

# COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2017-2021

## 2019 Performance Report

FOR WEST CENTRAL MINNESOTA

April, 2019

*prepared by:*



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THIS DOCUMENT WAS  
PREPARED FOR:

**ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
ADMINISTRATION  
U.S. DEPARTMENT  
OF COMMERCE**

and covers the  
west central  
Minnesota  
counties of:

- Becker
- Clay
- Douglas
- Grant
- Otter Tail
- Pope
- Stevens
- Traverse
- Wilkin

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## Introduction

The 2018 Performance Report is intended to provide an update that evaluates the status of activities and progress in accomplishing the goals and objectives set forth in the 2017-2021 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for West Central Minnesota. It also is intended to provide an updated snapshot of how the region is doing from an economic perspective.

The 2016 Performance Report includes a narrative on the following four components:

- Adjustments to the Strategy
- Report on Economic Development Activities
- Evaluation of Progress on Implementation Plan and Goals
- Schedule of Goals for next year

The full 2017-2021 CEDS can be accessed through the following link to West Central Initiative's (WCI's) website:

<http://wCIF.org/what-we-do/planning/edplanning/ceds.html> the full document provides greater detail on the demographics, labor force, and economy at both a regional and individual county level.

West Central Initiative (WCI) is the designated organization that administers the Economic Development District that covers the 9 counties in west central Minnesota. These counties are: Becker, Clay, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Traverse, and Wilkin.

## Regional Overview

This regional overview is intended to provide an updated snapshot of the region on key indicators that are addressed in the 2016-2021 CEDS. Economic Development Region 4 (EDR 4) continues to see an increase in the aging population and the out-migration of young adults, a trend since the 1940's. According to the 2010 Census the region grew, but only four of the nine counties gained population and the growth in those counties is concentrated in the more urban communities. Farming and other agricultural based business continues to be a major factor in the region's economy. Four industries employ 75% of the workforce. They are Education & Health Services, Trade Transportation & Utilities, Manufacturing, and Leisure & Hospitality. Post recession, a skilled workforce shortage has emerged. Some contributing factors for this include: Upcoming retirements, out-migration to urban areas, and the draw to the high-paying jobs in the North Dakota oil fields. Many industries are increasingly struggling to fill workforce needs.

### Demographics (Population)

#### 2017 Population Estimates

County	2017 Population	2010 Population	Change in 2017 from 2010
Becker	34,098	30,189	3,909
Clay	63,569	51,292	12,277
Douglas	37,575	32,881	4,694
Grant	5,941	6,261	-320
Otter Tail	58,345	57,295	1,050
Pope	10,970	11,196	-226
Stevens	9,634	10,022	-388
Traverse	3,319	4,088	-769
Wilkin	6,324	7,093	-769
<b>Region</b>	<b>229,775</b>	<b>210,317</b>	<b>19,458</b>

Source: MN State Demographer and 2010 Census

Based on revised State Demographer numbers, the 2045 the regional population is expected to grow to just over 236,000 from the 2010 population of just over 221,000.

#### Projected Regional Population 2015-2045

2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
226,691	230,949	233,909	235,619	236,661	236,991	236,869

Source: MN State Demographer

## 2045 Projected Population by County

Becker County	Clay County	Douglas County	Grant County	Otter Tail County	Pope County	Stevens County	Traverse County	Wilkin County
36,159	70,141	39,453	5,438	57,332	10,507	9,832	2,247	5,760

