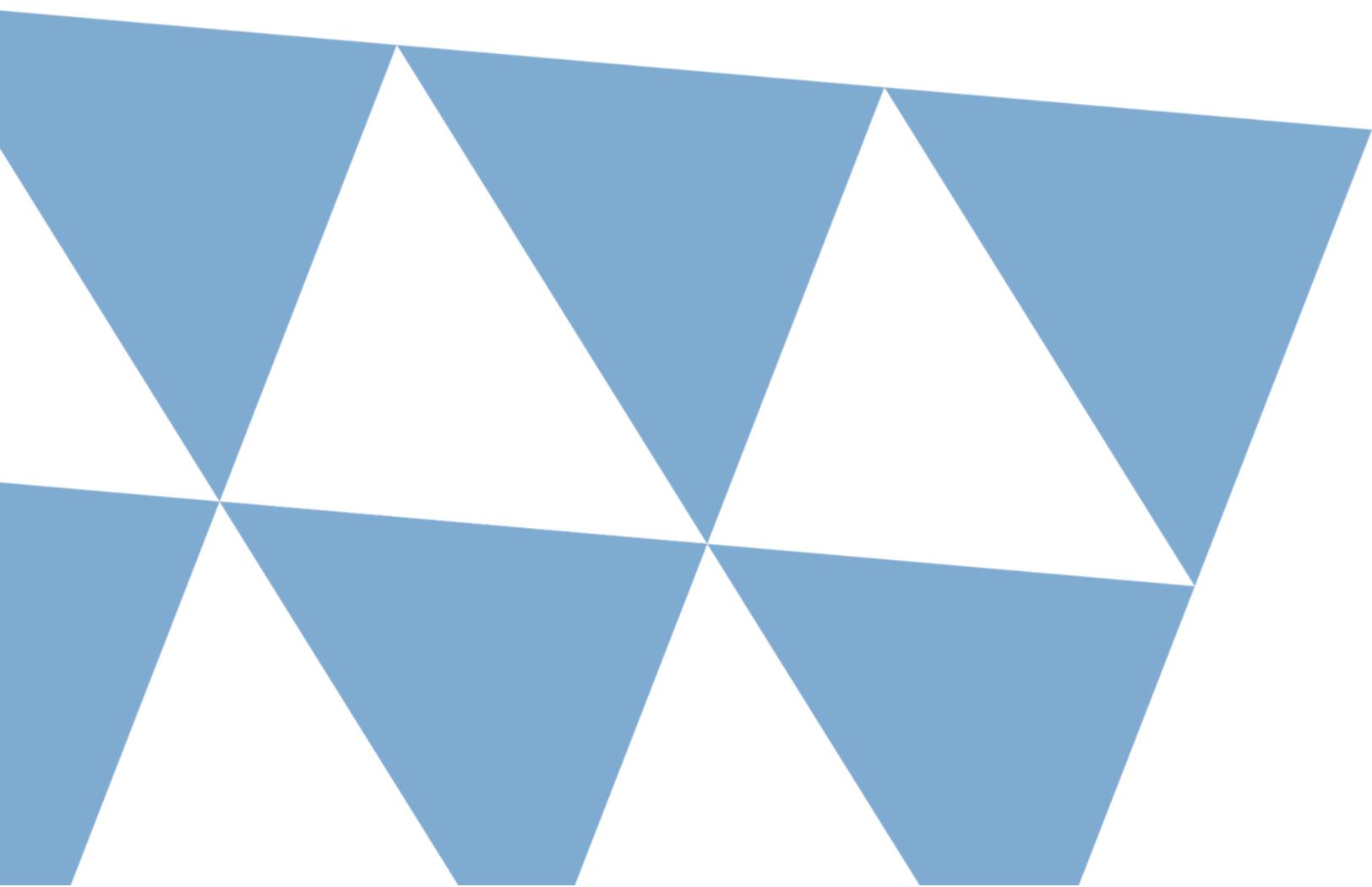




**Arrowhead Regional
Development Commission**



**2022 Annual Report
On Point**





**Arrowhead Regional
Development Commission**

A MESSAGE FROM ARDC BOARD & COMMISSION CHAIR:



At the end of 2022, I relinquished my long-time leadership position as Chair of ARDC and returned to being a regular member of the Commission for 2023. During my tenure as ARDC Chair, I was proud to witness many accomplishments including the building renovation and returning our RLF program to being staffed in-house. I am proud of all the projects and programs at ARDC that I helped lead.

Dick Brenner
Carlton County Commissioner

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

In 2022, ARDC was fully back to work after the Pandemic. In person community meetings, such a strong part of what we do, were welcomed again. COVID-19 continued to impact the region and our work in economic development, particularly the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program, worked to address these challenges.

