Center, Criminal Justice Center and Critical Issues teams. The legislative coordinator also reports to the assistant director.

The executive aide reports to the director and supports the work of the director, deputy director and assistant director. This person also leads the Clerical Support team.

The management team coordinates agency activities and gives broad input into decisions. This group, including all the team leaders plus the legislative coordinator and the financial officer, meets weekly with the director, deputy director and assistant director.

1998 funding sources

General funds		\$6,188,000
Base	\$4,133,000	
Community-based planning	665,000	
Teen courts	175,000	
Feedlot GEIS	1,200,000	
Census	15,000	
Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources		\$1,175,000
Integrated access to environmental information	\$650,000	
Economics for lasting progress	250,000	
Urban growth economics	75,000	
Proprietary funds		\$816,737
Federal funds		153,322
Total 1998 funding sources		\$8,333,059

1998 expenditures

Payroll	\$3,981,851
Other expenses	434,406
Grants	666,317
Total 1998 expenditures	\$5,082,574.00

The director and deputy director coordinated executive branch transition activities for the change of administration taking place in 1999.

Director's role in advisory and decision-making bodies

The director of Minnesota Planning is assigned by statute to membership on several boards. Except for the Environmental Quality Board, these responsibilities may be delegated:

- Children's Cabinet
- Environmental Quality Board
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Coordinating Board
- Criminal and Juvenile Justice Information Task Force

The director of Minnesota Planning is the appointing authority for the Governor's Council on Geographic Information. The director may also create and appoint members to advisory groups to assist the agency in addressing specific issues.

The director served on the Lieutenant Governor's Violence Prevention Task Force.

The director led Governor Carlson's agency cluster structure, serving as a cluster leader and attending the administrative and human development cluster meetings. The deputy director attended the economic development and environmental cluster meetings.

Staff organization	Full-time equivalents
Director and executive management and support	4.00
Criminal Justice Center	3.50
Critical Issues	5.00
Environmental Quality Board	14.30
Land Management Information Center	19.90
Local Planning Assistance	4.25
State Demographic Center	7.50
 Operations and support staff	
Clerical Support	10.50
Communications, Publishing and Library	7.10
Fiscal Services	1.00
Legislative Services	1.00
Technology Support	2.50

Team overviews

Minnesota Planning is organized into eight functional areas. The following staff allocations reflect the status when the agency budget was prepared in September 1998.

Clerical Support

These are the organizing experts that keep Minnesota Planning functioning efficiently. Their contributions include extensive contact with agency customers, the handling of mailings and fax distribution, schedule management, event planning, effective use of office equipment and office software applications, inventory control and accurate recording of meeting proceedings.

Communications, Publishing and Library

The tailoring of words, graphics and communication methods to meet the needs and interests of the audience is an essential service provided by the Communications, Publishing and Library team. The team is involved from the time an idea starts to gel until the final product gets into the hands of the people who need it.

This team also helps the agency reach its audiences better, faster and more effectively. For a given project, the target audience may be elected leaders, corporate movers and shakers, data analysts, scholars, journalists or the entire Minnesota public. Within the last year, the Communications, Publishing and Library team produced more than 50 published reports, oversaw a large, content-rich web site and helped project leaders gain media coverage for many issues and events. High professional standards for writing, editing, visual design, print and online production have led to more than a dozen awards for Minnesota Planning products in 1997 and 1998.

Strategic communication planning is another contribution of this team. The team helps project managers inform and inspire the people whose support is needed to accomplish agency goals in the interest of all Minnesotans.

The Communications, Publishing and Library team contributes to the agency's coordinating role. A recent

example is the full suite of agency briefing materials for the new Governor's administration. The team helped to plan and produce these practical guides to the accomplishments and inner workings of each state agency.

The Communications, Publishing and Library team coordinates the Minnesota Planning web site, which already contains more than 3,000 pages of information. The site — www.mnplan.state.mn.us — is consulted nearly 90,000 times a month by decision-makers and citizens. In September 1998, visitors downloaded nearly 7,500 copies of agency reports. At the same time, demand for printed copies is edging down.

"The exceptional way you presented complex information makes this report rise to the top. Rich in information, well planned and executed."

— Association for Women in Communications,
1998 Crystal Clarion Award

The library provides quick access to relevant documents, a service that is vital to an agency that deals in information and ideas. The leading edge of library services is the ability to conduct sophisticated electronic search and retrieval. The library staff, part of the Communications, Publishing and Library team, performs topical searches, reference and fact checks, and updates the agency on current events and issues. They also maintain a collection of relevant documents and periodicals, oversee records retention for the agency and hone the research and database skills of agency staff.

The library is undertaking two major projects. It is managing the transition to the new statewide library catalog, MN-LINK. The library is also overhauling and updating the Minnesota Planning reference collection.

