



July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

12 Month Work Plan

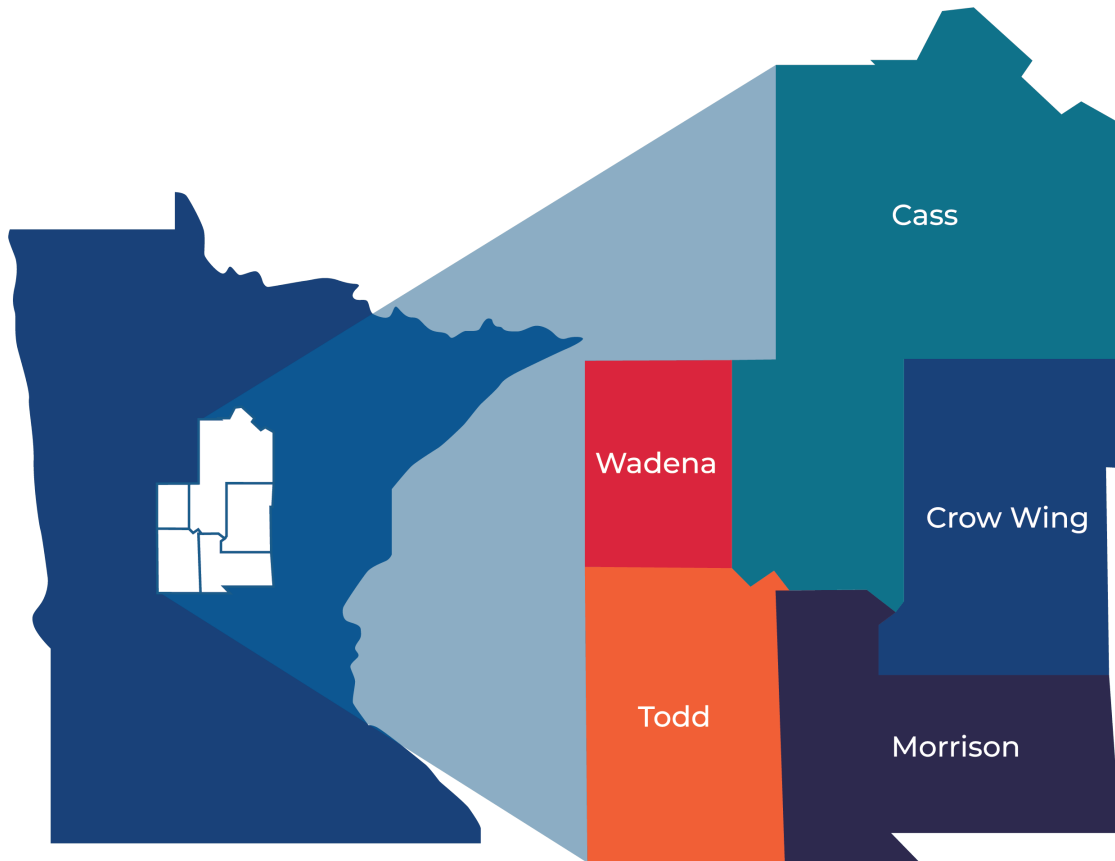


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OVERVIEW

Mission Statement

The mission of Region Five Development Commission is to enhance the vitality and quality of life in Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd and Wadena counties.

Role of R5DC

The role of the Region Five Development Commission (R5DC) is to address critical regional issues without duplication of the private, public and non-profit sectors. It is the aim and intention of R5DC to utilize all available resources to address the issues that are of importance to all residents of our region.

Vision

R5DC is a critical contributor to the success of the entire region. It brings a combination of passion, commitment, leadership and skill to each community's most important problems and opportunities, a combination that is unmatched by any other organization. R5DC is seen as the region's competitive advantage in an increasingly competitive world. Our communities cannot imagine how they could have achieved what they had without the help of R5DC.