I am proud to say that we fully expended the \$3.8 million the Federal Economic Development Administration had granted us to help businesses get through the Pandemic. Our work in that endeavor earned us a big “kudos” from the Federal Government. Nearly all the 62 loans we funded are current with their payments and some have already paid their loans back fully.

Trails and Transportation are still one of our main focus areas with plans being developed for Interstate 35 and Central Entrance in Duluth, the City of Cloquet, North Country Trail, Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway, Skyline Parkway, and more. The Regional Transportation Coordinating Council continues to work toward ensuring that all citizens have access to transportation for daily activities.

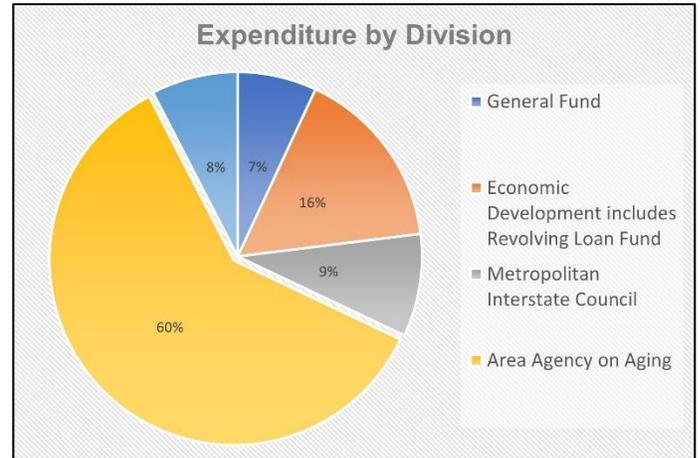
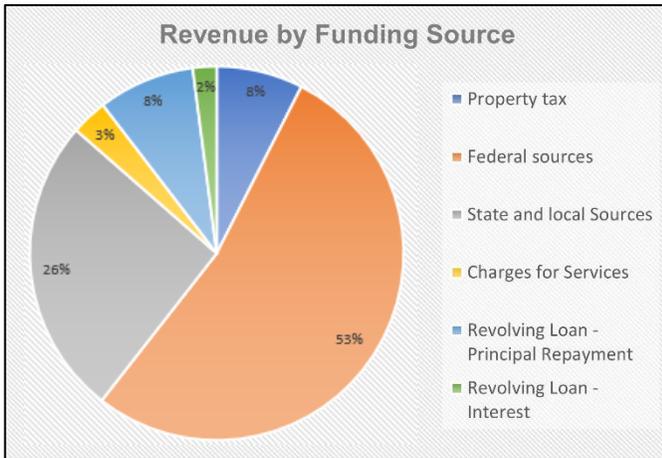
Our services to older Americans continue to grow and evolve post Pandemic. The always heavy workload during the Medicare sign-up period occurred in 2022 as usual. We have also implemented new programs and funded many entities providing direct services to seniors.

Our bottom line is strong, and workloads are steady. I am proud to say that ARDC is leveraging our small tax levy at a high level and will continue to do so in 2023. ARDC is doing its part to make northeast Minnesota a great place to live, work, play, and learn. And isn't that the point?

Andy Hubley
ARDC Executive Director/ARDC Planning Division Director



The charts below reflect unaudited amounts regarding ARDC’s FY 2022 expenditures and revenues. To view this information in greater detail and other information pertaining to ARDC’s financial summary, please visit: ardc.org/finance.



ARDC’s Revolving Loan Fund

The ARDC Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) supports business activities that credit is not otherwise available. The objective of the program is to stimulate private investment to create and maintain productive, permanent employment through the establishment of new businesses or the expansion of existing businesses. Financing provided in conjunction with this program is intended to complement – not compete with – private lending institutions. As such, securing private sector involvement is a critical factor in qualifying for this program.



Peter McClelland of White Wilderness Sled Dog Adventures instructs a new musher.

Featured RLF Business: White Wilderness Sled Dog Adventures, Isabella. ARDC provided a loan to Peter McClelland to keep his business going through the Pandemic. An ARDC site visit found his business to be vibrant and FUN!

To learn more about ARDC’s Revolving Loan Fund programs, visit: ardc.org/rlf.



ARDC Planning Division staff members continued to work around the region on a wide variety of transportation, community, public health, economic development, and recreation planning projects in 2022.

Pedestrian and bicycle safety along Highway 33 through Cloquet has been an ongoing and important conversation within the community. ARDC Planning staff, alongside the community and MnDOT, worked to develop a long-range transportation plan and vision for potential system improvements through Cloquet with a focus on improvements to Highway 33.

