

KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB) MEETING
MINUTES

December 10, 2015
EDC Office, Willmar

Present: Art Benson, Rollie Boll, Robert Carlson, Donna Boonstra, Linda Kacher and Kelly TerWisscha

Ex Officio: Bruce Peterson

Excused: Gary Gilman and Doug Reese

Media: Carolyn Lange, West Central Tribune

Staff: Steven Renquist, Executive Director and Connie Schmoll, Business Development Specialist

Secretarial: Nancy Birkeland, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

President Robert Carlson called the meeting to order at approximately 11:08 a.m. Added to the Consent Agenda under Approve was item 5, Addition of Brian Mort to the Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee and added to New Business was a request to the Elks to sound dampen the EDC's offices.

IT WAS MOVED BY Linda Kacher, SECONDED BY Kelly TerWisscha, to approve the revised Agenda and revised Consent Agenda. MOTION CARRIED.

CONSENT AGENDA—

- Approve:
1. Minutes of November 12, 2015 meeting
 2. Financial reports as of November 30, 2015
 3. Addition of Sam Bowen to the Business Retention and Expansion/Recruitment Committee
 4. Payment of Invoice EXECUIN15561 for \$3,147.16 to DH Wireless Solutions from the Blandin WiFi grant
 5. Addition of Brian Mort to the Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee

- Accept: Committee Minutes
1. Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development 11/19/2015
 - a. Ag Investment Planning Subcommittee 11/5/2015
 2. Broadband and Advanced Technology 11/2/2015
 3. Business Retention and Expansion/Recruitment 10/21/2015
 4. Finance 11/10/2015
 5. Marketing and Public Relations 10/26/2015

PROGRESS REPORTS—

EDC. Steve Renquist reported \$10 million was received for the BNSF Railway wye project and \$3.75 has been added to the state bonding bill for the project, part of which is for a spur into the Willmar Industrial Park; a possible sale of Bethesda's Heritage building for 47-49 three-, two- and one-bedroom market rate apartments is moving forward; he is working with an individual from the Karen community on opening an Asian food market; a local company with a trucking operation is looking at a major expansion; a company is looking at moving into Kandiyohi County with approximately 100 jobs; and he is working with communities in the county on specific needs. Connie Schmoll gave an update of the projects on which she has been working (see attached).

[Bruce Peterson joined the meeting.]

Schmoll reported the EDC's new website is nearly complete; the Marketing and Public Relations Committee is working on publishing quarterly flyers rather than a newspaper insert twice a year; and the County Board of Commissioners approved the match for the Blandin grant application to do a broadband feasibility study.

Willmar. Bruce Peterson reported he is doing year-end cleanup of projects; permitting continues and he estimated construction values to be in the mid-\$40 million range; the largest projects next year are tax-exempt projects; a non-county business is looking at moving its operations to Willmar with approximately 30 employees and a \$1.5 million facility with offices and maintenance facilities; a current business is looking at a 12-acre site in the new Willmar Industrial Park; he continues to fine tune routing questions for the wye project; the Federal Aviation Administration has now stated it may take one year to obtain the land release of the former airport property; land use and nuisance issues were high in 2015 with approximately 1,000 complaints—most end in compliance, but several are prosecuted for ordinance violations and on some occasions, the city retains a company to clean up the property and files a lien against the property.

Tax abatement. Renquist discussed a letter he sent on a tax abatement request for MinnWest Technology Campus (MWTC) (see attached) and believes this board should discuss its position on an EDC employee recommending tax abatement. Peterson stated Jim Sieben disclosed corporate data in support of MWTC's tax abatement request to the Willmar City Council and five of the six council members voted in favor of the request. Renquist noted he has no problem supporting a tax abatement for a project that will bring in high-paying jobs and a certain number of employees. Schmoll stated other communities are willing to offer incentives to have companies move to their community. Peterson believes it is important that when an EDC employee goes to a taxing entity, they have the support of the board. Peterson noted he has appeared before the county and the school board to make recommendations and to share the City's position. It is believed staff has free reign to do what they feel is important on behalf of the EDC as there is no policy. Peterson stated Renquist attended the Willmar City Council's public hearing and presented information about the tax abatement and does not believe he represented this board at those hearings. Peterson stated it is generally difficult to find fault with the numbers included in a tax abatement request as state statute gives the requirements and incentives have been used very judiciously by the taxing entities. Peterson stated the city will begin to collect a little over \$50,000 from MWTC's real estate taxes previously abated and Kandiyohi County will begin collecting \$80,000+ and every dollar of additional expansion taxes will be collected. Renquist stated MWTC believes it will add

more than 175 jobs. Tax abatement, in general, was discussed. Peterson noted it is important for citizens to listen to the hearings on these types of projects so they receive factual, first-hand information.

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Boll, SECONDED BY Art Benson, to support the tax abatement request outlined in the December 8, 2015 letter for the MinnWest Technology Campus. MOTION CARRIED.

Board members requested the boards have additional discussion at their joint planning session on how future tax abatement requests are handled. Peterson stated he has never seen a board set policy on its staff advocating for projects and Renquist is not aware of any policy directing what the EDC's staff may or may not do in advocating for projects.

2015 Strategic Plan. Renquist noted an update to the Strategic Plan was provided to the board (see attached) and highlighted a few areas. Renquist invited board members to speak with staff if additional information is desired and suggested if the board would like to see any changes in how reporting is done in the future, now would be the time.

Executive Director search. Donna Boonstra reported the search committee has had a couple of meetings and interviewed one applicant this past Monday. The committee will screen five applicants next week and is excited about the applicants. Renquist informed the board that his last day of employment will be December 31, 2015. The Joint Powers Board has set tentative interview dates for the finalists on January 4, 7 or 8, 2016. Boonstra will ask if the interview questions will be available to this board. The interview questions were developed by the consultant with input by the search committee.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Staff health insurance. Renquist reported the Joint Powers Board approved enrolling in a group health insurance plan with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota and retained the EDC's monthly contribution at \$850 per month, per employee. Schmoll informed the board she will be keeping the same plan as this year and the premium increase for 2016 will be less than presented because of enrolling in a group plan.

NEW BUSINESS

Soundproofing the offices. Renquist informed the board that sound carries between the EDC's rooms. Boonstra was requested to bring the issue to this board. Kelly TerWisscha stated it is difficult to soundproof with a wild air exchange system—white noise can possibly be added.

IT WAS MOVED BY Linda Kacher, SECONDED BY Rollie Boll, to ask the Elks what it would take to mitigate the noise in the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development offices. MOTION CARRIED.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance. Peterson reported the Finance Committee met this week and discussed a couple of loans. Renquist stated the committee recommended approval of one loan and tabled discussion of one until additional information has been provided.

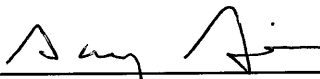
IT WAS MOVED BY Kelly TerWisscha, SECONDED BY Donna Boonstra, to approve a five-year \$40,000 loan to Bonnema Hardware & Flooring, Inc. under the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's Revolving Loan Fund Program at 5.25% interest with a third position security interest. MOTION CARRIED.

IT WAS MOVED BY Art Benson, SECONDED BY Linda Kacher, to approve extending interest-only payments through March 2016 on the loan to Peaceful Thymes under the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's Revolving Loan Fund Program. MOTION CARRIED.

Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development. Renquist invited the board to attend a presentation by EcoEngineers of Des Moines, Iowa, at the Ag Committee's next meeting on December 17, 2015.

NEXT MEETING—The next board meeting is **11:00 a.m., Thursday, ^{January 14, 2016}~~December 10, 2015~~**, in the EDC's board room.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:46 p.m.



Gary Gilman, Secretary

APPROVED: 1/14/2016



Robert Carlson, President



Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

December 8, 2015

RE: MINNWEST TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS TAX ABATEMENT

The MinnWest Technology Campus (MWTC) is requesting a 10-year 100% tax abatement of property taxes from the City of Willmar, Kandiyohi County and Willmar Public School District, ISD No. 347.

MWTC has been receiving a combination of Job Opportunity Zone (JOBZ) benefits and tax abatement on the portion of its property that was not JOBZ eligible. The JOBZ program and present tax abatement sunsets on December 31, 2015. The present tax abatement property may not be re-entered into a 'follow-on' tax abatement at this time. The property that is now in the expiring JOBZ program may be placed into tax abatement.

I advocate for tax abatement on the eligible MWTC property for the following reasons:

1. Prior to the sale of the former Willmar Regional Treatment Center, the State of Minnesota commissioned a reuse study. The study predicted it would take more than \$30 million to counter the effects of deferred maintenance on the property's unused buildings. Roughly half of the MWTC buildings have been renovated and just over \$16 million has been spent. It appears the \$30 million predicted to be spent on the campus buildings and infrastructure will be correct.
2. MWTC has created 460 jobs at an average wage of just over \$50,000 per year. The economic impact felt by our extended community is self-evident, but I will present what I consider to be conservative numbers.

- $460 \text{ (jobs)} \times \$50,000 \text{ (average wage)} = \$23 \text{ million (total wages paid)} \times 2 \text{ (multiplier factor*)} = \$46 \text{ million direct economic impact in our extended community}$

*multiplier factor = the figure used by government to measure the realized impact of wages in an area. If MWTC pays \$23 million in direct wages, it will 'bounce' in the community as the money is being spent and invested and the net impact will be twice the original wage received. Please feel free to check with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development on the wage multiplier effect. I believe you will find I have used a quite conservative multiplier. It is common to hear multipliers of double and even triple the multiplier (2) that I use, but I have never had

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a problem with justifying my figure and I think a \$46 million impact on our extended community is quite large and quantifiable.

- To receive the new tax abatement, MWTC has agreed to create at least 175 additional new jobs. They, as well, will continue to rehab the MWTC buildings and infrastructure with the net result of additional future property taxes.

The following is the information I have and I will amend the numbers prior to the requested public hearing, if I find they need correction:

Present (expiring 12/31/15) tax abatement:

Kandiyohi County	\$82,405
City of Willmar	\$47,348
ISD No. 347	\$33,380

The present tax-abated property may not be reentered (immediately) into a follow-on tax abatement program and the amount indicated would be paid to the respective public entities.

Requesting tax abatement on the former JOBZ property:

Kandiyohi County	\$68,357
City of Willmar	\$42,449
ISD No. 347	\$19,761

I believe the protocol is to request a public hearing to consider the tax abatement request and to announce its financial consequence to Kandiyohi County. I waited until today to send you this because I wanted to be able to report the City of Willmar approved a 10-year, 100% tax abatement for MWTC at last night's City Council meeting. Again, I believe the numbers I have presented to be accurate and it is my intent to provide you with this information as soon as possible so you may alert the County Commissioners and Senior Administration of the intent to request tax abatement for MWTC, but will amend my memo if I find more correct information in the next few days. I believe the county will receive the formerly tax-abated funds (\$82,405 annually) it is being asked to tax abate the portion of MWTC property that was in the JOBZ program (\$68,357 annually).

