

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)  
BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION/RECRUITMENT (BRE/R) COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**August 4, 2017  
EDC Board Room**

Present: Sam Bowen, Les Heitke, Roger Imdieke, Les Nelson, Ranae Rahn, and Kelly TerWisscha

Excused: Bob Carlson and Dean Steinwand

Absent: Jim Ellingson

Staff: Aaron Backman, Executive Director

Secretarial: Diane Beck, Legal and Administrative Assistants (LAA)

Chairperson Sam Bowen called the meeting to order at approximately 9:08 a.m.

**AGENDA**

IT WAS MOVED BY Roger Imdieke, SECONDED BY Les Nelson, to approve the agenda as emailed.  
MOTION CARRIED.

**MINUTES**

IT WAS MOVED BY KELLY TERWISSCHA, SECONDED BY Ranae Rahn, to approve the minutes of July 7, 2017 as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

**REPORTS**

**Diverse BRE Program Final Report.** Aaron Backman shared highlights of the Diverse Business BRE Program Final Report ([see](#) attached). Backman reported he completed 18 diverse BRE site visits (9 Somali, 1 Asian and 8 Latino) and developed lists of Latino and East African businesses in Willmar. The visits have been beneficial. Backman noted 55% of the Somali businesses are located on Litchfield Avenue and 23% are on Fourth Street with most being concentrated in downtown Willmar. The Latino businesses are more dispersed with 18% located on Litchfield Avenue, 15% on Highway 71 and 67% in other areas of the community. Most of the Asian business are located on First Street south of Affiliated Community Medical Centers. Backman stated some Latino businesses have been in operation 20 years; 37% have been in Willmar more than 10 years and 15% started in the last 18 months. Most Somali businesses have been operational less than 10 years. The similarities in business type are Latinos, Somalis and Asians have food-related businesses

while Latinos also have a significant number of auto sales and repair businesses; Somalis transportation and cell phone businesses and Asians nail salon businesses. On average, most Latinos own their buildings and Somalis rent. The most common trade areas for the Somalis are 11-15 miles and 50-100 miles for Latinos. The diverse businesses also have a high use of social media to advertise their businesses. Overall, the diverse business owners were favorable of the Willmar community stating it was quiet and safe. A high percentage of Somalis and Latinos were in favor of additional multi-lingual signage. The survey indicated most Somalis employ more part-time employees while Latinos employ more full-time employees. The Bush Foundation and Bremer Foundation have also shown interest in the results of these visits and may be interested in offering additional grants. Backman provided the report to Southwest Initiative Foundation and the EDC Joint Powers Board. He will share the final report with the EDC Joint Operations Board next week. Heitke inquired if the interviews were a good cross section. Backman responded it was a good cross section; however, interviews were not conducted with diverse home healthcare or transportation businesses. Heitke also asked if there were challenges for diverse businesses to find employees. Backman responded some businesses do have issues with finding employees and some have inquired about workforce training opportunities. Backman asked committee members if the Diverse BRE Program report should be shared with other groups. Heitke suggested the Willmar City Council and Nelson suggested local service groups.

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

**Historic 313.** Backman reported Foxhole Brewhouse has negotiated a lease with Preservation Alliance of Minnesota (PAM) for an additional three areas mainly for private gatherings storage space. He shared a building diagram (see attached). The Spurs Restaurant is moving forward at a slower pace and another food service business from the St. Cloud area has expressed interest in the center space. Backman gave representatives of the business tours of three different areas in Willmar and they prefer the Historic 313 building.

**Midtown Plaza.** Backman reported the renovation of the first floor is making good progress and suggested conducting a future BRE Committee meeting in their board room, possibly in September.

**Highway 23 Coalition.** Backman reiterated the goal of the coalition is to be more organized and to include representatives from New London, Paynesville, Richmond and Willmar, as well as businesses. Bob Mathiasen was selected as Chair; Vice Chair, Mayor Jeff Thompson, Paynesville; and Secretary/Treasurer, Aaron Backman. He provided an update on the Highway 23 Coalition Executive Committee meeting held on July 20<sup>th</sup> at McKale's Restaurant in New London. The group developed a budget of \$31,100 and a membership/dues structure for government and businesses/organizations (see attached). Backman also shared the corridor map showing the end points from Marshall to St. Cloud (see attached). Backman presented the budget and membership/dues structure at the Spicer City Council meeting on July 31<sup>st</sup> and to the New London City Council on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Both entities have committed to the Advocate level of \$1,500. Backman will present the budget, membership and dues structure to the Willmar City Council in the near future. Kelly TerWisscha mentioned no funds were identified for lobbyists. Backman stated a lobbyist could be secured for short periods of time although the costs have not been determined.

TerWisscha inquired if there is a lobbyist another business has used along the corridor the Coalition could piggyback on. Backman would be in favor of such an arrangement. Heitke mentioned another possibility for a lobbyist is the League of Minnesota Cities. Heitke inquired if only dollars approved by the state for Corridors of Commerce will be sought or is federal funding available. Backman stated both state and federal funding would be sought. Mid-Minnesota Regional Development Commission will serve as fiscal agent; a checking account has been established.

**Business Visits/Tours.** Backman reported he met with Mel Odens, Kandiyohi County Public Works Director, regarding possible construction of an overpass on CSAH 55 at the south end of the Willmar Wye railroad bypass. The EDC obtained letters of support for the project and proposed bridge on CSAH 55 over the railroad tracks. The Willmar Planning Commission has approved a conditional use permit for Kwik Trip to construct a total of three businesses: 1) one at the former Cenex site on east Highway 12 that will include a convenience store and a full truck stop; 2) one at First Street South near Wells Fargo Bank; and 3) one at the former Mills Auto downtown location. Backman shared Mr. B's Chocolates has been purchased by Brian Bollig and relocated to the former bakery at MinnWest Technology Campus (MWTC). They plan to deal mostly in mail orders although retail will also be available at MWTC. Backman ordered a EDC logo be designed by Mr. B's Chocolates that will be used for future marketing. Backman and Connie Schmoll will attend a TED/TEDI Grant meeting later today.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Workforce Training Program with CLUES/Ridgewater College.** Chair Bowen reported on the workforce training program partnership between Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES) and Ridgewater College. CLUES is a linguistically and culturally relevant resource and service nonprofit organization by Latinos for Latinos. The programs and services connect families to resources, skills, institutions and systems and create an environment for people to be engaged and empowered. CLUES services focus on the Latino family, they can also serve individuals from all walks of life including new immigrants and low-income families. Bowen reported two agreements have been signed with CLUES. A public announcement will be shared soon and an open house held in the near future. A current employee of Ridgewater College will serve as a part-time bilingual career navigator for CLUES. A new curriculum for Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) students will begin in September or early October. Approximately ten students, mainly Latinos, will participate in the training program with their fees and tuition covered by the \$1.5 million grant. Other training areas may be offered in the future.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Heitke inquired on the status of the CTC broadband project. Imdieke reported the project was cancelled by CTC and the grant cannot be transferred to another broadband company. He commended the remarkable effort by the County, EDC and volunteers to move the project to a positive outcome; Bowen also offered kudos to everyone involved in the project. Ranae Rahn inquired about the proposed sales tax increase; Imdieke shared that two separate sales tax

