

## **APPENDIX C**

### **FUNDING PROGRAMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The Implementation section of the Comprehensive Plan recommends that the County be aggressive in seeking funding for identified improvements, particularly for housing, parks and trails, and for providing financial incentives for housing improvements, business development, and natural resource protection.

The County will need to assign adequate staff resources to secure funding. The following is a sampling of programs that have potential application to the County's identified needs.

### **Housing**

#### **Home Ownership Programs**

1. Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA).
  - a. Home Mortgage Loan Programs.
    - i. Minnesota Mortgage Program (MMP). Mortgage loans that are available throughout Minnesota.
    - ii. Minnesota City Participation Program (MCP). Mortgage loans in designated communities.
    - iii. Community Activity Set-Aside (CASA). Mortgage loans for specific community needs.
    - iv. Home Equity Conversion Counseling (MECC). Reverse mortgage loans for Minnesota seniors.
  - b. Down Payment and Closing Costs Assistance.
    - i. Homeownership Assistance Fund (HAF). Down payment and closing costs assistance with MHFA loans.
    - ii. Entry Cost Homeownership Opportunity (ECHO). Down payment and closing costs assistance.
2. Greater Minnesota Housing Fund (GMHF). Many of the programs offered here overlap and use funding from the MHFA programs.
  - a. Gap Financing.
    - i. Home at Last. Loans for buyers of newly constructed homes.
    - ii. GMHF/Rural Development New Construction Program. Loans for new homes constructed by non-profit developers selling to qualified buyers.

- iii. Employer Assisted Housing. Matches employer contributions to single-family housing development projects.
  - iv. Community Rehabilitation Fund and Housing Trust Fund. Funds distributed to non-profit and public agencies for new construction and rehabilitation.
- b. Homebuyer Education Financing.
- i. Full Cycle Homeownership Services. Provides a match of local funding of MHFA's Home Stretch Program and post-purchase counseling.
- c. Entry Cost Assistance.
- i. Entry Cost Homeownership Opportunity Program. Down payment assistance funding coordinated with MHFA ECHO program.
  - ii. Down Payment Assistance. Matching local funds for down payment assistance programs.

### **Affordable Rental Housing Programs/Multiple Family Housing Development**

The MHFA and GMHF provide a multiple family Request For Proposal (RFP) process on a biannual basis for offering deferred loans, first mortgage financing, Housing Tax Credit (HTC) financing and project based rental assistance.

### **Other Sources of Assistance for Home Purchase or Rental Housing Development**

1. Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership. This organization may be utilized for technical assistance resources and administration of housing programs. They are already active in housing initiatives in the County and would be a part of the overall implementation of a housing plan.
2. Mid-Minnesota Development Commission. The MMDC can provide assistance with implementation of housing programs. Their staff provides technical assistance by researching information, doing survey work, assisting with grant and loan applications and coordinating special standards and projects.
3. Housing Developers and Contractors. The HRA/EDA could work with housing developers and contractors in creating housing projects that address needs in the County. Builders should be encouraged to consider development of townhomes, condominiums, twinhomes, and multiple family housing, especially in the municipalities to supplement the single-family homes and diversify the housing options.
4. Habitat for Humanity. Residents of the County should be encouraged to be involved and assist Habitat for Humanity (and other similar programs) in the creation of affordable housing.

5. Employers. Employers can assist with participation in housing development and assistance with mortgage and/or entry costs. A particular opportunity for employer involvement in Renville County relates to the future housing for seasonal laborers.

## **Housing Rehabilitation**

1. MHFA Programs.
  - a. Home Improvement Loans.
    - i. Fix-Up Fund Loans. Loans for home improvement projects.
    - ii. Rehabilitation Loan Program. Funds for rehabilitating homes.
    - iii. Community Fix-Up Fund. Affordable home improvement loans for specific community needs.
  - b. Affordable Rental Housing Rehabilitation.
    - i. Rental Rehabilitation Loan Program. Loan program to assist owners of smaller rental properties in financing improvements.
    - ii. HOME Rental Rehabilitation Loan Program. Deferred subordinate loan established to rehabilitate privately owned residential rental property.

## **Community Development**

### **Technical Assistance**

The following programs are sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED).