Purpose of Work Plan

The following Work Plan sets forth **action steps** that will be taken in the upcoming FISCAL year to address the overarching goals that were developed as part of the "Strategic Plan 2017-2021". The R5DC Work Plan directs staff to implement measurable action that will address identified issues resulting in positive and equitable impacts.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2021

Our Strategic Plan was developed by the R5DC Commissioners, which is comprised of 25 elected officials from a diverse spectrum of public, private and non-profit sectors throughout the region. The Plan creates a process to continuously check that current activities align with the overall vision for the region.

The Commission analyzed and identified critical regional issues including current trends and gaps. This Strategic Plan will be used continuously to monitor and align activities with the R5DC mission to enhance the vitality and quality of life within the region, while adapting to impending changes and opportunities.

The Strategic Plan outlines goals and crafts a broad range of issues to focus on from a 10,000 foot view. The Work Plan drills down and identifies specific action for a shorter time frame of 12 months.

Summary of Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives:

Goal 1: Foster Value to the Region

To nurture innovation, boost philanthropic engagement, own responsibility and to allocate investments toward growth initiatives that will build upon assets and drive long-term resilience.

Goal 2: Achieve Maximum Partner Satisfaction

Provide a vehicle for facilitation and implementation of regional programs that cross over traditional jurisdiction boundaries and varied disciplines by partnering with local, state and federal partners, and private, public and nonprofit organizations.

Goal 3: Agency Excellence

To provide superior agency capabilities that support the delivery of exceptional services that address regional critical issues in an equitable manner.



The following Work Plan shows steps that will be taken in the upcoming years to address these overarching strategic goals. Progress on meeting these goals will be incorporated into the Annual Report thus tying all documents and focus into one vision.

Goal 1: Foster Value to the Region

To nurture innovation, boost philanthropic engagement, own responsibility and to allocate investments toward growth initiatives that will build upon assets and drive long-term resilience.



Objective 1: Continue to facilitate diverse broad stakeholder civic engagement opportunities

- Identify emerging needs and opportunities through inclusionary public engagement process
- Model/practice, expect and teach civility and respectful dialogue throughout the region

Action steps:

- a) Make staff available for informational meetings with public interest groups, community organizations, schools, etc. Attend various governmental and civic meetings to provide program information and updates.
- b) Promote the region and projects in central Minnesota per the R5DC communication plan and emerging opportunities.
- c) Pull together diverse groups to identify future needs and opportunities. (examples: Food Co-op's)
- d) Support and participate in activities of the Minnesota Association of Development Organization (MADO) and National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) when funding permits. Work with MADO on projects that address services, programs, and state legislation that best meets the needs of the Economic Development Districts (EDDs) regions in rural Minnesota.

Goal 1: Foster Value to the Region

Objective 2: Practice the Plan-Do-Learn-Adjust-Teach methodology

- Build on 8 forms of community capitals: Built, Financial, Individual, Intellectual, Natural, Political, Social and Cultural Continue to act as an information clearing house of opportunities

The eight capitals		
The capital	The definition	
	Individual	The existing stock of skills, understanding, physical health and mental wellness in a region's people.
	Intellectual	The existing stock of knowledge, resourcefulness, creativity and innovation in a region's people, institutions, organizations and sectors.
	Social	The existing stock of trust, relationships and networks in a region's population.
	Cultural	The existing stock of traditions, customs, ways of doing, and world views in a region's population.
	Natural	The existing stock of natural resources—for example, water, land, air, plants and animals—in a region's places.
	Built	The existing stock of constructed infrastructure—for example, buildings, sewer systems, broadband, roads—in a region's places.
	Political	The existing stock of goodwill, influence and power that people, organizations and institutions in the region can exercise in decision-making.
	Financial	The existing stock of monetary resources available in the region for investment in the region.