increases can be imposed by the County and the City. Bowen briefly discussed the Job Fair and will bring additional information to the next BRE Committee meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:30 a.m.

**NEXT MEETING**—The next regular committee meeting is **9:00 a.m., Friday, September 1, 2017** in the EDC Board Room.

**Final Report for the Design and Implementation of  
a Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) Program  
for Diverse Businesses in the Willmar Area**



**July 24, 2017**



**Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**



## **Executive Summary**

The City of Willmar, population 19,610, is a regional trade center in Kandiyohi County and the six surrounding counties in West Central Minnesota. Located about two hours west of the Twin Cities, Willmar's population has quickly diversified in recent years. From 2000 to 2010 the Latino population increased by nearly 1200 people or about 41%, and the Somali/East African population increased by 768 people. By 2010 the population of Latinos and Somalis in Willmar exceeded 5,000 people.

New Americans bring with them their families, new ideas, cultural experiences, and entrepreneurial spirit. New Americans in Willmar have been establishing new businesses in the community. It is estimated that there are now 70 diverse businesses in Willmar, or about 12% of total businesses in the City. This business creation activity has occurred particularly in the last decade—approximately 71% of the Somali businesses and 52% of the Latino businesses were established in the last 10 years.

Last Fall the Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar Economic Development Commission (EDC) sought and was approved for a grant from the Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF) to design and implement a Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) Program for Diverse Businesses in the Willmar area. EDC staff would meet with and survey at least 16 diverse businesses (Latino, East African, etc.). The EDC would serve as a referral and resource agency for prospective minority entrepreneurs.

Aaron Backman, Executive Director of the EDC, conducted 18 Diverse BRE Site Visits from February to July of 2017. In terms of ethnicity, nine of the business owners were of Somali-descent, eight were Latino, and one was Asian. Several deliverables were developed as a result of the grant, including a Diverse BRE Site Visit Form, a listing of Latino businesses, a listing of East African businesses, and a map showing the geographic dispersion of Latino and East African businesses in Willmar. These documents are included in the Appendices.

Overall, the surveys indicated that, regardless of ethnicity, the new immigrant business owners viewed Willmar favorably. They described it as quiet, safe, and positive in its diverse population. Some of the survey findings indicated that on average the Latino business owner was more likely to own the property and the Somali business owner was more likely to lease (this partly is a function of length of time in the community). Somali businesses are concentrated in downtown Willmar. Fully 55% are located on Litchfield Avenue and 19% on Fourth Street. Latino businesses are more geographically dispersed, with only 19% on Litchfield Avenue and 66% located outside of the downtown. In terms of types of businesses, food-related businesses (groceries and restaurants 26%) were the most common, followed by transportation enterprises (taxis and long-haul transport 16%) for Somali enterprises. The top two for Latino businesses were food-related businesses (37%) and auto-related (repair, service, and sales 30%).



There are a number of outcomes as a result of the Diverse BRE Grant. First, as a result of the site visits (including follow-ups for technical assistance), the EDC's profile has been raised. The EDC is definitely more visible to the new immigrant communities. Second, the EDC now has baseline information that it did not have before. For the first time, Willmar now has compiled business lists with contact information by ethnic group. These lists were not part of the original grant purpose, however, they will be useful going forward. Third, the Diverse BRE Grant has helped facilitate two business startups and one business expansion. One project is renovating a building to establish a business center for diverse businesses, another is a start-up transportation business, and the third is an expansion of an established ethnic grocery.

## **Methodology**

A Diverse BRE Site Visit Form (See Appendix A) was developed in January 2017. It is a hybrid of several BRE forms the EDC already utilizes with communities and businesses in Kandiyohi County. The form was reduced to three pages in length to encourage participation by the various new immigrant/ethnic populations. In addition to contact information, the Site Visit Form asked 23 questions. These included questions on the type of business, product or services, business changes, trade area, gross sales trends, space needs, business expansion plans, number of employees (current and desired), community (likes, weaknesses, changes), customer, public signage, storefront signage, visual elements, rating various utility services, and general comments.

During the survey process, the EDC identified 31 East African businesses, 27 Latino businesses and at least 8 Asian businesses. These were obtained by talking with the Willmar Area Multicultural Business Center (WAM-BC), interacting with Abdirahin Hussen, the Regional Manager for the African Development Center (ADC) in Willmar, and connecting with local businesses. The business lists identified two Latinos who owned more than one business and at least six Somalis who owned more than one business in Willmar.

Businesses were selected for surveys from the business lists (See Appendix B) that the EDC created. Efforts were made to obtain a good cross-section of Somali and Latino businesses (type of business, size, location, and longevity). On average, interviews took 30 to 45 minutes and all were conducted on business premises. Six of the owners required the use of an interpreter. Good sample sizes were obtained for both Somali (29% of these businesses were surveyed) and Latino (30% surveyed). Because only one Asian business was surveyed, this survey was only included in the aggregate totals.



## **Introduction**

The City of Willmar, population 19,610, is a regional trade center in Kandiyohi County and the surrounding six counties in West Central Minnesota. Located about two hours west of the Twin Cities, Willmar's population has quickly diversified in recent years. From 2000 to 2010 the Latino population in the City grew from 2,913 to 4,099, or an increase of 1,186 people or about 41%. About 87% of the Latino population in Kandiyohi County resides in Willmar, and in 2010 represented 21% of the overall population of the City. Willmar's Latino population is the third largest for a city in Greater Minnesota after Rochester and Worthington.

