

Southwest Regional Development Commission



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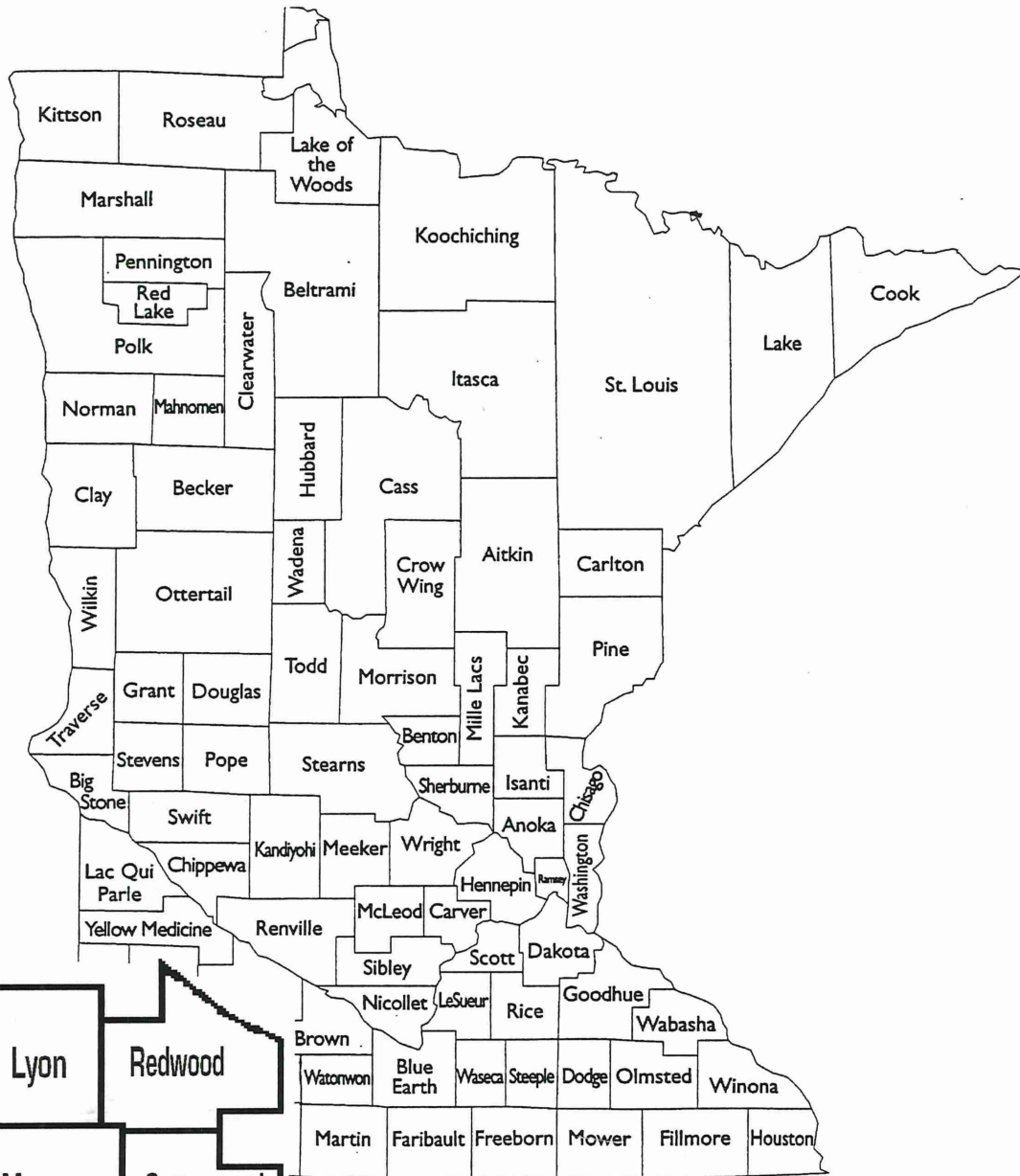
Attached to this correspondence you will find a description of the services provided by the Southwest Regional Development Commission. Many of you have used these services in the past and benefited as a result. The Commission staff stands ready to assist you in meeting your future needs and hopes you find these descriptions useful. Also, you will find a copy of the Commission's Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report which highlights some of the accomplishments of the staff of this organization during the course of the last twelve months. As you can see, the accomplishments are many.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Commissioners for the leadership they have provided this organization the past year and to the SRDC Staff for their dedication and devotion.

On behalf of the Southwest Regional Development Commission,

Craig Rubis, Chairman
Southwest Regional Development Commission

Service Area



Southwest Regional Development Commission

2401 Broadway Avenue
Suite 1

Slayton, MN 56172-1142

Phone (507) 836-8547 / FAX (507) 836-8°

Local Governments Served

CITIES IN REGION 8

Cottonwood County

Bingham Lake
Comfrey
Jeffers
Mountain Lake
Storden
Westbrook
Windom

Jackson County

Alpha
Heron Lake
Jackson
Lakefield
Okabena
Wilder

Lincoln County

Arco
Hendricks
Ivanhoe
Lake Benton
Tyler

Lyon County

Balaton
Cottonwood
Florence
Garvin
Ghent
Lynd
Marshall
Minneota
Russell
Taunton
Tracy

Murray County

Avoca
Chandler
Currie
Dovray
Fulda
Hadley
Iona
Lake Wilson
Slayton

Nobles County

Adrian
Bigelow
Brewster
Dundee
Ellsworth
Kinbrae
Lismore
Round Lake
Rushmore
Wilmont
Worthington