Action steps:

- Dedicate time to coaching, coordinating and teaching the WealthWorks Community Capitals framework to others within and outside the region as a fee-for-service technical assistance. See updated "Staff time allocation" for staff time commitment.
- Staff forward notices of grant opportunities to partners throughout the region on at least a monthly basis.
- Advocate for and support board-level thinking about how systemic inequities impact our region, and how best to address that in a way that is consistent with our mission.**

Forward actions and duties within the following departments:

Transportation

Action steps:

- a) **Bi-Annual MnDOT Planning Grant** - Fulfill the requirements set forth in the bi-annual MNDOT Planning grant agreement including:
 - a. **ATIP Development** - Assisting MnDOT District 3 in the development of its annual DRAFT Area Transportation Improvement Program (ATIP).
 - b. **TAC Administration** - Providing staffing and coordination for the Transportation Advisory Council (TAC)
 - c. **MADO Transportation Planner Meetings** – Actively participate in and attend the quarterly MADO Transportation Planner meetings as well as subsequent committee assigned meetings as necessary.
 - d. **Statewide Priorities** – Assist MnDOT on various statewide transportation planning projects, programs, or initiatives as needed including:
 - i. Monitor state, federal transportation legislation.
 - ii. Assist with ongoing updates to statewide transportation plans (Statewide Bicycle System plan, State Aviation System Plan etc.)
 - iii. Corridor Studies
 - e. **Regional Priorities** – Assist MnDOT District 3 on various regional transportation planning projects, programs, or initiatives as needed including:
 - i. Providing transportation related communication, information and technical assistance to communities within Region Five in coordination with MN/DOT, and local units of government (LUG) such as:
 - 1. Maintenance of Functional Classification
 - 2. Coordinating and planning with Scenic Byway(s)
 - 3. Access Management
 - 4. Assist communities within the region regarding active transportation planning, projects, programs and policies
 - 5. Assist communities with public transportation/local transit planning, programs, projects, and studies including:
 - a. Assisting transit authorities with five-year plans
 - b. Updating the Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan
 - 6. Assist communities with trail planning, programs, projects, and studies.
 - 7. Assist communities with rail planning, programs, projects, and studies.
 - 8. Assist communities with aviation planning, programs, projects and studies.

- f. **Conference Attendance** – Actively attend pertinent transportation related conferences annually such as the Minnesota Transportation Conference, and the NADO Rural Transportation Conference.
- b) **Safe Routes To School (SRTS)** - Coordinating with MnDOT, and local units of government to conduct Safe Route To School (SRTS) planning within region five by:
 - a. Promoting SRTS Technical Assistance Planning Grants
 - b. Assisting communities to apply for SRTS Technical Assistance Planning Grants
 - c. Assisting MnDOT determine Estimated budgets for SRTS Technical Assistance Planning Grants
 - d. Assist LUGs by executing SRTS contracts with MnDOT and fulfilling all aspects of the associated SRTS workplans.
 - e. Consider applying for MnDOT SRTS Coordinator Grant Solicitation
- c) **Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC)** – Execute the workplan associated with the Regional Transportation Coordination Council (RTCC) Implementation grants and agreements.
- d) **Other Transportation Planning** - Assist MnDOT and LUG with other transportation related planning, programs, projects or initiatives as appropriate, such as:
 - a. Walking/biking Assessments
 - b. Trail planning
 - c. Inventories
 - d. Scenic Byway Corridor Management Planning
 - i. Mille Lacs Scenic Byway in coordination with ARDC and ECRDC.



Economic/Community Development

Action steps:

- A) **Comp Planning – AND – Energy & Environment Planning – AND Pandemic planning**
 - Align Region Five regional transportation and regional economic development plans with local units of government comprehensive planning efforts.
 - Assist city officials and staff or community groups in the development of long term policy guidelines in the areas of housing, land use, transportation, recreation, energy/environment, economic development etc as comprehensive plans or stand-alone plans.