Source: MN State Demographer

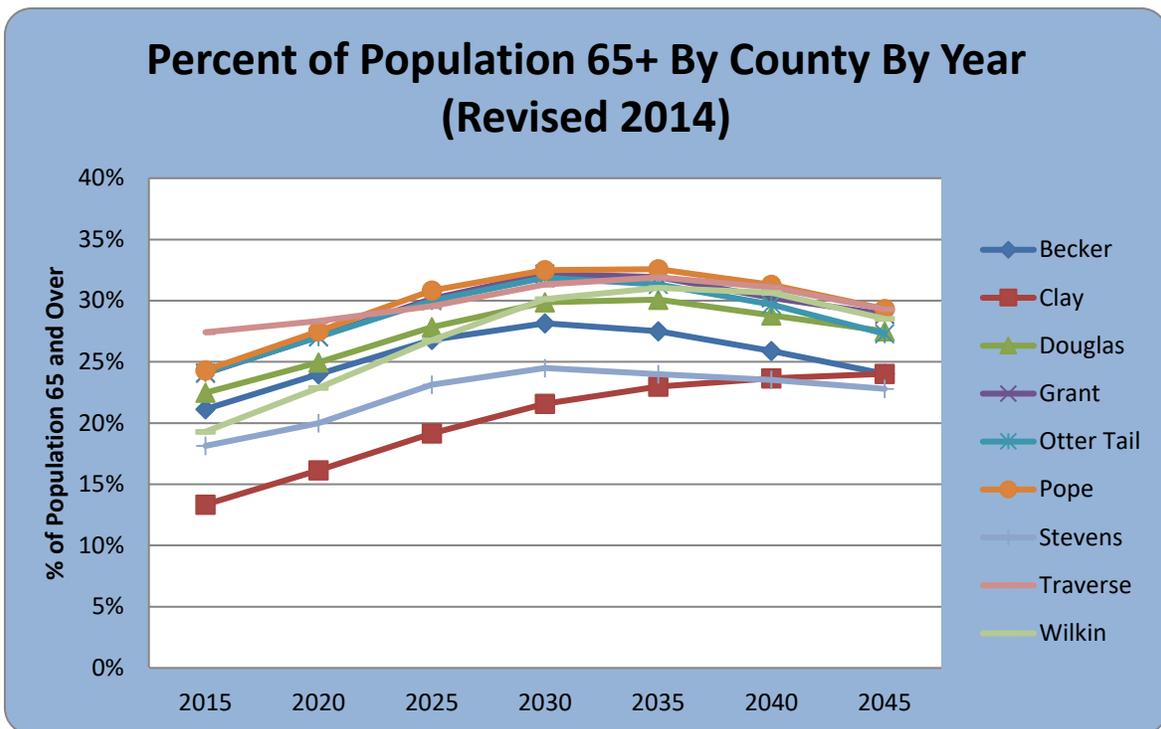
### Demographics (Diversity)

The racial diversity of the region is increasing and is expected to continue to increase. According to the 2010 Census, 14% of the population growth the region experienced from 2000 to 2010 was from a minority group. Becker, Clay, Stevens, and Traverse have the most diverse population makeup based on population numbers.

The region is forecast to have 9.5% of the total population being a minority by 2035. Currently, at 9% it is likely the region will well exceed 10% mark by 2035. Compare this to statewide minority population projection of 24.8%, or the nation at 46.9% for 2035, it appears marginal, but it is still a significant change for the makeup for the region. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin makeup the greatest percent of minority persons and this is anticipated to continue.

### Demographics (Age)

Currently, about 20% of the regional population is over 65. The percent of the population over 65 for the region will continue to increase dramatically until about 2030-2035. The effects that this aging of the population has on communities, the workforce, services, etc. are enormous.

