



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Since 1988, the Nelson County Job Development Authority (NCJDA) has assisted business development opportunities, supported local community development efforts, and provided financial and technical assistance for development projects.

OUR FINANCIAL REACH IN 2022



JDA INVESTED NEARLY \$70,000 WITHIN NELSON COUNTY

Assisted in housing, recreation, business improvements, and tourism projects



14 PROJECTS AWARDED GRANTS

JDA invested more than \$68,000 in grants. See pg. 3-4 for more information.



STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Provided more than \$28,000 in grants to local businesses. See pg. 4 for more information.

JDA INVESTMENT LEADS TO \$3.2 MILLION IN IMPACTS

YEAR	JDA INVESTMENT AMOUNT	*LEVERAGED FUNDS
2022	\$68,351	\$1,148,635
2021	\$91,325	\$239,487
2020	\$105,500	\$224,750
2019	\$33,648	\$1,078,056
2018	\$85,500	\$77,378
Total	\$396,757	\$2,768,306

*Leveraged funds are acquired from private, local, state, and federal sources.



NELSON COUNTY JDA

WHAT DO WE DO?

WE SUPPORT COMMUNITY **GROWTH** AND **VIBRANCY**



Business

Supporting local businesses with resources and assistance



Housing

Housing rehabilitation and development initiatives



Workforce

Retaining and attracting workers to support local businesses and promote growth



Tourism

Attracting visitors and new residents to our communities



Recreation

Supporting and enhancing local recreational opportunities



Infrastructure

Supporting enhanced infrastructure across Nelson County

2022 NELSON COUNTY JDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman Paul Retzlaff, Aneta, *Member at Large*
Vice-Chairman Rodney Fisk, Michigan, *Member At Large*
Elaine Brooks, Lakota, *Member at Large*
Steve Forde, Pekin, *County Commissioner*
Donald Fougner, Aneta, *County Commissioner*
Dennis Mattern, Lakota, *Cities Over 500*

Florija "Lule" Naas, McVile, *Township Officer*
Ranae Oxtan, McVile, *Member at Large*
Amie Vasichuk, Lakota, *Member at Large*
Jay Vasichuk, Michigan, *Member at Large*
Scott Sand, Pekin, *Township Officer*
Kevin Sundre, Petersburg, *Cities Under 500*



*Back, from left: Paul Retzlaff, Jay Vasichuk, Ranae Oxtan, Dennis Mattern, Steve Forde
 Front, from left: Don Fougner, Amie Vasichuk, Scott Sand, Kevin Sundre*

THANK YOU

We would like to thank **Don Fougner** and **Dennis Mattern** for their time, commitment, and service to the JDA and our communities. Their JDA terms expired in December 2022.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS 2023

Dennis Fahey, Lakota
City Council Member / Cities 500+
Mike Haugland, Lakota
Nelson County Commission
Anna Halvorson, Tolna
Member at Large

For questions or assistance:

Lule Naas, NCJDA Director | (701) 730-2090 | lule@redriverrc.com
 The NCJDA is contracted with the Red River Regional Council for professional services.



JDA SUPPORTS QUALITY OF LIFE PROJECTS

Recipient	Grant Amount	Other Funds	Project
Rainbow Lodge Sportsman's Club & Lakota Trap Shooting Team	\$8,500	\$500*	New trap thrower
Aneta Booster Club	\$5,000	\$2,000	Two new city entrance signs
Reality Check	\$600	\$1,200	Real world financial exercise for high school students
City of Lakota/Community Center	\$15,000	\$505,000	Center upgrades (gym floor, locker rooms, kitchen, signs, etc.)
City of Lakota/Wading Pool	\$10,000	\$398,000	Transform wading pool to a zero-entry pool with water features

*Significant in-kind labor provided by club



Paul Retzlaff (JDA), Mandy Wentz
Aneta Booster Club



Corey Anderson (treasurer), Chris Anderson (president), Paul Retzlaff (JDA)
Rainbow Lodge Sportsman's Club - Lakota Trap Shooting Team



Paul Retzlaff (NCJDA Chairman) presents a check to Lisa Haines
Reality Check Event for High School Students



STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM NCJDA CONTRIBUTES \$28,594 TO LOCAL BUSINESSES

In 2022, the Nelson County JDA launched a Storefront Improvement Program to assist businesses in updating commercial buildings. The program provides a grant of up to \$5,000 per project with a 50/50 match required by the business. **This is an on-going program and funding is available in 2023.**

The storefront improvement program strives to:

- Improve the visual appearance of storefronts
- Incentivize continued revitalization of business districts
- Encourage new businesses to relocate to vacant buildings
- Lower the cost of property improvements for business owners
- Assist in expansion of customer base

Eligible activities include, but are not limited to:

- External doors and windows
- Awnings or canopies
- Signs
- Permanent outdoor lighting
- Paint
- Reconfiguration of entrances

