



**EAST CENTRAL**  
Regional Development Commission

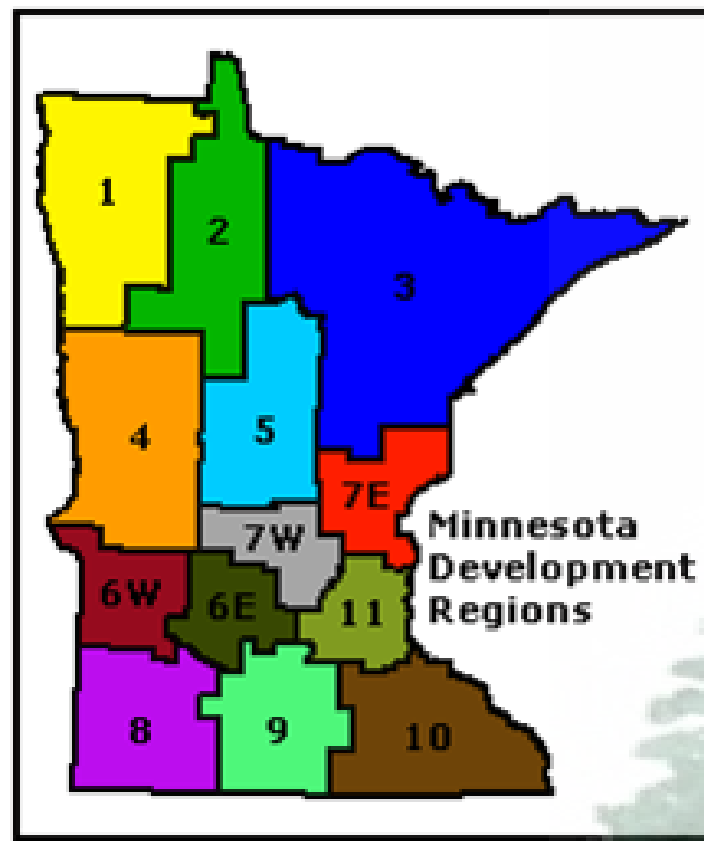
A watercolor illustration of a forest scene with several tall, dark green evergreen trees of varying heights and shades of green, set against a light, misty background. The trees are reflected in a horizontal line across the middle of the image.

# East Central Regional Development Commission Orientation

August 28, 2023

## Historical Overview

- Regional Development Act of 1969
- Thirteen Development Regions in Minnesota
- ECRDC was formed by petition of local governments in 1973





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# Regional Development Act

MN Stat §462.381 to 462.398

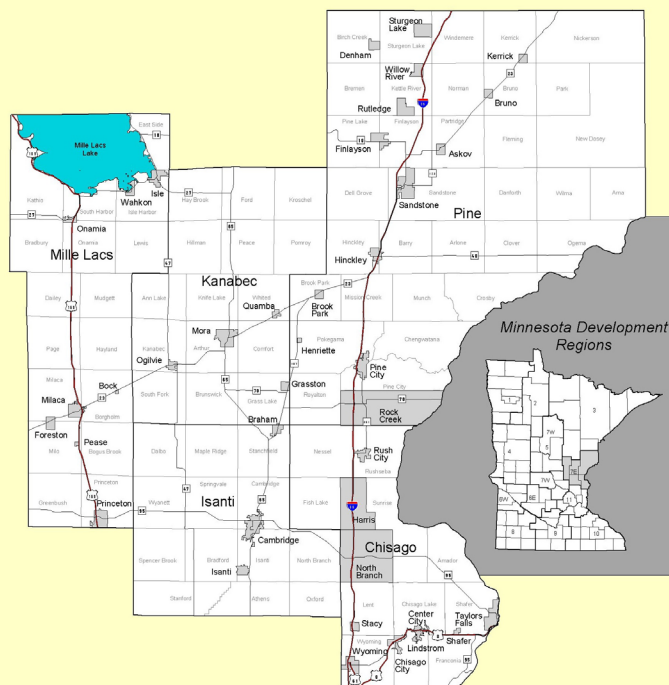
- Growth and development issues transcend jurisdictional boundaries.
- Coordination of multi-jurisdictional activities needed for effective policies and programs.
- Intergovernmental cooperation effective for pooling resources for common problems.



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*Region 7E*  
*East Central Regional*  
*Development Commission*



## East Central Regional Development Commission (7E)

Serving the counties of Region 7E:  
Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille  
Lacs and Pine



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## Region 7E Facts

- 3,367 square miles
- 39 statutory cities, 88 townships, and 20 ISDs
- Population: 175,945
- Annual operating budget: \$950,000+
- 5 State Senate seats, 8 State House seats





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## ECRDC Mission

“To provide leadership and direction through creative problem solving. We do this by initiating projects and programs that lead to creative solutions to regional problems, by providing technical assistance and by identifying and developing available resources. Our mission is to provide a leadership role as and advocate for East Central Minnesota to bring about positive change.”





