

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)**  
**JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB) MEETING**  
**MINUTES**  
**May 12, 2022**  
**Community Room, Heritage Bank, Willmar and via Zoom Video Conference**

Present: Art Benson, Les Heitke (via Zoom), Kelly TerWisscha and Mary Warszynski

Excused: Donna Boonstra, Jesse Gislason and Justice Walker

Ex Officio: Vicki Davis

Staff: Aaron Backman, Executive Director; Sarah Swedburg, Business Development Manager and Kelsey Olson, Marketing & Communication Specialist (via Zoom)

Media: Jennifer Kotila, West Central Tribune

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

President Art Benson called the meeting to order at approximately 11:05 a.m. and declared a quorum was present.

**AGENDA—**

IT WAS MOVED BY Les Heitke, SECONDED BY Kelly TerWisscha, to approve the Agenda and following Consent Agenda.

- Approve:
1. Minutes of April 14, 2022
  2. Financial reports as of April 30, 2022
  3. Payments of Invoice No. 19-195-22.1 from Achieve TFC in the amount of \$2,800 as budgeted for planning session facilitator
- Accept:
- Committee/Subcommittee Minutes
1. Broadband and Advanced Technology 4/11/2022 special meeting
  2. Finance 2/8 and 4/12/2022
  3. Marketing and Public Relations 3/28/2022

MOTION CARRIED.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**2022 Strategic Planning Session Followup.** The board reviewed the 2022 Strategic Planning Session Summary (see attached). Backman highlighted the business support graph on page 3; 2021 accomplishments on page 4; what is working well and what could be improved on page 5; and strategic focus areas for 2022-2023 on page 7. The board also reviewed the 2022-2023 Strategic Priorities (see attached) and discussed the goals and strategic objectives for each.

- Maximizing Human Potential—discussion and comments included:
  - Having videos of various careers and including the salary range for those careers
  - Education is power
  - Educate the teachers and encourage them to observe the students and guide them toward a career; see the teachers as a knowledge gap, especially in welding and shop; start with the principals to make a connection.
  - Sarah Swedburg spoke about the Business Education Network through the Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and the Classroom program School—she indicated the touch point was really good with Middle School students; and the recent job fair at the Willmar High School—the students used a bingo card that was good for them to discover a business that went with a type of job; interaction was higher than expected
- Housing Development
  - Vicki Davis believes there is a tiny home development being considered by the City of Willmar’s Housing Task Force
  - Need affordable starter homes
  - Because of regulations and material costs, building new is not affordable
- Countywide Engagement
  - Invite mayors annually to attend a board meeting
  - Young adults struggle to make connections in the community; inform businesses of what there is in the area to do and what groups there may be; the Chamber’s NEXT program was mentioned
- Advancing EDC Branding and Marketing Efforts
  - Kelsey Olson has been updating the EDC’s marketing flyers and created a new “what we do” flyer
- Business Support
  - Technical assistance for small businesses and entrepreneurs
  - Outreach to businesses across Kandiyohi County

**Replacement for Abdullahi Awale.** Backman informed the board that Abdulcadir Gaal, owner of Somali Connections, submitted an application to the City of Willmar to be considered for this board. Backman provided background information on Gaal. Backman also had a good discussion with a Latina businesswoman who, at this time, may be more open to an appointment in 2023.

**NEW BUSINESS**—There was no new business.

## REPORTS

**Economic Development Activity.** The board reviewed the Planning & Development update submitted by Justice Walker (see attached). Swedburg reported on her attendance at the April Community Venture Network where she was introduced to a business that will be purchasing property in Willmar and renovating an existing building. Another business may also be a good fit for the community. Swedburg noted that several times a month individuals have been contacting the EDC about starting a business. She has been working with Three Fingers Sawmill, which is moving north of New London, and continues to work with Amin Grocery on its new location.

Backman reported Block 25 Lofts is moving forward with clearing the property. Construction continues to move forward for FedEx, Preserve on 24<sup>th</sup> and Unique Opportunities. Kelly Morrell will be building storage units near Unique Opportunities and Nexyst is working on schedules and will be meeting with BNSF's Intermodal Department in Fort Worth, Texas. Swedburg reported the end of April she attended the Brownfields and Beyond: 2022 Minnesota Redevelopment Conference hosted by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development at Breezy Point.

**Elevate Community Business Academy.** As requested last month, Swedburg provided the past and current students of the Elevate program and the status of their businesses (see attached). HMD Photography will be taking professional photos of the current students at this week's Elevate class. Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF) covers the membership fee for the businesses to be members of the Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce for one year. As to the Elevate program, the license agreement and Memorandum of Understanding are between Rising Tide Capital and SWIF. Swedburg noted that because state grant funds will be used for the translation expense, three bids were needed. Estimates were obtained from West Central Interpreting, Translations in Motion and Propio (see attached). Since West Central Interpreting's quote was obtained in October 2021, a new estimate of \$36,500.00 was received. Included in the estimates are translations of the homework books, workbooks and PowerPoint slides.