For more information, visit redriverrc.com

2022 GRANT RECIPIENTS

Business	Grant Amount	Other Funds	Project
Aneta Parkview Health Center, <i>Aneta</i>	\$5,000	\$45,000	New main entrance with vestibule
Aaker Funeral Home, <i>Lakota</i>	\$3,000	\$21,300	Paint exterior
58344 Rentals, <i>Lakota</i>	\$2,760	\$6,986	Entrance doors, benches and flowers
Farmer's Union Oil Company, <i>Aneta</i>	\$3,434	\$3,434	Sidewalk
Wallace Repair, <i>McVile</i>	\$5,000	\$15,000	Walk-through and showroom doors
Good Samaritan Center, <i>Lakota</i>	\$2,500	\$15,000	Sign
Rod's Auto Body, <i>Michigan</i>	\$2,000	\$2,000	Siding and paint
Nelson County Arts Council, <i>Pekin</i>	\$4,900	\$4,900	Three new entrance doors
TOTAL	\$28,594	\$113,620	

BEFORE



Wallace Repair, *McVile*

AFTER





CHILDCARE EXPANSION PROJECTS

The Regional Workforce Impact Program (RWIP) provided grants to regional workforce partners to design and implement innovative plans to address the region's most demanding workforce challenges. This includes responding to negative impacts of the pandemic, encouraging regions and communities to develop sustainable, innovative solutions to help businesses find workers, and helping jobseekers prepare for and connect to better, higher paying jobs.

The Red River Regional Council, in collaboration with other regional developers, prioritized childcare as one of the ways to assist in workforce needs in Region 4. Childcare or related supportive services are needed so employees can access training and work. In Nelson County, this resulted in two childcare centers receiving 75/25 grant funds that expanded childcare openings.

Lakota Childcare Center

The Lakota Childcare Center received a \$40,000 grant from the Regional Workforce Impact Program (RWIP) to help fund a childcare expansion project.

The Lakota Childcare Center purchased a shed to create added storage space for items and used the increased indoor space to expand their program. This added 18 new childcare slots.

The total project costs were \$50,000.



KidZone Childcare - Tolna

KidZone Childcare in Tolna received a \$28,000 grant from the Regional Workforce Impact Program (RWIP) to help fund an expansion project that added 5 new childcare slots to their program.

The total project costs were \$35,000.



JDA SUPPORTS LOCAL FEED BUSINESS

Established in 2019, Lakota Feed sells high quality animal feed and livestock supplies to producers.

Lakota Feed requested financing for a new warehouse to store animal feed and supplies. The Nelson County JDA, in partnership with the City of Lakota, provided funds for the required local portion of interest buydown under the Bank of North Dakota (BND) Flex Pace Loan Program. The State Bank of Lakota is the lender for the project.



The new Lakota Feed warehouse.



REGIONAL WORKFORCE IMPACT PROGRAM (RWIP): TALENT ATTRACTION

A consortium of partners has come together to formalize a rural regional workforce initiative which focuses on workforce attraction and student work-based learning in Nelson, Pembina, and Walsh Counties (rural Region 4). The Nelson, Pembina, and Walsh County JDAs have come together to provide the 25% matching funds leading to a total budget of \$250,000 to launch this initiative.



Business surveys completed by the Red River Regional Council concluded the need for **1,500+ new employees** in manufacturing, healthcare, education, and small businesses over the **next five years**.

The strong workforce need has been growing for several years and an impending state/federal grant award through the Regional Workforce Impact Program (RWIP) will provide a significant boost to addressing these needs.

This budget is being invested in a professional workforce attraction consultant team that will work with an Advisory Group of regional private and public partners and employ a regional workforce director. The purpose is to prepare the necessary content and marketing strategy to promote the region as a quality place to live, work, and play.

Advisory Committee Members

Vicki Ham, *Marvin*
Mary Houdek, *ND Job Service*
Mariah Hall, *First Care Health Center*
Crystal Beggs, *Leading Edge Equipment*
Britt Jacobson, *Golden Valley Veterinary Clinic*
Anna Halvorson, *Good Samaritan Center/Nelson County JDA*
Jerry Symington, *Woodside Industries*
Kyle Halvorson, *Polar Communications*
Lisa LeTexier, *Pembina County Memorial Hospital*
Lori Zahradka, *North Valley Career and Technology Center*
Wendy Maurstad & Chris Patullo, *American Crystal Sugar*
Jenny Dusek, *City of Grafton*
Angelle French, *Pembina County Job Development Authority*
Alayna Brown, *Northdale Oil, Inc.*
Dawn Mandt, *Red River Regional Council*
TBD, *Walsh County Job Development Authority*



Stacie Sevigny, an 8-year developer with the Red River Regional Council headquartered in Grafton, moved into the role as **Director of Workforce Development** in September for Nelson, Pembina, and Walsh Counties.

RWIP Funds to be used for Regional Marketing

Walsh, Nelson, and Pembina Counties are teaming up with organizations and business partners from across our communities on a 6-month planning process to help uncover an authentic brand for the region. This includes:

- Community engagement surveys
- Focus group meetings
- Review of applicable workforce data
- Logo and brand development

This strategy and marketing development project will help attract people, visitors and workforce to our region by highlighting amenities, employment opportunities, and quality of life. Anticipated outcomes include development of a regional brand, a talent attraction website for use by area businesses and organizations, a coordinated social media campaign, and other strategies that will help us market the region. A soft launch is expected in mid-May 2023.

