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**Statewide Master Plan
for Fire and Law Enforcement Training Facilities:**

Report #2 – Siting, Financing and Use

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY



Office of the Commissioner

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January 24, 2000

To: Representative Stanek
Representative Broecker
Representative Murphy
Representative Skoglund
Representative Bishop
Representative Kalis
Representative Rhodes

Senator Spear
Senator R. Kelly
Senator Neuville
Senator Berglund
Senator Terwilliger
Senator Frederickson

And
Other Interested Parties

From: Commissioner Charlie Weaver

RE: Statewide Master Plan for Fire and Law Enforcement Training Facilities:
Report #2 - Siting, Financing, and Use

Following is the second report to the legislature on Fire and Law Enforcement Training Facilities. This report provides recommendations on siting, financing and use of training facilities. This report is a companion to the February 1999 Statewide Master Plan for Fire and Law Enforcement Training Facilities in Minnesota (published by the Department of Public Safety). This report is being submitted to you as required by the Minnesota Session Laws of 1999. This report is the product of a series of meetings between department staff and the 15-member training facilities advisory committee.

The general recommendations of this report are:

- Training facilities should be used for fire and law enforcement training at a minimum. Other uses should also be considered and accommodated.
- The State should consider up to eight regional training proposals. Training regions are defined within the report. A regional training proposal must address all the training needs of the region, including facilities.
- The State's role should be limited to providing to 50% of construction costs for new or expanded facilities. All operating costs should be paid by the agencies operating or utilizing the facility.
- The Department of Public Safety recommends that investments in existing facilities not be considered part of a region's share of construction costs. The training facilities advisory committee voted to remain neutral on this recommendation.

This report and the February 1999 report provide a series of recommendations that could be used by the legislature to assess a proposal for funding regional training. The Department of Public Safety will be happy to answer any questions or provide any additional information you may need. Thank you.

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Gambling
Enforcement

Bureau of
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Apprehension

Capitol Security

Center for
Crime Victim
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Services

Drug Policy &
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Prevention

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Commission

State Fire
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Pipeline Safety

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Traffic Safety

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Statewide Master Plan for Fire and Law Enforcement Training Facilities: Report #2 – Siting, Financing and Use

The 1999 Minnesota State Legislature, under Laws 1999, Chapter 216, Section 7, Subdivision 6, directed the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety to reconvene the task force that developed the statewide master plan for fire and law enforcement training facilities under Laws 1998, Chapter 404, Section 21, Subdivision 3, for the purpose of developing specific recommendations concerning the siting, financing and use of these training facilities. The task force included representatives from professional organizations for fire and law enforcement personnel, local governments, the Peace Officer Standards and Training Board, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, the Department of Military Affairs, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Public Safety and the public.

The commissioner was directed to prepare a report that includes detailed recommendations concerning the following issues:

1. The specific cities, counties, or regions of the state where training facilities should be located;
2. The reasons why a training facility should be sited in the recommended location, including a description of the public safety training needs in that part of the state;
3. The extent to which neighboring cities and counties should be required to collaborate in funding and operating the recommended training facilities;
4. An appropriate amount for a local funding match (up to 50 percent) for cities and counties using the training facility to contribute in money or other resources to build, expand, or operate the facility;
5. The feasibility of providing training at one or more of the recommended facilities for both law enforcement and fire safety

personnel;

6. Whether the regional or statewide need for increased public safety training resources can be met through the expansion of existing training facilities rather than the creation of new facilities and, if so, which facilities should be expanded; and
7. Any other issues the task force deems relevant.

By January 15, 2000, the commissioner is to submit the report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the house and senate committees and divisions with jurisdiction over capital investment issues and criminal justice funding and policy.

The report is intended to build upon the department's February 1999 Statewide Master Plan for Fire and Law Enforcement Training Facilities in Minnesota. The Statewide Master Plan recommendations are listed below.