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# East Central Regional Development Commission Programs & Services

- Economic Development
- Community Development
- Transportation Planning
- East Central Regional Transportation Coordinating Council
- Revolving Loan Funds
- USDA MinnKota
- Toward Zero Deaths



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## East Central Regional Development Commission Staff

ECRDC Staff	Program	Email
Bob Voss	Executive Director	robert.voss@ecrdc.org
Michelle Thomas	Economic Development and ECRTCC Sr. Planner	michelle.thomas@ecrdc.org
Darcy Rylander	Finance Director	finance.director@ecrdc.org
Karen Onan	ECRTCC Director	karen.onan@ecrdc.org
Trish Rydlund	Office Administrator	ecrdc@ecrdc.org
Penny Simonsen	Transportation Director	penny.simonsen@ecrdc.org
Jordan Zeller	Economic Development Director	jordan.zeller@ecrdc.org





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## East Central Regional Development Commission is Governed by a Commissioned Board of Directors

- 5 - county board representatives
- 5 - township representatives
- 5 - municipal representatives
- 5 - public interest representatives
- 2 - school board representatives
- 1 - tribal representative
- 1 - 10,000+ population

**TOTAL: 24**



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## Commission Board Membership

### Chisago County

Ben Montzka  
Vacant - Townships  
Tom Lawlor  
Dave Waldoch

### Isanti County

Tom Anderson  
Loren Davis  
Alan Duff  
Nate George

### Kanabec County

Vacant - Municipalities  
Dave Patenaude  
Peter Ripka  
Sara Treiber

### Mille Lacs County

Genny Reynolds  
Dave Dillan  
Robert Hoefert  
Vacant – Public Interest

### 10,000+ Population

Kevin Schieber

### Pine County

Jeannette Kester  
Brent Switzer  
Glen Williamson  
JJ Waldhalm

### Tribal Rep.

Vacant

### School Districts

Jill Anderson  
Scott Moe



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## ECRDC Advisory Committee

- East Central Regional Transportation Coordinating Council
- Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Committee
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- Transportation Advisory Committee
- Personnel & Budget Committee



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## Commission Responsibilities

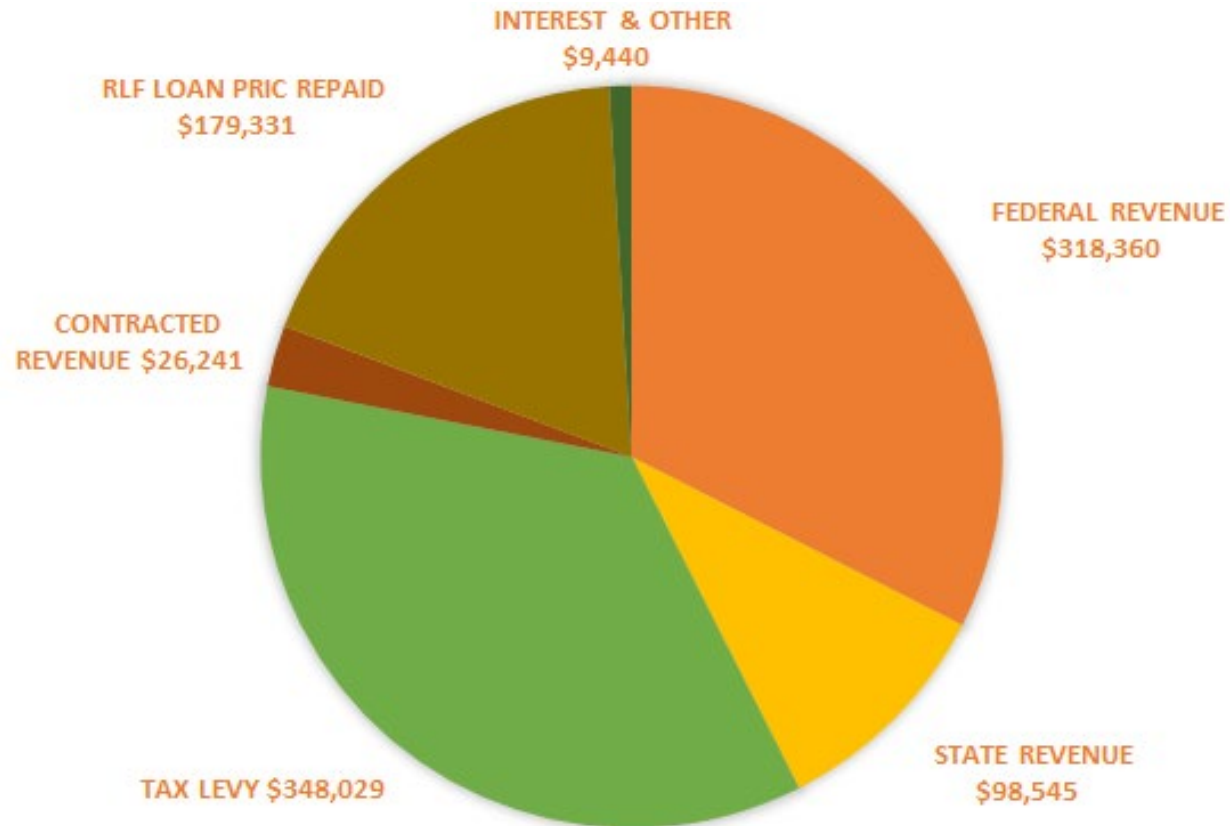
- Set Policy (i.e. Personnel Administration & Purchasing) and provide oversight function
- Approve Work Program & Budget
- Approve Agency Expenditures
- Approve Grants, Loans, and Contract
- Participate in Advisory Committees
- Annual Audit



