

KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
JOINT POWERS BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
MINUTES
April 25, 2019
EDC Office, Willmar, MN

Present: Fernando Alvarado, Roger Imdieke, Harlan Madsen, Roland (Rollie) Nissen and Kathy Schwantes

Absent: Andrew Plowman

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

Guest: Donna Boonstra

Media: Shelby Lindrud, West Central Tribune

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

Chairperson Kathy Schwantes called the meeting to order at approximately 11:30 a.m. and declared a quorum was present.

AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED BY Roger Imdieke, SECONDED BY Rollie Nissen, to approve the Agenda as e-mailed. All present voted unanimously in favor by roll call.

MINUTES

IT WAS MOVED BY Fernando Alvarado, SECONDED BY Harlan Madsen, to approve the Minutes of the January 24, 2019 annual meeting of the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission Joint Powers Board of Commissioners as e-mailed. All present voted unanimously in favor by roll call.

TREASURER'S REPORT—Aaron Backman presented the financial reports for periods ending January 31, February 28 and March 31, 2019 and compared the March 31, 2019 Balance Sheet with that of December 31, 2018. Backman reviewed the Profit & Loss Statement as of March 31, 2019 and highlighted the grant received from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant for Simply Shrimp. Connie Schmoll reported the Joint Operations Board approved a countywide business development grant to the New London Food Co-op for its marketing. Backman stated he expects the TIGER II grant may be expended at the end of this year. Backman noted the

Highway 23 Coalition has authorized reimbursement of mileage to the EDC as it relates to membership recruitment.

IT WAS MOVED BY Harlan Madsen, SECONDED BY Rollie Nissen, to accept the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission financial reports for periods ending January 31, February 28 and March 31, 2019, subject to audit. All present voted unanimously in favor by roll call.

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Nissen, SECONDED BY Fernando Alvarado, to amend the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's 2019 budget to include under revenues the USDA grant for Simply Shrimp of \$107,000.00 and expense related thereto and also include under revenues \$14,000 for the Retail Business Design Workshops and expenses related thereto. All present voted unanimously in favor by roll call.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Boards' Strategic Planning Session. Chair Schwantes thanked staff for preparing for the boards' planning session in March noting it was a successful event. Backman acknowledged Cheryl Glaeser for facilitating the planning session. Backman highlighted items from the 2019 Strategic Planning Session Summary (see attached). There were 24 participants, including members of both EDC boards, committee chairs and vice chairs and partner organizations. Backman reviewed the Closing Summary from the session (see attached). Board members commented on the planning session. Discussion was held on holding annual planning sessions or having an annual review with a planning session every few years. Backman noted Glaeser's comment as to other organizations' three to five year plans changing to one to two-year plans. If the EDC holds an abbreviated annual review, it was felt the same facilitator as the planning session should be used. Chair Schwantes stated the topic will be placed on the January 2020 board agenda to determine whether a review or full planning session should be held. Schmoll noted it was nice to have goals and action plans decided at the planning session.

IT WAS MOVED BY Roger Imdieke, SECONDED BY Fernando Alvarado, to accept the 2019 Strategic Planning Session Summary dated March 14, 2019 for the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission. All present voted unanimously in favor by roll call.

Backman reviewed the Objectives of the 2019 Action Planning Worksheets for the four strategic priority areas (see attached):

1. **Workforce Development.** Backman noted the Business Retention and Expansion/Recruitment (BRE) Committee reviewed the action plans and discussed creating a community video.
2. **Business Support.** The BRE Committee also reviewed the Business Support worksheet, which will also be reviewed by the Finance Committee.

Backman indicated the Joint Operations Board directed the BRE Committee should decide if both areas, Workforce Development and Business Support, should be approached and if a new committee or subcommittee should be created. Board members felt it should be under one committee with possible co-chairs or subcommittees and voiced concern about staff having more work than time allows.

3. **Broadband.** Schmoll reviewed the Objectives. She met with three townships (Mamre, St. Johns and Dovre) last night about a potential project. Schmoll requested an attorney attend the meeting to answer questions about projects and funding. There will be costs for a study, as well as a build out. Schmoll informed the townships she would ask the County Board if it would be willing to help fund the study.
4. **Agriculture.** Schmoll reviewed the Objectives. As to the first objective, the committee is working with MinnWest Technology Campus to host a joint conference on August 1, 2019.

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Nissen, SECONDED BY Roger Imdieke, to adopt the Strategic Priority Areas and action plans for 2019 for the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission. All present voted unanimously in favor by roll call.

NEW BUSINESS

Lease Renewal Proposal from Willmar Elks Lodge. Backman stated he requested a proposed lease renewal from the Elks as the EDC's lease ends in December this year (see attached). The current rent is \$1,800 per month (\$14.40 per square foot) and the proposed new Lease increases rent to \$2,000 per month (\$16 per square foot) all inclusive. The Elks have engaged Stacy's Nursery to redo the landscaping. Backman noted the corrections that will be needed to the proposed new Lease. Board members spoke in favor of the current location as to ease of access, visibility and parking, but indicated there should be a paragraph as to an early out, if needed.

Bylaw Change to Allow Remote Attendance. Chair Schwantes stated a question was asked that the Bylaws be reviewed for language allowing remote attendance by board members. Board members questioned if the Joint Powers Board is a taxing authority and can hold meetings remotely. Madsen stated the EDC does not set its own levy, but is certified by the City of Willmar and Kandiyohi County so may not be considered a taxing authority. Imdieke recommended remote attendance be in an emergency situation and not a regular thing. Backman will followup with Attorney Schmidt in this regard.

[Alvarado was excused from the meeting.]

PROGRESS REPORTS

Willmar/Willmar Industrial Park. Backman reported he and Schmoll have started weekly meetings with Dave Ramstad, the new Planning and Development Director for the City of Willmar. The EDC's flyer for the Willmar Industrial Park is being updated and will incorporate suggested changes by

Ramstad in time for Schmoll to bring with her to a conference in Canada. Backman reported 15th Street Flats is working on its fourth floor and continues to be on schedule and on budget. The move-in date is late August or early September. Schmoll reported Ramstad has requested data for his office to have on hand. Chair Schmoll reported the Willmar City Hall Task Force continues to work on a location for a new city hall. The city is awaiting an environmental assessment for the Nelsen property.

Rural Child Care Innovation Project. Schmoll reported Ridgewater College is planning to implement childcare certification training for 2020 and others have offered other ideas. State funding for childcare for initiative foundations is being considered. The message as to childcare needs must be shared with legislators. Schmoll has discussed the issue with Senator Andrew Lang. Schmoll toured two local churches as potential childcare sites.

Highway 23 Coalition. Donna Boonstra gave highlights on the legislative reception hosted by the Coalition at the State Office, which was attended by Minnesota Department of Transportation Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher. The Coalition held election of officers: Boonstra is the new president; Jeff Bertram is vice president and Backman continues as secretary/treasurer. The Coalition held its annual meeting at The 400 Club outside Rockville where Commissioner Kelliher, Representative Frank Hornstein and Senator Lang spoke. Sixteen representative of the Coalition and local government will attend a fly-in to Washington, D.C. in June. Sponsors will be sought to assist with the costs for a reception for Minnesota D.C. legislators and staff. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has moved up construction of the south gap by one year. Boonstra showed a map for the intersection by Richmond. Backman reported MnDOT representatives attended this week's Coalition board meeting. Bid letting for the north gap will be in 2021 and the south gap will be in 2022.

Business Visits and Meetings. Backman highlighted items from his written report (see attached). Schmoll highlighted business meetings, events and visits from her written report (see attached).

COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

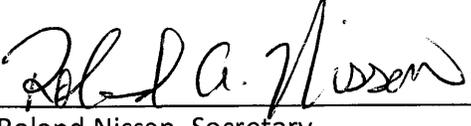
Broadband and Advanced Technology. Schmoll mentioned she will be going before the Kandiyohi County Commissioners to request the board's support for the engineering study for the three townships.

Finance. Backman reported the EDC was approached by the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) to take over its USDA Intermediary Relending Program (IRP). The IRP has \$600,000 available to loan to downtown Willmar businesses. If the EDC takes over the IRP, Backman recommends the EDC look at expanding the area covered and how the IRP is managed.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business,

IT WAS MOVED BY Roger Imdieke, SECONDED BY Rollie Nissen, to adjourn the meeting.
MOTION CARRIED.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular board meeting is 11:30 a.m., Thursday, July 25, 2019, at the EDC office.



Roland Nissen, Secretary

APPROVED: 7/25/2019:



Roger Imdieke, Vice Chairperson



Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

2019 Strategic Planning Session Summary

March 14, 2019

Kandiyohi Power Cooperative Community Room

Background

The mission of the **Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission (EDC)** is to be a catalyst for economic growth of the greater Kandiyohi County area. The EDC 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 and opportunities. The EDC holds a strategic planning retreat to prioritize short- and long-term goals with strategic objectives.

Process

The EDC engaged a third-party consultant, Cheryl K. Glaeser with Achieve TFC, LLC, to design a process and facilitate a strategic planning retreat with the outcome of developing a shared vision of success and key strategies that will guide the work of the EDC throughout 2019, recognizing the past goal areas and considering the changing demographics and trends impacting the EDC service area.

Advance Interviews

To ensure that the process designed would lead to desired results, 11 representatives from the EDC boards, staff and committees were interviewed. These phone interviews provided a basis of understanding of current activities, influential trends, challenges and opportunities.

The interviews exposed areas of appreciation, key concerns and potential actions for the future.

Appreciations:

- significant appreciation for the passion and commitment of the EDC staff and the impact realized through their efforts
- excitement around specific efforts pertaining to the Highway 23 Coalition, the child care initiative, the diverse workforce initiative in partnership with Ridgewater College and CLUES, broadband and support for existing businesses
- appreciation for the collaborative nature of the EDC and its work

Concerns:

- responding to the volatility of the economy, particularly in the agriculture sector
- being proactive in addressing changing demographics, such as aging population, diversity and workforce availability
- ensuring that we are not spreading EDC staff resources too thin
- balancing the support for existing businesses with new business recruitment

Advance Survey

In addition, EDC staff, Joint Powers and Joint Operations Board members, committee members from the Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development, Broadband and Advanced Technology, Business Retention & Expansion/Recruitment, Finance and Marketing and Public Relations Committees, and other key stakeholders were invited to provide insights about current trends and goals by participating in a survey developed by Glaeser [Appendix D: EDC 2019 Planning Survey]. A large number of respondents pointed to the strong leadership and dedication of the EDC staff. It is clear that currently engaged board members and other invited participants appreciate the knowledge and energy of the staff.

Trends and Influential Factors

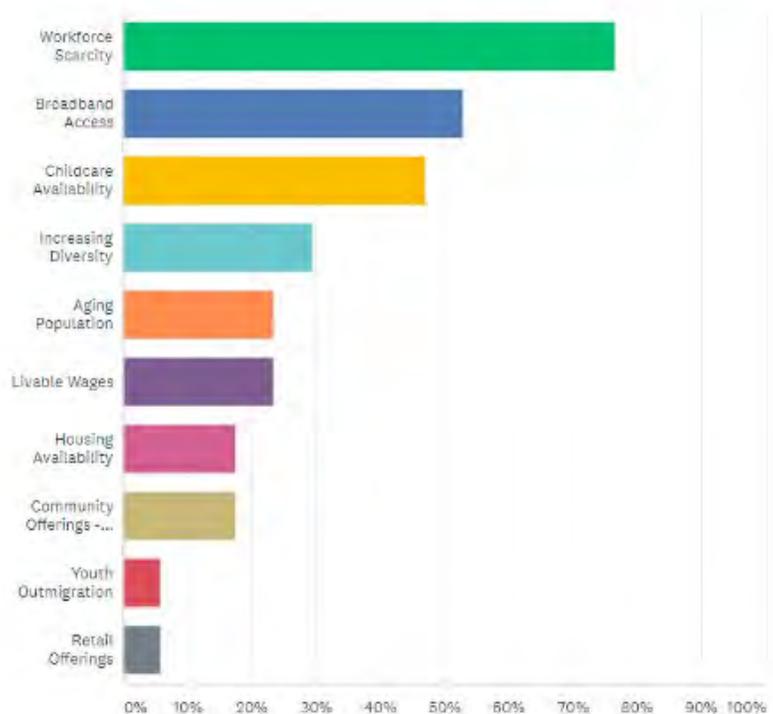
When asked to consider several trends, survey participants indicated the trends most likely to influence the direction of the EDC are:

- Workforce scarcity (76.47%)
- Broadband access (52.94%)
- Childcare availability (47.06%)
- Increasing diversity (29.41%)

Future Actions

When asked what near-term actions would have the greatest impact for Kandiyohi County, several themes emerged with the greatest number of survey participants indicating actions related to these top four areas:

1. Workforce (31%),
2. Childcare (25%),
3. Broadband (19%)
4. Business Recruitment (19%)



Key Challenges

- Changing demographics
- Capacity to support existing businesses; meeting their needs
- Volatility of our economy—downturns in certain sectors (e.g. agriculture) and unforeseen business loss

EDC Vision of Success

When asked what will be different in Kandiyohi County if the EDC is successful in reaching its goals, several themes emerged, including:

- A thriving economy that is more diverse and steadily growing
- New businesses/employers, including successful startups and larger employers in the area
- Childcare shortage no longer a barrier for working families
- High-speed broadband attracts new businesses and residents
- Recognition of Willmar as an up and coming regional center
- A skilled workforce meets employer needs and increases income opportunities for families

These insights from interviews and the survey were used to determine the focus for the Strategic Planning Retreat on March 14, 2019. Insights also guided the materials to be made available to planning participants prior to and during the session. Demographics and information on trends were provided in advance to attendees in areas, including Diversity and Population, Workforce, Child Care, Broadband and Retail/Taxable Sales. [Appendix A: Trends-Demographics Dashboards.]