Best regards,



Steve Renquist
Executive Director

Connie Schmoll
12/10/2015

1. Community Venture Network – pitches specific for rural areas – continued connections and follow-up with 2 people met at lunch. Patrick Donahue – Hill Capital and EOS 1st Light Presentation, Gary Hildebrand & John Offerman.
2. Hack-a-thon – Welcoming computer programmers and designers – funded partially by Blandin – 2-3 projects moving forward – need to offer funds to do so - \$10,000 from Blandin. Yellow Bikes, Aquatic Invasive Species, Fire Calls.
3. Ag Committee – PACE options – Peter Lindstrom; Kandiyohi County doing follow-up Plans for 12/17 meeting – renewable energy presenters, West Central Ag Sales Association meetings and planning for Ag Show- March 2016.
 - a. Subgroups: Ag Producers BRE Survey Planning next meeting
 - b. Ag investment Group – Angel Investors and/or Venture Capital Group – preparing survey and large group meeting
4. BRE/R Committee – just completed new Mission and Philosophy Statements –
 - a. Atwater BRE – Completed visits 19 total completed of goal of 24. Data entry now. Would like to plan January or February Atwater Community Meeting.
 - b. BRE Survey Projects:
 - i. Workforce – group plans for manufacturing Day – 2016 Teachers and principals rather than students to tour local manufacturing. Creation of video
 - ii. Marketing – EDC Committee – website and winter flyer –Chamber Advantage
 - iii. Broadband – work of the committee, Completed and sent grant application for fund feasibility study – secured matching funds form County and Federated
 - iv. Embracing Diversity – work with Visions 2040 on Green Card Voices, Taping of speakers completed.
5. Marketing Committee – Ads as stated above, U of M Showcase, Animal Science Conference, website work, winter flyer. Attended quarterly meeting of Minnesota Marketing Partnership in Bloomington.
6. Broadband Committee- Attended Border to Border – state conference. Federated received \$4.9 million in funding to complete Swift County; a necessary step before Federated can deploy fiber in Kandiyohi County. Feasibility grant submitted to Blandin. Scheduled meetings with Rep. Tim Miller and Sen. Lyle Koenen.
7. Blandin – Wifi Partners Grant work – units installed data reporting begun. Granted an extension for the project until end of March, 2016. Hack-a-thon, completion of applications continues. Granted an extension to complete project by March, 2106.
8. Business and new business start-up support, Nov-Dec.
 - a. Business planning document and loan application - Mark Bonnema, Purchase and inventory for former Vegdahl's Hardware, Spicer
 - b. New London small manufacturer planning for expansion and first time hiring of staff
 - c. Energy and Organic Systems making connection in area for inputs, location, and financial investment
 - d. Assistance in Lake Lillian for Grocery/Fuel/Convenience Store; presented options for local co-op formation and/or shared funding plan to address costs for site assessment as required by EPA.
 - e. Assisted Living facility- Raymond
 - f. Site for sale in Atwater – pending city tax issues
 - g. Made local inquiries about accommodating a large chemical company expansion request

h. Visit with Lange Ag Systems

9. Fargo trip follow-up: Submitted by Joanna Schrupp

1 Million Cups – There has been so much talk about 1MC! A couple people have made a second trip to Fargo to talk to Greg Tehven and the Emerging Prairie staff about the logistics of 1MC. It was also introduced to Vision 2040 Goal #4 and Goal #2. Melissa Sorenson is spear heading the 1MC application with the help of a few others. There are several people working on the application and Melissa has the Master Copy.

A few people have expressed interest in taking a trip to Yankton, SD to see how their 1MC is run since they are a community of 14,000 people. The size of Yankton is a bit more comparable to Willmar. They may have a few challenges that we have. Please see the attached article that Steve Linder found about Yankton and their 1MC. Thanks for sharing that Steve!

Future Intercity Leadership Trips – I hope that all of you felt that taking the time to go to Fargo was beneficial. Since then, I have had several conversations with more Fargo people and even Mankato people. Mankato also puts together Intercity Visits; they actually invited us down to see their community. What I really liked about talking with the Mankato EDC person, was that he said he can look around his community today and point to things that are direct spin offs from specific trips they have taken to other cities. I thought that was huge! Love it!

Education and New Americans – Conversation with Doug Allen, Ken Warner and Nasibu Sareva from the African Development Center about bringing postsecondary education to the New Americans in our community. Although President Allen has had this on his radar for a while I presume, it certainly is nice to have 22 other community members that will support him and his efforts. Rock on Doug!



Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

2015 Strategic Plan

Approved by EDC Joint Operations Board 1/8/2015

The EDC's mission is **to be a catalyst for economic growth of the greater Kandiyohi area.**

2015 Goal

To advance our mission, the EDC has one comprehensive and overarching goal for 2015:
Increase business retention, expansion, creation and recruitment in Kandiyohi County.

Objective 1. Develop, invest in and support programs and activities that increase business development			
Strategy 1.1. Target activities that leverage our assets in agriculture, with a special emphasis on ag-business manufacturing, bioscience, technology, energy and research			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Identify 2-3 opportunities in cluster development	Jean, Connie, SWIF, Deloitte Consulting	2 nd half of year	Placed Life Science project at Willmar WWTF
Conduct assessment of emerging agriculture-related industries through continued participation on West Central Ag Sales Committee (WCASC) and Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce (WLACC) Agri-Business Committee, as well as inviting presentations by ag-related statewide advocacy groups, such as Corn Growers, Soybean Growers, Minnesota Milk Producers, Minnesota Pork Producers and others to keep abreast of industry needs that could be met in Kandiyohi County	Connie EDC Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development (Ag) Committee	All year	Participated in WCASC Ag Show; WLACC Ag Committee. Presenters at Ag meetings: MN Milk, Clean Energy, Ethanol industry, PACE program, and private industry renewable energy project presentations.
Seek positive ROI renewable energy projects through participation at Community Venture Network meetings and promotions with businesses in Kandiyohi County	EDC staff Ag Committee	All year	Invited company from CVN to visit with Ag Committee Geronimo Energy solar panel project, EOS presentation
Determine cooperative or separate angel/venture capital fund for agriculture-based projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • secure at least three angel investors to join the planning committee • implement Ag/Ag Bio Science Investment Group for Kandiyohi County 	Connie Steve Ag Investment Subcommittee	1 st half of the year	In progress. Survey development, survey to be mailed 1/7/15. 12/15 Subcommittee continues to meet

Strategy 1.2. Develop resources for entrepreneurship			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Coordinate meeting with Ridgewater College, WORKUP, WAM-BC, MWTC and any other organizations that provide entrepreneurship programs or services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> document each entity's roles/services identify opportunities to work together 	Jean	1 st quarter	Founding member of WORKUP and entrepreneur training program: QUP and MEETUP in which the EDC participates. Quarterly business development meetings with MWTC and MCROC. Ridgewater Customized and Continuing Ed Director potential new member of BRE/R Committee and participating on workforce subcommittee. Facilitated 4 meetings with school personnel on workforce/Manufacturing Day planning.
Develop marketing of "Why Willmar is for Entrepreneurs" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> include on website cross market with partner organizations 	Jean and Marketing Team	2 nd quarter	Website links to partners complete.
Strategy 1.3. Increase availability of debt and equity capital for business projects			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Work with Willmar HRA and USDA to transfer USDA Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) to the EDC for the Finance Committee to administer	Jean and Finance Committee	1 st quarter	Presently on hold
Research business finance programs in other communities for a list of potential sources of capitalization to expand the EDC's loan program	Jean and Finance Committee	July EDCOB Meeting	Handout included with July finance report
Leverage resources from regional, state and national financing programs by educating businesses on available programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create quarterly newsletter (April 1, 2015) with a section marketing business development (DEED) program funds Initiate contacts with targeted businesses with three DEED program applications in 2015 	Staff and Marketing Team	Ongoing	DEED Angel Investment Program presented at Ag Investment Subcommittee meeting.
Strategy 1.4. Assess the feasibility of a countywide angel investor fund or network; support development efforts as warranted			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Coordinate follow-up meetings between local investors and Gopher Angels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine process to proceed 	Jean		Local company is finalist in MN Cup and has been certified for Angel Tax Investments.
Participate in active angel investor networks within the state	Staff		Networking with Fargo Arthur Ventures

