Renville County, North Dakota
Economic Development Strategic Plan

Prepared for
Renville County
and
Vision West North Dakota

Prepared by
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Southwest REAP Zone and the North Dakota Association of Oil and Gas Producing Counties ("Association") partnered with the REAP Investment Fund in the fall of 2011 to apply for funding from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to create a 20-year Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. The North Dakota Department of Trust Lands provided matching funds in order that the 19 oil-development-impacted counties could create local plans that would contribute to the overall Regional Plan.

The 19 counties, along with the Three Affiliated Tribes, four regional councils, five colleges and universities, Southwest REAP Zone, and the Association have combined to form Vision West ND, a consortium of interests working to diversify the regional economy and take measures to improve the overall quality of life.

The box at right presents the key organizations collaborating to advance the regional planning effort. The effort is centered around a set of principles, the Livability Principles, which were developed and are being promoted by the three federal agencies directly involved with the Partnership for Sustainable Communities—the US Department of Transportation, the US Environmental Protection Agency, as well as HUD.

This strategic plan document is one of a series of locally based (city or county) plans that comprise but one of six overall deliverables by Vision West ND. The six planning products include: 1) local economic development strategic plans, 2) plans to address infrastructure needs, 3) planning and zoning recommendations, 4) project schematics for priority local projects, 5) an entrepreneurship initiative and Western North Dakota Energy Project, and 6) the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development.

The development of this document was locally driven through the formation of a community-based Steering Committee under the leadership of a local Plan Director. The findings from this local plan will be combined with those from other such plans to form the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development in 2013.
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Executive Summary

Our Community and Vision

If North Dakotans are known for their friendliness and hospitality, then Renville County should be the State Capitol!

More than anything else, we want to live in our small communities where everyone knows and genuinely cares about each other. Despite the growth now coming to our county, most of us were born and raised here and we want to maintain our county as a place where we accept one another, volunteer together to help during the tough times, celebrate together during the good times, and participate together in community activities at all times.

We want to be the place where our arms are open, our doors are unlocked, and the light is always on.

To live in Renville County and our small communities of Mohall, Sherwood, Tolley, Glenburn, Grano and Loraine, means to be in the best of all worlds. While we have small, active, safe communities with access to hunting, fishing, boating and other activities, we are just a short drive to the bigger city of Minot and even to the nation of Canada.

The only thing about ourselves we don’t like is that we are the best kept secret in America. We like people finding out about us, meeting our people, shopping in our stores, and exploring our countryside. In fact, our goal is to not be the best kept secret in the United States—and with this plan, we are setting a course to be discovered.

Don’t get us wrong, we are not going to change when you all show up. But you just might. When you discover what Renville County has to offer, don’t be surprised to find yourself even changing your address!

Background and Context for Planning

Renville County, North Dakota is a participant in Vision West ND, a 19-county coalition collaborating to develop a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development.

The first step in the development of the Regional Plan is the completion of locally based (city and/or county) economic development strategic plans. These local plans emphasize economic diversification measures and a strong focus on quality-of-life initiatives designed to assist communities in maintaining and enhancing their livability during the economic boom time created by the development of the Bakken oil formation.

The planning participants are utilizing the Building Communities-based approach to economic development strategic planning. Information gained from this local planning process is then considered by the Vision West ND consortium in the development of the Regional Plan.

Scope of Plan

The scope of this plan is county-wide. Although the City of Mohall has a current strategic plan, this is the first time the county has come together as a team to build a county-wide plan.

The timing of this plan is excellent, as the county appears to have turned the corner from approximately 100 years of economic decline. Communities in Renville County are facing some of the impacts of growth from the oil industry that are impacting other counties in the region.

The implementation time frame for this plan is three to five years.
Looking to the Future

Renville County is ideally situated for a very bright future. Not impacted by the oil industry economic growth to the point of negatively impacting quality-of-life, and yet gaining by the effects of the energy industry, the county is poised to have the first decade of economic growth in 100 years.

The people of the county already realize what they have: positive, livable communities they are proud to call home. The county has demonstrated the leadership to guard against negative impacts of growth, while still positively embracing economic opportunities as a means to grow local schools, build stronger communities and create better times.

This planning process has not only yielded a comprehensive community and economic development plan, but has built a team of people from throughout the county who will work together for years to make the improvements envisioned in this plan.

Community and Economic Development Strategies

- Attracting Government Funding
- Attracting Government Jobs
- Business Recruitment
- Business Retention and Expansion
- Downtown Development
- Energy Development
- Health Care
- Infrastructure Development
- Local/Regional Tourism
- Pass-through Visitor Services
- Value-added Agriculture

Quality-of-Life Initiatives

- Housing
- Youth Opportunities
- Emergency Medical Services
- Roads
- Airport Improvements
Section 1: 

Introduction

Planning Methodology & Approach
Planning Methodology

In order to maximize community participation in the planning process, and to quickly transition the community to plan implementation, Renville County engaged Building Communities to employ its unique strategic planning methodology in the development of this plan. The Building Communities approach to strategic planning bypasses traditionally used planning and research components—such as lengthy demographic studies, which often add little to a plan in terms of usefulness over time and focuses instead on the development of action-oriented projects and initiatives. The Building Communities planning approach is objective, comprehensive and expeditious.

- **Objective:** Communities select community and economic development strategies and initiatives based on a logical analysis of the factors most relevant to community advancement
- **Comprehensive:** Communities consider a host of possible strategies and initiatives to improve local economic conditions, and to sustain and advance overall quality of life
- **Expeditious:** The process is fast-paced (typically 13 hours total) and excludes discussion unrelated to the development and implementation of the strategic plan

Vision and Mission

The development of vision and mission statements has long been “standard procedure” in traditional community and economic development strategic planning processes. These statements are crafted to inspire, convey core values, and to indicate the direction communities desire to head as they implement their plans. These are all important ingredients in any strategic plan. In the Building Communities planning methodology, vision and mission statements assume a different form. In fact, vision and mission statements appear to be absent in the planning process and final plan, at least as traditionally seen. But they are anything but missing.

The Building Communities methodology recognizes that communities embrace similar values, missions, objectives and visions for the future—leadership, integrity, health, quality services, safe environments, responsible use of resources, economic growth and quality living, to name a few. Fully recognizing that these values and ideals are both common to, and important in, nearly all communities (if not all!), the Building Communities methodology integrates vision and mission statements seamlessly into the strategic plan, both expanding their content and application, and making them unique to the community.

As part of the Building Communities planning approach, Renville County’s vision—“what we aim to become based on who and where we are”—is presented in a lengthier format than just a sentence or two. It is found under the header “Our Community and Vision” in the Executive Summary. The plan itself can also be considered an extension of Renville County’s vision—a palpable manifestation of its values and desires—while the strategies and initiatives which constitute the bulk of the plan define Renville County’s mission—“what we want to do to enact our vision.”

Defining a community’s vision and mission is at the core of the Building Communities planning approach. For Renville County, these elements emerged as participants were guided through a planning process that had two over arching objectives—improving local economic conditions and enhancing quality of life in the community.
Objectives of Methodology

The Building Communities approach is firmly grounded in the belief that the objectives of community and economic development strategic planning (like the values and aims of visions and missions) are also common among communities—*improving economic condition* and *enhancing quality of life*. These two high-level objectives can be directly related, indirectly related, or almost completely insulated from one another, depending on the development projects being pursued by the community. For example, development of value-added projects offers the potential for significant improvement to a community’s economic condition, but may only indirectly improve the quality of life enjoyed by its citizens. In like manner, strategic positioning as a bedroom community can dramatically improve general community conditions for residents in the form of residential amenities and aesthetic elements, but may only indirectly contribute to the economy. And some initiatives, such as well-developed tourism campaigns, may result in enhancements to both quality of life and the local economy.

The relationship between these two objectives works in both directions. That is, while improvements in one category may have a positive effect on the other, neglect in one—or overemphasis on it—may have a drag-down effect on the other. In order to maximize the benefit of community projects and initiatives, the Building Communities methodology emphasized analysis and planning in both of these categories during the planning process.

Major Components of Planning Approach

The Building Communities planning approach brings together three important components to produce a strategic plan—people, analysis and action. These components were carefully combined and organized for Renville County in order to minimize time spent on relatively fruitless planning activities, while maximizing the power that each of the components brings to the process:

- **People**: The Plan Director, Plan Facilitator, Building Communities Support Staff, Steering Committee—and the Community at large
- **Analysis and Action**: Plan Week, which included these analyses and action-assignment sessions:
  - Key Success Factor Analysis
  - Quality-of-Life Initiatives (QOLIs) Session
  - Community Organizer Assessment
  - Voice of the Community Meeting
  - Strategy & QOLIs Selection Session
  - Assigning Essential Action Steps
  - Elevator Speech Session

The People

Communities are people. And, this strategic plan is a road map to better the individual and collective lives of its people. As such, the Building Communities methodology places high value on involvement of the people. In fact, perhaps more than any other strategic planning process currently in use, the Building Communities approach invites—no, requires!—community members themselves to do the analyses and evaluations, determine the strategic projects and initiatives to be pursued, develop the content which constitutes the “meat” of the completed strategic plan and conduct follow-up activities to ensure that it is implemented, with Building Communities guiding the process.

Contrast this to traditional approaches in which often “detached” hired consultants do most or all of the analyses, interpret local conditions, write the plan, and community members accept the resulting plan as “their own.” Though this is the common formula, it in many cases leads to strategic plans being little more
than expensive dust collectors. This is no future, and the Building Communities methodology does not use this model.

The Building Communities methodology employed the services of the following people:

- **Plan Director**: Kristy Titus, Renville County - Serves as the liaison between Building Communities and Renville County; oversees community outreach efforts; assists in creating the Steering Committee; coordinates all planning and implementation efforts over the life of the plan.

- **Plan Facilitator**: Brian Cole, Building Communities Inc. - Deploys the Building Communities Strategic Planning methodology, tools and software; provides guidance and assistance to the Plan Director; conducts planning, analysis and content-development sessions; delivers the plan in its various drafts and forms.

- **Building Communities Support Staff**: Though never visible to the community, Building Communities’ support staff works behind the scenes to provide communities with effective and efficient planning tools, and to deliver a polished plan they can be proud of and use effectively.

- **Steering Committee**: Includes the Plan Director and represents the interests of Renville County in the planning process; participates in all Plan Week work sessions; invites community participation in the planning process; weighs all community input; selects strategies and initiatives for implementation; reviews and provides feedback on the draft final plan; leads implementation efforts during the life of the plan. Renville County Steering Committee members:
  - Ross Carter
  - Dan Dew
  - Allan Engh
  - LaVonne Erickson
  - Joe Genareo
  - Milt Hoyt
  - Shelley Iverson
  - Diana Krause
  - Robin Stark
  - Jason Tracy
  - LoAyne Voigt
  - Diane Witteman

- **Citizens of Renville County**: Includes all citizens and elected officials; provides crucial input during the Voice of Community Meeting and during plan review and adoption proceedings; assists and supports the Steering Committee during planning and implementation.