Fond du Lac Planning and the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission worked together to update Fond du Lac Reservations Long-range Transportation Plan. The plan covers transportation visions, goals, and projects across the Fond du Lac Reservation area, emphasizing increased community connections and access throughout the area. The plan includes a design component that envisions a bike and pedestrian trail and trailhead from Black Bear Casino, connecting to the Munger Trail on the east side of I-35.

The Avenue of Pines Scenic Byway Council had another exciting year in 2022. ARDC Planning helped the Council and its partner Visit Grand Rapids complete an ESRI story map featuring the communities, tourist locations, and businesses along the Byway. We were also able to work with MnDOT and the Federal Highway Administration to receive special (possibly first of its kind) approval to include Ojibwe language panels on the byway logo signs within the Leech Lake Reservation boundaries. *Bapakwanagemag*, the Ojibwe word for red pine will greet travelers along Highway 46 in the near future.



Other important transportation projects included facilitating the Arrowhead Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC), supporting efforts of several scenic byway committees, offering staff assistance to the Gitchi-Gami Trail Association, and continued facilitation of the Northeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership.

Community planning initiatives saw ARDC staff resuming its role of Planner on Retainer for the City of Two Harbors for the final quarter of 2022. In the communities of Nashwauk and Keewatin seasonal wayfinding signage was installed. This project was designed to increase opportunities for physical activity in conjunction with statewide and local community health partners.

ARDC Planning staff also continued to work with partners on Coastal Erosion Hazard mapping, working with communities with Brownfields initiatives, economic development planning, facilitating the North Shore Management Board, recreational planning in the community of Nashwauk, and much more.

Learn more about our current projects at: arrowheadplanning.org



Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging

The Arrowhead Regional Development Commission is designated by the Minnesota Board on Aging as the Area Agency on Aging for the Planning and Service Area under authority of Title III of the Older Americans Act. The Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging (AAAA) is committed to helping older adults maintain their highest level of independence.

In 2022, AAAA provided Propel Training sessions for non-profit leaders to our service providers,



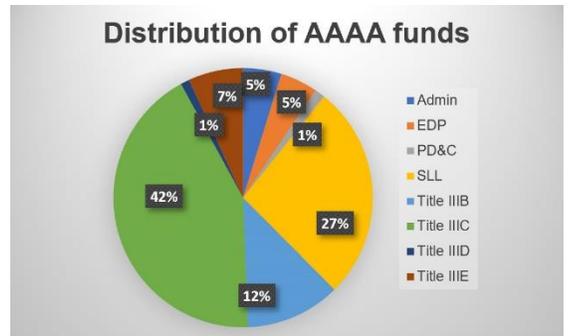
ramped up our St. Louis County COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, launched the Indigenous HealthCare exploration camp, moved to Preadmission Screening automation, shifted the grant process to SmartSimple, and continued to work with Medicare Partners to serve older adults in all of Minnesota. AAAA worked with Senator Klobuchar to protect seniors and improve Medicare.

Area Plan Development & Coordination distributed 53 grants totaling 2.8 million dollars in Title III funding to 22 agencies. The Title IIIB funds supported 3,429 individuals. Title IIIC provided 378,814 meals to 7,350 older adults. The Title IIIE funds provided 2,879 counseling sessions to 359 caregivers and 5,270 hours of respite to 66 caregivers. Additionally, 0.5 million dollars of state and NSIP nutrition funding was awarded.



Additional Region-wide funding of \$2,249,441 for Access, Technology, Homemaker, Legal Aid, Respite Services, Caregiver Counseling, and Telephone Reassurance calls.

Eldercare Development Partnership (EDP) trained in Mental Health First Aid facilitation, supported 8 new LWAH projects, undertook COVID PSA campaign, presented 5 Aging Impact Awards, provided 18 educational webinars on diversity, transportation needs, and advance planning. EDP launched 2 AARP age-friendly communities.



1EDP: ElderCare Development Program, PD&C: Program Development & Coordination, SLL: Senior LinkAge Line, Title IIIB: Supportive Services, Title IIIC: Nutrition Services, Title IIID: Disease Prevention/Health Promotion Services, Title IIIE: Caregiver Support Services

A total of 112 evidence-based wellness classes conducted by 13 providers improved the health of 522 participants.

AAAA Senior LinkAge Line® (SLL) service provides direct support to individuals and providers. AAAA SLL served over 10,122 clients combined. The Contact Center staff served over 4,877 clients, PAS processed 4,048 screens, and Community Living Specialist served 1,197 persons. SLL processed 285 intake forms, including 52 Medicare in-person or on the phone counseling sessions conducted by 26 active volunteers. A total of 203 outreach events, either online or in-person at health fairs, and trainings included 26 Healthcare Fraud Waste and Abuse presentations and 13 Volunteer presentations.

