



## Arrowhead Regional Development Commission

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[www.ardc.org](http://www.ardc.org)

### Commission

#### County Board Representatives (8)

Aitkin: Don Niemi\*  
Carlton: Dick Brenner\*  
Cook: Ginny Storlie\*  
Itasca: Terry Snyder\*  
Koochiching: Wade Pavleck\*  
Lake: Jeremy Hurd\*  
St. Louis: Frank Jewell\*  
St. Louis: Beth Olson

#### Representative of Cities, Townships, Tribal Nations, and School Districts (21)

Aitkin Cities <10K: Vacant  
Aitkin Townships: Vacant  
Carlton Cities >10K: Roger Maki (Cloquet)  
Carlton Cities <10K: David Lucas (Kettle River)  
Carlton Townships: Jason Paulson (Thomson)  
Cook Cities <10K: Anton Moody (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: Carlene Perfetto (Silver Bay)  
Lake Townships: Vacant  
St. Louis Cities >10K: Gary Anderson (Duluth)  
St. Louis Cities >10K: Tim Harkonen (Hibbing)  
St. Louis Cities <10K: Steven Johnson (Virginia)  
St. Louis County Townships: Warren Tinker (Lavell)

**Our Mission:** To provide local units of government and citizens groups a means to work cooperatively in identifying needs, solving problems, and fostering local leadership.

For career opportunities, visit [ardc.org/careers](http://ardc.org/careers).  
*EOE/AA/M/F/Vet/Disability Employer*

#### 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.

Bois Forte Tribal Council: Sidra Starkovich  
Fond du Lac Tribal Council: Jason Hollinday\*  
Grand Portage Tribal Council: Robert Deschampe  
School Districts: Pat Medure (ISD #318, Grand Rapids)  
School Districts: Walter Hautala (ISD #2711, Mesabi East)

#### At-Large (Citizen) Members (8)

Jim Berg (McGregor)  
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\*  
NEMNATP: Jason Hollinday\*  
DSMIC Policy Board: Earl Elde\*

\* denotes members of the ARDC Board

### Officers

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

# ARDC Newsletter

Fall 2020

*A Quarterly Update from ARDC*

## New RLF Program Launched

The federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) \$3.88 million in economic development funding, helping launch a new Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program to help local businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Businesses of all kinds (including non-profits) located within the ARDC service area (Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis Counties) are eligible to apply for a low interest loan under this program. Collateral may not be required for businesses that can prove impact from the COVID-19 pandemic. Loans to impacted business may qualify for deferred principle payments for 12 months,

*Cont'd on page 3, "RLF"*

## MIC Tests Pedestrian Improvements in Proctor

New temporary street improvements were installed as "demonstration projects" in Proctor in September. Traffic paint and vertical plastic flexible posts have been added to two intersections in the city: one downtown at Second Street and U.S. Highway 2 and one a few blocks west at Second Street and Fifth Avenue.



*Demonstration project in Proctor – The project slows traffic and shortens the distance between curbs, which improves visibility and makes it safer and more comfortable for people walking.*

*Cont'd on page 3, "Proctor"*

## Management Team Updates

ARDC's management team has continued to meet frequently throughout the summer. Because of COVID-19, several priorities were pressed to shift based on increased planning needs, funding opportunities and necessary safety efforts.

Employee flexibility, efficiency and morale have been strong focus areas. An employee Return-to-Work Business Plan was finalized and shared with employees, including high-level and specific guidelines, to help keep employees safe and at ease upon return.

Currently, only essential staff are in the office with non-essential staff coming in sporadically. The team does not predict bringing everyone back into the office for quite a while. Staff have been strongly encouraged to bring forward any questions related to working remotely, technology needs, challenges and/or concerns.

To support ARDC's new Inclusion and Diversity

*Cont'd on page 2, "Updates"*

*“Updates,” Cont’d from page 1*

statement, all staff have been participating in training for increased education and awareness in topics such as inclusion, equality, unconscious bias, and sensitivity.

Other areas the team has been working on include employee benefit renewals, ARDC’s Compensation Plan and Salary Classifications, communication, building needs and staffing.

The management team has been very proud of their employees for their diligence, hard work and support to meet community needs and ARDC’s strategic goals.

This fall, as we look at the beauty that surrounds us, we can remind ourselves that just like the leaves, this year, full of navigation and challenges, can bring opportunities for new growth ahead.



#### Management Team

Andy Hubley, ARDC Planning  
Kristi Kane, Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging  
Ron Chicka, Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council  
Krista Mattila, Human Resources  
Sister Mary Matthew Morrisroe, Finance and Operations

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## Division Highlights

### ARDC Planning

ARDC Planning is working hard to help communities in the Region be resilient in the face of the Pandemic. Our new low-interest loan program for businesses and non-profits is now taking applications ([ardc.org/rlf](http://ardc.org/rlf)). New planning projects are occurring in the International Falls area and in Duluth area townships. The Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC) has been renewed for FY 2021. Scenic Byways are seeking our assistance as they work to keep tourists engaged in their efforts. Also of note is our kick off of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) – watch for CEDS activities in your community this winter.

### Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging (AAAA)

This quarter, AAAA has more than doubled the amount of passthrough funds granted to the region with a total of \$2,093,563 additional dollars around COVID relief from the Family First Corona Virus Response Act, the CARES Act and state and local foundation dollars. Due to the restrictions on many of these funds it has been challenging to find partners with the capacity to fully expend awards in the timelines allotted. We have implemented a Quick Call grant award process approved by the Advisory Committee on Aging (ACA), which allows funds to be dispersed to the region in an expedited manner. Members of the ACA join staff in the grant review to ensure equitable distribution. On the direct service side, the Senior LinkAge Line® has kicked off the Open Enrollment Period for Medicare, and this year we are 100% phone based. AAAA is partnering with Dancing Sky AAA to develop online outreach tools to diverse populations such as those who require American Sign Language. In total 137 outreach events have happened in 2020.

### Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC)

MIC staff has been busy partnering with MnDOT and WisDOT as part of a large project team regarding plans/designs for the Blatnik Bridge. Recently this has included a series of events/workshops/meetings kicking off this large bi-state project continuing over the next four to five years. The MIC is a formal member of the standing project advisory committee. We will invite DOT representatives to periodically update our MIC Policy Board and other committees to gain feedback for the planning effort. To date, the MIC has been asked to provide our computerized travel demand model to aid a sub-consultant of the project team that is studying traffic flow and operations. We have also provided many contacts of local interested parties so that the project team may gain input from a wide variety of sources.

## Staff Notes

- Gina Marsalla was hired as a Provider Relationship Coordinator, a newly created position for AAAA. Gina is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Superior with a Bachelor’s in Community Health Promotions & Exercise Science.
- Alicia Arnold and Lori Larson were rehired to support Senior LinkAge Line®’s Open Enrollment. Both have several years of experience with ARDC.
- Ryan Kizewski, a senior at the University of Minnesota Duluth studying Geographic Information Science and Environment and Sustainability, has been hired as a ARDC Planning Intern for Fall 2020. Ryan will assist with various planning projects to strengthen his education goals.

## Regional Roundup

Recent community happenings from across northeast Minnesota have caught the attention of ARDC staff. Below are a few stories from our region that inspire us.

- The Backus Community Café is a twice-weekly free meal program in International Falls whose participation has skyrocketed since COVID-19. Providing an average of 49 meals pre-pandemic, the number of meals served jumped to an average of 166 meals per night. Overall, participation has increased 236% since mid-March 2020.
- The Carlton County-Cloquet airport will receive \$1.2 million in federal funding from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 for a new airplane hangar. The hangar will include offices, training rooms, and an aeronautics workplace center.
- Communities are finding creative ways to safely celebrate Halloween amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Neighborhood pumpkin hunts and Trick-or-Treat “candy chutes” are among some of the more creative ways people are staying physically distant while resurrecting their seasonal spirit.

## Upcoming ARDC Meetings

Mark these upcoming ARDC Commission and Board meeting dates on your calendar!

- Thursday, November 19 @ 10 am – Virtual Board Meeting
- Thursday, December 17 @ 10 am – Virtual Board Meeting
- Thursday, January 21 @ 10 am – Virtual Commission Meeting

To learn about events hosted by ARDC’s Divisions, connect with us online at [www.ardc.org/connect](http://www.ardc.org/connect). ▼

*“RLF,” Cont’d from page 1*

have origination and service fees waived, and not require private entity participation. Loans will be given at an interest rate of 75% of the prime rate listed in the Wall Street Journal (2.44% today).

ARDC looks forward to assisting the Region’s businesses recover from the impacts of the 2020 Pandemic. Businesses can go to [www.ardc.org/rlf](http://www.ardc.org/rlf) to fill out the program’s pre-application form. Questions should be directed to Anthony Landgren at [alandgren@ardc.org](mailto:alandgren@ardc.org). ▼

*“Proctor,” Cont’d from page 1*

The designs use curb extensions or “bump outs” to narrow the roadway. The narrower roadway calms traffic and improves pedestrian safety by providing a visual cue to drivers to slow down at those intersections.

The demonstration projects are part of the broader Proctor Transportation Plan, which will define the community’s vision for how it would like its transportation system to look, feel and function. The plan will bring forward key ideas from previous planning efforts and gather input to produce a comprehensive guiding plan.

“We wanted to bring forward themes about what makes Proctor a special place and how an integrated, multimodal transportation system can contribute to that,” said James Gittemeier, MIC Principal Planner. “We are hoping people will try out the temporary pedestrian improvements to evaluate their effectiveness.” ▼