**Overview of Plan Week**

The bulk of the analysis and data gathering needed to build the strategic plan were accomplished during Plan Week—a term actually coined by a Building Communities client to describe the series of rapid-fire Building Communities planning sessions. For Renville County, Plan Week consisted of the seven sessions listed previously and was conducted September 12 - 13, 2012.

Data-gathering and analysis sessions were first in the process. They drew on the knowledge and experience of Steering Committee members and community members. Evaluation sessions followed, in which collected data and information were assessed and weighed. Next were decision-making sessions during which Steering Committee members determined the strategies and initiatives which would define Renville County’s mission during the life of the plan. Initial plan implementation steps were also determined by the
Steering Committee in the later sessions, and finalization of these “Essential Action Steps” was completed in the following two months. In the final session of Plan Week, Steering Committee members were invited to reflect on the results of the preceding sessions, and to merge these with Renville County’s identity and aspirations to create an expanded statement of its vision and direction.

The seven sessions of Plan Week are designed to capture the “full body” of community and economic development considerations:

- A logical assessment of what the community should do based on the likelihood of success (the “mind”)
- The passion the community has to advance in a desired direction, or what it wants to do (the “heart”)
- The capacity of the community to advance based on its human, financial and technical resources, or what it can do (the “muscle”)

**Session 1: Key Success Factor Analysis**

Plan Week began with a fast-paced analysis of Renville County’s comparative advantage for a host of Key Success Factors—conditions, assets, abilities, etc., possessed by the community—relevant to 25 community and economic development strategies the community could pursue to improve economic condition and enhance quality of living.

The graphic below shows the carefully developed menu of strategies which the Steering Committee considered in this first session, and which the broader community also considered in a later session. Strategies ultimately selected are noted with an asterisk (*).

The input from this session yielded Renville County’s Prioritized Strategy Report—a ranking of the 25 strategies on a scale of 0 to 100 based on the likelihood of successful implementation. This report, along with a more detailed explanation of its content, can be found in Section 2 of this plan.
Session 2: Quality-of-Life Initiatives Session

Unlike the 25 strategies, which are presented as a finite list, Quality-of-life Initiatives are an “open book” whose main purpose is to address quality-of-life issues faced by the community. In Session 2 members of the Steering Committee were asked the question, “What would improve the quality of life in your community?” and invited to consider major issues or concerns they have about the livability in Renville County. In addition to the addressing specific issues, Quality-of-life Initiatives are also designed to capture development and sustainability elements consistent with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD)’s Livability Principles:

1. Providing more transportation choices
2. Promoting equitable and affordable housing
3. Enhancing economic competitiveness
4. Supporting existing communities
5. Coordinating and leveraging federal policy and investments

Many topics were brought forward by the Steering Committee, including but not limited to:

- Affordable Housing
- Air and Water Quality
- Airport Expansion
- Child Care
- City and County Road Impacts
- Economic Conditions
- Emergency Medical Services
- Health Clinics
- Increased Crime
- Lack of Community Envolvement/Community Engagement
- Lack of Retail and Services
- Limited Labor Force
- Loss of Local Middle Class
- Man Camps
- Mouse River Park
- Quiet Lifestyles Interrupted
- Reopening Community Pool
- School Issues
- Youth Opportunities

These initiatives were presented to the broader community in a later session for their consideration and input, before the final selection of initiatives to pursue was completed by the Steering Committee. A more detailed treatment of the Quality-of-life Initiatives follows in Section 4 of this plan.

Session 3: Community Organizer Assessment

One part of community and economic development strategic planning often ignored is determining the capacity of the community to implement its plan. Capacity relates to the human, financial and technical resources needed to generally engage in community and economic development activities, and considers such things as unity of vision, land-use policy, community attitude and organizational stability.
The Building Communities planning approach addressed this critical element in Session 3—the *Community Organizer Assessment*—in which were presented a series of questions specific to the community and business development aspirations of the community. This yielded a report detailing specific recommendations about how Renville County can increase its capacity in order to successfully implement its strategic plan. The results of the *Community Organizer Assessment* can be found in Section 5 of this plan.

**Session 4: Voice of the Community Meeting**

The entire community was invited to Session 4, a town-hall-style meeting carefully designed to receive broader input about the same strategies and initiatives being considered by the Steering Committee. During this meeting, two overall objectives were met.

First, the community was asked to consider the 25 strategies earlier presented to the Steering Committee and answer the following questions in relation to each:

- Would you like to see this strategy implemented in Renville County?
- Do you believe that Renville County can successfully implement this strategy?

The second objective was to present the results of the Steering Committee’s work on Quality-of-life Initiatives (from Session 2) and to receive feedback and other input on these topics. The results of the Voice of the Community Meeting were added to those of the Key Success Factor Session and presented to the Steering Committee in a later session as the *Enhanced Strategy Report*. This report can be found in Section 2 in this plan.

**Session 5: Strategy and Quality-of-Life Initiatives Selection Session**

After the Steering Committee considered the “full body” of community and economic development considerations it made a final selection of strategies and *Quality-of-life Initiatives* in Session 5. For the strategies, this was accomplished during a detailed review of all strategy-related information from previous sessions. Where consensus could not immediately be reached about how to treat specific strategies, they were “held” and reviewed again later. This pattern continued until an acceptable subset of “selected” strategies was complete.

Additionally, the Steering Committee reviewed all previously considered *Quality-of-life Initiatives*, along with all related information collected in previous sessions. From the original list of topics, the Committee chose to “act on,” “write about” or “ignore” the concern or issue. Topics selected for action became full-fledged initiatives and were slated, along with the selected strategies, for further development in Session 6.

**Session 6: Assigning Essential Action Steps**

Deciding what to do is almost always easier than determining how to get things done. Making decisions about how to begin implementation of selected strategies and initiatives, about who will lead these efforts for each strategy/initiative and determining exactly what steps need to be taken along the way is challenging work in the Building Communities methodology. And, equally important (perhaps even more so) is community members assuming ownership of making these implementation decisions. The “Achilles heel” of many strategic plans is the disconnect between community members and their plan when implementation consists of little more than “the consultant says this is what we should do.”

With these points in mind, during Session 6, each selected strategy and initiative was individually assigned to Steering Committee members or community organizations to act as “lead.” Committee members were then
introduced to an online tool designed by Building Communities to help them identify *Essential Action Steps* (EASs) for each strategy/initiative and “Tasks” for each EAS. Essentially, designated Steering Committee members were assigned to detail “who will do what by when, and with what resources” for each strategy and initiative. This was no small task. The Steering Committee’s work, together with all their input earlier in Plan Week (and that of the broader community) constitute the bulk—and certainly the “meat”—of this strategic plan. Building Communities takes great pride in being able to work with and engage great people in accomplishing such a huge task. We applaud you all!

**Session 7: Elevator Speech Session**

The final session returned to the heart of the matter: why are we doing strategic planning in the first place? Steering Committee members were asked to reflect on why they care about their community and what they desire for the future. During this time, the group explored and discussed what is unique about Renville County and what they expect as a result of conducting the strategic planning process. The result of this last session became the opening message in the plan and makes a unique statement about the heart of the community and what to expect in the plan—and during the years to come.

**Objectivity of Planning Methodology**

Great care was taken during Plan Week to avoid traditional strategic planning pitfalls. One of the most common of these pitfalls is the tendency in communities for the “loudest voice” or “most important person in the community” to dominate discussions and to silence (intentionally or otherwise) those who might disagree or, quite frankly, have better ideas. The Building Communities methodology used by Renville County employed a system which collected participants’ public responses to important questions anonymously in real-time. Because initial responses were given privately and silently, results were very likely genuine and representative of participants’ true positions. This ensured that discussions were fruitful, and that the issues, initiatives and concerns discussed were representative of the group rather than reflective of the opinion of one or two people. In other words, this provision for anonymity made what is, by its nature, very subjective work as objective as possible.

**Conclusion**

Renville County demonstrated excellent commitment to this planning process. Not only did the Steering Committee strongly engage with the seven-session Plan Week, but the community turnout for the Voice of the Community session was the second highest per capita turnout of the 15 Plan Weeks held to date.

The Steering Committee is set to systematically address the action steps identified in this plan. By doing so, significant momentum will be built for the implementation of all of the strategies and initiatives identified in the plan.
Section 2:

Plan Week Results
Plan Week Results

Overview

To gather the information from which to begin formulating Renville County’s strategic plan, the Steering Committee participated in a multi-session planning process called Plan Week, which is outlined in detail in Section 1 of this plan. During these sessions, the Steering Committee considered 25 specific community and economic development strategies and a community-generated list of initiatives to improve Renville County’s quality of life. The community at large was also invited to consider and provide input about these same strategies and initiatives. At the conclusion of Plan Week, the Steering Committee selected the following strategies for implementation in Renville County:

- Attracting Government Funding
- Attracting Government Jobs
- Business Recruitment
- Business Retention and Expansion
- Downtown Development
- Energy Development
- Health Care
- Infrastructure Development
- Local/Regional Tourism
- Pass-through Visitor Services
- Value-added Agriculture

In addition, these Quality-of-life Initiatives were selected for advancement:

- Affordable Housing
- Recreation Opportunities for Youth, Including Swimming
- Emergency Medical Services
- Road Maintenance
- Airport Improvements
Strategy Selection Process

As mentioned briefly in Section 1, the Renville County Steering Committee participated in an objective assessment of the most viable economic development strategies for a given community—the Key Success Factor Analysis. Using this rating and scoring system, the Steering Committee considered a host of strategy-specific Key Success Factors, rating Renville County’s comparative advantage for each factor, relative to communities of a similar size.

Each of the Key Success Factors was scored on a scale of ‘0’ to ‘4’. Where the Steering Committee determined that Renville County has a significant comparative advantage relative to its competition, that factor was scored a ‘4’. Where a particular Key Success Factor was determined to be relatively absent in Renville County, it was given a score of ‘0’. Intermediate scores from ‘1’ to ‘3’ were given for factors in the middle of the range.

The scores provided by the Steering Committee were then integrated with each of the 25 strategies on a weighted basis. The result is the Prioritized Strategy Report to the right, which presents all 25 strategies, ranked by Building Communities according to the likelihood of successful implementation.

This initial Prioritized Strategy Report provided the Steering Committee with a solid foundation from which it could begin considering which of the 25 strategies the community should ultimately pursue. As the Building Communities approach recognizes that making wise choices in representative government requires not only capable leaders but an involved citizenry, the views of the community were also sought, in order that the collective voice of the community could be heard and given weight in the decision-making process. This began in the Voice of the Community Meeting in which the community at large was asked whether or not it would like to see the community advance each of the 25 strategies, and whether or not it believes the community could successfully do so.
The results of the *Voice of the Community Meeting* were then weighed, factored and combined with the results of the *Key Success Factor Analysis* to produce the *Enhanced Strategy Report*. This report provided the Steering Committee with a more complete view about the desires and confidence level of both leaders and citizens with respect to each of the 25 potential strategies. This information, along with the *Prioritized Strategy Report*, served as the foundation for the final strategy selection process. In addition, before strategies were actually selected, the Steering Committee was asked to assess the capacity of the community to carry out both general and specific community and economic development activities. This was done during the *Community Organizer Assessment* session during *Plan Week*. The recommendations that resulted from that session will help the community refine and increase its capacity to work together and succeed as it begins implementing the strategic plan.

With these various analyses and assessments in place, the Steering Committee’s task was to choose the strategies which the community would ultimately advance. Consideration of the Prioritized Strategy Report yielded an initial selection of the “most viable” strategies. The Steering Committee then considered the Enhanced Strategy Report and reviewed strategies one-by-one until the final list of 11 strategies was selected.

The challenge was to keep the number of strategies to a manageable number. Although the county has relatively high capacity because of its commitment to its Job Development Authority, the Steering Committee members still realize it is a rural county that relies heavily on a small group of volunteers to accomplish its civic goals.

The list of 11 selected strategies was longer than originally envisioned by some of the Committee members but ultimately the Committee embraced it as being in the best interest of the county.
Importance of Recommendations

The Building Communities methodology results in two types of recommendations: 1) *Essential Action Steps* associated with the selected community and economic development strategies and *Quality-of-life Initiatives*; and 2) organizational capacity recommendations generated by the *Community Organizer Assessment*.

Combined, these two elements generate a substantial number of recommendations and actions the community should take in order to successfully implement its selected strategies.

However, the results of the *Community Organizer Assessment* should be seen as supporting recommendations. In other words, it is the *Essential Action Steps* that should be the primary focus, with the recommendations provided through the *Community Organizer Assessment* viewed more as a “tune-up” for the assigned organizations—and the community as a whole—to get the work done. The recommendations of the Community Organizer follow the Selected Strategies section of this plan.

While it is recommended that the Steering Committee review the *Essential Action Steps* on a monthly basis, it may only be necessary to review the *Community Organizer Assessment* recommendations on a quarterly or semi-annual basis.

SWOT Analysis

Overall SWOT Summary

The Building Communities economic development strategic planning approach does not utilize a conventional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis as a starting point for the process. Instead, it presents *Key Success Factors* for community and economic development.

The local assessment of the relative comparative advantage of each of the *Key Success Factors*, in effect, yields a SWOT analysis based on these seven categories:

- Assets
- Capital
- Expertise
- Government
- Infrastructure
- Labor
- Location
The table below presents a brief description of each category and the average score of the community in each of those categories.

The Key Success Factor scores by category are middle-of-the-pack scores compared to the Vision West ND region as a whole, and relatively high for a rural community overall.

The category scores range from a low of 1.0 for Labor (the rating that almost all western North Dakota counties have), to 2.8 for Government (forecasting good teamwork and cooperation in implementing the plan).

In addition to the high Government category score, the score for the Capital category is impressively high.

Note that a score of 2.0 is average. A score of 2.8, or 70% of 4, indicates that the factors in that particular category are sufficiently high to predict success for strategies that depend heavily on the category.

Also notable in this chart is the 1.5 score for Infrastructure. This score endorses efforts by communities in the county to seek the financial resources necessary to improve the water, sewer and roads systems that support the existing population, as well as the forecasted growth in Renville County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Success Factor Categories</th>
<th>AVG Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assets</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry-specific or activity-specific conditions or dynamics critical to certain strategies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business debt and equity funding as well as consistent funding for development organizations to succeed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The skills, connections and abilities of local professionals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The citizenry and government agencies/committees, whose decisions and opinions shape the community's actions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The land, buildings and infrastructure necessary to advance many of the business development strategies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The labor force of a community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The relative proximity of the community to the marketplace.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scores reflect the community's relative capacity in each category on a scale from 0 to 4.
Assets

The “Assets” category generally presents Key Success Factors unique to particular strategies. For example, the “availability of energy resources” is a unique Key Success Factor to the Energy Development strategy.

Scores in the Assets category are evenly split, with half being above average and half being at or below average. The average score for the category is exactly in the middle at 2.0.

Scores in this category generally serve to “rule in” or “rule out” strategies more than the other six category scores.

A close examination of the scores in this table reveal the likelihood of successful implementation of many of the related strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Success Factors - Assets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability of energy resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local recreational and visitor attractions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to large volumes of agricultural commodities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulation from industrial business annoyances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality residential neighborhoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financially sound existing health care facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to raw materials and minerals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to urban population and workforce centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizable central business district/downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient base of local businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient local entrepreneurial base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate, long-term analysis of infrastructure needs and costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available, desirable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desirable climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of recreational amenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High availability of urban services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing or prospective cultural attraction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expandable educational institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity and access to forests and forest products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to fisheries commodities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to nationally recognized attractions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to travel routes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Capital

Access to—and consistent availability of—capital is significant in two general respects. First, businesses must be able to secure sufficient debt and/or equity capital for their formation, operations, retention and expansion. Second, development organizations must have reliable sources of funding in order to regularly engage in activities consistent with their mission.

For businesses, access to capital is the lifeblood of the business itself. For small businesses that can demonstrate loan repayment capability, programs to provide such capital can be very traditional (bank and credit union lending), or they can be government-supported loan, loan guarantee or credit enhancement measures designed to supplement traditional lending.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Success Factors - Capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to small business financing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to large-scale capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to long-term infrastructure loans and grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of appropriated funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive recruitment incentives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated local financial resources for staffing recruiters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local funding for downtown development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient marketing, promotion, or public relations budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to secure power-purchase agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to secure long-term contracts for forest materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For development organizations, reliable funding is necessary so the board and staff can engage primarily in activities consistent with the organizational mission, rather than regularly chasing funding sources for the preservation of the organization itself.

Eight of the 10 scores in the Capital category score a 3, indicating the county has good availability of funding for business development, as well as for community development operations. The two scores at or below average are less significant to the specific strategies selected by Renville County.

These high Capital scores match the “money” scores in the other Vision West ND region, although the lack of a 4 score shows a slightly more conservative view of funding availability in Renville County versus many of the other counties.

**Expertise**

In this information age, it should be no surprise that one of the broadest and most important categories of Key Success Factors is expertise. The successful implementation of virtually every strategy requires expertise from a broad array of professionals in any community.

Not only must sufficient expertise be possessed by the individuals on the front lines of community and business development, but such capability is also important in various professional sectors of the local economy, for the advancement of targeted tourism and downtown development strategies and in the professionals backing up the front-line community and business developers (city managers, public works directors, county commissioners, etc.).

Scores in the Expertise category are evenly split with the vast majority of scores being 3s and 1s. For such a rural county, these scores are respectable, and reflect the commitment the county has made to its Job Development Authority. Steering Committee members were positive about the local structure and staff who increased tenure will very likely raise these scores.

In general, the high-scoring Expertise measures reflect the bread-and-butter of community and economic development activities, while the low-scoring items are more related to targeted economic development practices that may be less vital to the county.
Government

Increasingly people argue that “if only government would get out of the way” our communities and businesses would thrive. In reality, however, it is through government (federal, state and especially local) that key strategies are envisioned, defined and implemented.

Governmental bodies not only establish policies and funding programs, but establish cultures and attitudes that are either pro-development or anti-development. Strong collaboration between government and the private and volunteer sectors is an essential ingredient for success.

Fully 13 of the 15 Government Key Success Factors for Renville County scored a 3, indicating that a good internal relationship exists within the community, and the posture of the county is very positive.

People in Renville County believe that it is all about working together and making their communities all they can be. The good turnout during the Voice of the Community meeting underscored this dynamic.

Infrastructure

In order for communities to be attractive and appropriate for the implementation of many strategies, they must possess sufficient land, infrastructure, buildings and housing. Building Communities uses the term infrastructure in a very broad sense in this context (beyond just sewer, water and power facilities).

While the scores for the Infrastructure category were low (similar to virtually every other county in the Vision West ND region), there is one surprising score: the availability of land. In many communities, industrial land is in short supply due to the economic expansion of the region.

The communities in Renville County realize they must continue to invest in their infrastructure in order to meet the needs of existing and prospective residents.
Labor
It takes a deeper bench than simply the “experts” to successfully implement many strategies. The availability and skills of the local labor force are critical to the implementation of many strategies.

Not surprisingly, labor is in short supply in Renville County. The dynamic is somewhat different, and perhaps more challenging, in Renville County because the inflationary pressures on housing and other cost-of-living increases have been apparent but the county is not experiencing the influx of high-wage oil industry jobs similar to that of counties to the west and south.

Location
The location of the community is of great significance to many strategies. For example, communities strategically located to provide access to markets have a comparative advantage versus relatively isolated communities.

The Steering Committee ranked the county relatively high for its location in terms of accessing the markets and being close to scheduled air service (45 minutes away in Minot). The growth of the county also might place it in a strong position to expand the local health care clinic.

The Steering Committee took a very realistic and sober view regarding the potential for location for large-scale development such as a transportation distribution center, as the county is not on the interstate system.
Section 3: Selected Strategies

Attracting Government Funding
Attracting Government Jobs
Business Recruitment
Business Retention and Expansion
Downtown Development
Energy Development
Health Care
Infrastructure Development
Local/Regional Tourism
Pass-through Visitor Services
Value-added Agriculture
Renville County's Selected Strategies

Ultimately, the Steering Committee recommended the advancement of eleven strategies to enhance the economic condition and overall quality of life for Renville County.

On the following pages, each strategy is listed and described. In addition, the overall objective of the strategy is presented as well as the strategy-specific results of the Key Success Factor Analysis. The Essential Action Steps associated with each strategy are also listed.

Two figures lead out on each strategy's page—“Score” and “Rank.”

Score - This represents each strategy’s overall score on a basis of 100 points, and is the result of the Steering Committee's collective responses to the Key Success Factor Analysis in the first session of Plan Week. A score of 85 or higher indicates a strategy that is highly recommended for advancement. A score of 70 to 84 indicates a strategy that should be seriously considered for advancement. A score below 70 indicates that there likely exist serious impediments to successful implementation of the strategy.

Rank - This represents the position of each strategy among all the strategies, based on its score.

The strategies selected by the Renville County Steering Committee are:

- Attracting Government Funding
- Attracting Government Jobs
- Business Recruitment
- Business Retention and Expansion
- Downtown Development
- Energy Development
- Health Care
- Infrastructure Development
- Local/Regional Tourism
- Pass-through Visitor Services
- Value-added Agriculture

Strategies not selected include:

- Attracting Lone Eagles
- Attracting Retirees
- Bedroom Community
- Business Cultivation
- Cultural Tourism
- Destination Tourism
- Education Development
- Entrepreneurial Development
- Environmental Restoration
- Leading-edge Development
- Transportation Distribution Center
- Value-added Fisheries
- Value-added Forest Products
- Value-added Mining
Recommendations for Implementation

Although strategic planning has been done previously in communities in Renville County, this effort represents the first time such work has been done county-wide. It is intended that the implementation of this plan benefit all of the communities in the county. As such, the Steering Committee was recruited and appointed with this broader purpose in mind.

In general, the Steering Committee should meet monthly and hear reports from its members about the progress in advancing the Essential Action Steps for each strategy.