Special constituencies

In addition to the constituencies served by the entire agency, the Communications, Publishing and Library team has a special focus on:

- News media
- Governor's office communications staff
- Minnesota Planning executive leadership
- Minnesota Planning analysts, authors and web content developers

Criminal Justice Center

The Criminal Justice Center at Minnesota Planning is the leading source of crime and justice statistics in Minnesota. It also serves as the state's Statistical Analysis Center under the State Justice Statistics Program of the U.S. Department of Justice. This team provides information and analysis to equip policy-makers for strategic planning related to crime and criminal justice. The staff maintains seven large databases and draws out information on such topics as crime rates, arrests, apprehensions and inmate populations.

The Criminal Justice Center team often briefs legislative committees on crime and justice issues, and responds to frequent requests from legislators and the media for data and analysis, often with very short turnaround time.

The team answers about 2,000 requests for criminal justice reports, statistics and information each year. It serves many Minnesota organizations and citizens, as well as federal agencies, through its helpline. Recent published reports have covered gun-related crime, the cost of the justice system and the demographics of juvenile offenders. The criminal justice team administers grants for the startup of teen courts, local programs in which a jury of teens determines the consequences for minor offenses committed by their peers.

"Timely, accurate data and sound analysis are ... particularly important in the field of criminal justice given public perceptions regarding crime and the dollars that are invested across the entire criminal justice system."

— Rebecca Goodman, Citizens Council

Issues

Data availability and quality. Sometimes the data that policy-makers need simply is not collected in Minnesota, so policy-makers must rely on data developed for other purposes and not well suited to the need. Another problem is data of questionable quality. Serious caveats limit the usefulness of such data, and "cleaning up" problematic data takes a heavy investment for a team this size.

Lack of state funding. Only one of four staff positions on this team is state-funded. The need to secure and implement grants for the other positions takes a

significant portion of staff members' time and makes their tenure uncertain from year to year.

Special constituencies

In addition to the constituencies served by the entire agency, this team has a special focus on:

- News media
- Criminal justice professionals at many levels of government
- Teen court grantees and other communities exploring the concept
- Users of the helpline

Priority projects

Evaluate the teen court programs we have funded. These innovative programs train youth volunteers to assign consequences to their peers for minor offenses. The offenders choose this option as an alternative to the traditional court system. Three evaluations are due in January 1999 and four in June 1999.

Conduct a survey of Minnesotans' experiences with and perceptions of crime. The results of this survey, done every three years, generate significant interest from the Legislature, the media and the public. New components in the next survey will include an additional survey sample to focus on domestic abuse and new techniques to improve the inclusion of other underrepresented groups. Due September 1999.

Continue to implement the National Criminal History Improvement Program. This federal grant enables states to improve criminal history records. The Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension awarded funds to the criminal justice team to identify problems with the state's criminal history database. Minnesota is a model state in this program; federal officials meet with criminal justice team staff to evaluate the effectiveness of the grant program.

Boards, commissions and task forces

The Criminal and Juvenile Justice Information Task Force brings together state agencies and local law enforcement officials to improve the state's information collection, forms and procedures. By statute, the director of Minnesota Planning or a designee (currently the criminal justice team leader) is a member. The task force meets quarterly and has no sunset date.

The Interagency Adolescent Female Subcommittee focuses on the correction system. The criminal justice team sends a staff liaison. The subcommittee has no sunset date.

The Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee is a state advisory group required by the federal government. This committee has funded projects for the criminal justice team. The criminal justice team makes presentations to the committee. No sunset date.

Critical Issues

The Critical Issues team excels at clear, thorough presentation of complex issues and policy options. Strong working relationships with people throughout state and local government are a real asset of this team. The breadth of expertise of its members includes:

- Elementary to post-secondary education, organization and reform
- Fetal alcohol syndrome
- Child abuse and neglect
- Child adoption, custody and placement
- Welfare reform
- Gambling
- Racial, ethnic and diversity issues
- Children and family policy
- Public health and health care
- Homelessness and housing issues
- Government accountability, productivity, service, restructuring and spending
- Juvenile and criminal justice
- Work force, training, adult education and employment issues
- Regional economic future
- Performance measurement
- Strategic planning

"*Minnesota Milestones* is a fantastic piece and a fine example of the quality of information we get from your agency. We not only use this report ourselves, we make sure that our local library, United Way office and local foundations get their own copies."

—David Martin, Fargo-Moorhead Chamber of Commerce

The Critical Issues team not only responds to many requests from the Governor and Legislature, but takes the lead in drawing attention to issues on the horizon that warrant public discussion and action. The team also coordinates *Minnesota Milestones*, drawing on expertise from throughout Minnesota Planning and many external advisors to measure progress toward the state's long-range goals.