Pipestone County

Edgerton
Hatfield
Holland
Ihlen
Jasper
Pipestone
Ruthton
Trosky
Woodstock

Redwood County

Belview
Clements
Delhi
Lamberton
Lucan
Milroy
Morgan
Redwood Falls
Revere
Sanborn
Seaforth
Vesta
Wabasso
Walnut Grove
Wanda

Rock County

Beaver Creek
Hardwick
Hills
Kenneth
Luverne
Magnolia
Steen

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Local Governments Served

TOWNSHIPS IN REGION 8

Cottonwood County

Amboy
Amo
Ann
Carson
Dale
Delton
Germantown
Great Bend
Highwater
Lakeside
Midway
Mountain Lake
Rosehill
Selma
Southbrook
Springfield
Storden
Westbrook

Jackson County

Alba
Belmont
Christiania
Delafield
Des Moines
Enterprise
Ewington
Heron Lake
Hunter
Kimball
LaCrosse
Middletown
Minneota
Petersburg
Rost
Round Lake
Sioux Valley
Weimer
West Heron Lake
Wisconsin

Lincoln County

Alta Vista
Ash Lake
Diamond Lake
Drammen
Hansonville
Hendricks

(continued)

Lincoln County

(continued)
Hope
Lake Benton
Lake Stay
Limestone
Marble
Marshfield
Royal
Shaokatan
Verdi

Lyon County

Amiret
Clifton
Coon Creek
Custer
Eidsvold
Fairview
Grandview
Island Lake
Lake Marshall
Lucas
Lynd
Lyons
Monroe
Nordland
Rock Lake
Shelburne
Sodus
Stanley
Vallers
Westerheim

Murray County

Belfast
Bondin
Cameron
Chanarambie
Des Moines River
Dovray
Ellsborough
Fenton
Holly
Iona
Lake Sarah
Leeds
Lime Lake.
Lowville

(continued)

Murray County

(continued)
Mason
Moulton
Murray
Shetek
Skandia
Slayton

Nobles County

Bigelow
Bloom
Dewald
Elk
Graham Lake
Grand Prairie
Hersey
Indian Lake
Larking
Leota
Lismore
Little Rock
Lorain
Olney
Ransom
Seward
Summit Lake
Westside
Wilmont
Worthington

Pipestone County

Aetna
Altona
Burke
Eden
Elmer
Fountain Prairie
Grange
Gray
Osborne
Rock
Sweet
Troy

Redwood County

Brookville
Charleston
Delhi
Gales
Granite
Honner
Johnsonville
Kintire
Lamberton
Morgan
New Avon
North Hero
Paxton
Redwood Falls
Sheridan
Sherman
Springdale
Sundown
Swedes Forest
Three Lakes
Underwood
Vail
Vesta
Waterbury
Westline
Willow Lake

Rock County

Battle Plain
Beaver Creek
Clinton
Denver
Kanmaranzi
Luverne
Magnolia
Martin
Mound
Rose Dell
Springwater
Vienna

Southwest Regional Development Commission

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Southwest Regional Development Commission

SRDC STAFF

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Program Development Specialist ----- Robin Weis
Community Development Technician ----- Barb Kirchner
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Financial/Grants Manager ----- Helen Brinks
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Southwest Regional Development Commission

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Southwest Regional Development Commission

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AGENCY & LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

The SRDC Legislative Committee traveled to St. Paul to visit and present the SRDC's 2000 legislative agenda to our area legislators.

The following is a list of major legislative activities that occurred this fiscal year.

- Sought resolution of issues and/or concerns between local units of government and state department and agencies.
- The SRDC Revolving Loan Fund received exemption from the Business Subsidy requirements.
- Supported the continuation of planning grants to RDCs. A total of \$200,000 was received for new projects.
- The Prescription Drug program was expanded to more seniors by increasing the asset limit.
- The Community Purchasing Arrangements Act had several changes made to it so it is easier for Rural Minnesota and the Southwest Purchasing Alliance to offer affordable quality health care coverage.

SRDC FISCAL YEAR 2000 ANNUAL REPORT

Agency & Legislative Advocacy

The Southwest Regional Development Commission lends assistance and provides legislative advocacy to other local and regional agencies.

Policy Formation

The Commission solicits local input and assesses the needs within the Region. Following analysis, alternatives to current direction are identified and pursued to provide the greatest benefit to southwestern Minnesota through useful policy formation at the state, region, and local level.

Program Development

The Commission establishes and assists programs that provide additional service within the region. Examples include, but are not limited to the following:

- ◆ *Southwest Area Agency on Aging*
- ◆ *Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership*
- ◆ *Prairieland Economic Development Corporation*
- ◆ *Heron Lake Environmental Learning Center*

Pursuit of Projects Important to the Region

By being informed and involved, the Commission attains funds for projects that are important to the region.

The Commission has a project development process local units of government can participate in or adhere to. This process enables those interested to have an advantage in funding pursuits and provides a needed assessment of project potential. All facets of project development are addressed in the process providing innumerable benefits to the project proponents.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Staff assisted the Cities of Windom, Okabena, and Heron Lake in acquiring placement on the Drinking Water Revolving Loan Project Priority List.
- Staff assisted the Cities of Heron Lake and Dovray to receive placement on Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Project Priority List.
- Technical assistance for infrastructure improvements was provided to the Cities of Kenneth, Wanda, Taunton, Dovray, Rushmore, Pipestone, Heron Lake, Okabena, Mountain Lake, Westbrook, Windom, and Woodstock. These communities received grant and loan information on a variety of programs which include the Minnesota Trade and Economic Development Small Cities Development Program (SCDP), Rural Development (RD) Communities Facilities Grant and Loan Program, Public Facilities Authority (PFA) Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund (DWRF) and Public Facilities Authority (PFA) Wastewater Loan Program.
- Staff completed work with the Uniform Relocation Act Policies in regards to displaced flood tenants.