IT WAS MOVED BY Mary Warszynski, SECONDED BY Kelly TerWisscha, to approve the estimate of \$10,205.55 provided by Propio to translate the Elevate Community Business Academy curriculum into Somali. MOTION CARRIED.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development.** Swedburg will be attending the Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce's Fifth Grade tours of Cojo Dairy and Meadowstar-Louriston Dairy on Monday. She also gave an update on Happy Halal. The state recently announced grant recipients for the AGRI Value-Added Grant and Happy Halal was awarded \$100,000 and Kandi Acres was awarded \$12,000. Amin Grocery also received a grant from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Good Food Access Program in the amount of \$36,000 to purchase coolers. The committee and Industrial Hemp Exploratory Subcommittee will hold a joint work session in the near future.

**Broadband and Advanced Technology.** Swedburg reported she will be attending the Roseville Township meeting tonight to gain support for the Hawick/Long Lake project. The provider is ready to break ground next week. The county will pay the townships' portions of the project and then bill them for reimbursement. Charter is hosting a groundbreaking ceremony next week for its New London project. Swedburg attended the town hall meeting of Rep. Baker and Senator Lang where she was able to clarify answers to questions asked about broadband funding.

**Business Retention and Expansion/Recruitment.** Backman reported the committee will meet this Friday to review the Strategic Priorities from the planning session. It will also discuss holding another virtual job fair.

**Finance.** Backman reported the committee met this week. Swedburg reported the committee approved a three-month deferral of principal payments for Groom Zone after a three-month deferral was approved by United Prairie Bank. Mid-Minnesota Development Commission had a six-month deferral at the start of its loan and will not do another deferral.

IT WAS MOVED BY Kelly TerWisscha, SECONDED BY Mary Warszynski, to approve a three-month deferral (May, June and July 2022) of the principal loan payments by Groom Zone under the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's Revolving Loan Fund Program, requiring the interest to continue to be paid each month. MOTION CARRIED.

Backman informed the board that on April 11<sup>th</sup> a Conciliation Court hearing was held on the EDC's claim against Kandi Adult Care and Kamaal Geele, individually, relative to the unpaid COVID-19 Business Assistance Loan. On April 21, the court issued a judgment in favor of the EDC in the amount of \$5,080. Backman obtained an agreement by Geele to make monthly payments on the judgment until it is paid. An ACH form was sent to Geele, who indicated he will sign and return the form for payments to begin on June 15, 2022.

IT WAS MOVED BY Kelly TerWisscha, SECONDED BY Mary Warszynski, to approve the following amortization schedule to be paid by Kamaal Geele in payment of the judgment against himself and Kandi Adult Care: \$50 for three months beginning June 15, 2022, \$100 for three months and \$257.26 each month thereafter through May 15, 2024. MOTION CARRIED.

**Marketing and Public Relations.** Olson reported she created a "what we do" flyer following the in-person job fair (see attached). She has been updating all marketing flyers used by the EDC, as well as the prospectus to include the Opportunity Zone and the Willmar Renaissance Zone, and has organized the EDC's image library. Backman indicated they would like to do a marketing piece to include other communities. Olson encouraged the board to view the EDC's website, which is also being updated. The EDC is now working with Redwood Valley Technical Solutions to host the site and assist with updates. Olson asked the board to forward to her any businesses that should be highlighted or pictures that can be used on the site. Backman stated he is having Swedburg and Olson attend the Greater Mankato Real Estate Summit 2022 hosted by the Real Estate Journal on May 24. Tours of developments in Mankato prior to the Summit are also planned.

**Leisure Travel.** President Benson reported things are going well. The last meeting was at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society, which just added a new document room.

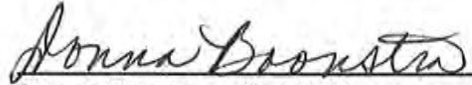
[Olson was excused from the meeting.]

**WHAT'S UP?** Board members provided information, including a grant is in the House and Senate for the curling club. Vicki Davis was hired by Fladeboe Auctions to do its online auctions. TerWisscha Construction is renovating an area of United Prairie Bank for a new business, Clarus Dermatology; the South 71 expansion/renovation project is starting; and it continues to work on renovations for 7/71 (Mel's Corner), Papa Murphy's and Panda Garden, which had a kitchen fire; and final designs


are being done for Foxhole Brewhouse's new location. Heitke attended the grand opening of Heritage Exteriors at its new location in the former Ziegler building.

**ADJOURNMENT**—There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:09 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING**—The next regular board meeting is 11:00 a.m., Thursday, June 9, 2022 at the Community Room of Heritage Bank, 310 First Street SW, Willmar, and via Zoom video conference.

  
Donna Boonstra, Secretary

APPROVED: 6/9/2022

  
Art Benson, President



# STRATEGIC PLANNING



# 2022

## **Appendices:**

- A – 2021 EDC Accomplishments
- B – 2021 Strategic Planning Goals Update
- C – 2022 Business Support Survey Summary
- D – Planning Session Presentation
- E – EDC Strategic Goals/Objectives 2022-2023



## Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar Economic Development Commission

### 2022 Strategic Planning Session Summary April 7, 2022 Willmar Conference Center

## 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 an annual 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, 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 2022-2023, recognizing the past goal areas and considering the changing needs of the EDC service area.