Issue

Agency need to upgrade web capabilities. Great potential exists for getting information about critical issues to many audiences through online data and interactive methods, but the agency needs the staff and tools to move to a new level.

Priority projects

Develop an online *Minnesota Milestones* — interactive, regularly updated, including frequent data updates and links to other data sources. This would make it easy for local communities, policy-makers and other organizations to find the most recent available data on the indicators that interest them. Target date: December 1999.

Revise and update the Children's Report Card, the printed and online source of county data about key children's indicators, to improve users' access to local data. Target date: December 1999.

Develop the "future indicators" laid out in *Minnesota Milestones*. Establishing these important data sets for measuring the state's progress involves working with other agencies that may gather and maintain the data. Target: six new indicators in 1999.

Prepare a report on Minnesota's system on local government. Create an inventory of local government activities; conduct focus groups and interviews with local administrators; analyze local government responsibilities. Due June 1999.

Handle the transfer of Municipal Board responsibilities to Minnesota Planning, after the board's expiration in December 1999.

Boards, commissions and task forces

The Advisory Council on Local Government examines the roles and responsibilities of local and regional government in the metropolitan area. Administrative and staff assistance from Minnesota Planning is required by statute. Expiration: June 30, 1999.

The Minnesota Interagency Task Force on Homelessness. No sunset date.

The Department of Human Services aging initiative, Project 2030, looks at several strategic issues related to the aging of Minnesota's population. No sunset date; scheduled to end December 1998.

An interagency Benchmarking Sharing Group meets monthly to promote quality improvement through comparison with successful programs. No sunset date.

Environmental Quality Board

The Environmental Quality Board is Minnesota's principal government forum for discussing environment and development issues. The 15-member board includes a chairperson and five citizen members appointed by the Governor, the commissioners of the departments of Agriculture, Transportation, Trade and Economic Development, Economic Security, Public Service, Natural Resource and the Pollution Control Agency; the directors of Minnesota Planning and the Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance; and the chair of the Board of Water and Soil Resources.

Minnesota Planning staffs the Environmental Quality Board. Staff members specialize in issues such as nuclear waste storage genetic engineering, environmental impact statements, airport planning, statewide water planning, power plant siting, electric transmission line routing, pipeline routing, environmental review and sustainable development. This staff coordinates the sometimes diverse interests represented on the board. One of the most important contributions of this team is to move the focus on controversial issues beyond emotional response and toward objective information and analysis. The team also makes sure that the public has opportunity to participate in environmental decisions.

The Environmental Quality Board fills a unique role in Minnesota government. Its broad coordinating function is a good fit with the statewide planning and coordinating mandate of Minnesota Planning. The board provides:

- A public forum for debating and discussing the environmental policies and decisions of state government
- A mechanism for coordinating the actions of major state agencies and the impact of their decisions on the environment and development
- A tool for the Governor and the Legislature to use in addressing environmental issues that do not fall within the scope of the state's other environmental agencies

"We have had superb help from EQB staff throughout the process of siting wind power facilities in our county. They understand the local issues that are involved — sometimes even better than we do. Their web site is also excellent. I use it a lot for information about power production and wind power issues."

— Jack Keers, Commissioner, Pipestone County

Issues

Animal agriculture. Concerns have been raised about the impact of feedlots on surface and ground water quality, air quality and the rural landscape. The Environmental Quality Board is undertaking a major two-year study of this volatile issue.

Chisago electric transmission line project. Key issues in this controversial project are the long-term local and inter-region need for the project and its proposed crossing of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.

Restructuring of the electric utility industry. The electric utility industry has been a regulated monopoly of companies that are vertically integrated, meaning that the same company generates, distributes and sells the electric power. Over the past few years, there has been increasing pressure to introduce widespread competition to the industry. Recent changes in federal law and regulation are causing states to explore policies and industry structures that could reduce prices and increase services, while continuing to provide the public benefits of regulation. The Environmental Quality Board regulates the siting of power plants over 50 megawatts and the routing of transmission lines over 200 kilovolts. Under most proposed restructuring plans, transmission lines would remain regulated and the board's authority probably would not change. The authority for siting power plants could change.

Prairie Island nuclear power plant. An issue that could return to the forefront is the Legislature's decision in 1994 to allow Northern States Power Company to store high-level radioactive waste at its Prairie Island nuclear power plant. In exchange, the Legislature required NSP to invest in alternative energy programs such as wind power and biomass fuels, and in programs to benefit Minnesotans in need. The Environmental Quality Board has been involved in this issue through environmental review activities and through other duties assigned by the Legislature.

Engaging Minnesotans in sustainable development issues. The Minnesota Sustainable Development Initiative and the Governor's Round Table on Sustainable Development have suggested a new path toward progress where economic, environmental and social concerns are seen as intimately connected. They have identified concrete steps that might be taken by government and private enterprise. The challenge now is to engage businesses, communities and government agencies in the discussion about how best to move toward this path.

