

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)**  
**JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB) MEETING**  
**MINUTES**  
**February 14, 2019**  
**EDC Office, Willmar**

Present: Rollie Boll, Donna Boonstra, Jesse Gislason, Les Heitke (via phone), Kerry Johnson and Kelly TerWisscha

Excused: Art Benson and Roger Imdieke

Guest: Sarah Swedburg, Willmar City Planner

Staff: Aaron Backman, Executive Director and Connie Schmoll, Business Development Specialist

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

Media: Shelby Lindrud, West Central Tribune

President Kelly TerWisscha called the meeting to order at approximately 11:02 a.m. and declared a quorum was present. President TerWisscha announced Jesse Gislason has been officially appointed to this board by the Joint Powers Board followed by self introductions.

**AGENDA**

IT WAS MOVED BY Donna Boonstra, SECONDED BY Kerry Johnson, to remove the Minutes of January 10, 2019 from the Consent Agenda. MOTION CARRIED.

IT WAS MOVED BY Kerry Johnson, SECONDED BY Rollie Boll, to approve the Agenda and revised Consent Agenda. MOTION CARRIED.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- Approve:
1. Financial reports as of January 31, 2019
  2. Removal of committee members:
    - a. Jon Folkedahl from the Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development Committee
    - b. Russ Weeks from the Finance Committee
    - c. Larry Kleindl from the Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee
  3. Addition of Roger Imdieke and Rollie Nissen to the Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee
  4. Payment of REDstar Creative invoice in the amount of \$1,567.20
- Accept: Committee/Subcommittee Minutes
1. Ag Marketing & Event Planning Subcommittee 1/4/2019
  2. Broadband and Advanced Technology 1/7/2019
  3. Business Retention Expansion/Recruitment 1/4/2019
  4. Leisure Travel 12/3/2018

**MINUTES**—Donna Boonstra noted that newly-elected President TerWisscha did not take over the meeting so that sentence should be removed from the Minutes on page 4 and the date for approval of the Minutes should be changed to today's date.

IT WAS MOVED BY Donna Boonstra, SECONDED BY Rollie to approve the Minutes with the deletion of the sentence: [Newly-elected President Kelly TerWisscha took over chairing the meeting.] and to change the date for approval of the Minutes to 2/14/2019. MOTION CARRIED.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Boards' Annual Strategic Planning Session.** President TerWisscha noted the proposal by Achieve TFC was emailed to the board to review (see attached). Aaron Backman stated some board members voiced a desire to try a new facilitator and previous facilitators are unavailable on March 14. Backman provided information on Achieve TFC and Cheryl Glaeser, noting the estimate given in the proposal is \$4,285, which is higher than in the past. Staff has met with Glaeser once relative to pre-meeting matters and, if approved, will meet with her again prior to the planning session to review questions that will be asked of board members. Backman recommends continuing to do annual planning sessions and accept the proposal of Achieve TFC to facilitate the planning session. Kerry Johnson announced she has a work conflict that has arisen on March 14<sup>th</sup> and will attend for a portion of the session, if able. Committee chairs will be invited to attend the planning session. The planning session will be at Kandiyohi Power Cooperative. It was the consensus to have a short board meeting at 8:20 a.m. followed by the planning session from 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Backman stated Achieve TFC requests a down payment of 15%. Backman suggested between \$1,200 and \$1,500 be paid.

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Boll, SECONDED BY Donna Boonstra, to approve the proposal from Achieve TFC and Cheryl Glaeser to facilitate the boards' annual strategic planning session at an estimated cost of \$4,285 and to approve a down payment of \$1,500. MOTION CARRIED.

There was no other unfinished business.

**NEW BUSINESS**—Backman announced the City of Willmar just received a notice of termination from Jones Development Company that the logistics company has decided to hold off on the purchase of property in the Willmar Industrial Park. Sarah Swedburg stated the letter has been forwarded to the Willmar city attorney. It appears the logistics company re-assessed its 2019 capital expenditure plans and decided to hold off on the Willmar facility.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

**Willmar/Willmar Industrial Park.** Swedburg reported the Herzog project is going well and the Development Agreement will be completed soon. A sale of a small portion of the former wastewater treatment property will be completed soon. The City of Willmar is working on the new plat for Marcus of the old Elm Lane site. A grant application through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development for updates to the Lakeland highrise and downtown street scape will be

submitted by the deadline at the end of this month. The City of Willmar received the largest grant awarded by the state in 2018 through the Small Cities Grant Program, which will be used for improvements at Hanson Apartments, residential rehab loans for homes in northwest Willmar and downtown commercial rehab. An article on the grant is in today's *West Central Tribune*. Swedburg reported Main Street Willmar received a \$30,000 grant through the Artists on Main Street program through the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota. Minnesota Main Street will host a statewide workshop for all communities in its program on May 2<sup>nd</sup> at Heritage Bank.