1. Industry Assistance. Industry specialists at DTED provide information to businesses on financial programs, supply sources, business planning assistance, trade opportunities, strategic partners and venture partners. The specialists also actively market Minnesota and attend industry gatherings to promote available marketing tools, buildings and sites, and other Minnesota advantages. Their primary clients include companies doing business in Minnesota, industry professional and trade organizations, out of state companies considering expansion in Minnesota, government agencies at all levels, and local development organizations.
2. Small Business Assistance. The Small Business Assistance Office offers information on questions relating to start-up, operation or expansion of businesses in Minnesota. The staff offers information on the DTED web site, provides direct assistance via the telephone, especially related to business formation, business structure, and tax and regulating issues.

3. Small Business Development Centers. DTED has established Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) that offer one-on-one business management counseling to help clients meet business goals. The services are provided by experienced consultants, college and university faculty, and qualified volunteers. Counseling focuses on primarily five areas – business planning, business assessment, financial analysis and loan packaging, marketing, and access to business information. The SBDC that serves Renville County is located at Southwest State University in Marshall.

## **Financial Programs**

1. Business Loan Programs. Renville County can develop business loan programs to provide financing assistance for commercial or industrial business that are located in or moving to the County. Start-up funds for the loan programs would need to be created from the County and possible state, federal or foundation sources. The County HRA/EDA would administer the program with local banks and financial institutions that could provide gap financing and loan packages with rates and terms that are more flexible than the market. Numerous examples of successful business loan programs exist in the State. Assistance in establishing the program could be provided through the Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development and the Mid Minnesota Regional Development Commission.
2. DTED Programs
3. Capital Access Program. This program is designed for lending institutions to assist in loans to be made for industrial, commercial or agricultural purposes. The program encourages loans from private lending institutions to business, particularly small and medium sized businesses.
  - a. Microenterprise Assistance Grant Program. This program is designed to assist small entrepreneurs to successfully start-up or expand business. The program is administered through non-profit organizations to provide technical assistance and financial support.
  - b. Minnesota Investment Fund. Eligible applicants are cities, counties, townships, and Indian tribal governments to provide loans to assist expanding businesses. The purpose of the program is to create and retain jobs with a focus on industrial, manufacturing, and technology related industries.
  - c. Rural Challenge Grant Program. The challenge grant funds provide a match for non-public funds to fund start-up or expansion costs including property acquisition, site improvements, new construction, building renovation, purchase of machinery and equipment, and working capital. The primary purpose of the program is to provide job opportunities for low income individuals, encourage private investment, and promote economic development.

- d. Small Business Development Loan Program. The purpose of this program is to provide small business loans for manufacturing and industrial business located or with the intention to locate in Minnesota. Eligible projects include acquisition of land, buildings, machinery and equipment, building construction and renovations, and development costs such as engineering, legal and financial fees.
4. Southwest Minnesota Foundation. The Southwest Minnesota Foundation provides financial support for start-up or expanding business that result in job growth and diversify the economy of the region. The Foundation provides a Business Financial Program to provide loans and a Business Initiative Grant program for grants. The two programs are discussed below:
    - a. Business Finance Program. This program provides group financing to eligible business. This financing supplements the dollars provided by financial institutions and investors and strengthens financial packages. The foundation has the following types of loans, some of them utilizing DTED as the funding source, available through this program:
      - i. Challenge/Revolving Loan – funds for start-up or expansion projects.
      - ii. Micro Loan – loans for small local businesses.
      - iii. Intermediary Re-lending Program (IRP) – USDA funds for start-up or expansion projects.
      - iv. Technology Development Fund – funds to assist businesses in the development or expansion of products and technologies.
    - b. Business Initiative Grants. The Southwest Minnesota Foundation will consider grants to support the development of business leadership attributes such as management, marketing, exporting, and telecommunication skills; to aid in work force development; worker training or orientation; and specialized training needs. The grants are also available for translators for minorities interested in business opportunities. Grants are also available for projects that facilitate or provide funding to build the community’s capacity to support business related social issues such as health care and child care.

The County can also approach sources such as the Blandin Foundation or the McKnight Foundation for participation in special types of developments, such as the Agricultural Innovation Center.