Continuation of the Minnesota Round Table on Sustainable Development. This group of business, civic and environmental leaders expired in June 1998, but a proposal to continue the round table is being considered.

Special constituencies

In addition to the constituencies served by the entire agency, this team has a special focus on:

- Environmental organizations
- Parties interested in projects that require environmental review
- Parties interested in the board's current study of animal agriculture

Priority projects

Complete the Generic Environmental Impact Statement on Animal Agriculture. Environmental Quality Board staff members work with a Citizen Advisory Committee and technical consultants to prepare a draft study to be completed in 1999. The board will host public meetings on the draft GEIS early in 2000. Staff will work with the Citizen Advisory Committee to refine the draft for board action in June 2000. Policy-makers consider the key recommendations from the study in 2000-2001.

Manage the environmental review process. This program was created by the 1973 Minnesota Legislature to minimize adverse environmental impacts from human activities by informing project proposers, the public, and governmental decision-makers of potential environmental impacts of major development projects and how they could be avoided. The Environmental Quality Board establishes the rules for the program, helps project proposers interpret and apply the rules and prepare review documents, and in rare cases reassigns responsibility for review. In addition, the board itself conducts environmental review for power plants, high voltage transmission lines and major pipelines.

Create the state's next 10-year water plan. By September 15, 2000, the board is to develop a comprehensive long-range water resources plan with strong participation from local governments and other water interests. The plan must engage communities and industrial interests in order to address economic and social implications of water protection and management.

Study potential sites for cogeneration in Minnesota and produce a guide for navigating the regulatory process. Cogeneration is the capture of waste heat created by power generators and the use of this

thermal energy for heating buildings or other purposes. If the 1999 Legislature approves funding (\$100,000 has been recommended by the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources), the project would start in July 1999.

Oversee the siting of wind energy facilities. As part of the agreement allowing Northern States Power to temporarily store nuclear waste at its Prairie Island power plant, the Legislature required NSP to develop 425 megawatts of wind energy capacity by 2002. The Environmental Quality Board issues the permits for the wind turbine sites.

Oversee the routing of major pipelines. The board has authority to route major gas and petroleum pipelines, except those of public utilities and those covered by federal authority

Route the proposed Chisago electric transmission line. Northern States Power Company and Dairyland Power Cooperative have proposed a 38-mile transmission line to serve northern, northwestern and western Wisconsin and east central Minnesota. Permits are required from the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board and the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. The proposed line would connect the Chisago County Substation southwest of North Branch and the Apple River Substation north of Amery, Wisconsin. A decision may come before the Environmental Quality Board in December 1998 or early 1999.

Site the Minnesota Agri-Power Alfalfa-Biomass Project. The project would convert alfalfa stems into a low-Btu "alfagas" as fuel for a power plant. As part of the agreement allowing Northern States Power to temporarily store nuclear waste at its Prairie Island power plant, the Legislature required NSP to construct or contract for 125 megawatts of biomass power by December 31, 1998. In 1996, NSP selected a proposal from the Minnesota Valley Alfalfa Producers, based in Granite Falls, to supply the first 75 megawatts. The role of the Environmental Quality Board is to conduct a joint environmental review with the U.S. Department of Energy and to issue a certificate of site compatibility specifying the size, type, and location of the new biomass plant.

Revise the environmental rules related to "connected action." Minnesota's environmental rules call for looking holistically at the full impact of a project, including activities related to the specific project being reviewed. In the field of animal agriculture, conflict has arisen over whether all sites in a multi-site operation should be added up when determining

if the project is big enough to require an environmental assessment worksheet. The Environmental Quality Board is refining the rules to address this issue.

Develop sustainable development resources. These include a guide to local planning, in cooperation with the local planning assistance team, by early 1999; a Minnesota progress indicator that integrates economic, environmental and social elements, by July 1999; an Environmental Quality Board strategic plan for sustainable development, by November 1999; a guide to indicators of sustainable communities, by January 2000; a collection of sustainable development success stories, by March 2000; and interagency working groups on sustainable development policies for state government.

Monitor the airport planning process. Currently this includes the Dual Track Airport Planning Process Final Environmental Impact Statement for Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport and the Flying Cloud Airport Environmental Impact Statement. Funding for these efforts was provided by Metropolitan Airports Commission.

Boards, commissions and committees

The Water Resources Committee of the Environmental Quality Board includes members from the Environmental Quality Board, several water-related state agencies, the Metropolitan Council and the University of Minnesota. Representatives of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service and U.S. Geological Survey also attend.

The Citizen Advisory Committee for the generic environmental impact statement on animal agriculture meets at least monthly for the expected duration of the study — until June 2000. The statutory expiration date is June 30, 2001.