Backman reported on the progress of the Midtown Plaza elevator project. Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) has closed its loan and Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF) will also provide funding in the near future.

## **2018 GOALS**

**Child Care Initiative.** Connie Schmoll reported the core group met on January 11<sup>th</sup> and decided on four goals: mentoring, training opportunities, identifying and accessing capital and business support and legislation. As to the loan to the Willmar Child Care Center, the financial partners are waiting to receive required documents before closing the loans. Once the building plans and permits are issued by the City of Willmar, it is anticipated MMDC and SWIF will close on their loans. The EDC's loan is funding operating capital, administrative costs and preliminary work. Plans for the YMCA childcare were announced on the radio this morning. Kerry Johnson stated she is on the YMCA committee, which will be looking at two sites tomorrow, the Green Lake Mall and Bella Cucino properties. The committee will be fund raising through the Willmar Area Community Foundation. Schmoll noted the goal of the Rural Child Care Innovation Project is to get the community involved.

**Opportunity Zones.** Backman reported the Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers (MAPCED) held its quarterly meeting yesterday and included discussions on broadband and Opportunity Zones. MAPCED discussed the state's lack of progress on the Opportunity Zones program and not having a designated individual in charge. Schmoll reported SWIF is co-hosting a seminar on February 28<sup>th</sup> at Jackpot Junction. Backman stated the area Initiative Foundations are encouraging funds in their regions. Swedburg stated she forwarded the training information to the Vision 2040 Housing Subcommittee. Swedburg will forward to the EDC information on a national webinar through the Main Street program and can forward it to anyone else who is interested.

**Transportation Infrastructure.** Backman reported the Master Agreements for the Willmar Wye have been signed. The Highway 23 Coalition board met and decided on four priority projects as noted in his report (see attached). The Coalition board approved a contribution of \$5,000 to the local match for the Clara City Intersection Safety Study. The Coalition's Legislative Committee hosted a legislative lunch reception on February 7, 2019 at the State Office Building. Fifteen Coalition members met with more than 20 legislators and staff. TerWisscha said the event was well attended and it was important for the Coalition to hold the event in St. Paul. Boonstra stated she had a conversation with Rep. Kurt Daudt on the availability of funds for transportation.

[Swedburg was excused from the meeting.]

Backman announced that Boonstra is the new chair of the board, Jeff Bertram was elected vice chair and he was re-elected Secretary/Treasurer.

**Retail Business Design Workshops.** Backman reported the EDC is co-hosting the Retail Business Design Workshops and coaching sessions as noted in his report. Schmoll reported the first workshop and coaching session were held at Bremer Bank. It has been positive for retailers to talk with other retailers. The cities of Spicer and Atwater are paying the registration fees for retailers from their communities. Two-thirds of the businesses are women-owned. Johnson stated Roger Imdieke is chairing the Greater Minnesota Boutique Expo to be held on April 8-9 at Little Crow Golf Resort. There will be three speakers who will speak to the boutique owners and vendors will be available for a small market. The attendees will do a shop hop around New London-Spicer. Johnson will provide information that can be given to the Retail Business Design Workshop participants, who would qualify to attend. Backman was interviewed by *Minnesota Daily* on the Retail Business Design Workshops.

**Business Visits and Meetings.** Schmoll highlighted information from her written report (see attached). Agprofessionals held its Agcellence banquet on February 1, 2019 and was attended by the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Scholarships were given to college students in ag-related fields. Recognized for their work on the former Willmar Ag Show were Lyle and Bonnie Lange and Chad and Krista Willis were recognized for their work in local agriculture. Schmoll has been working on recruitment strategies with MinnWest Technology Campus. Backman reported the EDC and SWIF are working on funding for a diverse entrepreneurship program. Backman stated the main bill at the Minnesota House is concerning broadband, which includes \$70 million funding for the biennium and funding for the Office of Broadband Development. Backman discussed the incumbents' right-of-first refusal with Senator Koran. Backman gave a presentation on the 15<sup>th</sup> Street Flats housing project at the Association of Minnesota Counties Legislative Conference.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development.** Rollie Boll reported yesterday, the Ag Committee hosted a presentation by Nexyst on a new way for farmers to market and ship their grain. The company will be meeting with the local angel fund. Schmoll reported an Industrial Hemp Subcommittee was formed to research the processing of industrial hemp. The committee is waiting for the state regulations to be developed. The committee is working on an co-hosting an event, Partners in Ag Innovation, that will replace the EDC's Talent & Technology Workshop and MinnWest Technology Campus' Ag & Animal Science Conference.

**Broadband and Advanced Technology.** Schmoll reported the committee is moving forward with requesting changes be made relative to the incumbent language. The committee will be making a presentation to local townships about forming a county broadband coalition and local funding. Boonstra reported the *Clara City Herald* printed an article on a federal government program on e-connectivity.