Strategic Planning Retreat

EDC staff, Joint Powers and Operations Board members, committee members from the Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development, Broadband and Advanced Technology, Business Retention & Expansion/Recruitment, Finance and Marketing and Public Relations Committees, and other key stakeholders met on March 14, 2019 for a full-day retreat.

Planning Retreat Outcomes

- Shared understanding of the vision of impact we seek through the work of the EDC
- Development of organizational priorities—overarching goals; short- and long-term objectives
- Exploration of how to reach objectives and what resources may be required
- Strengthened cohesion and common purpose among board, staff and other key stakeholders

Mission and Vision

The group began by reviewing the EDC’s existing Mission and Vision Statements. Together they explored the EDC’s purpose, using Simon Sinek’s concept that “People don’t buy what you do, they buy WHY you do it,” to help them consider strategic priorities grounded in purpose and their vision of the impact they seek. Group thoughts on the EDC’s purpose focused largely on the EDC being **a visionary organization that works toward community betterment and economic growth through collaborative efforts that build on past success and truly value and support all people and businesses.**

MISSION: To be a catalyst for economic growth of the greater Kandiyohi County Area.

VISION: To provide visionary economic development leadership creating growth, prosperity, innovation, international competitiveness, and enhanced quality of life.

Trends and Influential Factors

Together, participants explored the ways in which key economic, social, political and technological trends might affect the work of the EDC in the coming year. Referring back to the Planning Retreat Survey and the trends identified by the group (See Image 1.1), the group discussed what stood out for them, what trends might be missing, and how they might impact our work moving forward.

COUNTY PROFILE | Kandiyohi Co.

LABOR FORCE | Image 3.1

Table 10. Employment Characteristics, 2017

	Kandiyohi Co.			Minnesota	
	In Labor Force	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate
Black or African American	531	50.7%	12.6%	69.8%	11.0%
American Indian & Alaska Native	125	84.5%	0.0%	58.6%	13.3%
Asian or Other Pac. Islanders	162	63.3%	0.0%	71.1%	5.2%
Some Other Race	967	69.0%	8.9%	77.2%	7.5%
Two or More Races	247	72.9%	0.4%	72.5%	9.1%
Hispanic or Latino	2,228	71.4%	9.1%	76.2%	7.2%

When asked what stood out for them, participants noted the following:

- Kandiyohi labor force gains—growing faster than our overall population; commuting from outside the county; people are rejoining the workforce
- Incongruent conversation about immigration—cannot meet workforce needs without input and involvement from diverse populations
- Aging population—the benefit of wisdom and experience and how we might capture this as an opportunity
- A lot of retirement is coming, function of money, not age; the services needed for aging population is an economic issue
- All areas need to be addressed—How do we balance/prioritize/intertwine our efforts?

The group identified the following as potential trends that may be missing in our considerations:

- **Education**—Reassessing where education fits into the workforce—needs to be more about skills and the person, pursuing specific types of education rather than degrees—misaligned right now and creating concerns with student debt (MN average student debt of \$31,915 is 5th highest in U.S.)
- **Technological Changes**—Rapid changes and how to balance being visionary yet reactive; balancing immediate needs with future change
- **Global Economy**—Living in a global economy and competitors are now across the world

Analysis of Trends

To further ensure common understanding of key trends and how they might influence the work of the EDC, participants worked in small groups, selecting their top interest trends to complete a scan of the strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats related to each. The trends explored included: Childcare, Diversity, Education, Technology/Globalization and Workforce. [Appendix B: Trend Analysis]

Progress on Current Goals

Interviews and survey results indicated that the EDC is starting from a place of strength when considering its efforts toward existing goals. Aaron Backman, EDC Executive Director, briefly reviewed the current goals of the EDC and noted milestones/accomplishments that have been reached thus far. [Appendix C: 2018 Goals Review). Working in small groups, participants explored the lessons learned over the past 12 months.

Key Lessons Learned

- Partnerships/collaborations are very important
- Address items before they become an issue
- There is power in story telling
- Select achievable goals
- Consider staff capacity

“If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.”

African Proverb

Opportunities for Growth

- Better utilize the talent and expertise of committee members/volunteers
- Consider refocusing the BRE Committee to workforce or create separate committee
- Ag is still a predominant sector; understand better how it impacts the region and economy
- Explore the role of EDC as leader vs. supportive for various initiatives

Priorities—KEEP/CHANGE/ADD

The group considered what areas of current goals should be kept, which areas should be kept but changed, and what new areas we might consider adopting. Below is a chart of the priority areas that received the greatest number of votes during discussion.

KEEP—(# stars)

Business Retention & Expansion (5)
Agriculture (3)
Childcare Collaboration (3)
Entrepreneur Support (3)

CHANGE—(# stars)

Broadband (7)
Marketing (7)
Diverse Business Initiative (3)

ADD—(# stars)

Workforce Development (4)
Ag Support (3)
Marketing (3)—new focus

Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar Economic Development Commission

2019 Strategic Priority Areas

EDC boards and committee members and other participants explored and considered several potential priority areas for the EDC, including Agriculture, Broadband, Business Retention & Expansion, Business Visits, Childcare, Diverse Workforce Training, Energy, Entrepreneur Support, Marketing, Opportunity Zones, Retail Service/Amenity Recruitment, Ridgewater College Enrollment, Transportation and Workforce Development. A key to success is collaboration, which the group feels is a strength of the EDC. Following small group discussion and various voting methods, the group narrowed the focus to five major areas (listed as ranked by the group):

1. **Workforce Development:** Develop and expand workforce availability and skills to support the growth and expansion of businesses.

Potential Objectives:

- Establish a workforce development committee
- Expand diverse workforce training, building on the success of CLUES
- Work with Ridgewater College to improve enrollment and student success
- Support a Teachers of Color Pipeline Initiative in partnership with K12 and Ridgewater College
- Bring like-type industries together (focus groups by industry sector) to discuss workforce needs and explore additional employer-driven initiatives, such as MAP that might be supported/started
- Create a video highlighting Kandiyohi County businesses and the workforce skills/needs; host on the EDC website and promote via social media
- Develop a “Bring Them Back Campaign” with positive messaging of opportunities in the area and telling the stories of why they should want to return

Vision of Success:

Skill enhancement of potential labor market tied to local needs. Higher levels of people gaining greater employment and entering pathways that lead to careers with greater earning potential.

2. **Business Support:** Building relationships with area business, with a key intent to inform them of available resources through the EDC, better understand their challenges/needs and help them share their successes.

Potential Objectives:

- Engage in focused one-on-one visits with existing businesses to inform them of resources and streamline complications/challenges they may have
- Develop a business support group of “like-minded businesses*” and/or “emerging entrepreneurs;” consider the 1 Million Cup model; specific mention of support for businesses started within past five years and those in the retail sector
- Invite bankers/accountants to a gathering to learn of EDC resources and share business needs
- Develop a “community” marketing campaign to distribute EDC offerings broadly in the area

Vision of Success:

Businesses owners are able to streamline operations and resolve barriers they may have and learn from each other’s successes and challenges. Our communities know and understand how the EDC can help businesses.

*Note: There was mention of global marketing too, however, not sure where/how it fits with local business support. The group discussed creating a marketing piece/video about the area’s quality of life and drawing in businesses by redefining demographics and information as a regional draw for national businesses.

3. **Childcare:** Continue efforts of the Kandiyohi County Rural Childcare Innovation Program designed to develop right-sized solutions to address the challenges of early care and education in the area.

Potential Objectives:

- Increase the number of childcare options, including diverse childcare choices, available for the workforce in Kandiyohi County and in the region
- Secure sustainable solutions for existing and new childcare centers and family childcare providers, including diverse childcare by streamlining professional development opportunities, increasing network opportunities for childcare providers, developing new funding sources for childcare capital projects, increasing financial supports for childcare operations, identifying space for potential programs and promoting use of resources that are currently available to childcare providers.

Vision of Success: The supply of high quality, affordable childcare in the Kandiyohi County area is sufficient for all workforce. Childcare businesses are profitable.

4. **Agricultural Innovation:** Understanding and responding to the ever-changing food and agriculture sectors

Potential Objectives:

- Collaborate with other agriculture and producer groups to host community conversations and/or educational forums that support producers and dispel myths around agriculture
- Recruit additional value-added agriculture processors, businesses and markets
- Create a local vision statement for agriculture as an economic driver in Kandiyohi County and share vision broadly
- Revisit the Ag BR&E results and respond with training, workshops and education

Vision of Success:

Agriculture is recognized as a healthy, strong and vibrant industry that strengthens our area. Producer living wages improve and they feel valued and supported.

5. **Broadband:** Lobby—Collaborate—Educate to provide broadband access throughout Kandiyohi County

Potential Objectives:

- Identify specific people in government to lobby for statutory changes that enable grants for rural Kandiyohi County
- Develop a coalition of Kandiyohi County townships willing to facilitate the investment of broadband for the benefit of their residents
- Increase our involvement in the Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition to bring more awareness to Kandiyohi County's challenges (get the real story out about speeds/access) and increase opportunities for faster buildout of broadband services

Vision of Success:

Businesses are able to have employees work remotely from their homes, entrepreneurs have more opportunities to expand their businesses, students are able to do homework from home, seniors can take advantage of telemedicine healthcare, and house values increase.

Strategic Planning Session – 2019 Closing Summary

EDC staff, Joint Powers and Operations Board members, committee members from the Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development, Broadband and Advanced Technology, Business Retention & Expansion/Recruitment, Finance, and Marketing and Public Relations Committees, along with additional key stakeholders participated in the 2019 Strategic Planning Session.

Together, participants explored and discussed potential strategic priorities for the next 12 to 18 months, grounded in the framework of the EDC's mission and vision as well as the trends and influential factors that might affect their work. The trends identified as most likely to influence the work of the EDC included workforce scarcity, broadband access challenges, the lack of available/affordable child care, and changing population demographics. The group also discussed the need for aligning education, workforce needs and individual skills and interests.

Following a review of progress toward current goals and the lessons learned in the past year, the group reached consensus on five priority areas focusing on workforce development, business support, child care availability/affordability, agricultural innovation, and broadband access. The group identified potential objectives and desired outcomes for each of these priorities. The objectives within each of these areas may need to be further prioritized according to the EDC's capacity and available resources.

The EDC prides itself on being purposeful in working toward community betterment and economic growth through collaborative efforts.

This Strategic Planning Summary and the accompanying documentation will serve as a guide for the EDC Staff, Board and Committees as they strive to fulfill their mission of catalyzing economic growth of the greater Kandiyohi County Area.

Aaron Backman, Executive Director of the EDC, expresses his appreciation for the 24 attendees dedicating the better part of a day to focus on the EDC's goals, acknowledges the EDC staff's contributions in pulling the event together, recognizes the participation of our strategic partners in this planning process, and thanks Cheryl Glaeser, Achieve TFC, for being the facilitator for the EDC's 2019 Planning Session.



As a new participant in the EDC planning process, I was very impressed with the high degree of active participation and thoughtful engagement by community members as part of the planning process. The day's activities produced a clear set of goals for the upcoming year that were derived from a well-documented discussion and feedback process. I am confident that our time was well-spent and we were able to contribute to the development of a strategic plan that will be a good tool to guide the work of the EDC staff.

Craig Johnson, President of Ridgewater College

Appendix A: Trends-Demographics Dashboards

DIVERSITY & POPULATION

Across the state, a once homogeneous population is becoming increasingly multiracial and multicultural. A diverse array of communities of color are driving population growth, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. In 1980, only 4 percent of Minnesotans were people of color. Today, that figure is 19 percent, and by 2040 it is projected to be 29 percent.

Willmar is a diverse community with a large Latino and Somali/East African population that is increasingly represented in the business world. Members of these communities own and operate approximately 12% of businesses in Willmar, as evidenced by a recent Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Survey of diverse businesses undertaken by the EDC.

