EAST CENTRAL REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
August 24, 2026
100 Park Street South
Mora, MN 55051

Commission Members Present:
Tom Anderson – Isanti Co. Townships
Wallace Bengtson – Isanti Co. Public Interest
Todd Christensen – Isanti Co. Commissioner
Dave Dillan – Mille Lacs Co. Municipalities
Jack Edmonds – Mille Lacs Co. Public Interest
Steve Hallan – Pine County Commissioner
Shelly Johnson – Southern School Boards
Ben Montzka- Chisago Co. Commissioner
Rick Olseen, Chisago Co. Public Interest
Dave Patenaude -Kanabec Co. Townships
Julena Rahier – Pine County Municipalities
Genny Reynolds – Mille Lacs Co. Commissioner
Kevin Schieber - City of North Branch
Dave Waldoch – Chisago Co. Municipalities
Glen Williamson - Pine Co. Townships
Dave Youngquist – Kanabec Co. Municipalities

Commission Members Present via Teams:
Jeannette Kester - Pine Co. Public Interest
Sara Treiber – Kanabec Co. Public Interest

Commission Members Absent:
Bruce Fitzwater – Chisago Co. Townships
Robert Hoefert, Mille Lacs Co. Townships
Scott Moe - Northern School Boards
Peter Ripka – Kanabec Co. Commissioner

Staff Present:
Natalie Koerber - Executive Director
Karen Onan – East Central Reg. Transp. Coord. Council
Trish Rydlund - Office Administrator
Darcy Rylander, Finance Director
Michelle Thomas – Community Development Planner
Jordan Zeller – Economic Development Planner

Others Present:
Stefanie Williamson

A. **WELCOME:** Chairman Montzka called the East Central Regional Development Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. **AGENDA APPROVAL:** Williamson moved to approve the agenda as presented. Hallan seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

C. **MINUTES APPROVAL:** Waldoch moved to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2026 meeting. Christensen seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

D. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Executive Director Koerber reported on the following items:

1. **Strategic Planning Session:** A four-hour facilitated strategic-planning session is being planned for mid-November or early December. A meeting date poll will be distributed to determine the date that works best for Commission members.
2. **Mille Lacs County Regional Transportation Coordinating Council Representative (RTCC):** Reynolds moved to appoint Dave Dillan as the Mille Lacs County representative to the RTCC Board. Edmonds seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
3. **Mille Lacs County Personnel & Budget Representative:** The Mille Lacs County ECRDC Board members agreed to defer appointment of their P&B Committee representative until the next ECRDC meeting.

4. **Federal Grantmaking Advocacy:** ECRDC submitted comments regarding proposed Office of Management and Budget (OMB) grantmaking changes, expressing concerns related to increased administrative burdens, reduced predictability, and expanded federal discretion to suspend or terminate awards. The proposed changes are currently paused through December 11th.

5. **Funding and Business Development Activities:**
   - EDA Planning Grant Renewal
   - Community Resilience – McKnight Foundation
   - Electric Vehicle Infrastructure - MnDOT
   - Local Human Services Transportation Plan – MnDOT
   - Traffic Safety – FY27 Safe Roads Grants
   - Rural Mobility – Mobility, Access and Transportation Insecurity (MATI) grant
   - Entrepreneurship Support – Small Business Administration (SBA) Program for Investors in Microentrepreneurs (PRIME) application
   - Comprehensive Planning – City of Harris

6. **Economic Development Training:** Executive Director Koerber enrolled in the Economic Development Association of Minnesota's week-long Basics of Economic Development Course and received a $500 scholarship. The course provides foundational training in business development, financing, strategic planning, community revitalization, workforce development, entrepreneurship, organizational management, and ethics.

7. **Executive Director Mentorships:** Executive Director Koerber is participating in the National Association of Development Organizations' (NADO) Executive Director Mentor Program.

E. PERONNEL & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT: Glen Williamson brought forth the following recommendations from the P&B Committee:

1. **Roof Replacement Quotes:** Executive Director Koerber reported the ECRDC received two proposals for the roof replacement project: 4 Seasons Roofing, LLC, in the amount of $66,000 plus permit costs, and Quality Trusted Commercial Construction & Roofing, in the amount $62,750. She reviewed the similarities and differences between the proposals, including pricing, project scope, and warranty coverage.

