

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

 **NDACo**
NORTH DAKOTA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

State of the Counties



Terry Traynor
Executive Director

While I am tempted to say that this past year has been defined by "COVID," it really has been defined by "resiliency." County officials and employees have stepped up and responded by doing everything they have always done – in new and different ways – but also doing so much more to help their citizens through this difficult period.

Here at NDACo, we have worked to support you all in those efforts. Like counties, we had, and still have, people working from home, coming in at different times, wearing masks, and trying to do everything we can to "be safe."

At the same time our CEG team has been addressing COVID-incidents and COVID-claims for our frontline county workers; our NRG staff has been working extra hours to get counties "wired up" for the

ever-evolving way folks are working; our HR experts have been trying to provide the best, most current advice possible for the rapidly changing leave requirements; our coordination efforts for county health districts was moved to an entire new level, all while helping with budget projections, watching legislative efforts, and importantly - working for a fair share of the CARES Act funding for county government.

We at your association have learned from you, our county members – you must be flexible and ready to respond when needed. We have learned that sometimes you must just jump in and do it – even if you aren't totally sure of the outcome. Doing nothing during this state of emergency is not an option.

We are hopeful that 2021 will be a bit less intense; but even if it isn't, we will have all learned how well TEAM COUNTY responds when needed.

County Employer Group

For the purpose of "worker's comp," all county employees are covered together – rather than in 53 separate employers – saving money, time and administration.

This model, called the County Employer Group (CEG) has been modeled in other states due to its success here. CEG saves money and lives in **three important ways**:



1. Safety Training to prevent workplace injuries



Over the past year, CEG trained over **7,000** employees on safety topics ranging from the general, like lifting safely to the highly specialized, like bloodborne pathogens.

County employees in **23 counties** received over **10,000 hours** of safety training, including nearly **4,000** computer-based safety training courses.

2. Risk Management

Fifty-six risk managers assist CEG with compliance issues such as investigations, inspections, reporting and injury prevention, among other duties, resulting in **30%** worker's comp premium discounts through CEG.

3. Transitional Work Program

CEG handled **420** claims in 2019. While this number increased compared with the previous year, a CEG indemnity claim (lost time) is less than half of the average cost of other North Dakota employers, according to ND Workforce Safety and Insurance.

Institute of Local Government

The Institute of Local Government (ILG) continued a solid schedule of prevalent training webinars. As COVID-19 impacts counties, ILG has been reactive to changing laws, safety and human resource issues. Most topic areas are requested by members, and often we learn of valuable content provided from our members as well. The online library of recorded webinars offers a variety of training opportunities and keeps expanding.

Professional Development Manager Alisha Adolf reports that in 2020, ILG will honor **43** hour-level award recipients.



In addition to webinars, ILG continues to offer training with member conventions and on site by request. Also, with our valuable partnership with the HR Collaborative for Local Government, ILG continues to offer HR training relevant to counties. ILG trainings are listed on the NDACo website at www.ndaco.org/ilg.

Over the past 12 months, ILG has trained more than **4,000** county officials with more than **50** training sessions!



Juvenile Justice Services

To assist counties with at-risk youth, the Division of Juvenile Services (a division of the ND Dept. of Corrections) contracts with NDACo to employ our state's Juvenile Justice Specialist. This position is federally mandated by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. NDACo staff work with state and local officials on best practices and policies, administer federal funding and coordinate the activities of the Governor's Juvenile Justice Advisory Group.

The Advisory Group has identified **three main priority areas to focus resources**, with an emphasis on delinquency prevention:



1. Locally-operated attendant care programs that assist the counties with supervising youth who have been picked up by law enforcement. These services are supported by additional community-based services, such as screening, diversion and family reunification services. The goal is to minimize future placements into detention, foster care or juvenile corrections.



2. Reducing the disproportionate involvement of minority youth in the juvenile justice system. Funding is awarded by the Advisory Group to the counties with higher rates of disproportionality as well as a higher number of minority youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Funding has been awarded for mentoring services, diversion programs and law enforcement-community engagement.



3. Addressing factors that drive a youth's disengagement with school and possible involvement in the juvenile justice system. To increase youth's engagement with the school, the Advisory Group supports schools in developing positive behavioral interventions. Funding has been awarded to build capacity to decrease exclusionary discipline practices.