**Business Retention and Expansion/Recruitment.** Backman reported the committee discussed workforce. The West Central Area Job Fair will be held March 26<sup>th</sup> at Ridgewater College. Schmoll reported a small subcommittee has been meeting on whether or not to do another business survey.

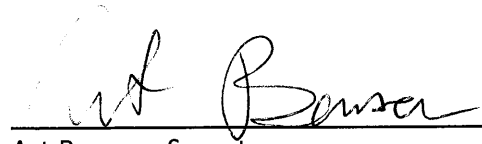
**Leisure Travel.** The board received the new Willmar Lakes Area 2019 visitors guide produced by the Leisure Travel Committee. The EDC's ad is on the left inside back cover.

**NEXT MEETING**—The next board meeting is **8:20 a.m., Thursday, March 14, 2019** at Kandiyohi Power Cooperative, Spicer.

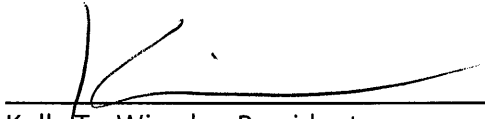
**ADJOURNMENT**—There being no further business,

IT WAS MOVED, SECONDED AND CARRIED to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:25 p.m.

  
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Art Benson, Secretary

APPROVED: 3/14/2019:

  
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Kelly TerWisscha, President



Proposal to Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic  
Development Commission - Strategic Planning  
Submitted by Cheryl K. Glaeser, January, 2019

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## Background Summary – Understanding of Needs

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The mission of the **Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission** is to be a catalyst for economic growth of the greater Kandiyohi County Area. The Commission develops organizational priorities on an annual basis by engaging Staff, Board members, Committee Chairs, and other key stakeholders in fact-finding efforts to identify trends, challenges, opportunities as well as a strategic planning retreat to prioritize short- and long-term goals with strategic objectives. The Commission seeks a third-party consultant to develop a shared vision and to create strategies that will guide the work of the Commission throughout 2019, recognizing the past goal areas and considering the changing demographics and trends impacting the Commission's service area.

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## About Achieve TFC/Cheryl K. Glaeser

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**Achieve TFC** supports organizations and small businesses by providing solutions that strengthen leaders and teams, move ideas to action, and help groups transform what is already strong into something superb. Working together, we help organizations **ACHIEVE** stronger results.

**Cheryl K. Glaeser**, Owner/President, is an enthusiastic and results-oriented professional who leverages exceptional interpersonal and communication skills and her passion for innovation and adaptive change to help others achieve stronger results together. Her facilitation and training skills span over 20 years of identifying, strengthening, and building collaborative relationships and effective training solutions that advance organizations and communities. Cheryl has managed complex collaboratives involving a broad array of stakeholders and is proficient at facilitating group engagements. As a professional consultant, trainer, and life-long learner, she has gained exposure to a broad array of tools and methodologies to effectively meet the customized needs of clients.

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## Approach

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Achieve TFC is built on a philosophy that with exceptional bursts of support, organizations and businesses can focus on what's truly important and move what is already strong to something more superb. Cheryl's approach includes:

- Listening to and working with clients to meet their specific needs
- Thinking creatively about the best possible ways to meet those needs
- Identifying relevant patterns to be strategic in creating alternative ways to move forward
- Communicating thoughts and ideas into action steps
- Using evaluative thinking toward continuous improvement throughout each project
- Being authentically committed to helping others reach their goals and deliver results
- Maximizing strengths to transform what's good into what's great
- Enjoying authentic connections with great people throughout the process



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## Goals and Outputs

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Strategic planning for the Commission would be designed to empower and enable staff, Board, and key stakeholders to develop a shared vision and to create strategies that will guide the work of the Commission for the benefit of Kandiyohi County and the City of Willmar. This approach includes a blend of consulting, facilitation, research and analysis on needs. Cheryl's highly participatory strategic planning process draws from traditional practices and new models to effectively involve decision makers and stakeholders. She would work with leadership and key stakeholders to select strategies and methods that respond to your needs and opportunities and guide discussion and decision-making in areas such as vision, organizational and strategic issues, goals and objectives, implementation, and measurement.

Cheryl K. Glaeser, Owner/President of Achieve TFC firmly believes in a participatory planning process that broadly involves stakeholders. You can count on me to effectively and efficiently direct advance preparation, a strategy retreat, as well as follow-up work that you desire from this planning process. The process used will ensure that:

- Key stakeholders are identified and engaged to ensure that the plan benefits from a diverse set of viewpoints
- All participants understand the strategic planning process
- Participants can identify the issues and opportunities they consider pressing and discuss them within the framework of the process
- The process stays on time and on track, unless leaders choose to change it
- The strategic outcomes are clearly understood and realistic.