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## Agency Budget - Revenues

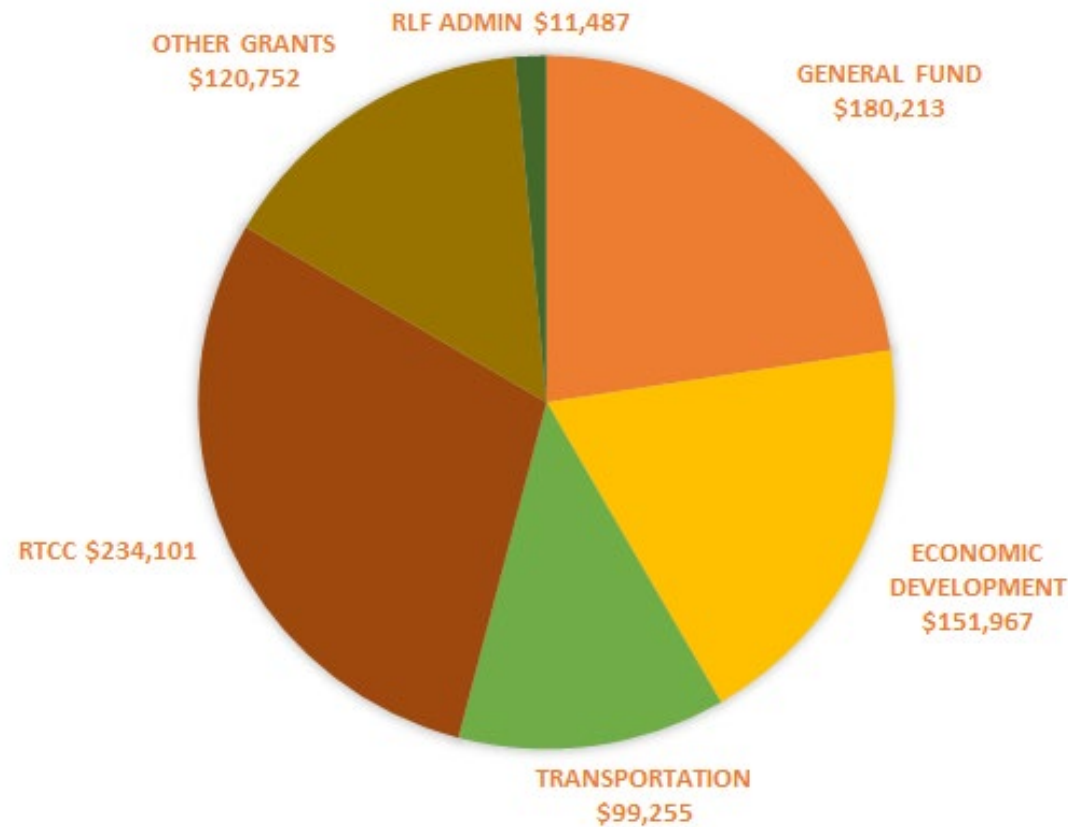




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## Agency Budget – Expenditures by Program





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## Indirect Expenses

Management and administrative costs are pooled and charged off to each program based on a percentage of salary and fringe benefits (approximately \$238,015 for FY24.)

- Annual Agency Audit
- Building Utilities/Maintenance Costs
- Software/Tech Services
- Postage, Office Supplies, Printing, Telephone, Insurance
- Compensation for Executive Director, Finance Director, Office Adm.



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## Commission Expenses

Commission members are eligible for per diem pay and mileage reimbursement for:

- Attendance at any regular or special meetings of the Commission; and
- if they are **appointed** by the Commission to serve as a liaison to any of the advisory committees



# Economic Development

Have been a “Economic Development District” (EDD) as designated since 1973 by the US Economic Development Administration (EDA), part of the US Department of Commerce.

As part of that we are eligible for an annual \$70,000 “Partnership Planning Grant” with a 50% match.