In addition to the monthly meeting, the Steering Committee should hold a meeting approximately every nine months to consider every Essential Action Step in a systematic fashion. For each step: 1) completion of the step should be noted; 2) progress should be noted; 3) efforts to restart the effort should be planned; or 4) the particular step should be recognized as no longer relevant. This systematic approach will ensure that nothing falls through the cracks during strategy implementation.
Selected Strategy:

Attracting Government Funding
Strategy Summary

Communities can create jobs and improve their overall quality of life through either a onetime or consistent approach of attracting government appropriations and grants.

Hundreds of state and federal agencies manage grant programming and/or legislative earmarks (funding directives) which can be utilized to complete projects for a wide variety of purposes. States or localities with congressman/legislators participating on powerful appropriations committees are particularly well positioned to benefit from this strategy.

While the vast majority of such funding either goes to formula-based entitlement programs or for competitive grant processes, a small percentage of the funding is directed by state and federal appropriators, thus bypassing the formula or competitive approach.

Often maligned as “pork barrel spending”, this strategy may face local opposition by individuals that are principled against such redistribution of government funding.

Voice of the Community Survey Results

During the Voice of the Community Meeting the community at large was asked to weigh in on:

- whether or not they wanted to see Renville County implement this strategy, and
- whether or not they believed Renville County could successfully implement it.

Below is a summary of community responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would you like to see Renville County implement this strategy?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you believe that Renville County can successfully implement this strategy?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objectives of Strategy Implementation

The fourth highest scoring strategy, Attracting Government Funding, was selected in order to help implement many of the other strategies.

Communities in Renville County have projects and strategies designed to meet the needs of its existing population, as well now as for the expected growth of the county due to the expansion of the oil industry.

The county is poised to be successful with this strategy because it has established a Job Development Authority, which provides funding for a staff position responsible for seeking grant and loan funding for priorities throughout the county.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

Every Key Success Factor for this strategy scored a 3, indicating there are no serious challenges to this strategy, and that everything is in place for a positive outcome.

Having said this, even despite North Dakota having record financial surpluses, the statewide demands for funding still require very competitive funding proposals in order to be successful.

### Key Success Factor Report - Attracting Government Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON</th>
<th>Slight Comparative Advantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Comparative Advantages</td>
<td>Availability of appropriated funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local ability to identify and advance a funding proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong community support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong state and/or federal legislative delegation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Entries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Strategy:

Attracting Government Jobs
Strategy Summary

In most communities, particularly rural communities, government job wage levels far exceed median (often also referred to as “family wage”) income levels. As such, increasing the number of government jobs can provide a local economic stimulus.

In general, federal jobs pay more than state jobs; state jobs pay more than local government jobs; and local government jobs pay more than the community’s average wages.

One significant factor in considering a government job attraction strategy is the attitude of the local community toward such a strategy. Communities with a more conservative political viewpoint may shun such a strategy as being inconsistent with core beliefs.

Another key consideration is the trend line for the total number of government jobs. In times of economic recession, for example, many government jobs may be eliminated. On the contrary, during good economic times—or perhaps when a state is responding to a policy change that increases government jobs in one or more specific departments—communities can benefit by targeted government office recruitment strategies.

Communities should also consider their strategic location with respect to the Federal Government’s (or State’s) desire to locate jobs in a key graphically-strategic manner.

Voice of the Community Survey Results

During the Voice of the Community Meeting the community at large was asked to weigh in on 1) whether or not they wanted to see Renville County implement this strategy and 2) whether or not they believed Renville County could successfully implement it. Below is a summary of community responses:

![Graph showing community responses](image)
Objectives of Strategy Implementation

Renville County selected Attracting Government Jobs with a singular focus in mind: border agents.

This strategic selection is simple—border agents have to live somewhere and why not Renville County? Why not make a statement that the county values these positions and will welcome additional government workers to the county.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

The Key Success Factors are generally positive for this strategy. In fact, a close examination of the lower-scoring factors adds to the underlying logic supporting the selection of this strategy, as the singular focus on welcoming border agents makes sense for a county on the Canadian border.

Key Success Factor Report - Attracting Government Jobs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRNGTHS TO BUILD UPON</th>
<th>Slight Comparative Advantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Comparative Advantages</td>
<td>Capable, experienced economic development professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Availability of land for business prospects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Projected growth in government budgets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local government support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong community support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Comparative Advantages</td>
<td>No Entries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME</th>
<th>Major Comparative Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</td>
<td>No Entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advantageous location for government or education expansion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable state policies with respect to office locations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of local buildings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Strategy:

Business Recruitment
Strategy Summary
Perhaps the most widely recognized economic development strategy is business recruitment, which is the act of proactively soliciting existing businesses located out-of-region to expand or relocate into a community.

Business recruitment can be very advantageous for local communities desiring to establish new jobs, focus on family wage jobs, expand the local tax base—and generally enhance community vitality.

However, business recruitment can have drawbacks. Communities that do not have the desire or infrastructure capacity for growth may view business recruitment negatively.

Communities that rely on business recruitment as a substantial component of their economic development strategy should view their effort as a long-term endeavor. Frequently, communities can go months (even years) without tangible results. This does not necessarily mean their efforts are poorly planned or executed. The fact is, there are far more communities chasing new businesses than there are businesses looking for new communities.

Business recruitment activity can also be costly. Advertising, public relations, attendance at industry trade shows, website development and maintenance, and informational and promotional materials are expensive.

Voice of the Community Survey Results
During the Voice of the Community Meeting the community at large was asked to weigh in on 1) whether or not they wanted to see Renville County implement this strategy and 2) whether or not they believed Renville County could successfully implement it. Below is a summary of community responses:
Objectives of Strategy Implementation

Although business recruitment is considered by Building Communities to be one of the most complex strategies, Renville County could be successful implementing it if: 1) a subset of possible business targets is determined and 2) the county makes the best use of its Job Development Authority.

Having the JDA creates not only a position, but a board of volunteers that can work business development leads and support the community coordinator position is fundamental to success.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

The Key Success Factors for this strategy are surprisingly positive, with 11 of the 17 factors scoring a 3.

The typical “North Dakota challenges” (tight labor supply, few industrial buildings and strained infrastructure) show up at the bottom of the KSF list but are offset by many strengths in the county.

North Dakota is benefitted by the availability of funding for business development in two ways: money for business and funding for local development organizations.

Finally, one of the biggest factors for this strategy is expertise. With the JDA in place, the county is likely to grow its capacity with the increased tenure of its staff.

### Key Success Factor Report - Business Recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON</th>
<th>Slight Comparative Advantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Comparative Advantages</td>
<td>Access to large-scale capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dedicated local financial resources for staffing recruiters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proximity and access to markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proximity to scheduled air service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to compete in a global market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capable, experienced economic development professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competitive recruitment incentives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Availability of land for business prospects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong community support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support from local businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local government support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</th>
<th>Major Comparative Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sophisticated use of the internet for marketing</td>
<td>No Entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with site selectors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local, available, low-skill labor pool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to network and attend relevant trade shows</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of local buildings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of local infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local, available, high-skill labor pool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Strategy:

Business Retention & Expansion
Strategy Summary

It is widely agreed by most economic development professionals that opportunities for job retention and job expansion with existing companies exceed the number of opportunities for recruiting new businesses to their communities.

Communities can employ a variety of approaches to foster the expansion of existing companies. One of these methods is to conduct a Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) program. The BR&E approach utilizes a systematic outreach to existing companies to identify their needs, challenges and opportunities. Several programs are available that can be adapted for the specific needs of a particular community.

Benefits of the BR&E approach include:

- Identifying opportunities to encourage the expansion of new companies;
- Identifying opportunities to avert pending job losses or business closures;
- Ability to take a community-wide approach to addressing business needs;
- A systematic way to collect information;
- Ability to immediately identify solutions for businesses;
- Opportunity to engage civic groups or volunteers to partner in the work;
- Building good public relations for municipalities and economic development organizations; and
- Identifying vendor and subcontractor business networking opportunities.

By meeting the needs of existing businesses, the stage is also better set for successful business recruitment efforts. Potential new businesses to a new community may investigate the satisfaction of existing businesses, and base a portion of their business location decision on such satisfaction levels.

Voice of the Community Survey Results

During the Voice of the Community Meeting the community at large was asked to weigh in on 1) whether or not they wanted to see Renville County implement this strategy and 2) whether or not they believed Renville County could successfully implement it. Below is a summary of community responses:
Objectives of Strategy Implementation

This strategy is almost an automatic selection for any county, especially one that has economic development staff in place. The benefits from a simple but disciplined outreach to the existing business community generally has big payoffs in terms of community attitude. When specific opportunities for the retention and/or expansion of jobs is surfaced, everyone wins.

This strategy can have county-wide implementation and benefit, and can boost the efforts of the JDA.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

Many factors are in place for the successful implementation of this strategy.

While similar limitations (labor, buildings and infrastructure) for this strategy, as is the case for others, a very targeted business-by-business approach will likely yield opportunities to facilitate the growth and development of area businesses.

**Key Success Factor Report - Business Retention and Expansion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON</th>
<th>Slight Comparative Advantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Comparative Advantages</td>
<td>Sufficient base of local businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Entries</td>
<td>Access to small business financing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to compete in a global market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capable, experienced economic development professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Availability of land for business prospects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong relations between economic development organization and local businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local pro-business climate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME</th>
<th>Major Comparative Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</td>
<td>No Entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from local education professionals at all levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local, available, low-skill labor pool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of local buildings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of local infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local, available, high-skill labor pool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Strategy:

Downtown Development
Strategy Summary

Most communities have a central business district commonly referred to as their “downtown”. Frequently, this area is recognized as the community’s business center, and can become the emotional heart of the community.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation created the National Main Street Center approach which recognizes a four-point method for downtown advocacy:

- Organization (volunteers, staffing, board of directors)
- Promotion (events, public relations, advertising)
- Design (building and amenity stabilization, preservation, beautification)
- Economic Restructuring (supporting existing businesses; promoting new businesses)

Often ignored is the large employment centers represented by downtowns. While most downtown business activity is in response to serving other businesses and residents, it still represents a vital economic sector for most communities.

By capitalizing on the four-point approach described above, jobs are created, communities have increased vitality, and a sense of pride and optimism is maintained.

Voice of the Community Survey Results

During the Voice of the Community Meeting the community at large was asked to weigh in on 1) whether or not they wanted to see Renville County implement this strategy and 2) whether or not they believed Renville County could successfully implement it. Below is a summary of community responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would you like to see Renville County implement this strategy?</th>
<th>Do you believe that Renville County can successfully implement this strategy?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Bar Chart] (94% Yes, 6% No)</td>
<td>![Bar Chart] (82% Yes, 0% No)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score: 63  Rank: 9
Objectives of Strategy Implementation

The City of Mohall’s downtown is a shining example of the aesthetic improvements that can materialize when the downtown receives a focused development approach.

For Renville County, downtown development will likely not require a separate downtown development organization. Rather, it will likely require an increase in the scope of services provided by the JDA. In fact, one of the discussions during Plan Week concerned the need to increase the hours of the JDA coordinator in order to address the rising demands described this strategic plan. Certainly, the implementation of a downtown development strategy benefitting all of the communities would create the need for increased staffing hours.