### Key Scope of Work:

- Develop and facilitate a planning process that engages and invests key stakeholders in developing an organizational strategy around short- and long-term goals to guide the work of the Commission.
- Facilitate a Strategic Planning Retreat to prioritize information gathered for the creation of goals and key objectives
- Provide a draft plan and summary of any pertinent information following the retreat.

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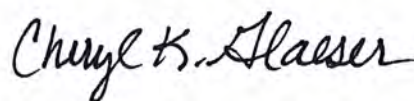
## Timeframe

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The specific dates and timeframes would be determined in partnership with Commission Staff and/or stakeholders, with a Strategic Planning Retreat planned for March 2019. Cheryl initially envisions advance meetings, calls, and interviews as part of the participatory approach for achieving the desired goals and outputs.

Cheryl incorporates a variety of individual reflection and group participation methods in helping groups be fully engaged in the success of their work. Her past experience and working knowledge of workforce, community, and economic development in rural communities as well as her Bachelor's Degree in Organizational Development and Group Dynamics positions her for this work.

Respectfully submitted by: Cheryl K. Glaeser  
President/Owner of Achieve TFC, LLC  
PO Box 4  
Hutchinson, MN 55350  
320-582-7526  
cheryl@achieveresultstogether.com



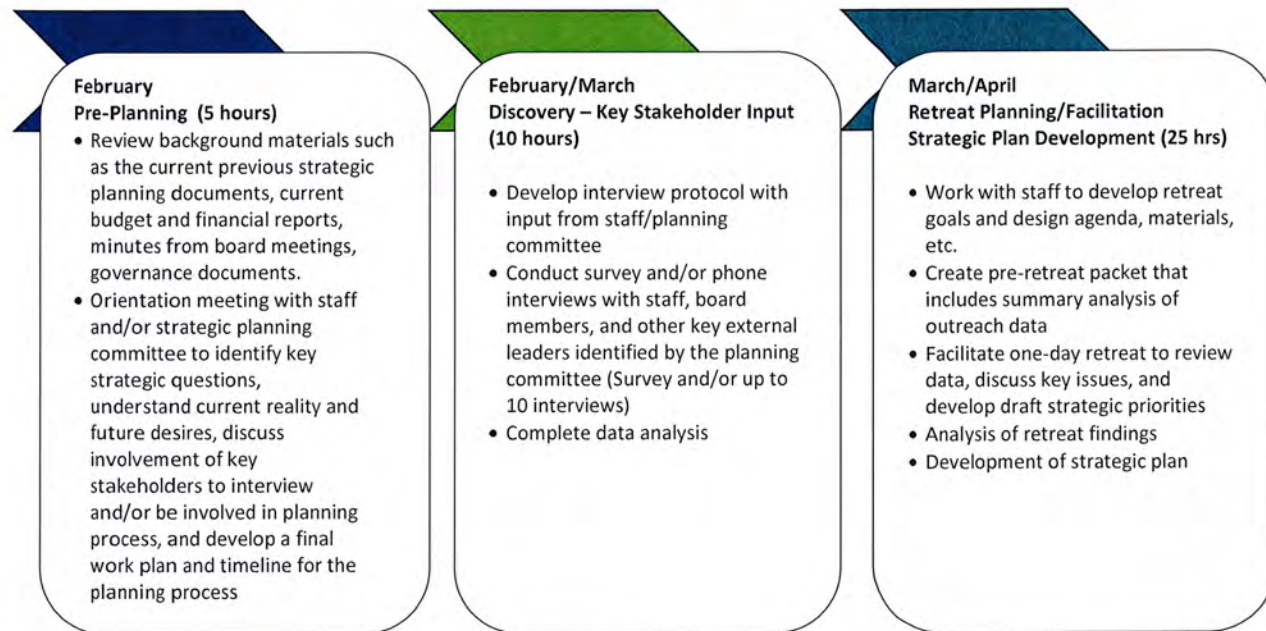
*References available upon request.*

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**Achieve TFC, LLC: DRAFT Scope of Work/Budget**

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The following chart outlines draft concepts for proposed activities, timeline, and estimated consulting costs required to complete them. This outline should be considered a starting point for discussion about the preferred process and timeframe to best meet the desired outcome of this project. A full scope of work will be developed based on further discussion and understanding of needs. Final estimated costs may be adjusted to reflect the work required.



