

**Hubbard County Regional
Economic Development Commission**

**2007-2009
Plan of Action**

Mission Statement

The Hubbard County Regional Economic Development Commission coordinates and facilitates the development of a strong and competitive economy in the Hubbard County area. As a public-private partnership, the HCREDC focuses on addressing needs and opportunities of existing businesses, provide assistance to new and expanding businesses, while embracing the exceptional quality of life the area offers.

Facilitating and Coordinating Economic Development Activities

Create a central point of contact for new businesses and existing businesses.

- * Inform allies and stakeholders of services available and the willingness of the HCREDC to offer assistance and guidance.
- * Establish business list serves to allow for intra-communications with stakeholders (i.e. building and site owners / agents, existing industry leaders, key stakeholders).
- * Follow-up on inquiries and referrals to assist prospective businesses with their needs.
- * Partner with the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and offer its “One Stop Shop” Business Assistance Program once its development is complete.

Establish a website / resource center.

- * Complete an inventory of available buildings, sites, assets and community data utilizing the Location One Information System (LOIS).
- * Enlist and train local real estate agents so they can interact directly with LOIS.
- * Create an electronic and downloadable community quick reference for Hubbard County, and for each community.

Establish a HCREDC Coordinating Council to further enhance communication and development efforts.

Seek opportunities to maximize and leverage the resources of Industries for Park Rapids.

- * Identify development opportunities that could benefit from Industries financing.
- * Promote the revolving loan fund for worthy business ventures through the HCREDC.

Define infrastructure and development opportunities for inclusion in city, township and county comprehensive plans.

- * Participate, as appropriate, in the facilitation of a vision for infrastructure and future sites for development, both short and long term.
- * Identify current inventory (LOIS) and determine past land use characteristics.
- * Review capacities to provide utility services.
- * Identify types of business and industries sought by the community.
- * Develop preliminary plans, with engineering assistance, for development sites in

conjunction with landowners.

Initiate efforts to improve the area's technology infrastructure and increase the availability of high speed broadband access for the area.

- * Obtain an assessment of the existing technology and future plans by service providers.
- * Identify future needs, as well as current limitations, for area businesses and residents.
- * Determine potential funding avenues and alternate means to enhance services.

Establish a coalition and legislative agenda for the Hubbard County area to promote projects and address issues as needed with our state and federal officials.

- * Consider a Washington DC advocacy effort to promote identified projects and establish a working relationship with appropriate entities and individuals.
- * Organize a St. Paul advocacy effort to promote identified projects and establish a working relationship with appropriate entities and individuals.
- * Work with state representatives to address issues and projects of local interest (i.e. spec building tax exempt status / credits, job training funding, infrastructure development, rural marketing, entrepreneurial development, taxation issues, etc.).

Organize a township / city top leadership forum.

- * Solicit input and establish direction to further enhance economic development efforts.
- * Encourage participants to establish their own agenda, meeting time, topics, issues, etc.
- * Consider a small community improvement grant program.

Provide support for Park Rapids downtown redevelopment efforts

- * Actively participate in the Downtown Development Steering Committee.
- * Assist in obtaining full funding for Downtown Study being prepared by RDG.

Organize a “housing summit” to review and address Hubbard County housing issues.

- * Identify issues, needs, assets and opportunities.
- * Include existing employers along with housing industry leadership.

Provide support for the Park Rapids Area Community Foundation.

- * Actively participate thru the PRACF Board of Directors.
- * Consider utilizing the services of the Northwest Minnesota Foundation to further fund development efforts.

Retention and Expansion of Existing Employers

Implement, in partnership with the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and the Park Rapids Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce, the Grow Minnesota! existing business call program to determine employer needs and potential opportunities.

- * Enroll in the Grow Minnesota! program and adopt its format and procedures.
- * Recruit and train Grow Minnesota! volunteers.
- * Identify top 20-30 employers to be contacted.
- * Implement the call program and complete documentation.
- * Communicate results as appropriate.

Take a lead role in identifying and addressing existing employer concerns.

* Establish an Existing Industry Advisory Board to solicit input and establish direction
to further enhance existing industry support and economic development efforts.

- * Address issues and concerns identified thru Grow Minnesota!
- * Encourage participants to establish their own agenda, meeting time, topics, issues, etc.

Address air transportation concerns expressed by existing employers.

Address electrical power concerns expressed by existing employers.

Responsibility: Board of Directors & Executive Director

New Business Development

Pursue marketing opportunities to attract and create new business activities.

- * Maintain the web site.
- * Positively Minnesota membership and involvement.
- * Community Venture Network membership and involvement.
- * Grow Minnesota! membership and involvement.
- * Highway 2 West Manufacturer's Association involvement.
- * Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers

(MAPCED)

membership and involvement.

- * Economic Developers Association of Minnesota membership and involvement.
- * Utilize JobZ signage at appropriate locations on main corridors.
- * Consider developing a "summer resident" database for communication and promotion.
- * Consider developing a "alumni" database for communication and promotion.
- * Research development of strategically placed "electronic kiosks" to tell our story.

Initiate targeted business recruitment efforts, if warranted, based upon the RDG Marketing Analysis. (i. e. hotel / meeting facility, entertainment anchors, etc.)

- * Proactive efforts pertaining to commercial development in addressing gaps and reactive assistance as to retail inquiries.

Coordinate an entrepreneurial development program to assist existing entrepreneurs and attract additional individuals to the community.

- * Utilize and promote the small business development services of the Small Business Development Center, Northwest Minnesota Foundation and the Headwaters Regional Development Commission.
- * Co-sponsor training opportunities targeted for small businesses (i.e. succession planning, How to Start a Business, FastTrack, Financing, QuickBooks, etc.).

Explore opportunities to further develop, and enhance support for, "lone eagles" located in the county.

Research the development of a speculative building program as a marketing tool and to attract new businesses.

- * Review current inventory of available buildings in rural Minnesota.
- * Determine potential building and holding costs, funding sources and investors.

