

2016 Performance Assessment



ARDC Service Area





The *Regional Development Act* states that regional development commissions are to “*work with and on behalf of local units of government to develop plans or implement programs to address economic, social, physical, and governmental concerns of each region of the state. The commission may assist with, develop, or implement plans or programs for individual local units of government*”. The Act mandates that every 5 years each Commission review its activities and issue a report that addresses the ways it is fulfilling its purpose and working in the best interests of the public it serves.

The **Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC)**, one of nine regional development commissions established by the State of Minnesota, has served Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake and St. Louis Counties of NE Minnesota for over 45 years. ARDC is also a partner in providing transportation planning services to Douglas County, WI.

ARDC provides a wide range of professional planning, direct support and technical services that focus mainly on transportation, comprehensive, community development and land use planning, aging services planning and direct support services. In addition, community economic development gap financing is provided through ARDC’s Revolving Loan Fund. Specialized technical assistance includes group facilitation and training and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping capabilities. Services are provided through ARDC’s divisions: Regional Planning, the Metropolitan Interstate Council, the Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging and Administration.

The following pages are examples of only a few of the accomplishments of ARDC staff members that have positively impacted the Arrowhead Region for the past 5 years (2011 through 2015).



The **Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging** Division of ARDC awarded over \$9 million through Title III Federal Older Americans Act and other federal and state funds in grants and contracts to non-profit agencies and community partners in the 7-county region for services to meet caregiver needs, provide nutrition services, deliver rides, aid legal rights and support the independence of older adults in the region.

The Senior LinkAge Line is a telephone information, assistance and counseling services for seniors and their families to find community services, from Medicare to transportation to comprehensive long term care options counseling. During the last 5 years, the Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging has answered 74,577 calls from 38,502 unduplicated callers. The Senior LinkAge Line has also trained and certified 92 traditional and in-kind volunteers. These volunteers have provided 5,891 volunteer hours by doing such things as meeting with Medicare recipients for 1:1 Medicare counseling, staffing exhibit booths, providing educational experiences, and providing outreach into the communities in the region.

Capacity was developed to offer *Powerful Tools for Caregiving, A Matter of Balance, Chronic Disease Self-Management and Tai Ji Quan* evidence based programs by training leaders/coaches/facilitators and offering program start up consultation.

ARDC's Regional Planning Division provides local governmental assistance, regional inter-governmental coordination, and a forum for regional discussion to the counties, cities, towns, tribes, and agencies in the seven-county Arrowhead Region. The Division offers services in the areas of community and transportation planning on both a project-by-project and an ongoing basis. Significant projects from the past five years include examples in the following categories:

City Planning and Zoning Administration

Regional Planning staff members have worked in conjunction with several communities including Two Harbors and Hermantown on an on-going basis to offer planning and zoning assistance. ARDC staff assist communities by facilitating planning commissions, facilitating sub-committees around community beautification, and guiding decisions regarding zoning, subdivisions, building codes, sign codes, and conditional use permits.

Community and Comprehensive Planning

Over the past five years, ARDC Regional Planning has assisted more than twenty communities with the development of comprehensive plan documents. A Comprehensive Plan sets community priorities and becomes an expression of a community's vision. The document provides a framework for local governments to reach their vision, and offers a strategic map for proactively planning changes in the future that will guide decision-makers in spending public funds to the maximum benefit. ARDC staff members work with city council and town boards, planning commissions or committees, and, most importantly, the public to inquire about issues and set a vision for each community's future. Plan documents include a demographic analysis; an assessment of resources; chapters on housing ; transportation; health; utilities; agricultural, natural and cultural resources; economic development; land use; inter-governmental cooperation; and implementation strategies.

Transportation Planning

ARDC assists local governments to make informed investments in their transportation systems. In particular, ARDC works to develop alternative and sustainable forms of transportation infrastructure and policies for pedestrians and bicyclists. The Regional Planning Division also serves as staff to the Area Transportation Partnership, the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee, the North Shore Scenic Drive Council, the Superior National Forest Scenic Byway Council, and the Gitchi-Gami Trail Association. ARDC works closely with communities and schools across the region to update and help implement action steps in Safe Routes to School Plans.



The Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC), as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Duluth-Superior Urbanized Area. The MIC works closely with the city, communities, townships and county staff to determine local priorities and to lay the groundwork for projects that meet our transportation needs, now and into the future. The MIC and Regional Planning work closely together on many projects including the Safe Routes to School program. The MIC's main focus is on the transportation portions of projects and plans. Below please see the significant projects from the past 5 years:

2011 Erie Pier Management Plan

This innovative plan saved taxpayers the millions of dollars it would have cost to build a new Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) by redesigning Erie Pier as a first-of-its-kind Processing and Reuse Facility (PRF). The Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with the Minnesota Sea Grant program, is now promoting the Erie Pier PRF as an efficient, environmentally friendly and cost effective strategy to deal with dredge materials.

2012 Duluth Sidewalk Inventory

The goal of the Duluth Sidewalk Study was to help the City of Duluth stretch scarce resources for constructing and maintaining its pedestrian infrastructure. It provides detailed GIS-based sidewalk condition data along with information about best practices and policies from other communities.

2013 DLH Passenger and Air Cargo Service Analysis

This study was requested by the Duluth International Airport to support its goal of expanding both passenger and cargo air service opportunities.

2014 Duluth Bikeway System Planning

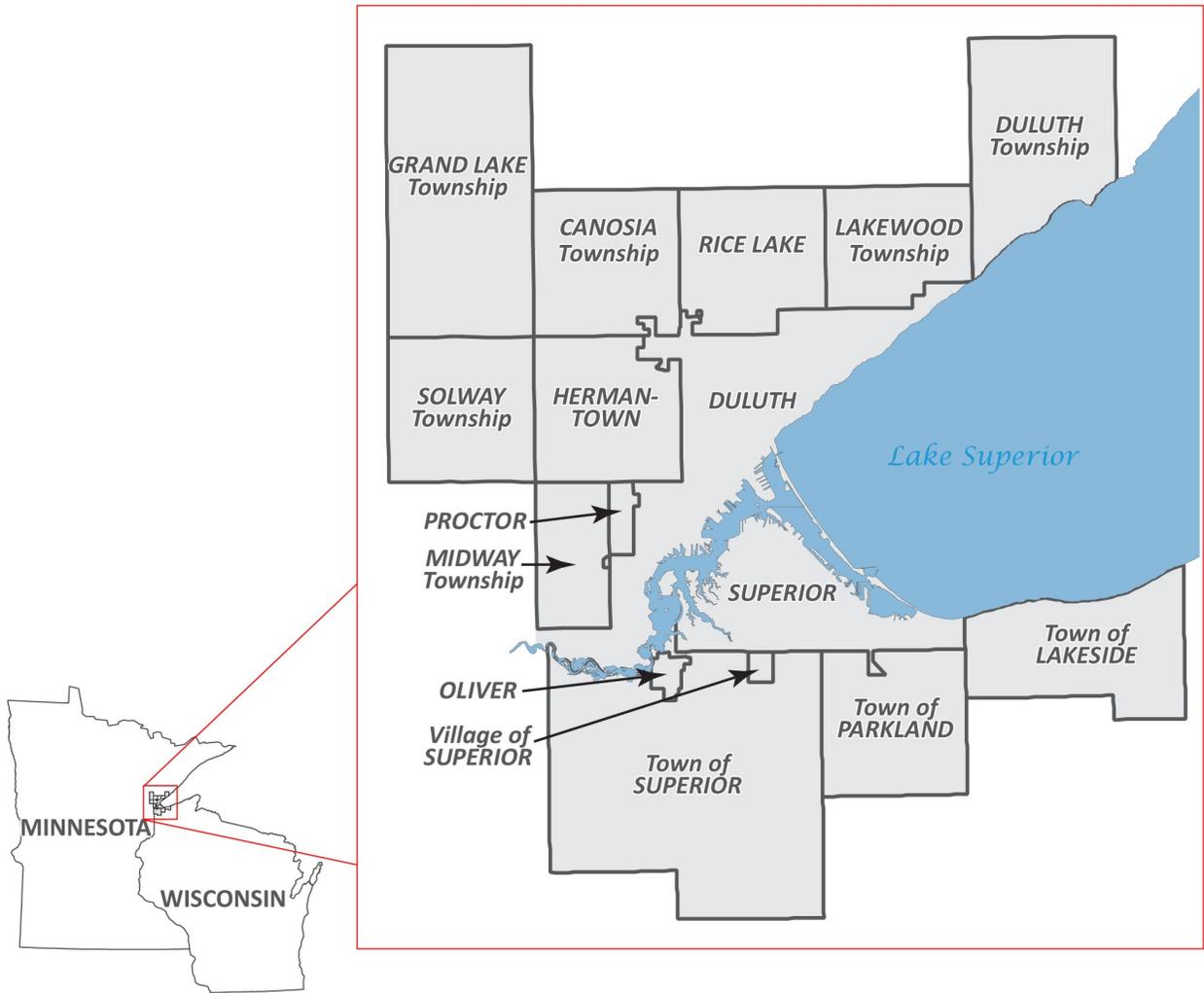
To safely accommodate a growing number of bicycle commuters, the MIC partnered with the Duluth engineering department to gain community input into a system of on-street bike lanes and to identify the preferred location for a designated bikeway to specifically serve the downtown commercial core.