   Following discussion, the Commission determined that 4 Seasons Roofing proposal provided the best overall value to the ECRDC, based primarily on its warranty coverage. The 4 Seasons proposal included a 20-year No Dollar Limit (NDL) manufacturer's warranty and a 10-year contractor workmanship warranty, compared with the two-year warranty coverage offered by Quality Trusted Commercial Construction & Roofing.

   Olseen moved to authorize execution of the contract with 4 Seasons Roofing, LLC in the amount of $66,000 plus permit costs. Williamson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

2. **Employee Credit Card Policy:** Motioned by Christensen to approve a change to the Operations Policy to include a Credit Card Policy as presented. Waldoch seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

F. TREASURER'S REPORT: Genny Reynolds presented the Treasurer's Report.

1. **June and July 2026 Treasurer's Reports:** The Treasurer's Reports were reviewed. Edmonds moved to accept the reports, including checks #12448 through #12500 and ACH payments. Bengtson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

2. **Finance Director Report:** Darcy Rylander reviewed FY26 year-end project financials and agencywide revenues and expenditures. Program-level financial reporting will be provided every 6 months.

G. Preliminary 2027 Budgets Across the Region: Commission members discussed preliminary 2027 budgets within their respective jurisdictions. The discussion highlighted common challenges across the region, including rising costs, increased health insurance expenses, infrastructure needs, service demands, and the need to maintain adequate reserves. Members discussed the various approaches being considered to balance these pressures while maintaining essential services and long-term financial stability.

F. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE: Jordan Zeller reported on the following items:

1. **Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grant Application:** No action has been taken by the Federal EDA for the City of Rush City's application for infrastructure improvements associated with a proposed industrial park. Their application was submitted in October, 2025.

G. EAST CENTRAL REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION COUNCIL (ECRTCC): Karen Onan reported on the following items:

1. **Community Driven Connected and Automated Vehicle Initiative (CAV):** ECRTCC participated in a project kick-off with MnDOT and Bolton & Menk for the Community Driven CAV Initiative.
2. **Community Driven CAV Advisory Committee:** ECRTCC launched the Community Driven CAV Advisory Committee, bringing partners together to establish shared goals, align expertise and resources, and move the project forward collaboratively.
3. **Mobility, Access, and Transportation Insecurity (MATI) Grant:** ECRTCC's MATI letter of interest was accepted and ECRTCC/ECRDC have been invited to submit a full application a deadline of September 30, 2026.

H. COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Michelle Thomas reported on the following items:

1. **Rural Entrepreneurial Venture (REV) Program:** ECRDC partnered with Isanti County organizations to secure Isanti County's selection as a REV community through the Initiative Foundation and University of Minnesota Extension. The community-driven initiative focuses on supporting existing businesses, encouraging new business development, and fostering long-term economic resilience.
2. **Entrepreneur Workshop Series:** The City of Isanti, North 65 Chamber of Commerce, and ECRDC are collaborating to offer monthly entrepreneurship workshops throughout 2026 to support new and existing businesses.
3. **Historic Bluff Country Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan:** Planning continues for the Historic Bluff Country Scenic Byway contract. The first Steering Committee was held. The group reached consensus on the timeline, planning approach, and next steps for moving forward.
4. **Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) Program:** Kanabec and Mille Lacs County TZD committees met and reviewed serious and fatal crash data in their respective counties. Mille Lacs County was recently ranked fourth in the state for serious and fatal crashes, highlighting the need for continued attention to roadway safety.

K. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Montzka announced that the next meeting will be the ECRDC Offices on October 26, 2026, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Christense moved to adjourn the meeting. Waldoch seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Natalie Koerbor, Executive Director

Ben Montzka, Chairman

ROLL-CALL VOTES

	ACTION ITEM						
Commission Members Present	**Agenda**	**6/22/26 Minutes**	**Mille Lacs RTCC Rep.**	**Roof Replacement**	**Employee Credit Card**	**Treasurer's Report**	**Adjourn**
Tom Anderson	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Wallace Bengston	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Todd Christensen	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Dave Dillan	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Jack Edmonds	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Steve Hallan	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Shelly Johnson	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Ben Montzka	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Rick Olseen	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Dave Patenaude	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Julena Rahier	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Genny Reynolds	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Kevin Schieber	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Dave Waldoch	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Glen Williamson	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Dave Youngquist	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Commission Members Present via Teams:							
Jeannette Kester	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
Sara Treiber	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye