

MINNESOTA SBDC SERVICES

Minnesota Small Business Development Center Services

Most every business begins as a small business. While some stay small in scale and scope, others continually grow and diversify. No matter how your business may grow or change, one thing remains constant: Your profitability and growth depend on your ability to make sound business decisions at the right times.

The Minnesota Small Business Development Centers (MnSBDC) provide the professional expertise and guidance that every small business owner needs to flourish in today's competitive and ever-changing business world.

Pre-Venture Business Services

You've got a great concept, but don't know where to start. Our business readiness assessment process helps you take the leap from concept to reality. Through a referral to one of our strategic resource partner organizations or to one of our professional training programs, we'll help you develop the plan and walk with you down the path to success.



Start-Up Business Services

You have launched your business, the "Open" sign is up, but you've found that things aren't going as you expected. Maybe customers aren't coming or they're coming too quickly. You need to realign or tweak your business strategies and you need professional assistance to guide you. The MnSBDC provides the guidance you need during those incredibly important formative years when businesses run the greatest risk of failure.

Established Business Services

Maybe you're ready to expand your business and take it to the next level. Maybe your business is growing but you don't know how to manage its demands. In either case, it's time to start working on your business and not just in it. Through our statewide network of professional business consultants, the MnSBDC provides the professional guidance you need to make the critical strategic decisions necessary for long-term growth, profitability and success.



minnesota sbdc services

Professional Consulting

The MnSBDC Network offers at no cost confidential consulting to help clients identify, understand and overcome the challenges of running a successful business. The MnSBDC operates through a network of nine statewide regional centers. Our network is made up of committed professionals, each with distinctive credentials that qualify them to assist with both general and specialized business needs. Drawing on formal education and years of practical business experience, each consultant is attuned to the challenges business owners face. They provide relevant, realistic and sound advice you can trust in such areas as:

- ◆ Access to Capital and Loan Packaging
- ◆ Financial Analysis and Assessment using OPTIMIST®
- ◆ Accounting Systems and Literacy
- ◆ General Marketing and Research
- ◆ Marketing Plan Development
- ◆ Feasibility Analysis
- ◆ Start-up Assistance
- ◆ Business Plan Development
- ◆ eCommerce/Web Site Development
- ◆ Succession and Strategic Planning



Training Seminars

The MnSBDC offers hundreds of workshops and seminars each year. Attended by thousands of small business owners, our workshops provide invaluable insights to help you successfully launch and operate a business. Training is specifically tailored to meet the needs of the local business community and is provided on a cost-recovery basis.

Accessing Capital

Our business consultants have longstanding relationships with lenders in their communities and understand their perspective and needs. In fact, many lenders require their borrowers to work with their local MnSBDC professional before submitting a loan application. While the MnSBDC does not administer loan or grant programs, our consultants do help small businesses assess funding options and opportunities, identify financing sources, evaluate eligibility, and prepare documentation that lenders require.

Who May Request Services?

Any enthusiastic and committed business owner passionate about his or her business, its growth and its success may request services.

Fees

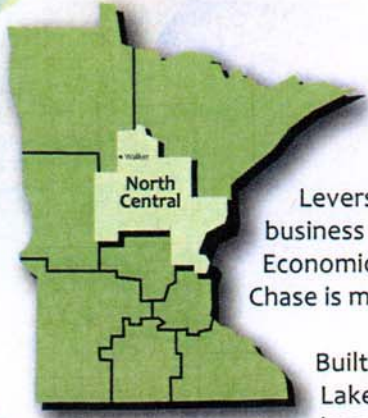
Financial support from our committed funding partners (listed on pages 14 to 15) allows us to provide our professional services at no cost to participants. Training programs and specialized projects or services are provided either at no cost or for a nominal fee.

To learn more about the services and training offered by the Minnesota SBDC Network, contact the regional center nearest you or visit our Web site at: www.mnsbdc.com

www.mnsbdc.com



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*U*nder the watchful eye of Gail

Levenson, SBDC professional business consultant, Cass County Economic Development Corp., the Chase is making a comeback.

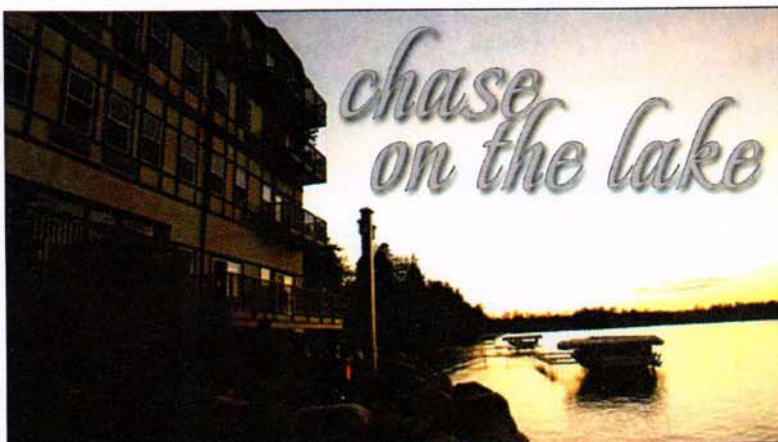
Built in 1922, Chase on the Lake is a historic hotel, located on Leech Lake in

Walker. Chase was promoted as one of the first Greater Minnesota tourism sites, as Minnesotans began driving to vacation destinations. Named for its original owner, Bert Chase, the hotel was the downtown business anchor and location of weddings and family events for three generations of Walker residents.

However, the Chase's doors were closed after a tragic fire in 1996 — and remained so for nine years, until Steve Olson, hotel developer, determined this would be his next great renovation. Olson's management firm, Leisure Hotels, purchased the hotel and neighboring parcels to renovate and market. Olson researched the project and planned renovations to match the original architecture while accommodating modern tastes with larger rooms, private baths, restaurant, spa, pool and bowling alley.

Olson approached the city with his plans for Chase, and they in turn asked the Cass County Economic Development Corporation, a satellite office of the North Central SBDC, for assistance. That's when Levenson got to work.

MAJESTIC HISTORY RECAPTURED



2008 North Central Minnesota SBDC Regional Highlights

Regional SBDC Budget	\$403,000
Small Business Clients Consulted	368
Professional Consulting Hours Delivered	3,899
Capital Successfully Raised	\$34,300,000
Jobs Created and Retained	1,295
Program Cost per Job	\$254
Business Wealth In Sales Revenues Created and Retained	\$98,300,000
Federal Tax Revenues Generated	\$4,700,000
State Tax Revenues Generated	\$2,700,000
Cost to Benefit Ratio (tax benefit to total cost)	\$19.71

She coordinated a successful \$673,700 grant request to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development from the Redevelopment Grant program for the acquisition of downtown property and redevelopment of the city-owned parking lot. She also facilitated the acquisition between the key property owner and the city.

The parking lot was too small, but to expand it, the Walker Senior Center would have to relocate. "This group liked their location and did not really want to move, so I was pleased to help facilitate the transition without condemnation or legal action," she said. Levenson worked on the tax increment financing agreement with the city and researched available financing options for the construction work.

Levenson kept the project moving forward whenever there was a glitch over the three-year development phase. "She knew who to call and she did it," Olson said.

Today the fully renovated hotel maintains the architectural character of the original time period. Olson intends to focus on building conference business for the Chase complex. The parking lot remains in the city's ownership so downtown business customers continue to use it. A new senior center is under construction, and the Chase is once again a showplace in downtown Walker.

"I couldn't imagine a better owner for the Chase," Levenson said.

See for yourself at:
www.chaseonthelake.com