- B) Implement and update the five-year Comprehensive Regional Economic Development Strategy (CREDS)** in accordance with Economic Development Administration (EDA) rules and procedures.
- Staff support to the region's CREDS committee; provide direction on the Economic Development Planning and Assistance Program.
 - Carry out needs assessment, feasibility studies, community surveys and data compilation among other activities that provide information necessary to update the CREDS.
 - Implement strategic core competencies and tactics outlined in the CREDS.
 - Maintain and review the ongoing CREDS governance structure; conform with recent changes to EDA rules and policy.
 - Solicit funding – including from the EDA Public Works Program – that support the projects selected as “vital projects” via the CREDS process. Intentional focus on the Business Accelerator feasibility and funding.
- C) Creation &/or coordination of Regional Networks**
- Champion Regional Administrators meetings as well as regional history, arts, food co-ops, educational and other special interest groups to identify shared resources.
 - Prioritize new avenues of intergovernmental planning.
 - Initiate work to expand and regionalize the local Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program
- D) Provide assistance on planning projects by fee-for-service contractual agreements.**
- Participation and regional engagement with Welcoming Community Advocacy Groups utilizing Intercultural Development Community training and implementation of strategies
 - Explore the broadband placemaking opportunities for further civic acknowledgment of the need for additional broadband services in rural communities
 - Intentional work within the Creative Community Cohort to learn and utilize a broad range of tools for implementation of community outreach projects
 - Continued work in technical assistance for local food co-ops for the Good Food Access Fund/Socially Disadvantaged Growers Group
 - Continue RxCSA and VetCSA implementation
- E) North Central Economic Development Association (NCEDA)**
- Oversee multiple lending programs to serve the region; Gap, micro, well water, septic system, minority lending and covid crisis lending.
 - Maintain NCEDA Full-Corp committee membership and provide regular updates.
 - Staff support to the NCEDA loan committee that make decisions on loan applications.
 - Provide updated information on all loan programs to Commission.
 - Conduct lending portfolio risk assessment per EDA guidelines.
 - Act as a fiscal administrator for groups in need.
 - Seek additional loan programs that R5DC can administer for the benefit of the region.
 - Fulfill role as a Local Development Organization (LDO) and assist cities with administration of CDBG funding.



F) Business Lending

- Market the loan funds; provide business start-up, retention and expansion assistance and process requests that meet the goals and objectives of the RLF Plan. Administer and process loans according to approved financial procedures. Manage active loans.
- Engage in activities that promote, identify, encourage and support businesses. Participate in collaborative lending activities if possible. Host and/or attend lending/lender finance meetings.
- Follow RLF policies and procedures or any program policies in the areas of technical assistance/review of loan applications and management of approved loans.
- Provide technical assistance as required by the grant to loan recipients, increasing the business owner's grasp of business practices and probability of success.
 - One-on-one direct technical assistance at the business location.
 - Provide group and webinar technical training.
 - Offer in-person small group industry specific TA.
 - Involve outside experts from Small Business Development Centers, SCORE chapters, Chamber of Commerce and independent Consultants.
 - Conduct yearly site visits.



G) Individual Sewage Treatment System (ISTS) & Household Water Well System (HWWS)

- Provide staff support to NCEDA loan committee that enables the Board to make a decision on loan application.
- Market the septic loan fund; process requests, communicate with county and landowner, process and close loans according to approved financial procedures. Manage active loans.
- Partner with counties to provide additional options; cost share opportunities.
- Authorized as a multi-county lender, consider expanding septic loans to other counties.
- Communicate effectively with MN Department of Agriculture and US Department of Agriculture on program regulations.
- Seek additional funding to repair/replace water wells or other programs that directly assist the region's residents.

- H) Make available information and appropriate referrals about existing federal, state and private resources which can assist local communities (units of government, businesses and others) in their development efforts - serve as a clearinghouse for this information.
- I) Make available contracts for services through which Commission staff will assist in completion of grant and/or loan requests through programs offered by state, federal and local agencies.
- J) Continue to coordinate with the Minnesota Workforce Centers, DEED and local community colleges to identify, create, develop, and maintain a qualified labor force.
- K) Continue to encourage existing communities to develop opportunities to improve their technology infrastructure.
- L) Work with Minnesota Association of Development Organizations to improve the overall value of the CREDS and economic vitality in MN rural regions through DevelopMN.

