A bill for an act

relating to local government; providing for local government planning assistance; requiring regional development commissions or organizations to submit annual work programs; appropriating money for local government planning assistance; amending Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 462.39, by adding a subdivision.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 462.39, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 5. **Local planning assistance.** A regional development commission or, in regions not served by regional development commissions, a regional organization selected by the commissioner of employment and economic development, may develop a program to support planning on behalf of local units of government. The local planning must be related to issues of regional or statewide significance and may include, but is not limited to, the following:

(1) local planning and development assistance, which may include local zoning ordinances and land use plans;

(2) community or economic development plans, which may include workforce development plans, housing development plans and market analysis, JOBZ administration, grant writing assistance, and grant administration;

(3) environment and natural resources plans, which may include solid waste management plans, wastewater management plans, and renewable energy development plans;

(4) rural community health services; and

(5) development of geographical information systems to serve regional needs, including hardware and software purchases and related labor costs.

Each regional development commission or organization shall submit to the commissioner of employment and economic development an annual work program that outlines the work items for the upcoming year and establishes the relationship of the work items to development issues of regional or statewide significance. The entity completing the annual work program and identifying the statewide development issues shall consider input from the Departments of Employment and Economic Development, Natural Resources, Transportation, Agriculture, Commerce, and other state agencies as appropriate to the issues.

Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATION.**

$900,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, and $900,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of employment and economic development to make grants of $75,000 each year to each regional development commission or, in regions not served by a regional development commission, to a regional organization selected by the commissioner, to support planning on behalf of local units of government. Each grant must be matched, dollar for dollar, by nonstate money.