Discussions gathering insights from EDC staff were used to determine the focus for the Strategic Planning Retreat on April 7, 2022. Insights also guided the materials to be made available to planning participants prior to and during the session. Participants received the following documents (*attached as Appendices A, B and C*): 2021 EDC Accomplishments, 2021 Strategic Planning Goals Update and 2022 Business Support Survey Summary.

## 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 April 7, 2022 for a full-day retreat. The presentation used to guide retreat discussions can be found in *Appendix D*.

### FRAMING THE DAY

The group began by participating in an exercise to reveal the importance of having diverse perspectives and strengths when working together collaboratively. After reviewing the EDC's existing Mission and Vision, participants reviewed the work to take place throughout the day.

**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.

## Planning Retreat Expected Outcomes

- *Share insights and explore what we have learned in the past year*
- *Discuss what is working well and what we can improve as we work to be a catalyst for economic growth*
- *Define goals and specific objectives that will make the most difference for the future of Kandiyohi County people and businesses*
- *Strengthen the ways in which we can work together to create and support prosperity, innovation, international competitiveness, and enhanced quality of life*

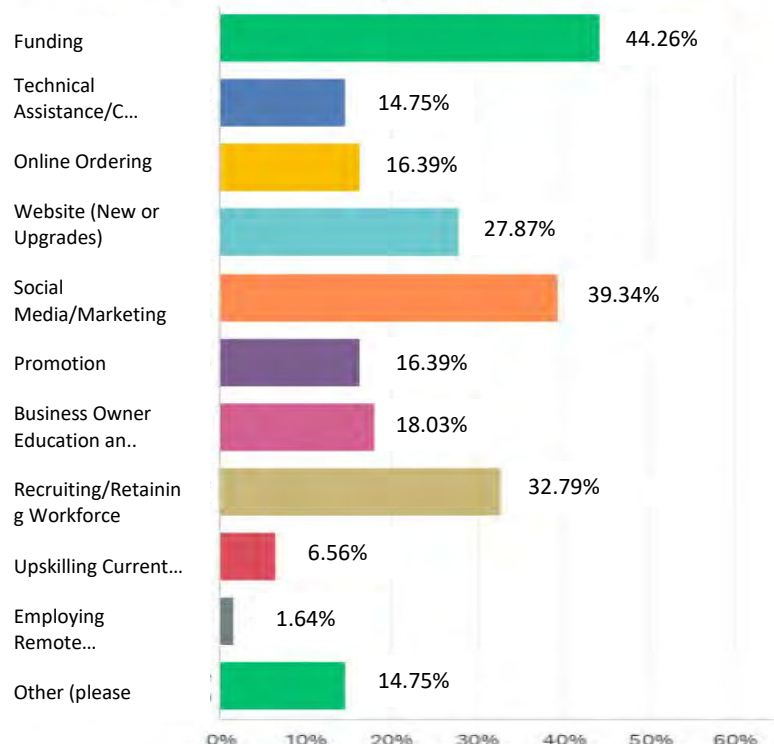
## Insights to Guide the Future

### Business Insights

Sarah Swedburg, Business Development Manager with the EDC shared business insights collected through the Business Support Survey sent to businesses (see Appendix C). As of April 2022, there were 70 survey respondents. Over half of the respondents indicated that they know how to access EDC resources. When asked about their business operations since March of 2020, 95.7% are still in operation in Kandiyohi County and over half have changed their business operations in response to current realities. Of the business support most needed, **Funding** ranked # 1 (44.26% of respondents). Following closely behind were **Social Media/Marketing** (39.34%), and **Recruiting/Retaining Workforce** (32.79%)

Planning participants heard from business representatives/owners, Hteh Hteh Hta Rue of Chaw's Asian Market and Ryan Vatnsdal of Erickson Plumbing, Heating & A/C. Both shared the importance of the EDC's support and funding in helping their businesses. Ryan Vatnsdal shared the challenge of attracting/retaining workers, indicating they will train their own workers but could benefit from having a plumbing/heating program at Ridgewater College. Dr. Craig Johnson, Ridgewater College President, shared interest in offering a program as well as the difficulty in attracting educators to teach classes in this field. Hteh Rue shared her story of her family's history in grocery store management and her hopes of purchasing a building to expand her operations in the future. As a family-run business-owner, she is grateful that she and her family live in a supportive community like Willmar.