Goal 1: Performance Measures



O1: The number of individuals that were engaged in R5DC activities and measured their interaction as "good" or above.



O2: The number of print materials (publications, stories, press releases) that share the qualitative and quantitative impacts of R5DC projects and programs.



O3: The quality of programs and services delivered, and number of grants applied/received will be used as a measure of success regarding how well we are filling service gaps within the region. Dollar amounts leveraged will be used as a measure of success regarding our ability to effectively address Resilient Region Plan objectives.

Our mission is to enhance the vitality and quality of life in Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd & Wadena counties.

Goal 2: Achieve Maximum Partner Satisfaction

Provide a vehicle for facilitation and implementation of regional programs that cross over traditional jurisdiction boundaries and varied disciplines by collaborating with Local, State and Federal partners, as well as Private, Public and Nonprofit organizations.

Objective 1: Clearly understand who R5DC partners are and articulate how our work aligns with or supports partner activities.

- How R5DC seeks to minimize duplication
- Understand partner priorities
- Transfer knowledge of the broad range and interconnectivity of regional issues

Action steps:

- a) Attend quarterly meetings with partners (County Administrators, EDO Pro's, TAC and others) to learn of ongoing initiatives.
- b) Send out surveys to our partners on an annual basis to ensure ongoing effort to achieve maximum partner satisfaction

Goal 2: Achieve Maximum Partner Satisfaction

Objective 2: Provide clarity of R5DC priority areas of service to partners

Action steps:

- Share through attended meetings.
- Share through published documents; a) strategic plan, b) annual work-plan, c) annual report, d) communications plan, e) Resilient Region Plan & reports, f) Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan and g) Comprehensive Regional Economic Development Strategy with partners.

Goal 2: Achieve Maximum Partner Satisfaction

Objective 3: Execute deliverables agreed upon in grant/loan agreements on time and on budget

- Deliver timely reports

Action steps:

- a) Communicate deliverables in multiple formats; web, social media, press releases, presentations, printed publications and more.
- b) Complete work as agreed.

Goal 2: Achieve Maximum Partner Satisfaction

Objective 4: Maintain strong brand

- Publish and execute annual Work-Plan
- Fulfill communication plan objectives
- Publish an annual report
- Deliver consistent branding message at various meetings

Action steps:

- a) Implement and monitor the approved Personnel Policy, Code of Conduct and Ethic Policy and By-Laws of the Commission; make recommendations as needed to keep said policies consistent with staff needs of the Commission.
- b) Adhere to the approved communications plan, maintain email contact lists, supply news media with appropriate press releases and articles pertaining to issues and subjects of interest to the area. Maintain website - keep relevant and informative.
- c) Develop individual program marketing materials and distribute to groups identified for services.
- d) Engage in modern website technology by education and redevelopment of website
- e) Creation of a short video for consistent explanation of R5DC services for communication/outreach
- f) Introduction/explanation of R5DC to elected officials bi-annually via podcasts.

Goal 2: Performance Measures



O1: Establish a Strategic Plan Commission Committee who meets annually to conduct self-evaluation of duplication verses collaboration of services.



O2: Referrals from partners to potential new partner agencies.



O3: Post-Performance survey evaluations and the number of continued contracts will be used to measure partner success. Will survey:

1. Number of loan applications.
2. Number of contracts signed.
3. Hours of technical assistance provided.
4. Referral from partners to potential new partner agencies.



O4: Referrals of partners for future project/program opportunities.

Goal 3: Agency Excellence

To provide superior agency capabilities that support the delivery of exceptional services that address regional critical issues.