Strategy 1.5. Increase the awareness and utilization of innovative business financing mechanisms			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Develop marketing template that will assist and guide companies in “crowdfunding” activities	Jean, Marketing Team, Finance Committee	2 nd quarter	Working on with WORKUP
Strategy 1.6. Attracting talent and enhancing our available workforce			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Coordinate meeting with HR professionals to assist recruitment and promote “Bring Them Home” campaign	Jean and Marketing Team		Met 5/14/2015
Coordinate meetings with Willmar and NL-S Education Foundations to develop alumni outreach programs via newsletter and social media marketing outreach	Jean and Marketing Team		Met with NL-S and scheduled to meet with Willmar.
Strategy 1.7. Continued growth of the MinnWest Technology Campus (MWTC)			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Collaborate with MWTC for targeted business recruitment events and activities including membership with Community Venture Network	Jean and Joanna Schrupp		Attended October meeting. Conducted follow-up with 2 companies. Next meeting 12/11/2015.
Develop materials for outreach and method for effective lead follow-up through Synchronist	Jean and Joanna		Determined the expense and complication of sharing private company information makes goal non-conductive to business.
Support Animal Science Venture Conference as conference sponsor	Jean and Joanna		Completed 10/15
Support efforts to develop, engage, expand and promote the Mid-Central Research and Outreach Center (MCROC)	Staff, MWTC, MCROC		Promoting new MCROC training lab to businesses; i.e. tour with DEED rep and BRE committee members 10/15 Avian Flu, AURI, University Showcase; working with state regarding enhancement of Avian Lab. Haranguing U of M re: Turkey R&D facility Showcase completed. EDC designed and funded all flyers and ads and made them transferable to future years.
Strategy 1.8. Market/attract major consumer goods retailer and hospitality industry companies to Willmar/Kandiyohi County			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Meet with corporate leaders of Kohl’s or other department store and Buffalo Wild Wings to assess feasibility of business in Willmar	Steve	1 st quarter of year	Participated in sale of Kandi Mall and investor acquisition; 12/15 Expect announcement of as many as three new retail/hospitality ventures in 2016

Objective 2. Increase Business Retention and Expansion (BRE)			
Strategy 2.1. EDC's BRE/R Committee, in cooperation with the Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce (WLACC) Grow MN! Team, will complete the Kandiyohi County Business Retention and Expansion Program as planned and started in 2014			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Enter survey information into Synchronist database	Connie, EDC admin staff	1 st quarter	Completed
Complete follow-up of all issues and concerns for individual businesses	Connie, BRE/R Committee and WLACC	1 st quarter	Completed
Generate reports and present information to the leadership team and participants of the program for review and prioritizing	Connie, BRE/R Committee and WLACC	1 st quarter	Completed
Select projects in response to the survey analysis	Connie, BRE/R Committee, WLACC and community leaders	1 st quarter	Completed
Secure leadership and initiate work on the projects	Connie, BRE/R Committee, WLACC and community leaders	All year	In process: EDC's Broadband and Marketing Committees, Vision 2040 groups for workforce issues and embracing diversity
Evaluate program processes and results and make a determination about continuation of the BRE program	Connie, BRE/R Committee and WLACC	2 nd quarter	EDC staff continuing to meet with businesses regularly—smaller interview form and more closely related to information about the business. Doing verbal assessment of environment for doing business.
Strategy 2.2. Plan and implement BRE programs in Kandiyohi County cities not included in 2014 program			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Meet with mayor, city council and/or clerk of the cities not previously involved in the Kandiyohi County BRE program: Lake Lillian, Blomkest and Sunburg, and the cities that were minimally involved: Atwater, Kandiyohi, Prinsburg, Pennock and Raymond, to initiate formation of a business survey group in the cities that show interest	Connie, BRE/R Committee	1 st half of the year	Met with Kandiyohi, Spicer, Lake Lillian, Atwater and Raymond City Councils
Conduct a BRE business survey in at least three cities where interest was shown during discussions. Conduct a minimum of four business visits per city	Connie, BRE/R Committee	3 rd quarter	Completed visits in Atwater on 12/1/2015. Entering data.