The Somali/East African population increased by 768 people to 933 people in the year 2010. About 95% of the East African population in Kandiyohi County resides in Willmar, and in 2010 represented about 5% of the overall population of the City. The Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development estimates the current Somali population in Willmar at 1,238. By 2010, the population of Latinos and Somalis in Willmar exceeded 5,000 people.

Minnesota is currently home to more than 16,200 foreign-born entrepreneurs. Such business owners are creating economic opportunities. In 2014 these firms generated \$289 million in business income. New Americans bring their families, new ideas and cultural experiences, and their entrepreneurial spirit. New Americans in Willmar have been establishing new businesses in the community. It is estimated that there are now around 70 diverse businesses in Willmar. These Latino, East African, and Asian businesses represent about 12% of total businesses in the City. This business creation activity has occurred particularly in the last 10 years—approximately 71% of the Somali businesses and 52% of the Latino businesses were established in the last 10 years.

In November of 2016 the EDC sought and was approved for a grant from SWIF to design and implement a BRE Program for Diverse Businesses in the Willmar area. As part of the grant, EDC staff would meet with and survey at least 16 diverse businesses (Latino, East African, etc.). The EDC would serve as a referral and resource agency for prospective minority entrepreneurs.

## **Findings from Diverse BRE Survey**

### **Business Longevity**

In compiling of the business lists, the EDC learned that minority-owned businesses are relatively new in Willmar. The oldest Latino business has been operating in Willmar for nearly 20 years and three other Latino businesses for over 15 years each. Fully 13 businesses or 48% of the Latino businesses have been operating for over 10 years. And five or 19% of the Latino businesses have been started within the last two years.



Somali migration to Willmar (and thus business creation) is more recent. Most are less than 12 years in operation and 9 businesses or 29% have been operating for over 10 years. And 10 or 32% of the Somali businesses have been started within the last two years. It would appear that the Somalis are creating businesses in Willmar at a faster rate than the Latinos, especially over the past five years.

The EDC surveyed nine Somali businesses in Willmar. The oldest was established in 2007 and the newest in 2016. The average tenure of the Somali businesses surveyed was 5.1 years. The EDC surveyed eight Latino businesses in Willmar. The oldest was established in 2001 and the newest in 2017. The average tenure of the Latino businesses surveyed was 7.9 years. The EDC surveyed one Asian business in Willmar. It was established in 2016.

## **Business Type**

For all 18 surveys, the types of businesses included:

- Auto Repair, Sales & Service (3)
- Bakery
- Cell Phone Sales
- Clothing & Household Goods (2)
- Groceries (5)
- Insurance Broker
- Interpreting Services
- Party Rental
- Restaurants (3)

There were similarities and differences among the ethnic groups regarding the types of businesses started by new immigrant populations. For Somali businesses, the most common were food-related (groceries and restaurants) with eight enterprises or 26%, followed by transportation (taxis and long-haul transport) with five enterprises or 16%, clothing/general merchandise with four or 13%, cell phone businesses with three or 10%. For Latino businesses, the most common were food-related with ten enterprises or 37%, auto repair/service/sales with eight or 30%, and construction contractors with three or 11%. With both ethnic groups there are likely home-based businesses in Willmar that have not been identified with this survey.

## **Business Location**

In terms of the geographical location for all diverse businesses in Willmar, they tend to be located downtown (a little over half), along U.S. Highway 12, and Business Highway 71 or First Street. Significant differences occurred by ethnicity. Somali businesses are concentrated in downtown Willmar. It is notable that 17 Somali businesses or 55% are located on Litchfield



Avenue in the downtown. And 6 businesses or 19% are located on Fourth Street. That means nearly 75% of Somali businesses are operating on one of those two streets in the downtown.

Latino businesses are more dispersed—fully 18 or 66% are outside the downtown, including on U.S. Highway 12 and First Street/Business Highway 71. Five or 18% are located on Litchfield Avenue, and four or 15% are located on Fourth Street in downtown Willmar.

In order to show the geographic dispersion of diverse businesses in the Willmar area, a map has been attached to this report (Appendix C) that plots the location of Latino and Somali businesses (the former with green dots and the latter with blue dots). An inset map highlights the location of diverse businesses downtown. As a side note, this map does not include Asian businesses in Willmar. More efforts would need to be done to identify and locate Asian businesses in Willmar. Initial research indicates that the Asian businesses are primarily located in an eight block area (south of the downtown) along First Street South near Affiliated Community Medical Center to the Kandi Mall.

## **Trade Area & Sales**

As part of the Diverse BRE Site Visit process, interviewees were asked to identify the approximate trade area in miles for their respective businesses. The most common categories for all 18 surveys were 11 to 15 miles, 21 to 50 miles, 51 to 100 miles, and over 100 miles. The most frequent trade area for the Somali businesses (4) was 11 to 15 miles, while the most frequent trade area for the Latino businesses (4) was 51 to 100 miles.

It was determined that total gross sales would not be asked of the diverse businesses at this time due to sensitivity regarding the question (though several businesses did provide that information). Instead, the focus of this question was whether total sales were increasing, decreasing or stable. For Somalis, five had increasing sales, two were decreasing, one was stable, and one did not respond. For Latinos, five had increasing sales, none were decreasing, and three were stable. These responses were not independently verified.

## **Property, Space & Signage**

Diverse businesses were asked whether they owned their business location or leased the premises. There was a strong bifurcation of responses regarding this question. Business owners of Somali descent were much more likely to lease their buildings—eight out of nine businesses surveyed leased. In contrast, Latino business owners were more likely to own their buildings—six out of eight businesses surveyed owned their properties. This difference could be related to the length of time in the community, household income, access to capital, geographic preferences, etc.



Collectively for all 18 diverse businesses surveyed, the businesses occupied roughly 32,500 sq. ft. of space. Individually it ranged from a business owner leasing 200 sq. ft. of space on Litchfield Avenue to an owner of a 4,000 sq. ft. building on U.S. Highway 71 South. The eight Latino businesses surveyed occupied about 16,900 sq. ft. of space with an average space of 2,100 sq. ft. The nine Somali businesses surveyed occupied about 14,200 sq. ft. of space with an average space of 1,580 sq. ft. In the next couple of years, the Latinos surveyed would like to add about 6,000 to 7,000 sq. ft. of commercial space, and the Somalis surveyed would like to add about 3,200 sq. ft. of space. The additional space required in the future would be met by adding space at the current location, constructing a new facility, or moving to a new location. Three of the Latino businesses surveyed have tentative plans to build a new building. One of the Somali businesses has immediate plans to move to a new building that will more than double its square footage, and two other businesses are considering expanding onsite.