**Estimated Fees: Consulting/Facilitation - \$4,000; Supplies/Materials: \$100.00; Travel/Mileage: \$185.00**

**Estimated Total: \$4285.00**





## **Joint Operations Board Meeting**

**Aaron Backman Report**

**February 14, 2019**

### **Highway 23 Coalition**

The Coalition's Board of Directors met on January 30<sup>th</sup> in Willmar. Among the items discussed was the final selection of highway projects that the Coalition would support for the 2019 legislative session. The four projects the Board supports are highlighted in an attached map. The four projects are:

- 1) Construction of a Roundabout in the City of Foley at Highway 23 and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue (near Foley Public Schools) and the undertaking of a Preferred Route Safety Study that would encompass Hwy 23 from Foley to Milaca. This study would determine the best route for a four-lane road.
- 2) Construction of a CSAH 55 Overpass that would connect to the new Interchange at Hwy 23 and County Road 5. This bridge over the BNSF railroad would tie into the new Willmar Railroad Wye project with a direct connection to the City's Industrial Park.
- 3) Undertaking an Intersection Safety Study at Highway 23 and Highway 7 in Clara City. This study would determine what changes could be made to enhance safety at this intersection. The Coalition's Board approved providing \$5,000 toward the local match required by MnDOT. Chippewa County and the City, both members of the Coalition, would match the contribution.
- 4) Construction of a four-lane extension of Highway 23 north from the City of Marshall to the City of Green Valley, a distance of 4.5 miles. This project would continue the four-lane infrastructure on the Hwy 23 Corridor and bring it closer to connecting with Highway 212.

On Thursday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, the Highway 23 Coalition held its Legislative Reception in Room 300S at the State Office Building across the street from the State Capitol. The event went very well. In spite of the blizzard conditions (and the bus cancelling on us), a total of 15 Coalition members traveled to St. Paul. We met with over 20 state senators and representatives, plus legislative staff. A highlight was meeting with MnDOT Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher (see attached photos). It was an excellent opportunity to discuss the four Hwy 23 priority projects that the Coalition has endorsed for the 2019 session. It was the perfect location. Thank you to the attendees. Great job everyone!



Commissioner Margaret Anderson-Kelliher; Aaron Backman; Rep. Lisa Demuth; Mayor Duane Willenbring



Kelly TerWisscha; Art Benson; Rep. Glenn Gruenhagen; Donna Boonstra



In other news, the Hwy 23 Coalition's Board of Directors elected officers. **Donna Boonstra** is the new Chair of the Board, Jeff Bertram is the new Vice Chair, I continue to serve as the Secretary/Treasurer for the Coalition, and Bob Mathiasen is the Past Chair. In addition, we had one Board member step down at the end of January: Jeff Mergen, Stearns County Commissioner. In his place, the Board appointed Joe Perske, who also serves as a Stearns County Commissioner and is the Chair of that Commission.

### **Retail Business Design Workshops**

The EDC has engaged partners to create Retail Business Design Workshops that will include five merchandising workshops for small retailers in Kandiyohi County. There are nine partners in this effort—the U of MN Extension, U of MN College of Design, EDC, Ridgewater College, Willmar Mainstreet, Spicer Economic Development, Willmar Area Community Foundation, United Way of West Central MN, and the Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce.

On alternating weeks there will be coaching sessions for participants to implement and assist one another in applying the information from the workshops. It is hoped that 20 to 30 local retailers will take advantage of the workshops. In addition, 4 or 5 businesses will be matched with U of MN College of Design students for one-on-one technical assistance or TA. The idea is to implement methods and techniques through the TA that will have a direct impact on those retail businesses. The partners will also write and distribute a local economic development best practices guide for retail revitalization efforts to be replicated elsewhere.

The workshops will run from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. During February of 2019 the workshops and sessions will occur at the Bremer Bank Community Room. During March the events will occur at the Willmar Public Library. The Social Media Marketing workshop will occur in conjunction with the Social Media Breakfast at WORKUP on the MWTC. The cost of this 10-week intensive program is \$250. Scholarships are available on an as-needed basis. In particular, we would want to assist women-owned businesses and minority retail owners and managers to ensure their participation.

The partners have arranged for notable retail representatives to come and present at these sessions. The main presenter at the first workshop on February 6<sup>th</sup> relating to Store Presentation and Layout was Peggy Lord, Assist. Director for the U of M Center for Retail Design and previously Christopher & Banks and VP of Merchandise Planning w/Target. Her presentation was well received by the 20 people in attendance and it elicited a number of comments and questions. About half the attendees were small retailers from Willmar and about 3/4 were women-owned businesses.

## 15<sup>th</sup> Street Flats—Construction Update



The contractors have begun working on the third floor of the multi-family apartment complex. These photos were taken on 2/8/19.



15<sup>th</sup> Street Flats from the Pizza Ranch parking lot.