Kandiyohi County – Population Percentage, Rank among MN Counties (2013)		
Origin	%	RANK - MN
Hispanic or Latino	11.4%	3*
Black or African American	3.3%	10**
*Nobles # 1 – 25.3%; Watonwan #2 – 22.3%		
** Nobles # 7 – 4%; Stearns #9 – 3.6%		

County Profile	Kandiyohi County				Updated: 2/1/2019	
Table 4. Race and Hispanic Origin, 2017	Kandiyohi Co.				Minnesota	
	Number	Percent	Change from 2000-2017		Percent	Change from 2000-2017
			Numeric	Percent		
Total	42,577	100.0%	1,374	3.3%	100.0%	11.6%
White	37,521	88.1%	-1,055	-2.7%	83.7%	4.5%
Black or African American	1,846	4.3%	1,637	783.3%	6.0%	90.4%
American Indian & Alaska Native	168	0.4%	30	21.7%	1.0%	4.7%
Asian & Other Pac. Islander	347	0.8%	162	87.6%	4.7%	79.2%
Some Other Race	2,089	4.9%	370	21.5%	1.7%	45.3%
Two or More Races	606	1.4%	230	61.2%	2.8%	86.7%
Hispanic or Latino Origin	5,061	11.9%	1,766	53.6%	5.2%	98.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2017 American Community Survey

Labor Force	County Profile	Kandiyohi Co.				
Table 10. Employment Characteristics, 2017	Employment Characteristics by Race & Hispanic Origin	Kandiyohi Co.			Minnesota	
		In Labor Force	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate
		White	20,505	67.9%	2.5%	69.7%
Black or African American	531	50.7%	12.6%	69.8%	11.0%	
American Indian & Alaska Native	125	84.5%	0.0%	58.6%	13.3%	
Asian & Other Pac. Islander	162	63.3%	0.0%	71.1%	5.2%	
Some Other Race	967	69.0%	8.9%	77.2%	7.5%	
Two or More Races	247	72.9%	0.4%	72.5%	9.1%	
Hispanic or Latino Origin	2,228	71.4%	9.1%	76.2%	7.2%	

The EDC identified 31 East African businesses, 27 Latino businesses and at least 8 Asian businesses in Willmar. Fully 13 businesses or 48% of the Latino businesses have been operating for more than ten years. And five or 19% of the Latino businesses have been started within the last two years. Businesses created by the Somali population are more recent. Most are less than 12 years in operation, and 9 companies or 29% have been operating for over 10 years. And 10 or 32% of the Somali businesses have been started in the last two years.

Source: MN Department of Employment and Economic Development

WORKFORCE

As the economy has recovered and added jobs, the labor market in the region has been getting tighter. During second quarter of 2018, there were 0.6 unemployed job seekers for each job vacancy in Minnesota indicating an extremely tight labor market. In Region 6E there are 0.7 unemployed job seekers for each job vacancy.



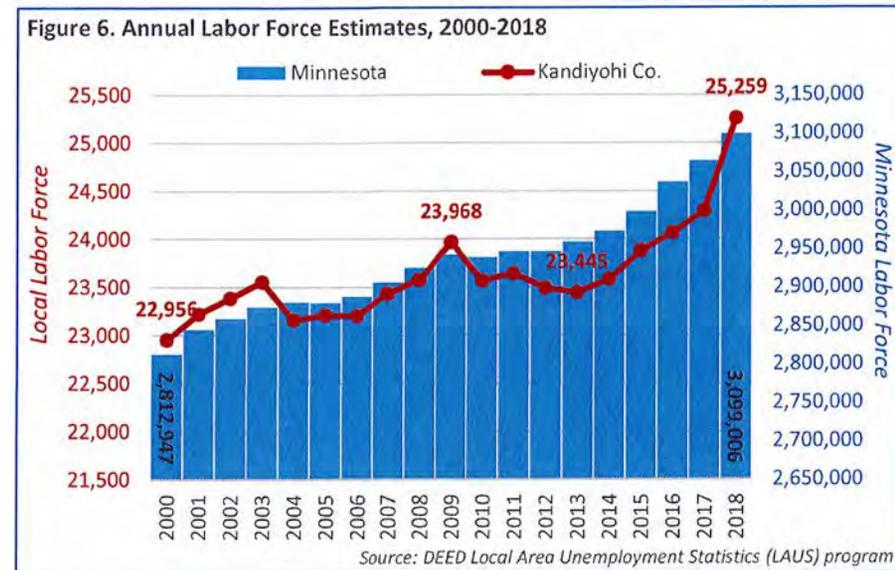
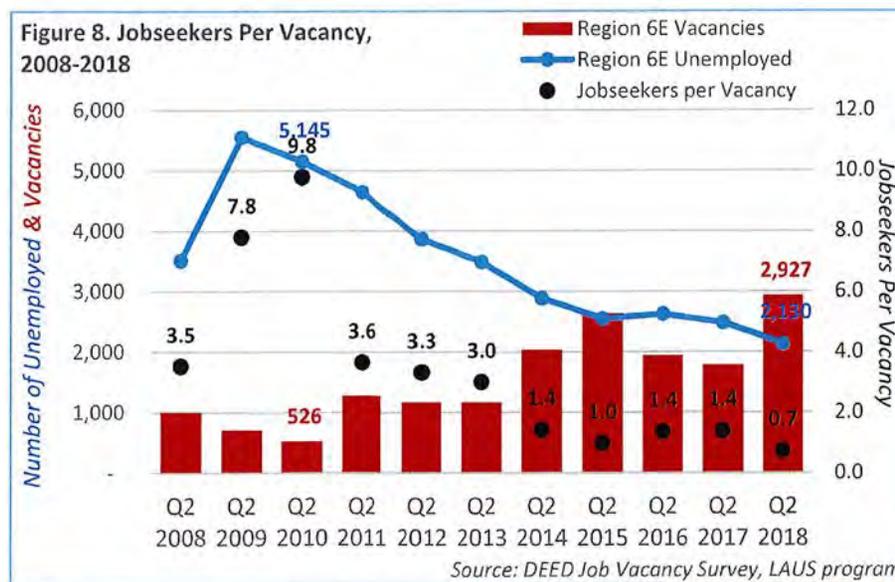
unemployed job seekers for each job vacancy.

Increasingly tight labor markets and a scarcity of workers is now recognized as one of Region 6E's most pressing concerns for future economic growth.

Though the size of the regional labor force is expected to decline,

the age composition of the workforce will see a significant shift over time, with a steady gain in the number of workers aged 20 to 44 years and gains in workers aged 65 years and over against huge declines in the number of workers aged 45 to 64 years. The region may lose about 4,350 workers in the 45 to 64-year-old age group as the Baby Boom generation moves through the population pyramid. The 25 to 54-year-old age group will still be the largest part of the labor force, accounting for 58 percent of the total. This will likely lead to a tight labor market in the future, with employers needing to respond to the changing labor force availability.

In the face of these constraints, it has become evident that a more diverse workforce in terms of age, gender, race, ethnicity, disability status, and immigration has been and will continue to be a vital source of the workers that employers need to succeed. As the Caucasian workforce continues to age, younger workers of different races or from different countries will comprise the fastest growing segment of the labor force.



Sources of information: MN Dept. of Employment and Economic Development; Luke Greiner, Regional Labor Analyst and Minnesota's Tomorrow: Equity is the Superior Growth Model, a report by PolicyLink.

CHILD CARE

The majority of the growth in center-based care occurred in the Twin Cities Metro. The increase in metro center-based capacity was enough to cover the losses of in-home spaces. However, there was no such surge in Greater Minnesota, where communities are experiencing a net loss of more than 15,000 spaces.

	Child Care	Child Care	
Greater MN	-20,416	5,039	-15,377
Twin Cities	-16,125	19,049	+3,284

The change in the number of spaces in in-home family child care and center-based child care between 2006 and 2015 (MN Dept. of Human Services).

“A crisis has been quietly brewing throughout Minnesota and the nation for many years now. People have been getting out of the in-home family child care business at a disturbing rate, creating a severe shortage over most of the state. And while statewide data makes it appear that growth in child care center is picking up the slack, that is not the case in much of Greater Minnesota.” Werner

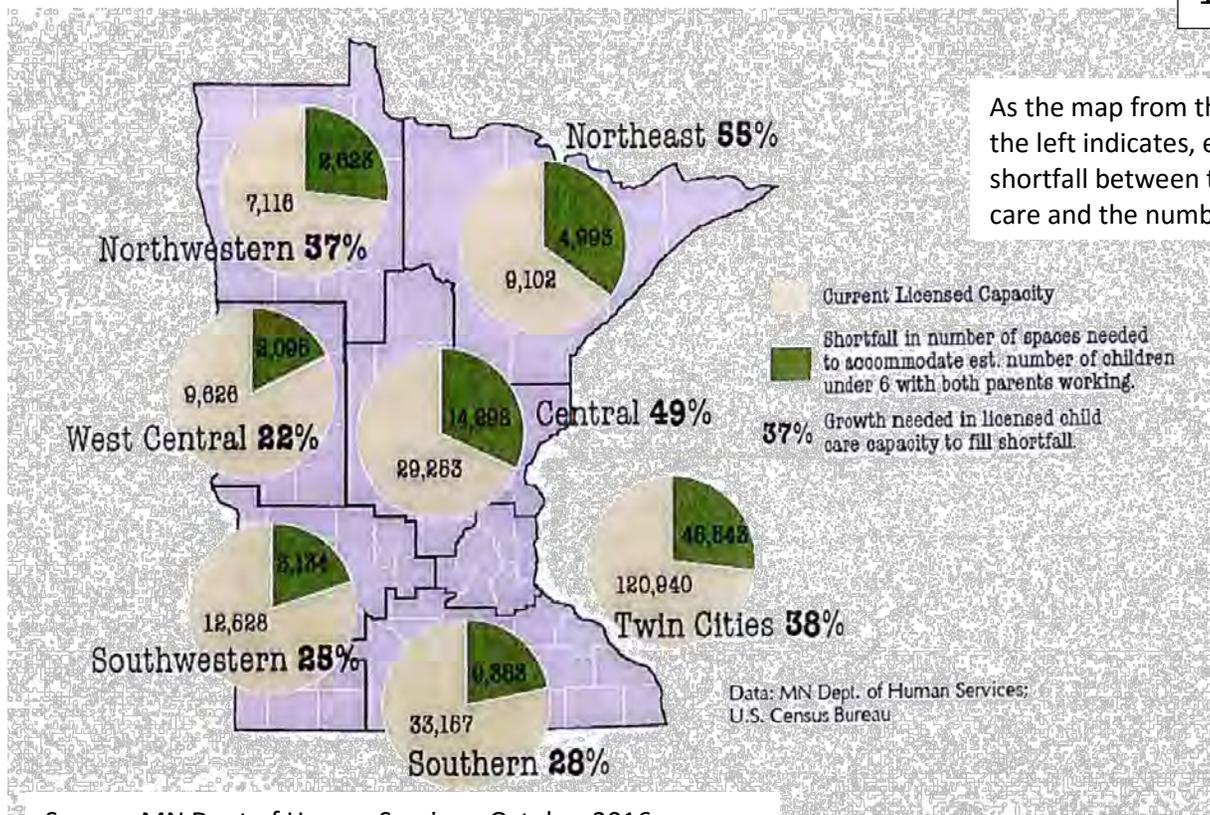
West Central MN:

(According to LIS, 2005 to 2015)

555 Programs

8,390 Capacity

17% Decrease in Capacity



As the map from the Center for Rural Policy and Development to the left indicates, every region of the state is experiencing “a shortfall between the number of children potentially needing child care and the number of spaces available.”

Why Are They Leaving?

- Providers are of retirement age
- Subsequent generations choosing other options
- Providers transition into fields that are more profitable and less demanding – they simply cannot make a living in the industry
- Regulations have been tightened in the last several years, including increased training/paperwork
- Regulatory enforcement by county licensors can sometime be inconsistent and punitive.

Source: MN Dept of Human Services, October 2016

BROADBAND

As of 2018, 74.11 percent of households and businesses had access to service that meets or exceeds the state of Minnesota’s speed goal for 2026, which is 100 Mbps download by 20 Mbps upload from at least one provider. When looking at just non-metro areas, that number drops to 60.05 percent, and for Kandiyohi County, the number drops to 10.64%. Communities (such as Kandiyohi and others) are on the ground doing public education and encouraging action and adoption. We are leaders – and that means we learn from our own lessons to stay ahead of the pack.

Minnesota Speed Goals for Border to Border Broadband

25 Mbps down and 3 Mbps up by 2022
100 Mbps down and 20 Mbps up by 2026

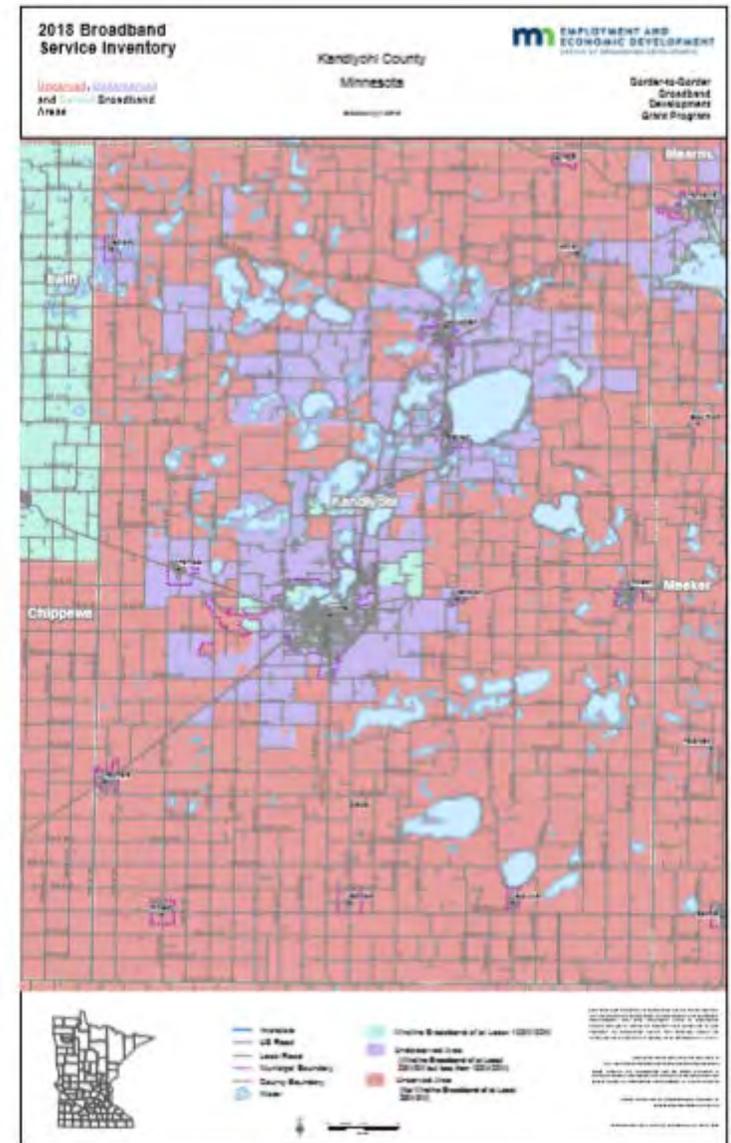
Access as of October 2018*

<u>Speeds</u>	<u>Statewide</u>	<u>MN Rural</u>	<u>Kandiyohi County</u>
25/3	91.13%	80.07%	77.20%
100/20	74.11%	60.05%	10.64%

*Connect America and MN DEED mapping according to census blocks (If one person in a census block has access to the advertised speed, all are counted as served at that speed. Local reports show access is less.)

