

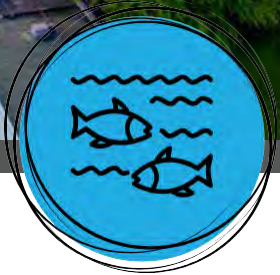


EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SALARY: \$115,000 TO \$145,000

To be a catalyst for economic growth of the greater Kandiyohi County area.

WELCOME TO KANDIYOHI COUNTY!



[Kandiyohi County](#) is situated in West Central Minnesota in the heart of what the Dakota called “Mni Sota Makoce” or “Land where the waters are so clear they reflect the clouds.” With a population of 44,674 residents, there are 12 incorporated cities scattered throughout the lakes, rolling hills and farmland of Kandiyohi County. The County is within an hour of St. Cloud and two hours from Minneapolis/St. Paul. With the new four-lane highway, travelers travel more quickly, and more safely, from Willmar to St. Cloud along the Highway 23 corridor.

Kandiyohi County is a vital, growing county that offers cutting edge bioscience, a nationally-rated community college, advanced healthcare center, outdoor recreation access including Sibley State Park, one of Minnesota’s top 10 state parks, and much more. The County has seen continued growth supported by a diverse economy with a wide range of sectors, including technology, manufacturing, logistics/distribution, ag-related industries, small businesses and tourism. As a leader in technology, Kandiyohi County offers professional and living wage jobs.

[Willmar](#), the largest city in the County and the county seat, is a regional center in the heart of West Central Minnesota supporting a population of nearly half of the residents of the County. It is a diversified, growing, micropolitan city. Within the City of Willmar lies the [Opportunity](#) Zone and the Industrial Park.

The area is home to more than 300 lakes, a thriving art scene, historical attractions, exceptional school districts, a growing job market, and friendly communities. With a beautiful blend of many cultures and faiths, Kandiyohi County cultivates a unique environment with plenty of diverse shopping and dining options, as well as a variety of events and festivals.

Come see for yourself why Kandiyohi County is a great place to live, work and play.

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THE ORGANIZATION

KANDIYOHI COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (KCED)

KCED consists of two boards—the Joint Powers Board and the Joint Operations Board. There are also committees determined annually by the KCED's Joint Powers Board.

JOINT POWERS BOARD

Kandiyohi County and the City of Willmar each appoint three elected representatives to serve for three years. This Board sets policy, adopts budgets, hires staff, and serves as the final authority for the organization.

JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD

KCED's Joint Operations Board of Directors consists of seven members appointed by the Joint Powers Board of Commissioners and includes representatives from communities throughout the County, businesses, education providers, and other groups. Board member terms are for three years and are limited to three full three-year terms.

COMMITTEES

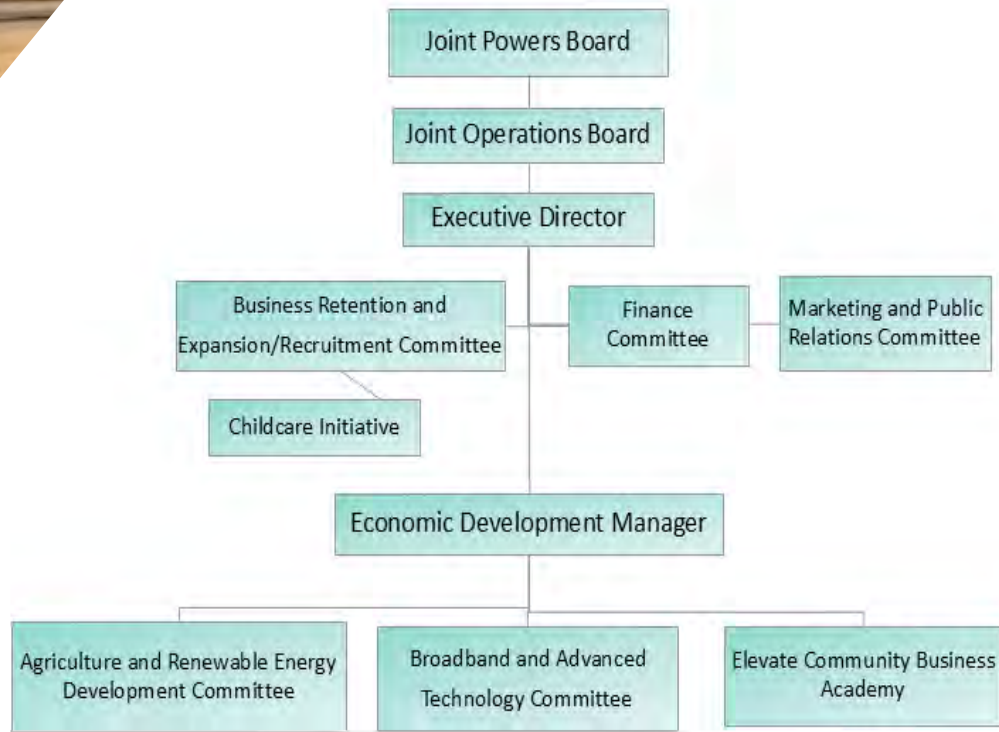
- Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development
- Broadband and Advanced Technology
- Business Retention and Expansion/Recruitment
- Finance
- Marketing and Public Relations