While the state does not yet have a downtown development program, there are conferences and training sessions available from state downtown development enthusiasts. Renville County should learn more about these opportunities and also consider the programming recommendations from the National Main Street Center.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

The Key Success Factors are positive for this strategy, and like some of the other strategies, the payoff comes from examining the low-scoring factors.

The first low score, the lack of organization and staff focused on downtown development, can be resolved by directing extra resources to the JDA to focus on this strategy. The factor that scored 0 can be addressed by simply examining the information on-line about the four-point approach to downtown development.

### Key Success Factor Report - Downtown Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON</th>
<th>Slight Comparative Advantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Comparative Advantages</td>
<td>Recognizable central business district/downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local funding for downtown development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local government support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Active engagement of downtown building and business owners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME</th>
<th>Major Comparative Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</td>
<td>Implementation of national Main Street Four-Point Approach ™</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown organization and staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Strategy:

Energy Development
Section 3 - Selected Strategies

Energy Development

Strategy Summary

The current and forecasted shortages in energy resources, and more specifically renewable energy resources, present communities with an opportunity to recruit or locally establish new energy production facilities.

Renewable energy options include wind, solar, biomass, bio-energy, geothermal, and hydropower.

Both the federal government and many states have approved new policies and incentives to foster the development of the renewable energy industry.

While larger, established companies may have an edge in capitalizing on many of these business opportunities, viable start-up options exist based upon proximity to renewable energy supplies and local market demand.

For many states and communities, traditional non-renewable energy development and production using coal, oil or natural gas has significant potential. In these cases, proximity to the energy resource is not only necessary, but can become the catalyst in creating a local industry with or without significant local community advocacy.

America’s commitment to energy independence is generally seen as dependent upon all forms of energy development—both renewable and non-renewable. At the same time, increasing emphasis on energy conservation—efficiency though green building practices and retrofitting is becoming a more common element in public policy supporting that development.

Voice of the Community Survey Results

During the Voice of the Community Meeting the community at large was asked to weigh in on 1) whether or not they wanted to see Renville County implement this strategy and 2) whether or not they believed Renville County could successfully implement it. Below is a summary of community responses:
Objectives of Strategy Implementation

The impact of the growth of the energy industry in North Dakota has thus far had more of an indirect, than direct, effect on Renville County. The indirect effect is largely the increased prices for housing.

Renville County wants to shape the effects of the growth of this industry should the impacts become more direct. There was some discussion during Plan Week that concluded Renville County may never experience significant direct effects.

The key for this strategy is to define the outcomes being sought.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

It is not a surprise when any county in western North Dakota has highly scored Key Success Factors for the Energy Development strategy. This is certainly the case for Renville County.

With the exception of the county being power-transmission constrained, all of the factors are positive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Success Factor Report - Energy Development</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Comparative Advantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of energy resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slight Comparative Advantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to large-scale capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to build a team comprised of energy-development experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive state energy policies and incentives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capable, experienced economic development professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Comparative Disadvantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to transmission lines with excess capacity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Strategy:

Health Care
Strategy Summary

Communities that have established notable centers of excellence for broad-based health care or specific health care specialties benefit from an unusually large cadre of well-paid professionals.

Communities such as Rochester, Minnesota, home of the Mayo Clinic, for example, benefit substantially from having a high health care location factor. (“Location factors” are an economic term referring to a high density of employment in an industry within a specific region.)

National trends have a significant impact on health care, especially in rural communities. Mergers and acquisitions create a dynamic where there are fewer health care conglomerates controlling hospitals dispersed throughout the country.

Additionally, federal policies on Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements have created a significant financial challenge for rural hospitals.

Communities desiring to pursue a health care-based business development strategy should begin with a very objective analysis of the true competitive position of their local hospital and medical community. While every community likes to boast that they have competitive superiority with respect to health care professionals and facilities, a realistic assessment may prove otherwise.

It may be more realistic to target a specialty area of health care. For example, many rural hospitals have targeted orthopedic care based upon the superiority of one or more orthopedic surgeons and the investment in state-of-the-art orthopedic assessment and surgery equipment.

Voice of the Community Survey Results

During the Voice of the Community Meeting the community at large was asked to weigh in on 1) whether or not they wanted to see Renville County implement this strategy and 2) whether or not they believed Renville County could successfully implement it. Below is a summary of community responses:

![Bar Chart: Would you like to see Renville County implement this strategy?](#)

- **Yes:** 94%
- **No:** 6%

![Bar Chart: Do you believe that Renville County can successfully implement this strategy?](#)

- **Yes:** 78%
- **No:** 11%
Objectives of Strategy Implementation

While Renville County does not have a hospital, it does have a health care clinic that has been expanding its services over the past several years. In fact, during the Voice of the Community meeting, a local physician assistant indicated he believed an additional physician assistance/nurse practitioner will need to be recruited to the community in order to meet the increased needs for medical services.

While some of the increased demand for medical services comes from the slight recent increase in population, much of it is a consequence of the positive reputation the clinic is earning from within and outside of the county.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

With the exception of the constrained labor force, all of the factors for this strategy scored a 3, indicating that the health care leadership and services are very sound.

Key Success Factor Report - Health Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON</th>
<th>Slight Comparative Advantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Comparative Advantages</td>
<td>Financially sound existing health care facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sufficient marketing, promotion, or public relations budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prospect of an expanded geographic market for health care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competent, strategic-minded hospital and health-care executives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Existing excellence in local health care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong community support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Comparative Advantages</td>
<td>Financially sound existing health care facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Entries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME</th>
<th>Major Comparative Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</td>
<td>No Entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local, available, low-skill labor pool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local, available, high-skill labor pool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Strategy:

Infrastructure Development
Section 3 - Selected Strategies

Infrastructure Development

Strategy Summary

The term infrastructure describes all of the basic utilities and public services needed by communities and businesses. Infrastructure includes, but is not limited to, power, water, sewer, storm sewer, street/roads, and telecommunications.

Although “infrastructure development” is an economic development strategy, it is typically viewed of a means-to-an-end in terms of providing the necessary input for other strategies to be successful.

Infrastructure development is considered an economic development strategy in-and-of-itself in that it is a long-term commitment toward the betterment of communities and the businesses that they support.

Communities need to examine the infrastructure requirements both of their current residents, as well as their projection of future residential, commercial, and industrial demands.

The federal government, and most state governments, provide long-term, low-interest debt financing to advance eligible infrastructure projects. At times, particularly when immediate job creation opportunities arise, grant funding is available for infrastructure development.

Communities pursuing an infrastructure development strategy should strategically assess their needs, and engineer solutions consistent with long-term projections.

Voice of the Community Survey Results

During the Voice of the Community Meeting the community at large was asked to weigh in on 1) whether or not they wanted to see Renville County implement this strategy and 2) whether or not they believed Renville County could successfully implement it. Below is a summary of community responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would you like to see Renville County implement this strategy?</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you believe that Renville County can successfully implement this strategy?</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objectives of Strategy Implementation

Renville County and its communities can make the case that substantial investment is needed in infrastructure in order to meet the needs of the current and projected population.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

The close-knit county will be able to work together to prioritize and seek funding for its top infrastructure needs.

Renville County is eligible for oil impact funding, although the impacts from the energy industry are not as widespread as they are in other counties. Nonetheless, addressing the impacts to sewer, water, and road systems is a high priority.

Key Success Factor Report - Infrastructure Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Comparative Advantages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Entries</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Entries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Strategy:

Local/Regional Tourism
Strategy Summary

While most communities do not have a destination attraction in their backyard, they may have sufficient recreational or historical amenities that can draw visitors within a one-day drive and thus stimulate the local economy.

Many communities have successful weekend events designed to celebrate the community’s history and/or culture. These events have potential to draw people from a county or two away.

By investing in the local tourism “product” and marketing efforts, tourism expenditures can be maximized.

Communities should understand that employing a local/regional tourism strategy is not an economic panacea. Such a strategy can have a modest economic impact, however, and bolster community pride.

Voice of the Community Survey Results

During the Voice of the Community Meeting the community at large was asked to weigh in on 1) whether or not they wanted to see Renville County implement this strategy and 2) whether or not they believed Renville County could successfully implement it. Below is a summary of community responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would you like to see Renville County implement this strategy?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you believe that Renville County can successfully implement this strategy?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objectives of Strategy Implementation

If ever a discussion in a public meeting had an impact on the decision by a governmental body to act, it may have been the response by the county to the discussion during the Voice of the Community session about the importance and future of the county’s Mouse River Park.

Ever since the disastrous flood of June 2011, Renville County has sought to rebuild the park. For a county that desires to welcome people with its arms wide open, the best “meeting space” in the county has been this very cherished park. Yet since the flood and the beginning efforts by the county to rebuild the park to be better than ever, the county has received very little public input about the desire for the park—until Plan Week.

The people attending the meeting were unanimous and very clear that the county should rebuild the park, leading County Commissioner Joe Genareo to proclaim the park reconstruction would proceed full blast. Commissioner Genareo understands the importance of the park but wanted to make sure the residents did as well. They do.

The park reconstruction leads the list of action steps for this strategy.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

The Key Success Factors for this strategy point to the reverse of an age-old question: If you build it, will they come? The county is dedicated to this strategy, with the Mouse River Park reconstruction leading the list. There are additional attractions in the county, as well.

But just building the attractions does not ensure that out-of-county visitors will come to Renville County. The low-scoring factor points to this, with the need to build more expertise in promoting the county to the region.

### Key Success Factor Report - Local/Regional Tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON</th>
<th>CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Comparative Advantages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local recreational and visitor attractions</td>
<td>Sufficient marketing, promotion, or public relations budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong community support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slight Comparative Advantages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major Comparative Disadvantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative sophistication in coordinating and marketing local events</td>
<td>No Entries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Strategy:

Pass-through Visitor Services
Strategy Summary

Depending on a community’s proximity to major interstates, highways, scenic byways, and other significant travel routes, communities can enjoy the benefits of non-destination visitor expenditures.

Travel expenditures can be categorized as destination travel expenditures or pass-through travel expenditures. Unlike destination travel, pass-through travel simply represents the activity that a traveler conducts on the way to their destination. These expenditures are typically fuel, meals, and sometimes lodging.

Generally, these expenditures happen regardless of efforts made by local communities. Certain targeted efforts, however, can have a modest impact on pass-through visitor expenditure patterns:

- Signage on travel routes (freeways, highways, etc.)
- Community entrance beautification efforts
- Low-frequency AM Radio transmitters
- Hospitality training educating front-line workers about local visitor destinations

Voice of the Community Survey Results

During the Voice of the Community Meeting the community at large was asked to weigh in on 1) whether or not they wanted to see Renville County implement this strategy and 2) whether or not they believed Renville County could successfully implement it. Below is a summary of community responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would you like to see Renville County implement this strategy?</th>
<th>Do you believe that Renville County can successfully implement this strategy?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Graph 1" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Graph 2" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objectives of Strategy Implementation
The county has a strong desire to welcome tourists and passers-by, and the Pass-through Visitor Services strategy is precisely the approach the county desires to reach out to these people.