Follow-up with individual business concerns as identified in BRE program for three cities	Connie, BRE/R Committee	3 rd and 4 th quarters	Planning for Ag producer survey continues. Ridgewater College Ag Department assisting.
Analyze data from individual city BRE programs and select projects in response.	Connie, BRE/R Committee and community leaders	4 th quarter	Meeting planned for January.
Secure leadership from the individual communities to initiate work on the projects	Connie, BRE/R Committee	4 th quarter	
Strategy 2.3. Completion of hotel feasibility process for New London-Spicer			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Facilitate completion of the second stage of the feasibility study and performance statements for hotel	Connie and Hotel Planning Committee	1 st quarter of year	Developer working with team to review incentives offered by two separate locations.
Assist communities of New London, Spicer and New London Township, as asked, in creating incentive packages for hotel developers	Connie	1 st and 2 nd quarters	10/15 Announcement of Spicer project
Strategy 2.4. Continue Veterans Home recruitment using new definition			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Develop and present concept of local affiliated Veteran's Home to state legislature	Steve	1 st quarter	12/15 Met with legislative delegation and provided information regarding vet's wing to existing nursing facility.
Strategy 2.5. Address available workforce issue			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Coordinate meeting with manufacturing businesses, workforce representatives and education to identify critical needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine areas of underemployment where training programs could assist • Determine recruitment needs to attract workforce to Kandiyohi County • Determine unemployed and training needed to prepare for workforce 	Steve, Jean	1 st quarter	Met with Willmar school to discuss ideas for engagement Attend Willmar World's Best Workforce Steering Committee and NLS SCOPE Committee 12/15 worked with manufacturing committee to recognize manufacturers in 2015 and host major event in 2016

Objective 3. Provide leadership for industrial park development			
Strategy 3.1. Completion of Shovel Ready Certification process for Willmar Industrial Park			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Coordinate a meeting with Willmar Mayor and city staff to determine program benefits and develop a process to proceed	Jean, Bruce Peterson and City	1 st quarter	Continued meetings with Willmar planning director.
Develop a plan with DEED's site selector consultant to market the Industrial Park to site selectors in targeted industry sectors	Staff and City of Willmar	2 nd half of the year	Hosted site selector through DEED on 9/16
Strategy 3.2. Assist other cities within the county in efforts to map their industrial properties and/or complete Shovel Ready Certification process			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Survey cities in Kandiyohi County for industrial property listings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train staff on searchable database in EDC website Present at City Council the opportunities and benefits of Shovel Ready Program for Industrial Park sites 	Jean and Connie	Ongoing	Updated LOIS training, 12/9/15. Secured site information for 2 recent listings; LL & Atwater.
Strategy 3.3. Implement railroad bypass program			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Determine TIGER II or non-grant dependent option funding *Update: 10/15 SCR We are waiting for an announcement from US DOT. The State money (\$18 million is secured); the local participation remains constant; the BNSF RR contribution \$15 million+ is committed. Local issue with retail establishment disappointed in lost Hwy 12 access	Steve	1 st quarter	12/15 Funded; need additional \$1.3 million
Strategy 3.4. Implement railroad siding into new industrial park			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Set in motion plan to add rail to new Industrial Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with BNSF RR, working with City of Willmar – notified legislative representatives of possible bonding request 2016. Local ask - \$1.5 million, 10/15 SCR 	Steve and Jean	1 st half of the year	12/15 Continue to work with BNSF marketing personnel
Strategy 3.5. Market availability of railroad served industrial park to railroad dependent industry			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Determine logical candidates working with BNSF Economic Development	Steve and Jean	1 st half of the year	10/15 Dependent on TIGER funding, in progress