### What business support do you need?





Overall, participants shared the following challenges and opportunities of businesses in the area:

### Business Insights...

#### Challenges

- Business expansion is limited by workforce availability/# of employees
- Child care, housing and broadband are still significant challenges for workers/businesses
- Business owners are still hesitant to ask for help or may not know how to ask; a need for increased awareness/education
- Entrepreneurs need stronger business skills

#### Opportunities

- Funding and technical assistance help increase business appetite
- Technology and investments in marketing can help businesses
- The EDC and Ridgewater College can help with awareness, education and business skills
- Rising gas prices may be contributing to increased local shopping
- Our area is blessed with diverse businesses/people

### Highlights of 2021 Accomplishments & Progress Toward Current Goals

Aaron Backman, EDC Executive Director, shared several key 2021 accomplishments and progress toward 2021 goals. (Key accomplishments can be found in *Appendices A: 2021 EDC Accomplishments* and *B: 2021 Strategic Planning Goals Update*.) Areas of note included:

- **COVID Business Assistance:** MPR grants to 60 businesses/6 nonprofits (\$844,000 total); Revolving Loan Funds to 4 businesses (\$127,500 total)
- **Industrial Development:** FedEx Distribution Center (a 217,325 sq. ft. facility on a 27-acre site)
- **Housing:** Unique Opportunities (two 72-unit multi-family housing buildings); Preserve on 24<sup>th</sup> (two multi-family housing buildings with 36 units each); Bethesda North Pointe (Senior housing project in New London with 24 independent living units, 18 assisted living and 18 memory care units); Block 25 Lofts (4-level 58-unit multi-family complex in Willmar's Renaissance Zone)
- **Workforce Development:** In-person Job Fair at Ridgewater College (50+ employers/300 job seekers); Workforce Solutions Summit (74 attendees); Virtual Job Fair (54 employers; 79 attendees); Diverse workforce training (CLUES, Ridgewater, CMJTS)
- **Elevate Community Business Academy:** Education/Mentorship program focused on creating economic opportunities for underserved minorities (12 students representing 10 businesses graduated from the first two cohorts); program recognized statewide through a Small Business Partnership Grant from MN DEED (\$76,000) to fund the program through June 2023 and allow the Fall 2022 class to be translated/taught in Somali. The EDC also received the 2021 Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers' Outstanding Economic Development Program award.

Additional efforts helped advance child care, broadband, agriculture and marketing. Refer to the aforementioned appendices for detailed accomplishments.

## Evaluating 2021 Strategic Priorities & Looking Toward Future Priorities

The group considered what areas of current priorities are working well, what might the EDC improve upon, and what might be missing or need greater attention from the EDC moving forward. In small group discussions, the following insights were lifted up ...

### What's working well?

- The EDC's ability to collaborate, be innovative, and quick to act (noting that the EDC has a well-functioning team)
- The business support provided during/following COVID helped businesses persevere
- The EDC is effective in developing minority businesses; this was advanced by adding the Elevate program in 2021
- The EDC's involvement in job fairs and the Workforce Solutions Summit is a great start to being more engaged in workforce challenges
- The broad focus of the EDC aids in the support of all people, cultures, businesses
- The EDC's persistence is paying off in areas such as broadband, Highway 23 and child care

#### EDC's Strengths

- Well-functioning team
- Ability to partner/collaborate
- Quick to act
- Innovative thinking
- Gathers info to understand needs
- Measurable success toward goals
- Persistence – Broadband/Hwy 23

### What could the EDC improve upon?

Participants shared insights that revealed six overarching areas with specific ideas for possible improvement (see image below.) Several participants sighted a need from innovative ways to support workforce development and overall business needs all across the county.

#### What could be improved?

##### Child Care and Housing

- Intentional focus/strategies
- Working with developers on a variety of housing options
- Incentives, subsidies, funding

##### EDC Branding/Communications

- Updated branding/logo
- Intentional marketing/awareness of services (particularly outside of Willmar)

##### Broader Countywide Engagement

- Engage and evaluate the needs of ALL communities in Kandiyohi County

##### Business Support

- Continue outreach momentum
- Education of services to more businesses
- More RLF/Micro Loans
- Business to business mentors

##### Showcasing Kandiyohi County

- Showcase the area/our successes
- Volunteers to share/tout area amenities

##### Greater Diversity on Boards/Committees

- Age, gender, geography, and cultures
- Cultural awareness for event planning

## What is missing (or may need greater attention)?

Participants shared the following insights regarding areas that may benefit from more focused attention:

### What is missing?

#### People Attraction/Recruitment

- Bring them back campaigns (students/young families)
- Focus on trailing spouses
- Attract entrepreneurs from other geographic areas

#### Career/Human Development

- Benefits of technical training/degrees
- Awareness of local jobs/careers
- Youth and adults reaching full potential

#### Broader Countywide Engagement

- Evaluate needs of ALL communities in Kandiyohi County
- Collaborate with other economic development groups/mayors
- Committee members as ambassadors
- Meetings held in locations across county
- Greater collaboration for tourism

#### Refugee Resettlement Planning

- Planning
- Awareness and education

## Identifying Key Priorities for 2022-23

EDC Board and Committee Members and other participants explored and considered several potential priority areas for the EDC including, Child Care, Housing, Broadband, Maximizing Human Potential (Workforce Development), Countywide Engagement, Communications/Marketing, Business Support, and Agriculture. Discussions about these priorities revealed insights about the importance of these areas in building a strong economy:

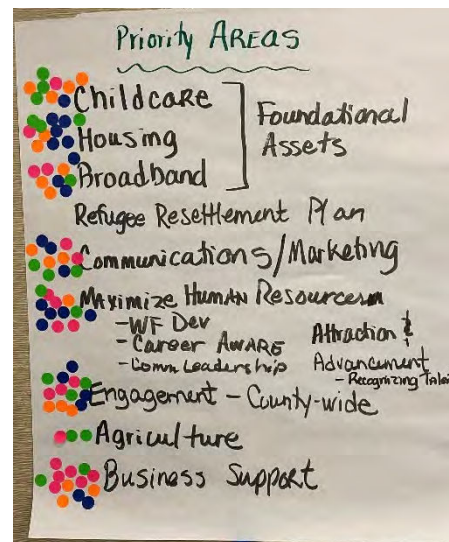
- Child Care, Housing and Broadband are key foundational assets
- Maximizing human potential includes:
  - Developing our current/future workforce
  - Building awareness of career opportunities
  - Recognizing talent/opportunities for advancement
  - Developing community leaders
  - Attracting people from outside the area
- Communication/marketing includes:
  - Improved branding/marketing of EDC and its services
  - Increased marketing of Kandiyohi County area—why live, work, play here
- Business Support—need to continue the momentum started through COVID
- More intentional countywide engagement can help ensure the EDC is supporting the economic development needs all across Kandiyohi County

### Top Priority Areas

- Child Care
- Housing
- Broadband
- Maximizing Human Potential
- Countywide Engagement
- Communications/Marketing
- Business Support
- Agriculture

Following small and large group discussion, individual participants selected their top 4 priorities. The blue dots represented their top priority, the other colors are their second, third, and fourth rankings. Through this process and further discussion, participants ranked the key as follows:

1. Maximizing Human Potential
2. Housing
3. Countywide Engagement
4. Communications/Marketing
5. Business Support
6. Broadband
7. Child Care
8. Agriculture



## Strategic Focus Areas for 2022-23

While all of these areas are important and will be part of the EDC's efforts over the next 12-24 months, participants agreed that strategic focus and specific action plans should be developed for the priorities shown below. Breaking into groups according to their personal interests, the group worked to generate ideas for specific action items for each of these strategic focus areas. More detailed strategic goals and objectives can be found in *Appendix E*.

### Strategic Focus Areas for 2022-2023 (As selected by participants)

#### Maximizing Human Potential

Helping every individual in Kandiyohi County reach their full potential through career awareness, training, and development

#### Countywide Engagement

Intentional outreach and engagement in communities all across Kandiyohi County to determine needs and provide awareness of EDC support and services

#### Communications/Marketing

Improved EDC branding and marketing strategies to reduce confusion about who we are/what we do

#### Housing

Developing alternative housing options to increase the availability of affordable workforce housing stock countywide

#### Business Support

Continued momentum of supporting existing businesses and fostering the growth of new business opportunities through appreciation, awareness, technical support, and access to funding

## Next Steps

Participants of the 2022 EDC Strategic Planning Session made significant strides in developing a shared vision of success and key strategies that will guide the work of the Commission over the next 12 to 24 months. Initial action plans drafted for each focus area can be reviewed as *Appendix E: EDC Strategic Goals/Objectives 2022-2023*. EDC staff and committees will further define specific action items for each of the five priority areas and plans will be brought to the EDC Boards for further consideration.

## **Maximizing Human Potential**

**GOAL: Help individuals in Kandiyohi County reach their full potential through career awareness, training and development.**

**Committee:** BRE Subcommittee: Workforce Development

**Key Partners:** Ridgewater College, CMJTS, Mid-Minnesota Development Commission

### **Strategic Objectives:**

#### **Career Awareness/Marketing**

- Videos highlighting area careers
- Informing people of career opportunities through job fairs, social media
- Marketing materials/social media strategies to showcase Ridgewater College courses/Customized Training and Continuing Education and local careers

#### **Youth/Adult Career Development**

- Supporting/developing secondary school programs to feed workforce pipeline
- Aiding employer engagement with their future workforce

#### **Alternative Career Pathways**

- Guidance/Training toward new career entrances/pathways
- Upskilling/training for employees (retention/efficiency)
- Reentry into the workforce through new pathways

## **Housing Development**

**GOAL: Develop alternative housing options to increase the availability of affordable workforce housing stock countywide.**

**Committee:** Business Retention and Expansion/Recruitment (BRE) Committee

**Key Partners:** Vision 2040 Housing Committee, Kandiyohi County HRA, local City Council representatives, local realtors/developers

### **Strategic Objectives:**

#### **Developing NEW Housing Concepts/Opportunities**

- Reimagining housing; exploring alternative and affordable housing options (e.g., reinvent mobile home parks, incorporating bungalow courts)
  - Developing housing that can grow with families (home design includes the full-sized end product, but the home can be built in stages, as family size and incomes grow)

- Evaluate/improve zoning requirements to allow expanded opportunities
  - Consider allowances for the construction and incorporation of accessory dwelling units (backyard guest house for grandparents, adult children with disabilities, etc.)
  - Consider allowances for smaller lot sizes—more households per linear foot of street, sewer, etc.
  - Consider establishing a tiny homes subdivision