### **Business Meetings (January 11<sup>th</sup> – February 14<sup>th</sup>)**

1. Mtg. w/Rep. Dave Baker & Scott Marquardt, SWIF, regarding funding for a Diverse Entrepreneurship program (1/11/19)
2. Participated in Hwy 23 Coalition Board Mtg. at Dooley's Petroleum (1/30/19)
3. Participated in BRE Committee Mtg. (2/1/19)
4. Mtg. w/Abdirashid Sharif re Diverse Entrepreneurship program
5. Monthly Mtg. w/Dr. Johnson, President, Ridgewater College
6. Attended Agcellence Banquet at the Willmar Conference Center (2/1/19)
7. Participated in conference call w/reporter from MN Daily re the Retail Business Design Workshops (2/4/19)
8. Attended the Vision 2040 Steering Committee Monthly Meeting
9. Meeting w/Cheryl Glaeser, Achieve TFC, re the EDC's Strategic Planning Session in March
10. Participated in the initial Retail Business Design Workshop at Bremer Bank (2/6/19)
11. Mtg. w/Jennifer Mendoza re CLUES update and WAM accounts
12. Hwy 23 Coalition Legislative Reception at the State Office Building in St. Paul (2/7/19)
13. Attended CVB Leisure Travel Committee Mtg. at the New London-Spicer Performing Arts Center (2/11/19)
14. Attended the Vision 2040 Housing Subcommittee Mtg.
15. Led MAPCED Quarterly Mtg. (held in conjunction w/AMC Legislative Conference) in St. Paul

### **Business Visits**

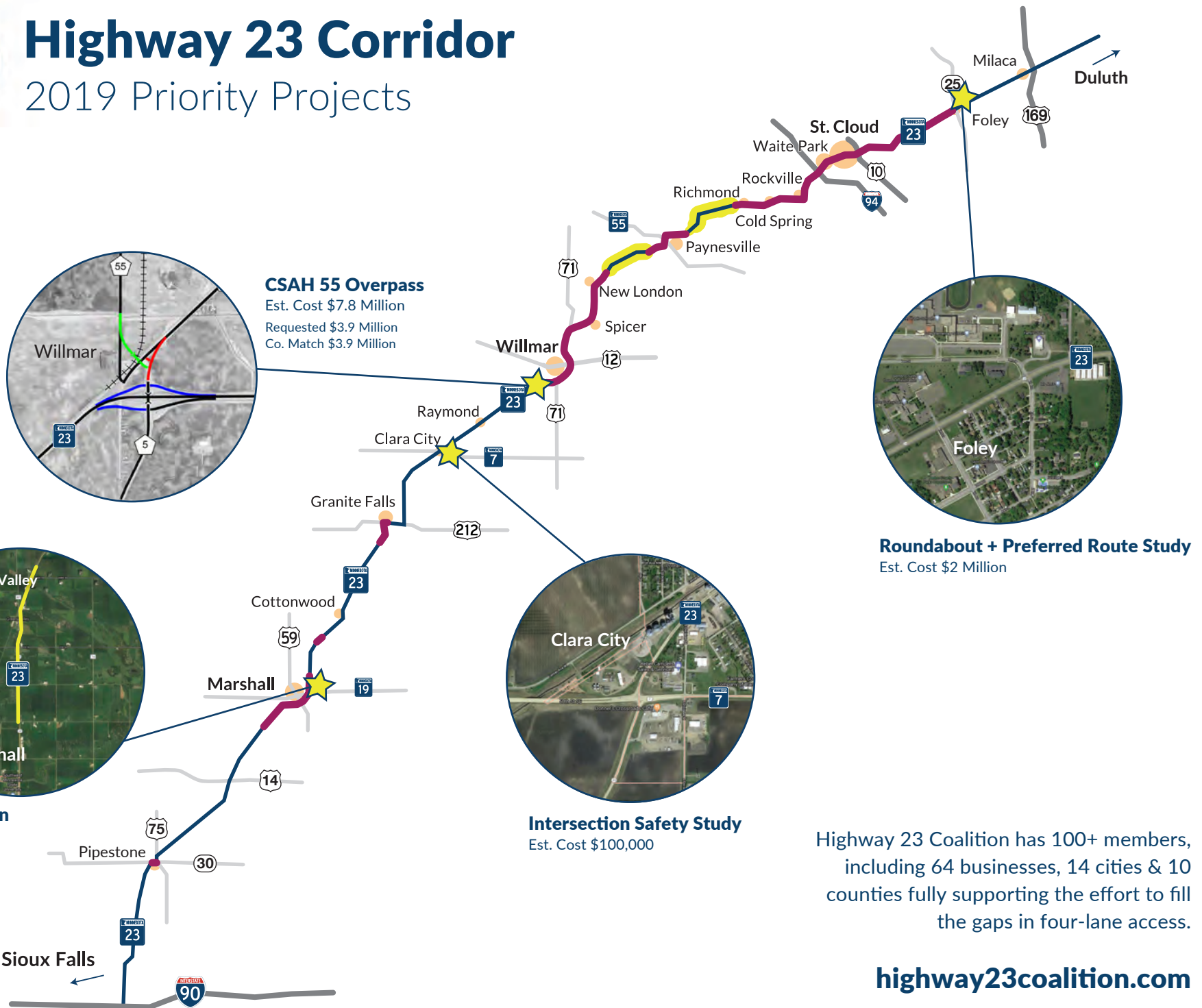
1. Mtg w/Zack Mahboub re-funding for elevator project at Midtown Plaza
2. Mtg w/Joanna Schrupp, GM for the MinnWest Technology Campus, recruitment strategy
3. Mtg. w/Abdirahin Hussen and later with Les Nelson, MMDC, re Willmar Child Care Center





