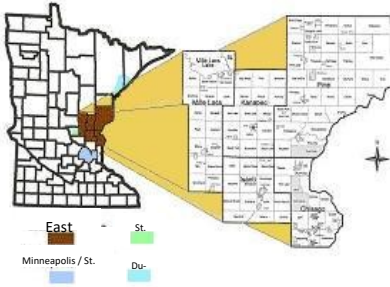


# East Central Regional Development Commission

Serving Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs and Pine Counties  
Website: [ecrdc.org](http://ecrdc.org) 320-679-4065



East Central Minnesota: Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs and Pine Counties are conveniently located just north of the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metro Area, south of Duluth, and east of St. Cloud. Our location on Interstate 35, US Highway 169, and MN Highways 23 and 95 provide easy access to the MSP Airport and the Port of Duluth.

## 2019 - Year of Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E)

“The Year of the BR&E”, Retaining and expanding local business is central to the mission of economic development in Minnesota. Economic developers build positive relationships with businesses, put systems in place to connect with businesses regularly, and follow up when there are problems are critical business retention activities.

U of M Extension is offering BR&E Training which is designed for economic and community development professionals and stakeholders, community leaders and others who want to conduct a community-led BR&E effort.

*Vibrant communities often have a healthy economy with a diverse set of economic activity occurring related to job growth, business growth and attraction and a sustainable infrastructure. Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) is an economic development strategy of proactively connecting with existing businesses to understand and respond to local business needs.*

## ECRDC welcomes new intern!

The ECRDC welcomes Ashley Carlson, a graduate student at St. Cloud University, who is conducting an internship with our organization starting October 15<sup>th</sup>. Ashley is pursuing a Master's degree in geography, travel, and tourism. She will be assisting the planning staff on a number of projects including Scenic Byways, Safe Roads, and the Regional Transit Coordinating Council (RTCC) planning projects. Ashley can be reached at [Ashley.carlson@ecrdc.org](mailto:Ashley.carlson@ecrdc.org) or (320) 679-4065 ext. 24



## Regional City / County Clerks / Administrators & Community /

### Economic Developers Meeting



The ECRDC held our quarterly City / County Clerks / Administrators & Community / Economic Developers Meeting on October 5th at Milaca City Hall. Speaker / topics for the meeting included Andrew Virden on the US Census and Dan Solomon with the MN Department of Labor & Industry on their pipeline training program to assist business with employee training costs. This group will next meet on January 11<sup>th</sup> at Cambridge City Hall.



### GPS::45::93 Annual Meeting

ECRDC staff assisted GPS::45::93, a regional public / private economic development focused non profit with their annual meeting held on Friday, September 28<sup>th</sup>. The ECRDC had a booth to help promote our Revolving Loan Fund, Business Assistance Directories and other resources available to businesses and entrepreneurs in our region, and staff moderated a panel discussion of the region's business economy with Dr. King Banaian of St. Cloud State University, Kelly Asche with the MN Center for Rural Policy and Development, and Luke Greiner – Labor Market Analyst with the MN Department of Employment & Economic Development (DEED).



*Caption: Dr. King Banaian of St. Cloud State University discusses local economic conditions at the GPS::45::93 Annual Meeting on 9/28. Looking on are Luke Greiner – DEED Labor Market Analyst (far left) and Kelly Asche (center) with the MN Center for Rural Policy and Development.*



## Lake Mille Lacs Scenic Byway

The Scenic Byways Commission designated Lake Mille Lacs as the state's newest scenic byway In July. The designation will open up opportunities for increased tourism and promote the region's unique character.

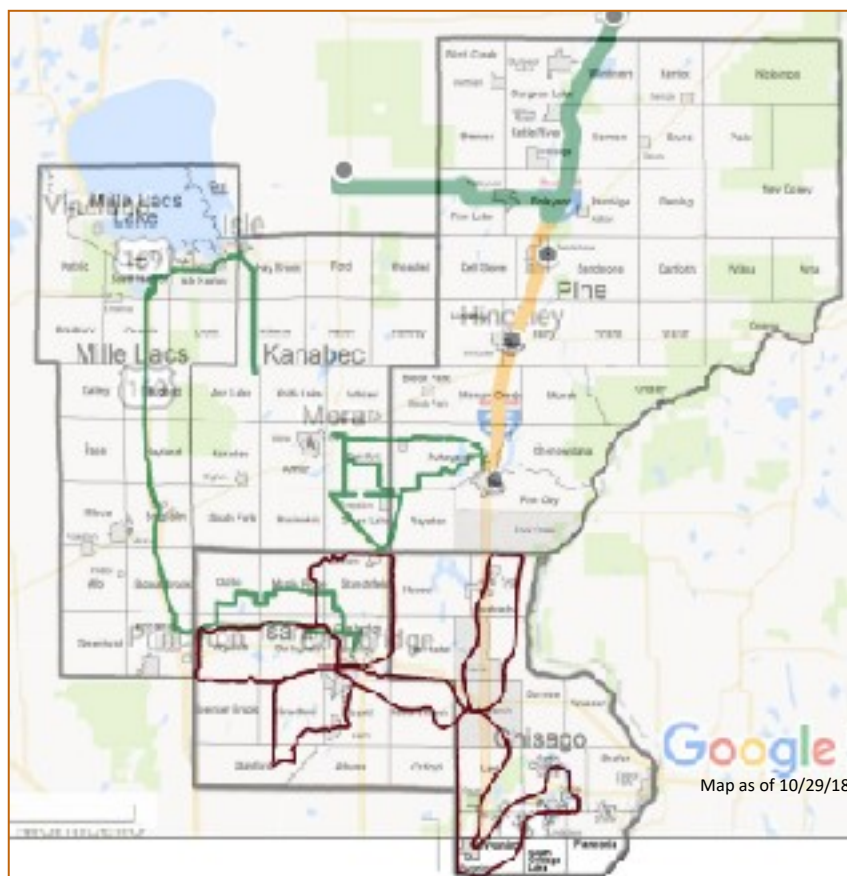
The Lake Mille Lacs 68-mile Scenic Byway is the state's 22nd byway. Just 30 minutes from Brainerd and 90 miles north of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Offering something for everyone in the family. Whether you're making a trip to Onamia, Isle, Wahkon, Malmo or Garrison to see the huge walleyes or the fall colors, picnicking in the two State Parks, hiking or biking the multi-use trails, cross-country skiing or just relaxing in a cozy resort, it's a trip worth taking.

# East Central Regional Transit Coordination Council


Coordination between transportation providers and service agencies has been a goal and strategy to fill transportation gaps, provide more service with the same or fewer resources, streamline access to transportation and provide customers more options of where and when to travel.

## Goal for Regional Transportation Coordination Councils

The state agencies would provide support for creating a statewide framework of 8-10 Regional Transportation Coordination Councils throughout Minnesota in order to break down transportation barriers and offer a seamless system of transportation services. The Regional Transportation Coordination Councils would be responsible for coordinating transportation services through a network of existing public, private and non-profit transportation providers.



 Arrowhead Transit

 Chisago/Isanti Heartland Express

 Timber Trails

*Working Together  
to Connect Communities  
to Opportunities  
through Transportation*