Recommendations from the February 1999 report:

- a. Public safety personnel should continue to use the state's situation-specific training facilities for refinery and aircraft burn simulations, as appropriate.
- b. The location of a public safety training facility should ensure cost-efficient, easy access for users and maximum use of the facility, while capitalizing on existing infrastructure or other capital investments where possible.
- c. Priority for new facilities should be given to areas with inadequate or no reasonable access to training facilities.
- d. Demand for public safety training facilities should be assumed to be from departments within a 100 mile driving radius from the site, unless the siting plan

includes a formal commitment from departments willing to travel further to train there.

- e. Mobile facilities should be considered in areas where the density of departments within a 100 mile radius is not sufficient to support a fixed facility. (MNSCU involvement recommended)
- f. Public safety training facilities should support safe, realistic training in a controlled environment. Technology should aid in creating more realistic training simulations, while also keeping participating personnel safe from accidents and injuries.
- g. Additional consideration for funding should be given to facilities with collaborative ownership or operation among federal, state and local agencies and private-sector organizations, in order to maximize cost-efficiency and use.
- h. Multi-purpose facilities should be encouraged, to maximize the potential base of users and spread costs across agencies.
- i. The state's role in funding public safety training facilities should ensure that agencies can meet minimum standards for training established by the Peace Officer Standards and Training Board, OSHA, and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).
- j. To ensure equal state and local participation in training facilities, state funds should be assumed to provide no more than 50% of the total capital costs for the facility and no state subsidy should be provided for the ongoing operations of the facility, unless the state is an ongoing partner in the use and operations of the facility.
- k. Facility plans should include mechanisms for marketing and rental of the facility to maximize its use and recover a portion of

operating and capital costs.

The Training Facilities Advisory Committee met three times between August 13 and October 20, 1999. The committee reviewed the recommendations of the Statewide Master Plan and reaffirmed their endorsement of the recommendations in the plan. The committee then reviewed the legislative charge and formulated the following recommendations:

1. The specific cities, counties, or regions of the state where training facilities should be located;

Recommendation:

Training Proposals

The State should consider up to 8 regional training proposals. Furthermore, the State should consider only one training proposal per region. Interested parties must demonstrate collaboration to meet the region's training needs.

A training proposal must:

- *Include a plan to meet the state, federal and local training requirements for agencies in or near the region, either at one new or existing facility and/or at a number of sites within the region;*
- *Clearly define multi-jurisdictional commitments to the proposal;*
- *Identify regional funding sources that will provide at least 50% of the construction costs and 100% of the operating costs unless a state agency is an ongoing partner in the use and operations of the facility, then a state source for operating funds should also be identified.*
- *Identify the anticipated service area and student population;*
- *Include plans for mobile training as needed; and*
- *Identify any specialized training that will be offered exclusively in the region.*

In addition to the items listed above, a training proposal should also address the recommendations of the Statewide Master Plan, February 1999.

Regions

For proposal evaluation purposes, the State should be divided into eight regions (Attachment 1).

Factors considered in selecting the regions were population, the unmet training need as defined in the Statewide Master Plan, and existing training efforts such as the center under development in Marshall.

It is very important to note that the regions represent potential service areas. This recommendation does not preclude a proposal from serving any other region, portion of a region, or out-of-state clients. This recommendation also does not preclude a proposal from using mobile training resources from inside or outside a region.

It is also very important to note that interested parties are identified for each region. These parties have an existing training capability, have indicated an interest in providing training, or could serve a significant population base. A training proposal from a region is anticipated to include or address these interested parties.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities are statewide interested parties. The involvement of the state colleges and universities should be addressed in all proposals.

