

# ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 1991 - June 30, 1992

**MID-MINNESOTA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



**Charles Warner**

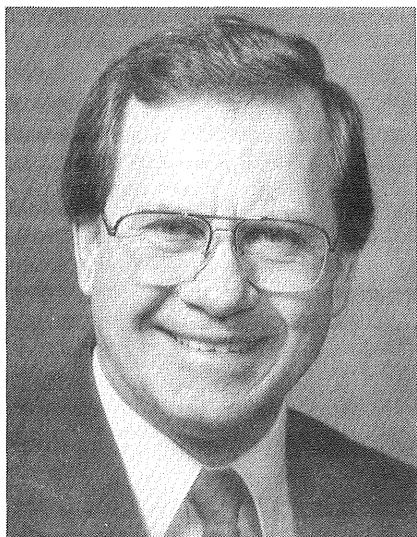
Many times, as we look back on a concluding year, numerous items come to mind where a better effort, a keener focused endeavor or a more knowledgeable execution would have resulted in accomplishments closer to what had been envisioned when the year began.

The past 12 months, however -- when viewed from the perspective of the Mid-Minnesota Development Commission -- abound with things about which we may take pride in accomplishment while items which cause us regrets about unfulfilled expectations are at a minimum.

I'm proud of the job done by our executive director and staff. The annual meeting of the Minnesota Regional Development Organizations was held at Willmar and our staff did an excellent job in helping to arrange and carry out the conference.

There has been a movement underway in some quarters attempting to have fewer points of contact for state and federal programs. The easy solution -- and one which had been advanced -- is to incorporate RDC's along the lines of the initiative fund boundaries. To meet the requirement of fewer points of contact while at the same time maintaining the individual sovereignty of our RDC's, negotiations have been held between the chairs of the three RDC's in southwest Minnesota. Cooperation and coordination, not confrontation and head-in-the-sand isolation, is our approach. We trust it will work.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



**H. Eugene Hippe**

What is a regional development commission? What does it do? Who are the commission members? What has it done that benefits me? Each year for the past 18 years I have been asked these and similar questions. Each year we try to answer some of those questions by preparing and distributing an annual report.

A regional development commission is a partnership of local units of government cooperating to address issues of common interest. Emphasis is placed on intergovernmental cooperation. Our agency serves a four county area, and this report lists the membership and who they represent. Also contained in the report is information on the various state and federal programs the commission administers and the type of technical assistance offered through the use of local funding.

This past fiscal year was a productive year. Productivity is highest for the commission when local governmental units utilize the staff's expertise at the preliminary stage of a proposed project. This allows the staff to assist with all aspects of a proposal. Every local governmental unit should keep in contact with its appointed representatives and the staff to make sure its interests are being addressed and it is utilizing the commission to the maximum advantage.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



**Lee Larson**

The Mid-Minnesota Development Commission's economic development program is designed to assist local units of government and businesses in the region with activities that create or support the creation of jobs and investment. Program activities are funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration and the local tax levy. An advisory committee makes recommendations to the commission on the priorities and goals of economic development in the region. The committee is chaired by Richard Loftness of Hector and consists of 16 members representing the diverse economic interests in the region.

A major portion of the staff time in economic development is devoted to technical assistance. Businesses, individuals and government units can request and receive economic development technical assistance. Requests range from business assistance information to business finance analysis, infrastructure improvements, tax increment financing and grant and loan writing.

The preparation of loan and grant applications made up a large portion of the commission's economic development workload. Application assistance was provided for the Southwest Minnesota Initiative Fund, Opportunities Minnesota, Inc., the Minnesota Economic Recovery Fund/Small Cities Economic Development Program, Small Business Administration, Farmers Home Administration and the Economic Development Administration.

The commission re-submitted a preapplication to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) for funds to capitalize a regional revolving loan fund. The preapplication had been rejected by EDA the previous year. Significant changes were made to the preapplication for its re-submittal. Renville County was the only county in the region eligible for the program, but the fund is designated to accommodate Kandiyohi, McLeod and Meeker Counties should they become eligible in the future.