The Advisory Group also provided funding to support a request by the chair of the Interim Judiciary Committee for a study of the state's juvenile justice system. The Council of State Governments Justice Center (CSG) conducted a preliminary assessment, and recently released their findings and recommendations. The Juvenile Justice Specialist has been working with the newly established Commission on Juvenile Justice to draft legislation incorporating those recommendations into statute to the extent practicable.

Human Resources Service

The HR Collaborative for Local Government continues to be an important element in NDA Co's HR effort. Although the 2020 statewide conference was postponed until June 2021 due to the pandemic, the Collaborative continued to offer HR training sessions through NDA Co and other local government partners.

A key resource of the Collaborative is the HR Reference Guide, which was recently updated to comply with law and guideline changes. The Guide and other HR resources are available at www.HRNDGOV.org.

The HR Collaborative email group now has over 400 subscribers!

To join the group for updates on HR law/rule changes, training opportunities and other important HR resources, go to www.HRNDGOV.org and click on **Join Now**.

The **HR Collaborative** has a number of resources to use in assisting counties with their HR needs and questions, including the online **HR Reference Guide** and **HR Checklist**.

Legislative Services

Even in an "off-year" NDA Co's legislative team continues monitoring interim activity and working on priority issues. Two high profile efforts were the mail-in Primary Election and working to secure CARES funding for COVID-19 impacts.

Local Public Health COVID-19 Response

- Ongoing planning for testing and tracing
- Development of a funding mechanism with Dept. of Health
- \$20 million allocated for Local Public Health costs

Social Service Redesign Implementation

- Weekly transition team meetings
- Development of zone plans
- Planning legislative adjustments—indirect costs

CARES Act Funding for Counties

- Continuous planning and discussion with state and national partners
- Development of a LE payroll mechanism to allocate funds
- Distribution of ~\$25 million to counties

Expanded County Tours

- Strategic Plan Goal to increase NDA Co contact with counties
- Greater opportunity to understand individual county issues
- Planning to move from two to four tours per year
- Targeting all county visits in 3 rather than 5 years

DOCR Prisons & County Jails

- Ongoing discussion regarding COVID-19 impacts
- Cooperating with DOCR on admission restrictions due to COVID-19
- Reimbursement to counties for state inmate housing costs during COVID-19
- Continuous work to address prioritization plan impacts

SIRN Implementation

- Continuous education on project and costs associated
- Ongoing construction with Phase 1 of PSAPs and Core complete
- Encouraging counties to utilize cost-share reimbursement for radios
- Representing county interest on Statewide Interoperable Executive Committee (SIEC)

Septic System Regulation

- The Interim Commerce Committee wrapped up work without formally adopting a bill to resolve the uncertainty regarding septic regulations
- There is strong legislative support for a bill to help create statewide guidelines overseen by a joint board of regulators and installers

Statewide Election Planning

- Ongoing discussions with SOS on elections through weekly meetings
- Requested Executive Order for all Vote-by-Mail for June election
- Development of social media campaign for June election
- Facilitating training for voting best practices in COVID-19 environment

MAMAs and Other Support Services

NDACo staff continues to support **seven** Member Associations:

- County Auditors Association
- Association of County Engineers
- Association of City & County Health Officials
- County Recorders Association
- Sheriffs & Deputies Association
- State's Attorneys Association
- County Treasurers Association

Support services include:

Event Planning



Financial Management



Legislative Advocacy



Member Communication Efforts

We are keeping in touch with our members through:

- **County News** – Bi-monthly newspaper
- **Common Ground** – Monthly legislative newsletter
- **Leader Letter** – Monthly county officials newsletter
- **County Officials Directory** – Pocket-sized phone book
- **Legislative Blog** – ndcounties.blogspot.com
- **Website** – www.ndaco.org
- **Facebook** – facebook.com/ndcounties
- **Twitter** – [@ndcounties](https://twitter.com/ndcounties)
- **YouTube** – youtube.com/ndcounties



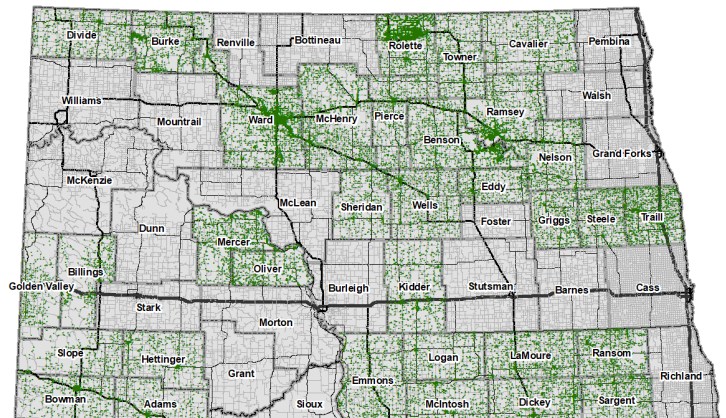
Next Generation 9-1-1

North Dakota's 9-1-1 transition to NG9-1-1 continues to move forward.