## **Work Force Development**

The Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development and other resources are available related to work force development:

1. Minnesota Job Skills Partnership. Grants are awarded to educational institutions with business as partners to develop cooperative training projects that provide training for new jobs or retain existing employees. The preference for funding is given to non-profit

institutions, which serve economically disadvantaged people, minorities, or those who are victims of economic downturns and to businesses located in rural areas.

2. Pathways Program. Grants are awarded to educational institutions with a business partner to develop cooperative training programs that provide training, new jobs, and career paths for individuals making the transition from public assistance to the work force. Preference is given to programs that provide employment, with benefits to employees and projects with defined career paths.
3. Health Care and Human Services Worker Training and Retention Program. The purpose of this program is to alleviate critical worker shortages specifically in the health care and human services industries and to increase opportunities for employees in the health care and human services fields through training and education. The assistance is in the form of grants to consortiums that may include employees in the health and human services industry, work force centers, and counties. A public or private higher education institution must be a part of the consortium. The grants are for local or regional training and retention programs.
4. Higher Education and Loan Program (HELP). HELP was established to assist Minnesota businesses in obtaining the training necessary for new or existing employees by providing short-term, no interest loans, directly to businesses. The business is required to contract for the training with an outside public or private training institution.
5. Other Training Resources. The County can use the following resources to assist in work force training and education:
  - a. The Network. This is a statewide network of customized training education and development for business and industry.
  - b. Southwest State University. The University's Office of Distance Learning provides students the opportunity to obtain their bachelors degrees at a variety of off-campus locations.
  - c. Minnesota West Community and Technical College. The college offers over 16 programs at its Granite Falls Campus focusing on industrial and manufacturing, automotive, business and office, health and human services, and computer career development.

## **Tourism**

The following are offered by the Department of Trade and Economic Development:

1. Advertising by the Tourism Office.
  - a. Advertising Opportunities, including the Explore Minnesota Travel Guide, Minnesota Explorer Travel Newspaper, and Accommodations Guides.

- b. Electronic Marketing, including the Explore Minnesota Website, the Journey Travel Planning Service, and Attractions, Accommodations and Events Databases maintained by the Office of Tourism.
  - c. Distributing Community Brochures at the Minnesota Travel Information Center, Highway Travel Information Centers, the Explore Minnesota USA Store, and various Sports Shows.
  - d. International Marketing, including Familiarization Tours and Media Relations, and Canadian, European, and Asian Marketing efforts.
  - e. Group Tour and Travel Agent Marketing through Tour Operating and Group Leader Familiarization Tours, Trade Shows and Events, and travel Agent Marketing.
  - f. Explore Minnesota USA Store, located at the Mall of America in Bloomington, where over 300,000 people visit the store annually.
2. Financial Assistance.
- a. Tourism Loan Program. Provides low interest financing and consulting to tourism accommodation businesses. Eligible applications include corporations, sole proprietorships or partnerships that are engaged in a tourism related business that provide accommodations. The program can be used to finance building construction and renovation, site preparation, and other construction and equipment.
  - b. Organizational Partnerships. Provides up to 50 percent of the marketing costs to attract non-resident travelers to the State. Eligible applicants include any non-profit tourism promotion organization that represents all facets of the travel industry within an area.
3. Other Marketing Resources.
- a. Audio Visual Resources.
  - b. Explore Minnesota Logo/Explore Minnesota Golf Logo.
  - c. Mailing Labels.
  - d. Research and Analysis.

## **Natural Resources**

Below is a sampling of programs for natural resource protection organized by agency:

- 1. U.S. Department of Agriculture (Farm Service Agency; Natural Resources Conservation Service).
  - a. Agricultural Conservation Program. Aimed towards the solution of critical soil, water, and pollution abatement problems on farms.

