

**KANDIYOHY COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

MINUTES

August 28, 2017

WORKUP, Willmar

Present: Donna Boonstra, Melissa Knott, Emily Lien and Ryan Thielen

Excused: Shari Courtney and Mike Negen

Absent: Deb Geister, Jean Geselius and Sarah Isdal

Guest: Jayme Sczublewski, REDstar Creative

Staff: Aaron Backman, Executive Director

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

Aaron Backman called the meeting to order at approximately 12:06 p.m.

MINUTES—Due to lack of a quorum, the minutes were received for information only and will be corrected to move Donna Boonstra from present to excused.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Social Media Statistics. Jayme Sczublewski presented the following statistics for the EDC Facebook page from January 4 through August 28, 2017:

Number of posts	157
Post reach	40.9k
Post impressions	67.0k
Post clicks	5,238
Reactions	599
Engaged users	3,230
Page and post engagements	1,723
New fans	50

REDstar is trying to post five to eight times each week. There was a large increase of engagement during the Kandiyohi County broadband campaign and during the development of the Destination Playground. All numbers are trending upward.

Posts that performed the best as to reactions were:

- R&R Family Farms being recognized as one of the 2107 Farm Families of the Year with 89 clicks, 22 reactions and 1,459 post impressions
- 8/1 on Kelly Hammerschmidt
- 8/17 on NL-S Schools

- 7/25 on Magnum Trucking with 36 post clicks, 10 reactions and 749 post impressions

The top post reaches were a 7/19 post on broadband and a 2/27 post on an Atwater business. The next step will be to set targets that can be tracked and what the committee wants done as to conversions.

Tradeshow Display Concepts. The committee reviewed proposed panels for the EDC's new popup displays (see attached). The stock ag photo was replaced with a new photo of a Select Genetics employee using an iPad. Attempts are being made to find a higher resolution welding photo. Connie Schmoll will look at the photos she has received from West Central Steel. Sczublewski found a welding photo from Ridgewater College that may be able to be used. Melissa Knott will contact RELCO for original photos of welders.

Highway 23 Coalition Flyer Update. Backman reported he and Schmoll have been meeting with potential members of the Highway 23 Coalition and obtaining financial commitments. Backman reported the Highway 23 Coalition formally organized and elected officers, adopted a budget through calendar year 2018 and set membership fees. Stearns and Kandiyohi Counties have committed to a membership along with several communities, businesses and organizations. A portion of the membership fees will be used for marketing and to develop a website. Backman stated because the corridor was extended to Marshall, the map on the EDC's flyer needs to be changed. The updated map with contact information was shown. The first goal of the Coalition is to finish the gaps from New London to I-94 and future goals will include the southwest section. Backman noted the Marshall area tends to travel to Sioux Falls or to the Twin Cities via Highway 212 from Granite Falls. Backman stated the busiest section of travel on Highway 23 is between Willmar and I-94. The committee discussed a new flyer and its purpose. The committee recommended removing member names from the flyer and, instead, list them on the website. Highest paying members could have their logo on the website with a hyperlink, lesser amounts could have a smaller logo with a hyperlink and those paying the lowest membership fee could have their printed name with a hyperlink. Backman stated the Coalition will meet on September 28 and host a noon luncheon on October 13 with guests, including Minnesota Department of Transportation Commissioner Zelle, at O'Neil's Event Center.

Business in Focus Draft Article and Ad. The committee was shown the shared half page ad (see attached) the EDC will have in the *Business in Focus* magazine along with the City of Willmar and Willmar Municipal Utilities. EDC staff is reviewing the draft article.

NEW BUSINESS

Fall Newsletter. Sczublewski stated a newsletter has not been done for awhile. The last printed newsletter was Winter 2016. Sczublewski showed the MinnWest Happenings, a digital newsletter done for the MinnWest Technology Campus. REDstar recommends a similar format be used for the EDC as it is easy to track clicks and has content that can be pushed to social media platforms.

Other. Backman distributed an agenda for the September 22, 2017 annual meeting of the Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers (MAPCED) (see attached). The annual meeting will be held at Dooley's Petroleum in the morning and the afternoon will be a bus

tour of the community. Ryan Thielen suggested contacting the Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce to have business representatives at the Foxhole Brewhouse at the end of the tour. Backman requested social media posts be done welcoming MAPCED members. Emily Lien suggested tagging economic developers from other communities. It was recommended registration include photo releases by the attendees. Knott suggested doing Facebook check-ins during the tour.

FAM Tour. Backman reported the EDC will participate in the Minnesota Marketing: 2017 FAM Tour September 13-15, 2017, but will not host a site selector. Backman and Schmoll will attend meetings and business tours in Minneapolis and a site selector reception. Backman recommended the EDC be a transportation sponsor at an approximate amount of \$900.

Taste of WORKUP. Backman stated the EDC will participate in a Taste of WORKUP. Last year's theme was raising the bar and a seven-layer bar was served. This year, the EDC is looking at serving a fudge bar with a theme of "You Can't Fudge It—We're the Best."