SRDC FISCAL YEAR 2000 ANNUAL REPORT

Infrastructure

The Southwest Regional Development Commission works with communities to identify their infrastructure needs and funding sources to satisfy those needs. Examples of community development public facilities projects include:

- ◆ *Water treatment.*
- ◆ *Water storage.*
- ◆ *Water distribution.*
- ◆ *Sewer collection.*
- ◆ *Sewer treatment.*
- ◆ *Individual sewer systems.*
- ◆ *Storm sewers.*
- ◆ *Streets.*
- ◆ *Fire halls.*

SOLID WASTE

- The Southwest Regional Solid Waste Commission completed work on a grant for \$11,230 provided by the Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA) to conduct the Municipal Coordination Project. The SRDC provided principal staffing to the project. The project worked to build communication between counties and cities as it related to solid waste management. The project focus was to increase community awareness of the Public Entities Law. A brochure was completed called “The Importance of Contracting for Solid Waste Disposal: Organized Collection of Waste” and distributed to the 105 communities in the 12 county area. In addition, community visits were conducted with communities who did not contract for waste disposal.
- Staff assistance was provided to the District 8 Solid Waste Administrators to facilitate continuity between the Solid Waste Commission directives and the Administrators.
- Assistance was provided to the Solid Waste Commission on legislative issues, including funding support for the Office of Environmental Assistance Capital Assistance Program.
- Upcoming issues are anticipated to be OEA requirements of the County Solid Waste Management Plans and the OEA Policy Report implications.

SRDC FISCAL YEAR 2000 ANNUAL REPORT

Solid Waste

The Southwest Regional Development Commission provides staff support to the Southwest Regional Solid Waste Commission who's goal is to foster an integrated approach to solid waste management in the region and to follow the order and preference of waste management strategies identified in the Minnesota Waste Management Act which are:

1. *Reduce and Reuse*
2. *Recycle*
3. *Compost Organics*
4. *Resource Recovery*
5. *Landfilling*

Staff support to the Solid Waste Commission includes correspondence, grant writing administration, and substantive planning through study, plan, and solid waste ordinance development.

The Commission coordinates regional efforts to encourage conservation of resources.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

◆ SOUTHWEST WIND ENERGY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (SWEAP)

- The Commission worked on accessing, storing and organizing wind monitoring data from the five active monitoring sites. The data is currently available to the participating landowners and other interested parties.

◆ PRAIRIE ECOLOGY BUS CENTER

- The Southwest Regional Development Commission provides staff and fiscal administration assistance to the Prairie Ecology Bus Center. Staff has provided assistance through fund raising and grant writing for the continued operation of the bus, as well as the development of a business marketing plan to outline the future of the bus.

◆ GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)

The Commission began its second year of the implementation of this new program. Projects were funded through a variety of sources, including a Planning Grant from the State of Minnesota, Transportation Planning funds as well as contracts with local units of government and private businesses. Projects included:

- Regional Trails Planning. A database was compiled and for use with the inventory of regional trails as well as potential trailheads and corridors.
- Nobles County. Database creation of clipped layers for the municipalities in Nobles County. Staff provided training assistance in the operation of GIS hardware and software, and to familiarize the county staff with ArcView.
- Arrowhead EMS. The GIS was used to create regional EMS maps for locating hospitals, ambulance service and distribution centers throughout the State of Minnesota. A total of twenty-four maps were produced.
- Community Land Use and Zoning Maps. Staff has worked with a variety of communities in the region to update their land and zoning maps including Russell, Currie, Redwood Falls, Lake Wilson, Lynd, Marshall, and Storden.
- Prairieland EDC. Staff completed a series of maps outlining the activities of the PEDC since its inception.

◆ NOAA-WEATHER RADIO SYSTEM

Over the past year, the SRDC has worked with the Murray County Emergency Services Director to obtain funding through a Hazard Mitigation Grant Application for NOAA coverage in Southwest Minnesota and matching funding from Lincoln, Lyon, Redwood, Pipestone, Murray, Cottonwood, and Jackson Counties to install a weather radio transmitter system. The project was funded and the weather radio equipment has been ordered. The tentative completion date is August, 2000.

Development Services

The Southwest Regional Development Commission is committed to a continuous process of sustainable development planning and assistance to the Region's customers, primarily local units of government, business, industry, and non-profits. The planning and assistance of sustainable development activities encompasses three major categories within development:

- ◆ *Economic development,*
- ◆ *Local government infrastructure development, and*
- ◆ *Land management.*

The Southwest Regional Development Commission will work with the public and private sectors to provide assistance which will enhance development across the Region.

TRANSPORTATION

◆ TRANSIT

- Staff served on the District 7 Section 5310 grant review committee.
- Facilitated Regional Transit Coordinator meetings and communication.
- Assisted with the acquisition of vehicles through the Section 5310 program, Office of Transit, or the ATP process.
- The SRDC provided assistance to two transit projects in the Region: Coordination with the City and County of Pipestone and Coordination with the City of Worthington and Nobles County (Joint Powers Transit Authority).
- Assisted in the McKnight Welfare to Work Transportation Initiatives facilitation of Rideshare Coordinator meetings, the school bus initiative, and development of the child seats initiative for transit systems and volunteer drivers in the 14 county McKnight area.