The 8 regions of the state are:

- Northeast – Koochiching, Itasca, Carlton, Pine, St. Louis, Lake and Cook counties.
 - ◆ Interested Parties – Chisholm, Duluth, Eveleth, Grand Rapids, Hibbing
- Northwest – Kittson, Marshall, Polk, Norman, Clay, Becker, Mahnomen, Red Lake, Pennington, Roseau, Lake of the Woods, Beltrami, Clearwater and Hubbard counties.
 - ◆ Interested Parties – Bemidji, Detroit Lakes, East Grand Forks, Moorhead, Thief River Falls

- Central – Wilkin, Traverse, Stevens, Grant, Otter Tail, Wadena, Douglas, Pope, Stearns, Todd, Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Benton, Mille Lacs, Aitkin and Kanabec counties.
 - ◆ Interested Parties - Alexandria, Camp Ripley, Fergus Falls

- Southwest – Big Stone, Lac Qui Parle, Yellow Medicine, Lincoln, Pipestone, Rock, Nobles, Murray, Lyon, Chippewa, Swift, Kandiyohi, Renville, Redwood, Cottonwood, Jackson, Martin, Watonwan, Brown, Nicollet, Sibley and Meeker counties.
 - ◆ Interested Parties – Mankato, Marshall

- Southeast – Faribault, Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Waseca, Freeborn, Steele, Rice, Goodhue, Dodge, Mower, Fillmore, Olmsted, Wabasha, Winona and Houston counties.
 - ◆ Interested Parties – Austin, Mankato, Rochester

Note: The committee discussed the possibility of three southern regions at length. A south central region with Mankato as the hub was proposed. The committee recognized Mankato's strategic location but decided not to expand the number of proposed regions.

- Metro East – Ramsey, Washington and northern Dakota counties.
 - ◆ Interested Parties – Ramsey, Washington, northern Dakota counties

- Metro West – Wright, Sherburne, Isanti, Chisago, Anoka and northern Hennepin counties.
 - ◆ Interested Parties - Maple Grove, Minneapolis, Hennepin County

- Metro South – McLeod, Carver, Scott, southern Hennepin and southern Dakota counties.

◆ *Interested Parties – Bloomington, Eden Prairie, Edina, Mankato, Carver County*

2. The reasons why a training facility should be sited in the recommended location, including a description of the public safety training needs in that part of the state;

Recommendation:

The factors listed under Recommendation 1. describe the reasons for recommending the regions and interested parties within the regions. The Statewide Master Plan identified the unmet training needs across the state (Attachment 2).

3. The extent to which neighboring cities and counties should be required to collaborate in funding and operating the recommended training facilities;

Recommendation:

Neighboring cities and counties should not be required to collaborate in funding and operating state funded training facilities. However, preference should be given to proposals from collaborating cities and counties.

4. An appropriate amount for a local funding match (up to 50 percent) for cities and counties using the training facility to contribute in money or other resources to build, expand, or operate the facility;

Recommendation:

The local cost share of the construction of a facility or expansion/improvement of an existing facility should be at least 50%. This follows current practice and the Statewide Master Plan recommendation.

The facility and/or operating party(ies) should cover 100% of the operational costs.

Any investments in facilities need to consider the future impact of distance/mobile learning. The existing Minnesota State Colleges and Universities mobile training trailers are in use 80% of the time and are a valuable resource to any regional proposal.

Standing Issue

There was considerable discussion as to whether existing investments should be included as part of a local cost share. The committee was divided and voted to take no position on this issue.

The Department does not support including an existing investment as part of the local cost share.

5. The feasibility of providing training at one or more of the recommended facilities for both law enforcement and fire safety personnel;

Recommendation:

Training proposals must address at least law enforcement and fire training needs. Other training needs such as emergency medical services, community education and private sector safety training should also be considered.

6. Whether the regional or statewide need for increased public safety training resources can be met through the expansion of existing training facilities rather than the creation of new facilities and, if so, which facilities should be expanded;

Recommendation:

The regional training proposals should identify opportunities to improve existing training venues. An expansion of an existing facility will be economically competitive and should be given strong consideration if the location of the facility also meets the needs of the region.