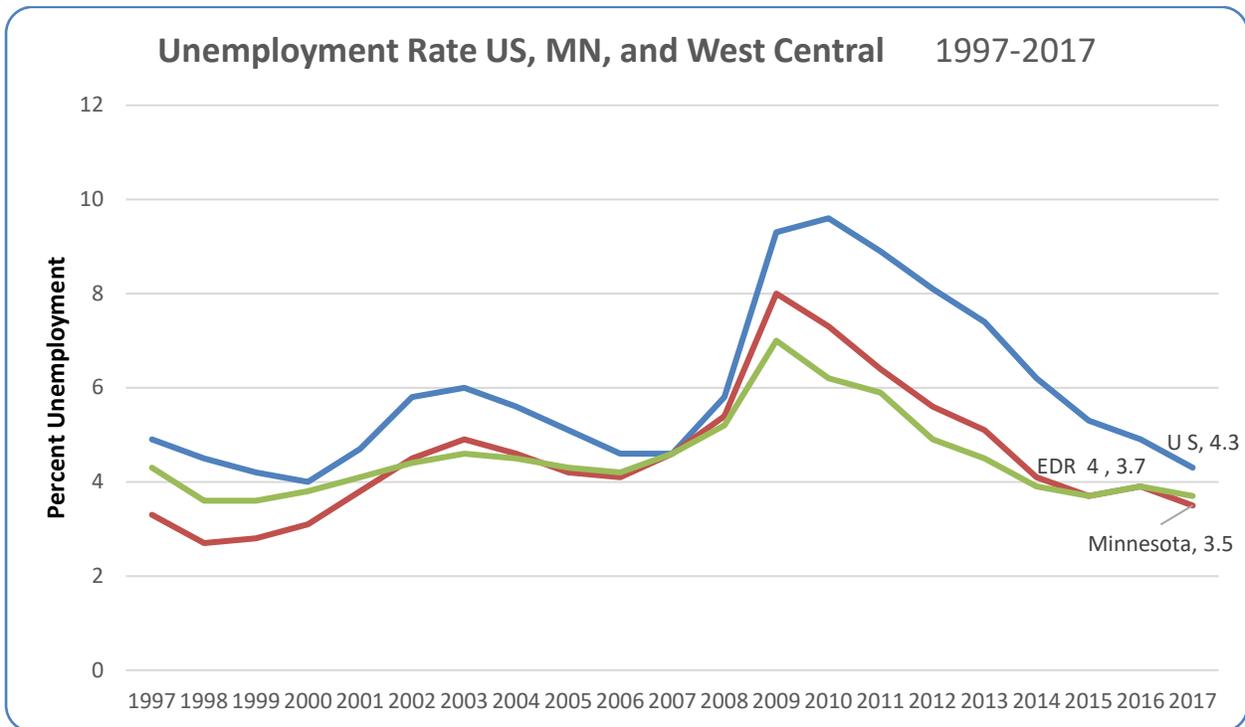


Source: MN State Demographer

## Unemployment

The average 24 month unemployment rate for EDR 4 is down from 2011 (5.9%) and the 2016 analysis (3.9%) at 3.7%, the region is now at historic lows. The average unemployment rate for 2000-2007 (pre-recession) was 3.8%. The average 24-month unemployment rate for individual counties ranges from 2.8% to 4.8%. The chart below indicates a historical look at unemployment for the region compared to the state, and nation.