In addition, KCED has a Tourism Partnership Agreement with the [Willmar Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau](#) (CVB) and supports funding for tourism-related goals administered by the CVB.



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THE ORGANIZATION



| Expenses | 2025 | 2026 |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|
| Joint Powers and Joint Operations Boards | \$ 7,200 | \$ 6,300 |
| Countywide Business Development | 12,900 | 19,250 |
| Economic Development Contributions | 2,500 | 2,600 |
| Elevate Community Business Academy* | 160,125 | 73,904 |
| Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development Committee | 11,350 | 12,050 |
| Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee | 14,450 | 3,000 |
| Business Retention and Expansion/Recruitment Committee | 57,700 | 5,300 |
| Childcare Initiative/Grants* | 691,149 | 33,900 |
| Finance Committee | 3,450 | 1,750 |
| Marketing and Public Relations Committee | 16,600 | 43,675 |
| Tourism/Leisure Travel Committee | 25,175 | 25,175 |
| Employee Compensation (Marketing Specialist position eliminated in 2026) | 308,871 | 253,401 |
| Administrative | 56,964 | 64,906 |
| Office | 184,858 | 191,664 |
| Total Program Expenses | \$ 1,553,292 | \$ 736,875 |

*2025 included significant one-time state grants

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THE ORGANIZATION



The KCED (legally known as Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission) plays a critical role in advising and making recommendations on all economic development matters in Willmar and throughout Kandiyohi County.

What Does KCED Do?



Advocates for communities to support sustainable economic growth



Recruits businesses and new industries while supporting established ones through customized assistance



Provides education, financial and technical assistance to local businesses and entrepreneurs



Builds collaborative relationships with site selectors, developers and government entities to help programs operate smoothly



Focus Areas

Industrial Development

Agricultural Innovations

Housing Development

Workforce Development

Childcare Creation & Retention

Broadband Expansion

Elevate Community Business Academy

Marketing of Kandiyohi County



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THE ORGANIZATION

ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

KCED and its many partnerships are an integral part of the region's success. The energy is ingrained and the organization in a good position. KCED's talented staff not only bring diverse skills and a long list of professional contacts and relationships to the organization, but they also serve as history keepers for the new Executive Director. KCED has celebrated many successes. KCED is a magnet for attracting global companies, site selectors, developers, and living wage jobs to the area.

