

Renville County HRA/EDA Office of Economic Development 2025 Annual Report

Childcare Capacity Building Forgivable Loans

The Renville County HRA/EDA recently closed on several childcare capacity building forgivable loans in 2025. This forgivable loan program is available to new and expanding childcares providers and centers in Renville County.

Photo right: Renville County Commissioner John Robinson (L) and new Fairfax childcare provider Anna Ufkes (R) on July 16th at the loan closing for the Renville County HRA/EDA Childcare Forgivable Loan.

Photo Below: Monica Ridler, recipient of a Renville County HRA/EDA Childcare Capacity Forgivable Loan with County Commissioner Greg Snow.



West Central CEO Program

The West Central CEO Program, a cooperation of Renville County West, Prinsburg, MACCRAY and KMS Schools, and sponsored in part by the Renville County HRA/EDA, continues to do well. Staff meet with students approximately monthly to work with students on business plans, marketing, brainstorming and more.

Photo right: The 2024-25 West Central CEO students, instructor, alumni and board.





“Barnstorming” Visits

Again this year, economic development staff, along with economic development partners such as the Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF), the Mid Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC), the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), the US Small Business Administration (SBA) and others make “Barnstorming” visits – quick, unannounced visits to banks, credit unions and city halls to promote economic

development programs and resources. We made our spring visits on Tuesday, March 25th, and the fall round occurred on Thursday, September 18th.

Photo above: Spring “Barnstorming” on Tuesday, March 25th, stops by Renville City Hall. L to R: Briana Mumme – SWIF, Kris Boedigheimer – SBDC, Sheila Robinson – Renville County HRA/EDA, Nate Reuss – MMDC, and Shane Wohlman – City of Renville.

Childcare Provider Appreciation Month

May is Childcare Provider Appreciation Month in Renville County! On Thursday, May 8th staff, along with staff from Renville County Childcare Licensing and the Mid-Minnesota Development commission visited the childcare providers and centers in Renville County to thank them and deliver tokens of our appreciation. As in years past, our visits and gifts were extremely well received.

Photo right: Staff from the Mid-Minnesota Development Commission and Renville County stop at The Learning Funhouse in Bird Island with goodies to celebrate Renville County Childcare Appreciation Week on Thursday, May 8th.



Local EDA / City Council Meetings.

Staff love to be invited to City Council and local EDA meetings to talk about economic development programs and resources. Staff attended the City of Renville's EDA meeting on the evening of Wednesday, July 16th, to update them on the West Wing project and ask for their support and assistance as things move forward.



Photo left: Staff attend the City of Renville's EDA meeting to update them on the West Wing project on July 16th.

Farm Fest

Staff attended Farm Fest on August 6th at the Gilfillan Estate. Staff attended show talking to exhibitors and telling them about the opportunities of locating in Renville County. We also stopped by our Renville County businesses that were exhibiting to check in and thank them for being in business in Renville County.



Small Business Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program

Our small business revolving loan fund makes loans to new, expanding and relocating businesses in Renville County. We made several loans in 2025. Our loan committee members include Scott Nissen (Chair), Nathan Rath (HRA/EDA Board), Joel Harmoning & Shirley Dove.

Picture right: Carla Way (L) and Diana Hopp, owners of Cosmic Recycling in Fairfax at their loan closing on Friday, September 12th.



Picture left: L to R: Elizabeth Torkelson, Mark Glesener and Commissioner Greg Mertens at a loan closing for The Learning Funhouse in Bird Island on November 25th.

Manufacturing Month

Renville County HRA/EDA celebrated Manufacturing Month with deliveries of cookies and bottled water to manufacturing businesses for their employees on October 9th. We were joined by Mike Nicholas with the Mid-Minnesota Development Commission and several cities.

Photos below: Manufacturing Week deliveries at Warner Manufacturing in Sacred Heart – left, and Bald Eagle Sidecar – right, Thursday, October 9th.





Childcare Provider Appreciation Event

Renville County HRA/EDA celebrated our Childcare Providers with our annual Holiday Dinner for childcare centers, family providers and special family childcare providers on Monday, December 1st at Max's in Olivia. The event was well attended and much appreciated.

Photo left: HRA/EDA Board Chair Mark Thiesse gives the welcome at the December 1st Childcare Provider Appreciation Event

The West Wing Project



Renville County closed on the purchase of a wing of the former Meadows on Main assisted living facility in Renville in July. This was funded in part by a grant from the State of Minnesota for childcare development. This wing has 11 apartment units and two common areas. Four wings are earmarked for and leased out at a reduced rent to special family childcares, and the remaining seven units are to be rented for market-rate workforce housing. The first childcare provider is now open, and the remaining three units have been spoken for. We anticipate leasing the housing units

this spring.

Photos above and right: Volunteer afternoon at The West Wing in Renville on October 29th was a success! We had approximately 20 volunteers help assemble furniture and playsets, clean, do yardwork and other projects!