### **Rehabilitation of Existing Housing Stock**

- Maximize the use and quality of existing housing stock
- Work with developers/property owners to fix existing housing stock
- Reduce absentee landlords (consider ordinance adjustments that require landlords or their representatives to live within 30 minutes or similar)

### **Cross-Agency Collaboration**

- Work with multiple agencies/governmental units to increase affordable housing stock countywide over the next five years (set specific goals for # of units)

## **Countywide Engagement (Public Relations)**

**GOAL:** Intentional outreach and engagement in communities across Kandiyohi County to determine needs and build connections to EDC support and services

**Committee:** Marketing and Public Relations

**Key Partners:** City Councils; Local Economic Development Groups; Chambers of Commerce, Local Businesses/Community Members

### **Strategic Objectives:**

#### **Intentional Outreach to Build Relationships, Awareness and to Gather Insights**

- Connections with community banks and businesses across the County
- Town Hall meetings to hear needs/priorities
- Identify community representatives for ongoing communication and diverse participation on board/committees

#### **Expanding Meeting/Event Locations**

- Host EDC Board/Committee meetings, Elevate and other events in a broad array of communities

#### **Sharing Countywide Success Stories**

- Lift up success stories of businesses/communities all across Kandiyohi County to help promote opportunities and quality of life all across the County

## Advancing EDC Branding and Marketing Efforts

**GOAL:** Position the EDC with updated branding to enhance its ability to reach target audiences and increase targeted outreach to Kandiyohi County and beyond.

**Committee:** Marketing and Public Relations

**Key Partners:** Potential focus group participants: local marketing professionals, business professionals, Chambers of Commerce representatives

### Strategic Objectives:

#### EDC Branding Refresh

- Updates to brand, logo, taglines to aid brand consistency and understanding of EDC (who we are/what we do/how we can help)
- Website updates and enhanced functionality

#### Developing Targeted Messaging/Outreach

- Identify key audiences and associated key messages
- Share relevant information of importance to key audiences
- (Note: Refer to marketing-related strategies within other goal areas)

#### Intentional Kandiyohi County Marketing

- Identify strategic opportunities to tout Kandiyohi County as a place to live, work, play
- Intentional marketing of the County as THE place for entrepreneurs (effort to attract entrepreneurs to Kandiyohi County)

## Business Support

**GOAL:** Continued momentum of supporting existing businesses and fostering the growth of new business opportunities through appreciation, awareness, technical support and access to funding.

**Committee:** BRE Subcommittee: Business Support

**Key Partners:** Local Lenders; Lending Partners

### Strategic Objectives:

#### Relationships with Businesses

- Intentional outreach to businesses all across Kandiyohi County to identify countywide needs/opportunities
- Focused support for emerging entrepreneurs and diverse businesses through technical assistance and programs such as Elevate Community Business Academy

#### Awareness/Education of EDC services

- Align identified business needs/opportunities with EDC and partner support/services

#### Encourage Business Growth/Expansion

- Identify and work to support businesses struggling with workforce challenges (see Human Potential Goal)
- Utilize Opportunity/Renaissance Zones to aid business growth/expansion



## Additional Areas (Addressed by Existing Committees/ Groups)

### Broadband

**Strategic Objectives:** Continue objectives defined during 2021 planning including education, awareness, and advocacy for countywide broadband.

### Child Care

**Strategic Objectives:** Reinvigorate Rural Child Care Innovation Program group and assist in the reassessment of goals/strategies for 2022-2024

### Agriculture

**Strategic Objectives:** Continue targeted activities that leverage Kandiyohi County's agricultural assets and provide education of new opportunities, such as industrial hemp.





## **Planning & Development EDC Update 5/12/22**

- New code enforcement has been very successful so far addressing graffiti and other complaints around town
- We have had 5 new house plans submitted this year. Last year was 6 total.
- Several projects and zoning changes are on the last step of approval in the planning commission, but we didn't have quorum at the latest meeting to move them to Council
  - Columbarium Ordinance
  - Industrial Uses
  - Shopping Center District Rezone
  - CIP Approval
- Tiny Homes have been revamped and resubmitted
- The Comp Plan Taskforce will be transitioning to the next 4 chapters
- Staff will be reviewing and finalizing the first 4 chapters
- Staff will be working to set up several outdoor public engagement events over the summer
- The department is looking at a way to expedite the abatement process to address more repetitive complaints and violations
- All of the forms, notices, and letters that the department uses are now available in Spanish
- Inspectors will have tablets that will streamline the inspections process and better communication with contractors on projects. This should also reduce workload internally.

TO: Joint Operations Board

FROM: Sarah Swedburg  
Business Development Manager

DATE: May 12, 2022

RE: Elevate Report

The third class of Elevate Community Business Academy is underway. The following report details our past and current students and the status of their businesses!