For more details on our programs or how to reach us our website can help: arrowheadaging.org



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

The MIC, as our region’s designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), works to encourage local policy decisions and to prioritize infrastructure projects that will provide a transportation system that serves all users.

Key 2022 Planning Initiative: Duluth Area I-35 Corridor Plan



The Duluth Area Corridor Plan will systematically address current and future needs along a 14-mile segment of I-35 between Midway and 26th Ave E in Duluth.

Those reading this are likely familiar with the large-scale Twin Ports Interchange reconstruction project that’s currently underway in Duluth. But well before its completion, the MIC and MnDOT partnered to plan for the maintenance and improvement of I-35 to the north and south of that project.

The Duluth Area I-35 Corridor Plan was initiated in 2022 to study the 14-mile segment of highway from County Road 61 in Midway Township to 26th Avenue East in Duluth. The goal of the plan is to get out ahead of – to identify, prioritize, sequence and fund – the future needs of this essential transportation route.

The final product, to be completed by the end of 2023, will be an implementation plan to guide MnDOT’s investments to support the continued safe and efficient movement of people and goods into and through the Twin Ports area.

Planning work in 2022 focused on conducting detailed engineering assessments as well as extensive public outreach. In 2023, community engagement events will bring forward key points from the technical report in an accessible, visual format for consideration and comment.

To learn more about the study findings to date and to learn about upcoming opportunities to give input, please visit the plan website at dsmic.org/i35.

Key 2022 Planning Initiative: MIC Area Safety Action Plan

This project, continuing into 2023, is a comprehensive approach to reducing or eliminating risk factors for roadway crashes throughout the Duluth-Superior metro area. The plan will provide a regional safety analysis for all modes of travel, a prioritized list of short-, mid-, and long-range project solutions, a project management team, and a method to measure implementation progress. For more details on our efforts to improve the reach and effectiveness of our public involvement go to dsmic.org/safety.



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) is to provide local units of government and citizens groups a means to work cooperatively in identifying needs, solving problems, and fostering local leadership.

COMMISSION

*denotes members of the ARDC Board

REPRESENTATIVE OF CITIES, TOWNSHIPS, TRIBAL NATIONS, AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS (21)

Aitkin Cities >10K: Sharon DeWitt (Palisade)
Aitkin Townships: Jim Berg (McGregor)
Carlton Cities >10K: Roger Maki (Cloquet)
Carlton Cities >10K: David Lucas (Kettle River)
Carlton Townships: Clayton Kauppila (Carlton)
Cook Cities <10K: Michael Garry (Grand Marais)
Cook Townships: Vacant
Itasca Cities >10K: Dale Adams (Grand Rapids)
Itasca Cities <10K: Calvin Saari (Nashwauk)
Itasca Townships: Larry Salmela (Effie)
Koochiching Cities <10K: Brian Briggs
(International Falls)
Koochiching Townships: Kevin Adee
(Koochiching County)
Lake Cities >10K: Vacant
Lake Townships: Vacant
St. Louis Cities >10K: Terese Tomanek (Duluth)
St. Louis Cities >10K: Tim Harkonen (Hibbing)
St. Louis Cities <10K: Steven Johnson (Virginia)
St. Louis County Townships: Cal Warwas
(Eveleth)
Bois Forte Tribal Council: Vacant
Fond du Lac Tribal Council: Jason Holliday*
Grand Portage Tribal Council: Robert
Deschampe
School Districts: Pat Medure (ISD #318, Grand
Rapids)
School Districts: Walter Hautala (ISD #2711,
Mesabi East)

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION AT ARDC

ARDC is committed to building an inclusive culture that encourages and supports the diverse voices of our employees and of the communities we serve. ▼▼▼

COUNTY BOARD REPRESENTATIVES (8)

Aitkin: Don Niemi*
Carlton: Dick Brenner*
Cook: Ginny Storlie*
Itasca: Leo Trunt*
Koochiching: Wade Pavleck*
Lake: Pete Walsh*
St. Louis: Frank Jewell*
St. Louis: Ashley Grimm

AT-LARGE (CITIZEN) MEMBERS (8)

Dirk Davis (Morcom Township)
Mike Hoops (Silver Creek)
Joel Hoppe* (McGregor)
Paul Nevanen* (International Falls)
Allen Rasmussen* (International Falls)
Gordon Salisbury (Hovland)
Mary Somnis* (Grand Marais)

ADVISORY MEMBERS (3)

AAAA Advisory Board: Pam Franklin*
DSMIC Policy Board: Vacant*

OFFICERS

Dick Brenner, Chair
Don Niemi, Vice Chair
Allen Rasmussen, Treasurer
Jason Holliday, Secretary

ARDC is an EOE/AA/M/F/Vet/Disability Employer



**Arrowhead Regional
Development Commission**



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