Pine Innovation Center, Pine City



Glenn Metalcraft, Princeton



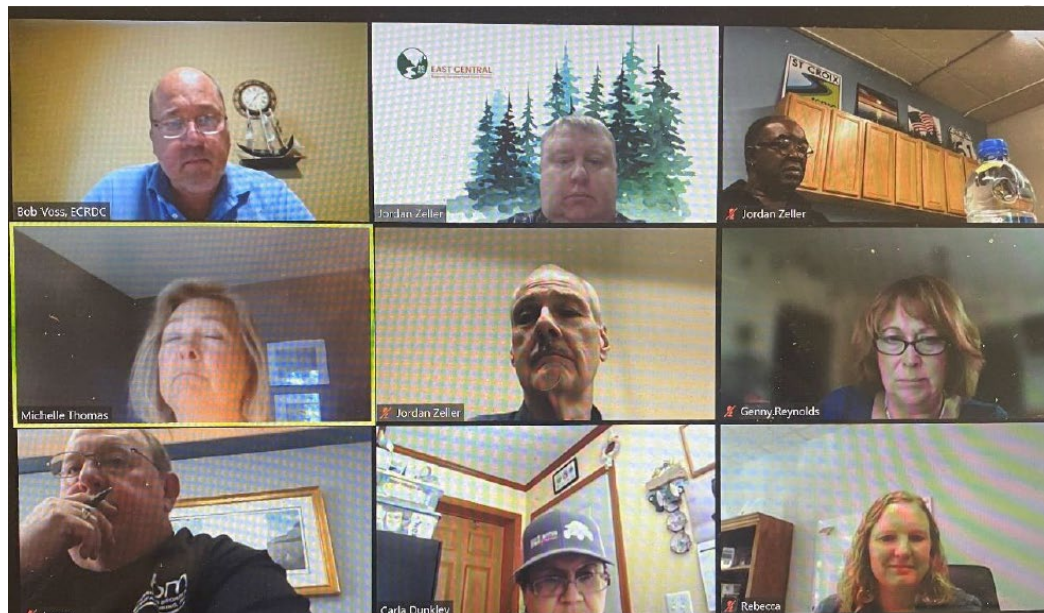
Shore Acres, Onamia



# Economic Development

## *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy*

As part being an EDD we are required to create a “Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy”, or CEDS.



The CEDS Strategy Committee is composed of private industry, post secondary education, workforce, tribal, and chamber of commerce and that meets quarterly to oversee the program and provide guidance, etc.

Top Row, L to R: Robert L. Voss – ECRDC Executive Director, Jordan Zeller – Staff, Glen Williamson – Pine County. Second Row, L to R: Michelle Thomas – ECRDC Economic Resiliency Coordinator. John Schlagel – Isanti County, Genny Reynolds – Mille Lacs County. Bottom Row, L to R: Loren Davis (Vice Chair) – Kanabec County, Carla Dunkley (Chair) – Mille Lacs County / Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Rebecca Perrotti – Kanabec County. Not pictured: Susie Brooks – Chisago County, Joe Mulford – Pine County.

## Economic Development

Being a EDA EDD, our local units of government are eligible for EDA Grants for economic development focused projects.

In just EDA grants, we have an approximately 14:1 ROI operating the EDD since 2000.

Projects funded recently include:

- Sandstone rail study
- MLBO Incubators
- Pine Tech Incubator
- Pine Tech campus modernization
- Industrial / Business Parks in: Isle, Sandstone, Mora, Cambridge.



Dignitaries meeting with Assistant US Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Alejandra Castillo during the visit / tour of Pine Technical & Community College on April 12, 2022. L to R: , Robert L. (Bob) Voss - ECRDC Executive Director, Matt Varilek - President of the Initiative Foundation, Dr. Devindar Malhotra - MinnState Chancellor, Joe Mulford – President of Pine Technical & Community College, Alejandra Castillo – US Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development, David Minke – Pine County Administrator & Mark Majors – MN DEED Deputy Commissioner for Workforce Development.





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# Economic Development

## *Revolving Loan Fund*

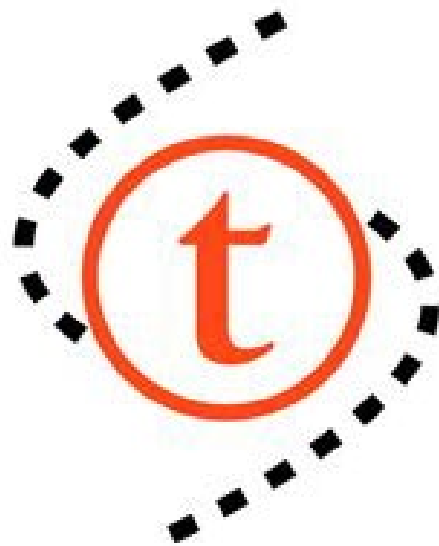
- We do business financing
- Prohibited from financing, housing, commercial agriculture, and personal loans, etc.
- Often “gap”, often subordinated
- All loans are underwritten
- All loans are secured & require personal guarantees.
- We have an 11 member loan board that makes the decisions - 2 members from each county plus 1 ECRDC board member.
- Maximum loan: \$60,000. Average: \$35,000.
- We charge a 1% commitment fee plus closing costs.
- Financing is often done in conjunction with others: cities, counties, DEED, Initiative Foundation, Entrepreneur Fund, etc.
- Interest rates: we have a floor and ceiling, but often match the bank rates.
- For separate loan “funds quote: three funded by EDA, one funded by USDA. We market them together and use the same board and loan requirements, etc..
- Approximately \$1.2mm in assets.