Currently, there is not a lot for pass through visitors to spend their money on. By focusing on the “tourism product” and then the “tourism pitch”, the county hopes to slow down the motorists and help existing businesses.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis
The simplest of the 25 strategies, Pass-through Visitor Services has only three Key Success Factors.

The list of factors highlights the fact that Renville County is not adjacent to a state or nationally designated travel route, so the area is not benefitted from outside promotion and marketing of such routes. Nonetheless, the county is benefitted by travellers along the route of the area.

### Key Success Factor Report - Pass-through Visitor Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON</th>
<th>CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Comparative Advantages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major Comparative Disadvantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Entries</td>
<td>Proximity to travel routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slight Comparative Advantages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local focus on revenues from visitors</td>
<td>Local, available, low-skill labor pool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local, available, high-skill labor pool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Strategy:

Value-added Agriculture
Value-added Agriculture

Section 3 - Selected Strategies

Strategy Summary

Counties—and frequently clusters of counties—may produce an inordinate amount of one or more agricultural products based upon competitive advantages such as soil types, climate, and elevation.

If sufficient volumes of individual raw materials are produced, communities may have an opportunity to “add value” to the raw commodities through processing. Examples include producing french fries from potatoes, sugar from sugar beets/sugar cane, steaks from cattle, and wine from grapes.

Advantages from value-added agricultural business include retaining profits and job-creation opportunities locally, providing jobs consistent with skill levels of the local labor force, and reinforcing the culture and economy of local communities.

Drawbacks from a value-added agriculture strategy typically include a high demand on local utilities (typically water, sewer, and power), frequently below-to-average wage levels, and sometimes undesirable wastewater and air emissions.

Voice of the Community Survey Results

During the Voice of the Community Meeting the community at large was asked to weigh in on 1) whether or not they wanted to see Renville County implement this strategy and 2) whether or not they believed Renville County could successfully implement it. Below is a summary of community responses:

Objectives of Strategy Implementation

The agriculture industry has formed the backbone of the local economy for over 100 years and always represents an opportunity for the civic sector to think creatively about how the community can work with producers to add value to their product before it leaves the county.
Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

With the exception of the basics of labor, land and buildings, the county does have great strengths with its agricultural commodities and the ability to transport those commodities to the marketplace.

**Key Success Factor Report - Value-added Agriculture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON</th>
<th>Slight Comparative Advantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Comparative Advantages</strong></td>
<td>Access to large-scale capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to large volumes of agricultural commodities</td>
<td>Proximity and access to markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to successfully market materials</td>
<td>Ability to understand industry trends and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slight Comparative Advantages</strong></td>
<td>Availability of land for business prospects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME</th>
<th>Major Comparative Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</strong></td>
<td>No Entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess water and sewer infrastructure capacity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local, available, low-skill labor pool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of local buildings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of local infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local, available, high-skill labor pool</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Section 4:
Quality-of-Life Initiatives
Summary

Although Quality-of-life Initiatives are not regarded as Building Communities strategies in traditional economic development strategic planning, the broadening of objectives from “economic development” to “quality-of-life” brings a new set of considerations for communities.

Quality-of-life Initiatives have been added to the traditional Building Communities approach and include the additional Key Success Factors and Essential Action Steps that this broader approach requires.

These initiatives are included, in part, to surface considerations encompassed in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Livability Principles (see table above).

Quality-of-life Initiatives differ from the traditional 25 strategies in that they encompass a critical set of disciplines and values (housing, transportation, and environmental quality). Discussions related to Quality-of-life Initiatives will be widely divergent from one community to the next, based upon the specific interests and opportunities of the communities themselves.

These broader considerations will help each community identify issues, challenges, opportunities, and potential development projects that can be supported by programs aimed at improving quality of life, as well as those that promote community and economic development.

Example Projects and Initiatives

- New or expanded transit services connecting housing to jobs and services
- Affordable housing development strategically situated to minimize traditional transportation time and costs
- Mixed-use development projects combining housing, services, and work opportunities
- Proactive zoning to facilitate growth
- Health and fitness walking path systems/promotional campaigns urging pedestrian and bicycle transportation activity
- Sustainable local foods initiatives Forest stewardship initiatives
• Energy conservation activities
• Establishment of arts and crafts coops
• Green jobs initiatives
• Strategic use of treated wastewater
• Development of Parks and Recreational Facilities

Potential Advantages to Implementing these Initiatives
• Improve local quality of life
• Long-term perspective on infrastructure investments
• Reduction of traffic congestion
• Upgrading historically blighted areas
• Air quality improvement
• Short-term job creation from development projects
• Forest sustainability
• Support for local farmers and growers
• Engagement of cross-section of local population focused on sustainability
• Support for other strategies related to community livability

Potential Drawbacks to Implementing these Initiatives
• Effort-to-visible-benefit ratio sometimes challenging
• Perception that local resources are being redirected to benign initiatives

Brief Overview of Selected Initiatives
The identification of the Quality-of-life Initiatives is begun by asking the Steering Committee members one question: “What is affecting the quality of life in your county?”

This open-ended question is designed to let the community decide what issues are the most important for community and economic development and overall livability.

The Steering Committee members started slowly, only focusing upon the lack of housing and how prices have increased in the county, putting pressure on existing residents.

Over the next hour, the Steering Committee members identified many issues. Community members added to this list during the Voice of the Community meeting. In total, the participants in the process identified the following issues:

• Affordable Housing
• Air and Water Quality
• Airport Expansion
• Child Care
• City and County Road Impacts
• Economic Conditions
• Emergency Medical Services
• Health Clinics
• Increased Crime
• Lack of Community Involvement/Community Engagement
• Lack of Retail and Services
• Limited Labor Force
• Loss of Local Middle Class
• Man Camps
• Mouse River Park
Section 4 - Quality-of-Life Initiatives

- Quiet Lifestyles Interrupted
- Reopening Community Pool
- School Issues
- Youth Opportunities

Affordable Housing. The escalation in local housing prices and rental rates has placed a great burden on many county residents. Added to this is the recent increase in fuel and food prices. Larger employers are forced to find creative solutions in order to support their employees. The school district, for example, purchased an apartment building in order to retain school teachers.

Mohall has a local housing authority that is working very diligently to build housing units. The volunteers supporting the authority are discovering the challenges of building affordable housing, given today’s housing construction costs.

Recreation Opportunities for Youth, Including Swimming. The leadership of the county would like to develop new facilities and programs to support the youth in the county. One of the most desired projects would be the re-establishment of the swimming pool in Mohall. Currently, improvements are being made to the pool in hopes that sufficient improvements can be made to reopen the pool.

Other priority projects might include new walking and running trails, bike trails and possibly reopening the theater in Sherwood (although the building is in exceptionally poor condition).

Emergency Medical Services. Pressures on the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system in Renville County are not acute but the pressures of growth are taking their toll. More and more, it is becoming difficult for people to afford to volunteer their time.

Everyone wants the best emergency care but such care requires investments in training and equipment. The 2013 North Dakota Legislative Session is likely to take up several bills related to Community Paramedics. Although under the Community Paramedic program the care provider does not have to be a Paramedic, the program would provide another funding source for the local ambulance service.

Road Maintenance. The county is facing new pressures on their road system with the oil field traffic beginning to pick up. One positive development is new housing developers who are contributing to a road improvement fund that grows as new houses are being built and sold.

Airport Improvements. One significant effort is improvements to the Mohall airport, with new plane hangers being built and sold. The new hangers have sparked the interest of oil companies that may look to use the services of the Mohall airport. Airport advocates are seeking grant funding for more improvements to the airport. Needed improvements include self-service fuel, jet fuel and the possibility of offering airplane maintenance at the airport.

Key Considerations

With ever-increasing focus and attention being placed on livability and environmental issues, communities that proactively address quality-of-life projects are riding a popular wave. State and federal agencies, as well as foundations, are redirecting funding and technical resources toward these initiatives.

Quality-of-life initiatives may be viewed by traditional community and (especially) business development activists as peripheral to the essential development activity needed by the community. Alternatively, many communities advance these initiatives as a central cornerstone to their economic development program.
Section 5:

Community Organizer Results
Overview

Recognizing that the successful implementation of an economic development strategic plan takes more than simply selecting the right strategies, Building Communities presents the Community Organizer tool. This tool helps Steering Committee members to ask and answer the right questions with respect to the identification of the current and desired levels of capacity to implement business and community development strategies. The Renville County Steering Committee met to consider both the business development and community development approaches to the Community Organizer tool.

The tool presents a series of scenarios that describe alternate levels of capacity with respect to seven elements relevant to business development and community development. The Steering Committee was asked to consider each scenario and to reach a consensus about which one best describes the current capacity of their community. Each of the members were also asked to identify their desired level of capacity. The tables below present the results of the Community Organizer tool for Business and Community Development Capacities.

### Business Development Capacity Report

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### Community Development Capacity Report

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The *Community Organizer Assessment* not only presents a description of the current level of capacity, but also prescribes the steps necessary in order for the county to achieve its desired level of business and community development capacity.
Business Development Capacity

The information below itemizes the specific “capacity building action steps” needed in order for the community to reach its desired level of capacity for both business development and community development activities.

1 - Business Development Strategy

| ASSESSED SCORE: 24 / 37 | PRESCRIBED SCORE: 37 / 37 |

**Definition**

A business development strategy, which can be viewed as a subset of a community and economic development strategy, should be very clear in its scope. In addition to answering the question “What types of business development activities should we engage in?”, the strategy should be equally clear in identifying “What business development activities are beyond the scope of our community?” That is, many communities, due to limitations in factors such as labor force, proximity to markets, and available infrastructure, ought to conclude that the recruitment of large-scale business development opportunities is beyond the realistic grasp of the community.

Business development strategies should also assess the desirability of business growth for a community. Many urban and suburban cities experienced such dramatic growth in the 1990s that they became very selective about new job creating possibilities. Times of economic recession cause communities to rethink these policies.

Often overlooked, and frequently most important, are activities to support existing businesses within a community. In the end, a large percentage of jobs created in any community will come from the expansion of existing businesses. Additionally, communities can often offset the threat of curtailment of business operations with proactive business retention efforts.

Communities must also assess the business development climate that they offer. What is the condition of the state and national economy? How competitive is the state’s business climate? How streamlined is the community’s regulatory process for businesses?

1a. Relationship with Community’s Strategic Plan

Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

1b. Desirability of Business Development

- Analyze the support for business development activities in the community, hold an open dialogue on the subject, and document strong levels of support.

1c. Appropriateness of Business Development

- Identify and advance a selection of business development strategies/activities based upon the key business development success factors available.
- While being mindful of any invitations, conduct a broad array of business development activities based upon relative strengths of the community.
1d. A Foundation of Support for Existing Businesses

- Proactively engage existing business community in business development activities; reinforce the symbiotic relationship between new and prospective businesses.

2 - Local Staff and Team Development

| ASSESSED SCORE: 27 / 37 | PRESCRIBED SCORE: 37 / 37 |

**Definition**

Similar to the community development capacity requirements, business development requires strong staffing, organization, and volunteerism to succeed. Communities must be careful not to assume that simply because they have broader community development organizations in place (that advocate for community livability, tourism development, downtown development, historic preservation, arts and culture, and/or other priorities), that they have a business development organization. Business development advocacy can be coordinated through an organization with broader purposes, but in order to be effective, the specific skills and focus of business development cannot be lost.