2018 Visitors Guide Ad. Backman showed the location, location, location ad placed in the 2017 visitors guide featuring the shovel-ready Willmar Industrial Park (see attached). The committee suggested the ad show a variety of tourism experiences in the county. Backman stated the EDC is considering funding for kayak boat launches. Knott suggested creating a video of a kayak launch for the 2018 Governor's Fishing Opener promotion.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:28 p.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next committee meeting is **12 noon, Monday, September 25, 2017** at WORKUP, 1601 Technology Drive NE, Willmar.



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION



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COALITION

OUR ECONOMIC FUTURE DEPENDS ON FOUR-LANE ACCESS AND FILLING THE GAPS FROM WILLMAR TO I-94

COMMUNITY

- MnDOT District 8 completed environmental reviews, but does not currently have funding to complete the four-lane gaps.
- Willmar is the largest outstate city without four-lane access.
- A four-lane connection to the interstate is essential to West Central MN's economy & 60,000+ workforce.

GROWTH

- Accessibility is required to attract and retain manufacturing jobs, businesses and skilled employees.
- Willmar's \$48 million Railroad Wye project will provide spur line access which also enables multimodal transport.

INDUSTRY

- Logistics and warehousing businesses with just-in-time inventory models require four-lane accessibility.
- Safe, reliable transportation is crucial for our key industries and the traveling public.
- In the six county region, 585 transportation-related businesses with 13,000 employees will directly benefit.



Contact us at kandiyohi.com or toll-free at **866.665.4556**



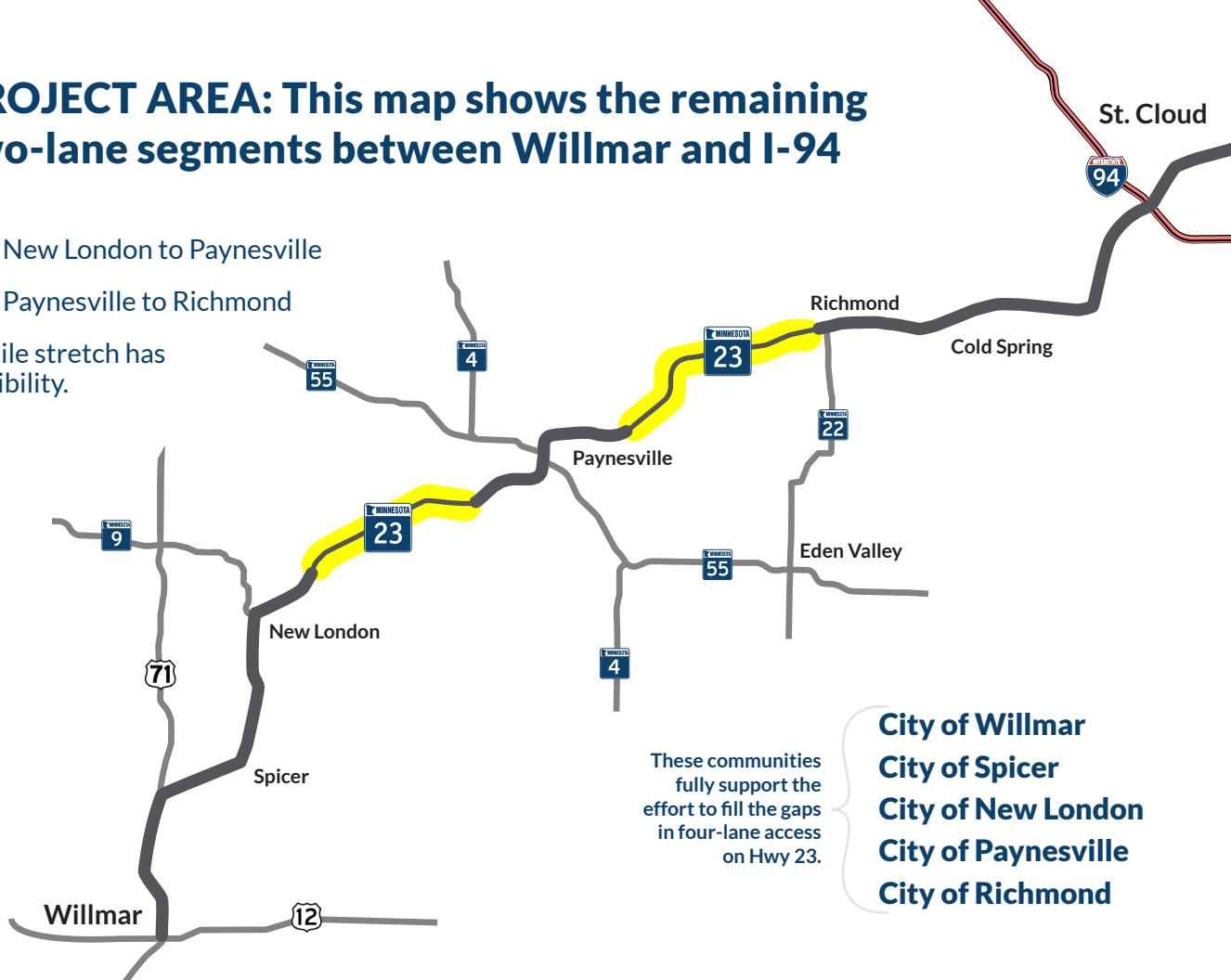


PROJECT AREA: This map shows the remaining two-lane segments between Willmar and I-94

7-mile gap from New London to Paynesville

8-mile gap from Paynesville to Richmond

72% of the 53-mile stretch has four-lane accessibility.