◆ GENERAL TECHNICAL/CENSUS ASSISTANCE IN TRANSPORTATION

- Assisted local units of government in regard to MnDOT and County highway projects, traffic counts on roadways, status of roads and construction; additionally, City Officials were assisted with the development of Capital Improvement Programs; Township Officials were also provided with expertise on area bridge projects.
- Monitored State & Federal Legislative issues that affected transportation.
- Served as a Technical Advisory Committee member for Redwood Falls, Pipestone, and Marshall Community Transportation Plans.
- Initiated a Regional Trails group to assist in the development of a Regional Trails Plan.
- Provided assistance to Pipestone County and the City of Marshall with Functional Classification requests.

◆ AREA TRANSPORTATION PARTNERSHIPS (ATP)

- Staff assistance to ATP Districts 7 and 8.
- Regional Significance ratings were completed for each project submitted for federal TEA21 funds in Region 8.
- Participated in the development of rating criteria for transit capital projects.
- Sponsored Public Meetings to review the Draft Transportation Improvement Plans.
- Provided coordination between the two ATP's on issues and projects in the Willmar and Mankato ATP's.
- Presented the positions of local units of government and the general public to the Area Transportation Partnerships.

◆ CURRENT AND EMERGING TRANSPORTATION ISSUES, PROBLEMS, AND CONCERNS

- Funding concerns include the impact and distribution of State and Federal Transportation funds.
- Rail improvements, transit coordination, resource collaboration, continued funding assistance for transit systems, welfare reform, capital requests, and interstate transit system use.
- Funding of major construction projects, such as Highway 60 from Worthington to the Iowa border and Highway 23 to St. Cloud.

◆ SOUTHWEST REGIONAL TRAILS PLAN

- The Southwest Regional Trails Planning Committee was established in June 1999 and met monthly through December 1999. The Committee was comprised of two representatives appointed by each county.
- The committee developed a vision statement to establish a network of trails in Southwest Minnesota for multiple users. The Plan, approved in March 2000 identified a variety of factors including: Trail Vision for Southwest Minnesota; List of benefits of trails; Existing and potential trails/corridors; Trails in the process of development; Potential trail development; Types of trails, with an emphasis on non-motorized trails; Funding resources; and Timelines for development.
- The Trail Plan was developed to be used as a guidance document for local trail development initiatives.

Transportation

The Southwest Regional Development Commission coordinates with the Minnesota Department of Transportation in the planning and development of a comprehensive transportation system in southwest Minnesota.

There is a Transportation Committee that reviews, comments, and makes recommendations on local, regional, district, and statewide transportation issues, plans and programming.

The Southwest Regional Development Commission also:

- ◆ *Participates with and has a membership to the Area Transportation Partnerships 7 and 8 to impact intermodal investments within the Southwest Region.*
- ◆ *Provides professional assistance to local units of government on local and regional transportation issues by:*
 - Disseminating information.
 - Assisting with functional re-classification requests.
 - Collecting information relating to specific transportation projects and their status.
 - Assisting enhancement applicants with the proposal process.
- ◆ *Reviews plans, policies, or studies undertaken by Minnesota Department of Transportation (or others) that impact transportation in the Region.*
- ◆ *Facilitates transportation coordination efforts in the Region.*
- ◆ *Conducts long range transportation planning to promote a seamless transportation network within southwest Minnesota.*

CAPITAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

◆ PRAIRIE EXPO PROJECT

Prairie Expo has been determined to be a project with region-wide impact for Southwest Minnesota. Construction at the Prairie Expo site began in May 1999 and will be completed in July 2000.

Prairie Expo will provide a compelling reason for travelers to stop off I-90. Prairie Expo will be a self-supporting facility through business/industry/corporate participation and built-in profit centers. Exhibitory will showcase the rich tourism attractions that exist in Southwest Minnesota. The facility will be open year round and will contain exhibits which will promote the cultural, natural and commercial history of Southwest Minnesota. The facility will entice visitors to travel throughout the region. Traveler research showed an untapped resource of visitor dollars and a strong interest in stopping at an attraction such as Prairie Expo.

◆ REVOLVING LOAN FUND

Since the capitalization of the SRDC Revolving Loan Fund in 1995, the SRDC has made 43 loans for a total of \$2,946,330. Over \$630,192 was lent during FY00. The program has been so successful for the SRDC there is no money available for new projects until the end of 2000. As repayments are made to the pool they will be relented to small businesses throughout the region. Businesses in Cottonwood, Jackson, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock, Lincoln, and Lyon counties are eligible to apply.

◆ INFRASTRUCTURE AWARDS AND ADMINISTRATION

- Grant applications were submitted to the Department of Trade and Economic Development for the City of Woodstock. Applications were also submitted in collaboration with the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership for the Cities of Heron Lake, Okabena and Mountain Lake. Staff assisted the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership in developing applications for the Cities of Round Lake, Marshall and Pipestone. Applications that received funding were Woodstock, Marshall, Round Lake, and Mountain Lake.
- Rural Development Community Facilities Loan and Grant were prepared for the City of Woodstock. Woodstock received loan and grant dollars for a sanitary sewer collection and treatment project. The City of Woodstock also received funds from the Public Facilities Authority Program.
- Trosky received loan dollars from the Drinking Water Revolving Loan Program. Staff conducted grant administration on the project. Construction has been completed and the project closed-out.
- Windom received loan dollars from the Drinking Water Revolving Loan Program. Staff assisted the city with administration and construction has been completed on the project.
- Pre-applications for Rural Development funds were prepared for the Cities of Storden, Okabena, Heron Lake, Dovray, Edgerton, and Westbrook.
- Westbrook received Rural Development grant and loan funds for a new ambulance.
- The SRDC conducted grant administration for various communities that received funding for infrastructure projects. The City of Rushmore is finishing a storm sewer project. The City of Wanda is finishing a wastewater collection and treatment construction project. Leota is finishing a wastewater collection and treatment construction project. The City of Woodstock has begun the initial steps for their funding wastewater collection and treatment construction project.
- During this fiscal year the following projects have been closed: Balaton Sewer Improvements Project, Marshall Ditch Project, Vesta Ditch Project, and Adrian Water Treatment Project.
- Staff from the SRDC assists the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership in grant administration for housing, rental and commercial projects along with disaster projects.
- Staff assists communities in grant development. During this fiscal year a number of communities have been assisted in project and funding development.
- Staff assisted the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership (SWMHP) in developing two grant applications to the Minnesota Housing Partnership Community Building Program to assist in the planning phase of new housing development and housing rehabilitation.
- Authored an application to Minnesota Department of Health for a Rural Hospital Capital Improvement Grant and Loan Program for the Westbrook Hospital, which received funding.