2a. Focused Business Development Organization

- Ensure that the business development organization has long-term staying power in terms of its organization and budgeting.

2b. Stability of Business Development Organization

Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

2c. Frequency of Meetings

- In addition to regular monthly board meetings, ensure that subcommittee activity also generates results.

2d. Business Development Staff

- Recognize that the community has a capable lead economic development person but the position is hampered by the lack of administrative support.
- Ensure that the organization not only has a capable staff person, but also has adequate administrative support.

2e. Business Development Training

Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

3 - Industrial Land and Infrastructure

| ASSESSED SCORE: 38 / 68 | PRESCRIBED SCORE: 68 / 68 |

**Definition**

Many communities get geared up to conduct business development—and particularly business recruitment—activities without first conducting an objective analysis of the existing availability of land and infrastructure.
Frequently, communities confuse the availability of land “zoned industrial” with the true availability of such land for business expansion and business recruitment endeavors. Simply because land exists does not mean that it is for sale. It does not mean that it is for sale at a competitive price. It does not mean that the land is necessarily served by infrastructure. It does not mean that the land is served by specialized infrastructure requirements of a particular industry. And it does not mean that the land is clear from environmental constraints.

Indeed, the availability of land, or lack thereof, that is truly available, appropriate, and competitive for business development uses becomes a huge opportunity or constraint for a community.

Issues of land ownership must also be considered. Although the community may think it has land available, what really happens when the existing expanding business or the industrial prospect comes seriously knocking on the door? Will the price of the land suddenly escalate? Is the landowner truly motivated to sell? Are they legally empowered to sell?

Communities may wish to consider the public ownership of industrial land to ensure that the public interest, rather than an individual or corporation’s private interest, dominates the motivations of a future transaction.

Perhaps this public ownership is in place through a port, county, city, or other public entity. Even if the land is publicly owned, does the public body have a strategy for its ultimate use?

3a. Availability of Industrially-Zoned Land
   Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

3b. Potential for Land
   Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

3c. Land Ownership
   Ensure that publicly-controlled industrial land is competitively priced.

3d. Environmental Considerations
   Conduct an environmental assessment and conclude that industrial land has no environmental limitations.

3e. Land Price
   Ensure that the available industrial land is competitively priced.

3f. Availability of Buildings
   Identify existing industrial and/or commercial buildings that are generally desirable and competitive for developing.
   Document existing buildings that are highly competitive for business development opportunities.
   Not only document the availability of competitive industrial buildings, but also outline the expandability of such buildings.

3g. Basic Infrastructure
   Document how available basic industry is already available for the majority of business development opportunities
3h. Access Infrastructure

- Document, if possible, how the access infrastructure (and therefore the community) is within fifteen minutes of an interstate system.
- Document, if possible, how the access infrastructure (and therefore the community) is within five minutes of an interstate system.
- Establish and document the availability of rail spurs.
- Ensure the availability and document scheduled air service and/or barge services within 30 minutes of the community.

3i. Special Infrastructure

- Ensure that availability of all of the needed specialized infrastructure based upon the business development priorities being selected.

3j. Land/Target Compatibility

- Complete specialized activities ensuring that all of the unique land requirements associated with business development activities can be met by the community.

4 - Targeted Industries

**ASSESSED SCORE:** 4 / 19  **PRESCRIBED SCORE:** 19 / 19

**Definition**

Similar to communities being focused on specific objectives within the context of a strategic plan, communities must also have a focus in their business development activities in order to be successful.

The concept of “targeted industries” is the most often used procedure to identify, on a selective basis, the types of industry that are consistent with the development and recruitment desires of a particular community.

Typically, businesses are targeted based on the type of industry they represent utilizing the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). This system replaced the U.S. Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system. There are additional methods for targeting industries that can be done either in addition to, or in replacement of, the industry selection process. Communities may target industries based upon a geographic region or based upon other factors such as the size of typical companies.

Communities may wish to begin their Targeted Industry Analysis by analyzing the types of companies that could locate in their community to produce products that are typically imported into their community. That is, they can substitute the local manufacturing of goods and services that have historically been imported into the community. This is a process known as “import substitution.”

Still other communities may wish to conduct their Targeted Industry Analysis to be consistent with other objectives and priorities within a community. For example, communities that have historic strength—or current strategies—to expand the visitor industry, may wish to recruit businesses consistent with this focus.

Targeted Industry Analysis is a very sophisticated field, and communities can initiate fairly complex strategies and contract with specialized consultants to conduct such industry targeting.
4a. Import Substitution
   - Conduct a full-scale import substitution analysis.

4b. Connection with Strategic Plan
   - Ensure a general desirability for specific business development activities—and then engage in such activities.

4c. Targeted Industry Analysis
   - Complete an informal target industry analysis.
   - Engage a qualified consulting firm to develop a target industry analysis specific to the community.
   - Ensure that the target industry analysis yields a series of businesses to be recruited.
   - Ensure that current connect information exists for targeted businesses.
   - Ensure that the target industry analysis provides sufficient background information about targeted businesses that the community has a “running start” with recruitment activities.

5 - Marketing

| ASSESSED SCORE: 7 / 33 | PRESCRIBED SCORE: 33 / 33 |

**Definition**

Once the business development strategy is in place, a local development team is poised, land and infrastructure is ready, and some level of Targeted Industry Analysis has been completed, the community is only then prepared to conduct specific business development marketing activities.

The sequential nature of the elements of business development capacity must be recognized. Conducting marketing activities without land to be offered is a waste of resources. Conducting a marketing strategy without some form of targeting, or market segregation, can be very inefficient—if not completely unproductive.

The community needs to take a holistic, sophisticated approach to marketing techniques including direct mail, industry trade shows, web sites, cold calling, alliances with site selectors, and other methods.

Finally, communities may wish to conduct business development—and, in particular, business recruitment—activities in concert with other communities and counties in their region. By conducting a regional approach, costs can be shared, and the possibility of attracting a company to the region increases.

5a. Marketing Track Record

   Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

5b. Professional Marketing Assistance

   - Engage a professional business development marketing firm.
   - Identify and articulate specific business development marketing techniques and outcomes to be initiated.
   - Collaborate with a business marketing consultant to ensure success.

5c. Diversification of Marketing Techniques

   - Ensure that at least two business development marketing techniques are being deployed.
5d. Financial Resources

- Dedicate at least $50,000 cash toward business marketing efforts on an annual basis.

5e. Use of the Internet

- Provide a modest amount of business development information on the community website.
- Post a complete website generally providing 100% of the relevant business development information online.
- Create a client-specific business development reporting system allowing business development prospects to download relevant community-based reports.

6 - Prospect and Lead Management

| ASSESSED SCORE: | 12 / 27 | PRESCRIBED SCORE: | 27 / 27 |

**Definition**

All of the activities thus far in this business development capacity assessment tool are designed to ultimately generate business development leads or prospects (these terms are used interchangeably here, although prospects can refer to a more developed stage of relationship between a community and a business).

Businesses can take two years—or more—to make a business location decision after they have made preliminary contacts with cities and states for site information. Generally, however, this process takes between six and twelve months. Regardless of the duration of this period, communities must be prepared to address each and every concern and need of a prospect.

Business development—and particularly business recruitment—is a process of elimination. Companies come to their ultimate site decision through a process of eliminating other communities that have one or more significant variances from the ideal conditions being sought by the company. Given this, communities must manage prospects by addressing each and every need.

Prospect management requires a very steady, professional approach to businesses. The combination of a strong network of civic advocates and, especially, a well-trained business development professional maximizes the likelihood of business development success.

6a. Community Profile

- Complete a “hard copy” community profile that has a comprehensive and current display of relevant community and business development information.
- Ensure that all of the relevant business development information is readily available online.

6b. A Professional Community Response

- Assemble a business development team that possesses the knowledge and skills necessary to professionally respond to business development inquiries; make business development responses a priority.
- Formalize the community’s business response team and ensure that adequate training and resources are available for professional responses.

6c. Availability to Travel

- Create a standing business development account and resource team that are immediately available for proactive business recruitment.
7 - Closing the Deal

**Definition**

All of the prior steps in this business development capacity assessment mean virtually nothing if the community is not capable of “closing the deal.” Generally, closing the deal is the process of eliminating any remaining uncertainties in the minds of the company decision makers. Almost always, these details—as well as the overall commitment by all parties (the company, the community, the state, and possibly other entities)—are formalized in a contract or memorandum of understanding.

Communities, therefore, have to be willing to put their commitment in writing. Both the company and the community may have to back up their commitment with potential penalties in the event that either party does not perform. Typically, performance from a community would be the guarantee of the delivery of land, infrastructure, and local incentives. Communities, and particularly the State, typically require a guarantee by the company to create the jobs negotiated in the site location process.

It is typical—and most preferable from the State’s perspective—for the topic of incentives to be seriously discussed late in the site location process. Companies that insist upon detailed incentive commitments early in the process may have the importance of incentives out of balance with respect to other site location factors (access to markets, cost of labor, etc.). Nonetheless, incentives of some form almost always become a required provision of the memorandum of understanding.

**7a. Deal Making Experience**

Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

**7b. Expertise with Incentives**

- Recognize the depth of understanding of incentives and ability to “package the deal” in concert with state and federal partners.

**7c. A Winning Attitude**

Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

**7d. Community Sophistication**

- Recognize capability of in-house attorney with expertise in negotiating business development deals.

**7e. Project/Contract Monitoring**

- Demonstrate technical competence to put a follow-up/compliance system in place to ensure business development agreements are in compliance.
- Develop a compliance document/system to ensure legal obligations are met.
Community Development Capacity

1 - Strategic Plan/Vision

**Definition**
 Communities are in various stages of commitment to a strategic planning process. Some communities have never engaged in such an effort to collectively envision the future and set specific projects in motion to capture that vision. Conversely, some communities not only have a strategic planning process in place, but have engaged in professional strategic planning consultants, widely participated in the development of the plan, reviewed the plan regularly, and have even engaged one or more times in updating their strategic plan.

**1a. Existence of Community-wide Strategic Planning Document**
 Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

**1b. Acceptance of Plan**
 Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

**1c. Professional Development of Plan**
 Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

**1d. Use of Strategic Plan**
 Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

**1e. Plan Updating**

- Recognize that the existing strategic plan has been updated once.
- Recognize that the existing strategic plan has been updated twice.
- Recognize that the existing strategic plan has been updated on three or more occasions.

2 - Project and Issue Development

**Definition**
 Typically, a strategic planning process yields an overall vision statement and then a series of goals and objectives related to projects and issues.

For the purposes of this evaluation tool, projects and issues are separated from the strategic planning process.

Ultimately, it is the success, or lack thereof, of a community in advancing projects and issues that reinforces the community’s commitment to long-term strategic planning. Communities must see this “pay-off” to reinforce a long-term outlook.
2a. Community Wish List
- Recognize that an existing “wish list” exists, and that the list is less than four years old.
- Recognize that an existing “wish list” exists, and that the list is less than two years old.