# Highway 23 Corridor

## 2019 Priority Projects



Highway 23 Coalition has 100+ members, including 64 businesses, 14 cities & 10 counties fully supporting the effort to fill the gaps in four-lane access.

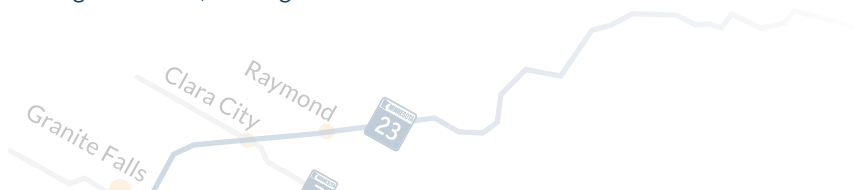
[highway23coalition.com](http://highway23coalition.com)



# Highway 23 Projects

## Status of Current Projects & Ongoing Corridor Needs

- ▶ The Highway 23 Coalition has expanded its coverage to 14 cities and 10 counties and now covers from I-90 in Southwest MN to I-35 in Northeast MN. The Coalition has over 100 business, government, and organizational members.



- ▶ The Highway 23 Coalition is appreciative of the Corridors of Commerce funding that was approved for the two four-lane gaps between Willmar and I-94 during the last legislative session. MnDOT District 8 is the lead entity for both gaps and is proceeding to develop and deliver these projects.

Recently District 8 has hired Isthmus Engineering to provide engineering services (e.g. final design, public engagement, permitting, etc.) for the North Gap. Land acquisition/ROW activities will begin in 2019. Construction of the first gap is expected to begin in 2022.

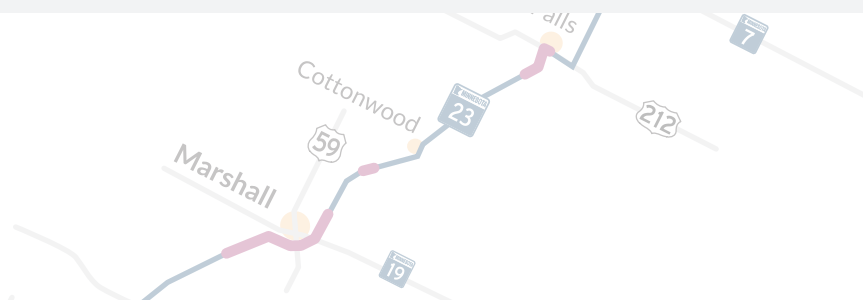
## Promoting Safety, Mobility & Growth

- ▶ The Highway 23 Coalition has identified and supports the following corridor project priorities for 2019:

- Construction of a **Roundabout in the City of Foley at Highway 23 and 8th Avenue (near Foley Public Schools) and the undertaking of a Preferred Route Safety Study that would encompass Hwy 23 from Foley to Milaca.** This study would determine the best route for a four-lane road.
- Construction of a **CSAH 55 Overpass that would connect to the new Interchange at Hwy 23 and County Road 5.** This bridge over the BNSF railroad would tie into the new Willmar Railroad Wye project with a direct connection to the City's Industrial Park.

- **Undertaking an Intersection Safety Study at Highway 23 and Highway 7 in Clara City.** This study would determine what changes could be made to enhance safety at this intersection. The Coalition's Board approved providing \$5,000 toward the local match required by MnDOT. Chippewa County and the City, both members of the Coalition, would match the contribution.
- Construction of a **four-lane extension of Highway 23 north from the City of Marshall to the City of Green Valley,** a distance of 4.5 miles. This project would continue the four-lane infrastructure on the Hwy 23 Corridor and bring it closer to connecting with Highway 212.

- ▶ In addition, the Highway 23 Coalition has been supportive of an improved I-94/MN23 Interchange project, an important safety project near Waite Park. MnDOT District 3 is now in the process of moving up this project, if possible, from 2020 to this year. The Coalition appreciates District 3's efforts in this regard.





**Joint Operations Board Meeting  
Connie Schmoll Report  
February 14, 2019**

**Child Care**

The Kandiyohi County Child Care Innovation Project Community Conversation has been completed with more than 90 people in attendance. Kandiyohi County turned in the greatest return on completed surveys with more than 1200 secured. The information that was collected was shared at the Community Conversation on November 29, 2018. Participants broke out into small groups to begin collecting ideas that could bring solutions to the shortages in childcare spaces.