Capital Resource Development

The Southwest Regional Development Commission will work with local government and non-profits to generate capital resources. Some of the methods the Commission uses are:

- ◆ *Capitalize and lend funds through the Southwest Regional Development Commission Revolving Loan Fund.*
- ◆ *Assist businesses in structuring loan packages and leveraging public and private resources.*
- ◆ *Assist local units of government in leveraging and administering a multitude of funding programs.*
- ◆ *Provide outreach to communities throughout the region by working to leverage financial resources from State and Federal programs.*
- ◆ *Funding sources are administered by the Commission through application to different agencies. Sources include, but are not limited to:*
 - *Federal Economic Development Administration.*
 - *Federal Small Business Administration.*
 - *Federal Rural Development Agency.*
 - *Minnesota Trade and Economic Development.*
 - *Minnesota Public Facilities Authority.*
 - *Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.*
 - *Minnesota Department of Health.*

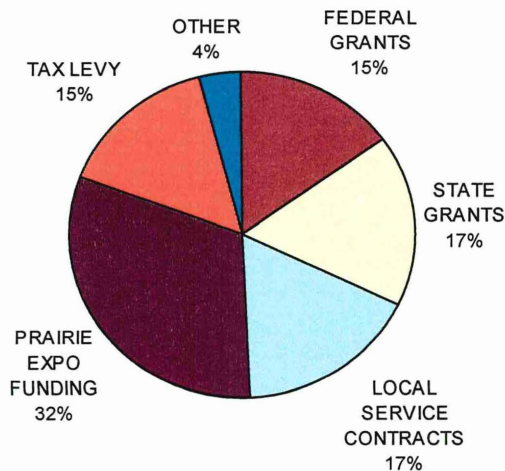
MANAGEMENT & POLICY ADMINISTRATION

The audit for Fiscal Year 1999 of the SRDC's finance and contract compliance was completed by certified public accountants in September of 1999. Copies of that audit and all prior audits are available for review at the SRDC office. No negative findings were produced by the audit.

	FY2000 <u>ACTUAL</u>	FY2001 <u>BUDGET</u>
REVENUES		
Tax Levy	\$217,138	\$215,000
MN Board on Aging	99,500	99,645
Dept. Health - Purchasing Alliance	43,350	50,000
Senior Linkage / Insurance Counsel - MBA	44,800	52,500
State - Health Insurance Counsel - MBA	37,000	37,000
Medicare Fraud & Abuse (ORT) - HICP	38,440	6,152
Dept. of Human Services - MN Care	46,029	65,166
Economic Development Administration	55,000	55,000
State Planning Grant	15,532	33,384
EDA-Livestock Study	1,908	0
Minnesota Department of Transportation	50,000	50,000
EQB - Wind Monitoring	10,290	0
Office of Environmental Assistance	6,423	0
Foundation	27,136	1,983
EXPO Site	41,107	438,565
Interest Earned & Miscellaneous	29,758	24,200
Contracts	223,285	237,601
Reserves for Building - Architect	5,000	3,000
Reserves for Equipment Purchases	<u>7,141</u>	<u>26,000</u>
TOTAL REVENUES	<u>\$998,837</u>	<u>\$1,395,196</u>

	FY2000 <u>ACTUAL</u>	FY2001 <u>BUDGET</u>
EXPENDITURES		
Committee Expenses	\$ 73,116	\$ 60,850
Salaries & Fringe	521,263	987,541
Staff Travel	35,712	47,842
Office Space	33,237	39,000
Postage	18,332	17,860
Communications	15,047	18,480
Printing / Publication	42,003	29,337
Supplies	8,346	8,925
Insurance	5,922	5,000
Depreciation (Non-Building)	28,100	27,000
Audits	4,100	4,400
Computer	17,270	19,980
Equipment	7,141	26,000
Housing	1,500	8,000
Other	59,154	41,325
Consultant / Contract Payments	99,734	80,090
Office Building Principal Payment	<u>14,668</u>	<u>20,763</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>\$984,645</u>	<u>\$1,442,393</u>
Balance	14,192	(47,197)
Equipment Reserve Change	20,959	1,000
Operating Reserve Change	(11,476)	(54,906)
Building Reserve Change	4,709	6,709

WHERE OUR OPERATING REVENUES COME FROM



NOTE 1: Estimates are included for final payable and receivable amounts on revenues and expenditures in FY00.

NOTE 2: 18,400 Administrative expense incurred for PEBC.

NOTE 3: Receivables of 90,000 from PEDC/PEBC/EXPO.

PROJECT REVIEWS

During Fiscal Year 2000 the SRDC reviewed 45 projects from within the Region to avoid duplication and insure wise use of public funds. If you are interested in receiving a complete listing of the project reviews for FY99, please contact the SRDC office.