The workforce attraction will be added to ongoing student-focused workforce development efforts that have been growing over the past eight years with North Valley Career and Technology Center (North Valley).

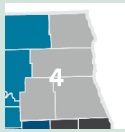
"The RWIP grant is a much-needed investment in the future of rural communities and businesses," according to Dawn Mandt, Executive Director of the Red River Regional Council. "The rural population of our region is 35,000 people – about the same as the City of West Fargo – and share the same types of needs and yet do not have the financial means as densely populated cities. Therefore, we are often years behind in these types of initiatives while we await grant opportunities such as RWIP."

This initiative has secured short-term funding and private and public partners will be needed to create stable, long-term funding to meet the goal of seeing people relocate to the area.



DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT UPDATE

Destination Red River Region is a regional project striving to develop a four-county Action Plan to provide a clear direction on how and what we can do to **enhance quality of life** and **attract new people** - both visitors and future residents. The project was led by a regional team and managed by the Red River Regional Council.



Counties included:

- Nelson
- Grand Forks
- Pembina
- Walsh



42 Communities Visited

All region 4
incorporated cities



Recreational Areas Visited

- State, county, city parks
- Dams & lakes
- Pembina Gorge
- Frost Fire

Nelson County

The Nelson County JDA contributed \$10,000 toward this \$112,000 project. Amie Vasichek, Ranae Oxton, and Lule Naas represented Nelson County on the Regional Team.

As one of the nation's leaders in destination development, Roger Brooks was selected for this project. He started his secret shopping assessment in 2021. His month-long stay ended with eight public workshops/conversations including one in each county. Brooks provided a pictorial assessment showcasing each community with strengths and potential improvements.

Brooks presented each community action plan in May of 2022 consisting of tailored recommendations and provided a 200+ page regional action plan in September of 2022.



Nelson County Workshop recording:

Visit: [www.youtube.com
@redriverregionalcouncil4104](https://www.youtube.com/@redriverregionalcouncil4104)



To access public regional photos:

Visit: www.flickr.com
Search: rrregionalcouncil

Communities **benefit** from Tourism



Increased retail and hospitality spending

Helps support and sustain our small businesses
Fills 'leakage' when residents don't shop locally



Front door for potential new residents

Everyone visits before relocating or investing
We are forecasting the need for **1,500 new people**
to live and work here in the next 5 years



Monetize visitor trips

Create itineraries to support local spending
Helps attract new businesses, services, and amenities



Promotes the best of what you have

Raise awareness of products and services that
will bring them back again

Next Steps

• Creating a Regional Brand

The Regional Team is currently working in coordination with the Regional Workforce Team to create a shared regional brand. Several marketing agency proposals were reviewed in 2022 and AE2S Communications was chosen to create our regional brand and marketing strategy for tourism and workforce. A soft launch of the brand is expected in mid-May 2023.

• Creating Vibrant and Beautiful Communities

The Regional Team is currently working to create resources to encourage and support local communities in implementing Brook's recommendations. Follow the Nelson County JDA and the Red River Regional Council on Facebook for more information and resources.

• Creating an Online Presence

The next step is to help our communities and businesses increase their online presence so they can be easily found by potential visitors. This includes updating websites, claiming and updating Google Business Listings, updating the North Dakota Tourism site, adding campsites and RV parks to travel websites, and creating and updating social media pages.



NELSON COUNTY HOUSING

HOUSING REHABILITATION PROJECT UPDATE

Example home pictured is located in Grafton



Before



After: New siding, shingles, windows, and doors

By focusing on the **preservation, maintenance, and improvement** of the existing housing stock, this project will assist in addressing an important piece of community vitality in Nelson County.

The JDA is an integral partner in a project under development in response to the countywide housing study completed in 2020.

Using federal, private, and local dollars, the program assists qualifying low and moderate-income residents with health and safety issues in their homes at no cost to the homeowner. Common repairs include roofing, windows, doors, plumbing, heating and electrical, and other safety or accessibility items. The goal of the project is to assist homeowners in the rehabilitation of their homes they would unlikely have been able to afford otherwise.

The JDA allocated \$15,000 to the development of the project and formed the housing committee, made up of five members which will oversee the project. Staff at the Red River Regional Council are managing the project.

Development tasks include soliciting interested and qualified homeowners and contractors, writing grants and securing funding, and overall project management. Approximately \$300,000 has been secured in grant funds including \$150,000 in a Housing Preservation Grant from the USDA Rural Development Grant which was awarded in 2022.

Funds will potentially rehabilitate 6-8 homes as part of Phase 1, with multiple phases expected. Rehab projects began in the summer of 2022 with mostly small interior projects. Major projects are expected to begin in the spring of 2023. Applications are still being accepted.

The project will also increase the **market value** of these homes and contribute to the overall **betterment** of the neighborhood, community, and county.

For more information: Lori Estad | 701-352-3550 | lori@redriverrc.com | www.redriverrc.com



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