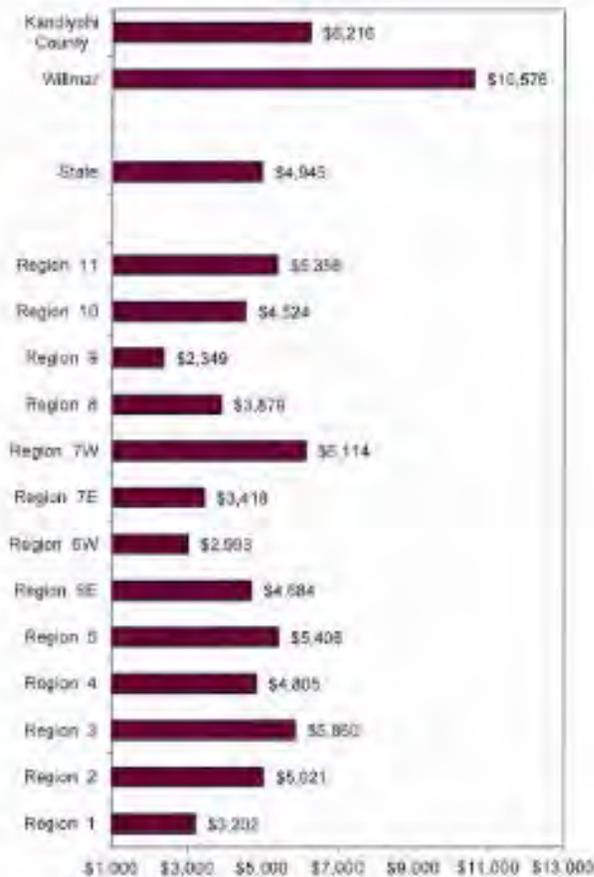
Rural Challenges:

- **Inaccurate maps** – The basic data about where we have coverage and where we don’t may not be accurate according to residents
- **Deployment costs** – Costs of serving rural areas is higher because of population density, distance, terrain. ROI is lower because of lower potential volume compared to more densely populated areas. These make securing a provider more difficult.
- **Provider Competition** – Existing providers compete with slight improvements at just the right time to potentially interfere with projects yet may not collaborate to deploy 100/20 to all residents in area



RETAIL/TAXABLE SALES

2016 Retail Sales per capita

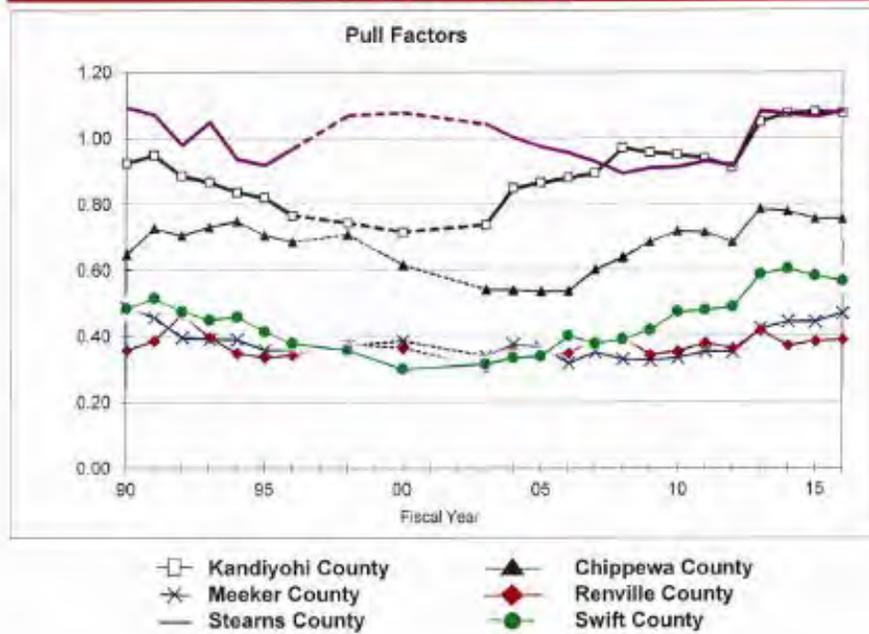


Comparison with Nearby Trade Centers
Pull Factor

Willmar	1.73
Marshall	1.51
Hutchinson	1.46
New Ulm	1.34
Litchfield	.91

University of MN Extension, 2016.

Comparison with Neighboring Counties
Kandiyohi County



Comparison with Neighboring Counties, 2016

County	Population	Gross Sales (\$millions)	Taxable Sales (\$millions)	Number of Firms	Per Capita Taxable Sales	Pull Factor (Taxable Sales)
Kandiyohi County	42,481	\$ 1,274.38	\$ 414.84	1,006	\$ 9,765	1.07
Chippewa County	12,122	\$ 210.08	\$ 82.54	310	\$ 6,840	0.75
Meeker County	23,109	\$ 256.78	\$ 92.06	470	\$ 4,246	0.47
Renville County	14,719	\$ 156.57	\$ 51.72	319	\$ 3,507	0.39
Stearns County	155,732	\$ 4,355.96	\$ 1,484.34	3,530	\$ 9,821	1.08
Swift County	9,384	\$ 146.25	\$ 49.10	222	\$ 5,140	0.57

Trend Analysis

Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar EDC
Strategic Planning Session March 14, 2019

CHILDCARE	
STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recognized need/demand for childcare services • Quality of existing childcare options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortage of openings with existing childcare providers • Regulations and food services • Costs and available space
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for adding jobs and/or filling existing jobs • Having access can increase family income • Potential for larger organizations to sponsor or open childcare centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations—licensing and other changing regulations • Healthcare providers for childcare • Economics

DIVERSITY	
STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant portion of our population • Filling vacant storefronts • Positive narrative (KARE 11 story) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language barriers • Stresses on education • Time consumption • Lack of workforce skills
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My City Academy—education for new Americans; conversations • Willmar Main Street • Healthy Together Willmar • Changing community conversations; more of a world view • ADC/CIC and educational programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misunderstanding • Negative stories that create divide

EDUCATION	
STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-12, Ridgewater and U of M Extension • Ridgewater Continuing & Customized Training • KCEO Program and MAP initiative • Alumni base of Ridgewater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student debt; costs of higher education • Relationships between Ridgewater and high schools • Skepticism of value of education for careers (credentials)
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site -focused college programs • More 4-year programs at 2-year sites • Employer willingness to partner with education • Building relationships between faculty at high schools and Ridgewater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative control of funding • Impact of Ag economy

TECHNOLOGY AND GLOBALIZATION	
STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional technologies—agriculture; MinnWest Technology Campus • Work ethic • Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtaining high-speed data (broadband) • Shifting revenue sources • Decreased physical footprint • Advancement in technology • Retail changes
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atmosphere • Way of life • Trends toward outdoors • Tapping into global markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster-changing technology • Transportation • Infrastructure

WORKFORCE	
STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ridgewater College • Labor force growing faster than the state • Immigration/new diverse populations • Short-term growth of high school class sizes • Diverse economic landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tight labor market (.7 person available for each job vacancy) • Language barriers—comprehension and fluency • Labor market participation rates less than state average for some populations • Skills gap
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigrant workforce • Growth of labor force participation rate for some populations • Seniors/Retirees opportunities for additional careers/skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automation, technology and robotics may eliminate some jobs and increase skills sets needed for new jobs • State/National policy decisions • Cultural norms related to higher education/post-secondary • Lack of diversity in immigrant careers; lack of aspirations for different careers

2018 GOALS REVIEW

CHILDCARE	
2018 GOALS	Milestones/Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the availability childcare options, including diverse childcare options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 240 new childcare spaces planned • Childcare provider appreciation event—85% of providers attended • Assessment of needs—gap of 776 spaces in county; 1200 community surveys; 90 participants in community conversation • Awareness/Education—MN Counties Workforce Symposium; MAPCED; State Senators Delegation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure sustainable solutions for existing and new childcare centers and family childcare providers, including diverse childcare. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with United Community Action Partnership • Receipt of Rural Child Care Innovation Program Technical Assistance Grant • Four broad goals selected for completion in next 24 months
DIVERSE BUSINESS INITIATIVE	
2018 GOALS	Milestones/Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse Business Retention Expansion (BRE) Phase II Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to research potential partners (e.g. Neighborhood Development Center) • Seeking funding for a Diverse Entrepreneurship Program. SWIF is engaging with state legislators that could provide funding for such a program in communities, such as Willmar and Worthington • Establishing such a program could involve hiring a person under contract
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willmar Area Multicultural Business Center (WAM-BC) loan portfolio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following extensive discussions, EDC formally approved assisting in the dissolution of WAM-BC, acquiring the loan portfolio, and transferring the WAM-BC assets to the EDC (est. \$101,315) • EDC incorporated seven loans from WAM-BC; including five loans in good standing (two now paid off) and two non-performing loans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish diverse workforce training program in partnership with Ridgewater College, CLUES and others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse training programs have moved ahead. CLUES and Ridgewater College have now held five cohorts of participants—three diverse CNA sessions and two diverse welding sessions • 63 people have participated in this training: 28 certified for CNA and 11 certified for welding • Average wages for participants have gone up significantly; in most cases by 50% or more
OPPORTUNITY ZONES	
2018 GOALS	Milestones/Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate Opportunity Zones for one to three tracts in Kandiyohi County in low- to moderate-income areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One tract, including downtown Willmar, south to Monongalia and east along Highway 12 has received designation as an Opportunity Zone

