



**CEDS**

**2017-2021**

**Comprehensive Economic  
Development Strategy for  
Southwest Minnesota**



**Southwest Regional Development Commission**

# Executive Summary

## The Region

The Southwest Regional Development Commission (SRDC) is a nine-county Regional Development Commission as established under Minnesota Statute §462.381-462.398 the “Regional Development Act.” The SRDC represents local units of government in Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood and Rock counties. The SRDC is also known as Region 8 or for purposes of this document, the southwest region.

## Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

This document is the result of a locally-based, regionally driven planning process designed to enhance the economic growth of the southwest region. Planning for the document began in early 2016 with public input. A 30-day comment period was provided and the SRDC approved the document on December 8, 2016.

The CEDS document is made readily available to the economic development stakeholders in the southwest region. In creating the CEDS, there is a continuing effort to increase communication and outreach that encourages broad-based public engagement, participation, and partnerships. The general public, government decision makers, and the private sector are able to use this document as a guide to understanding and improving the regional economy.

This document 1) describes the Region, 2) identifies the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the Region, 3) presents the regions goals and establishes strategies and 4) establishes performance measures.

The Economic Development Vision Statement for this region is: “The southwest region conducts collaborative economic development efforts to be globally competitive, attracting new and diverse residents, businesses and investments. The region cultivates and promotes a unique culture that includes a high quality of life, preservation of natural resources, an educated and skilled workforce, and strong civic engagement.”

The goals and strategies mirror the DevelopMN cornerstones: Human Capital, Economic Competitiveness, Community Resources and Foundational Assets. Each area includes a Call to Action, Context, SMART Goal and Strategies/Activities. Economic resilience is a key element to bolster the long-term economic durability of the region, and while it is an important enough element to be identified as its own cornerstone, the approach recommended is that economic resilience strategies be a consideration for carrying out the work identified in all four cornerstones.



# Introduction

## Table of Contents

### Acknowledgements:

SRDC would like to thank all the individuals and organizations who have given their time to share their vision for the southwest region. Information was collected via in-person meetings, one-to-one visits, phone calls, e-mails and the following cornerstone focus groups.

Human Capital	6/23/16
Economic Competitiveness	6/30/16
Community Resources	7/21/16
Foundational Assets	7/28/16

SRDC would also like to thank the United States Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) for their financial contribution to the plan development.

### SRDC Mission Statement:

“Providing professional expertise and leadership to enhance regional opportunities”

### MADO-DevelopMN:

In 2012, MADO (MN Association of Development Organizations) began working on a Greater MN Development Strategy, which was named “DevelopMN.” DevelopMN establishes the strategic framework for coordinated action by MADO, the communities they serve and the federal and state agencies that share their commitment.

MADO is made up of 9 Regional Development Commissions and 1 Initiative Foundation, all of whom agreed to use the framework of DevelopMN as a template for our local CEDS. Using a similar framework will assist in identifying progress statewide.

DevelopMN can be found at <http://www.mnado.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/DevelopMN-Plan-2016-final-web.pdf>.

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# Background Summary

## The Region

The SRDC is located in extreme Southwest Minnesota. The physical office of the SRDC is located in Slayton, which is central to the Region geographically. Slayton is located approximately 200 miles southwest of the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area and 90 miles from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. SRDC's western border is South Dakota and its southern border is Iowa. Border issues frequently impact economic development in the region.

The area is characterized by flat, windy prairie, with water quality and availability being a factor influencing economic development in the region. Road quality and expansion of existing lanes is of major concern to development as well. Telecommunications infrastructure issues limit some of our communities from economic advancement, and the need for updated water and wastewater treatment systems for local communities is ongoing. The communities in our region and throughout the state are struggling to attempt to find ways to continue to deliver essential services to their residents.

Historically, counties in the southwest region have relied heavily on agriculture as an economic engine. As the agricultural economy continues to struggle, so does the economic climate of the region. Out-migration of the population has masked some of the economic troubles in the region. While income and unemployment rates show relatively little stress, the relative lack of opportunity is forcing many to leave. Economic development activities, therefore, are crucial to bringing opportunities to the region.

The southwest region has both relative strengths and weaknesses to incorporate into economic development strategies. The region's strengths include strong per capita income, low unemployment and large employers paying relatively high wages. The challenges to the region include a declining population, lower than state-average education levels and lower than state-average wages. From a competitive standpoint, the region has never had the large employers such as auto manufacturers prevalent in much of the upper Midwest, and so has not suffered from the loss of those employers, making unemployment largely an ineffective means of evaluating economic status relative to other states in the Midwest.

A detailed report on the current economic status of the southwest region is attached as an addendum to this report.

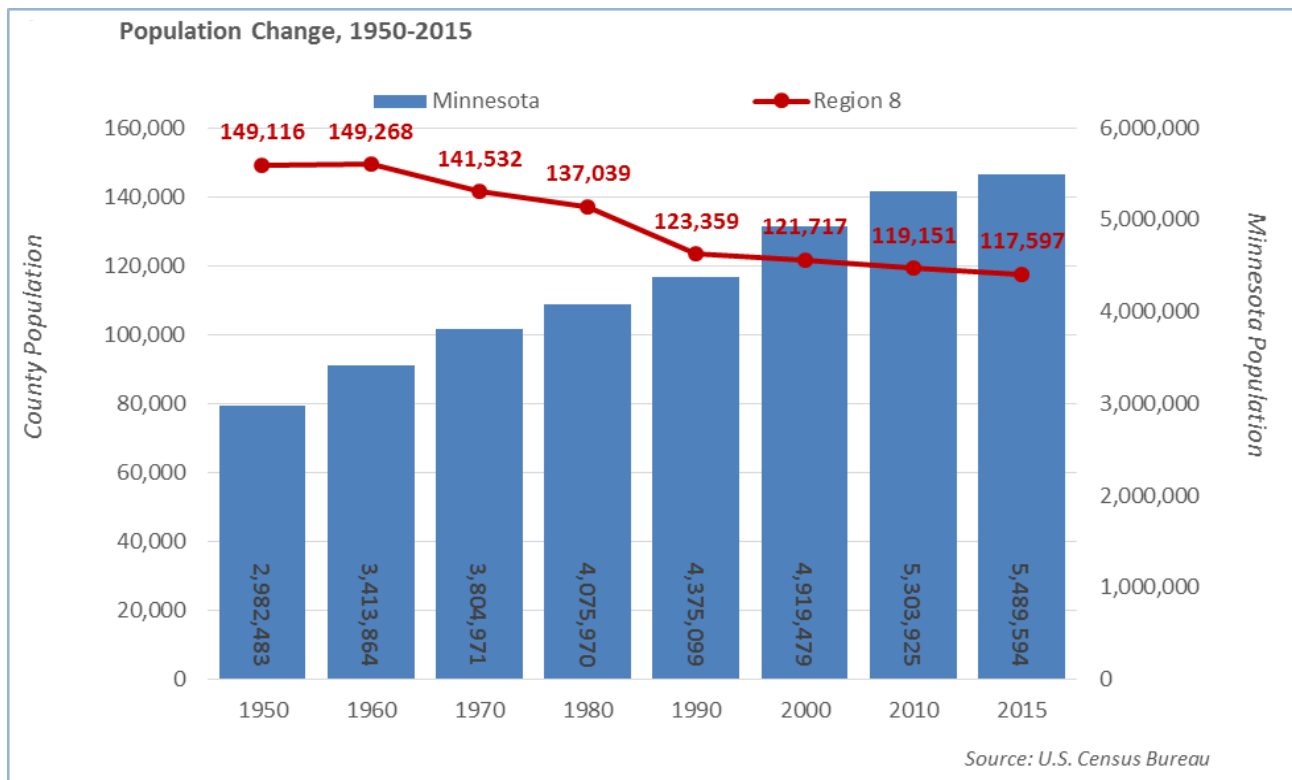


# Background Summary



## Population

The Southwest Region has long been experiencing population declines, with most of the counties in the region peaking in 1960. The southwest region was home to just over 2% of the state's population. The counties of Lyon and Nobles are the only counties in the southwest region currently seeing population increases and only Lyon County has added people since the turn of the century. The number of births in the region is going down, while the life expectancies are going up. The region suffered severe population loss during the farm crisis in the 1980s. Out-migration has led to much of the steady decline. This population decline creates further employment challenges as there simply are not enough people to fill job vacancies.