2b. Identification of Strategic Issues
Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

2c. Large Project Advocacy
- Recognize that the community has a demonstrated track record of completing large-scale projects.

2d. Coordinating Projects with State and Federal Processes
Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

2e. Incorporation into Community Facilities Plan
Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

3 - Organizational Capacity

**ASSESSED SCORE: 26 / 38**  **PRESCRIBED SCORE: 38 / 38**

Definition
Strategic planning and project identification means very little to a community if it does not have the organizational capacity to carry out the city’s priorities. Although there is not “one correct way” to organize a community to conduct community development activities, there are some basic principles that apply. First of all, the scope of the community development activities needs to be defined. Communities may desire to implement projects and address issues that deal with the following types of community development activities: tourism development, historic preservation, arts and culture development, infrastructure improvements, and community facilities. A community’s priority list may even stretch longer than this.

A community may seek to empower one organization to advance the full gamut of community development priorities. Conversely, a community may wish to have more than one organization focused on specific priorities (a visitor and convention bureau, a downtown development association, a business recruitment organization, etc.). This Continuum is designed so as not to advocate for one form of organizational structure over another, but rather to simply advance the notion that the community must be specific in the priorities that it tends to advance and to empower one or more organizations to successfully advance these priorities.

This process advances, therefore, the following specific principles with respect to a community’s “organizational structure”:
- A community must have one or more organization(s) dedicated to advancing specific priorities identified in the strategic plan.
- If a community has more than one organization serving a community development advocacy role, the organizations must avoid duplication of services and serve to reinforce each other.
- Organizations should have adequate, stable funding and dedicate a majority of their time to reaching stated objectives rather than simply keeping the organization afloat.
- Organizations must meet frequently enough to advance identified priorities.
3a. Connectedness and Focus of Organization(s)
   - Ensure that all of the priorities identified in the local strategic planning process are assigned to one
     or more community development organizations.

3b. Organizational Stability
   - Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

3c. Focus on Business of Community
   - Ensure a complete, holistic approach to how community development is executed through
     completion of all of the activities identified in the strategic plan through one or more organization(s).

3d. Frequency of Meetings
   - Commit to regular (at least monthly) activity by one or more community development
     organization(s) with regular sub-committee activity advancing community priorities.

3e. Organizational Board Training
   - Provide limited training to community volunteers.
   - Engage in a broad, community-wide initiative to train community volunteers in leadership and
     project advocacy principals.

4 - Staffing

ASSESSED SCORE: 14 / 23  PRESCRIBED SCORE: 23 / 23

Definition
For community development organizations to reach optimal effectiveness, a professional staff person
must serve them. Community development organization staffing requires a talented individual (or team of
individuals), strong staff support, a connection to organizational objectives, and long-term staff training and
development.

4a. Skill Level of Staff Person
   - Recognize that the staff displays excellence in terms of skills, accomplishments, and credentials.

4b. Support Staff
   - Recognize that the staff support exists but capabilities could be stronger.
   - Recognize the effectiveness of the staff support.

4c. Staff Focused on Organizational Objectives
   - Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

4d. Staff Training
   - Provide consistent and comprehensive training to staff.
5 - Civic Volunteerism

ASSESSED SCORE: 6 / 8  PREScribed SCORE: 8 / 8

Definition
Individuals are frequently motivated to commit time to their community because they are willing to give to a greater cause. Volunteers appreciate being a part of a “winning team” and desire to see their community succeed. Successful communities inspire civic volunteerism, and often reward volunteers for their time and service.

5a. Opportunities for Service
Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.

5b. Celebration of Volunteerism
☑ Maintain and consider expanding regular events to honor civic volunteerism.

6 - Community Attitude

ASSESSED SCORE: 6 / 13  PREScribed SCORE: 13 / 13

Definition
Although it is intangible, the attitude of a community is a major factor in the community’s capacity for community development. Like individuals, communities can be either proactive or reactive. They can believe that they are in charge of their destiny or be resigned to the fact that too many issues are uncontrollable.

Success is contagious. Failure is contagious. Communities that have established a track record of envisioning and completing community development projects believe that their next success is imminent. Likewise, communities that have either tried and failed—or have not tried at all—do not sense a control of their destiny. It’s all about attitude.

6a. Proactive vs. Reactive Communities
☑ Recognize (either formally or informally) the nucleus of forward-thinking civic volunteers that are able to “carry the day” on certain key projects and initiatives.
☑ Recognize that one of the hallmarks of the community is a deep and growing cadre of elected and non-elected individuals that regularly succeed with projects and initiatives.

6b. Viewing the Glass Half-Full
Capacity achieved. No further action necessary at this time.
7 - Maintaining the “Community” as the Goal

**Definition**
A community completes a strategic planning exercise. The exercise yields a series of community development projects. Local organizations, equipped with staff and volunteers, focus on the implementation of the strategic projects. How does the community, at that point, view the importance of the projects? Do the projects become of paramount importance over the broader, strategic direction of the community? Or do civic leaders maintain the appropriate perspective of successful projects fitting into the broader community development vision?

Ideally, civic leaders will view their efforts to advance a project in the broader context. Even the chairperson for the largest community development project should view their project as subordinate to the community’s strategic plan.

7a. Depth of Community “Vision” or “Mission Statement”
- Recognize that a select number of citizens are intimately aware of the community’s strategic plan and mission statement.
- Keep the community strategic plan and mission statement so visible to a broad array of its citizenry that the mission and vision statements are virtually memorized.

7b. Formal or Informal Subordination of Projects to Community
- Formalize a “teaming of projects” to ensure coordination and potential collaboration.
Appendix

Prioritized Strategy Report w/ Community Input
Strategy Recommendations
Strategies by Group
Alphabetical Listing of Strategies
Key Success Factor Report
## Prioritized Strategy Report

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Appendix B

To aid communities in determining which community and economic development strategies are most viable for them, Building Communities answers three questions using input gathered from the community:

- What should we do?
- What do we want to do?
- What can we do?

The “Recommended Strategies” report is based on the findings of the Key Success Factor (KSF) Analysis and answers the question “What should we do?”

In the KSF analysis, the steering committee considered Renville County’s comparative advantage relative to a host of specific factors in categories such as community assets, public- and private-sector expertise, access to funding, etc. Responses were run through Building Communities’ strategy-selection algorithm which returned a rank-based list of strategies—the Prioritized Strategy Report—from which the recommendations below are drawn. Recommendation thresholds used in the Prioritized Strategy Report are:

Recommended (score of 85 and above) - It is highly recommended that these strategies be considered for implementation:

- No strategies recommended at this time.

Borderline (score between 70 and 84) - These strategies may be pursued with a degree of confidence, although existing obstacles may make successful implementation more challenging:

- Bedroom Community
- Value-added Agriculture
- Local/Regional Tourism
- Attracting Government Funding
- Energy Development
- Health Care

Not Recommended (score under 70) - Serious impediments exist which are likely to make successful implementation of these strategies very difficult:

- Infrastructure Development
- Business Cultivation
- Value-added Mining
- Business Retention and Expansion
- Downtown Development
- Business Recruitment
- Attracting Government Jobs
- Leading Edge Development
- Environmental Restoration
- Entrepreneurial Development
- Attracting Retirees
- Transportation Distribution Center
- Attracting Lone Eagles
- Value-added Fisheries
- Destination Tourism
- Value-added Forest Products
- Cultural Tourism
- Pass-Through Visitor Services
• Education Development

As indicated, these recommendations are viewed in reference to the question, “What should we do?” Strategies are not selected on the basis of these recommendations alone, but are determined after considering the other two questions as well. Material examined and data gathered in the Voice of the Community and Community Organizer Assessment sessions of Plan Week were also considered before final selection of strategies took place.
### Strategies by Group

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## Alphabetical Listing of Strategies

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Appendix E - Key Success Factor Report

Key Success Factors with a Score of “4”:
- Availability of energy resources
- Local recreational and visitor attractions
- Proximity to large volumes of agricultural commodities
- Absence of industrial business activity
- Ability to successfully market materials

Key Success Factors with a Score of “3”:
- Quality residential neighborhoods
- Financially-sound existing health care facility
- Proximity to raw materials and minerals
- Proximity to urban population and workforce centers
- Recognizable central business district/downtown
- Sufficient base of local businesses
- Sufficient local entrepreneurial base
- Access to small business financing
- Access to large-scale capital
- Access to long-term infrastructure loans and grants
- Availability of appropriated funds
- Competitive recruitment incentives
- Dedicated local financial resources for staffing recruiters
- Local funding for downtown development
- Sufficient marketing, promotion, or public relations budget
- Ability to build a team comprised of energy-development experts
- Ability to compete in a global market
- Ability to identify product and service gaps
- Ability to understand industry trends and opportunities
- Capable, experienced economic development professionals
- Competent, strategic-minded hospital and health-care executives
- Existing excellence in local health care
- Local ability to identify and advance a funding proposal
- Team approach to infrastructure finance
- Active engagement of downtown building and business owners
- Community acceptance of the visitor industry
- Community support for needed infrastructure rate increases
- Local focus on revenues from visitors
- Local government support
- Local pro-business climate
- Projected growth in government budgets
- Strong community support
- Strong relations between economic development organization and local businesses
- Strong state and/or federal legislative delegation
- Support from local businesses
- Supportive local government policy and focus
- Supportive state energy policies and incentives
- Adequate telecommunications infrastructure
- Availability of industrial-zoned land for industrial park development
Appendix

Availability of local land
High-speed internet
Prospect of an expanded geographic market for health care
Proximity and access to markets
Proximity to scheduled air service

Key Success Factors with a Score of “2”:
- Accurate, long-term analysis of infrastructure needs and costs
- Ability to secure power-purchase agreements
- Support for attracting retirees

Key Success Factors with a Score of “1”:
- Available, desirable housing
- Desirable climate
- Existence of recreational amenities
- High availability of urban services
- Ability to network and attend relevant trade shows
- Cooperation of economic development staff and educational community
- Cultural development and advocacy organization
- Dedicated business coaching staff
- Downtown organization and staff
- Relationship with site selectors
- Relative sophistication in coordinating and marketing local events
- Sophisticated tourism development & promotion
- Sophisticated use of the internet for marketing
- Support from local education professionals at all levels
- Supportive post-secondary education training program
- Favorable state policies with respect to office locations
- Availability of local buildings
- Availability of local infrastructure
- Excess water and sewer infrastructure capacity
- Land/Buildings/Campus for education development
- Local, available, low-skill labor pool
- Local, available, high-skill labor pool
- Advantageous location for government or education expansion

Key Success Factors with a Score of “0”:
- Existing or prospective cultural attraction
- Expandable educational institution
- Proximity and access to forests and forest products
- Proximity to fisheries commodities
- Proximity to nationally-recognized attractions
- Proximity to travel routes
- Ability to secure long-term contracts for forest materials
- Implementation of national Main Street Four-Point Approach™
- Staff focused on recruitment objectives
- Adequate housing for labor force
- Availability of brownfield sites
- Proximity to transmission lines with excess capacity
- Strategic location for distribution centers
Renville County

Strategy Thumbprint™ by Building Communities, Inc.

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