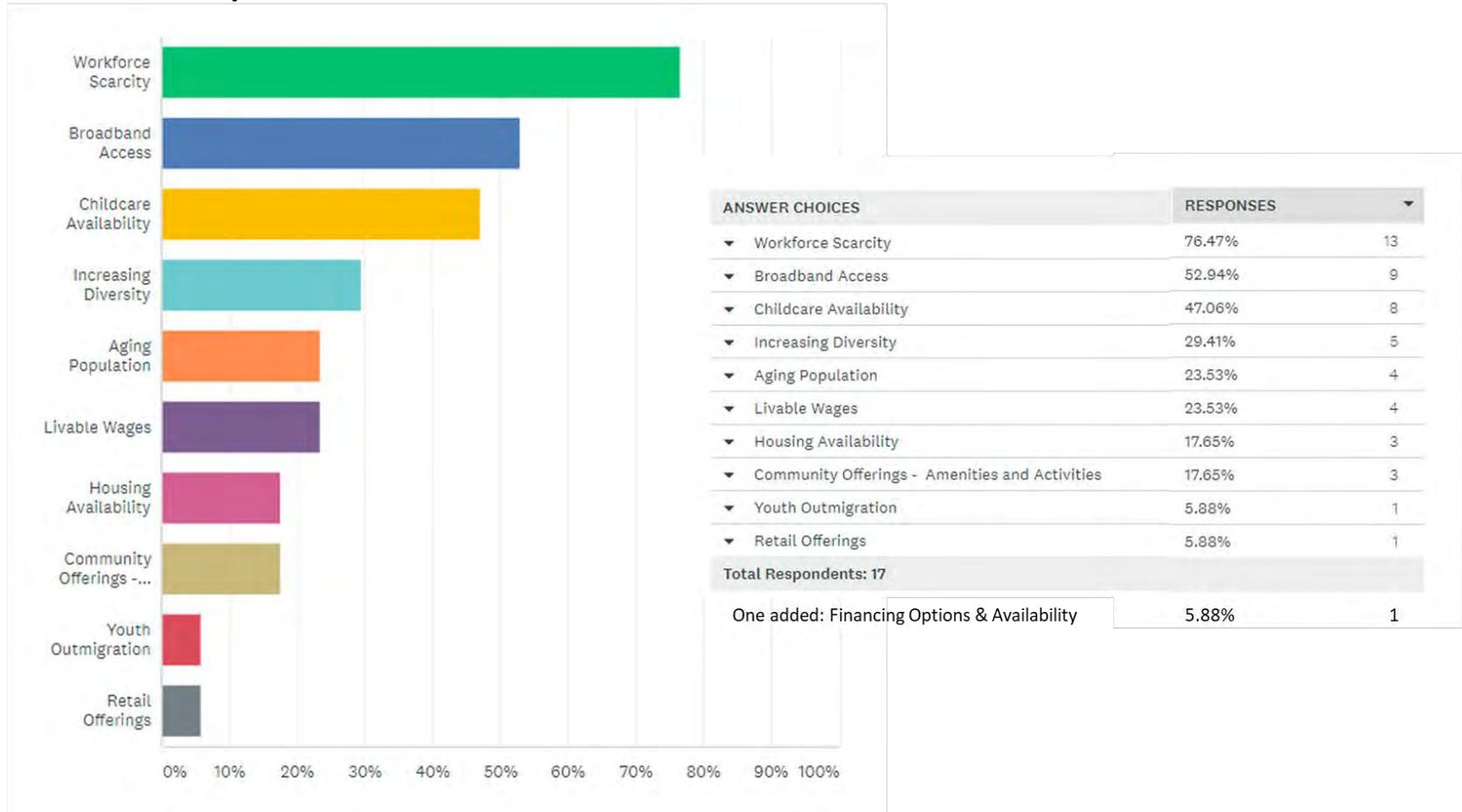
APPENDIX C: 2018 GOALS REVIEW

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage investment for new commercial and housing projects in designated Opportunity Zones in Kandiyohi County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites inside of Opportunity Zone have been provided to housing developers for consideration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate and secure new commercial and housing projects in Kandiyohi County Opportunity Zones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDC staff met w/experienced Sioux Falls housing developer interested in constructing a mixed-use development in the City's Opportunity Zone
TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE	
2018 GOALS	Milestones/Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willmar Railroad Wye project; bypassing the downtown and installation of rail spur to Willmar Rail Park by 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiations with BNSF, MnDOT, Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar took longer than anticipated (lost one construction cycle) • Partner Master Agreements signed on 1/17/2019 • Construction contract for Highway 12 component awarded to Hoffman Construction team • Contract approved on 2/22/2019 and Notice to Proceed expected shortly • Road construction beginning in 2019 • Railroad construction beginning in 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minnesota Highway 23 four-lane corridor between Willmar and I-94, including the two gaps north and south of Paynesville by 2024 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor's Fishing Opener on Green Lake was beneficial for Highway 23 funding (fishing guide Kelly Morrell) • Highway 23 Coalition successfully lobbied for \$105 million in Corridors of Commerce funding for the two four-lane gaps • MnDOT District 8 is the lead entity for both gaps (even though one is located in District 3) • District 8 recently hired Isthmus Engineering to provide final design, public engagement and other services for the north gap • First gap construction expected to begin in 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of the County Road 5/55 bridge over railroad tracks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kandiyohi County is seeking \$3.9 million in state bonding funds for project and will provide local matching funds • Highway 23 Coalition has adopted the CSAH 55 overpass project as one of its top four priority projects for 2019 legislative session • Project presented to MN House Transportation Committee in St. Cloud
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase operations at Willmar Municipal Airport by 25% by 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oasis Aero, the new FBO since beginning of 2017, has had a positive impact on operations • 2018 fuel sales are up 10+% over 2017 and are the most ever (including during ND oil boom) • 2018 operations, including plane repairs, are up over 10% as well

Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar EDC

Pre-Strategic Planning Survey
Results Summary
March 2019

Considering the following trends, please select the 3 that you feel are most likely to influence the direction of the EDC



What truly inspires and excites you about the work of the EDC?

EDC & ITS PEOPLE

- Informed and engaged staff
- Providing leadership; forward-thinking
- Reputable presence
- Willingness to partner with others
- Desire to make the area prosperous
- Passion and commitment of EDC Staff, Committees and Boards
- Stronger engagement through committees

BUSINESSES

- Assisting established businesses
- Success of current businesses
- New businesses – attracting/starting
- Proactive outreach

GROWTH

- The growth of area communities
- Opportunities for growth/success
- Growth and expansion of new/local businesses
- A vibrant/growing economy
- Willmar as a central hub

SUCCESS

- Successful efforts; positive momentum
- Results of priorities/goals

RESOURCES

- Opportunities – using available resources
- Leveraging and connecting people to resources

What actions, if begun in the near future, would have the greatest impact for the communities/region the EDC serves?



What are some concerns, challenges, or opportunities for improvement?

Changing demographics – cultural and age

- Have to figure out how to move ahead; cannot live in the past
- Way we address now will impact the next generation
- Stay positive and focus on successes; don't give voice/power to those who are negative/nay-sayers

Support for Existing Businesses

- Small independent existing businesses need more of our focus
- Balancing support for existing businesses with new, diverse, other priorities

EDC Internal

- EDC meeting structure – less time on reports; use the talent to help staff with carrying out plans; less meetings overall
- How to juggle all the committees/work
- Working to see that our Strategic plan intersects with committee work
- Retaining EDC staff
- Succession planning

Things we can't control –

- Volatility of regional/national economy
- Ag Industry – downturn creates broad challenges
- Mall – changes in ownership and loss of businesses
- An unforeseen major closing/layoff

What will be different in the Kandiyohi County area if the EDC is successful in reaching its goals?

NEW BUSINESSES

- New/Additional Industry/Businesses/Employers
- Successful startups
- Job growth
- Larger employers

IMAGE

- Better image of the area
- Recognition as up and coming regional center
- Better community acceptance of our similarities
- EDC as a go-to resource

NEEDS ADDRESSED

- Childcare shortage improved
- Childcare providers compensated properly
- Adequate communication technology
- High-speed Broadband attracts businesses/residents
- Adequate roads

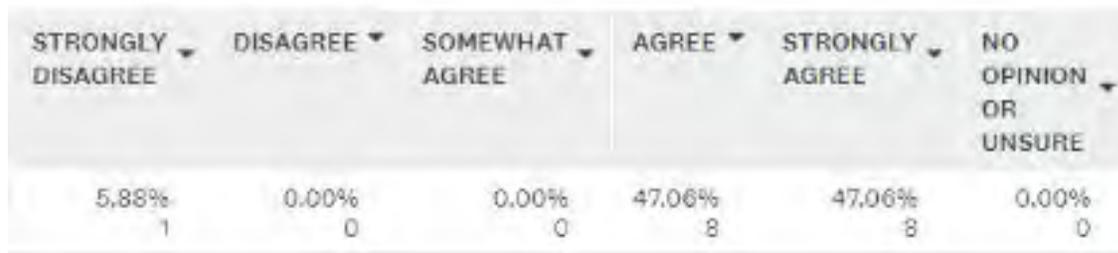
WORKFORCE

- Increased migration to area; filling workforce needs
- More career opportunities with increased income
- People moving to town to work in created jobs
- Businesses have adequate workforce
- Lower turnover rates

THRIVING ECONOMY

- Overall boost in local economy
- Better place to live and work
- Steady growth – housing, businesses, jobs, economy
- Vibrant economy (Mall/Downtown)
- More diverse/thriving economy

The EDC engages a broad mix of constituents that reflect the communities they serve in their work. (Indicate your level of agreement with this statement.)



Who might we serve in better ways in the future? How?

WHO	HOW
All businesses that want to improve/grow (starts, diverse, youth, new, existing)	Personal visits; access to incumbent/new training and mentor opportunities
Small Entrepreneur & existing businesses that want to expand	Permit, finance, planning assistance
The Aspiring Entrepreneur	Cultivate and learn to recognize; future is small business
Existing and new businesses	Help grow workforce = competitive
New Start-up Businesses	More advocacy/support
New businesses	Training program being offered currently
Young people	Expose them to opportunities in region; Retain our best & brightest; find career direction before college debt
Diverse community	Continued growth through representation
Kandi Mall	Assist in attracting stable tenants
Retailers	Concentrate on those here; entice more to locate in County
New childcare providers	Forgivable start-up loans

2019 Action Planning Worksheet

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



Priority Area	Workforce Development
Priority Summary	Help build a skilled workforce that meets the needs of the local economy in order to grow and support businesses.
Project Coordinator: (A person of interest/ champion to help EDC Staff)	Sam Bowen, Dean of Customized Training and Continuing Education, Ridgewater College
Phone/Email:	320-905-2269 / sam.bowen@ridgewater.edu

Strategic Priority (Stated as a goal with measurable results, not just effort)	Building a base of support and implementing innovative strategies that expand opportunities for building a skilled workforce that meets the needs of our local economy and helps businesses grow.	
Mission Connection (How this goal aligns with the mission of the EDC)	EDC would be a catalyst, providing leadership for workforce growth which increases potential for prosperity, international competitiveness and enhanced quality of life.	
Objectives How might we address this goal? (i.e. What actions/milestones might be pursued?) What resources may be needed? S – Specific M – Measurable A – Attainable R – Relevant T – Timebound	Potential Objectives	Resources Needed
	1. Establish a Workforce Development Committee to focus on specific initiatives.	People and approval
	2. Promote Ridgewater College, working with partners to improve enrollment and student success.	Planning, Details, Funding
	3. Continue to expand diverse workforce training programs like Diverse CNA/Welding	Funding, Support, Partners
	4. Establish a Teacher of Color pipeline program	TBD
	OTHER NOTES: Insights from planning session (some could be tasks under the above Objectives) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring similar industries together (focus groups by industry sector) to discuss workforce needs and explore additional employer-driven initiatives such as MAP that might be supported/started • Video highlighting businesses of Kandiyohi County and the workforce skills/needs; Host on EDC website and promote via social media • Develop a “Bring Them Back Campaign” – positive messaging of opportunities in the area; telling the stories of why they should want to return 	
Expected Outcomes: The impact we seek: What will be different as a result of our efforts?	These efforts will help grow and support businesses by addressing a major need in our regional economy—skilled workers. We will develop and implement innovative recruiting and training strategies that will set our region apart as a workforce development leader. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill enhancement of potential labor market • Higher levels of people gaining greater employment • People entering pathways that lead them to career with greater earning potential • Helping to fulfill local job market needs 	

Who are the people who may be interested in supporting/working together on this goal?

Name	Skills/Resources	Email	Phone
Eric Day, Business Service Coordinator, CMJTS	Funding, People	eday@cmjts.org	320.241.1747
Sam Bowen, Dean, Ridgewater College	Customized Training and Continuing Education	sam.bowen@ridgewater.edu	320.222.5206
Dayna Latham, Training and Outreach Manager, Ridgewater College	Customized Training and Continuing Education	dayna.latham@ridgewater.edu	320.894.5169
Craig Johnson, President, Ridgewater College	Leadership, Administration	craig.johnson@ridgewater.edu	320-222-5202
Jason Duinck, Director of Business Development, Duinck Inc.	Business Development, Legislative	jasond@duinck.com	320.212.9330

As you move further along, identify the key strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats for achieving this goal...

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ridgewater College • Kandiyohi County labor force growing faster than the region • Immigration/New diverse populations • Short-term growth of high school class sizes • Diverse economic landscape 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tight labor market (.7 person available for each job vacancy) • Language barriers—comprehension and fluency • Labor market participation rates less than state average for some populations • Skills gap
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigrant workforce • Growth of labor force participation rate for some populations • Seniors/Retirees opportunities for additional careers/skills 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automation, technology and robotics may eliminate some jobs and increase skill sets needed for new jobs • State/National policy decisions • Cultural norms related to Higher Ed/Post-Secondary • Lack of diversity in immigrant careers; lack of aspirations for different careers

2019 Action Planning Worksheet

BUSINESS SUPPORT



Priority Area	Business Support
Priority Summary	Supporting existing businesses through access to information and awareness of the EDC's services.
Project Coordinator: (A person of interest/ champion to help EDC Staff)	Dan Tempel, Broker/Owner, Glacial Ridge Realty
Phone/Email:	320-403-5404 / glacialridgerealty@gmail.com

Strategic Priority (Stated as a goal with measurable results, not just effort)	EDC works to build relationships with area business, with a key intent to inform them of available resources through the EDC, better understand their challenges/needs, and help them share their successes.	
Mission Connection (How this goal aligns with the mission of the EDC)	EDC catalyzes economic growth by supporting area businesses so that they can prosper, innovate and be competitive.	
Objectives How might we address this goal? (i.e. What actions/milestones might be pursued?) What resources may be needed? S – Specific M – Measurable A – Attainable R – Relevant T – Timebound	Potential Objectives	Resources Needed
	1. Engage in focused one-on-one visits with existing businesses to inform of resources and streamline complications/challenges they may have	TBD
	2. Develop a business support group of “like-minded businesses” and/or “emerging entrepreneurs;” consider the 1 Million Cup model; specific mention of support for businesses started within past 5 years and those in the retail sector	TBD
	3. Invite bankers/accountants to a gathering to learn of EDC resources and share business needs	TBD
	4. Develop a “community” marketing campaign to distribute EDC offerings broadly in the area	Center of influencers; marketing plan
Expected Outcomes: The impact we seek: What will be different as a result of our efforts?	Businesses owners are able to streamline operations or resolve barriers they may have and learn from each other's successes and challenges. Our communities know and understand how the EDC can help businesses.	

Who are the people who may be interested in supporting/working together on this goal?

Name	Skills/Resources	Email	Phone
Jesse Gislason	Business support	jessegislason@gmail.com	320.295.6938
Melissa Knott	Marketing	mknott@christiansoncpa.com	320.212.9505
Fernando Alvarado	City Government/Business support	falvarado@willmarmn.gov	320.235.2577

As you move further along, identify the key strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats for achieving this goal...