"It is the mission of the Southwest Regional Development Commission to address the economic, social, physical, and governmental needs and opportunities of Southwestern Minnesota; while transcending traditional jurisdictional configurations. Further, to apply a regional perspective to problems, allowing for a coordinated effort by local units of government to address the needs of the region's citizenry and the activities of area agencies resulting in the sharing of a regional private and public resources while increasing the efficiency of government in general.

In addition, the Commission shall serve as the mechanism for initiating change in local, regional, State, and Federal policy, programs and regulations translating the region's concerns into a blueprint of action."

Management & Policy Administration

The Southwest Regional Development Commission is a Management, Marketing, and Fiscal Agent service provider. The Commission handles fiduciary responsibilities for local units of government and non-profits. The Commission will work with the governing body to:

- ◆ *Conduct meetings.*
- ◆ *Review and approve amendments to the work program and budget including the indirect cost plan, as necessary, to reflect unanticipated changes.*
- ◆ *Overview and approve the Annual Report.*
- ◆ *Overview, propose, and approve policy changes needed as a result of new legislation or audit recommendations.*
- ◆ *Conduct orientation meetings for new members.*
- ◆ *Ensure financial practices are in keeping with federal and state standards.*
- ◆ *Review personnel policies to ensure compliance to current employment law.*
- ◆ *Provide input on attraction and retention of key public personnel.*

COMMUNITY DRIVEN PLANNING

- ◆ The SRDC conducted a Rental Housing Analysis in the City of Pipestone for the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership.
- ◆ The SRDC coordinated and facilitated meetings between Jackson, Cottonwood and Murray Counties to identify interest in the cleanup of the Des Moines River. Staff assisted in submitting a TMDL application to the MPCA in June, 2000.
- ◆ **LINCOLN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**
The SRDC, in cooperation with numerous project partners, worked to develop a Comprehensive Plan focused on sustainability. In addition to authoring a portion of the plan, the SRDC developed all the maps included in the plan. The SRDC served as fiscal host for the project and the plan was approved in June 2000.
- ◆ **NOBLES COUNTY**
The SRDC continues to assist Nobles County in the development of a Community-Based Plan, which received funding through Minnesota Planning. A 2025 committee was established to assist in the planning process. Issue meetings were held that focused on transportation, water resources, economic development and feedlots. GIS software and its use was also a part of the plan development. A draft plan is being developed for public review.
- ◆ **LAND USE PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM**
The SRDC received a planning grant to provide GIS services and a planning program that would provide financial assistance to local units of government. The following are projects which utilized the funds.
 - City of Tracy Land Use Plan. SRDC Staff completed work with Tracy's Land Use Plan update. The City required updated information in their land use plan as well as language revisions to address current and future land use issues. The City approved the update in March, 2000
 - Windom Regional Housing Analysis. This project was a collaboration between the Windom EDA, SRDC, and the Southwest MN Housing Partnership. A major employer in Windom created the need for a substantial amount of housing by expanding employment. This project involved detailed analysis, the availability of owner-occupied and rental housing, and the number of available building lots in a six county area including a total of thirteen communities.
 - Pipestone County Land Use Plan and Ordinance Update. This project encompasses the update and incorporation of various plans and ordinances. Staff is currently updating the Land Use Plan which is twenty years old and developing a planning document that includes the updated Land Use Plan, Solid Waste Plan, and Water Plan. Staff is also reviewing and updating the zoning, feedlot, floodplain, shoreland, sewage and wastewater treatment, and solid waste ordinances and incorporating them into a Land Management Ordinance.
 - Wabasso Capital Improvement Program. A Capital Improvement Program is currently being developed for the City to provide for the timely construction of essential projects at the minimum of expense. Staff assisted the City in preparing an inventory of existing facilities to include such information as age, condition, extent of use and any plans for rebuilding or expansion. All Department Heads identified possible projects and a financial analysis is currently being conducted with a five-year schedule prepared based on the analysis.
 - Mountain Lake Ordinance Book Codification. Staff is currently working with Mountain Lake on the codification of numerous ordinances. The staff will work very closely with the City Administrator and the City Council to identify desirable changes or issues that they feel need to be addressed. The project will create new language that reflects current policies and activities and is readable for day-to-day usage.
 - Slayton Needs Assessment. The City of Slayton was contemplating the development of a large community project that would have a substantial financial impact on the community. Staff from the SRDC worked with the City in developing a survey instrument to be distributed to the residents that would guide the city in their decision-making process. The survey helped the community identify the needs of the area residents and allowed them to make an informed decision on the project.
 - Belview Ordinance Book Codification. The SRDC staff is working closely with Belview City Clerk and Council to identify any existing issues with the current ordinances. Upon identifying initial issues, a review of the ordinances is being conducted and any recommended repeals or revisions presented to the City Council. In addition, the Council is apprised of any new ordinances that should be added.
 - Storden Ordinance Book Codification. Staff is nearing completion in working with the City to codify approximately 50 ordinances. Some ordinances dating back to the 1920s have never been reviewed, resulting in a substantial need to review the ordinances and recommend repeals or revisions or new ordinances that should be added.
 - Currie Ordinance Book Codification. The Currie Ordinance book was in need of a codification to make the ordinances easier to implement and enforce. The project, which is near completion, will provide an ordinance book that is easy to utilize and also has current ordinances.
 - City of Bingham Lake Land Use and Zoning Ordinance. The Commission worked with the City Attorney to review and finalize the draft Land Use Plan and draft Zoning Ordinance developed two years ago by the SRDC. Documents were finalized and adopted in May 2000.
 - Slayton Ordinance Book. The SRDC began work on the codification of the City's ordinances.
 - Tracy Labor Survey. The SRDC developed a labor survey to analyze the available labor force for a potential new employer. The survey results were analyzed and provided in a narrative format.