- Through the efforts of KCED, FedEx recently established a 217,000 square foot logistics facility in the Willmar Industrial Park. This brought a \$30 million investment to the Willmar/Kandiyohi County area.
- The relocation of Willmar Municipal Airport and creation of the Willmar Wye have added capacity for future industry and expansion of the Willmar Industrial Park and Willmar Rail Park.
- Nearly \$20 million in broadband investment was approved in 2024, which included successfully garnering \$8.8 million in state grants.
- Willmar Connect, a city-owned fiber optic network, was recently approved bringing affordable, high-speed, reliable fiber infrastructure to the city with multiple internet service providers offering service to residents and businesses.
- The MinnWest Technology Campus houses over 30 innovative companies in agribusiness, bioscience and technology. With more than 750 employees, 65 engineers and 200 patents, the MinnWest Technology Campus will be a continued hot spot for innovation in the region and the state.
- KCED has met the challenge of bringing apartment projects to the area as a partial solution to housing shortages. These contemporary apartments include underground parking, multi-level units and modern loft style living, such as 15th Street Flats, Block 25 Lofts, Edgeview Apartments, Preserve on 24th, etc.
- KCED is the only organization in Minnesota that offers the Elevate Community Business Academy. Elevate classes are offered in both English and Spanish. The program provides business education and coaching specifically tailored to underserved minority entrepreneurs and gives them the tools to live their dreams.
- Support the needs of the aging population with construction of senior housing—Bethesda NorthPointe Independent Living in New London; Bethesda StoneRidge Independent Living and The Crossings in Willmar.
- The region has benefitted from over \$240 million in construction over recent years. Projects include Dahmes Stainless and the Southwest/West Central Educational Learning Center in New London, and the following in Willmar: Happy Halal, RELCO, West Central Steel, Ziegler Caterpillar, Lakeland Elementary School, Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Hospital (CABHH), a \$1.5 million covered outdoor skating rink/pavilion at the Civic Center, and an addition by Jennie-O Turkey Store.
- KCED submitted a TED Grant to DEED which was approved for \$900,000 for a turn lane on Highway 40 into Willmar Rail Park.
- The Opportunity Zone in Willmar is ripe for continued housing and commercial redevelopment.

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CORE DUTIES OF THE POSITION

- Overall responsibility for leading the organization. This includes representing KCED in public settings, presenting at board meetings, and the development and presentation of annual budget requests to Kandiyohi County and the City of Willmar.
- Act as a “one-stop-shop” and coordinate resources of information for all aspects of economic development, including site and building options, financing, taxation policies, entrepreneurship, business counseling, and general information on community facilities and amenities.
- In partnership with other groups, actively recruit the targeted industries of logistics, warehouse, bioscience, technology, healthcare, tourism, and value-added agriculture including the expansion potential associated with each industry, with outreach efforts beyond Kandiyohi County.
- In recognition that the greatest potential for business growth and expansion will come from within, work with other organizations to actively retain and facilitate expansion of current businesses.
- On an annual basis, review industries with targeted designation to include businesses that complement Kandiyohi County's economic base and resources.
- Provide leadership for a coordinated organization and volunteer network committed to economic development. Provide oversight for the five standing committees.
- Work closely with business representatives and elected officials in enhancing and maintaining a “business-friendly environment” within Kandiyohi County and its municipalities.
- Enhance community awareness of KCED's strategic goals and objectives, activities and accomplishments.



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CORE DUTIES OF THE POSITION - CONT'D



- With the philosophy that both existing and relocating businesses will have access to the same economic development program incentives, develop and implement financial packages to retain, expand, recruit and/or relocate businesses to Kandiyohi County.
- In cooperation with other groups and agencies, develop and implement promotional plans, websites and materials to facilitate the retention, expansion and/or relocation of businesses in Kandiyohi County.
- With input from the boards and cooperating organizations, annually evaluate, prepare and implement goals, a work plan, and budget for the year.
- Become knowledgeable and, to the extent time permits, network with regional, state and federal partners that provide technical and/or fiscal support to KCED's economic development efforts.
- Work with other agencies to access/offer educational opportunities that mirror KCED's objectives.
- Prepare recommendations for Board consideration of new and/or changes to existing KCED Policies and Procedures.
- Recognize and communicate with the Boards regarding the impact of current or proposed state and federal legislation which is, or has, the potential to negatively impact the economic health of the City of Willmar and Kandiyohi County.

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DESIRED ATTRIBUTES

Relationship Builder

- Demonstrates confidence, integrity, trustworthiness and is emotionally intelligent.
- Personable and welcoming – serves as the face of the organization and thrives on community outreach.
- Engages with an inclusive and open communication style; demonstrates appropriate tact and confidentiality.
- A team builder/uniter who invites representatives throughout the region to have a seat at the table.
- Intentional, reflective, and active listening skills – listens to what is needed and asks the right questions.

Driven

- Unafraid of challenges; open to new ideas and new ways of doing things.
- Optimistic, energetic and purpose driven.
- Broad imagination and confidence. Does not see limits to the organization's mission.
- Collaborative yet competitive.