### Annual Unemployment 1997-2017



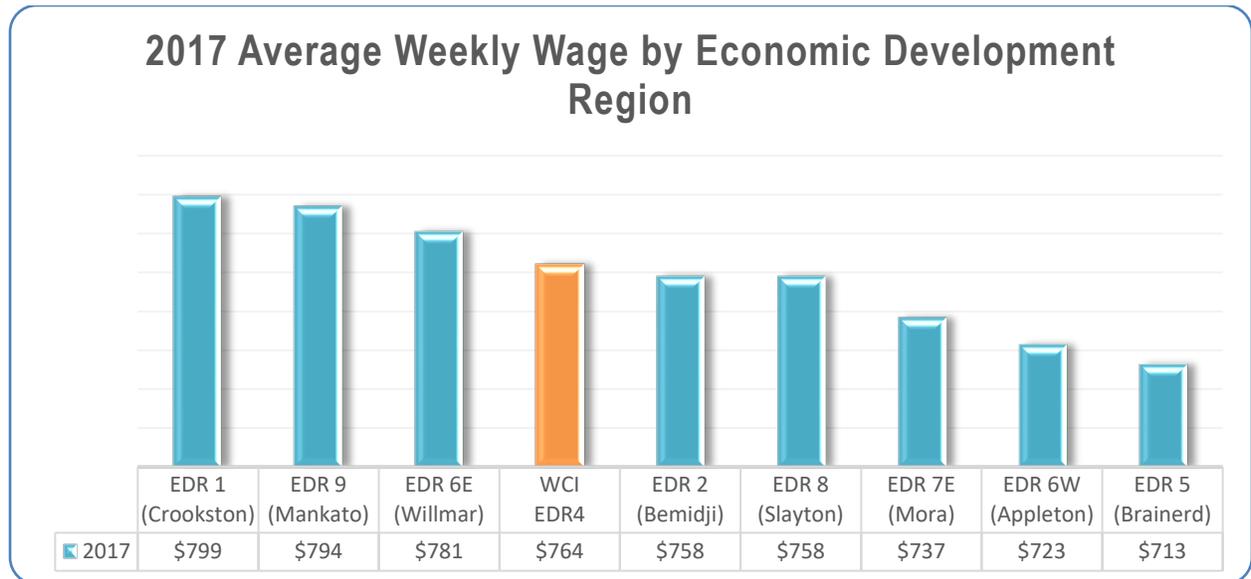
Source: MN DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics

## PER CAPITA INCOME (PCI) and Wages

Currently, none of the nine counties fall below the 80% threshold of the national per capita income that indicates “distress”. At one point the City of Moorhead did, but it now is just past the 80% threshold. Moorhead is the largest community in the region. When looking at the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) data for 2014, all counties in the region are actually at almost 84% or higher of the national per capita income, with 3 counties exceeding 100%. The 2014 PCI percentages did decrease from 2013 in all counties; this is most likely related to the continued decline in crop prices. These numbers are not truly representative of what is really occurring related to income when you look into smaller areas at the community and township levels where many municipal areas, townships, and census tracts fall below the 80% PCI threshold.

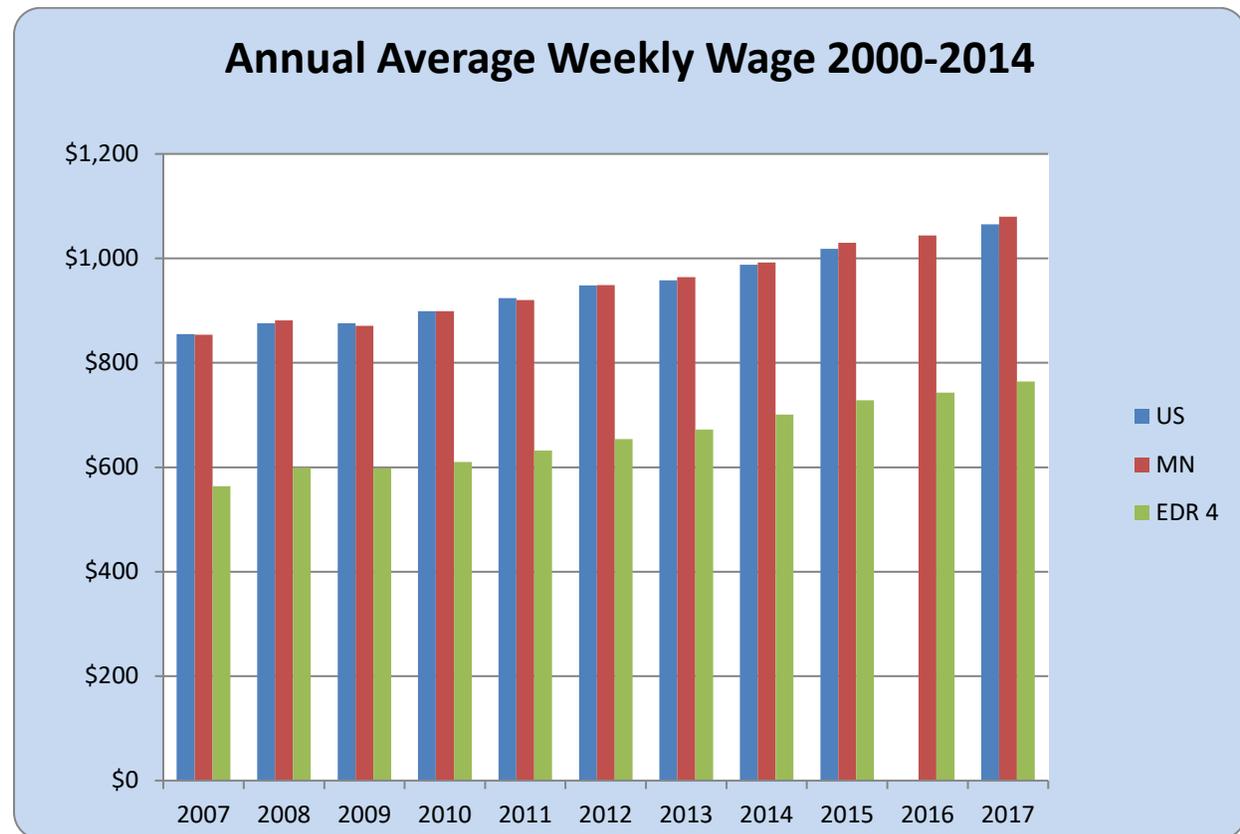
Wages remain to be an obstacle for the region. The 2017 average weekly wage for the region was \$764, the state was \$992 and at the national level, \$988. Studies show that 63% of jobs in the region pay less than \$658/week. For a family of four with two adults