The Citizen's Advisory Task Force on the Minnesota Agri-Power Alfalfa Biomass Project, a group based in Granite Falls, focuses on the scope of the board's environmental review of the proposed power production plant and on the site of the facility.

The Route Advisory Task Force on the Chisago County power line proposal, made up of 19 citizens, is preparing final recommendations for board action in late 1998 or early 1999.

Financial Services

The fiscal officer is responsible for preparing and accurately reporting on the agency budget. Working closely with the departments of Finance and Administration, the fiscal officer manages day-to-day finance operations to ensure that Minnesota Planning follows the proper policies and procedures.

Seeing that payments and employee reimbursements are on time, payroll is processed accurately, contracts are appropriate and properly authorized, cash receipts are deposited and budget information is available to managers in an easy-to-understand format are among the vital functions of this role. The fiscal officer also acts as a liaison with the Legislative Auditor's Office and handles quarterly reporting for federal funds.

Priority project

Design a budget system to improve the agency's ability to track, recover and distribute overhead costs.

Information Technology Support

Reliable and well-maintained computing resources are essential tools for an agency whose work is information-based. The Information Technology Support team ensures that Minnesota Planning staff members have the tools they need, and resolves technical problems with dispatch.

This team plans, manages and maintains the agency's computing system. During the past four years, the team has rebuilt that infrastructure from the ground up, replacing an unreliable collection of desktop systems with two well-designed and easily maintained networks. A Novell NetWare network provides access to e-mail services, the World Wide Web, all agency printers and reliable daily file backups. A UNIX network supports specialized software equipment used by the Land Management Information Center.

Issues

Planning and oversight. Minnesota Planning has no full-time position to guide an agency plan for information resource management, which is a requirement for obtaining funding for new technology initiatives. The agency has proposed funding for an information technology integration effort, including a chief information officer position.

Technology budget as a basic cost of doing

business. Minnesota Planning has been strongly committed to providing the software and equipment that staff members need to accomplish their work. Standard and specialized software options for the agency require continuous review and investment. Hardware investments are also required regularly. Because of an aggressive upgrade program over the past several years, desktop systems are currently adequate. However, a rule of thumb suggested by the state's Information Policy Council is that desktop systems currently have about a three-year life cycle. Network upgrades and shared peripheral equipment, such as printers and scanners, are also on a short timeline.

Priority projects

Create an information technology team headed by a chief information officer. This team leader would oversee a comprehensive technology plan for the agency covering the web site, databases and computer support. The team would also establish policies and procedures for system administration, security, purchasing, computer and network use, Internet use, user support, application development and database design.

Task forces, committees and advisory groups

The Information Policy Council brings together the chief information officers from state agencies. The director of the Land Management Information Center has represented Minnesota Planning, but this should be reviewed, especially if a high-level information technology position is created.

The System Network Administrators Group is attended by technology support staff.

Land Management Information Center

This team advances the use of geographic information and analysis for planning and decision-making in Minnesota. A widely respected pioneer in this field, the Land Management Information Center is one reason Minnesota has been nationally recognized for effectively using geographic information technology in the service of public policy.

The center plays a big role in coordinating the development and use of geographic information resources in Minnesota, a rapidly growing field with huge potential. This coordinating role includes

helping people find the data they need and reducing duplication of effort. The center also helps to spread advances in geographic information technology in Minnesota. Its project services team designs custom solutions for a wide range of clients and projects.

The center's services benefit thousands of Minnesotans every year. DATANET, an Internet service offering extensive socioeconomic data, is available in every county through more than 1,000 organizations, including libraries and schools. EPPL, the center's inexpensive geographic information software customized to use more than 30 years of statewide data, is licensed to nearly 600 Minnesota users. Each year, the center's data services staff fills more than 150 major data requests and the project services staff conducts more than 30 projects for other agencies and units of government.

"I would like to recognize the recent successful collaborative effort between the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the Land Management Information Center. . . . We successfully met the program objectives. This achievement, in part, was based on the maps produced at the Land Management Information Center."

—Gene Hugoson, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, about the center's assistance during an emergency response simulation by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Issues

Municipal boundary mapping. The Municipal Board has determined changes in municipal boundaries since 1959, but no agency maintains official statewide maps of the municipal boundaries. Inaccurate boundaries can result in problems with taxation, service delivery, judicial authority and liability. A working group chaired by the Land Management Information Center and including the State Demographer and other organizations currently involved in boundary record-keeping is investigating solutions. The group will report its findings to the Governor's Council on Geographic Information.

Modernizing land records. Converting Minnesota's local land records into a consistent data format would allow this data to be shared among local, regional and state information systems. A Minnesota Planning proposal to fund local systems development under standardized state guidelines was not funded for 1998-1999. At the request of the Governor's Council

on Geographic Information, the Land Management Information Center has proposed a scaled-down pilot program for the 2000-2001 budget. The Association of Minnesota Counties and the League of Minnesota Cities have recognized the need for state support of local efforts, but seem less interested in elements of the proposal that promote standardization and state-wide coordination.