Community Impact Fund Grants

The Renville County HRA/EDA makes grants of up to \$1,000 available to all 10 of our Cities in Renville County. We encourage all cities to apply, but not all do. Below is a list of 2025 recipients with details.

| CIF 2025 | Project | Total Project Cost | Grant Amount | Actual Award amount |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| City of Bird Island | Christmas Wreaths | \$ 7,000.00 | \$ 1,000.00 | \$ 1,000.00 |
| City of Fairfax | Lions Park Tree Replacement | \$ 2,000.00 | \$ 1,000.00 | \$ 1,000.00 |
| City of Renville | Brick Path | \$ 3,582.50 | \$ 1,000.00 | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Buffalo Lake EDA | City Benches | \$ 1,600.00 | \$ 800.00 | \$ 800.00 |
| City of Hector | Main Street Beautification | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 1,000.00 | \$ 1,000.00 |
| City of Morton | City Park Improvements | \$ 2,498.64 | \$ 1,000.00 | \$ 1,000.00 |
| City of Olivia | Downtown Beautification | \$ 18,860.00 | \$ 1,000.00 | \$ 1,000.00 |
| City of Sacred Heart | Liquor Store Improvements | \$ 1,826.99 | \$ 913.49 | \$ 913.49 |

Business Innovation Grants

The Renville County HRA/EDA makes grants of up to \$3,000 to Renville County businesses that are starting, expanding or are making upgrades. Grants are made four times annually. Not all grants are picked up by the awardees as projects may change or not be completed.

| BIG Grants 2025 | Project | Total Project Cost | Grant Amount | Actual Award amount | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| B Clever Covers | 3D Printer update | \$ 4,000.00 | \$ 750.00 | \$ 750.00 | Fairfax |
| Flora Dog Boarding | Kennel start-up costs | \$ 8,000.00 | \$ 1,750.00 | \$ 1,750.00 | Renville |
| River Valley Low Voltage LLC | cybersecurity bootcamp | \$ 11,245.00 | \$ 1,500.00 | declined | Fairfax |
| Warner Manufacturing Company | dual gravimetric feeder | \$ 12,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 | Sacred Heart |
| Well Made LLC | Expansion | \$ 122,067.00 | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 | Franklin |
| A Dog'r 2 Kennel | Get rid of the mud | \$ 6,500.00 | \$ 1,000.00 | \$ 1,000.00 | Hector |
| BLHS Preschool | Outdoor Play Area | \$ 6,000.00 | \$ 1,800.00 | \$ 1,800.00 | Hector |
| Dockens Laundromat | Laundromat Washers | \$ 45,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 | Sacred Heart |
| Harazin Landworks | Dump Truck | \$ 36,022.50 | \$ 1,500.00 | \$ 1,500.00 | Olivia |
| Hawk Creek Lutheran Church | AV Computer System upgrade | \$ 1,100.00 | \$ 550.00 | \$ 550.00 | Sacred Heart |
| JoLar Inc dba Buffalo Lake Insurance | Windows | \$ 17,152.00 | \$ 1,500.00 | \$ 1,500.00 | Buffalo Lake |
| Lightner Creek Co | Soap Equipment upgrade | \$ 8,150.00 | \$ 1,500.00 | \$ 1,500.00 | Danube |
| Rachel Marie Photography | Camera lens/hard drive | \$ 2,358.00 | \$ 1,050.00 | \$ 1,050.00 | Fairfax |
| RCCR | Laptop upgrade | \$ 1,999.90 | \$ 999.95 | \$ 999.95 | Bird Island |
| The Learning Funhouse | Classroom teaching aids and equipment | \$ 3,965.80 | \$ 1,500.00 | \$ 1,500.00 | Bird Island |
| ACTS Inc | Smile! You're on Camera! | \$ 6,805.50 | \$ 2,250.00 | \$ 2,250.00 | Olivia |
| Bald Eagle Side Car | Equipment upgrade & Expansion | \$ 8,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 | Hector |
| Bearcat Coaching | Confidence Lives Here: New Home | \$ 9,050.00 | \$ 2,250.00 | \$ 2,250.00 | Olivia |
| JT Controls | CAD Software upgrade | \$ 15,500.00 | \$ 2,500.00 | \$ 2,500.00 | Renville |
| Kathy's Place | Kitchen Equipment Upgrade | \$ 9,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 | Sacred Heart |
| NXuS Collective | Startup Costs award \$2,500.00 | \$ 14,500.00 | \$ 2,037.77 | \$ 2,037.77 | Danube |
| Pages of our Communities Foundation | Cornland USA | \$ 100,000.00 | \$ 2,000.00 | \$ 2,000.00 | Olivia |
| Prairie PROducers | Bagging System Upgrade | \$ 40,000.00 | \$ 1,500.00 | \$ 1,500.00 | Olivia |
| | | | | | \$4400.00 Carryover from 2024 |