2015 Lincoln Park Multi-modal Transportation Study

The aim of this study was to identify ways in which the public transportation assets within the low-income, traditionally underserved Lincoln Park neighborhood can be improved for its residents, businesses, and visitors. It was undertaken in conjunction with the small area plan led by the City of Duluth.

Currently the MIC is working with the City of Duluth on the update of their Comprehensive Plan, the DTA to update their Transit Development Plan, and continues to work with ARDC's Regional Division on the Safe Routes to School Program.

MIC Planning Area





The purpose of the ARDC Revolving Loan Fund is to support business activities. The primary objective is the stimulation of private investment in order to create and maintain productive, permanent employment through the establishment of new businesses or the expansion of existing ones.

Revolving Loan Fund Changes from October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2015

	Changes 2010 to 2015
Revolving Loan Fund Portfolio Status	
Increase in Loan Balances Outstanding end of 5 years	\$ 1,519,225
Change in Loans in Default	\$ 90,860
Increase in Total Active Loans	\$ 1,610,085
Summary of Loan Activities	
New Loans	29
Private Sector Jobs Created	180
Private Sector Jobs Saved	719
RLF \$ Loaned during 5 year period	\$ 3,730,366
Total Project Financing Outside Sources Cost per job in previous year	\$ 39,450,650
Cost per job in previous year	\$ 2,586
Revolving Loan Fund Income Earned in last five years	
Total RLF Income	\$ 841,403
Portion of RLF Income used for administration expense	\$ 435,947
RLF Income Added to Capital Base for lending	\$ 405,456
Recapitalization funding	
EDA	\$ 1,400,000
Outside Match	\$ 772,000
Total RLF Recapitalization Funding 2011 - 2015	\$ 2,172,000
Change in RLF Capital	
RLF Income Added to RLF Capital Base for Lending	\$ 405,456
Loan Losses	\$ (171,762)
Current RLF Capital Base	\$ 3,855,296
Other Metrics	
Number of Loans Outstanding	36
Total RLF Principal Outstanding on Loans 9/30/2015	\$ 2,956,016
Current balance available for new loans RLF Dollars Committed but not disbursed	\$ 899,280
RLF Dollars Committed but no disbursed	\$ 320,000
Current Balance Available, as percentage of Capital Base:	15.03%