The commission continues to serve as an information source for businesses. The commission office is a public access site for the Minnesota Project Outreach (MPO) program. MPO provides telephone/computer access to an information system that allows companies to obtain answers to technical and business questions. Companies can access experts in science and technology, search for printed material, pursue licensable technologies available from the University of Minnesota and receive business planning assistance. The commission is also an affiliate member of the State Data Center and the Economic Business Information Network (EBIN). Through the Data Center and EBIN, the commission has access to all data generated by the U.S. Census and Department of Commerce. We have ready access to demographic and economic information needed by the business community.



## REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY FISCAL YEAR 1992

### REVENUES

FEDERAL		\$ 624,966
Economic Development Administration	\$ 50,252	
HHS - Area Agency on Aging	<u>574,714</u>	
STATE		\$ 196,944
Homestead Taxes/Credits	\$ 42,822	
Department of Transportation	27,000	
State Nutrition	85,279	
Small Cities Development Grant	9,347	
Small Business Development Center	<u>32,496</u>	
PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS		\$ 20,000
Southwest Minnesota Initiative Fund	<u>\$ 20,000</u>	
CHARGES FOR SERVICES		\$ 375
Accounting Service	<u>\$ 375</u>	
LOCAL		\$ 138,759
Property Taxes	\$107,912	
Interest Earnings	22,464	
In-Kind Contributions	3,848	
Miscellaneous	<u>4,535</u>	
TOTAL REVENUES		<u>\$ 981,044</u>

### EXPENDITURES

PERSONAL SERVICES	\$ 305,711
SUPPLIES AND PRINTING	12,859
OTHER SERVICES: Communication, Postage, Conference, Subscriptions	31,440
CONTRACTED SERVICES	613,466
OTHER CHARGES: Rent, Insurance, Professional Services	24,840
CAPITAL OUTLAY	6,436
TRAVEL: Staff and Advisory Committees	16,130
COMMISSIONERS: Travel and Per Diem	13,350
IN-KIND SERVICES	3,848
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>\$1,028,080</u>

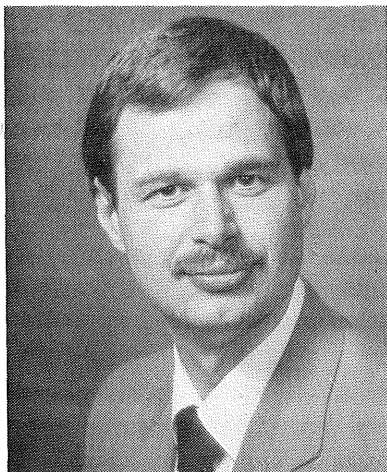
## PROPOSED BUDGET SUMMARY FISCAL YEAR 1993

### REVENUES

FEDERAL		\$ 626,876
Economic Development Administration	\$ 56,000	
HHS - Area Agency on Aging	<u>570,876</u>	
STATE		\$ 323,672
Homestead Taxes/Credits	43,028	
Department of Transportation	29,612	
State Nutrition	85,279	
Rural Rehabilitation Program	20,800	
Small Cities Development Grant	109,953	
Small Business Development Center	<u>35,000</u>	
PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS		\$ - 0 -
CHARGES FOR SERVICES		\$ - 0 -
LOCAL		\$ 169,803
Property Taxes	\$111,372	
Interest Earnings	20,000	
In-Kind Contributions	3,960	
Reserve From Prior Years	<u>34,471</u>	
TOTAL REVENUES		<u>\$1,120,351</u>

### EXPENDITURES

PERSONAL SERVICES	\$ 344,659
SUPPLIES AND PRINTING	15,802
OTHER SERVICES: Communication, Postage, Conference, Subscriptions	33,141
CONTRACTED SERVICES	656,956
OTHER CHARGES: Rent, Insurance, Professional Services	25,975
CAPITAL OUTLAY	2,000
TRAVEL: Staff and Advisory Committees	20,108
COMMISSIONERS: Travel and Per Diem	14,250
OTHER USES	3,500
IN-KIND SERVICES	<u>3,960</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>\$1,120,351</u>



**Greg Bergman**

## SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

A Small Business Development Center (SBDC) was opened on January 1, 1991. Located in the Mid-Minnesota Development Commission office, the new SBDC serves Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Renville and northeastern Swift Counties. Greg Bergman has been assigned to staff the new SBDC.