18.5% of the southwest region is 65 years or older (about 27% higher than Minnesota). About one-fourth of the region's population was a part of the Baby Boom generation, born between 1946 and 1964, which is creating a significant shift in the population over time. While the region declined by -2.7% from 2000-2014, youth ages 5-24 declined by more than 10%, our youngest cohort increased by 7% and our age 55+ rapidly increased. The southwest region has a higher percentage of both age 60+ and 75+ than the state of MN. Lincoln County has 30.1% of its population age 60+, followed closely by Murray County at 29.1%. Lincoln County has 13.6% of its population age 75+, followed closely by Cottonwood and Murray County, each having 11.9%.

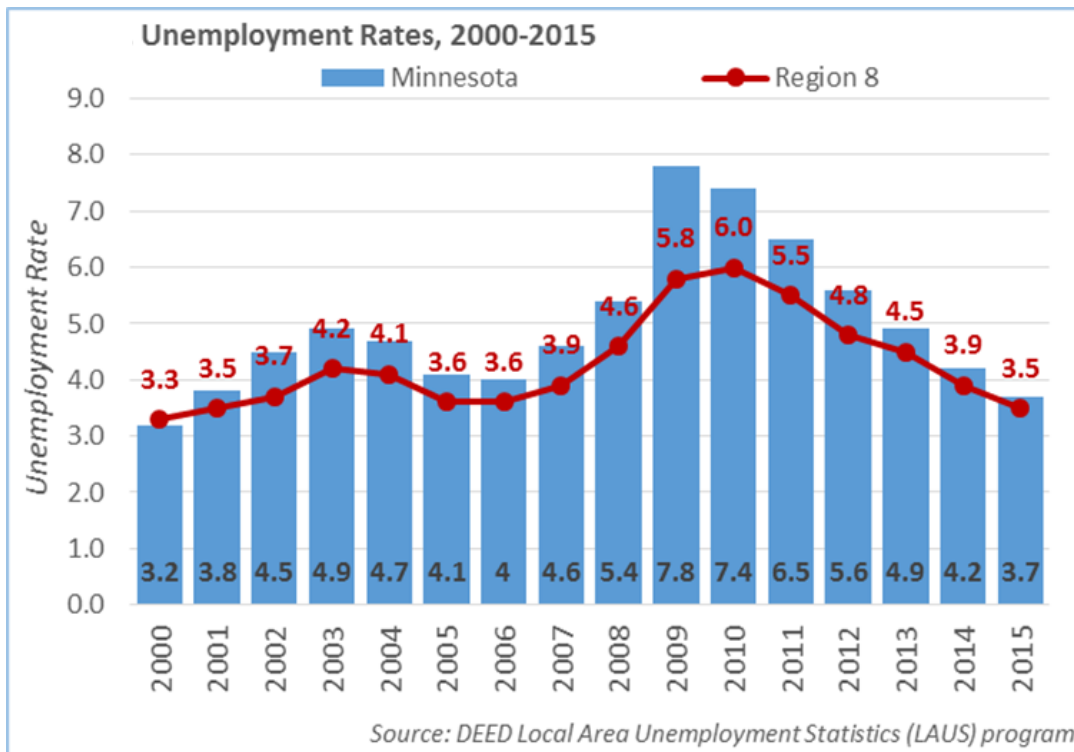




# Background Summary

## Employment

The southwest region has a very low unemployment rate. With that being said, the southwest region has typically been below the state unemployment rate average, but has now recently fallen in line with the state average. Health care and social assistance surpassed manufacturing as the largest industry in 2009 followed by manufacturing, retail trade, educational services, accommodation and food services, public administration, and wholesale trade. Our most distinguished industries include; animal production, support activities for agriculture, food manufacturing, machinery manufacturing, truck transportation, wood product manufacturing. There is also a strong concentration of employment in government owned hospitals and/or nursing homes. The region is known for its renewable energy production including wind, solar, ethanol and bio-diesel. Our low unemployment rate creates a question to businesses on whether they should focus on growth or simply retention.



Annual labor force estimate trends in the southwest region show that we are about 1,000 workers less than the last local labor force peak in 2009. Hiring workers in 2016 is not easy as there are fewer people unemployed as there are vacancies leaving .9 jobseekers for every vacancy available. Our employment outlook indicates that many occupations will face a shortfall in workers due to employment growth and jobs left vacant by retirements and other career changers. The number of replacement openings heavily outweighs the number of new jobs.

# SWOT Analysis Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats



## Human Capital

- ◆ Workforce training & educational resource networks
- ◆ Educational attainment (well-educated workforce)
- ◆ Competitive public school system that encourages post-secondary education
- ◆ Quality, diverse K-12 opportunities
- ◆ Strong Higher Education institutions
- ◆ Influx of students from K-4
- ◆ High number of self-employed individuals contributing nearly \$500 million in annual sales.

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**STRENGTHS**

- ◆ Workforce turnover as population ages
- ◆ Workforce supply does not meet demand due to preparedness, participation and competition
- ◆ Population outmigration
- ◆ Untimely adaptation to changing needs
- ◆ Insufficient rural awareness of local training and employment opportunities
- ◆ Unmet demand for specialized workers
- ◆ Childcare shortage

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**WEAKNESSES**

- ◆ Population and workforce expansion through immigration
- ◆ Investment in talent retention and attraction
- ◆ Utilizing retirees knowledge and experience thru mentorship
- ◆ Marketing quality of life and economic opportunity to millennials
- ◆ Entrepreneur training
- ◆ Develop and implement college and career awareness programs
- ◆ Succession planning for small businesses
- ◆ Developing the aspects of quality of life (social, recreation, schools, infrastructure)
- ◆ Brain Gain phenomenon

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**OPPORTUNITIES**

- ◆ Funding shortfall for education/training
- ◆ Competition for human capital on the local, regional, and global scale
- ◆ Aging workforce
- ◆ Highly competitive industries in neighboring states drawing many skilled workers out of the region
- ◆ Policy and mandates around customized training
- ◆ Shortage of specialized workers
- ◆ Employment for trailing spouse
- ◆ Low unemployment rate causing few job seekers/vacancies

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**THREATS**

# SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats



## Economic Competitiveness

- ◆ Well-developed economic and business development networks providing technical and financial assistance to entrepreneurs, businesses and communities
- ◆ Strong core industries include traditional resource based industries and emerging industries, such as health care and retail
- ◆ Work Ethic
- ◆ ¼ of all agriculture, construction and mining machinery manufacturing jobs in MN are located in Region 8
- ◆ Largest employing industries are 1) manufacturing, 2) health care and social assistance and 3) retail trade

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**STRENGTHS**

- ◆ Facing a severe workforce shortage
- ◆ Wage and career advancement opportunities
- ◆ Perception of high cost of doing business in rural MN
- ◆ Lack of a culture of innovation
- ◆ Inconsistent, lacking funding model for SBDC
- ◆ Transparent financing models
- ◆ Underdeveloped linkages between industries and businesses
- ◆ Businesses operating at status quo (i.e. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.)
- ◆ Low appraisal values
- ◆ Decline of downtown economies and buildings.
- ◆ Health insurance

**W**

**WEAKNESSES**

- ◆ Support societally and environmentally aware entrepreneurs/businesses
- ◆ Challenge the business perception of MN
- ◆ Increase awareness of the benefits of business in rural MN
- ◆ Broaden access to start-up capital to encourage innovation
- ◆ Increase trade and development opportunities with neighboring states and Canada
- ◆ Capitalize on renewable energy to expand, create and reduce costs of running business
- ◆ Utilize the knowledge and skills of retirees
- ◆ Utilize workforce centers and technology/business incubators
- ◆ Online sales
- ◆ Revitalize main streets

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**OPPORTUNITIES**

- ◆ Long-term labor force trends
- ◆ Lack of control over state and federal policies
- ◆ Natural disasters, including pandemic
- ◆ Resource based industries are susceptible to changes in the global commodity markets and energy prices
- ◆ Undiversified economies are susceptible to impacts from macroeconomic events
- ◆ Loss of community wealth due to MN permitting, regulations and taxes
- ◆ Macro-economic trends influence on local spending decision making