Eight out of nine of the Somali businesses surveyed would like to update their merchandise/service signage to promote their businesses better. Five out of eight Latino businesses surveyed were satisfied with their storefront signage. These responses could also be related to the longevity of the business and whether the business owner leases or owns the building.

## **Technology Adoption & Utilities**

Most of the diverse businesses surveyed were not heavy users of technology. Several of the office-related businesses (interpreting business and insurance broker) made significant use of PC technology regarding contracts, accounts, payroll, and other business processes. Fourteen out of the 18 businesses used e-mail for their business activity, however, 15 of the businesses did not have an active website.

Interestingly, half of the businesses surveyed were using social media to market their products and services, specifically Facebook (5 of the Latino businesses, 3 of the Somali businesses, and the Asian business). Several businesses (insurance broker and auto sales business) reported significant sales utilizing Facebook. Several of the grocery stores did sell phone cards in the store as many of their customers were not Internet savvy or had limited access.

All diverse businesses surveyed were asked to rate their satisfaction with various services, including water, sewer, garbage removal, natural gas, electricity, telecommunications, cellular service, Internet access and speed. Overall, water, sewer, and natural gas services were rated highly by the business owners. For Somalis, the lowest ranked services were telecommunications (5 respondents) and garbage removal (4). For Latinos, the lowest ranked services were electricity (6 respondents, primarily cost) and Internet (5; primarily access and speed).



## Business Employees

Altogether the 18 diverse businesses surveyed employ about 73 people, including 40 fulltime persons and 33 part-time employees. On average for the diverse businesses surveyed, the Somali businesses hired more part-time employees or people under contract. The Latino businesses hired more fulltime employees and fewer part-time employees. At the present time the Somali businesses surveyed employ 12 people fulltime and 25 people part-time or under contract. In the future they would like to increase that to 21-24 people fulltime and 34 people part-time or under contract. At the present time the Latino businesses surveyed employ 28 people fulltime and 8 people part-time. In the future they would like to increase that to 36 to 40 people fulltime and 11 part-time.

## Views of the Community

The Diverse BRE Site Visit Survey asked the 18 businesses what they like about Willmar and what are Willmar's weaknesses as a place to do business. The most common responses by all diverse businesses to the first question was to describe the community as "quiet" (9), "safe" (7), and "diverse population" (5). Overall, the surveys indicated that, regardless of ethnicity, the new immigrant business owners viewed Willmar favorably.

With regard to Willmar's weaknesses, a significant portion of the surveyed businesses (7) identified no weaknesses in the community. This could indicate a high level of satisfaction with the community, but it could also indicate a reticence by new immigrant groups to disclose negative comments about the community to a government representative. Several of the Somali business owners did identify the need for more parking downtown. The most common response for the Latino business owners was the "lack of activities/attractions for youth." Only one business owner referenced any ethnic "Discrimination" in Willmar (and he himself did not experience it). By and large, the diverse business owners who were surveyed described the people in Willmar as "good people" and "nice."

One question posed to the businesses was would you like to see wayfaring/destination signs in downtown Willmar in several languages, e.g. English, Spanish and Somali. All nine of the Somali business owners and five out of the eight Latino business owners indicated affirmatively. They viewed the multi-lingual signs as welcoming all customers to downtown.

Another question that was asked was what are your customers looking for that they are not finding in Willmar? The most common responses for the Somali business owners were having a "barbershop for Somali men" (5), more "fresh Halal foods" (2), and a "furniture store" (2). The most common responses for the Latino business owners was "nothing" (3) and "more activities for youth/people".

## Survey Outcomes

Designing and implementing a BRE Program for diverse businesses in the Willmar area has been a very informative process for the EDC. We have become a better resource agency, gained a better knowledge of the new immigrant communities, and we have established relationships with new partners.

The number of new immigrant-owned or diverse businesses in Willmar has grown over the past 10 years. These businesses are for the most part small in size (employing less than five employees each). Initially these diverse businesses have focused on “mom and pop” retail enterprises. Over time, the new immigrants have begun to diversify into service and other types of commercial enterprises. In another 10 years’ time, a number of these diverse businesses may become medium-sized enterprises in the City of Willmar.

There are a number of positive outcomes as a direct result of the Diverse BRE Grant. First, with the various site visits (including follow-ups for technical assistance), the EDC’s profile has been raised. The EDC is definitely more visible to the new immigrant communities. Second, the EDC now has baseline information that it did not have before. For the first time, Willmar now has compiled business lists with contact information by ethnic group. These lists were not part of the original grant purpose, however, they will be useful for programming going forward. Third, the Diverse BRE Grant has helped facilitate two business startups and one business expansion. One project is renovating a building to establish a business center for diverse businesses, another is a start-up transportation business, and the third is an expansion of an established ethnic grocery.



# **APPENDIX A**



# DIVERSE BRE SITE VISIT FORM

To be filled out by the interviewer — Information is confidential

7.26.17

Business Interviewed	
Business Name	Date of Visit(mm/dd/yy)
Contact Name/Title	Email Address:
	Website:
Phone ( ) -	Cell Phone ( ) -
Other Company Business Contact	

Product/Service			
1. What type of business do you have? _____ _____ _____			
Business Sector (Check one)			
Accommodations	Finance	Motor Repair/Vehicles	Technology
Bakery	Furniture and Appliance	Restaurants	Transportation
Cell Phone	Grocery and Drugstore	Retail	Other
Clothing	Hair Salon	Retail – Non-Store	
Educational/Cultural	Healthcare	Services - Business	
Entertainment	Home Improvement/Household	Services - Consumer	
2. When did you establish your business? _____			
3. Has your product/services changed significantly in the last two years?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If yes, please explain: _____ _____			
4. Do you anticipate a significant change in your business in the next 12 months?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If yes, please explain: _____ _____			
5. What is your trade area in miles: _____ <5 5-10 11-15 16-20 21-50 51-100 100+ mi.			
6. What are your total sales for this business:		Are they <input type="checkbox"/> Increasing <input type="checkbox"/> Stable <input type="checkbox"/> Decreasing	
7. Do you want to expand your business?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If so, what obstacles exist? _____			
8. Do you need more space?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
9. How many square feet do you have now? _____ sq. ft.			
10. Do you own your space or lease?		<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Lease	
11. How many people do you employ now?		_____ Full-Time _____ Part-Time	
12. How many people do you need? _____			