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDC Marketing Committee • EDC Staff 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many businesses are not aware of what the EDC has to offer • Need to break down into smart goals; specific action steps
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break down barriers with other groups • Programs like SCORE, 1 Million Cups • Mentoring/coaching arrangements 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate time/capacity • Insufficient financial resources

OTHER NOTES: Two remaining task in notes that did not fit neatly into this strategy could possibly be brought to the Marketing Committee:

1. Doing research and gathering data/demographics needed to market to restaurants and national retail so that they are drawn to Kandiyohi County
2. Being strategic in collaborating to promote the quality of life in Kandiyohi; mentions of Greg Harp’s photos, PWELC as resources; mention of “Bring Them Home” campaign that was also added to the Workforce Strategy

2019 Action Planning Worksheet

BROADBAND



Priority Area	Broadband
Priority Summary	Lobby, collaborate and educate to secure broadband services throughout Kandiyohi County
Project Coordinator: (A person of interest/champion to help EDC Staff)	Mark Boeschen/Dave Sisser
Phone/Email:	320-212-3125 mark@firebytes.co / 320-894-8237 daves@wccwireless.com

Strategic Priority (Stated as a goal with measurable results, not just effort)	EDC provides leadership in building coalitions that support, educate and collaborate to quickly bring improvements in broadband services leading to greater opportunities for Kandiyohi County residents.	
Mission Connection (How this goal aligns with the mission of the EDC)	EDC provides visionary leadership that increases the quality of life and allows Kandiyohi County to grow, prosper and compete on an international scale.	
Objectives How might we address this goal? (i.e. What actions/milestones might be pursued?) What resources may be needed? S – Specific M – Measurable A – Attainable R – Relevant T – Timebound	Potential Objectives	Resources Needed
	1. Develop a coalition of Kandiyohi County townships willing to facilitate the investment of broadband for the benefit of their residents	Funding, time and partnerships
	2. Identify specific people in government that would carry policy bills leading to statutory changes that allow grants for the rural areas of Kandiyohi County.	Time spent talking with legislators and trips to St. Paul
	3. Increase our involvement in the Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition to bring more awareness of the challenges in Kandiyohi County, including the correct information about current speeds and access.	Time and travel
Expected Outcomes: The impact we seek: What will be different as a result of our efforts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are able to do homework from home • Seniors can take advantage of telemedicine healthcare • Businesses are able to have employees work remotely from their homes • Entrepreneurs have more opportunities to expand their businesses • Agriculture professionals will be able to use precision ag data • House values increase with broadband access 	

Who are the people who may be interested in supporting/working together on this goal?

Name	Skills/Resources	Email	Phone
Connie Schmoll	EDC Business Development Specialist	Connie@kandiyohi.com	320-522-2805
Donna Boonstra, EDC Joint Operation Board and Broadband Committee	Involved in broadband for several years; skills for communicating with legislators	Donnaboo47@msn.com	320-295-3134
Art Benson, EDC Operations Board	Works in the area of technology and communications	Art@soundimagewillmar.com	320-220-1513
Dean Bouta, Bennett Office Technologies	Past chair and longtime member of Broadband committee	dbouta@bennettoffice.com	320-212-5964
Mark Boeschen	Chair of Broadband Committee	mark@firebytes.co	320-212-3125
Michelle Marotzke	Broadband Committee and a shaker and mover	mmarotzke@wmu.willmar.mn.us	320-979-6751
David Sisser	Broadband Committee Vice Chair and activist	daves@wccwireless.com	320-894-8237

As you move further along, identify the key strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats for achieving this goal...

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment of Broadband Committee members • High level of interest and demand 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and deployment cost constraints • Provider competition • Many personalities and agendas • Some people already receiving adequate service for current usage • Population density • Topography
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadband Committee • State Border-to-Border grants • Provider interest • Working with those who are underserved • Education in the community 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws/current language in policy • Inaccurate maps • Federal funding allows substandard projects • Telcos

OTHER NOTES:

- Need to act now; do not wait for new technology
- Imperative to get the correct information out about speeds and access.

2019 Action Planning Worksheet

AGRICULTURE



Priority Area	Agriculture
Priority Summary	Understanding and responding to the ever-changing food and agriculture sectors.
Project Coordinator: (A person of interest/champion to help EDC Staff)	Dan Tepfer, Energy Management Specialist, Kandiyohi Power Cooperative
Phone/Email:	320-894-5921 / dtepfer@kpcoop.com

Strategic Priority (Stated as a goal with measurable results, not just effort)	Collaborate with other agriculture groups to support and market agriculture as an economic driver in Kandiyohi County through educational forums and innovative marketing that strengthen the ag industry sector.	
Mission Connection (How this goal aligns with the mission of the EDC)	EDC can provide visionary leadership for this sector, a strong economic driver in the region. Supporting this sector with innovative strategies leads to economic growth, prosperity and enhanced quality of life.	
Objectives How might we address this goal? (i.e. What actions/milestones might be pursued?) What resources may be needed? S – Specific M – Measurable A – Attainable R – Relevant T – Timebound	Potential Objectives	Resources Needed
	1. Collaborate with other agriculture groups and producers to host community conversations and/or educational forums that support producers and dispel myths around agriculture.	Partners and funding
	2. Recruit additional value-added agriculture processors, businesses and markets.	Recruitment efforts
	3. Create a local vision statement for agriculture as the economic driver that it is in Kandiyohi County and share the vision broadly.	Passionate leaders, writing experts and marketing personnel
	OTHER NOTES: Revisit the Ag BR&E results to identify ways to respond with training, workshops, education.	
Expected Outcomes: The impact we seek: What will be different as a result of our efforts?	<p>Agriculture will be recognized as an important, strong and vibrant sector in our area. Producers will be valued and supported and their income will increase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area ag producers feel supported and valued for their role in our regional economy • Agriculture is recognized broadly as a strength of the area • Producers are supported in increasing their potential for success 	

Who are the people who may be interested in supporting/working together on this goal?

Name	Skills/Resources	Email	Phone
Dan Tepfer, Energy Management Specialist	Kandiyohi Power Cooperative	dtepfer@kpcoop.com	320-894-5921
Joanna Schrupp, Manager	MinnWest Technology Campus	Joanna.Schrupp@mnwesttechnology.com	320-894-2620
Rollie Boll	Ag Banking and Member of the EDC Board	rjboll@en-tel.net	320-212-7991
Russ Peterson, Chair	Ag Professionals	Russ.Peterson@ridgewater.edu	320-905-0733
Christie Ransom	Chamber of Commerce Agri-Business Committee	cransom@willmarareachamber.com	320-231-0270
Kim Lippert, Instructor, Ag Department Leader	Ridgewater College Agriculture Programs	kim.lippert@ridgewater.edu	320-222-5272
Nick Bjornberg, Chair	Kandiyohi County Corn/Soybean Growers	nbjornberg@mvtvwireless.com	320-220-1369
Loren Molenaar, Director	Kandiyohi County Farm Bureau	lorenmolenaar@hotmail.com	320-220-1481
Donnell Williamson, Chair	Kandiyohi County Farmers Union	williamsonorganicfarm@gmail.com	320-220-3100
Krista Willis, local producer	Women in Agriculture and MARL	Kristachad_willis@msn.com	320-905-2946
Steve Olson, Executive Director	Minnesota Turkey Growers Association	steve@minnesotaturkey.com	763-682-2171

As you move further along, identify the key strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats for achieving this goal...

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many and diverse groups involved • Ag is an economic driver in our community 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current state of ag stress • Low commodity prices • Developing a common message
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a stronger voice and message • Youth education • Interest in value-added agriculture 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of correct information by consumers to consumers (few producers; many consumers)

LEASE AGREEMENT

THIS LEASE AGREEMENT ("Lease") is entered into this 1st day of **December**, 2019, by and between Willmar Elks Lodge #952 ("Landlord") and Economic Development Commission of Willmar.

WHEREAS, Landlord is the owner of certain real property and improvements as are hereinafter defined; and

WHEREAS, Tenant desires to lease the real property and improvements from Landlord.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants, conditions and promises set forth herein, Landlord and Tenant agree as follows:

1. **Premises.** Landlord hereby leases unto Tenant certain real property located at 200 – 20th Street SE in the city of Willmar, county of Kandiyohi, state of Minnesota which is more particularly described as approximately **1500** square feet shown hatched in Exhibit "A" attached hereto ("Premises"). The Premises is located within an office building known as 222 – 20th Street SE (together with the parking lot and other common areas surrounding the building, the "Building").

2. **Term.** The initial term of this Lease shall commence on the Effective Date (as hereinafter defined) and shall terminate sixty (60) full calendar months after the date that Tenant accepts possession of the Premises ("Initial Term"). Within ninety (90) days after the expiration of the Contract, Tenant may provide notice to Landlord that Tenant elects to terminate this Lease. If such Contract extends beyond the Initial Term, Tenant shall have the right to renew this Lease for additional terms of Three (3) years each "Renewal Term(s)". During the Renewal Terms, this Lease shall continue upon the same terms, covenants and conditions as in the Initial Term except that the rental due Landlord during the Renewal Terms shall be based upon a market rent for similar space in the surrounding Willmar area.

3. **Rental.** Effective as the sale of the Building to Landlord from Tenant, ("Commencement Date"), Tenant shall pay to Landlord on the first day of each calendar month the sum of **Two Thousand Dollars** (\$ 2000) as rental for the Premises through the Initial Term. The above rent schedule is inclusive of all charges including taxes, insurance, utilities, janitorial and Common Area Operating Costs and Tenant shall not be obligated to pay any other charges to Landlord except those described in this Lease. Tenant will be responsible for Cable, Telephone system and installation, Internet and Internet installation. Tenant has a Security deposit currently in the amount of One Thousand Eight Hundred Dollars. This will remain as the security deposit.

4. **Use of Premises.** Tenant shall have the right to use and occupy the Premises for office space. Tenant's employees, contractors and related parties will at all times during its business hours have access to the restrooms and break room of the Building. Landlord and Tenant acknowledge that Tenant's Premises will be locked and secured at all times and that Landlord will not have any keys or access to the Premises (after completion of Landlord's Work).

5. **Quiet Enjoyment.** Landlord warrants to Tenant that Landlord has good title to the Premises free and clear of all liens and encumbrances, except as set forth in paragraph 22 of this Lease, and that Landlord may rightfully enter into this Lease. Landlord shall protect, defend and indemnify Tenant against any interference with Tenant's use and quiet enjoyment of the Premises.

6. **Landlord's Work.** The east wall in office to the southeast corner of the building will be moved to the east to make a storage room, a lockable door will be put in the reception area of that room. There will be power put to the middle of the floor in the board room. A double window will be placed next to the main door into the office. A wall and lockable door will be installed in the very north hallway leading to the bathrooms and break room. Exterior trimming or removal of the overgrown landscaping. All other improvements will be at the tenants expense.

7. **Intentionally Deleted.**

8. **Insurance.**

(a) **Tenant Insurance.** Tenant shall maintain at all times during the Initial Term and any Renewal Term, commercial general liability insurance against claims for personal injury, death or property damage occurring in, on or about the Premises or sidewalks or areas adjacent to the Premises to afford protection to the limit of not less than \$2,000,000 combined single limit. Such insurance may be covered under a blanket policy covering the Premises and other locations of Tenant or its general partner or the general partner's parent or an affiliate corporation. Tenant shall deliver a certificate of insurance to Landlord upon written request.

(b) **Landlord Insurance.** Landlord shall maintain at all times during the Initial Term and any Renewal Term commercial general liability insurance of at least \$2,000,000; and statutory workers compensation insurance. Any improvements made by tenant after initial occupancy and initial landlords build out, will be insured at the sole cost of the tenant. Landlord shall deliver certificates of all policies of insurance to Tenant upon written request.

9. **Utilities.** Landlord shall provide (furnish and install) to the Premises connections for all utilities necessary for Tenant's conducting of its business therein at Landlord's sole cost and expense. Landlord shall pay for all sewer, water, gas, electric utilities in or on the premises.

10. **Maintenance and Repairs.** Landlord shall maintain the structural portions of the Premises and Building, including the roof, foundation, exterior walls, and loadbearing interior walls and columns, as well as the common areas including, without limitation, the parking areas, sidewalks, landscaping, snow removal from common areas including but not limited to parking lots and sidewalks, electrical and plumbing. Landlord shall be responsible for cleaning, repairing and remediating all portions of the Premises and Building which may be contaminated or damaged by mold, mildew, fungus or other biohazardous materials.

11. **Common Area Maintenance.** Landlord shall repair and maintain and clean the common area of the Building.

12. **Improvements, Fixtures and Signage.** Tenant may install such tenant improvements, fixtures and finishes in the Premises, as Tenant may deem necessary or desirable, with consent from the exalted ruler or Chairperson of the board of directors of the Willmar Elks Lodge #952. Tenant shall not be required to remove any such improvements or fixtures and Tenant's failure to do so within thirty (30) days after the expiration of the term of this Lease shall be deemed to be an abandonment thereof whereby the same shall become part of the real estate with title thereto vesting in Landlord. Tenant may install signs in, on and about the Premises to the maximum extent permitted by local law, including signage on top portion of the monument sign adjacent to East Highway 12, in cooperation with landlord and any other tenants.

13. **Fire or Casualty.** In the event the Premises, or the Building in which it is located, are taken or destroyed in whole or in part by fire or other casualty, Tenant may in its sole discretion terminate this Lease. Within thirty (30) days after the date of a fire or other casualty, Landlord must inform Tenant if the Premises and the Building will be rebuilt. If the Premises and Building is to be rebuilt and Tenant elects not to terminate the Lease, the Premises and Building must be rebuilt and ready for occupancy within ninety (90) days of date of fire or other casualty.