7. Any other issues the task force deems relevant.

Primary Principle:

The primary principle applied by the Committee is: the more basic the training - the more local the training site.

Basic training elements should be available as close to "home" as possible to reduce work schedule interruptions and time away from the office and home. The more specialized (and less frequent) training should be available on a regional basis and/or a statewide basis (for exceedingly specialized courses).

Alternative methods of addressing the training need:

Training Subsidies

The Committee did discuss a state training subsidy for each fire and law enforcement agency as an alternative to state investment in training facilities.

The advantages of a direct subsidy are the agency can choose the training location for its employees, the state investment is directed to the most local level, and the need for training would drive the establishment of training centers.

The disadvantages of a direct subsidy are the state is committing to ongoing costs, past legislative debate on subsidies did not indicate strong support, and a state commitment for a solely local benefit does not support Governor Ventura's budget principles.

Travel Subsidies

The State could support a central training facility and subsidize travel to that facility and other (existing) specialty training facilities around the state.

The concerns expressed by the Committee about training subsidies apply to this option as well. This option may be viable if no collaborative regional efforts are proposed.

Distance Learning

The potential for distance learning is unknown at this time. However, efforts such as Connecting Minnesota will greatly enhance the ability of all jurisdictions to access distance learning. This increased access will allow jurisdictions to train staff "at home" and is very likely to alter the scope and type of unmet training needs. Any State investment in training facilities should take into consideration that training methods will change dramatically within the next decade and that the return on any investment needs to be realized within that timeframe.

Quality Assessment

Law enforcement and fire training is occurring now. Each agency has some method of reaching or trying to reach its training requirements. Law enforcement agencies are pursuing training that meets POST standards. Fire departments are pursuing training that meets OSHA and NFPA standards.

The quantity of training that is currently occurring varies across the state. Increasing training requirements, without accompanying funding, are having a detrimental impact on all agencies, especially small agencies with limited budgets. The hardship associated with meeting current training requirements has also been noted. The need for public safety personnel to train close(r) to home was often cited in legislative testimony related to the southwest Minnesota / Marshall project.

The quality of the current training has also been debated. The Statewide Master Plan only assessed the quantity of existing training facilities; the plan did not assess training quality. Training quality is very subjective. An agency's compliance with POST, OSHA, and NFPA standards is the only objective quality benchmark available.