Community Driven Planning

The Southwest Regional Development Commission operates Community Driven Planning to provide staff assistance to its customers. Customers contract for specific services identified in the contract work program. Some of the Community Based Planning services the Commission offers are:

- ◆ *Conducting Comprehensive Plans, Land Use Plans, Water Plans, Solid Waste Plans, Zoning Ordinances and Updates, and Ordinance Consolidation.*
- ◆ *Assisting communities with Capital Improvement Plans, Surveys and Analyses.*
- ◆ *Providing Housing Program Support.*
- ◆ *Providing Prairieland Economic Development Corporation Program Support.*
- ◆ *Writing and administering grants.*
- ◆ *Conducting Housing Studies and Housing Market Analyses.*
- ◆ *Assisting communities with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Project Priority List, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Intended Use Plan, and the Department of Health Intended Use Plan.*
- ◆ *Assisting, organizing, and implementing the training and education of public officials relating to land management issues.*
- ◆ *Providing assistance in the development of wellhead protection planning.*

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Southwest Regional Development Commission provides staff support to a number of regional and state-wide committees, boards and programs. The goal of these activities is to provide long range planning strategies to the public and private organizations. Some of the activities include:

- Transportation Coordination Advisory Committee (TCAC)
- Economic Development Association of Minnesota
- American Planning Association Membership
- Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership Board of Directors
- Southwest Regional Solid Waste Commission
- Economic Development Professionals of Southwest Minnesota
- Regional Welfare To Work McKnight activities
- Sustainable Energy for Economic Development (SEED)
- Regional School to Work Advisory Board
- Southwest Minnesota Ridge Counties Task Force
- Emergency Management Services Board of Director's
- Area Transportation Partnerships
- Prairie Ecology Bus Center
- Lewis & Clark Joint Powers Board
- Planning Tech Assistance Program
- County Councils on Aging
- Ombudsman Advisory Committee
- Legal Services Advisory Committee
- Minnesota Rural Health Association
- Seniors Agenda for Independent Living (SAIL)
- Alzheimer's Association Advisory Council
- Senior Nutrition Project Council
- Southwest Minnesota Intergenerational Task Force
- Nutrition Project 2000
- Colleges N' Caring Policy Work Group
- Murray County Alternative Care Team
- Nobles County Senior Concerns
- Senior LinkAge Line® Work Group
- Rural Health Access Task Force (HICP)
- RSVP Advisory Council
- Murray County Hospice Board
- Minnesota Area Geriatric Education Center (MAGEC)
- Regional Resources for Rural Minnesota
- Southwest Minnesota Purchasing Alliance
- Solid Waste Administrators
- Planning Technical Assistance Program (PTAP)
- Des Moines River Restoration Task Force
- TEA21 Statewide Planning Regulations
- Lake Shetek Clean Water Partnership Resource Committee

EVENTS SPONSORED

- Lyon County Township Association Feedlot Meeting
- Coordinated meetings of the Water Issues Task Force regarding the Lewis & Clark Project
- Co-sponsored Welfare to Work Meetings as a result of the McKnight Initiative
- Microenterprise Technical Assistance Conference
- Community Based Planning Workshop
- Training events for Health Insurance Counselors
- Regional Conference on Aging
- Forums on Affordable Health Care
- Public meetings on the State Transportation Improvement Plans



The SRDC serves as the State and Federally designated Economic Development District for the Southwest Region. As a result of this designation, the SRDC is charged with the duty of providing primary staff necessary to implement the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration's (EDA) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). During this fiscal year a grant of \$51,000 from EDA for economic development planning included the following work program elements:

- The SRDC in collaboration with Minnesota Planning and USDA Rural Development co-sponsored a listening post designed to gather information on the issues facing southwest Minnesota. This data will be used to develop a long-range plan for the State.
- SRDC conducted a Southwest Minnesota Employer Survey to assess the areas employer needs. The survey gathered data on the regional technology needs, employee skill requirements, employee recruitment and retention efforts, employee salary averages and level of education.
- SRDC works cooperatively with adjacent Development Districts to increase efficiency.
- SRDC coordinates activities with State, Federal and local agencies.
- SRDC provides technical assistance and advisory services to units of government, development agencies, and others. This includes efforts to plan and implement economic development projects to diversify the district's economy, to increase business activity, and to upgrade infrastructure within the district.
- SRDC maintains economic, demographic and site databases and make them available to public and private users.
- SRDC assists local agencies and regionwide programs in obtaining private foundation grants and assistance.
- SRDC supports a permanent economic development process capable of meeting the planning, coordinating and implementation requirements of the district.
- SRDC supplies the EDA with timely information on plant closures or prospective plant closings, as well as the number of employees affected by these actions.
- SRDC serves as a Regional Census Data Center.
- SRDC offers its GIS capabilities to communities within the region through the Community Cooperative GIS Program.

The SRDC received \$20,000 from the Economic Development Administration to conduct an analysis of the Livestock Industry in Southwest Minnesota. The study incorporated an extensive analysis of the regional livestock industry as it relates to the economy, natural resources and the environment, physical and social infrastructure, and the interrelationships between the factors. This analysis identified the status of trends impacting and provided insight to the future directions of the industry.

SRDC received Design and Innovation Awards for the eleventh consecutive year from the National Association of Development Organization.

Strategic Planning

The Southwest Regional Development Commission conducts broad region-wide planning activities. Some of these activities include:

- ◆ *Conducting and completing plans and studies pertaining to regional issues. Issues include changes in the Region's economy, housing market, targeted public investment, and infrastructure capacity.*
- ◆ *Developing model ordinances.*
- ◆ *Providing Long Range planning strategies for the mitigation of natural disasters that occur within the Region.*
- ◆ *Providing staff and analytical support to regional ad hoc committees on programs, projects, or policy matters of local importance.*

Provide long range planning to area public and private organizations to determine appropriate direction and application of human resource allocations.