Graduates:

**Hteh Hteh Hta Rue** - Chaws Asian Market – New Business (Grocery); Microloan Recipient

**Stephanie Thompson** - Wings Gymnastics – Existing Business (Gymnastics Gym)

**Abdiqani Mahamed** - Hakim Trucking Company – New Business (Trucking)

**Abdulahi Omar** - Ain-u-Shams – Existing Business (Grocery)

**Abdiweli Yusuf** - Amin Grocery – Existing Business (Grocery); Purchased a building and working towards expansion; RLF Loan Recipient

**Hans & Victoria Hibma** - Rendezvous - Working towards opening a new business (Entertainment Center); Currently working on drafting a business plan and finding a location

**Candace & Nick Aaker** - Goodness Coffee House – Existing Business (Coffee Shop); Just began new coffee trailer – an expansion they had been working on throughout class

**Fatouma Hachim** - Fatou Boutique – New business (Online Clothing Store); Built website for online sales throughout class

**Mohamed Abdi** – Working towards opening a new business (Shoe Store)

**Danny Carranza** - Smokey's Barbeque – Working towards opening a new business (Restaurant); Currently working on finding a location to finalize determination of start up costs; Newest Elevate Instructor

Current Class:

**Dawn Stahl** – Dandelion Wishes LLC dba Mainstream Boutique – Working towards opening a new business (Clothing Store); Currently working on lease agreement

**Jessica Hanson** – Willmar Hypnosis – Existing Business (Hypnotherapist)

**Scott & Stacy Holwerda** – S&S Sweets and Treats AND The Hive – Existing Businesses (Cottage Foods Bakery and Event Space)

**Tiffany Farrier** – Kandi Acres Farm, LLC – Existing Business (Goat Farm)

**Mery Castro** – Yireh Creations – Existing Business (Custom T-shirts and Merchandise)

**Stephanie Lopez** – Spurs Bar & Grill – Existing Business (Restaurant); Working on some potential expansion activities

**Zethukia Momanyi** – Zethukia's Beauty – Existing Business (Natural Hair Salon); Working on some potential expansion activities

**Abdiwali Ali** – Care Connect – Existing Business (Home Health Services)

TO: Joint Powers Board

FROM: Sarah Swedburg  
Business Development Manager

DATE: May 12, 2022

RE: Elevate Translation Quotes

As part of the Small Business Partnership grant received from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, we are pursuing translation of the Elevate Community Business Academy Curriculum. Rising Tide Capital has authorized an MOU accompanying the licensing agreement they have with Southwest Initiative Foundation to cover the legal aspect of this translation project.

The next step in this project is to review and choose a company to complete the initial direct translation of the curriculum, including the Power Point slides used for live class, Workbooks, and Homework Books. The following three companies were contacted and have submitted quotes for review:

West Central Interpreting: \$25,000

Translations in Motion (Company that purchased MN Translations): \$22,827.90

Propio (Company that purchased Arch Translation): \$10,205.55

West Central Interpreting and Propio both have at least some local connection. MN Translations was previously based out of the Twin Cities. The three detailed quotes are attached; we are awaiting confirmation from West Central Interpreting that their quote is still valid, due to the original date of receipt.

As we do not have a committee dedicated solely to the oversight of Elevate, we are asking the Joint Operations board to review and act on which quote to pursue. Staff recommendation is to accept the quote from Propio and begin work immediately, with an anticipated completion date of direct translation no later than August 15, 2022. After the direct translation is complete, we will then engage with a company to work on adaptation of the curriculum.

## Sarah Swedburg

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**From:** Abdirizak Mahboub <mahboub2000@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 1, 2021 11:35 AM  
**To:** Sarah Swedburg  
**Subject:** Elevate Curriculum Translation!

Good morning Sarah,

I was able to review Elevate curriculum to provide a quote for translation. The curriculum consists of twelve chapters with homeworks.

The curriculum contains 238 pages, some of the pages have graphs and tables which means less wording to translate, nevertheless require formatting and uniformity of the chapter. Applying standard quotes, we are required to assume each page contains a minimum of 400 words and each word will cost 0.50 cents. Here are the calculations.

**Standard calculation;** 238 pages X 400 words X 0.5 cents = \$47,600.

As I mentioned above some pages have pictures/graphs and tables which have less wording, but require a format that consumes a lot of time. Here is my quote.

**Cost complete translation of the curriculum is;** 125 pages X 400 words X 0.5cents = \$25,000

My quote to the project is **\$25,000.00**. Please let me know if you need any additional information.

Thank you, Zack Mahboub  
West Central Interpreting Services, LLC

Translations in Motion, LLC, dba  
 Carolina; Minnesota; and South Florida  
 Translations  
 515 N. Flagler Dr., Suite P-300  
 West Palm Beach, FL 33401  
 +1 8338767528  
 sales@translationsinmotion.com  
 www.translationsinmotion.com



# ADDRESS

Sarah Swedburg  
 Kandiyohi County and City of  
 Willmar Economic  
 Development Commission  
 222 20th St SE  
 PO Box 1783  
 Willmar, MN 56201

Estimate TIME583046

DATE 03/14/2022

EXPIRATION DATE 06/01/2022

DATE	ACTIVITY	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
07/01/2022	SOMALI   WORD SOMALI   PER SOURCE WORD	76,093	0.30	22,827.90
	HOMEWORK PDF'S   WORD COUNT: 13,154			
	WORKBOOKS   WORD COUNT: 34,962			
	POWERPOINTS   WORD COUNT: 24,328			