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## Regional Transit



**east  
central**

Regional Transportation  
Coordinating Council

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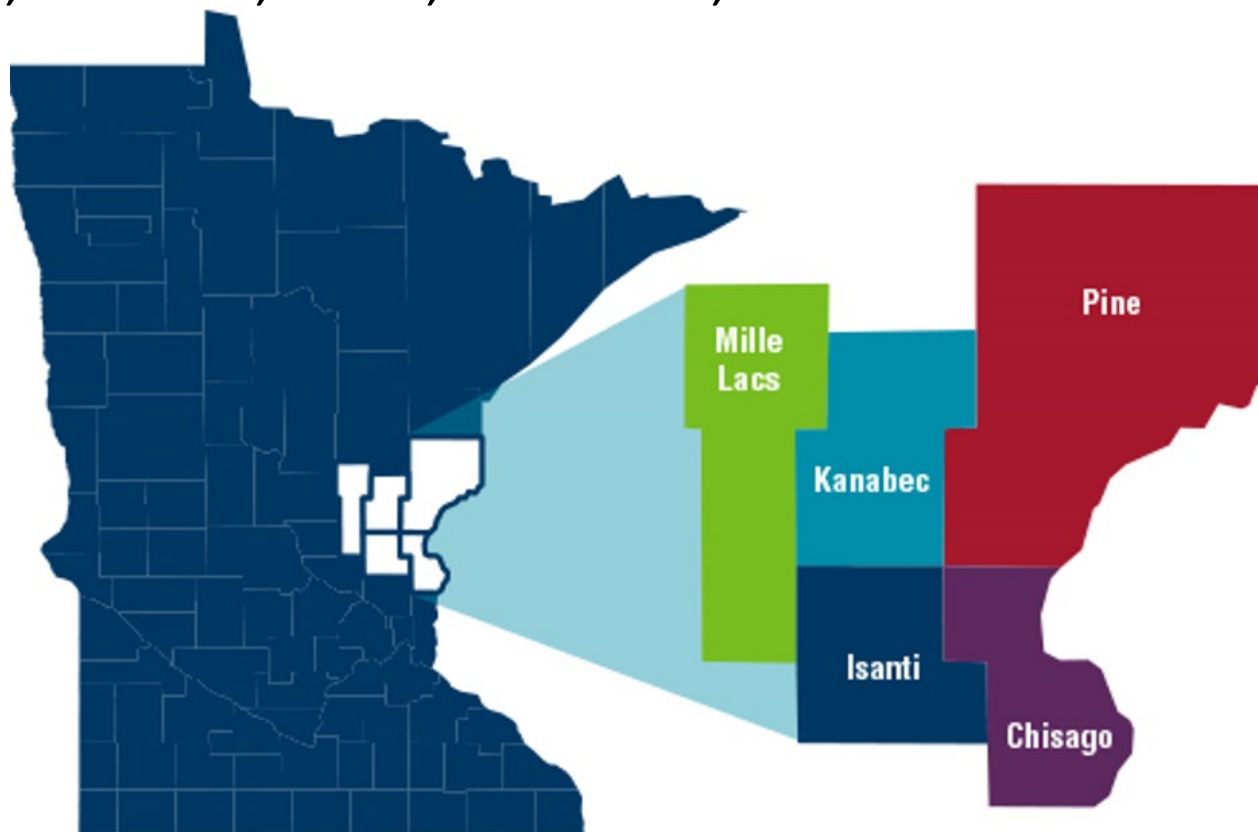


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## East Central

Chisago, Kanabec, Isanti, Mille Lacs, Pine Counties



**TASK #1: Transportation Guidance and Consultation:**

**TASK #2: Vehicle Sharing:**

**TASK #3: Stakeholder and Community Engagement:**

**TASK #4: Volunteer Drivers:**

**TASK #5: Training and Education:**

**TASK #6: Mobility Management Integration:**

**TASK #7: MCOTA Participation:**



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Get Connected: [EastCentralTransit.com](http://EastCentralTransit.com)

Michelle Thomas 612.390.037  
[michelle.thomas@ecrdc.org](mailto:michelle.thomas@ecrdc.org)

Karen Onan 612.269.4090  
[karen.onan@ecrdc.org](mailto:karen.onan@ecrdc.org)





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# Community Development Programs

## *Safe Cab*

New program to the ECRDC.

Designed as an 'after hours' transportation assistance program for local bars, restaurants, and their patrons.

Started in Isanti County and they were able to boast as being the #1 County in the State of Minnesota for reducing the number of drunk drivers - number of DWIs in Isanti County dropped by 65%.

Program was expanded to other counties and some of them have had even more success.

ECRDC has agreed to take this program on as it fits nicely with our transportation projects as another service for our region's residents and businesses.

**STARK**  
Transportation Co.

## SAFE CAB PROGRAM

Receive up to **\$10** off your ride home.  
Ask your bartender for a Safe Cab Voucher at participating bars.  
(Cambridge Bar and Grill, Cambridge Pizza Pub, Sidelines, Isanti VFW and Wintergreens)

**SAFE CAB**  
Stark Transportation  
aka Cambridge Cab  
763-552-8294  
320-465-1433

Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Destination Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Ride: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number in Party: \_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fare Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Isanti County  
**(763) 552-8294**