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AREA AGENCY ON AGING

◆ LINKING PEOPLE WITH INFORMATION

- The Senior LinkAge Line® (1-800-333-2433); is an information, referral and assistance line that provides access and information to services for seniors. In FY00, the line answered 1,550 calls, with 3,797 contacts. Insurance issues continue to be the most commonly addressed topic. Other topics dealt with include Adult Day Care, Housing, Home Health, Legal, Nutrition, Transportation, etc. A statewide database has been purchased and will be implemented in FY01.
- Senior Linkage: Nutrition and You: This was the third year of taping half hour TV shows focusing on nutrition and health. In collaboration with Region 4, 6E, and 6W AAA's, fourteen shows were taped with copies made for use by the public. This series was broadcasted on Pioneer Public TV.
- 20th Annual Regional Conference on Aging "The Journey Continues": A day long educational and entertaining conference was attended by approximately 250 persons. Thirty-eight booths with information on senior issues were available to attendees. The keynote was presented by a senior advocate and workshops were held on Alzheimer's Dementia, prescription drugs, funeral pre-planning and pre-financing and the internet. The afternoon session revolved around a real life story which was told in a motivational and inspirational way. Centurions were recognized from each of the nine counties.

◆ BUILDING COMMUNITY

- Regional Resources for Rural Minnesota: Meetings of providers, agencies and minority groups were convened to discuss issues in the region and a committee was formed called Regional Resources for Rural Minnesota (RRRM). This group worked together to develop a data base of resources for minority outreach and held the first annual diversity conference in October of 1999.
- Assistance: Aging staff attended meetings of County Councils on Aging and Senior Concerns groups to offer assistance and information. Also a group was formed called Aging Advocacy Network of Senior Providers to seniors to show advocate senior programs. Staff assisted in grant applications to secure funding for the Regional Conference on Aging, Medicare FYI and Minnesota Care Outreach. Multiple presentations on aging issues were given to local organizations.
- Advocating for seniors by involvement with work groups such as the Minnesota Rural Health Association, Advocates for Marketplace Options on Mainstreet, Employers Association Inc., the Southwest Health Alliance, Intergenerational Task Force and the McKnight Initiative on Welfare to Work. Issues such as the high cost of prescription drugs, consumer rights, health care access for seniors, and the positive role seniors play in the community were brought to the attention of decision-makers.
- Southwest Minnesota Purchasing Alliance
The Southwest Purchasing Alliance (SWPA) was formed in an effort to offer an affordable, accessible, quality health care product aimed at small businesses, farm families, local government entities, and non-profit organizations. With the assistance of funds from our state legislature, the SWPA has formed a board of directors, developed by-laws, guiding principles, membership criteria and are currently in the process of negotiating benefit packages with a licensed entity. It is hoped to have an affordable, community-focused product available January 2001. The SWAAA staffs the SWPA in an effort to maintain a local health care system for seniors.
- Partners in Community Planning is a project where the Southwest Regional Development Commission, in partnership with the Southwest Area Agency on Aging, the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership received a grant from the Southwest Minnesota Foundation to conduct a process that involves all five generations in finding solutions. This process was conducted in Slayton and Westbrook. Westbrook worked on a teen center and Slayton worked on "How we can make the town friendlier". A final report was submitted to the Southwest Minnesota Foundation in March.

◆ PROMOTING STEWARDSHIP

- Senior Agenda for Independent Living (S.A.I.L.) is Minnesota's initiative to prepare the state's long-term care system to deal with the needs of a growing elderly population. This project is located in Redwood County.
- Contracting for nutrition, legal and transportation services, rather than grant-making was implemented in order to focus on cost savings and outcomes.
- The Health Insurance Counseling Program: In FY00, 5 new volunteers were trained and a total of 20 volunteers have donated 2,162 hours assisting clients with health insurance issues. Outreach was conducted in each of the nine counties with presentations made to senior centers, professional organizations, housing units and community groups. Twenty-one community sites are established. The program served 1,294 individuals with 5,290 contacts. A total of 112 presentations were given to approximately 2,366 persons. The most common issues addressed include Medicare, Medicare supplemental insurance, long-term care insurance, Medical Assistance programs, the Senior Drug Program and prescription drugs.
- Parish Nurse program development dollars were received by the Area Agency on Aging. These funds are to provide matching scholarships for 20 registered nurses from the nine county area to attend parish nurse education programs in 1999 & 2000.
- Minnesota Medical Care and Anti-Fraud and Demonstration Project (Operation Restore Trust) was a cooperative agreement between the Administration on Aging, the Minnesota Board on Aging, Arrowhead AAA (Region 3), and Southwest AAA (Region 8). The project received additional funds to continue into FY00. The project collaborated with the HICP and was implemented statewide. An Education and Resource Guide, video, presentation outlines, and pamphlets were materials developed for this project and continue to be used. Five volunteers were trained to educate the senior population about the benefits available under Medicare and Medicaid Programs, and the issues of fraud, waste and abuse under the programs. During the past year presentations were made to not only the senior population, but various service agencies, civic groups, and providers in the area.

Area Agency on Aging

The Southwest Area Agency on Aging is a program of the Southwest Regional Development Commission. The agency works to build a proactive, comprehensive and coordinated system of advocacy and services that ensures rights and benefits of all older people.

Areas of concentration within the Agency are:

- ◆ *Health Insurance Counseling Program.*
- ◆ *Information and access through the Senior Linkage Line.*
- ◆ *Strengthening the communities to meet the needs of the elderly.*