# DIVERSE BRE SITE VISIT FORM

To be filled out by the interviewer — Information is confidential

7.26.17

## Community

13. What do you like about Willmar? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

14. What are Willmar's weaknesses as a place to do business? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

15. What type of products/services are your customers looking for that they are not finding in this community?  
\_\_\_\_\_

16. Have there been any changes in Willmar or the downtown area impacting your business in the last two (2) years (demographic, physical, competition)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

[Interviewer (circle one each): Is the comment about Community, Neighborhood, Both Was the comment: Positive, Negative, Both]

17. Would you like to see signs in downtown Willmar in several languages? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

18. Would you like to make changes to your storefront? \_\_\_\_\_

19. Would you like help with design of a business sign or merchandise/service sign? ☐ Yes ☐ No

20. Have you considered redesigning your business name, logo or sign or business cards? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what changes? \_\_\_\_\_

How will they affect the company? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

21. Are there any visual elements which could be added to your building or your block to attract customers? ☐ Yes ☐ No

# DIVERSE BRE SITE VISIT FORM

To be filled out by the interviewer — Information is confidential

7.26.17

## Utility Services

22. Please rate your satisfaction with your utility services.

Type of Utility	Low			High	
A) Water	1	2	3	4	5
B) Sewer	1	2	3	4	5
C) Solid waste removal	1	2	3	4	5
D) Natural gas	1	2	3	4	5
E) Electric	1	2	3	4	5
F) Telecommunications	1	2	3	4	5
G) Cellular service	1	2	3	4	5
H) Internet access	1	2	3	4	5
I) Internet speed	1	2	3	4	5

23. Do you have any final comments you would like to share?

Thank you for your assistance.



# **APPENDIX B**

7/28/17

## Ethnic-Owned Businesses in Willmar – Latino

<u>Business Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Telephone Number</u>	<u>Type of Business</u>
Alvarez Interpreting Service	294 57 <sup>th</sup> Ave NE, P.O. Box 3022	Dulce (Candy) Alvarez, Owner	320-262-3099	Spanish Interpreters >10 yrs.
AutoBarn	5454 Highway 71 South	Joe Valdez, Owner	320-979-5975	Custom Car Detailing <2 yrs.
Azteca Restaurant	215 Fourth Street SW	Guillermo Serrano, Owner	320-262-4445	Restaurant <5 yrs.
Beto's Auto Repair	3950 Highway 71 NE	Alberto Ramon, Owner	320-235-0941	Auto Repair, Tires, Oil <10 yrs.
Diamond Builders	215 Fourth Street SW	Carlos Valdovinos, Owner	320-441-9405	Commercial/Ag Const. 15 yrs.
El Tapatio	1111 First Street South	Jose Gomez, Owner	320-214-0444	Restaurant >10 yrs.
Elite Insurance Group	201 Becker Avenue SE	Leobardo (Leo) Martinez, Owner	320-220-0216	Auto, Home, Life Ins. >10 yrs.
Estrella Bakery	421 Litchfield Avenue SW	Antonio Vasquez, Owner	320-231-2455	Bakery >10 yrs.
Express Plus Auto Repair	1005 Highway 12 East	Edwin (Polo) Lo Pineda, Owner	320-444-0966	Auto Repair <1 yr.
Fiesta Time Rentals	5454 Highway 71 S, Box 743	Robert Valdez, Owner	320-905-3966	Tents & Party Rentals >5 yrs.
Francisco's Pico de Gallo Salsa	902 Second Street SW	Francisco Morales, Owner	320-235-4275	Hot Sauce 10 yrs.
Hill's Construction	4233 11 <sup>th</sup> Avenue SE	Hilario (Hill) Vargas, Owner	320-220-2800	General Contractor 20 yrs.
Huerta Auto Repair	124 Benson Avenue SW	Luis Huerta, Owner	320-235-1178	Auto Repair <5 yrs.
Huerta Restaurant (New)	913 Highway 71 NE	Andrea Gallegos, Owner	320-262-5544	Restaurant <1 yr.
La Fiesta Foods	307 Third Street SW	Alberto & Perla Gasca, Owners	320-231-9713	Grocery >15 yrs.
La Michoacana	121 Fifth Street SW	Juan Mejia, Owner	320-491-3847	Grocery >10 yrs.
Latino Multiservice/Max Tax	333 Litchfield Avenue SW	Branch Office	320-235-7777	Tax Prep & Accounting >2 yrs.
Lohse Auto Repair	1002 Litchfield Avenue SW	Miguel & Roxana Lohse, Owner	320-295-8212	Auto Repair >5 yrs.
Mejia's Handyman	?	Juan Mejia, Owner	218-910-0329	Movers/Short-haul ? yrs.
Novedades Gaudalajara	425 Benson Avenue SW	Alma Enriquez, Manager	320-979-2972	Women's Clothing >5 yrs.
Rosita's Restaurant (Moving)	308 Fourth Street SW	Alberto Gasca, Owner	320-235-1072	Restaurant >15 yrs.
Saenz Custom Cabinets	2213 23 <sup>rd</sup> Street SW	Urbano Saenz, Owner	320-235-2462	Kitchen Cabinets >10 yrs.
Spurs Restaurant	313 Fourth Street SW	Aydee Lopez, Owner	320-894-4335	Restaurant <1 yr.
Taqueria El Guerrerito	1605 First Street South #B07	Valentin Ciriaco	320-894-0138	Restaurant >10 yrs.
Tevalan Sales	706 Litchfield Avenue SE	Freddy (JR) Mejia, Owner	320-212-3680	Car Sales, Tires, Service <1 yr.
Tony's Auto Sales	625 Litchfield Avenue SW	Tony Vega, Owner	320-222-5477	Used Car Sales, Service <10 yrs.
Zelaya Auto Sales & Repair	1781 41 <sup>st</sup> Avenue NE	Rafael Zelaya, Owner	320-235-0167	Car Sales & Repair >12 yrs.