Late last year, the U.S. Department of Commerce and U.S Department of Transportation awarded North Dakota's 9-1-1 system \$1,473,805 as part of the 9-1-1 Grant Program to help call centers, also known as Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), upgrade to Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) capabilities.

Grant funding is being used to expedite the completion of an advanced GIS mapping system, a key milestone in the counties' path towards Next Generation 9-1-1.

Mapping has been completed in 33 of the 53 counties thus far; and with the additional resources, the program hopes to reach the other counties in the next year. The end result will be a statewide address map that serves as the foundation for Next Generation 9-1-1 services, and for improving efficiencies in other areas of county government.



NRG Technology Services

Over the last two years, NRG has assisted the ND Information Technology Dept. (NDIT) with the network security project to put a firewall in place between each county. NRG continues to assist counties and NDIT with Phase 2 of this project by bringing county network equipment up to date in order to handle the new 1 gig bandwidth bursts available that also increase internal security controls.

NRG continues to move clients to a cloud-based environment to reduce the need for physical servers. One such project is the Human Service Zone transition. The firewalls put in place to protect individual counties has caused access challenges between counties within zones. There have been many requests to open holes in those protective firewalls. NRG has been working with NDIT and DHS to augment the goal of standardized services across the state with a cloud-based solution that would encompass all zone employees, offering an alternative to opening up the firewalls again.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many courthouses closed their doors to the public and sent employees to work from home.

NRG assisted workers with remote access to files and programs they could normally access in the office and work through the kinks of having their office equipment work in their home networks. As we move forward in this unpredictable time, NRG encourages agencies to plan for more remote workforce capability and flexibility.

The phasing out of Windows 7 computers and Windows Server 2008 is an ongoing project. Most of the outdated systems have been replaced or upgraded.

NRG employees are involved in events and interests outside of our organization that could affect counties. President Lonny Bosch, sits on the CJIS Board and the state's Cybersecurity Collaboration Committee. Amber Schriock, Account Manager, has taken part in meetings with the Human Service Zone Board, Commissioners, Department Heads, as well as participating in many county leader conferences throughout the year. NRG employees meet monthly with NDIT officials to ensure county interests are included and addressed when dealing with the state network.

The tagline ***Stress-Free IT*** means their customers let them worry about managing their ever-changing and complex IT infrastructures.

Vision Zero Outreach Program

In an effort to align itself more with the ND Department of Transportation's Vision Zero Initiative, NDACo's program tweaked its name, and will now be the Vision Zero Outreach Program.

The Vision Zero Outreach Program is set to grow by adding Outreach Coordinators in three areas of the state. These coordinators will serve multiple counties and be responsible to develop and maintain partnerships, provide resources, and coordinate outreach activities to support communities to work toward zero motor vehicle crash fatalities and serious injuries.

The mission of Vision Zero relies on personal responsibility to obey traffic safety laws and is implemented through various strategies, including:

1. Widespread public education/outreach
2. Infrastructure/road safety improvements
3. High visibility enforcement of existing laws
4. Technology advancements
5. Working with the legislature to ensure state laws represent best practices in traffic safety

The strategy of Vision Zero is simple: to eliminate motor vehicle crash fatalities and serious injuries on North Dakota roadways.

VISION ZERO
Zero fatalities. Zero excuses.

Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor

The Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor (TSRP) is a joint effort between NDACo and the ND Department of Transportation (NDDOT).

NDDOT funds the position through federal government grants, while NDACo provides the facilities and the equipment for the TSRP program.

In 2019 alone, TSRP trainers Aaron Birst and Kristi Venhuizen were involved in providing over **100 hours** of training to more than **1,100** law enforcement officers and prosecutors.