Appendix A – Training Facilities Advisory Committee

Members

Lt. Col. Steve Mengelkoch
Minnesota State Patrol

Mark Salmen
Public Member

Don Beckering
MnSCU

Dave Sarazin
MnSCU

Bob Fletcher
Minnesota State Sheriff's Association

Mike Stockstead
Minnesota Professional Firefighters

Don Latch
Minnesota State Fire Chief's Association

Steve Strachan
League of Minnesota Cities

John Laux
Retired law enforcement officer

Colonel Dennis Lord
Department of Military Affairs

Jay Lee
Peace Officer Standards and Training Board

Sergeant Bill Micklus
Association of Training Officers of Minnesota

Jack Murray
Association of Minnesota Counties

Greg Orth
Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association

Thomas Pressler
Minnesota State Fire Departments Association

Ad hoc members

Neil Melton
Peace Officer Standards and Training Board

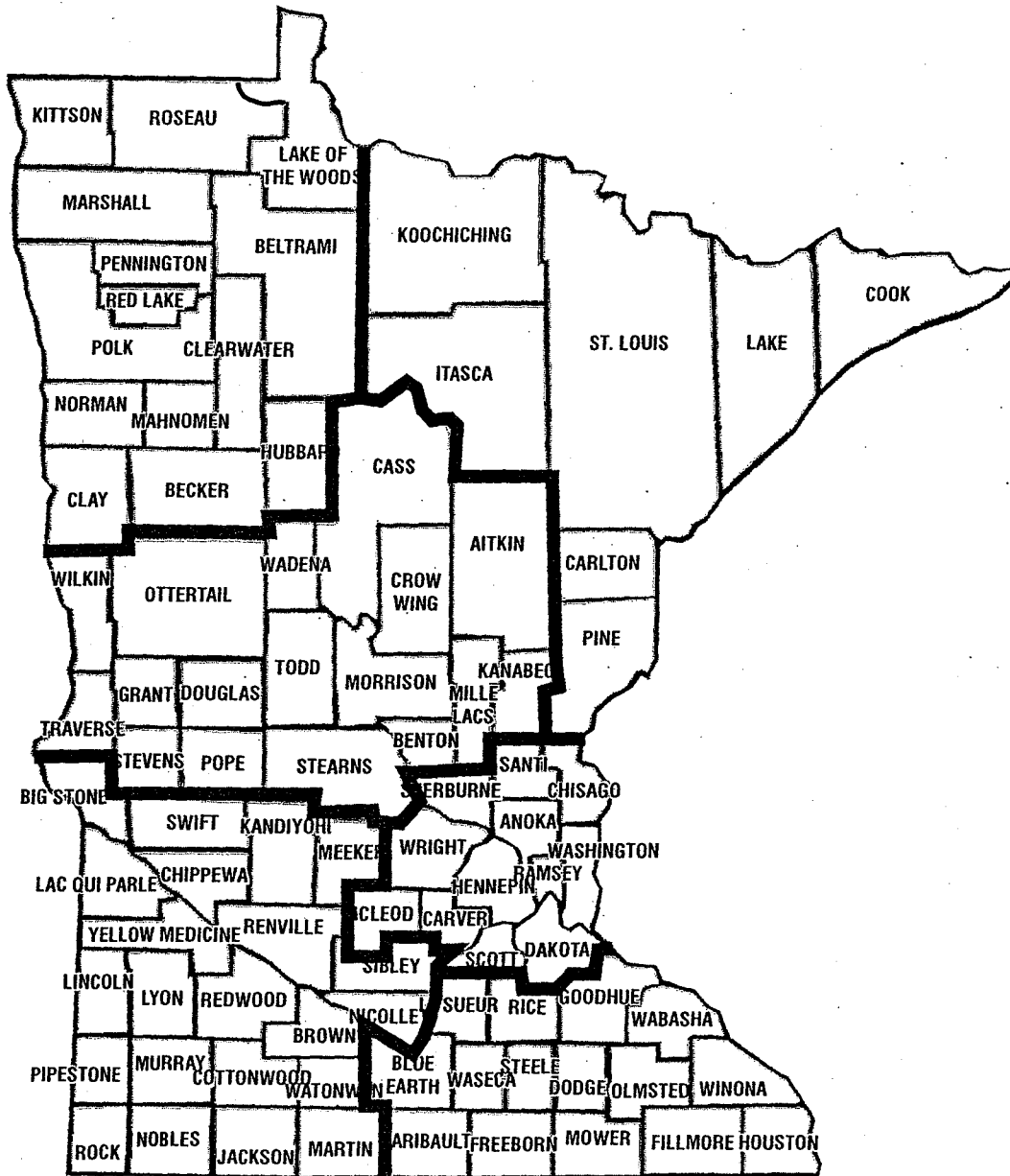
Tom Brace
State Fire Marshal Division

Linda Finney
Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

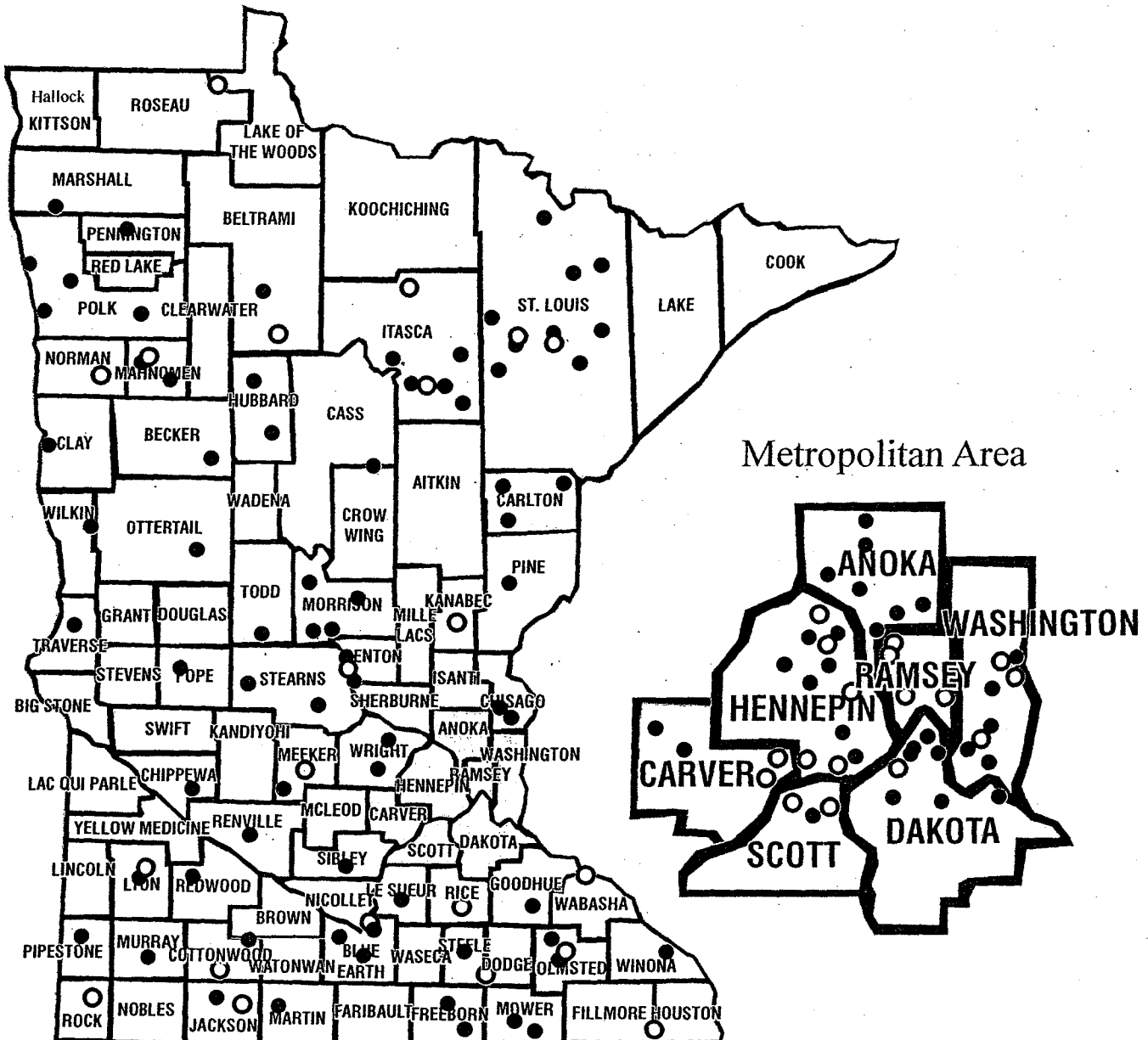
Erik Skon
Department of Corrections

Jeff Thielen
Department of Natural Resources

Attachment 1 – Map of Training Regions



**Attachment 2 – Map of Unmet Training Needs – Reproduced from the
Statewide Master Plan for Fire and Law Enforcement
Training Facilities in Minnesota Report.**



- Fire Needs Not Being Met or Will Not Be Met*
- Law Enforcement Needs Not Being Met or Will Not Be Met*

* According to departments responding to the Minnesota Department of Administration survey.
From the Land Management Center, Minnesota Office of Strategic and Long Range Planning - Feb. 1999