Status of the Governor's Council on Geographic Information. This group, appointed by the director of Minnesota Planning as specified by executive order, is essential to the coordination of geographic information technology in Minnesota. A recent report from the Office of Technology affirmed its importance. We should support its continuation. Consideration should be given to clarifying its mandate and formalizing its relationship to the executive branch.

Special constituencies

In addition to the constituencies served by the entire agency, this team has a special focus on:

- Office of Technology
- Information Policy Council
- State agencies that use GIS
- Clients for technical services, including the departments of Transportation, Natural Resources, Public Safety, Public Service, Children, Families & Learning and Health; the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency; and the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources
- Federal agencies, particularly the U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service and Federal Geographic Data Committee
- Schools and libraries
- Businesses such as planning consultants and engineering firms
- Professional organizations, including the Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium and the National States Geographic Information Council

Priority projects

Continue to develop an Internet-based Minnesota Geographic Data Clearinghouse to provide access to geographic data maintained by the center and other Minnesota organizations, by the end of fiscal year 1999.

Working with the Local Planning Assistance team, develop tools and training for community-based planning, based on the center's own EPPL geographic information software. Funding has been recommended by the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources for 2000-2001. Work is scheduled to begin in July 1999.

Help to coordinate Twin Cities area geographic information through MetroGIS, a project funded primarily by the Metropolitan Council. The Land Management Information Center has played a key role in working with seven metropolitan counties and many other organizations that use geographic data to serve the metropolitan region.

Help to coordinate state and federal mapping interests through the National Spatial Data Infrastructure Framework Demonstration Project. The project focuses on the state's interest in specific elements of a National Spatial Data Infrastructure. The center received a grant in 1996, extended through September 1998. Work has been delayed; a second extension will be sought.

Continue to assist the Department of Children, Families & Learning in several important programs, including several programs that qualify Minnesota child care providers for assistance.

Provide ongoing GIS support to the U. S. Department of Justice for its case, Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, Red Lake Band, Et Al. versus United States. The center's role includes the creation, analysis and mapping of historical and contemporary cultural and natural resource data as requested by the Department of Justice and its consultants. This is a dispute between the United States government and the Red Lake Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. The State of Minnesota is not currently a party in the lawsuit.

Provide oversight for the Foundations for Integrated Access to Environmental Data project. The project is creating a single point of access to all kinds of environmental information for Minnesotans. Minnesota Planning coordinated the project proposal, but responsibilities were shifted to the Department of Natural Resources through an interagency agreement in fiscal year 1998. Land Management Information Center staff participate in the project oversight group.

Work toward the creation of a more precise digital database of pipeline routes for the Minnesota National Pipeline Mapping System, State Repositories Project funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Pipeline Safety and the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Office of Pipeline Safety.

Reach key audiences through the GIS/LIS Consortium Conference. The Land Management Information Center and the Governor's Council on Geographic Information both use the annual fall conference for

outreach. Most of the center's staff members attend; many help to lead sessions and workshops.

Sponsor an EPPL Users Conference each October. This forum for users of EPPL7, which is the GIS software developed and supported by the center, helps to focus development efforts for the software.

Maintain and promote DATANET, including an annual open house to promote integration of statistics collected by state agencies. DATANET is an online query system for socioeconomic data about Minnesota, now offered via the World Wide Web.

Boards, commissions and task forces

The Governor's Council on Geographic Information coordinates public investment in geographic information technology and provides technical and policy advice. The Land Management Information Center staffs the council.

The Intergovernmental Information Systems Advisory Council has an interest in GIS but has a broader focus on information technology use in local and state government. This council expires in fiscal year 1999, but legislation will be introduced to replace it with an Information Advisory Council for Technology. If this is approved, Minnesota Planning representation should be reviewed.

The GIS subcommittee to the Information Leadership Council of the Department of Transportation is an advisory group whose bylaws name the Land Management Information Center as a standing member. This is an important opportunity for coordination.

The National States Geographic Information Council is a small but important group through which Minnesota has been able to influence national data standards.

The Urban and Regional Information Systems Association sponsors one of the major national conferences on GIS technology. The Land Management Information Center's director is a past board member and a member of the *URISA Journal* editorial advisory board.

The mid-continent Mapping Center of the U.S. Geological Survey brings together state representatives annually to discuss regional mapping issues. The Land Management Information Center represents Minnesota.

The Geographic Data Clearinghouse Advisory Committee advises the Land Management Information Center on the clearinghouse project. Its members were recruited by the center and represent local, state, regional and federal agencies, academic institutions and businesses.