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**THREATS**



# SWOT Analysis Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats



## Community Resources

- ◆ Diversity and abundance of natural amenities
- ◆ Rich in non-profit/ service agencies
- ◆ Public safety of rural communities
- ◆ Leader in exporting power

- ◆ Perceptions of the health of rural communities
- ◆ Shortage of new and emerging community leaders
- ◆ Lack of leadership succession
- ◆ Lack of growth defining community identities
- ◆ Gaps in mental health and dental services
- ◆ Lack of “welcome wagons”
- ◆ High level of long distance commuting
- ◆ Lack of overnight accommodations for tourists, etc. in some areas
- ◆ Arts and recreation are not a funding priority

- ◆ Extensive, diverse tourism infrastructure, program and options.
- ◆ Art communities gaining strength
- ◆ Renewable energy/ chemical development
- ◆ Empowering and encouraging new and emerging leadership
- ◆ Place-making through arts and culture
- ◆ Expand on tourism opportunities
- ◆ Community preservation and enhancement
- ◆ Racial diversification
- ◆ Regional branding
- ◆ Balancing economic, recreation, and aesthetic needs for natural resources

- ◆ Less social cohesion
- ◆ Fear of diversification
- ◆ Reimbursement reductions for health care services
- ◆ Reduction in rural health care specialty services, facilities and pharmacies.

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**STRENGTHS**

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**THREATS**

# SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats



## Foundational Assets

- ◆ Productive land
- ◆ Rail service- Class 1, 2 and 3 railroads in region
- ◆ Existing road systems are safe and connect principal economic needs well
- ◆ Multi-modal transportation systems
- ◆ Broadband is recognized as a state-wide priority

- ◆ Housing continuum (quality, affordability, availability)
- ◆ Age of housing stock/ value gaps
- ◆ Broadband deployment and connectivity- lack of adequate funding
- ◆ Failing ISTS and contaminated private wells
- ◆ Local markets for recyclable materials
- ◆ Disinvestment and deferred maintenance in public and private community facilities and infrastructure
- ◆ No commercial air service
- ◆ Limited access to Class 1 rail lines for competitive pricing
- ◆ Access to dedicated railroad funding
- ◆ Lewis and Clark Water

- ◆ Promote livability, public spaces and identity
- ◆ Healthy communities initiative
- ◆ Encourage units of governments to collaborate on foundational assets
- ◆ Expand broadband/ fiber footprint in southwest MN
- ◆ Recycling and solid waste facilities
- ◆ Identify partnerships and resources to maximize infrastructure investment
- ◆ Develop public/private partnerships to identify solutions for housing challenges
- ◆ Shared services/ resources and intergovernmental cooperation
- ◆ Low cost of living
- ◆ Rail Transloading

- ◆ Ability to meet return on investment for broadband and housing services
- ◆ Reductions in funding from public and private sources
- ◆ Valuation disparity for housing
- ◆ Tax forfeited properties and declining tax base
- ◆ Cost of infrastructure replacement and maintenance
- ◆ Added costs of changing regulations/ standards
- ◆ Rail condition, hazardous conditions, and competition for freight space
- ◆ Existing roads are deteriorating- lack of allocated funding
- ◆ Reliance on multiple out-of-region water supplies
- ◆ Landfill capacity

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**STRENGTHS**

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# Strategic Direction/Action Plan and Economic Resilience



**SRDC's Strategic Direction/Action Plan is broken down into four cornerstones:**

## Human Capital

Developing, retaining and attracting talent is critical for the southwest region in order to sustain and grow rural businesses and communities. Tracking the characteristics of the labor force and the needs of employers, and creating strategies for alignment between the two, are the foundation for this cornerstone.

## Economic Competitiveness

Making the southwest region an attractive environment for growth is critical to creating jobs, improving living standards and financing necessary public services. Economic competitiveness requires communities to develop and link all available assets to support innovation and encourage business growth.

## Community Resources

The communities in the southwest region seek to maintain rural values, their heritage and the assets that support them. Community resources include topics that balance the preservation and improvement of local social, cultural and natural assets that are critical for the future. Community resources include social capital, arts & culture, tourism, natural resources and water quality, as well

as community facilities, including ambulances and fire trucks.

## Foundational Assets

The communities in the southwest region require proactive and collaborative approaches/strategies to address infrastructure needs in a cost-effective manner. Managing the access to, maintenance, replacement and growth of these assets are key to preserving and maintaining communities, and provide for growth opportunities. Foundational assets include above-ground and below-ground infrastructure such as broadband, transportation, active transportation, transit, utilities and housing.

**Economic Resilience** is defined as an area's ability to avoid, withstand, and recover from economic shifts, natural disasters, the impacts of climate change, etc. Economic resilience is a key element to bolster the long-term economic durability of the region. While it is an important enough element to be identified as its own cornerstone, the approach recommended is that economic resilience strategies be a consideration for carrying out the work identified in all four cornerstones. While not called out further in the document, it is implied that economic resilience is a component of all activities with economic development in the southwest region.



# Human Capital

## Labor Force

**Call to Action:** As the southwest region's economy recovers to prerecession levels, it is confronted with the challenge of meeting the hiring and skills needs of employers.

The labor force in the southwest region's businesses have increased 4.5% from 2004-2014, in comparison to a 3.7% gain in the state of MN and a 5.8% expansion in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> After substantial gains during the recession, labor force growth has virtually flattened since. With low unemployment rates, the labor market in the region is extremely tight. Educational attainment lags in the southwest region, partly due to the region's older population.<sup>2</sup>

**Context:** Labor force participation is the proportion of people ages 16 and older who are either working or seeking work. Students, homemakers, retired individuals and others not looking for work do not count as participating in the labor force. The southwest region's labor force peaked at 68,029 in 2009 (Greater Minnesota's labor force peaked at 1,345,402 workers in 2010, while MN peaked in 2015).<sup>3</sup> Labor force projections through 2025 indicate an 8.2% increase for aged 25-44 and an 18% decline for aged 45-54, both age groups the prime labor force.<sup>4</sup> (Prime Labor Force for MN aged 25-54 is projected to decline by 1.4% while the prime labor force in Greater MN is projected to decline 5.2% during this same time). It is interesting to note that labor force projections through 2025 for those aged 65-74 are projected to increase 37.9% and for those aged 75 and older 23.5%.

A 2016 parent survey, of which 287 responded, conducted by the Redwood County Child Care Task Force indicated the following: 80.5% rated the current availability (availability to access child care in the area) of child care options in Redwood County and surrounding areas as very poor or poor.<sup>5</sup>

**SMART GOAL:** Increase labor force participation by 2% by 2021.

## Strategies/Activities:

1. Align education and workforce data to meet current and future skill needs of employers.
  - a. Provide current labor force data to students at middle school orientation, and freshman year annually, and their parents.
  - b. Partner with community connectors to get current labor force data to students of color.
  - c. Support vocational training in high schools.
  - d. Offer fast track courses to career pathways in manufacturing, health care, welding and Commercial Driver's License (CDL).
    - i. Maximize attendance by offering classes to the entire community while working within high school schedules to allow students to also attend.

# Human Capital



2. Expand the participation of workers age 55+, immigrants and refugees, those with health disparities, and those with disabilities to make up for the shortage of new workforce entrants.
  - a. Work with employers to identify tax credits available for disparity groups and long term unemployed persons.
  - b. Encourage businesses to relook at required minimum job qualifications, methods for application submissions and application redundancies.
  - c. Reduce barriers to obtaining a GED via the online testing tests (Marshall and Worthington).
  - d. Expand Caring thru Sharing (volunteer time at community agencies) ESL Adult classes to Walnut Grove.
  - e. Advocate for GED modifications for individuals who have an abundance of life experience.
3. Increase daycare options to assist people in joining the workforce.
  - a. Expand mentorship program thru MN Licensed Family Child Care Association available to this region
  - b. Educate the public on child care provider requirements.
  - c. Outreach to potential bi-lingual child care providers.
  - d. Market legally non-licensed care (aka Care for Two).
  - e. Encourage employer involvement in child-care and expand upon current models in the region.
  - f. Explore and encourage tax incentives for family child care providers.
  - g. Work with partners to ensure that caregivers have access to information about home and community based service options.
  - h. Explore drop-in and overnight child care options.
4. Advance credit-based apprentices, internships, and on the job training as a workforce development solution.
  - a. Promote successful employer programs.
  - b. Market opportunities to high school seniors and their parents.
  - c. Inform employers about these opportunities.
5. Create and sustain vibrant and healthy communities that attract and retain residents.
  - a. Maintain local health care services, including but not limited to hospitals, clinics, pharmacies, durable medical equipment companies, dentists and mental health providers, by supporting and accessing funds to maintain and expand local service.