14. **Eminent Domain.** If any portion of the Premises, or the Building in which it is located, shall be taken by right of eminent domain, Tenant shall have the right, at its discretion, to terminate this Lease and be relieved from further liability hereunder. Following such taking, Landlord shall, with all due diligence and at its own cost and expense, make all necessary repairs and alterations required to make the remaining portion of the Premises an architectural whole. All compensation awarded for such taking shall be allocated in accordance with the Landlord's and Tenant's respective interest therein.

15. **Intentionally Deleted.**

16. **Landlord's Default.** If Landlord shall be in default or shall fail or refuse to perform or comply with any of its obligations under this Lease and shall continue in default for a period of thirty (30) days after Tenant has given Landlord written notice of such default and demand of performance, Tenant may remedy the same and seek reimbursement from Landlord, pursue any other remedies available at law or in equity, or terminate the Lease and recover from Landlord any and all damages Tenant may have incurred due to such default or failure.

17. **Assignment and Subletting.** Tenant may not sublease the Premises or any portion thereof or assign the Lease without Landlord's consent. For purposes of the Lease, any sale or transfer of capital stock including redemption or issuance of additional stock of any class will not be deemed an assignment, subletting or any other transfer of the Lease or the Premises.

18. **Intentionally Deleted.**

19. **Hazardous Materials.** Landlord warrants and represents that the Premises and the Building (collectively referred to as the Property) are in compliance with environmental laws and regulations. Landlord will indemnify and hold Tenant harmless from loss relating to any hazardous materials. Tenant will hold Landlord harmless from loss for any hazardous materials present on the Property as a result of Tenant's negligence or willful misconduct.

As used herein, "hazardous material" means any substance that is toxic, ignitable, reactive, or corrosive and which is regulated by any local government, the state in which the Property is located, or the United States government or poses a threat to human health or the environment. "Hazardous material" includes any and all material and substances which are defined as "hazardous waste", "toxic substances" or a "hazardous substance" pursuant to state, federal or local governmental law. "Hazardous material" includes, but is not restricted to, asbestos, polychlorobiphenyls ("PCBs") and petroleum.

20. **Condition of Premises and Building.** Landlord warrants and represents that upon delivery and throughout the term of this Lease, the Premises and Building will be and Landlord will maintain the same in sound condition, in compliance with all applicable federal, state and local codes and that the structural elements, roof and building systems of the Building along with the Premises will be seismically and otherwise sound and will meet all applicable federal, state and local codes, including but not limited to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

21. **Attorney's Fees.** In connection with any litigation arising out of this Lease, the prevailing party, Tenant or Landlord, shall be entitled to recover all costs incurred, including reasonable attorney's fees.

22. **Liens.** Each party represents to the other that it has complete authority to enter into this transaction. Landlord further warrants to Tenant that Landlord owns the land and Building in fee simple, free and clear of all liens and encumbrances of every kind and nature, except for those listed below.

<u>Name of Lienholder</u>	<u>Type of Lien</u>
Concorde Bank	Mortgage

Landlord shall use reasonable efforts to obtain from the holder of any lien which is not discharged within ten (10) business days of the date of execution of this Lease, a Subordination, Attornment and Nondisturbance Agreement in form acceptable to Tenant.

23. **Notices.** Any notice, report, statement, approval, consent, designation, demand or request to be given under this Lease shall be effective when made in writing, deposited for mailing with the United States Postal Service or with a recognized overnight delivery service and addressed to Landlord or Tenant at the following addresses:

LANDLORD: Willmar Elks Lodge #952
P.O. Box 816
Willmar, MN 56201
Phone 320-231-2188
Paul Ryan 320-295-3121

TENANT: Economic Development Commission of Willmar
200 20th St SE

24. **Continuous Operation.** Tenant shall have no obligation to operate continuously in the Premises during the Initial Term or any Renewal Term.

25. **Miscellaneous.**

(a) **Successors and Assigns.** This Lease shall be binding upon and shall inure to the benefit of Landlord, Tenant and their respective successors and assigns.

(b) **Governing Law.** This Lease shall be construed under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

(c) **Merger Clause.** This Lease contains the entire agreement between Landlord and Tenant regarding the Premises which are the subject of this Lease and may only be altered by a written agreement executed by both Landlord and Tenant.

(d) **Severability.** If any term or provision of this Lease or the application hereof to any person or circumstance shall, to any extent, be invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of this Lease shall not be affected thereby.

(e) **Force Majeure.** In the event the performance by either party of any of its obligations hereunder, except with the respect of payment of money, is delayed by reason of the act or neglect of the other party, act of God, strike, governmental restrictions, war, or any other cause, similar or dissimilar, beyond the reasonable control of the party from whom such performance is due, the period for the commencement of completion thereof shall be extended for a period equal to the period during which performance is so delayed.

(f) **Counterparts.** This Lease may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which when so executed and delivered shall be deemed an original, but such counterparts together shall constitute but one and the same instrument.

(g) **No Partnership Created.** Landlord and Tenant are not and shall not be considered joint ventures, not partners, and neither shall have power to bind or obligate the other except as set forth herein.

(h) **Headings.** The titles to the paragraphs of this Lease are inserted only as a matter of convenience and for reference and in no way confine, limit or describe the scope or intent of any section of this Lease, nor in any way affect this Lease.

(i) **Modification.** No modifications, alterations, or amendments of this Lease or any agreements in connection therewith shall be binding or valid unless in writing and duly executed by both Landlord and Tenant.

(j) **Leasing Commissions and Agency Disclosure.** Landlord acknowledges that no real estate broker was involved in this Lease. Landlord and Tenant shall each indemnify, defend and hold the other harmless from and against, all damages (including reasonable attorneys' fees and costs) resulting from any claims that may be asserted against Landlord or Tenant by any broker, finder, or other person with whom the indemnifying party has or purportedly has dealt.

(k) **Penalty for Late Delivery.** Landlord will deliver possession of the Premises to Tenant with Landlord's Work completed within thirty (30) days after the Commencement Date ("Delivery Date").

(l) **Compliance.** Landlord and Tenant agree to comply with any and all Federal, State and Local ordinances or regulations regarding the Building.

(m) **Authority.** Each party hereby represents to the other that the person(s) who have executed this Lease are duly authorized to do so.

(n) **Effective Date.** The "Effective Date" of this Lease shall be the date upon which the latter of Tenant or Landlord shall so execute this Lease as evidenced by the date inserted below the signature of each party at the time of execution.

(o) **Parking.** Landlord shall provide all necessary parking for Tenant's employees and invitees and Landlord shall apply for and obtain all variances needed to meet all codes and permitting requirements for Tenant's anticipated use throughout the term of this Lease. The current parking ratio of the Building is 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet.

*****END OF PAGE*****

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, Landlord and Tenant have executed this Lease as of the day and year above first written.

LANDLORD:

Willmar Elks Lodge #952

By: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

TENANT:

Economic Development Commission

By: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____



Joint Powers Board Meeting

Aaron Backman Report

April 25, 2019

Highway 23 Coalition

The Coalition's Board of Directors met on January 30th 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:

- 1) Construction of a Roundabout in the City of Foley at Hwy 23 and 8th Avenue (near Foley Public Schools) and 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 7th, 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.



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



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

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. 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.

On Friday, March 22nd, the Highway 23 Coalition held its Annual Meeting at The 400 Club Restaurant in Rockville, MN. It went very well—over 70 participants attended, members approved a slate of candidates for the Board of Directors, and, in addition to year-end reports, attendees were able to hear from MnDOT Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher, House Transportation Committee Chair Frank Hornstein, and Senate Transportation Committee member Andrew Lang. It was a wonderful opportunity to network with MnDOT representatives and elected officials!



MnDOT Commissioner Anderson-Kelliher speaking to the Hwy 23 Coalition

The Highway 23 Coalition’s Board of Directors held a special meeting on April 8th to continue planning for a Coalition trip to Washington, D.C. from June 18th through 20th. The Coalition Board approved scholarships of up to \$500 per participant for the first five Coalition members in good standing who apply. On April 11th MnDOT announced that construction of the South Gap would move up by one year. At the April 24th Board meeting MnDOT representatives provided an update on activities related to the North and South Gaps, the Willmar Wye project, and authorized a reception in Washington, D.C. for the MN Congressional Delegation and Staff.

Proposed Bethesda New London Campus

Over the past 18 months Bethesda has been considering and planning for a new senior housing project in the New London/Spicer market area. A market study indicated there was sufficient demand for more senior housing. Bethesda Board of Directors considered various locations and ultimately selected an 11-acre site along Peterson Parkway north of the ACMC Clinic in New London (they have a signed purchase agreement). For the past five months the EDC has been interacting with Bethesda management, Marcus Construction, City of New London, and others regarding the new Bethesda campus, a \$16 million senior and assisted living complex that will feature 36 senior apartments, 18 assisted living units and 18 memory care units. Phase I of the campus would include a town centre with chapel, community areas, dining spaces, a spa, Club Bethesda wellness center, and potentially a child care center. On April 3rd the New London City Council unanimously called for setting a TIF public hearing for the Bethesda project. That hearing will take place on May 22, 2019.

15th Street Flats—Construction Update

Construction for 15th Street Flats is on time and on budget. If the schedule continues to hold, the developer anticipates project completion and move-in by late August or September of 2019.



The contractors have been working on the fourth floor of the multi-family apartment complex. On this day (see photo above) there were lots of people working on site in terms of the roof, window and door installation, plumbing, etc. This photo was taken on 4/9/19.

Retail Business Design Workshops

The EDC has engaged partners to create Retail Business Design Workshops that included 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 Main Street, 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 were coaching sessions for participants to implement and assist one another in applying the information from the workshops (the last session occurred on April 10th). Presenters at the workshops included Peggy Lord, a former VP of Merchandising for Target; Jaye Thompson, previously with Target and Proctor & Gamble; Cheryl Olson, a Director with Bluestem Brands (also known as Fingerhut) and consultant for Best Buy, Target, & Marshall Fields; and Jenna Paulus, Public Relations Manager of Deluxe Corp. These sessions were facilitated by University of MN College of Design and Extension staff. The retail participants were very pleased with the sessions (so much so that they would like to continue meeting on a periodic basis as a group and have agreed to meet again on June 5th).

The workshops ran from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. During February of 2019 the workshops and sessions were held at the Bremer Bank Community Room. During March the events occurred at the Willmar Public Library. The Social Media Marketing workshop was held in conjunction with the Social Media Breakfast at WORKUP on the MWTC. The cost of this 10-week intensive program was \$250. Scholarships were available on an as-



needed basis (all participants qualified for some level of assistance). In particular, we wanted to assist women-owned businesses and minority retail owners and managers to ensure their participation.

A total of 22 small businesses from the region participated in the workshop/coaching sessions over the 10 weeks. About half the attendees were small retailers from Willmar, 18% were diverse business owners, and about 72% were women-owned businesses. After an application process, four of the business participants were matched with Univ. of MN College of Design students for one-on-one technical assistance (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 prepare a final report and will write and distribute a local economic development best practices guide for retail revitalization efforts to be replicated elsewhere.

Business Meetings (January 25th – April 25th)

1. Participated in Hwy 23 Coalition Board Mtg. at Dooley's Petroleum (1/30/19)
2. Participated in BRE Committee Mtg. (2/1/19)
3. Mtg. w/Abdirashid Sharif re Diverse Entrepreneurship program
4. Monthly Mtg. w/Dr. Johnson, President, Ridgewater College
5. Attended Agcellence Banquet at the Willmar Conference Center (2/1/19)
6. Participated in conference call w/reporter from MN Daily re the Retail Business Design Workshops (2/4/19)
7. Attended the Vision 2040 Steering Committee Monthly Meeting
8. Meeting w/Cheryl Glaeser, Achieve TFC, re the EDC's Strategic Planning Session in March
9. Participated in the initial Retail Business Design Workshop at Bremer Bank (2/6/19)
10. Mtg. w/Jennifer Mendoza re CLUES update and WAM accounts
11. Hwy 23 Coalition Legislative Reception at the State Office Building in St. Paul (2/7/19)
12. Attended CVB Leisure Travel Committee Mtg. at New London-Spicer Performing Arts Center (2/11/19)
13. Attended the Vision 2040 Housing Subcommittee Mtg. (2/11/19)
14. Led MAPCED Quarterly Mtg. (held in conjunction w/AMC Legislative Conference) in St. Paul (2/13/19)
15. Mtg. w/rep of local group interested in investing in a housing project in Willmar (2/14/19)
16. Mtg. w/Jim Bach, Marcus Construction, re Bethesda New London Campus cost estimates (2/15/19)
17. Participated in Open Mic on KWLM (2/21/19)
18. Testified before House Transportation Committee at St. Cloud City Hall re Hwy 23 Coalition 2019 Priority Projects (2/22/19)
19. Mtg. w/Sioux Falls developer interested in potential mixed use development in Opportunity Zone/Downtown Willmar (2/25/19)
20. Participated in Hwy 23 Coalition Board Mtg. at Dooley's Petroleum (2/27/19)
21. Monthly Mtg. w/Dr Johnson, President, Ridgewater College
22. Disc. w/TerWisscha Construction re potential redevelopment project across from Legacy Commons (3/5/19)
23. Mtg. w/Lindsey Donner, REDstar Creative re EDC marketing activities (3/6/19)
24. Attended Willmar Chamber Connection at Carrie's Chapel in Bethesda (3/8/19)