27 Businesses

7/18/17

## Ethnic-Owned Businesses in Willmar – East African

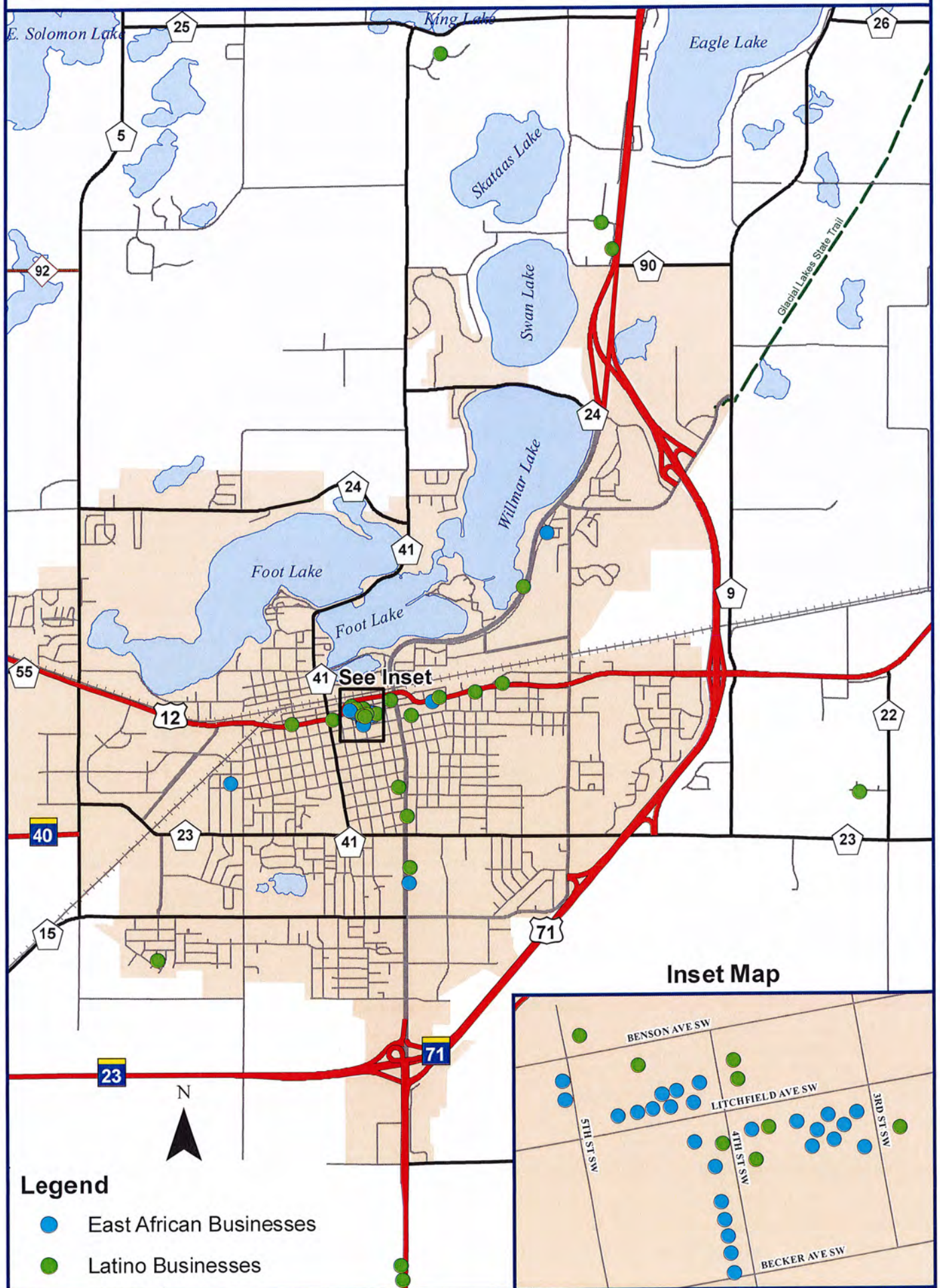
Business Name	Address	Contact Person	Telephone Number	Type of Business
Ain-U-Shams, Inc.	222 Fourth Street SW	Abdilah Omar	612-298-6330	Grocery (Midtown) <10 yrs.
Aless Transportation	620 16 <sup>th</sup> Street SW	Abdirahin Hussien, Co-Owner	612-481-4577	Transportation <1 yr.
Alfurqaan	314 Third Street SW	Abdusalaam Hirsi, Director	612-323-2778	Community Services (M) <2 yrs.
Amaal Trucking, Inc.	333 Litchfield Avenue SW #11	Osman Jibril, Owner		Transport. Brokerage <1 yr.
Amin Grocery Store	302 Fourth Street SW, #3	Abdiqadir Yusuf, Owner	320-262-5003	Grocery <2 yrs.
Ardo Fashion Store	313 Litchfield Avenue SW	Ardo Mohamed, Owner	814-440-6244	Women's Clothing (M) <2 yrs.
Bihi's Shop of African Food	212 Fifth Street SW	Mohamed Bihi, Owner	320-235-0646	Grocery >10 yrs.
Bihi's Restaurant	214 Fifth Street SW	Mohamed Bihi, Owner	320-235-0646	Restaurant >10 yrs.
Guled Merchandise	320 Fourth Street SW	Safia Ahmed, Owner	320-295-0661	Clothing >5 yrs.
Hamza Restaurant	426 Litchfield Avenue SW	Kafi Ali, Owner	320-262-6857	Restaurant >10 yrs.
Iftin Clothing	410 Litchfield Avenue SW	Kafi Ali, Owner	320-262-3579	Clothing >5 yrs.
Immigration & Tax Services	309 Litchfield Avenue SW	Mohamed Mohamed, Owner	952-687-0386	Immigration/Tax Services <2 yrs
Kaah Express, F.S. Inc.	320 Fourth Street SW	Mohamed Hassan, Owner	320-235-2800	Money Order/Transfer >10 yrs.
Kulmiye Store	400 Litchfield Avenue SW #1	Abdulcadir A. Gaal, Owner	320-214-1234	Grocery >10 yrs.
Lakeview Inn	1212 N. Business Hwy 71	Asim Siddiqui	800-718-3424	Motel >10 yrs.
Land O'Lakes Home Care	408 Litchfield Avenue SW	Abdirahim Mohamud	320-231-1111	Home Health Care <10 yrs.
Languages & Resources Center	408 Litchfield Avenue SW	Abdirahim Mohamud	320-231-1111	Language Programs >10 yrs.
Metro PCS	1605 First Street South #12	Abdi Nasir, Owner	469-396-3672	Cell Phones >5 yrs.
Mubarak Food & Grocery	421 Benson Avenue SW	Luqmaan Mohamud, Owner	320-235-5000	Grocery / Coffee Shop >10 yrs.
Nasir Prepaid Wireless	426 Litchfield Avenue SW	Abdi Nasir, Owner	469-396-3672	Phone Service >5 yrs.
New Minnesotan Realty, LLC	309 Litchfield Avenue SW	Sahra Gure, Owner	320-444-8555	Events/Conferences (M) N/A
Reliant Transportation	309 Litchfield Avenue SW	Aden Hassen, Manager	320-444-4222	Trans. (M) >5 yrs.
Salaam Transportation, Inc.	309 Litchfield Avenue SW	Abdusalaam Hirsi, Owner	612-323-2778	Trans. (M) > 5 yrs.
Samah Home Health Care	330 Fourth Street SW, #9-B	Ismahan Osman, President	952-452-0409	Home Health Care >2 yrs.
Somali Bride Consultant, LLC	309 Litchfield Avenue SW	Sahra Hirsi, Owner	320-262-6636	Wedding dresses (M) <2 yrs.
Somali Connection	408 Litchfield Avenue SW	Abdulcadir A. Gaal, Owner	320-231-3333	Tax Prep./Immgra. Srv. >10 yrs.
Somali Star	407 Litchfield Avenue SW	Bashir Yusuf, Owner	320-262-3789	Restaurant >5 yrs.
Southwest Transportation, Inc.	230 Lyon St. W. #104, Marshall	Abdullahi Olow, Owner	507-401-4945	Trans. -Willmar/Marshall <2 yrs.
Tawakel Fashion Store, LLC	330 Fourth Street SW #3	Abdi Nasir, Owner	469-396-3672	Clothing/House/Grocery N/A
West Central Interpreting, LLC	309 Litchfield Avenue SW	Abdirzak (Zack) Mahboub & Sahra Gure, Owners	320-235-0165	Interpreting Services-HQS in Willmar; Office in Mpls >5 yrs
Zack Wireless LLC	402 Litchfield Avenue SW	Mohamed Aden	320-262-3579	Cell Phones <2 yrs.