- b. Conservation Reserve Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. Payments to farmers for easement to implement conservation plans. Directed at environmentally sensitive cropland and highly erodible land.
  - c. Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program. Cost-share assistance for small watershed projects.
  - d. Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program. Cost-sharing to help solve natural resources and related economic problems on a watershed basis.
  - e. Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. Provides private landowners will assistance to establish and improve habitat.
  - f. Environmental Quality Incentives Program. Assistance to farmers to implement conservation plans including structural, vegetative, and land management practices.
2. Bureau of Land Management.
- a. Bring Back the Natives. Funding for projects that restore damaged or degraded riverine habitats.
3. US Fish and Wildlife Service.
- a. Migratory Bird Conservation Fund. Acquisition of bird habitat and waterfowl production areas.
  - b. North American Wetland Conservation Fund. Encourages partnerships for restoration and management of wetlands.
  - c. Partners for Wildlife. Assists private landowners interested in habitat restoration.
4. Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.
- a. Erosion Control and Water Quality Cost-share program. Cost-sharing for private installation of conservation practices to control erosion and reduce sedimentation.
  - b. Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM). Payment to landowners for enrollment of land in conservation easements.
5. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.
- a. Conservation Partners Grant Program. Support for enhancement of habitat.
  - b. LCMR Grant Program. Funding for projects promoting sustainability.



- c. Metro Greenways Planning Grant. Funding for comprehensive natural resource inventories and local green way plans.
- d. Metro Greenways Land Acquisition Program. Funding for DNR acquisition of fee title or easements on lands nominated for protection or restoration of natural areas.
- e. Minnesota Native Prairie Bank Conservation Easement Program, Reinvest in Minnesota. Encourages private landowners to protect native prairies.
- f. Wild and Scenic River Acquisition Program. Encourage landowners to preserve and protect the values of Wild and Scenic Rivers in Minnesota.
- g. Community Environmental Partnerships Grant Program. Encourages environmental service projects and related education activities through public and private partnerships.
- h. Natural and Scenic Area Grant Program. Easement and fee title acquisition to increase, protect and enhance natural and scenic areas.

Private sources for funding natural resource protection and enhancements include foundations and conservation organizations.

## **Parks and Trails**

Below is a sampling of programs for park and trail development sources organized by agency:

- 1. National Park Service.
  - a. Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON) Grants. Funding to create and maintain high quality recreation areas and facilities.
- 2. US Department of Transportation.
  - a. TEA-21 – Enhancement and Surface Transportation Program. Grants can be used for water-related projects, enhancement of pedestrian and bicycle trails.
- 3. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.
  - a. Outdoor Recreation Grant Program. Funding to increase and enhance outdoor recreation facilities, including park acquisition and/or development/redevelopment; includes among others, picnic shelters, playgrounds, athletic facilities, trails, boat accesses, fishing piers, swimming beaches, and campgrounds.
  - b. All-Terrain Vehicle Grants-In-Aid (ATV GIA) Program. Maintenance, development, and acquisition of public, locally controlled all-terrain vehicle trails

and areas, including ATV project administration, trail maintenance, trail and facility development, acquisition, map publication, and limited winter grooming.

- c. Cooperative Trail Linkage Grant Program. Funding for relatively short trail connections between where people live and desirable locations, not to develop significant new trails, includes land acquisition and trail development for projects that result in trail linkage and are immediately available for use by the general public.
  - d. Cross Country Ski Trail Grants-In-Aid (GIA) Program. Maintenance and development of cross country ski trails, including cross-country ski trail development, maintenance, winter grooming, and trail administration.
  - e. National Recreation Trail Program. Maintenance and development of motorized, non-motorized, and diversified trails by providing project assistance, motorized/non-motorized trail projects, maintenance of existing trails, development of trail linkages, environmental awareness and safety education programs related to trails, redesign of trails to benefit natural environment.
  - f. Regional Trail Initiative Grant Program. Development of regionally significant trails, includes land Acquisition and trail development outside of the metro area.
  - g. Water Recreation Cooperative Acquisition and Development Program. Improvements to public boat accesses in public lakes and rivers, including acquisition, development, and improvement of public boat accesses, parking lots, docks, and boat launching ramps. Engineering and design assistance is available.
4. Local options include:
- a. CIP bonds.
  - b. GO bonds.
  - c. Grants and donations.
  - d. General taxes.
  - e. User fees.
  - f. Appropriations for the annual budget.
  - g. Park dedication or fee in lieu of dedication for new subdivisions.

Private funding sources include foundations and private donations.