The Steering Committee for the Federal Geographic Data Committee, chaired by Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt, includes the Minnesota Governor's Council on Geographic Information. Staff members of the Land Management Information Center have often represented Minnesota on this steering committee.

Legislative Services

Minnesota Planning coordinates legislative review for the Governor's office. This service enables the Governor to ensure that all executive branch proposals make fiscal and strategic sense and support the Governor's agenda for the state. The coordinator also tracks the progress of bills and alerts the Governor's office to those that will require action.

In the height of the session, this can mean shepherding up to 100 different bills at a time through the review process and delivering a complete review packet for each one on tight deadlines.

The legislative coordinator trains and assists liaisons from other agencies. All legislation initiated by any state agency is reviewed by these liaisons and by the Department of Finance, the Governor's office and the Revisor of Statutes.

In addition to supporting the Governor's office, the legislative coordinator tracks legislation for Minnesota Planning, briefing the executive team, management team and involved staff members. When the Legislature is not in session, the coordinator takes on special projects for the agency and contributes to the work of other teams.

Local Planning Assistance

The Community-Based Planning Act of 1997 marked the first legislative focus on local comprehensive planning in more than 15 years. The law establishes statewide goals for local planning, stresses public participation and cooperation among neighboring communities, and calls for state review of local plans. Assigned by the Legislature to implement this new framework, the local planning assistance team makes available practical assistance to all Minnesota communities conducting local planning.

"When we first started talking about doing a pilot project in community-based planning, I knew the grant money would help, but the expertise and assistance from Minnesota Planning was what really interested me. So far, we haven't been disappointed."

—Paul Michaelson, director, Upper Minnesota River Valley Regional Development Commission

Issues

State involvement in local planning. While people around the state have voiced support for planning and state guidance and assistance, some are concerned about state review of local plans and fear state approval could become a requirement.

Fewer strings attached to grant funds. The 1998 Legislature removed the requirement that local governments return community-based planning grant funds if they refuse to enter dispute resolution. While this change has made communities more likely to try the process, some people believe the change weakens the framework. Proposals for change are likely.

Property rights. Some believe that local planning, particularly when it involves state oversight, infringes on the rights of property owners to use their land as they see fit. Debate is likely to continue on this issue.

Future funding. Staffing and grants to local governments for community-based planning were funded only for the fiscal years 1998 and 1999.

Dispute resolution. It is unclear what processes will remain after the Municipal Board's functions move to Minnesota Planning, slated for December 1999. The alternative dispute resolution process enacted in 1997 is still untested.

Special constituencies

In addition to the constituencies served by the entire agency, this team has a special focus on:

- County, city and township officials and staff
- State associations for cities, townships and counties
- The Minnesota Regional Development Organization
- The Initiative Funds, six organizations that provide grants, technical assistance, training and small business assistance to communities throughout the state
- Groups and organizations interested in land use and development in Minnesota

Priority projects

Implement and administer the Community-Based Planning Act. This is the team's top priority for the next biennium. We are required through Minnesota Statutes 4A.09 to provide financial and technical assistance to local governments that use this planning framework. The first pilot project draft plan is due from the St. Cloud Planning District in December 1999. Draft plans from the other three pilot projects are due in July 2000.

Report to the 1999 and 2000 Legislatures on the progress of community-based planning. A final report on the four pilot projects is due in the 2001 session. This latter report also will provide an update on the planning and technology grants and will make recommendations about ongoing funding to local governments for planning.

Operate the Planning Assistance Center and increase its capacity to provide technical assistance to local governments. Our initial emphasis is on helping communities that use the community-based planning framework. The center draws on existing efforts, expertise and materials, and develops materials where none exist.

Work with the Environmental Quality Board's Sustainable Development Initiative to publish a detailed planning guide for local governments in early 1999. The guide incorporates the 11 community-based planning goals and the principles of sustainable development. Following publication, the team will provide training in using the guide.

Work with the Land Management Information Center to develop tools and training for using geographic information systems in local planning. Minnesota Planning is slated to receive \$450,000 in the next biennium from the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources to develop and deliver easy-to-use software, data and training. The tool kit will be

developed between July 1999 and July 2000, with training to follow.

Review and comment on the Metropolitan Council Development Guide. The Legislature has required that the guide be amended to reflect and implement the goals of community-based planning. This must be accomplished by July 1, 1999. We expect our role to be concluded by March 1999.

Present a final report to the Legislature on a \$20,000 appropriation made to Minnesota Planning in 1998 for a local planning grant to the Southwest Regional Development Commission. State grants for these purposes had been available to regional development commissions through the early 1990s. This appropriation was viewed as a pilot effort to determine whether such funding should be restored.

Working with the Critical Issues team, produce *Minnesota IssueWatch*, a monthly electronic newsletter for decision-makers and interested citizens. *Minnesota IssueWatch* scans journals, newspapers and other sources for issues, trends and innovations that could affect government spending, revenues and policies in Minnesota.