# Human Capital

## Educational Attainment

**Call to Action:** As the size of the southwest region's workforce is projected to decline in the aged 16-19, aged 45-54 and aged 55-64, increased worker skills will be critical to improving productivity and growing the economy.<sup>6</sup>

**Context:** The percentage of the southwest region's population aged 25 or older that has not completed high school is 12% (compared to 7.7% statewide).<sup>7</sup> The southwest region's population aged 25-64 that have earned a bachelor's degree or higher is 21%, compared to Greater Minnesota at 28% and statewide at 36%.<sup>8</sup>

About 67% of the jobs in the region require a high school diploma as minimal educational requirements (about 16% require technical college education and 17% require a university education).<sup>9</sup> About 55% (258 of the 466) of the occupations in relatively high demand do not require higher education.<sup>10</sup>

### SMART GOALS:

1. Increase GED or high school equivalent education in the southwest region.
2. Increase the number of residents (ages 18-64) who have completed post-secondary education or training with a particular focus on certificates, technical degrees and apprenticeships relevant to employment in middle-skill, living wage occupations and those residents aged 25-44 with a bachelor's degree or higher, collectively to 36% by 2025.

## Strategies/Activities:

1. Build and improve career technical education opportunities for youth.
  - a. Work with school counselors to ensure that students know about this option and are connected to relevant scholarships, etc.
  - b. Educate students and parents on higher education costs.
  - c. Allow schedule adaptations for high school students eligible for PSEO classes.
2. Create, educate and market career opportunities in the region.
  - a. Expose high school students to career opportunities via technology.
  - b. Encourage businesses to promote their job possibilities via tours, online sites (i.e. HireWire, swmncareers), job shadowing, including minimum education requirements and pay range.
    - i. Gather stories for regional marketing opportunities.
3. Create targeted educational programs via public and private partnerships that address employer needs.



# Economic Competitiveness



## Entrepreneurship and Innovation

**Call to Action:** The southwest region must embrace innovation, calculated risk-taking and entrepreneurship in order to compete effectively in the global economy.

**Context:** The Stats America Index compares local performance to state and U.S. performance. It is calculated from four component indexes: human capital, economic dynamics, productivity and employment, and economic well-being.

With 100% representing the national average, the southwest region ranks 86% on the Stats America Innovation Index while Greater MN ranks 86.9% and the State of Minnesota ranks 105.2%.<sup>11</sup> The southwest region ranks lower than the National Average on Human Capital, Economic Dynamics and Productivity & Employment however exceeds the National Average on Economic Well-Being.

**SMART GOAL:** Improve the southwest region's rank on the Stats America Innovation Index from 86% to the National Average rank of 100% by 2021.

## Strategies/Activities:

1. Broaden access to capital to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship.
  - a. Expand entrepreneur financing to, including but not limited to, crowd funding, angel investors and venture capitalists
2. Create networks of incubator, co-working, proof of concept and maker spaces.
  - a. Explore success models and distribute to

interested communities for replication

- b. Create entrepreneur networking opportunities
3. Establish and expand entrepreneurship education programs in K-12 schools.
  - a. Research and/or establish curriculum materials for entrepreneurship track in secondary schools and/or community and technical colleges
4. Work with businesses to create a successful social media strategy that helps them build an online presence and grow their online sales through interactions and engagements with their target audience.
5. Maintain and expand renewable/chemical energy production incentives, including but not limited to the USDA Advanced Biofuel Payment Program
6. Invest in value-added opportunities from agricultural products, including but not limited to the USDA Value Added Producer Grant, USDA Rural Business Development Grant or USDA Rural Cooperative Development Grant.



# Economic Competitiveness

## Small Business Growth

**Call to Action:** Small businesses, especially those in rural areas, have more limited access to capital sources than larger businesses, including government economic development programs. In order to prosper, the southwest region's small businesses must have access to information and the availability of more public and private funding.

**Context:** 76.1% of businesses in the southwest region have less than 10 employees and 90.6% have fewer than 50 employees.<sup>12</sup> New and young companies are the primary source of job creation in the American economy.<sup>13</sup>

**SMART Goal:** Increase the number of capital investment programs available to Small and Medium Enterprises (SME, small is considered 20 or fewer employees, medium is considered 21-50 employees) to allow growth and job creation for the southwest region.

### Strategies/Activities:

1. Increase awareness of regional business planning and financing options by eligibility and stage.
  - a. Create a regional resource of business planning and capital programs including pre-venture, start-up and established business services
2. Utilize public-private partnerships to facilitate increased SME business lending.
  - a. Establish a tool kit of best practices for replication
3. Establish new business programs to fill gaps in the

capital market.

- a. Expand business financing to, including but not limited to, crowd funding, angel investors and venture capitalists
4. Fully fund regional Small Business Development Centers at the state level.
  - a. Advocate for an ongoing commitment from the state, to fully fund the Federal SBDC match requirements, to allow for growth and additional services.
5. Expand and improve opportunities for growers, focusing on local foods, existing family farms and producers.
6. Offer professional education and networking via the Southwest Economic Development Professionals group.
7. Provide grant writing and loan packaging services related to economic development.
8. Maintain regional revolving loan fund for businesses.
9. Encourage shop local initiatives.

# Community Resources



## Social Capital

**Call to Action:** Residents must act together to meet challenges, improve their communities and transform their communities for the better. This can happen if residents believe that their civic participation, as an individual or as part of a larger group, can have an impact.

**Context:** “Rural Pulse”, a Blandin Foundation research study which captured a real-time snapshot of concerns, perceptions and priorities, asked people in MN if their community works together effectively to address local issues.<sup>14</sup>

- ♦ 71% from southwest MN indicated somewhat or strongly agree
- ♦ 73% across MN indicated somewhat or strongly agree

**SMART Goal:** Based on “Rural Pulse”, increase the percentage of respondents who feel that their community works together effectively to address local needs by 5% by 2025.

### Strategies:

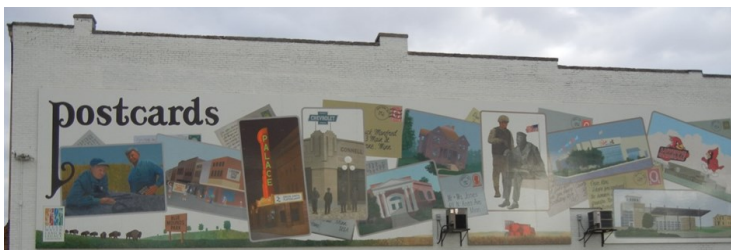
1. Actively recruit and nurture emerging community leaders.
  - a. Promote general awareness of community opportunities to new residents.
  - b. Create mentoring and leadership opportunities for youth, minorities, etc. within current groups.
2. Formalize community leadership networking groups for young professionals.

3. Enhance the knowledge and capacity of community leaders and educators through development opportunities.
  - a. Formulate list of available development opportunities.
4. Establish a succession-planning program that includes entrepreneurial development and mentoring, targeting private, public and/or nonprofit organizations.
5. Gather success stories from elementary and/or high schools who have implemented a program to encourage volunteerism.

## Arts and Culture

**Call to Action:** Arts, culture and place-making contribute to the vibrancy of the southwest region’s economy and quality of life.

**Context:** According to the MN Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), Region 8 has 450 jobs in the arts, entertainment, and recreation industry, accounting for less than 1.0 percent of total employment; compared to 49,230 arts, entertainment, and recreation jobs statewide, comprising 1.8% of total jobs. However, arts industry jobs increased 7.7% in Region 8 from 2005 to 2015.<sup>15</sup> In comparison, arts industry jobs increased 3.0% statewide during that same timeframe.