Economic Development

- Detailed in acquiring and presenting facts and figures.
- Extensive network of regional and national contacts.
- Knowledgeable about various loan programs and other financial tools; creative in seeking grants.
- Extensive knowledge of rural economic development needs: housing, industrial, agriculture, energy, transportation and amenities.
- Articulate in sharing the mission and vision of the organization.

Executive Director

- Provides professional guidance, sets direction, and supports staff in achieving goals and fostering career growth.
- Takes an active approach with the media and community to share the organization's mission, provide education and celebrate successes.
- Leans on resources and asks questions. Tactfully delegates initiatives to volunteers to gain buy-in, utilize others' strengths and further garner momentum.
- Strong budgeting skillset (developing and managing) with extensive knowledge of federal and state grants and resources.
- Bilingualist is a plus; an eager approach to learn the international business culture and foreign direct investment.
- Trusts and cares for staff; adopts a work life balance approach to the workplace.



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PRIORITIES/PROJECTS/GOALS

Take a greater Kandiyohi County approach to developing and expanding upon:

Rail and Transportation

- Continue to support the momentum related to Willmar Wye, Willmar Rail Park, adjacent Willmar Industrial Park, and the region.
- Support certification of the Willmar Industrial Park and Willmar Rail Park by BNSF.
- Utilize the Highway 23 four-lane expansion to further encourage development.
- Encourage the build-out of the Industrial Park and Willmar Rail Park, including railroad spurs, within the next 3-5 years.

Quality of Life/Amenities

- Continue KCED's focus on broadband, childcare and life cycle housing initiatives.
- Work with area partners to attract additional restaurants and entertainment to the area.
- Employ creativity on the potential of unoccupied buildings, including the partially occupied malls as destinations: medical, entertainment complex, etc.
- Identify areas for redevelopment for affordable housing and adding life cycle housing throughout the county.
- Place continual focus on diverse economies: agriculture, tourism/recreation, finance, cultural, manufacturing, healthcare and logistics.

New & Existing Business/Industry

- Encourage other cities to acquire additional adjacent property to promote industrial growth throughout the county.
- Support the expansion of existing businesses (e.g. Jennie-O, Dooley's Petroleum).
- Find opportunities to bring small and medium-sized businesses to the area (30-50 employees).
- Work with area partners to expand workforce development initiatives.
- Continuously explore opportunities for the Opportunity Zone.

Public Relations

- Place emphasis on development in Kandiyohi County as a regional center with its unique offerings.
- Be an active and outward-facing leader in the community to quickly gain an understanding of the future wants/needs of the region. Be on the lookout for new opportunities.
- Be a partner and engage in regular meetings with Ridgewater College, Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC), Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF), Chamber, CVB, County HRA and local ED Directors/City Administrators.
- Continue to work with small cities, small businesses, area community foundation, underrepresented groups, and various area leaders to share what KCED has to offer.
- Ability to develop committees that include diverse occupations, geographic locations within the county, financiers and underserved populations.



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POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT



Organization: Kandiyohi County Economic Development

Position: Executive Director

Salary: \$115,000 to \$145,000

Application Deadline: March 20, 2026

Benefits:

- Health, Dental
- Retirement (PERA)
- Section 125 Plan
- Paid Time Off
- 11 Paid Holidays
- Earned Sick & Safe Time Leave

Job Summary: With a passion for rural Minnesota, the Executive Director will take a leadership and coordinating role in cooperation with other public, private, governmental, and educational organizations and agencies, encouraging the retention and expansion of existing businesses and the recruitment of additional businesses to Kandiyohi County. This position is responsible for leading efforts in retention, expansion and location of businesses in the County.

Minimum Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in Public Administration, Business, Finance, Economic Development, or related field, five years of experience in the effective presentation of technical economic, business, and/or industrial information and knowledge of information regarding proposed business expansion or relocation, or a combination of education and experience may be considered. A master's degree and/or Certified Economic Developer certification are preferred.

Apply: [Visit here](#) to complete the application process by March 20, 2026. Finalists will be selected on April 16, 2026, and final interviews will be held on April 27, 2026.

Please direct any questions to Marv Calvin, Interim Executive Director at marv@kandiyohi.com or 320.235-7370.

KCED is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability or veteran status.

KCED Hiring Committee | 1601 Highway 12 East, Suite 3 | P.O. Box 1783 | Willmar, MN 56201

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