SBDC's work one-on-one with individuals interested in starting or expanding a business. SBDC's provide counseling, training, information, referral, technology transfer and other assistance to small business owners and managers. Counseling services provided include recordkeeping techniques, marketing strategies, financial packaging and analysis, business planning and entrepreneurial training. There is no fee for counseling and many other services. A fee may be charged for seminars, workshops and specialized services.

Sixty clients were served by the Small Business Development Center this fiscal year. The SBDC has also provided information to over thirty additional individuals and businesses who telephoned or visited the office. Counselor Bergman has been a keynote speaker at a variety of service organization meetings throughout the year. The SBDC has also played an active role in the Willmar Chamber of Commerce Education Committee, the Kandiyohi County Economic Development Partnership, the Litchfield Chamber of Commerce and other organizations related to business education and development.



**Lorraine Patton**

## AREA AGENCY ON AGING

The Mid-Minnesota Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is dedicated to helping older people in Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker and Renville Counties lead comfortable, independent lives. The goals of the AAA are to enhance service offerings and to ensure that the needs of the senior population are met. Each year the AAA is accountable for a budget of approximately \$650,000, which provides for program development as well as financial assistance to service providers and senior centers.

During 1992, the AAA had the opportunity to participate in two statewide program development activities. Seniors Agenda for Independent Living (SAIL) is a statewide project which emphasizes prevention of problems through early intervention and building a broad base of community involvement as a means of more effectively meeting the long term care needs of the elderly. The statewide Senior LinkAge line, a phone link to help families, friends and seniors find answers and services for older people, has been implemented.

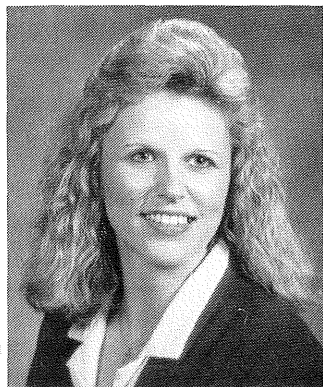
The AAA has an advisory council composed of 13 members chaired by Andrew Walters of Watkins. The advisory council meets once a month and has a primary responsibility of establishing priorities and reviewing and recommending projects for funding. Although priorities and projects change, the following list of priority areas and projects funded during 1992 is representative of a typical year:

Transportation: Meeker County, Spicer, Atwater, Glencoe Area Health Center and Heartland Community Action Agency

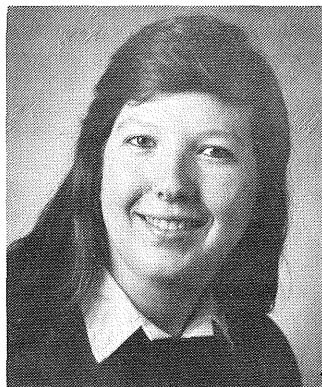
Legal Services/Education: Western Minnesota Legal Services and Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services

Respite Care: Counties of Kandiyohi, Meeker and McLeod

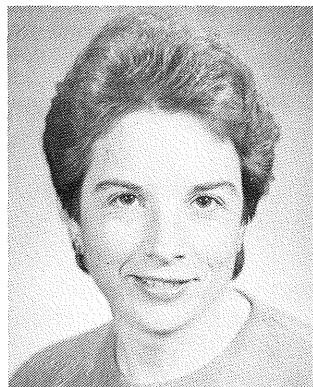
Congregate Dining and Home Delivered Meals: Heartland Community Action Agency



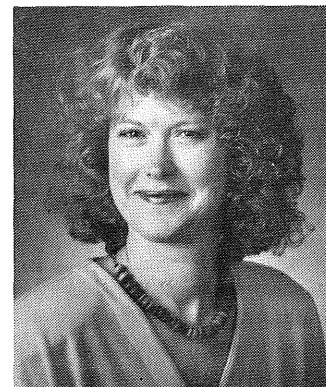
**Pam Wiegmann**  
Office Manager  
(July-April)