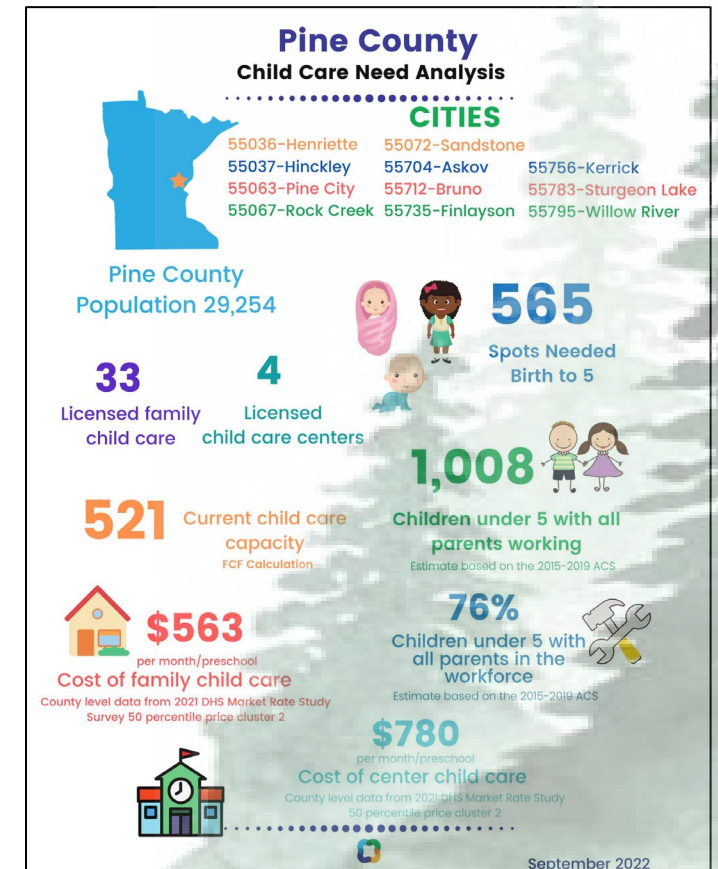
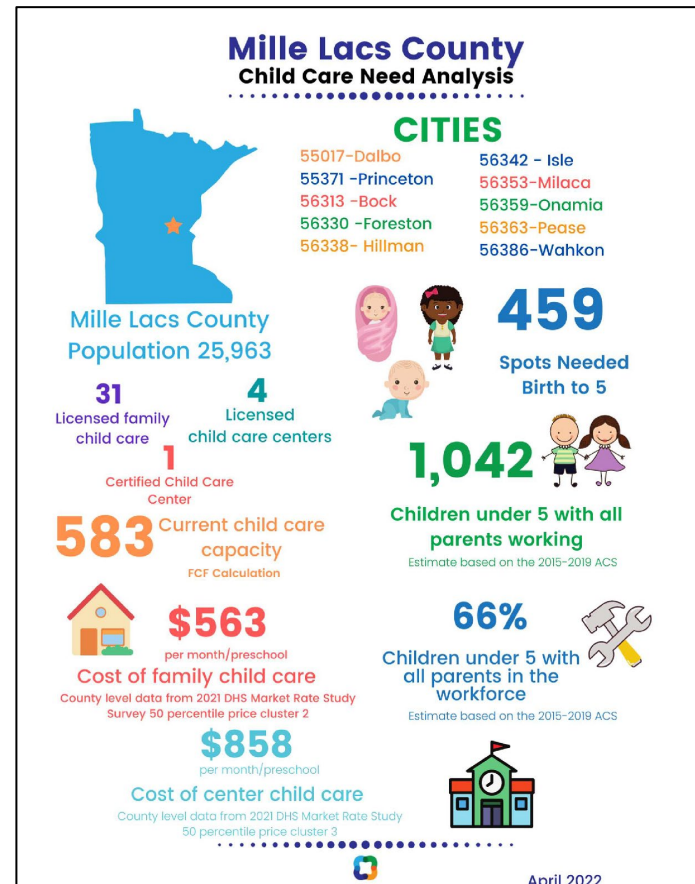
Chisago County  
**(320) 465-1433**