Objective 1: Maintain agency fiscal integrity

- Monthly financials and annual audits
- Meet reporting deadlines
- Board Composition
- Board Stewardship

Action steps:

- a) Prepare and recommend a fiscal year work program and annual budget to be considered and adopted by the Commission at its end of the fiscal year meeting in June.
- b) Develop and implement a budget that utilizes available resources in the most efficient and effective fashion. Prioritize repayment of debt. Issue the annual budget report pursuant to the Regional Development Act. Prepare an annual report, which includes a financial statement of all receipts and expenditures for the year just ended.
- c) Establish and maintain adequate accounting and financial management procedures, which include but are not limited to:
 - i. Submit for Commission review, monthly financial statements showing revenues by funding source, expenditures by line-item and end of month balances.
 - ii. Generate required financial reports to EDA, USDA and others
 - iii. Craft annual NCEDA budget
 - iv. NCEDA monthly financials for Commission and NCEDA Loan Board.
 - v. Conduct third party quarterly finance reviews, as needed.
 - vi. Contract for and complete fiscal year-end audit of Commission/NCEDA financials in accordance with Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 34 guidelines.
 - vii. Financial reports are prepared and submitted to funding agencies pursuant to contractual requirements.
 - viii. Accounting staff receives training to maximize accounting software capabilities.

Objective 2: Prioritize and provide programs that have a strong value and high potential of success

- Offer programs/services that include:
 - i. Align with Mission, Vision, Values
 - ii. Is self-sustaining
 - iii. Public value
 - iv. Direct value
 - v. Positive return on investment
 - vi. Maximize expertise of staff
 - vii. Have regional need
 - viii. Political necessity
 - ix. Reduction of duplication
 - x. Can promote & evaluate the core program

Action Steps:

- a) Conduct periodic meetings with agency staff to ensure programs and activities remain coordinated, relevant and that program information is being effectively disseminated.
- b) Consider new programs and opportunities that may benefit the region. Explore funding possibilities, resources permitting, to expand R5DC services.

Objective 3: Provide high quality, professional planning services

- Strong leadership at executive level
- Maintain quality skilled staff that also honor agency core values
- Value a performance-based culture
- Conduct bi-annual team development
- Attend Peer-to-Peer learning opportunities (MADO & NADO)

Action steps:

- a) Provide direction, training and grant application assistance to Commission staff in an effort to obtain funding to support programs.
- b) Maintain quality staff that complies with Operations Manual procedures, Code of Conduct, Ethics Policy and Core Values.
- c) Allocate resources and encourage staff to attend conferences, workshops, seminars, statewide meetings and other training sessions according to development needs and budget limitations.
- d) Annual performance evaluations will be conducted to determine the quality of work performed and the fulfillment of tasks assigned according to position descriptions, work program elements and local projects assigned.



Goal 3: Agency Excellence

Objective 4: Fulfill RDC state statute and regulatory requirements.

Action steps:

Maintain a governing board comprised of locally elected officials and special interest groups from the five county region with active participation

- Prepare/provide materials including meeting minutes, agendas and issue information needed to conduct meetings of the full Commission.
- Provide policy recommendations to the Commission that will, when adopted, utilize resources available to best meet the needs of region.
- Provide the full Commission with periodic work program progress reports and information/ recommendations pertaining to future direction.
- Maintain current Commission membership according to the Regional Development Act, State Statute and R5DC by-laws.
- Provide each Commission member a detailed orientation prior to their first Commission meeting.
- Presentations at periodic Commission meetings to inform of programs.
- Submit to the State of Minnesota, a report on programs & services offered in past five years, and activities identified for the next five years. Report due in December of following years; 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021 and sequentially thereafter.



Maintain adequate physical infrastructure.

- Maintain building, equipment and technology.
- Update technical hardware as necessary.
- Research new technology/obtain training.

Goal 3: Performance Measures

- ✓ O1: Annual audits used as success measures.
- ✓ O2 - O4: Satisfaction Survey results from partners, customers and residents will be used as a measure of success regarding the quality of professional planning. (**External and Internal** program and agency evaluations, based on criteria).
- ✓ O3: Annual performance evaluations of staff.
- ✓ O4: Monthly confidential Commission self-evaluations used to measure stewardship.