31 Businesses



# **APPENDIX C**

# Locations of Ethnic Businesses in Willmar (July 12, 2017)







**ENGAN ASSOCIATES**  
1800-368-2222  
1800-368-2222  
1800-368-2222  
1800-368-2222

PRELIMINARY  
PROGRESS PRINT  
FOR INFO ONLY  
NOT FOR CONST.

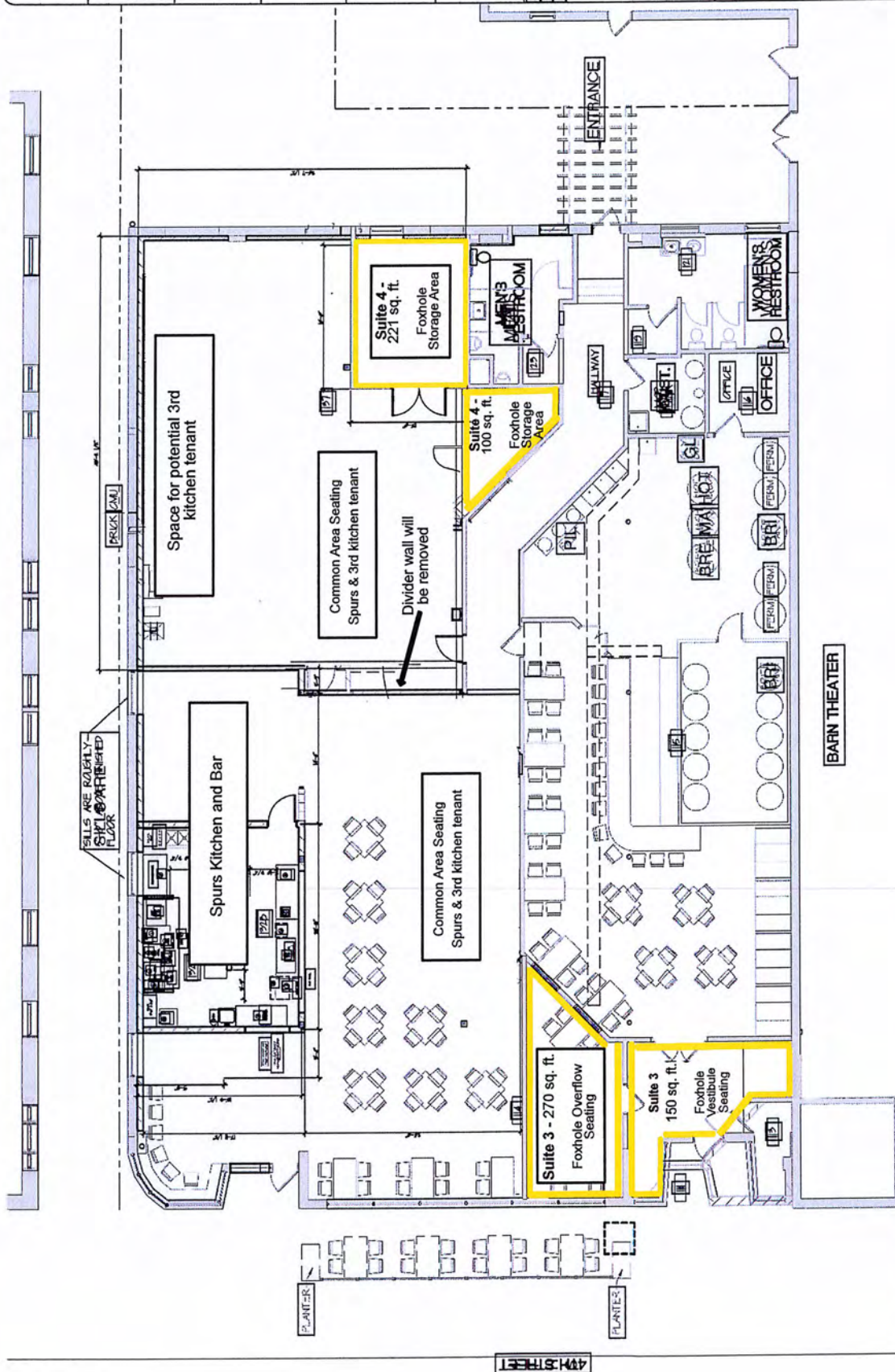
PROJECT #	787.00	DATE:	11/10/2014
RAWN MT:		CHECKED BY:	