# Community Development Programs

## Child Care

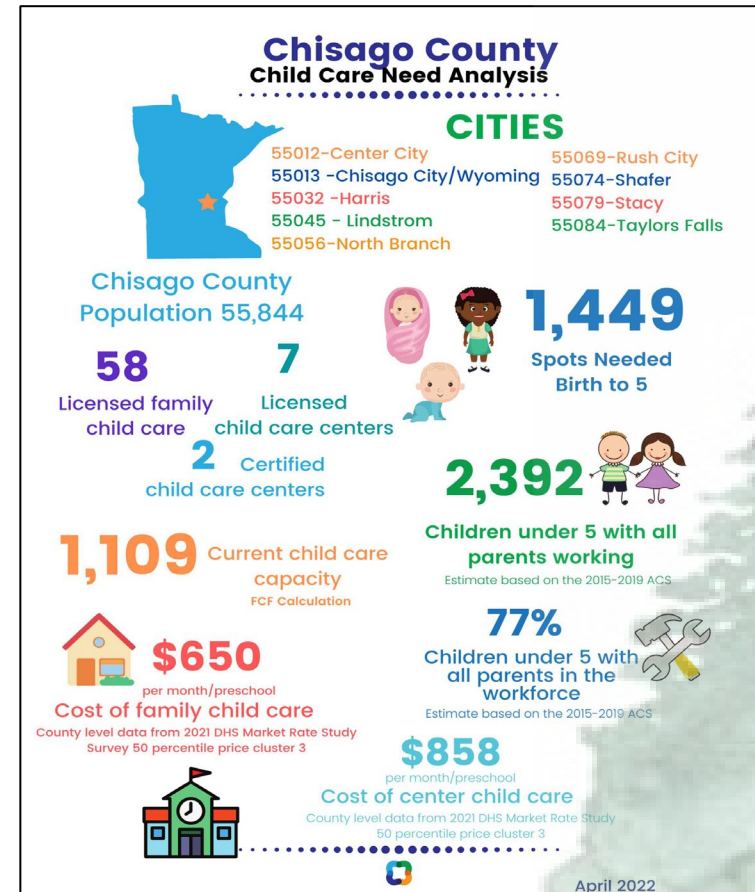
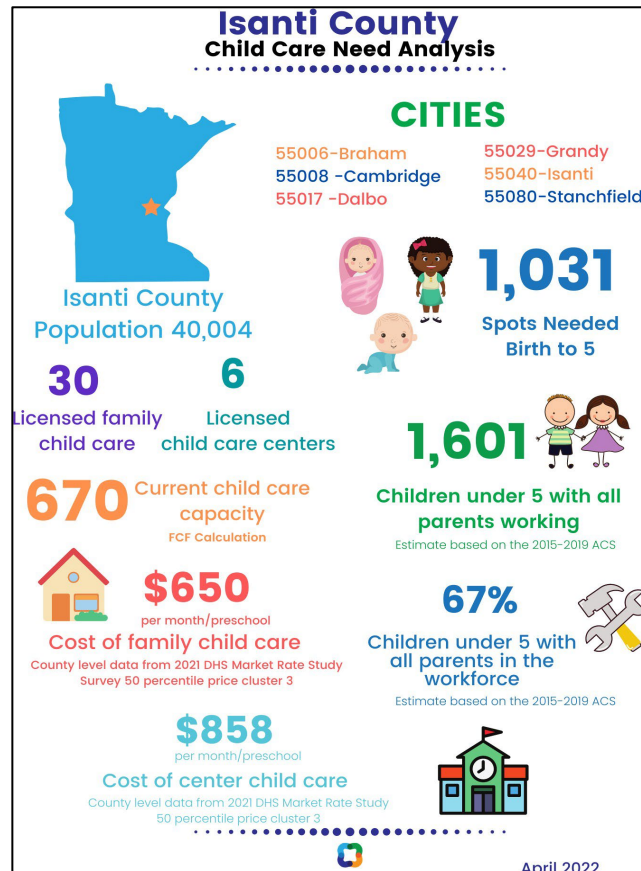
Child Care, or lack of, is a huge concern for our entire region. 7E has over 3,700 children that need a spot in a child care center or with a family home provider. This number comes from a study ECRDC commissioned in the summer 2022.





# Community Development Programs

## Child Care





# Community Development Programs

## *Child Care – what are we doing about it?*

ECRDC is working with a team in each of our 5 counties to uncover solutions that will work best for their communities.

Quick examples:

- A. Chisago County has held multiple Resource Fairs and is offering a \$2,000 grant to the first 5 new providers for start-up costs.
- B. Isanti held a provider event to solicit feedback from current providers, show appreciation for what they do and to share resources with them.
- C. Mille Lacs held a Child Care Information Meeting to garner interest for those interested in opening a child care business and did a survey of local businesses to ask about employee needs.



**MAY 31, 2023 | 5:30-8:00PM**

### **CHILD CARE PROVIDER RESOURCE FAIR**

Join us at this innovative open house for valuable resources and assistance in starting a child care business or to discover additional resources for your existing business in Chisago County.

Have fun with the kids while pursuing your passion for child care. Enjoy family fun at Community Education's event with **THE TEDDY BEAR BAND** and then stop in to learn about the benefits of working for yourself as a child care provider.

Experts will be on-hand to discuss licensing, regulations, funding, marketing, training and more.

Whether you are just starting out or are an established child care business in the county, the Child Care Provider Resource Fair is a fun way to connect, learn and grow.

Location: North Branch Area Education Center 38705 Grand Ave  
North Branch, MN 55056

#### Future Events for Child Care Providers

**Chisago Lakes School**  
Wildcat Community Center  
29330 Olinda Trail, Lindstrom MN  
Tuesday, June 20, 2023  
4:00 to 6:00pm  
Following the Summer Enrichment Week Daily Events

**Rush City Community Center**  
720 W 14<sup>th</sup> St., Rush City, MN  
Thursday June 22, 2023  
2:00 – 4:30pm



**\$2,000 in Grant Funds will be awarded to new providers.**  
Further details provided at all fair locations.

Learn how to start  
your own child care  
business

Find a vast array of  
resources for  
current child care  
providers

Speak with experts  
from financing to  
licensing for  
guidance and to  
answer questions  
in all areas of  
child care

Discover new  
funding and grant  
opportunities to  
start or enhance  
your business

**Questions? Contact the  
CHISAGO COUNTY HRA-EDA**

651-674-5664  
info@chisagocounty.org  
Registration NOT  
Required



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Collectively, and with each group, we are doing a lot of marketing – you'll see billboards going up in and around Isanti County shortly.