## REGULAR SERVICE

DIGITAL DELIVERY BY 7/1/2022

IF ACCEPTED AND PAID BY 6/1/2022

PHYSICAL DELIVERY (IF NEEDED) TO FOLLOW  
 VIA USPS FIRST CLASS MAIL

REGULAR SERVICE—7-8 DAYS FROM PAYMENT /  
 APPROVAL OF CONTENT (WHICHEVER IS  
 LONGER)

EXPEDITED AND EXPRESS SERVICE AVAILABLE  
 FOR AN ADDITIONAL FEE. PLEASE INQUIRE IF  
 YOU'D LIKE AN ADDITIONAL ESTIMATE.

EXPEDITED SERVICE—3-4 DAYS FROM PAYMENT  
 / APPROVAL OF CONTENT (WHICHEVER IS  
 LONGER)

EXPRESS SERVICE—1-2 DAYS FROM PAYMENT /

SERVING YOUR TRANSLATION & INTERPRETING NEEDS WITH OFFICES IN  
 BOCA RATON | CHARLESTON | CHARLOTTE | COLUMBIA | FARGO | FT. LAUDERDALE | GREENVILLE | MIAMI  
 MINNEAPOLIS | NAPLES | ORLANDO | RALEIGH | ST. PAUL | TAMPA | WEST PALM BEACH

APPROVAL OF CONTENT (WHICHEVER IS LONGER)

TOTAL

\$22,827.90

Accepted By

Accepted Date

Times indicated in UTC-4

HomeOrders

Order detailsCost

Elevate Community Business Academy

Status

Co-owner(s) and notifications

Status

Proposal

Accept proposalCancel request

Last message:

Good morning Sarah!  
Have you had time to check the proposal or get the InDesign?  
Please let me know if anything.  
Best,  
CDS  
5/11/2022 9:14 AM

View/Send messages

Cost:

10,205.55 \$

Your contact:

Catalina De Sanctis

Details

Client:

Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar Economic Development Commission (EDC)  
Sarah Swedburg

Order Option:

Translation

Reference:

Elevate Community Business Academy

Order Id:

Deadline:

5/13/2022 12:00 AM

Received:

5/5/2022 10:51 AM

Cost Center/Account No.:

Cost Center

Owner/Payer:

PO Number:

Certificate Needed:

Do you have an internal language approver?:

Target Audience:

Small Business Owners and Entrepreneurs in Kandiyohi County, Minnesota

SKU:

CRF:

Digitization:

Content contains PHI and/or PII?:

DTP Type:

Source language:

English (United States) (en-US)

Instructions:

We are looking for the translation of curriculum for our Elevate Community Business Academy - a 12 week course that teaches existing or prospective small business owners about business ownership. We are really excited for the translation of this material so we can offer a class taught in Somali! We recognize there will be some adaptation needed of examples, but at this time, we're looking for direct translation of the materials provided. Due to file size, I have uploaded 3 .zip files of the groups of materials we need translated: Workbooks, Homework Books, and Power Point Slides. We are currently only looking for a quote for this work, as part of our requirement to solicit quotes, as this project is being funded by Minnesota State grant dollars. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.  
Option selected in order form: Translation

Target languages (1):

Somali (so)

Notes: we will not translate  
Images: we will translate (the relevant ones)

Domains:

Business and Economy, Business and Economy > Training

Documents

UploadDownload allClear selection

FILE NAME	SIZE	CREATION DATE
Elevate CBA Homework Books.zip	5388507	5/5/2022 10:47 AM
Elevate CBA Powerpoints.zip	304902835	5/5/2022 10:51 AM





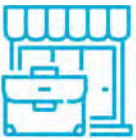
KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR

## Economic Development Commission

Mission: To be a catalyst of growth for economic development in the greater Kandiyohi County area



### What does the EDC do?



We recruit businesses and new industries while supporting established ones through customized assistance



We advocate for communities to support sustainable economic growth



We provide education, financial, and technical assistance to local businesses and entrepreneurs



We build collaborative relationships with site selectors, developers and government entities to help processes operate smoothly

### Our Focus Areas:

- \* Industrial development
- \* Agricultural innovations
- \* Housing development
- \* Workforce development
- \* Child care creation and retention
- \* Broadband accessibility
- \* Leader in the Highway 23 Coalition
- \* Elevate Community Business Academy
- \* Marketing of Kandiyohi County

Follow us:

Facebook: Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar EDC

LinkedIn: Kandiyohi and City of Willmar EDC

Twitter: Kandiyohi County EDC | @KandiWillmarEDC

Upon request, this information can be made available in an alternative format such as large print, digital, braille, or audio. Requests can be made by contacting the EDC.

Contact us:

email [edc@kandiyohi.com](mailto:edc@kandiyohi.com)

website [kandiyohi.com](http://kandiyohi.com)

(320) 235-7370

(866) 665-4556