JOIN OUR GROWING BUSINESS HUB



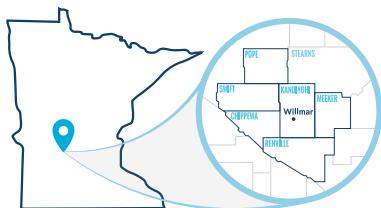
Ag Innovation & Technology



Industrial Development



An Entrepreneurial Culture

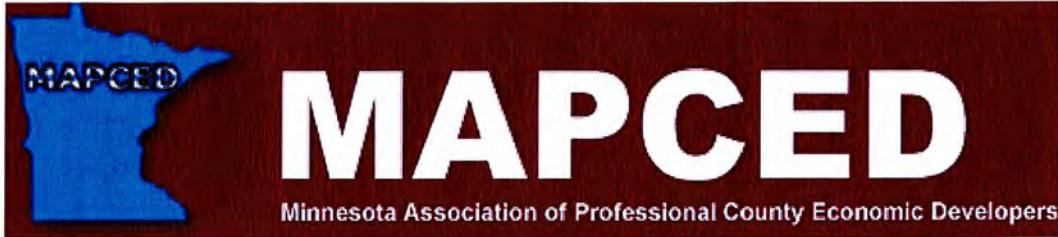


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Annual Meeting

Friday, September 22, 2017

Time: **9:30 AM – 3:00 PM**

Location: **Willmar, Minnesota**

Start at Willmar Public Library, 410 5th Street SW

Mission: To champion economic growth through the advancement of county economic development professionals in Minnesota.

9:30 a.m. MAPCED members park in City Lot in front of the Willmar Public Library (410 5th Street SW) in downtown Willmar

9:40 a.m. Coach Bus picks up MAPCED members and travels from Downtown to Dooley's Petroleum (3101 3rd Avenue SW) in the Willmar Industrial Park

9:45 a.m. Intro to company and tour of new corporate offices for Dooley's Petroleum

10:15 a.m. Annual Meeting / Selection of officers & proposed budget in Dooley's Boardroom

10:45 a.m. Committee Reports / Willmar Diverse BRE Report if time permits

11:15 a.m. BREAK

11:25 a.m. Lunch at Dooley's (Catered in Lunchroom) and Development Update by Members

12:45 p.m. Bus Tour

1:00 p.m. Visit & Tour of Destination Playground

1:30 p.m. Visit & Tour of WORKUP co-working space

2:00 p.m. Visit & Tour of Mr. B's Chocolates at MWTC

2:30 p.m. Travel back to Downtown, Tour of Barn Theater

3:00 p.m. ADJOURN

3:00 p.m. to ? For MAPCED members that wish to stay, an opportunity to try nationally award-winning brews at Foxhole Brewhouse (313 4th Street SW). Foxhole is located about a block from where you parked your car.

location,

Home of the Midwest's premier technology park with 400,000 sq. ft. of commercial space used by Agribusiness, Bioscience & Technology companies.



location,

Offering a new 181-acre area for industrial development recently certified Shovel-Ready by the State of Minnesota.



location.

Featuring a new airport, an east/west & north/south railway hub and access from both MN Highway 23 & US Highway 71.



Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION



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SHOVEL-READY WITH ROOM TO GROW

WILLMAR INDUSTRIAL PARK

Businesses ready to expand and build should consider the expanding industrial park in Willmar, Minnesota. It recently gained shovel-ready status, a certification by the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), that means the planning, zoning, surveys, title work, environmental studies, soils analysis and infrastructure engineering are complete to start construction.

The park is just two miles from the Willmar airport, which has available hangar space and a modern terminal building. It is also a transportation hub with north/south connections via US Highway 71 and MN Highway 23 and east/west connections via US Highway 12. Plans to add direct rail car access to the Willmar Industrial Park were also recently announced. The site is close to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe switching yard connecting Chicago to the Pacific coastal states. Over 30 companies already call Willmar Industrial Park home, including Jennie-O Turkey Store, Willmar Poultry Company, Mills Parts Center, Willmar Electric Service, RELCO and Chappell Central.

One of only 34 shovel-ready industrial parks in Minnesota



Zoned I-1
Light Industry



Easy access to
US Highways 12, 71
and MN Highway 23



36 platted lots
available



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