

ARDC Newsletter

Fall 2024
A Quarterly Update from ARDC

Homeless Awareness Month

November is Homelessness Awareness Month. CHUM offers vital emergency food, shelter, advocacy, support, and outreach services to homeless and low-income adults throughout Duluth. At the St. Francis

Apartments, which provide housing for older adults with a history of long-term homelessness, Chum utilizes ARPA funds from the Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging to host at least two community

meals each month. These fresh meals not only nourish the residents but also cultivate a strong sense of community and foster meaningful friendships. Some residents have even begun sharing taxi rides to the grocery store after connecting over these shared meals. Additionally, Chum ensures that St. Francis residents have transportation to medical appointments and other essential destinations through ARPA funding, further enhancing their quality of life. ▼



New Climate Resilience and Clean Energy Programs for Northeastern Minnesota

ARDC is excited to announce two new programs designed to help communities in Northeast Minnesota address climate resilience and transition to clean energy.

Funded by a four-year grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), ARDC's Climate Resilience Planning initiative offers vital support to communities in Carlton, Lake, St. Louis, and Cook Counties, as well as the Fond du Lac, Bois Forte, and Grand Portage Tribal Nations. This program will develop a comprehensive regional climate resilience plan, while also assisting each community and Tribe in addressing their unique climate challenges and opportunities. (Continued on Page 3)

Executive Director Updates

Every fall, changing leaves create a beautiful landscape in northern Minnesota, and ARDC is counting on change to enhance our visibility and positive impact in the region. A benefit of unforeseen organizational change is the ability to observe and contemplate on where we have been and where we can go. ARDC did that by engaging leadership, staff, and partners in conversation. These past few months have been full of stakeholder conversations, and we anticipate many more to come. We surveyed our staff and interviewed over 30 external area partners including agencies with likeminded goals, funders, project partners and organizations that use our services. Much of what we learned supported what we already suspected.

1) ARDC can do excellent work and is positioned to lead the region in many areas.

2) Many people and organizations do not understand how to engage with ARDC and what our services include.

3) We need to work on communication, responsiveness, focus and intentional reach to all communities in our services area, and we need to challenge our own assumptions about what we do and how we do it.

Moving forward, ARDC will need to adopt new and more flexible perspectives. We will anticipate the unexpected, focus on a diversity of perspectives, anchor on purpose, value progress over perfection with an action-orientated approach, trust and engage our regional partners and invest time in strengthening sustainable internal systems creating efficiencies that will serve ARDC and the region for years to come. ARDC is full of talented and progressive people, and we intend to harness their collective mindset to write our fall colors roadmap. ▼



Kristi Kane, Interim Executive Director

kkane@ardc.org



**Arrowhead Regional
Development Commission**



Management Team

Kristi Kane, Executive Director
Rebecca Sash, Arrowhead Area
Agency on Aging
Ron Chicka, Duluth-Superior
Metropolitan Interstate Council
Sister Mary Matthew Morrisroe,
Finance and Operations



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.

Krista Mattila, Human Resources

EOE/AAM/F/Vet/Disability Employer

Diversity & Inclusion Statement

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

Staff Notes

Joining ARDC:

- Travis Houle was hired as a Senior Planner for the ARDC Planning Division.
- Hayden Thomas was hired as an intern for the Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) Division.

Promotions and Transfers:

- Gina Marsalla was promoted from Grants Coordinator to Grants Manager.
- Jennie Brouse was promoted from Senior LinkAge Line Resource Specialist-Tier 2 to Senior LinkAge Resource Specialist-Tier 3.

Leaving ARDC:

- Stephanie Larson, Senior LinkAge Line Resource Coordinator-Tier 2 is resigning in October.

Upcoming Retirements:

- In October, Kate Kuhlmeier, Senior LinkAge Line Resource Coordinator-Tier 2, is retiring. Kate has worked in ARDC's Aging Division for over 8.5 years.
- In December, Desiree Gnerre, Senior LinkAge Line Resource Specialist-Tier 2, is retiring. Desiree has worked in ARDC's Aging Division for 6 years.

We wish them both the very best in their next chapter!

To view current job openings at ARDC, please visit <https://ardc.org/careers/>.