**Sharon Lindstrom**  
Office Manager  
(May-June)

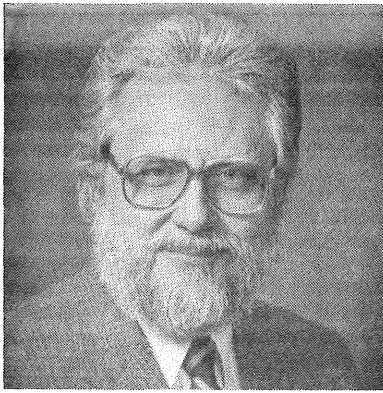


**Kay Ruhl**  
Account Clerk



**Karen Burau**  
Part-Time Secretary  
(May-June)





**Jerry Grinde**

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

All of the commission's programs are involved with technical assistance because the commission's purpose is directly associated with being of service. However, this particular program area is not tied to any state or federally funded program and, in fact, is made possible because of the commission's authority to raise a limited amount of taxes. Consequently, the commission can establish its own priorities and objectives.

Each year the staff works with local units of government to develop or update comprehensive land use plans, zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations. Other areas where technical assistance is provided are the preparation of tax increment finance districts, Small Cities Development Program (SCDP) grant applications and open space/recreation grant applications. Other projects include helping record township roads, seeking housing options for rural communities, re-use of closed school facilities, updating maps, responding to requests for census data, assisting with preparation of Star City and Star County applications, and researching both public and private funding sources. This past year, considerable assistance was given to counties and cities with SCDP grant applications, land use planning and water management planning.

A document has been prepared which lists major work items in which the commission has been involved. It is the intent to update this document on an annual basis and share it with local elected officials.



**Donn Winckler**

## TRANSPORTATION

Over the course of the past fiscal year, the Mid-Minnesota Development Commission has been active with a number of transportation projects and events.

This year, staff assisted the City of Willmar with conducting an airport location study. The city is considering installing an instrument landing system (ILS). The current runway alignment is such that the city cannot add an ILS. The airport will need to be shifted or moved to a new location. The commission's study looked at a 10 mile radius of Willmar, mapping out environmental factors that would make it more difficult and costly to build an airport. The study showed several locations where an airport could be built with a limited number of costly problems to overcome. The study was reported to the city's Airport Committee, and the city was given the study and the prepared maps.

Staff have been very active again with transit planning activities. Staff assisted Mn/DOT's Office of Transit conduct a region-wide transit provider inventory. A transit meeting was held in each of the four counties to discuss transit needs, and a region-wide meeting was held to further discuss needs, cooperation and how to meet the needs. Staff also attended statewide meetings on transit issues.

Assistance was given to a Meeker County organization which applied and received funding for 16(b)(2) funds this year. The 16(b)(2) program primarily funds nonprofit organizations, enabling them to buy vans

and small buses which provide improved access to transportation services for the elderly and the handicapped. A staff member was also part of the transit 16(b)(2) grant review committee.

Staff worked on updating the commission's Township Road Manual. The update was needed because of legislative changes and to give more information on road recording. Staff has also given assistance to 8 townships this past year in recording their roads. Three of the townships required extensive assistance in the recording process.

A staff person continues to be a member of the T.H. 12 task force that has a goal of an improved Highway 12 corridor. The commission passed a resolution asking Mn/DOT to make a decision in favor of the Highway 12 Wayzata to Delano highway segment and also favoring an express highway design.

The Mid-Minnesota Transportation Advisory committee (TAC) makes recommendations to the commission on transportation issues affecting Region Six East. The committee consists of 14 members and is chaired by Harold Sanken of Brownton.

Within the commission's aging program activities, transportation for senior citizens was, as always, a major activity. The Area Agency on Aging, which is administered by the commission, funded five transportation programs and gave technical assistance to senior citizen transportation organizations.

Mid-Minnesota Development Commission  
333 SW 6th St. • Willmar, MN 56201

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