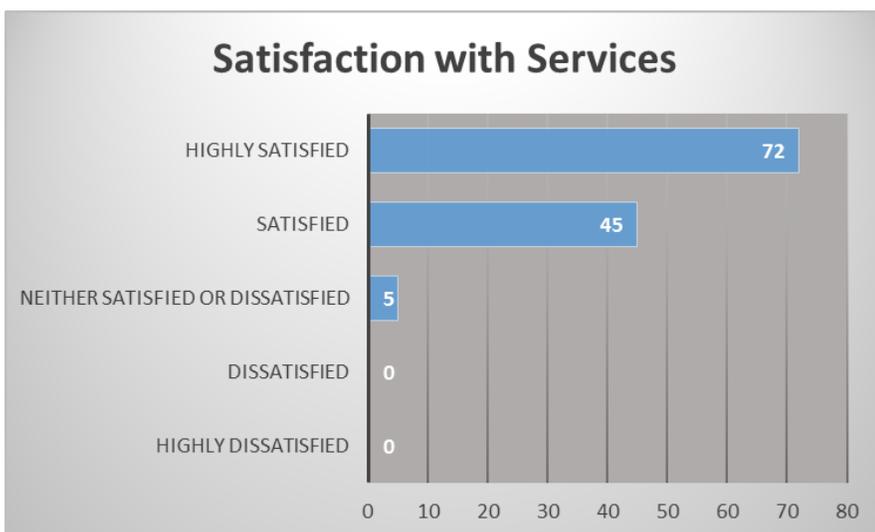
To validate the efforts of ARDC’s work, a survey was developed and distributed to 276 key stakeholders identified as regional leaders, ARDC partners and/or customers, including ARDC Board and Commission members, members of advisory committees, tribal representatives, and recipients of services, regarding their satisfaction levels and evaluation of interaction with ARDC. There was a good response rate of 45%.

Ninety-five percent (95%) of survey respondents indicated satisfaction levels of “Satisfied” (36%) or “Highly Satisfied (59%).

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction of the skills, expertise and professionalism of ARDC’s staff on twelve statements below.

- ◆ GIS/Mapping Services
- ◆ Information/Assistance-the Senior Linkage Line
- ◆ Aging services planning
- ◆ Technical assistance
- ◆ Information
- ◆ Funding/Grants/Loans
- ◆ Training
- ◆ Group facilitation
- ◆ Comprehensive planning
- ◆ Land use planning
- ◆ Transportation planning
- ◆ Community development planning

The satisfaction ratings are shown below:



Below are a few of the overall comments that were made at the end of the survey:

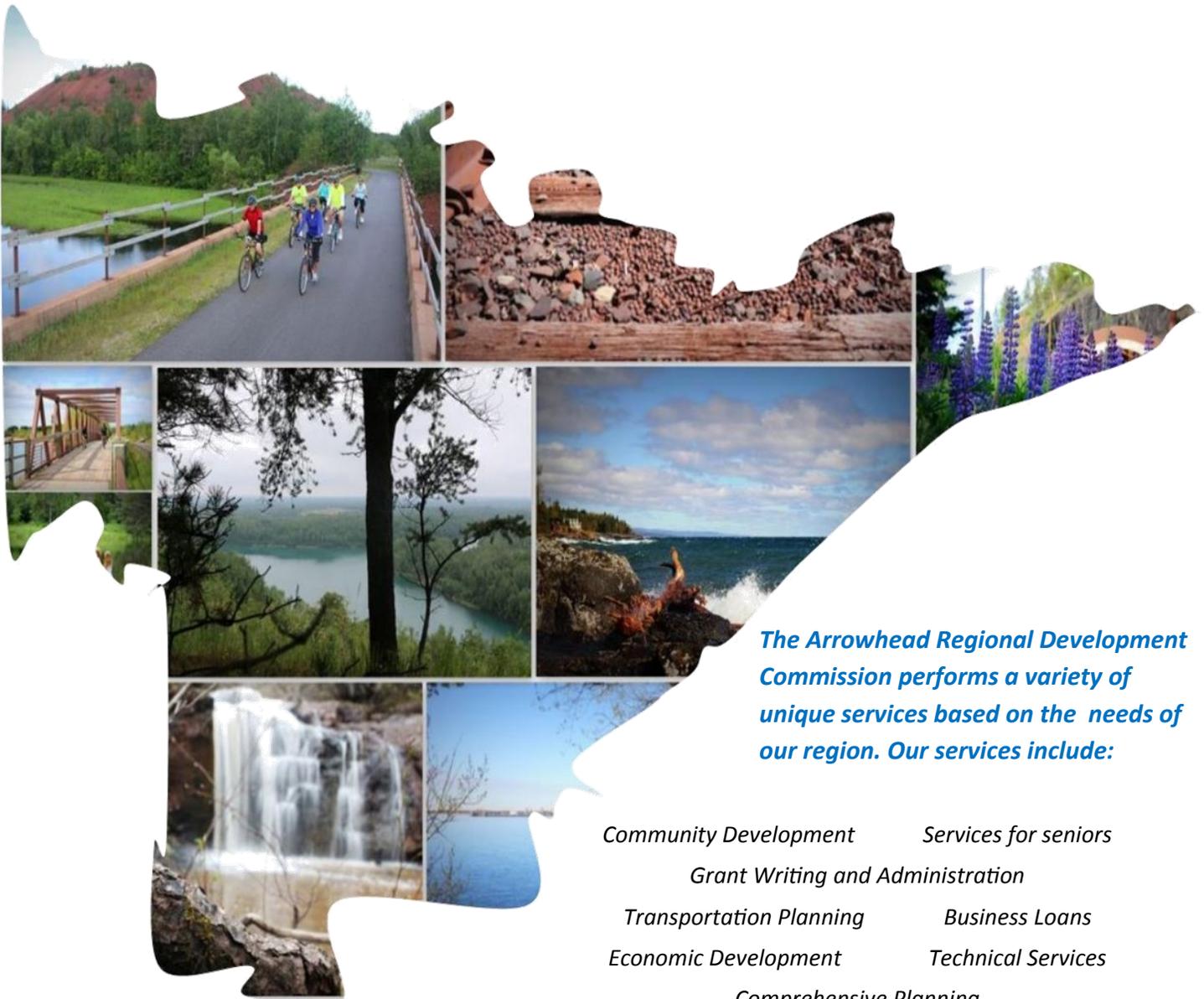
- ◆ They research to solve problems for local governments in a controversial situation. They have the experience that local governments don't have.
- ◆ [ARDC Staff] brought parties together to try to alleviate transportation issues with veterans seeking healthcare.
- ◆ ARDC is not afraid to take on new projects and push for innovative solutions which may be led by them, or the communities.
- ◆ With their extensive work experience and knowledge of the regional geography (cultural and physical), ARDC was able to guide our planning process in a highly effective manner and still remain open and flexible to local nuances in our community.
- ◆ [ARDC staff are] willing to help make initiatives happen that benefit older adults and caregivers.
- ◆ Senior services team members have jointly planned, solved problems and created alternate ways of doing business...
- ◆ [They work at] getting the public involved in hands-on solutions to problems...
- ◆ [ARDC Staff] have also taken a lead in getting the right people/organizations to the table to solve numerous transportation issues for the area.
- ◆ [The ARDC staff are a] good group to work with

In conclusion:

ARDC continues to fulfill its mission to *serve the people of the Arrowhead Region by providing local units of government and its citizens groups a means to work cooperatively in identifying needs, solving problems, and fostering local leadership.*

The projects and services highlighted in this assessment, as well as the high satisfaction rate of the citizens and organizations it serves, attest to the positive impact the agency has on the region. ARDC will continue to pursue opportunities for collaboration, leadership, building capacity, responsiveness and leveraging funding to meet the changing needs in the region for the years to come.

...without the Arrowhead Region, there would be no “point” to Minnesota!



The Arrowhead Regional Development Commission performs a variety of unique services based on the needs of our region. Our services include:

- Community Development*
- Grant Writing and Administration*
- Transportation Planning*
- Economic Development*
- Services for seniors*
- Business Loans*
- Technical Services*
- Comprehensive Planning*
- Environmental Services*
- Entrepreneurial Training Programs*
- Housing Service Tourism Planning*
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)*



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Arrowhead Area
Agency on Aging



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