Upcoming ARDC Meetings

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

- Thursday, October 17 @ 10 am – Commission Meeting
(Hermantown Training Center)
- Thursday, November 21 @ 10 am – Board Meeting
- Thursday, December 19 @ 10 am – Board Meeting

To learn about events hosted by ARDC's Divisions, connect with us online at www.ardc.org/connect. ▼

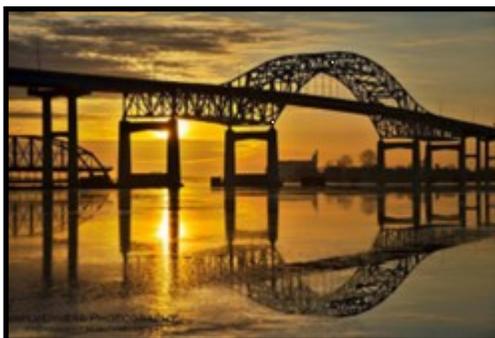
Division Updates

ARDC Planning

ARDC Planning staff have been scattered around the region like the leaves falling from the trees. Planning staff have kicked off a Safe Routes to Schools Plan in Silver Bay, a community transportation plan in Carlton, are working with Grand Portage on the final steps of their EDA Ferry dock project, are working to collect and synthesize data that will showcase age-friendly trails, are working with partners in the region on facilitating several scenic byway councils, and will be helping communities navigate the federal Transportation Alternatives and Carbon Reduction Program grant applications. Our work with the Regional Transportation Coordinating Council continues and saw ARDC Principal Planner Beverly Sidlo-Tolliver present to legislators in Washington DC to showcase the needs around volunteer driver legislation. Work continues to help communities improve former Brownfields through our USEPA funded program, and staff are making progress at looking at needs, challenges and opportunities through the North Shore Management Plan Update. ▼

Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC)

In advance of the reconstruction of the Blatnik Bridge, work is now underway to anticipate the impacts of its closure and to plan for ways to keep traffic moving on both sides of the bridge. The MIC's traffic model for the Duluth-Superior area is being used as a forecasting tool in this process, and findings from MnDOT's modeling and mitigation study were presented to the MIC Board at its September meeting (summarized in this [Duluth News-Tribune article](#)). A public meeting is scheduled for Tues, Oct. 15 at 5pm at the Superior Public Library, 1530 Tower Ave. ▼



The Blatnik Bridge links the cities of Duluth and Superior across the St Louis River. While it is closed for reconstruction for an estimated four years, beginning in Spring 2027, traffic will be diverted a few miles south on I-35, across the Bong Bridge.

Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging (AAAA)

Happy Fall! As October approaches, the Senior LinkAge Line Resource Information staff at AAAA are gearing up for Medicare Open Enrollment. This annual period, running from October 15th to December 7th, typically sees a significant increase in inquiries statewide regarding Medicare plans. If you have questions or need assistance with your Medicare options during this time, please don't hesitate to contact the Senior LinkAge Line at 1-800-333-2433. We're here to help you navigate your choices and ensure you have the coverage that best meets your needs. ▼

ENERGY PROGRAMS

(Continued from Page 1)

To ensure these efforts are collaborative and inclusive, ARDC is bringing on a Climate Resilience Planner and a Tribal Relations Fellow. Their role will be to coordinate planning efforts across local, state, and Tribal governments, ensuring that all voices are heard as we work toward climate adaptation.

In addition, ARDC is launching *Energizing Communities*, an initiative funded by the Minnesota Department of Commerce and the McKnight Foundation. This program will provide grant writing assistance, technical support to help communities and organizations access federal funding for clean energy projects. Mini-grants to assist with planning, engineering, and assessments will be awarded to smaller cities and towns (pop. under 15,000) to help with energy and climate resilience projects

For communities looking to increase energy efficiency, explore renewable options, or strengthen resilience against climate impacts, ARDC's programs are here to support you every step of the way. Reach out today to learn more. ▼



*Autumn in Hartley Park, Duluth, MN
Photo by: ARDC's Laura Hoden*



Commission

County Board Representatives (8)

- Aitkin County: Michael Kearney*
- Carlton County: Susan Zmyslony*
- Cook County: Ginny Storlie*, Chair
- Itasca County: John Johnson*, Vice Chair
- Koochiching County: Destry Hell*
- Lake County: Jeremy M. Hurd*
- St. Louis County: Annie Harala*
- St. Louis County: Ashley Grimm

Representative of Cities, Townships, Tribal Nations, and School Districts (23)

- Aitkin Cities <10K: Vacant
- 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 (Nashauk)
- Itasca Townships: Mike Baltus (Hill City)
- 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: Laurence Cuffee Jr. (Virginia)
- St. Louis County Townships: Cal Warwas (Eveleth)
- Bois Forte Tribal Council: Vacant
- Fond du Lac Tribal Council: Jason Hollinday*, Secretary
- 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)

- Dirk Davis (Morcom Township)
- Mike Hoops (Silver Creek)
- Joel Hoppe* (McGregor)
- Paul Nevanen* (International Falls)
- Stephen Sydow (Duluth)
- Allen Rasmussen (International Falls)
- Vacant(2)

Advisory Members (2)

- AAAA Advisory Board: Steve Lyons*
- DSMIC Policy Board: Vacant

*denotes members of the ARDC Board

Officers

- Ginny Storlie*, Chair
- John Johnson* Vice Chair
- Allen Rasmussen, Treasurer
- Jason Hollinday*, Secretary



Pictured (Left to Right): Allen Rasmussen, John Johnson, Jason Hollinday, and Ginny Storlie



ARDC

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