Objective 4. Enhance marketing to prospective businesses, residents, investors, site selectors and existing residents			
Strategy 4.1. Complete redesign of the EDC website			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Host stakeholder meetings in January to define content framework for new EDC website that meets needs of our audience	Jean and Marketing Team	1/20/15	Completed
Develop written copy and attractive content to populate the new website	Staff and Committees	Feb-April 2015	In process
Integrate technology for real time reporting of key information meeting site selectors criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> staff training 	Staff	After website launch	In process
Searchable building/land database <ul style="list-style-type: none"> promoted to all commercial realtors community training 	Staff	1 st half of 2015	Staff training in LOIS
A recruitment section in website to meet the needs of companies recruiting workforce from outside the region to Kandiyohi County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> meet with County HR professionals-workforce 	Jean and Marketing Team	During website development phase	In process
Strategy 4.2. Development of a comprehensive written marketing plan for the EDC			
Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Research best practices for marketing the new website for a successful launch	Jean and Marketing Team	1 st quarter	Moved public promotion of new website to March 2016. Will use Chamber ADvantage flyer to promote. Will also report live on Open Mic.
Market the EDC through local channels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newsletter Blog B2B articles Chamber ADvantage 	Jean and Marketing Team	Ongoing	Have advertised in quarterly Chamber ADvantage in 2015
Market outside of the area to targeted industries and trade publications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Venture Network Technology sectors Manufacturing sectors Ag-Business sectors – Prairie Business Renewable energy sectors Research publications within these sectors in which to submit story content for editor consideration	Staff, Committees and Marketing Team	Ongoing	
Produce written materials that promote the area for ag-business and ag-manufacturing opportunities to include in EDC marketing materials	Ag Committee	1 st and 2 nd quarters of the year and then ongoing	Secured persons to assist from Ag Committee; attended session on blogging to market.

Objective 5.

Work with service providers to enhance broadband infrastructure, access and utilization in the county

Strategy 5.1. Assess needs for broadband and develop a plan to improve access in targeted locations in the county

Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Survey target area identified by the Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee to determine an effective strategy for documenting speeds, business needs and pricing thresholds	Jean and EDC Broadband Committee	January 2015	Survey will be part of feasibility study if funds are secured from Blandin. Secured matching funds.
Evaluate survey results and expand target area based upon findings	Committee	February 2015	Will be included in feasibility study
Survey companies that have demonstrated upload speed requirements to document improved infrastructure requirements to meet the technology needs in business	Committee	February 2015	Hosted Senator Klobuchar on 8/18 with local businesses and reps on broadband issues Hosted Rep. Baker and Rep. Dault 10/21 with local businesses and reps on broadband issues
Hold public forum meetings throughout Kandiyohi County to identify the “wants” and “needs” for broadband access	Committee	April/May	Hosted Senator Klobuchar on 8/18 with local businesses and reps on broadband issues Hosted Rep. Baker and Rep. Dault 10/21 with local businesses and reps on broadband issues
Work with Kandiyohi County to map infrastructure through the permitting process	GIS/County	Ongoing	Part of feasibility study if funded.
Continue to meet with companies providing broadband services to examine needs and develop strategies to upgrade infrastructure	Committee	Ongoing	Attended Border-to-Border Conference. Networked with providers. Mark Erickson of RS Fiber to present at next Broadband meeting.

Strategy 5.2. Execute “Hackathon” event in collaboration with Ridgewater College, WORKUP and Blandin Community Broadband Program

Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update
Market the Willmar Hackathon to communities in the Blandin network to attract talented computer coders/programmers to attend	Jean, Broadband Committee, Ridgewater College	April - Sept	Hosted Hack ₂ 0 on 9/18-20/2015
Market Hackathon to local stakeholder groups and community to attract interest and local buzz for the project and programs at Ridgewater College, WORKUP and MWTC	Jean, Broadband Committee, Ridgewater	April - Sept	Completed
Develop brand messaging from the Hackathon that can be used in the EDC website for recruitment of talent workforce and attracting technology businesses	Jean, Marketing Team, Broadband Committee	April - Sept	Completed by Marketing Committee “Ready for Business”