# Community Resources

**SMART Goal:** Increase employment in the arts industry in the southwest region to 2.5% by 2021.

**Strategies:**

1. Utilize arts-based place-making, including visual arts, performing arts, literacy arts, media arts, interdisciplinary and/or multidisciplinary art, to improve affordable housing, downtown redevelopment and public spaces with a focus on Worthington thru an Art Place America project.
2. Connect artists with resources they need to make a living and life in the southwest region.
3. Expand existing and create new artist-in-residence programs.
4. Support and enhance arts and culture efforts through an increase of Legacy Act investments in the southwest region.

## Tourism

**Call to Action:** The leisure and hospitality industry is an important producer of jobs in the southwest region. Communities across the southwest region consider tourism to be an essential industry for economic development.

**Context:** Travel and tourism make up a large portion of the leisure and hospitality industry. They create jobs and generate sales in every community in the southwest region. Tourism jobs represent all levels of employment, from important entry-level service jobs to high-paying executive positions. Traveler spending indirectly supports jobs in many other industries, as well, from financial services to printing.

The leisure and hospitality industry in the southwest

region generated \$178.7 million in gross sales in 2014 and 3,914 private sector jobs.<sup>16</sup> (In MN, the leisure and hospitality industry generated \$13.6 billion in gross sales and 254,380 private sector jobs.)

**SMART Goal:** Increase visitor spending in the southwest region by 5% by 2021.

**Strategies:**

1. Keep MN travel experiences fresh and current by creating new outdoor recreation, arts and cultural heritage experience and amenities.
  - a. Partner with Chambers of Commerce and tourism organizations.
  - b. Explore regional marketing campaigns, including the promotion of our educational systems.
2. Develop career paths in the tourism industry to attract and keep younger employees while staying competitive in pay and benefits to attract and retain employees.
  - a. Dialogue with employers in hospitality, leisure and tourism to determine needs for the development of soft skills training for employees which could include topics such as communication, customer service, teamwork, flexibility, professionalism and commitment.
  - b. Work collaboratively with higher education to promote internships with tourist based businesses.

# Community Resources



- c. Participate, support and provide technical assistance to the Comprehensive Community Planning efforts for the Lower Sioux Indian Community.<sup>18</sup>
  - i. Work in partnership with the Lower Sioux Indian Community, throughout each facet of their comprehensive planning process, capitalizing on each other's strengths.

## Natural Resources

**Call to Action:** The southwest region is fortunate to have an abundance of natural resources that are essential to the economy. Strain on natural resources is on the rise, putting pressure on stakeholders to adapt. MN must solve multiple threats from ground-water overuse and contamination, invasive species, decline of natural areas, exploitation of natural resources and a loss of species.

**Context:** Minnesota has a strong and long hunting and fishing tradition. Minnesota's angling and hunting participation rates (28 percent and 12 percent, respectively) are double the national averages of 14 percent and 6 percent, respectively. Minnesota ranks ninth in the nation for resident hunters. Each year the state licenses about 1.1 million resident anglers and 550,000 resident hunters. Total expenditures by Minnesota residents on hunting and fishing within and out of Minnesota totaled \$3.3 billion in 2011 (the most recent year for federal information on hunting, fishing and wildlife-related recreation). This level of spending supports nearly 48,000 Minnesota jobs.<sup>19</sup>

As global interactions have become more prevalent, MN has seen the rise of several non-native invasive species, including zebra mussels, spiny water flea, Eurasian Milfoil, West Nile Virus, and Emerald Ash Borer. These invasive species (and others) have a direct effect on water quality, fishing, forest production and human health.

**SMART Goal:** Protect and preserve natural resources for continued responsible use. Achieve no net loss of wetlands/prairie lands, and add programs and policies that reduce the carbon footprint through renewable/chemical energy or energy efficiency initiatives.

## Strategies:

1. Identify and safeguard valuable natural resources and outdoor heritage through education, preservation and conservation efforts. Incorporate outdoor heritage and preservation strategies that draw connections between historic land-use and natural ecosystems, including agri-tourism, mining/timber tourism, transportation (land, water, air) tourism, and flora/fauna tourism.
2. Generate comprehensive plans that address biodiversity, watersheds, wetlands, critical habitats, grassland, agriculture, minerals, forest habitat, and migration corridors in the planning process.
3. Develop land-use plans that balance economic competitiveness/resilience with human well-being and natural amenities preservation.





# Community Resources

4. Support efforts on the reduction or elimination of invasive species.
5. Support and enhance stronger conservation efforts across all natural resources through an increase of Legacy Art Investment in Greater MN.
6. Conduct project reviews for larger regional impact projects as requested for projects such as wind farms, livestock facility expansions, solar farms, housing, fire trucks, etc.
7. Reduce carbon footprint.
  - a. Promote comprehensive energy audits which may lead property owners to reduce energy costs.
  - b. Promote the Property Assessed Clean Energy Program.
  - c. Implement on-the-ground solutions to help businesses find the right lights and save energy, including but not limited to gas stations and dairy farms.
  - d. Foster composting, recycling and zero waste events.

## Water Quality

**Call to Action:** Minnesota's water resources are world-renowned and one of the most abundant and precious resources. On the one hand, human activities require increasing amounts of water for drinking water supply, for industrial and agricultural needs, and for aesthetic purposes. On the other hand, a high quality, ongoing water supply is necessary to maintain the rich natural resource heritage that generations in this state have enjoyed.

**Context:** Although water may seem abundant in Minnesota, in the Land of 10,000 Lakes, water is a limited resource. The Lewis and Clark Regional Water System pulls water from out of state, while the community of Marshall pulls water from a neighboring county, through a recently constructed twenty- seven mile pipeline.

Monitoring suggests that about 40% of Minnesota's lakes and streams are impaired for conventional pollutants, which is comparable to impairment rates in other states.<sup>19</sup> The MN Pollution Control Agency delisted 55 (2010-2016) and added 661 (since 2014 report) bodies of water to their impaired waters list of 4,599 listings, of which over 9% were located within the southwest region.<sup>20</sup>



According to a 2014 report from the MN Pollution Control Agency, no lakes and few streams in the Minnesota portion of the Minnesota River Basin met state standards for supporting aquatic life and recreation — fishable and swimmable.<sup>21</sup> The region is split by the geographic feature known as the Buffalo Ridge, and is also part of the Missouri River Basin.



# Community Resources



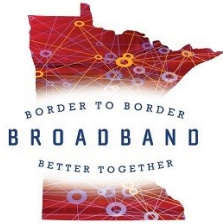
The Missouri River Basin in Minnesota is made up of four major watersheds - the Upper Big Sioux River, Lower Big Sioux River, Rock River, and Little Sioux River. The four watersheds stretch from the South Dakota border near Lake Benton southeast to the Iowa border just west of Jackson. This area of Minnesota has very fertile soils and has an important agricultural economy rich in crop production and livestock operations. Drinking water, aquatic recreation and aquatic life uses are compromised by high nitrate, bacteria, and turbidity levels.<sup>22</sup> Lakes within the basin are very shallow.

**SMART Goal:** Improve water quality by ensuring that the southwest region's groundwater and surface water supplies are protected from depletion and degradation by reducing the number of impaired waters and endangered ecosystems.

## Strategies:

1. Address water shortage by completing the Lewis and Clark Regional Water System project to the City of Worthington.
2. Promote adherence to federal Clean Water Act standards that presume a water body should sustain healthy aquatic life, recreation and additional uses, such as drinking water (domestic consumption), industry, agriculture, navigation and aesthetic enjoyment.
3. Achieve delisting of impaired waters on MN MPCA baseline inventory through identification of critical ecosystems and promotion of conservation best practices.
4. Use of buffer strips, shoreline management and other best management practices to stabilize banks and reduce erosion.





# Foundational Assets

## Broadband Access

**Call to Action:** Like electricity a century ago, broadband is a foundation for economic growth, job creation, global competitiveness and a better way of life. Affordable high-speed internet is necessary to remain competitive in today's global economy. Many businesses and residents experience lack of access to reliable broadband at acceptable speeds and costs.

**Context:** 78% of businesses and their workers are using broadband to grow, thrive and prosper.<sup>23</sup> With the exception of Rock County, there are no counties in our service area that are completely served via wireline broadband of at least 100M/20M. Many of our larger communities are considered underserved as they have wireline broadband of at least 25M/3M. The majority of our area, comprised of smaller communities and rural areas, is considered unserved as it has no wireline broadband of at least 25M/3M.<sup>24</sup>

The Federal Communications Commission now only allows connections of at least 25 Mbps download speed and 3 Mbps up to be classified as broadband. The previous benchmark established in 2010 was 4 Mbps down and 1 Mbps up, which is now considered inadequate by the FCC.