We believe we are making a difference

2018

105 lives lost in traffic crashes in ND
32% due to impaired driving

2019

100 lives lost in traffic crashes in ND
42% due to impaired driving

Financials

NDACo 2019 Year End & 2020 Budget General & Special Fund Comparison

Audited Figures as of December 31, 2019 by Eide Bailly

	Audited Year End 2019	Budget 2020
REVENUES		
General Income		
County Dues	646,608	666,000
Other General Income	71,464	59,700
Building Income	226,621	230,170
Service Area Income		
Publication Services	54,620	53,900
Conference Services	269,834	225,000
Cooperative Services	4,371,716	4,674,790
TOTAL REVENUES	5,640,863	5,909,560
EXPENDITURES		
Staff, Board & Indirect Costs		
Salaries, Fringe & Payroll Tax	2,338,876	2,675,898
Travel	91,875	118,000
Supplies & Operating	8,794	14,500
Fees & Services	79,293	56,740
Equipment & Maintenance	284,926	316,700
Other Expenses	53,592	57,730
Direct Service Area Costs		
Legislative Services	47,598	18,000
Publication Services	30,612	32,700
Conference Services	178,609	159,000
Cooperative Services	2,387,968	2,489,460
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	5,502,143	5,938,728

NDACo Consolidated Balance Sheet General & Special Funds

Audited Figures as of December 31, 2019 by Eide Bailly

ASSETS	
Cash	4,873,633
Investments	6,951,594
Accounts Receivable	71,355
Prepaid Expenses	48,967
Land	178,559
Buildings	3,181,189
Capital Improvements	1,487,542
Furniture, Equip., Fixed Assets	567,453
Accumulated Depr.	(1,947,587)
TOTAL ASSETS	15,412,705
LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES	
Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	305,790
Accts Payable-Next Generation 911 Fund	2,475,748
Payroll Withholding Payable	(37)
Accrued Payables	671,306
Deferred Revenues	488,636
Due to Other Funds	
Compensated Absences Payable	155,724
Fund Balances	
Reserved for Special Projects	4,467,155
Undesignated	6,848,383
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES	15,412,705



NDACo 2020 Budgeted Revenues

79.1% Cooperative Services
11.3% County Dues
4.9% Building & Other
3.8% Conference Services
0.9% Publication Services



NDACo 2020 Budgeted Expenses

45% Staff/Board Costs
41.9% Cooperative Services
9.5% Operating Costs
2.7% Conference Services
0.3% Legislative Services
0.6% Publication Services

2020 Board of Directors

Executive Committee



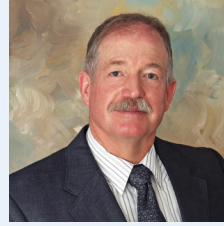
Kevin Fieldsend
President
Ramsey County
Highway
Superintendent



Stanley Dick
1st Vice President
Cavalier County
Commissioner



Carrie Krause
2nd Vice President
Wells County
Recorder



Steve Lee
3rd Vice President
McLean County
Commissioner



Scott Ouradnik
Past President
Slope County
Commissioner

Board of Directors



Darbie Berger
ND Treasurers
Association
Mercer County
Treasurer



Lynn Brackel
Region 8
Bowman County
Commissioner



Becky Hagel
Region 6
Foster County
Commissioner



Lori Hanson
ND County Tax
Directors Association
Mountrail County
Tax Director



Lisa Herbel
ND County Auditors
Association
Bottineau County
Auditor



Kim Jacobson
ND Social Service
Directors Association
Agassiz Valley Human
Service Zone Director



Chad Kaiser
ND Sheriffs
& Deputies
Association
Stutsman County
Sheriff



Wanda Knutson
ND County Clerks
of District Court
Association
Mercer County Clerk
of District Court



Maynard Loibl
Region 4
Nelson County
Commissioner



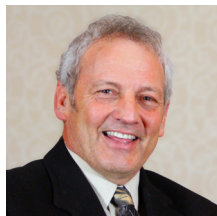
Trudy Ruland
Region 2
Mountrail County
Commissioner



Mary Scherling
Region 5
Cass County
Commissioner



Jayme Tenneson
ND State's
Attorney's
Association
Griggs | Nelson County
State's Attorney



Gene Veeder
Region 1
McKenzie County
Commissioner

Ex Officio Members



Perry Turner
ND County
Commissioners
Association President
McIntosh County
Commissioner



Daryl Dukart
NACo Board
Representative
Dunn County
Commissioner



Marcia Lamb
NACo Board
Representative
Billings County
Auditor | Treasurer