The end result of survey, town hall meeting, and follow-up meetings will be to create a community action plan. At the next meeting of the core group which was held on Friday, Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>, members selected practical projects that have potential to be successful. The core group formed subgroups to lead the project tasks and get the subgroups organized. Project task groups will meet to devise SMART goals in each area. The SMART Goals decided on for continued processing include

- Goal 1 – Diversity/Mentoring
- Goal 2 – Training Opportunities Locally
- Goal 3 - Identifying and accessing capital
- Goal 4 – Business Support and Legislation

In addition, a member announced that a new day care center is being considered by the YMCA and other volunteers and will be located at the mall in Spicer, MN.

**Willmar Child Care Center**

Mr. Mohamoud Mohamed of Minneapolis, owner of proposed Willmar Child Care Center, has found a site and facility for his business at 500 Industrial Drive SW, in Willmar. The city rezoned the site for general business in November so that the site could be used for this purpose.

Mr. Mohamed submitted loan applications for the child care center to the EDC. The business will be a privately held, for-profit business, with Mr. Mohamed as 100% principal/owner. The child care center will provide services to 120 children. The plan includes 60 children per shift ages 4 months to 12 years. Services include:

- ✓ Full-time Child Day Care
- ✓ Part-time/After School Care
- ✓ After School Tutoring
- ✓ Drop-In Care

The African Development Center approved \$300K toward the purchase of the building and renovation costs. Other potential funders include Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF) at \$75,000, Mid-Minnesota Regional Development Center (MMDC) at \$50,000 and owner equity of \$50K.



The EDC approved a \$25,000 request for Revolving Loan Funds to be used for soft costs including administrative costs, marketing, and contingencies.

The MMDC has approved loan funds in the amount of \$50,000. The decision was ratified by the MMDC board on January 23rd. SWIF also approved the request for \$75,000 toward the business. SWIF is awaiting construction documents and city permits to do the buildout before closing their loan.

The EDC will be closing on the loan on Friday, February 15, 2019 if all paperwork including insurance plans are submitted by the owner by that date.

### **Opportunity Zones**

SWIF is sponsoring a training on Opportunity Zones:

"Think Like an Opportunity Zone Investor"

Thursday, February 28, 2019

Jackpot Junction Casino Hotel

[39375 County Highway 24, Morton](#)

8:30am – Registration, Breakfast, and Networking

9:00am to 1:30pm – Workshop (includes working lunch)

REGISTER today for Minnesota Opportunity Zones: *Think Like an Opportunity Zone Investor*.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/minnesota-opportunity-zones-think-like-an-opportunity-zone-investor-tickets-56103582325>

This FREE seminar is provided by the Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF) in partnership with Minnesota Opportunity Zone Advisors ([MN-OZA](#)) and features community and economic development specialists to explore leveraging Opportunity Zone Fund investments.

Who Should Attend:

- City, county, and regional economic/community development staff and board members
- City and county staff and elected officials
- Nonprofit organizations engaged in community planning/development
- Chamber of Commerce executives
- Developers (private and nonprofit)
- Employers and Entrepreneurs
- Property owners within Opportunity Zones
- Commercial Lenders
- Investors
- Attorneys
- Accountants
- Financial Planners/Advisors
- Real Estate Professionals



Learn how to build and/or screen project opportunities and gain an enhanced understanding of eligible projects and the timelines you'll need to follow. You'll also gain insights into ...

- Economic parameters of typical Opportunity Funds
- Materials you'll need to provide to investors for project evaluations

### **Business Meetings and Events**

1. Childcare Core Group Meeting
2. LAI Video Conference Call
3. Open Mic Ag Professionals
4. USDA Grant reports
5. Facebook ads training at Workup
6. Broadband workgroup for Coalition
7. Open Mic with Bruce Peterson
8. WestCon – Holloway – invitation to join ag group
9. Interview with student – Hamed Fadir on Community Development
10. Nate Hultgren on Industrial Hemp
11. Joint Ag Conference with MWRC – Planning
12. BRE Survey Research Subcommittee
13. Bruce Peterson Retirement Reception
14. Agcellence Banquet
15. Industrial hemp Exploratory Subcommittee
16. Retail Design Workshop Session 1
17. Highway 23 Legislative Reception
18. Meeting with Dave Baker i.e.: Childcare, Broadband, NDC and Highway 23

### **Business Visits**

1. Ag-business start-up meeting at EDC
2. Ag-business start-up investor meeting
3. Planning with start-up restaurant
4. Three start-up retail/service businesses
5. MWTC recruitment strategy
6. Planning with Willmar Childcare Center