25. Mtg. w/Michelle Haefner (Bethesda), Jim Bach (Marcus), Trudie Guptill (New London), Shannon Sweeney (David Drown Assoc.), Doug Fenstra (Fenstra R.E.) regarding Bethesda New London Campus project (3/11/19)
26. Participated in the EDC's Annual Strategic Planning Session at Kandiyohi Power Cooperative headquarters in Spicer (3/14/19)
27. Participated in the interview team process for City of Willmar Planning & Development Director. (Dave Ramstad, the new P&D Director, starts on 4/14/19)
28. Attended Southwest Business Development Network meeting at Lyon County Library
29. Local Housing Trust Fund/MHFA Commissioner Visit Pre-Planning Mtg. (3/20/19)
30. Attended EDC's Ag Committee Meeting w/MN Soybean Growers Presenter
31. Attended Kandiyohi County HRA Strategic Planning/Survey Results Session (3/21/19)
32. Manned booth for shift for Willmar Lakes Area CVB at Northwest Sport Show at Mpls Convention Center (3/23/19)
33. Meeting w/Lindsey Donner re EDC marketing pieces
34. Participated in 2019 West Central Job Fair at Ridgewater College Gym (3/26/19)
35. Participated in Ridgewater College Community Listening Session at Student Center (3/28/19)
36. Attended Pitch Night (3 businesses) at WORKUP
37. Participated in Ridgewater College General Advisory Council at Admin Bldg (3/29/19)
38. Monthly meeting w/Dr. Craig Johnson, Ridgewater College (4/4/19)
39. Attended the Willmar Chamber's Retail in MN: Apocalypse or Epiphany Workshop (4/5/19)
40. Mtg. w/ City of Marshall/Lyon County and Kandiyohi County, Willmar & EDC representatives regarding EDC model (4/8/19)
41. Mtg w/Kevin Friesen, USDA, & Jill Bengtson, HRA, re EDC taking over the Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) that is at the HRA (4/9/19)
42. Mtg. w/Victoria Hibma, Lakeland Broadcasting, re marketing
43. Mtg. w/Laura Warne, Home State Bank regarding business acquisition in Blomkest 4/15/19)
44. Mtg. w/Dave Ramstad, new Planning & Development Director, and Sarah Swedburg, Planner for Willmar (4/16/19)

Business Visits

1. Mtgs w/Zack Mahboub re funding for and construction of elevator project at Midtown Plaza
2. Mtgs w/Joanna Schrupp, GM for the MinnWest Technology Campus, recruitment strategy and projects
3. Abdirahin Hussen, ADC, and later with Les Nelson, MMDC, re Willmar Child Care Center
4. Mtg. w/Dale Odom & Ken Inselmann re potential business
5. Tours of the renovation area for the elevator project at Midtown Plaza with Zack Mahboub
6. Attended CVB Leisure Travel Committee Mtg. at Rosita's Grill in Willmar
7. Participated in New London Food Co-op Membership Meeting at Peace Lutheran in N.L.
8. Meetings w/Myron Krupa re new commercial business near Lakeland Drive
9. Meeting w/Abdirashid Sharif re proposed business idea
10. Disc. w/Gabe Olson re Suite Liv'n's proposed Sunwood Apartments project



**Joint Powers Board Meeting
Connie Schmoll Report
April 25, 2019**

Child Care

The next meeting of the Rural Child Care Innovation Program is scheduled for 3 p.m., Tuesday, April 9, 2019.

Jessica Beyer, First Children’s Finance, is the facilitator of the core leadership team meetings and is committed to a full two years of assistance.

Nine SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound) goals have been created for future focus of tasks and fall in these primary goal areas of:

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

The Willmar Childcare Center has submitted construction plans to the City of Willmar for review. A letter from Carlson Construction has been received stating contractor agreement at the planned price of \$75,000. Southwest Initiative Foundation and Mid-Minnesota Regional Development Commission are awaiting approval by the City of Willmar before closing on loans.

Broadband

Townships Meetings

Committee Members are facilitating discussions with township boards to encourage township level investment and planning for a high-speed broadband deployment project. Both Hiawatha and Arvig have stated they would partner with us to do build out if we have funding partners that cover more than 50% of the project costs. Meetings have been planned or completed with the following township boards:

- | | |
|------------|-------|
| Green Lake | Mamre |
| St. Johns | Dovre |

The most successful attempts have a willing provider, a committed township, city or county, residents willing to advocate and assist in the planning and a successful Border-to-Border Grant application.

Meeker County Broadband

Vibrant Broadband, a project of Meeker Cooperative Light and Power (Meeker Co-op), has launched a high-speed broadband project using mixed technology. The project covers the rural areas of Meeker County and a small portion of eastern Kandiyohi County. Scott Froemming, CEO of Kandiyohi Power Cooperative, and I visited with Meeker Co-op CEO, Tim Mergen on Monday, March 25th in Litchfield. Mergen provided a PowerPoint presentation on the planning process, technology to be used and partnerships. The project was



planned in conjunction with a fiber deployment already planned for their electrical system throughout the county. Mergen reported that the broadband part of the buildout still amounts to 80% of the project costs while the electrical portion was 20% of the costs. More details about the project can be found on the Coop's newsletters at, <http://www.meeker.coop>

Century Link

I received a return call Kirstin Sersland, Director of Local Government Affairs with Century Link. They have interest in doing a project with us in one of their CAF2 funded areas. They shared a map with me and I am trying to figure out if there is a CAF2 area that is currently "unserved" and has township support for which a project could be planned. Century Link is working on the same.

Broadband Day on the Hill

Rollie Nissen, Donna Boonstra, Mark Boeschen and I attended Broadband Day on the Hill on April 3rd. The event is sponsored by the Rural Minnesota Broadband Coalition. Legislators are currently proposing the following:

House Democrats and Senate Republicans released funding targets to their committee chairs this week, signaling a turn towards the final stage of the 2019 Legislative Session. House Democrats are proposing to spend **\$70 million for the Border to Border Broadband Grant program** for the 2020-2021 biennium and the Senate Republicans are proposing to spend **\$30 million in one-time funding**.

Governor Walz released an amended budget proposal at the end of last week. The Governor trimmed \$131 million from his initial proposal, largely due to the February Revenue Forecast showing a \$1 billion surplus instead of the \$1.5 billion available after the November Revenue Forecast. Nearly all agencies were subject to reductions in his budget proposal, **but he left the \$70 million recommendation for the Border-to-Border Broadband Grant Program intact.**

The Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition's priority is \$70 million in ongoing funding for the Border-to-Border Broadband Grant Program! They need our voices to help get the larger amount across the finish line.

A couple of policy bills have been introduced lately concerning broadband. One of them, authored by Senator Draheim and supported by Senator Lang and Representative Baker, removes the word "wireline" from the existing broadband policy, making wireless and fixed wireless projects eligible for funding. This would also affect the mapping; which Baker would like to see. He wants to see how we fair when you add wireless services to the mix. I hope our discussions with both Lang and Baker helped them to see the consequences this could have for securing real broadband that meets our needs for the future. The Rural Alliance Lobbyist, Judy Erickson and Office of Broadband Chair Danna Mackenzie remain confident that this policy will not change and that if it does, projects still need to be scalable to 100/20 in the future and need to prove reliability.

A second policy bill, authored by Senator Koran, directs the Office of Broadband Development to develop and make publicly available a comprehensive "Broadband How-to Guide" to assist grant applicants and potential grant applicants with broadband best practices, funding options for broadband projects, and the broadband grant application process.



One of our speakers was the new Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) **Commissioner Steve Grove**, who spoke about his past work in Silicon Valley with Google and his wife’s work with a Venture Capital Group in Silicon Valley. They currently live in Northfield where they have family roots. Commissioner Grove spoke of a unified voice for broadband at the capitol. He said all legislators appear to be in favor of funds for the Border-to-Border program but proposed funding levels differ from House to Senate. He sees broadband as “critical to economic development” and confirmed that we have a way to go with our current 2022 goal at 91% and the 2026 goal at 73%. He spoke of the expertise of Danna Mackenzie and the rest of the staff at the Office of Broadband Development. Commissioner Grove offered points about growing the economy in the state as follows:

1. Broadband is critical
2. Minnesota Innovation Collaboration is needed in areas such as grants, research and development and educational tracts for starting businesses
3. Tax credits as one of several things to spur economic development

House and Senate leadership that joined our group and offered their comments were:

- Senator Erik Simonson
- House Minority Leader Kurt Daudt
- Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka
- HF 7 Author Representative Rob Ecklund
- HF 7 Author Senator Mark Koran

Some of the quotes that we received from speakers and audience responders, and that I may use in my presentations include:

Senator Koran: “Have a plan for the future, do not plan for being ten years behind” and “Every elected official needs to get out and speak about the importance of broadband and have this as a top priority.”

Mark Erickson, RS Fiber: after Daudt comments about deficits in some state organizations, “an investment in broadband helps with all of the issues.”

Vince Robinson of the Rural Broadband Coalition: “Rural area issues affect metro businesses, broadband is truly a statewide issue.”

Bill Coleman of Community Technology Advisors and advisor for Blandin: “The level of urgency for high speed broadband is escalating but waiting for deployment statewide is like waiting for the railroad to come”.

Judy Erickson of the Rural Broadband Coalition: “Securing \$30 million one year rather than \$70 for the biennium is a delay of at least one year of progress; a delay that risks losing businesses.”

Our group of four had legislator visits with Senator Andrew Lang and Representative Dave Baker. Mark Boeschen shared the story of a local business with critical broadband issues and a threat to leave our county, maybe even our state.

We shared our concerns for removing the word, “wireline” from the broadband policy and asked for support of funding at the \$70 million level for the biennium. We tried to eliminate the myths they had about



adequate speeds and technology for the rural area and about wireless broadband ability to meet needs for the future.

Senator Lang stated that a concern for ability for broadband providers to do any more than \$30 million dollars' worth of work in the next two years was one of the reasons that the Senate has reduced their funding bill to \$30 million. Other community representatives heard the same concern. I later researched this and was told by Jason of Cooperative Network Services (CNS), providers are indeed looking for new projects. They conducted a survey of providers and discovered there are at least \$35 million of projects that the providers are collectively willing to take on in the next year.

Our task for the remainder of the legislative session is to continue to advocate for the funding in the amount of \$70 million for the next biennium. Stories and messages of support will be best sent to Senator Torrey Westrom, leader of the Agriculture Committee (see address below). Senator Westrom, according to Senate Majority Leader Senator Paul Gazelka, is passionate and will fight for better broadband. That is why Senator Gazelka put the broadband funding bill, SF9, into the Ag Committee. Do not hesitate to also share stories of need and personal experience that justifies the full \$35 million with our own legislators, Rep. Dave Baker, and Senator Andrew Lang.

Senator Torrey N. Westrom (12, R)
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg, Room 3201
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-3826
E-mail: sen.torrey.westrom@senate.mn

Business Meetings and Events

1. Open Mic Ag Professionals
2. USDA Grant reports
3. Facebook ads training at Workup
4. Open Mic with Bruce Peterson
5. WestCon – Holloway – invitation to join ag group
6. Interview with student – Hamed Fadir on Community Development
7. Nate Hultgren on Industrial Hemp
8. Joint Ag Conference with MWTC – Planning
9. BRE Survey Research Subcommittee
10. Bruce Peterson Retirement Reception
11. Agcellence Banquet
12. Industrial Hemp Exploratory Subcommittee
13. Highway 23 Legislative Reception
14. Meeting with Dave Baker i.e.: Childcare, Broadband, NDC and Highway 23
15. Planning with DEED representative, Elise Buchan, on SIAL Canada Food Show
16. Meeting with new representative for EDC marketing, Lindsey Donner
17. Childcare core group meetings
18. Retail Design Workshops
19. General membership meeting of the Highway 23 Coalition
20. West Central Minnesota Job Fair at Ridgewater College

21. AURI New Uses Forum in St. Louis Park
22. Green Lake Township broadband discussion
23. Highway 23 Coalition legislative Committee meeting
24. Krista Willis discussion on workforce in agriculture
25. Membership meeting for New London Food Coop
26. Broadband Day on the Hill
27. Partners in Ag Innovation planning
28. Agprofessionals meeting and event planning
29. Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTS) Steering Committee meeting
30. Chamber Retail Workshop
31. Visit to Fargo – Industrial Hemp Use Business C2Renew
32. Townhall Meeting with Rep. Baker and Sen. Lang
33. Minnesota Marketing Partnership Meeting in Minneapolis
34. Roundtable on Workforce issues with staff from Sen. Klobuchar Office
35. Meeting with new Willmar City Planner, Dave Ramstad

Business Visits

1. Ag-business start-up meeting at EDC
2. Ag-business start-up investor meeting
3. MWTC recruitment strategy
4. Planning with start-up restaurant
5. Planning with start-up food sales and distribution
6. Planning with spa business start-up
7. Accessories 4 Trucks
8. Appliance and Home Center of Willmar
9. Willmar Childcare Center
10. Follow-up with participants of Retail Design Workshops
11. New London Food Coop Membership Promotion
12. Planning with Homecare Business start-up
13. Site search for three different light manufacturing/sales businesses
14. Opening Week for Mill Pond Salon
15. Business Expansion, Escape Willmar
16. Planning with Plumbing and Heating Business