

CHAPTER 5. Action Plan

CHAPTER 5 - ACTION PLAN

This chapter will identify the specific action steps to be taken to advance the priority goals and objectives for the five year CEDS.

Under the technical requirements section of the EDA guidelines "goals are defined as: broad, primary regional expectations. Objectives are more specific than goals, clearly measurable, and stated in realistic terms considering what can be accomplished over the five year time frame of the CEDS "

Using these definitions the following goals with action steps have been proposed followed by the objectives and performance measures that will be used to evaluate our progress toward these five year goals.

It was decided by the group to keep the number of primary goals to a minimum toward with the understanding that the Commission's annual work program will also focus on issues like innovation and entrepreneurial programming for youth, business incubators, and other efforts to expand the economy of Southwestern Wisconsin.

Regional recognition

Goal # 1- Southwestern Wisconsin becomes a recognized region Action Steps

- 1) Coordinate efforts of the region's economic development groups
 - a) Gather information on all regional groups that have "economic development" as part of their name or mission
 - b) Survey these groups to find out what their mission or role is in economic development
 - c) Organize a meeting of these groups to explore the areas where they can work together or eliminate duplication of effort
- 2) Formalize organization to meet state requirements
 - a) Research requirements to be recognized by the "Governor's Business Council"
 - b) Work with the groups identified in objective one to gain a consensus of who the recognized economic development entity should be

- c) Formalize this group through legal and or registration required by the state of Wisconsin
- 3) Research funding opportunities for regional organization
 - a) Determine funding necessary for initiatives and operations staff
 - b) Identify specific funding partners, including both public and private
 - c) Approach identified partners to secure funding
- 4) Develop a regional identity
 - a) First initiative should be to "brand" the region
 - b) Develop a marketing plan to introduce the "Region"
 - c) Fund and implement the marketing plan
- 5) Establish formal relationship with other regional groups
 - a) Identify other "regional groups" (groups that have a regional voice or impact)
 - b) Establish contact with these groups to formalize a working relationship

Broadband

Goal #2 - High-speed broadband access throughout the region Action Steps

- 1) Establish a baseline of existing infrastructure and service coverage
 - a) Clarify the existing infrastructure ownership and availability
 - b) Gather existing survey information on service area that has been conducted by the Public Service Commission, State Senator Schultz and others.
 - c) Collate and analyze this data to get a clear picture of the issue
- 2) Research funding options of increased coverage
 - a) Explore possible State, (Commerce) Federal, (Commerce, USDA, other) funding sources
- 3) Influence/lobby for legislative changes to encourage providers to extend service
 - a) Encourage the formation of an REA (Rural Electrification) type system to serve rural areas with Broadband

Transportation

Goal #3 - Upgrade transportation system

Action Steps

- 1) Improve communications between state, county, and local governments in transportation planning
 - a) Begin a dialogue on regional transportation planning during the regional planning process to take place in 2009-10
- 2) Establish a regional Capital Improvement Plan for transportation
 - a) Form a task force to work with local and county government to establish a five year Capital Improvement plan at their individual level
 - b) Using the local plans, form a regional plan to eliminate duplication/un necessary expenditures
- 3) Assess and prioritize regional transportation needs and links to tri-state system
 - a) Conduct a region wide assessment of the transportation system link ages
 - b) Assess the connections to the larger tri state region
 - c) Report on necessary improvements to the system to improve economic development opportunities in the region
- 4) Work regionally to influence project selection
 - a) Keep lines of communications open with others in the region to explore more joint efforts in the transportation area such as linkages to Dubu que, Galena, and Freeport rail and road projects.
- 5) Research feasibility of regional transit systems
 - a) Explore the feasibility of a Regional Transit Authority (need)
 - b) Explore the legislative approval process to establish an RTA (funding authority)

Agriculture

Goal # 4 - Encourage value added agricultural ventures

Action Steps

- 1) Expand value added agricultural processing capacity
 - a) Explore transportation/distribution issues for small producers
 - b) Do a feasibility study on commercial incubator kitchens/freezer/ processing facilities in the region
 - c) Determine best location/highest need for incubators by type
 - d) Encourage private / public partnerships to develop needed incubators
- 2) Encourage alternative energy industry
 - a) Support efforts to increase wind energy in Southwest Wisconsin
 - b) Encourage and support the emerging bio-fuels industry in the region (switch grass, wood, bio fuels, etc.)
- 3) Coordinate bio-digester technology information
 - a) Work with the University of Wisconsin Platteville and others to expand the capacity (efficiency) and reduce the costs of installing bio digesters in the region.
- 4) Support agri-tourism
 - a) Work with local Chambers of Commerce and the Tri-State Tourism Council to expand the tourism industry as it relates to Agri-tourism
 - b) Support efforts of the Local Fare program to increase the awareness of the value added agriculture market
 - c) Work with Riverlands efforts to do the same things in the Tri-state region

Worker Housing goal

Goal #5 - Housing that is suitable and available for the workforce

Action Steps

- 1) Survey existing housing stock
 - a) Find funding to do a regional housing survey
 - b) Complete a regional survey on quantity and condition of housing stock
 - c) Distribute survey results
- 2) Encourage local ordinances for inspection of housing
 - a) Based on the results of the survey concentrate on communities with the highest need for improving existing housing stock
 - b) Encourage improvements through establishing/enforcing local ordinances for maintenance of property
- 3) Research funding options for local communities to establish housing programs
 - a) Research funding opportunities to establish housing improvement programs in local communities (USDA, WHEDA, Etc.)
 - b) Assist local communities with grant writing for those funds

Objectives & Performance Measures

Objectives provide tangible items that can be measured to assess progress towards achieving the Region's goals. Measuring this progress, ideally on a yearly basis, allows the EDD to assess and make modifications to the CEDS goals and objectives to reflect and respond to the changing economy. The performance measures will be reported in subsequent CEDS Annual Reports.

Objective 1: Build recognition and a brand for the region

- Performance measure 1.1 Legal formation of one primary economic development organization for the region
- Performance measure 1.2 Official recognition of the region from the State of Wisconsin

- Performance measure 1.3 Raise sufficient capital to fund the organization

Objective 2: Build capacity in the region (broadband, rail, shovel ready land, etc.)

- Performance measure 2.1 Increased availability of high speed broadband in the region
- Performance measure 2.2 Rail restoration to Lafayette & Iowa Counties (RR15)
- Performance measure 2.3 Award and completion of Flood projects submitted to EDA
- Performance measure 2.4 Funding for industrial park development when and where appropriate

Objective 3: Improve communications

- Performance measure 3.1 Development of a regional comprehensive plan
- Performance measure 3.2 Development of a regional transportation plan
- Performance measure 3.3 Development of a region Capital Improvement Plan

Objective 4: Improve community project funding

- Performance measure 4.1 Development of a grant writing position at SWWRPC
- Performance measure 4.2 Grant award rate higher than other regions or state average
- Performance measure 4.3 More communities aware of grant opportunities