**SMART Goal:** 100% of businesses and household will have access to broadband under the FCC definition, 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload, by 2021.

## Strategies:

1. Advocate for broadband funding at both state and federal levels.
  - a. Advocate for modifications to the provider

challenge component in Minnesota's Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Program that funds the expansion of broadband services to areas that are unserved or underserved.

2. Advocate for a symmetrical standard.
3. Create and leverage public and private partnerships to fund improved broadband access.
4. Develop an inventory of best management practices (BMP) to improve policies and procedures for broadband and deployment of broadband service in rural, sparsely populated and high-cost regions.
5. Ensure the collection of accurate data around served and underserved regions.
6. Promote an understanding of the importance of broadband to a community's infrastructure.
  - a. Gather information in regards to increased property values as a result of broadband.
  - b. Educate residents on capabilities of various speeds as it relates to tele-medicine, tele-home care, home based businesses, etc.

# Foundational Assets



## Transportation

**Call to Action:** Economic growth and trade depend on safe and reliable transportation networks. Virtually no production can take place unless raw materials, manufactured products, labor and fuel can be moved to and from different locations.

**Context:** In the southwest region, county and state highways are a primary means for moving freight. MnDOT estimates that there will be \$18 billion in revenues available over the next 20 years to address more than \$30 billion in transportation needs, resulting in a funding gap of approximately \$12 billion.<sup>26</sup>

**SMART Goal:** Increase the percentage of the southwest region's good quality-rated roadways in the next 20 years and increase/maintain the County ten ton network.

### Strategies:

1. Work with partners to provide input to Minnesota Go- MnDOT's portal to all the Transportation Plans, such as the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan (SMPT) and MnDOT's 20-year State Highway Investment Plan (MnSHIP); and the modal plans Bicycle, Aviation, Freight, Rail, Ports and Waterway, Pedestrian, and Greater Minnesota Transit.
2. Work with counties to identify freight generators and map a county network of freight routes.
3. Maintenance of the local Functional Classification System.
4. Keep abreast of highway corridor meetings in the

region.

5. Provide local planning assistance including participation in SHIP CLT meetings to facilitate information on transportation projects.
6. Provide assistance to district planning related to upcoming FY pre-scoping activities/worksheets.
7. Offer assistance to local units of government with their long-range planning to address transportation sustainability and action steps to reach identified goals.
8. Encourage state and local units of governments to use all available options that increase transportation funding, including but not limited to the Transportation Economic Development (TED) program.
  - a. Provide assistance to applicants applying for transportation funding (i.e. TED applicants).
  - b. When turnbacks are considered, encourage roads be reconstructed to appropriate standards, upon mutual agreement.
9. Advocate for a categorical exclusion for small general aviation airports in regards to airports GIS, runway expansions, etc.



# Foundational Assets

10. Advocate for railroad funding at both state and federal levels.

- a. Provide technical assistance to FAST Act applicants, which include the Department of Transportation's rail, highway, motor vehicle safety, public transportation, motor carrier safety, hazardous materials safety, research, technology, and statistics programs.
- b. Explore local hazardous material training options for fire fighters.

11. Support safety, mitigation and planning initiatives.

- a. Encourage emergency personnel to obtain hazardous material training.
- b. Participate in the Toward Zero Deaths initiative
- c. Explore the possibility of a regional fire district.
- d. Assist local units of government in the preparation of hazard mitigation plans.

## Active Transportation

**Call to Action:** Active-living planning and implementation will help improve community health, livability and social capital.

**Context:** The Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) program provides a roadmap to improve conditions for bicycling and guidance to create and implement a plan to better, bikeable communities. MN ranks #2 in the nation as a bicycle friendly state.<sup>27</sup> Currently there are 16 communities, 75 businesses and 2 universities in MN that have this designation, none of

which are located in the southwest region.<sup>28</sup>

Complete Streets is an approach to road planning and design that considers and balances the needs of all transportation users. It is about the basics: improving the transportation system's safety and functionality for all users. Its main premise is nothing more than for people to get around safely and efficiently from point A to point B, using whatever mode of travel they choose.

There are 43 communities in MN that have a Complete Streets policy, of which 22 are in Greater MN and 3 (Pipestone, Worthington and Nobles County) are in the southwest region.

## SMART Goals:

1. Assist 2 communities with achieving BFC-designated status.
2. Assist 3 communities with the adoption of a Complete Streets policy.
3. Increase the number of regionally designated parks and trails by the Greater Parks and Trails Commission.

## Strategies:

1. Work with state and local partners, including but not limited to SHIP, to coordinate efforts to develop and enhance regional bicycle and pedestrian systems.
2. Explore long-term funding mechanisms for the maintenance and improvement of bike and pedestrian infrastructure.



# Foundational Assets



3. Ensure that pedestrians and bicyclists are considered in future transportation infrastructure decisions.
4. Partner with National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) to help communities across the country consider/achieve the vision of Safe Routes to Parks.
5. Work with state and local partners to support the expansion and maintenance of regional trail systems.
  - a. Maintain SRDC Regional Trail Plan.
  - b. Support Rails to Trails.
  - c. Provide technical assistance to Greater MN Parks and Trails applicants.
  - d. Improve connectivity between trail systems.
  - e. Promote Wi-Fi at regional parks and trails.
  - f. Encourage the DNR to work with Greater MN Parks and Trails Commission and regional stakeholders to develop a strong regional trail system for southwest Minnesota.

## Transit

**Call to Action:** Transit in the southwest region will be increasingly important for access to services, jobs and educational opportunities. Rural transit systems must respond to customer needs for high quality and customer-based service to meet this increasing mobility gap.

**Context:** Greater Minnesota has 50 public transit sys-

tems, covering 80 counties. The southwest region's 9 counties are served by 2 public transit systems, one of which covers 8 of our 9 counties. Their 2015 data indicates that they collectively provided 194,990 Passenger trips, put in 60,195 Hours and drove 1,269,745 Miles.<sup>29</sup>

**SMART Goal:** Increase the level of transit system service in the southwest region by 2021.

## Strategies:

1. Work to ensure that long-range public transit policy decisions address future demographic shifts and needs.
2. Work with local partners to evaluate funding and service options to meet mobility and access needs of individuals. Support providing both public bus and volunteer driver programs to meet individual needs.
3. Participate in the Regional Ride Council (RRC) to increase communication and coordination with transportation partners.
4. Build connections between public transit and other transportation providers.
5. Foster connections between transit systems and customers to increase transit riders, including but not limited to, appropriate, accessible and easy to understand information.



# Foundational Assets

## Water-Wastewater Infrastructure

**Call to Action:** Communities with low populations frequently struggle with the affordability of water infrastructure as they lack the economies of scale that help keep costs down in more populous cities.

**Context:** Over 80% of the cities on the MPCA 2016 Clean Water Priority list are in rural MN, of which 19 of the 293 cities are located in the southwest region. The total estimated project cost, statewide, is \$1.4 billion, of which approximately \$83 million are for the southwest region's projects. About 30% of the top 55 listed are projects within the southwest region.<sup>30</sup>

**SMART Goal:** Decrease the number of communities out of MPCA compliance by 2025.

### Strategies:

1. Assist local units of government in accessing sources of funding to maintain community infrastructure and other essential services, all of which supports business development and affordable housing.
2. Encourage cities to obtain technical assistance in early stages of development.
3. Facilitate dialog around right-sized systems (i.e. modest in design, scope and cost) and regionalization options when considering wastewater infrastructure projects.
4. Encourage cities to develop capital improvement plans that are aligned with comprehensive plans and zoning/land use ordinances.

## Housing Availability

**Call to Action:** Housing issues in the southwest region vary from community to community. Challenges that need to be addressed include: tight rental and ownership markets, cost-burdened households, workforce and elderly housing shortages, homelessness, and low- quality and aging housing stock.