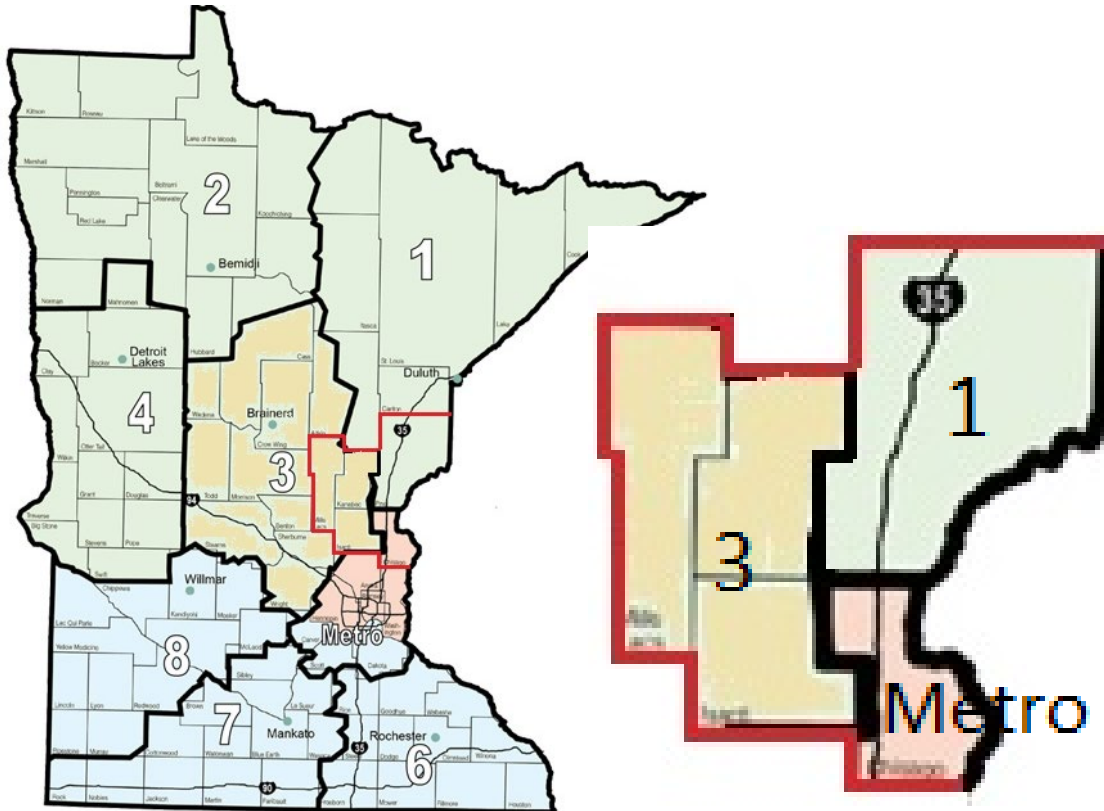




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# Transportation Planning



- The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) contracts with the ECRDC to provide a wide range of transportation-related planning services across the five county 7E region.
- Area Transportation Partnerships (ATPs) exist in each of MnDOT's districts. The ATPs guide the distribution of MnDOT funds to local projects.
- Chisago County = Metro District ATP  
Pine County = District 1 ATP  
Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs County = District 3 ATP



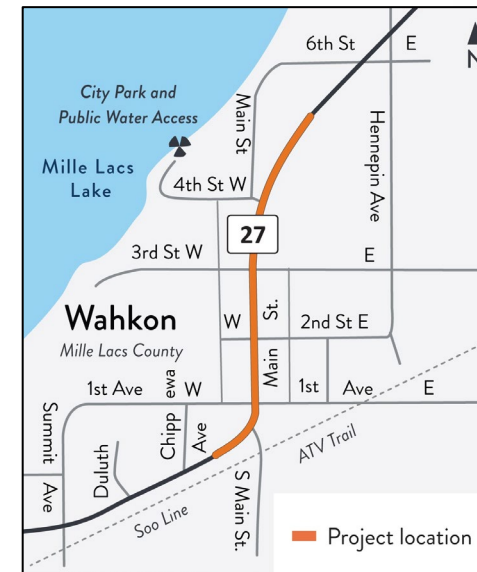
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# Transportation Planning

## *Transportation Advisory Committee*

ECRDC's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) provides advisory and recommendation roles for a variety of MnDOT funding for local projects. This guidance moves through the ECRDC board, and the District ATPs.



Reconstruct and improve Hwy 27 (Main St.) from east of Chippewa Ave. to east of Fourth St. W in Wahkon.



# Transportation Planning

## *Examples of Funding Sources:*

- Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)
- State Safe Routes to School both Planning and Infrastructure (SRTS)
- Federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TA or TAP)
- Federal Transportation Economic Development (TED)
- Scenic Byway
- Toward Zero Deaths (TZD)







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## Questions?