313 4TH STREET

WILLMAR, MN

**FLOOR PLAN**

A-131



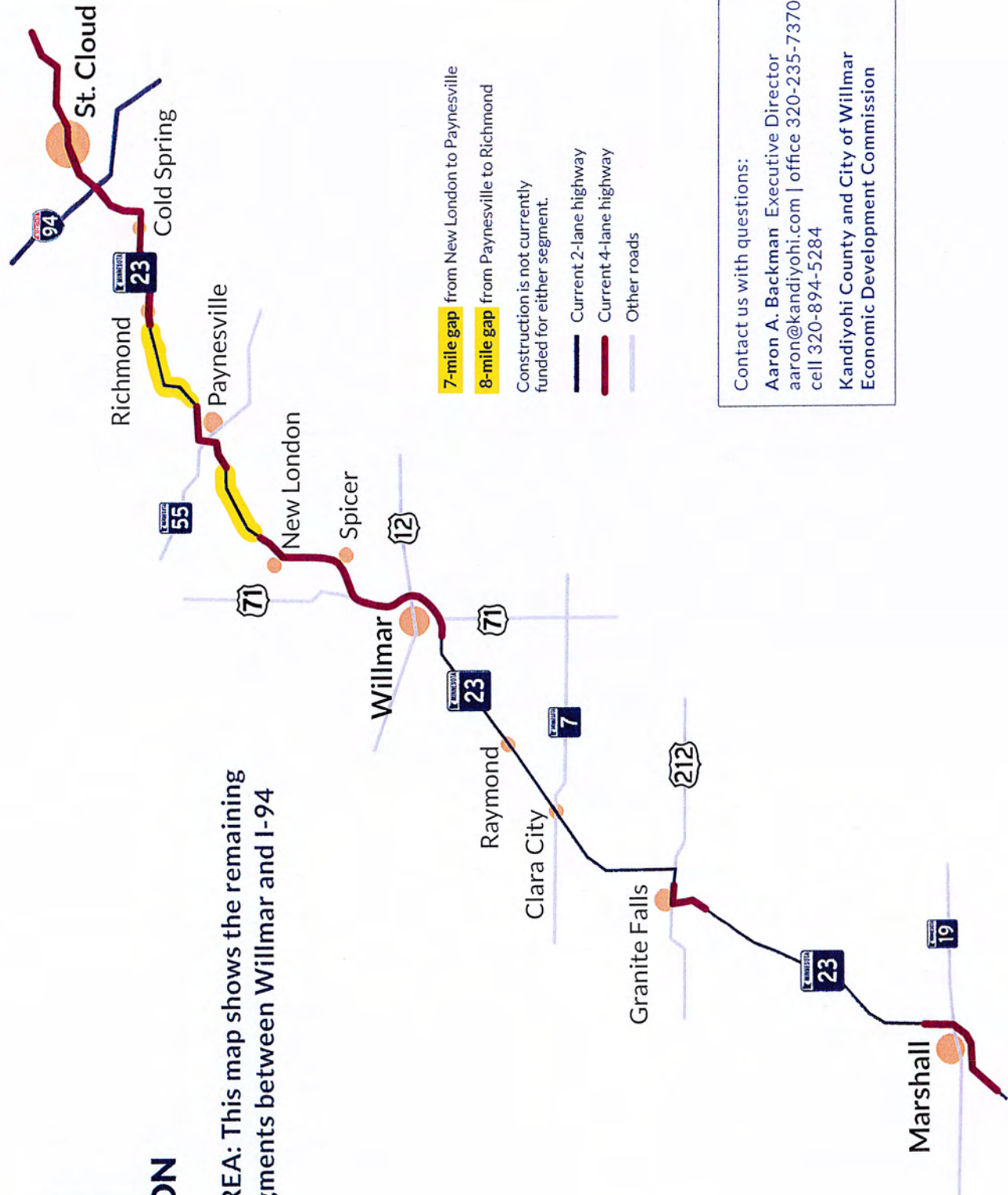
1/4" FLOOR PLAN





# COALITION

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

Construction is not currently funded for either segment.

Current 2-lane highway

Current 4-lane highway

Other roads

Contact us with questions:

Aaron A. Backman Executive Director  
aaron@kandiyohi.com | office 320-235-7370  
cell 320-894-5284

Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar  
Economic Development Commission



**PROPOSED BUDGET  
8/1/2017 TO 12/31/2018**

**REVENUES**

MEMBERSHIPS		\$ 28,600
Counties	\$ 8,000	
Cities and Townships	\$ 13,000	
Businesses/Organizations/Individuals	\$ 7,600	
 GRANTS		\$ 1,000
EVENTS		\$ 1,000
MISCELLANEOUS		\$ 500
 <b>TOTAL</b>		<b><u>\$ 31,100</u></b>

**EXPENSES**

MARKETING/PRINTING	\$ 12,000
(Newsletters, Flyers, Maps, Etc.)	
TRANSPORTATION STUDIES	\$ 7,500
WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT/HOSTING	\$ 5,500
EVENTS	\$ 2,400
BOOKKEEPING (MMDC)	\$ 1,200
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 1,200
BOARD INSURANCE	\$ 700
SUPPLIES/MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 600
 <b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$ 31,100</u></b>



## MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

### Government:

	<u>Supporter</u>	<u>Advocate</u>
Counties with Population >35,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 3,000
Counties with Population <35,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,500
Cities with Population >7,500	\$ 2,000	\$ 3,000
Cities with Population <7,500	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,500
Townships (Any Size)	\$ 200	\$ 300

### Businesses/Organizations:

Platinum	\$ 1,000
Gold	\$ 500
Silver	\$ 250
Bronze	\$ 100