**Context:** In the southwest region, 43.5% (median value- ranged from 38.4%to 48.8%) of households are cost burdened, 38.3% (median value- ranged from 33% to 41.8%) of homeowners are cost burdened and 52.5% (median value- ranged from 46.7% to 62%) of renters are cost burdened.<sup>31</sup> In Greater MN, nearly half of all renters spend more than 30% of income on housing, while 30% of homeowners with a mortgage spend at least 30 cents of every dollar they earn on housing.

During the last ten days of January each year, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) asks that a "point-in-time" count of homeless households be completed. The following data are from the "Point-in-Time" counts done in the southwest region for January 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016: 112, 63, 51, 45 and 29 respectively.<sup>32</sup> Numbers represent households, not people. On the contrary, since 1991, homelessness in Greater MN has increased. Between 2009 and 2012, the homeless rate increased from 13-14.1 per 10,000 residents, and the number of homeless adults ages 55 and older nearly doubled.



# Foundational Assets



A 5% vacancy rate is generally considered a sign of a healthy rental housing market. According to market analysis studies for Worthington, Jackson and Windom, there was less than a 1% vacancy rate, a 3.9% vacancy rate (however, five of the six identified vacancies were in one project, Rolling Hills Apartments. If Rolling Hills is removed from the calculation, the vacancy rates drops to less than 1%) and a 3.7% vacancy rate respectively.<sup>33</sup> There tends to be waiting lists at many of the existing income-based projects.

**SMART Goal:** Move toward equilibrium in local housing markets.

## Strategies:

1. Advocate for funding programs for demolition of vacant, unsafe and dilapidated housing units.
  - a. Consider replicating models such as Worthington Rediscover for housing demolition.
  - b. Explore the possibility of DEED's Redevelopment Grants being reestablished.



2. Increase the number of units rehabilitated or preserved.
3. Encourage development of permanent supportive housing.
4. Collect and share best management practices around housing policy and financing.
5. Keep abreast of trends and opportunities of temporary family health care dwellings (Granny Pods) and tiny homes.
6. Work with to address student housing shortage for MinnesotaWest students at their Worthington location.
7. Work collaboratively with the Southwest Minnesota Continuum of Care to track needs, secure financial resources and coordinate regional goals to prevent and end homelessness.

In conclusion: In order to accomplish these goals, local and regional leaders will utilize all potential financial resources including those offered through DEED, the federal EDA and all of the programs of the USDA Rural Housing/Business/Utility Service including the Community Facilities program and the Strategic Economic Community Development (SECD) Community Facilities set-aside program (6025 Initiative).



# Implementation and Evaluation

## Implementation

The SRDC CEDS is meant to be usable to stakeholders as a guide to the regional economy and for action to improve it. The primary purpose of our CEDS is to align public and private entities around a common vision for the southwest region of Minnesota. This document can be the strategic document that will become that foundation. SRDC's hope is that through this process partners can align plans across state and local governments, organizations, educational institutions and businesses. SRDC will look to and partner with a number of partners to help accomplish the goals within this document. SRDC will review and update this document annually and each year will assess progress, identify gaps and modify as needed.

SRDC welcomes your participation and involvement. The southwest region is most successful when all are involved. If you have ideas, or comments, please contact the SRDC.

## Evaluation Framework

The SRDC intends to evaluate the effectiveness of their CEDS implementation by answering a series of questions about the goals and strategies listed. These questions will be both subjective and objective in nature, allowing the SRDC to establish some baseline data for the success of implementation as well as providing input from observations.

## Questions

*How are we doing?* Are we meeting the measurable portion of the goals we have established?

*What can we do better?* If we are not meeting our goals, or have only been partially successful, how can

we improve our outcomes?

*Have we applied the SWOT Analysis?* Have we made measurable impacts on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as previously identified, and are there new things that need to be considered?

*Does it cascade from the strategic direction and action?* Performance measures are identified to evaluate the progress of activities in achieving the vision, goals and objectives.

Performance measures go beyond job creation to address linkages to other important factors, such as conditions the region needs to reverse or create, and what regional assets can be leveraged.

## Costs Associated with Implementation

No specific dollar figure is attached to the individual goals and strategies of the CEDS. As always with strategy implementation, the majority of the costs associated will be primarily staff related. The SRDC intends to continue to use its EDA Planning Grant funding, as well as other sources of revenue, including contracts and grants from other sources. In addition, the SRDC will continue to work closely with other economic development entities in the region and will leverage funding for specific projects and strategy implementation with our partners through-out the process. Implementation of the CEDS will be one of the factors that will go into the development of the SRDC's annual budget as we progress into the five years of this plan.

# Community Participation



## CEDS Committee

A CEDS Committee, which broadly represents the main economic interests of the region, was formed to facilitate the planning process, and to develop and update the CEDS. Our CEDS Committee is as follows:

### Public Sector:

1. Lori Grant, Lyon County Townships, representing Townships
2. Bradley Chapulis, CEDS Committee Chair, City of Worthington, representing cities

### Private Sector:

3. Miron Carney, SRDC Chair, representing Small Business
4. Mary Mulder, Private Industry Council, representing private industry
5. Brian Kletscher, CEO, Highwater Ethanol, representing the renewable/chemical energy industry
6. Jane Lanphere, Luverne Area Chamber and Convention and Visitors Bureau, representing tourism industry.
7. Brianna Mumme, Branch Manager, Rice Home Medical, representing health care
8. Tara Onken, EDA Director for Balaton and Tracy, representing small business

### Other Main Economic Interests:

9. Brian Cooley, Cottonwood County Highway Department, representing transportation
10. Jacqueline Knips, representing parks and trails

11. Teresa Peterson, representing Lower Sioux Indian Community

12. Leah Sassner, MinnesotaWest Community and Technical College, representing arts and culture

### Higher Education:

13. Bill Mulso, Southwest Minnesota State University, representing higher education

### Private Individual:

14. Michael Timm

SRDC collaborated with a diverse set of stakeholders in the formation of its CEDS committee and the development of its CEDS.

The SRDC looks forward to collaborating with EDA, University Centers, Economic Development Districts, the Lower Sioux Indian Community and other entities funded by EDA on the future development and on-going implementation of its CEDS.

## Public Comment on the CEDS

The SRDC Board of Directors adopted the CEDS on December 8, 2016. The required public comment period occurred from October 31, 2016 to November 30, 2016. Documentation of public comments and verification of adoption is located in the Appendix.



# Community Participation

## Other Participants

In addition to the CEDS Committee, the following were a part of providing input to the development of this document:

SRDC Staff: Jay Trusty, Robin Weis, Annette Fiedler, Max Kaufman

SRDC Board and Full Commission

Cameron Macht, Luke Greiner, Denise Myrberg- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Neil Linscheid- University of Minnesota Extension

Drew Hage- City of Windom- Economic Development

Pat Thomas- Adult Basic Education

Carol Dombeck and Carrie Scheffler- Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council

Amy Rucker- Murray County Economic Development

Karen DeBoer- Prairieland Transit System and Region 8 Child Care Aware of MN

Darlene Macklin- Worthington Chamber/Visitor's Bureau

Gary Papik- Papik Motors and Private Investor

Abraham Algadi- Worthington Regional Economic Development Corporation

Amy Woitalewicz and Greg Jodzio- Southwest Initiative Foundation

Liz Struve, Christine Fischer and Ruth Ann Karty- Small Business Development Center

Cathleen Amick and Shelly Pfaum- United Community

Action Partnership Transit

Steve Nasby- Windom City Administrator

Christy Riley- Travel SW Minnesota

Lisa Graphenteen and Rick Goodemann- Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership

Teresa Peterson- Lower Sioux Indian Community

Paul Pierson and Megan Gernentz- USDA Rural Development

Roxanne Hayenga- MinnesotaWest Community and Technical College

Rick Anderson- Greater MN Parks and Trails Commission and Lyon County

Julie Foote- MVTW Wireless

Kyle Oldre and Susan Skattum- Rock County

Julie Rath- MN Valley Regional Rail Authority and Redwood Area Development Corporation

Justin Vorbach- Southwest Minnesota Continuum of Care

Regional Ride Council

Connie Gores and Stacy Frost- Southwest Minnesota State University

Kay Gross, Tom Appel and Norm Holmen- Cottonwood Soil and Water Conservation District

Cecilia Bofah- Cottonwood- Jackson- Nobles Community Leadership Team (SHIP)

Robert Gervais- truShrimp Systems



# Community Participation



## Southwest Regional Development Commission

The SRDC is organized under the MN Regional Development Act of 1969, as amended (MN Statutes 462.381 et. seq). The region was officially designated as a state development region by Executive Order of the Governor of MN in 1973. The establishment of the Commission was in response to a desire of local units of government in Southwest MN to band together to address problems of mutual concern or ones that transcend local government boundaries. The area includes 9 counties, 80 cities, 163 townships and 32 independent school districts.