Continue outreach for community-based planning. Participate in the annual meetings of local government associations and provide instruction to local planners through Government Training Service workshops in January and February 1999.

Boards, commissions and task forces

The Government Training Service develops and arranges training programs for state agencies and local governments, including annual training sessions on local planning. Local Planning Assistance staff serves on the board and executive committee.

The Minnesota Regional Development Organization offers an opportunity to strengthen ties between regional and state planning efforts. Local Planning Assistance staff serves as the Minnesota Planning liaison to this board.

State Demographic Center

The State Demographic Center studies Minnesota's population and economy, documenting important trends and making long-range projections. This information forms the basic building blocks for many Minnesota Planning projects as well as for planning efforts throughout Minnesota by government, businesses and service organizations. The demography staff has the widest public contact of any Minnesota Planning team, fielding several thousand requests each year through the Demography Helpline and making many presentations to professional and civic groups. Businesses are the largest single category of helpline clients, submitting about one-third of telephone queries January through September 1998. Local and state government agencies are a close second.

"Thanks so much for helping me find the answers ... I have been searching for nearly a month now. ... I'm glad to see there are still a few caring, helpful people out there, willing to spend a few minutes helping someone out."

—Mindy Herr, helpline client

Issues

Success of Census 2000. The census will be used to apportion seats in Congress, determine state legislative district boundaries, distribute federal money and provide critical data for the next decade. The demography team needs to make sure that Minnesota gets an accurate count. Census-related work includes a Census Round Table, Local Area Training, assistance and technical expertise for the Legislative Coordinating Committee on Redistricting, and the American Community Survey.

Expansion of the American Community Survey.

This annual Census Bureau survey will begin in 2001 to cover housing, social and economic data for local communities and population groups. Until now, the sample size has made it difficult to give reliable statistics for local areas. The demography team will invest considerably in the design and delivery of data products made possible by the improved survey.

Expanding services of the Minnesota Data Center.

The center is a cooperative venture between the State Demographic Center and the U.S. Bureau of the Census for disseminating federal and state data through affiliate agencies. After Census 2000, the

Minnesota Data Center will not only disseminate data from the Census Bureau and other federal agencies, but will develop new data products for Minnesota from the raw data.

Boards, commissions and task forces

The Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement oversees pension funds for public employees, including police, firefighters, public higher education and state government. The state demographer and the state economist advise the commission on such forecasting assumptions as longevity, retirement age and economic trends.

The Minority Health Task Force of the Department of Health looks to the State Demographic Center for statistical information.

Cooperative liaisons

Both the Federal-State Cooperative Program on Estimates and Federal-State Cooperative Program on Projections are joint ventures between the State of Minnesota and the U.S. Department of Commerce. These liaison roles offer Minnesota the opportunity to review, coordinate and comment on programs that provide money, services, and representation for Minnesotans.

The State Demographic Center coordinates the Minnesota Data Center Network and Economic Resource Group, and thus also serves as Minnesota's liaison to the National State Data Center Network.

Priority projects

Promote Census 2000, which takes place on April 1, 2000. The demography team is heavily involved in planning, promotion and staff recruiting for Census 2000. The team will also develop and deliver new census products — ways for people to access and use census data — beginning in December 2000.

Deliver data and analysis gathered annually in the American Community Survey by the Census Bureau.

Conduct continuous scanning and analysis of emerging demographic trends with potential impact on Minnesota.

Monitor the state population projections and county population projections published in 1998. Revise as needed.

Publish annual estimates of population and households for Minnesota counties each May. These estimates are used to help determine state aid to local governments.

Coordinate the Minnesota Data Center, including an annual meeting each fall. This event provides workshops, updates and introduction of new products to the nearly 70 affiliates throughout Minnesota.

Support the Legislative Coordinating Committee, Subcommittee on Redistricting, through 2002.

Answer queries from government, business, service organizations and local communities through the Demography Helpline.

Complete the Block Boundary Suggestion Program and address list update for the 2000 Census. The State Demographic Center and the Legislative GIS Office collaborate to make sure Census 2000 will reflect accurate local boundaries.

Conduct a Boundary and Annexation Survey each fall and continuously update geographic files of county, township and city boundaries. This directly affects state aid to local governments based on population.

Conduct scoring for Community Development Block Grants each year. This qualifies local governments for federal aid to local programs that benefit low- and moderate-income people, prevent or eliminate slums and urban blight, or meet other community development needs. The eligibility formula uses census data.

Publish *Population Notes* and *PopBites*, widely read briefings on demography findings.

Special constituencies

In addition to the constituencies served by the entire agency, this team has a special focus on:

- Planners
- Minnesota Data Center Network member organizations
- News media
- Businesses