The Board of Directors and Full Commission also give input into the strategic direction of the Economic Development District. The Commission meets every other month, with Board of Director Meetings in between. The following are current members:

### Board Members

Miron Carney: Chair  
Mike Kuhle: Vice-Chair  
Gerald Magnus: Treasurer  
Hartwin Kreft: Secretary  
Rick Anderson  
Bob Byrnes  
Eric Hartman  
Eloise Hauschild  
Dave Henkels  
Paul Langseth  
Laurie Ness  
Sherri Thompson  
Donna Gravley

### Representing

SRDC  
Nobles County  
Murray County  
Redwood County  
Lyon County  
City of Marshall  
Region 8 School Boards  
Lincoln County  
Jackson County  
Nobles County  
Pipestone County  
Rock County  
Cottonwood County

## Full Commission

Larry Anderson  
Rick Anderson  
Vicky Baumann  
Bob Byrnes  
Miron Carney  
Brian Cooley  
Bill Crowley  
Mike Davis  
Keith Elbers  
Lori Grant  
Donna Gravley  
Daryl Hanenburg  
Eric Hartman  
Eloise Hauschild  
Dave Henkels  
Sharon Hollatz  
Tim Jones  
Dennis Klingbile  
Bruce Kooiman  
Hartwin Kreft  
Mike Kuhle  
Paul Langseth  
Maydra Maas  
Gerald Magnus  
Laurie Ness  
Richard Peterson  
Roxanne Hayenga  
Tammara Schons  
Stacie Golombiecki  
Sherri Thompson  
Mic VanDeVere  
Carol Wagner  
Matt Widboom

## Representing

Cottonwood County Townships  
Lyon County Commissioners  
SWCIL  
City of Marshall  
Murray County Cities  
Cottonwood County Cities  
Murray County Townships  
Rock County Townships  
Rock County Cities  
Lyon County Townships  
Cottonwood County Board  
Pipestone County Townships  
Region 8 School Board  
Lincoln County Townships  
Jackson County Board  
Redwood County Board  
SW MN Private Industry Council  
Lincoln County Cities  
Pipestone County Board  
Redwood County Townships  
City of Worthington  
Nobles County Townships  
Region 8 School Boards  
Murray County Board  
Pipestone County Cities  
Jackson County Townships  
Higher Education  
Lyon County Cities  
Health and Human Services  
Rock County Board  
Lincoln County Board  
Jackson County Cities  
Nobles County Board



## End Notes

- <sup>1</sup>MN DEED- Southwest MN 2015 Regional Profile Project Report- Luke Greiner, Regional Analyst at DEED- page 7- Table 6: Average Annual Labor Force, Not Seasonally Adjusted
- <sup>2</sup>U.S. Census American FactFinder DP-1 (2000 & 2010)- Population 2000-2010 and Percent of total population
- <sup>3</sup>MN DEED- Southwest MN 2016 Regional Profile Project Report- page 5- Figure 5. Annual Labor Force Estimates, 2000-2015
- <sup>4</sup>MN DEED- Southwest MN 2016 Regional Profile Project Report page 5-Table 3. Region 8 Labor Force Projections, 2015-2025
- <sup>5</sup>Redwood Area Development Corporation- 2016 Redwood County Child Care Task Force Parent Survey- 2016
- <sup>6</sup>MN DEED- Southwest MN 2016 Regional Profile Project Report- page 5-Table 3. Region 8 Labor Force Projections, 2015-2025
- <sup>7</sup>MN DEED- Southwest MN's Economic Trends- Luke Greiner, Regional Analyst at DEED- Slide 18
- <sup>8</sup>Luke Greiner, Regional Analyst at DEED
- <sup>9</sup>Ibid., Slide 19
- <sup>10</sup>Ibid., Slide 30
- <sup>11</sup>Stats America Innovation Index (3/17/16)
- <sup>12</sup>Luke Greiner, Regional Analyst at DEED
- <sup>13</sup>Kauffman Foundation- Entrepreneurship Policy Digest- September 25, 2014, Updated September 14, 2015
- <sup>14</sup>Blandin Foundation- Rural Pulse™ Snapshot: Southwest Minnesota- 2013
- <sup>15</sup>Cameron Macht, Regional Analyst and Outreach Manager at DEED
- <sup>16</sup>Explore Minnesota- Tourism and Minnesota's Economy- 2014
- <sup>17</sup>Lower Sioux Indian Community- Comprehensive Community Planning- 2016
- <sup>18</sup>Commission's Council on Hunting and Angling Recruitment and Retention- Recruiting and Retaining Minnesota Hunters and Anglers- 2013
- <sup>19</sup><https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/minnesotas-impaired-waters-list> 10/11/16
- <sup>20</sup>MN Pollution Control Agency- 2016 Draft Impaired Waters List- Updated August 1, 2016- will be draft until submitted to EPA
- <sup>21</sup><https://www.pca.state.mn.us/news/few-waters-far-sw-minnesota-meet-swimmable-fishable-standards-> 10/11/16
- <sup>22</sup>MN Pollution Control Agency- Missouri River Basin Watersheds Summary- September 2014
- <sup>23</sup>[http://www.connectednation.org/business-trends?state=Minnesota-](http://www.connectednation.org/business-trends?state=Minnesota) 10/11/16
- <sup>24</sup>MN DEED Office of Broadband Development- 2016 Broadband Service Inventory for the State of Minnesota
- <sup>25</sup>[http://www.theverge.com/2015/1/29/7932653/fcc-changed-](http://www.theverge.com/2015/1/29/7932653/fcc-changed-definition-broadband-25mbps-)

[definition-broadband-25mbps-](#) 10/11/16

<sup>26</sup>Minnesota GO 20-Year State Highway Investment Plan 2014-2033

<sup>27</sup>[http://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/BFS2015\\_Minnesota.pdf-](http://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/BFS2015_Minnesota.pdf) 10/11/16

<sup>28</sup><http://www.bikeleague.org/bfa/awards#community-> 10/11/16

<sup>29</sup>United Community Action Partnership (Cathleen Amick, Transit Director) and Southwest MN Opportunity Council (Karen DeBoer)

<sup>30</sup>MN Pollution Control Agency- 2016 Clean Water Project Priority List (PPL) September 29, 2015 Final

<sup>31</sup>MHFA- Community Profile Report (2016)

<sup>32</sup>Southwest Minnesota Continuum of Care- Homelessness in Southwest Minnesota- 2016

<sup>33</sup>Viewpoint Consulting Group, Inc.- Housing Market Analysis & Demand Estimate for Worthington, MN- 3/29/13, Community Partners Research, Inc.-Street E Townhomes- A Market Study of Housing Needs of Low and Moderate Income Households in the Jackson area- June 2013, Viewpoint Consulting Group, Inc.- Housing Market Analysis & Demand Estimate for Windom, MN- 5/13/14

## Documents

Southwest Minnesota 2015 Regional Profile Project Report  
Population 2000-2010 and % of Total Population  
2016 Regional Profile- Economic Development Region 8: Southwest  
Redwood County Child Care Task Force- 2016 Survey Results  
Southwest Minnesota's Economic Trends  
The Stats America Innovation Index  
Rural Pulse™ Snapshot: Southwest Minnesota  
Tourism and Minnesota's Economy  
Comprehensive Community Planning for the Lower Sioux Indian Community  
Recruiting and Retaining Minnesota Hunters and Anglers  
Missouri River Basin Watersheds Summary  
Broadband and Business  
2016 Broadband Service Inventory for the State of Minnesota  
Bicycle Friendly State- Minnesota- Report Card  
2016 Clean Water Project Priority List  
2016 Community Profile Report  
Homelessness in Southwest Minnesota  
Housing Study- Worthington, MN  
Housing Study- Jackson, MN  
Housing Study- Windom, MN