working, to simply meet basic needs they need to earn \$800/week. The chart shown below identifies where Average Weekly Wages for the region (EDR 4) compare to the wages in other rural economic development regions throughout the state. Note: the communities listed are for geographic reference.



Source: MN DEED QCEW

The region's Average Weekly Wage continues to increase, but has not closed the gap between it and the state and national level.

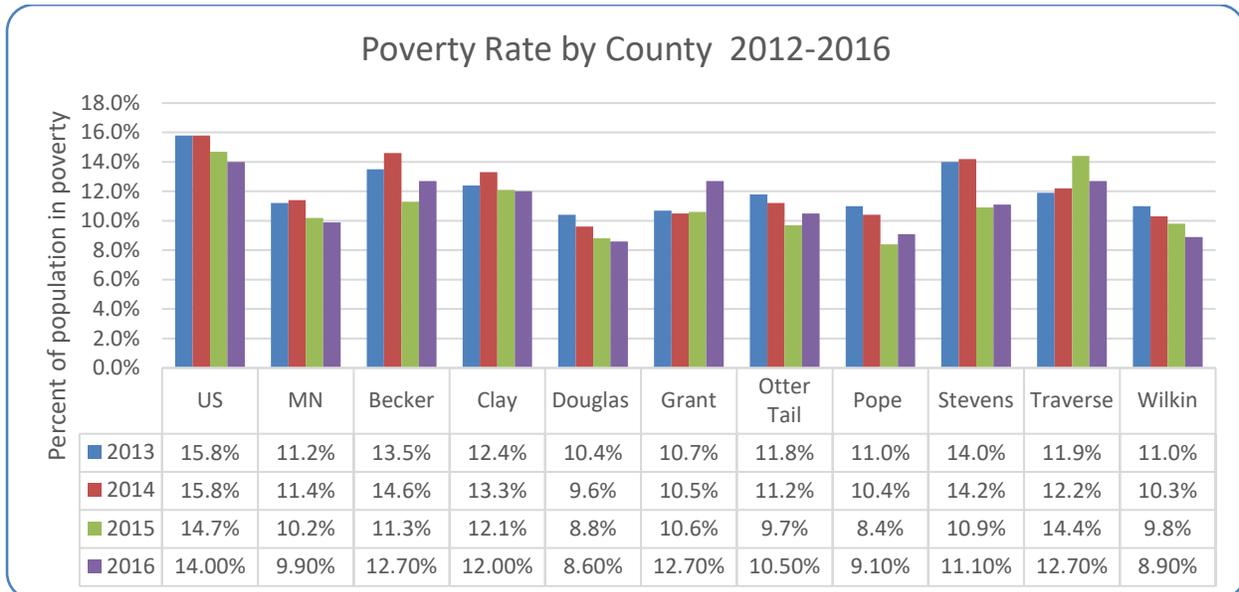


Source: MN DEED QCEW\*

\*2016 wage information was unavailable for US

## Poverty

Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Pope, and Wilkin all have poverty levels at or below the 2014 state level of 11.4%. All counties remain below the national poverty rate, which is 15.8%. While the poverty rate for the US and MN has stabilized since a significant jump from prior to 2011, the poverty rate in several of the region's counties continues to increase. This can in part be attributed to high employment in lower wage jobs.



Source: US Census Bureau SAIPE Data

## Workforce and Industry

In the region four industries are predicted to see the most need for employees in the next few years:

- Trade, Transportation & Utilities
- Professional & Business Services
- Education & Health Services
- Leisure & Hospitality

Additionally, economic recovery and hiring is continuing to happen. Manufacturing production is going strong, and many companies are now challenged by finding enough workers. The shortage of workers able to fill open positions has now become a common and ever-growing problem in many of the region's communities and businesses across all industry classifications. This is interrelated with an emerging need to identify solutions for adequate and affordable housing, and childcare.

## Adjustment to the Strategy

The CEDS is meant to be a flexible document and may be adjusted to respond to changing economic conditions. The planning process that resulted in the completed 2011-2016 CEDS for WCI was directly tied to the extensive planning process that was undertaken in the development of WCI’s organizational strategic plan that falls within the same timeframe. The development of both plans was a result of a process that engaged partners, stakeholders, and residents of the west central region. The resulting components of each plan that correspond and correlated to each other were incorporated into the CEDS. Furthermore, the CEDS strategy committee, EDD Board, and each of the nine county boards provided an additional level of review, input, and perspective on the plan, and the goals and objectives. The CEDS was then fine-tuned to align with EDA requirements. In addition to the annual review and update of the CEDS, WCI conducts an evaluation of the strategic plan to make mid-course adjustments. As a result of this review and evaluation no formal adjustments have been made to content of the CEDS for 2016. The goals and objectives have remained the same, and were affirmed by the EDD Board at its November 5, 2018 meeting.

## EDD Board, CEDS Strategy Committee, and Staff Changes

In February of 2018, WCI hired an additional staff member to assist in Economic Development work, Jill Amundson.

### 2018-2019 EDD GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

<b>MEMBER:</b>	<b>COUNTY:</b>	<b>REPRESENTING:</b>	<b>AFFILIATION:</b>
Neil Madison	Traverse	Browns Valley City Council	Elected Official
Joel Dahlheimer	All	Townships	Elected Official
Ron Zeman	Becker	Detroit Lakes City Council	Elected Official
Brent Thompson	Otter Tail	Fergus Falls City Council	Elected Official
Todd Johnson	Traverse	County	Elected Official
Sheldon Giese	Morris	Morris City Council	Elected Official
Currently Vacant	White Earth		Elected Official
Deb White	Clay	Moorhead City Council	Elected Official
Keith Englund	Douglas	County	Elected Official
Frank Gross	Clay	County	Elected Official
<b>MEMBER:</b>	<b>COUNTY:</b>	<b>REPRESENTING:</b>	<b>AFFILIATION:</b>

Neil Wiese	Stevens	County	Elected Official
Wayne Johnson	Otter Tail	County	Elected Official
Dennis Larson	Wilkin	County	Elected Official
Don Skari	Becker	County	Elected Official
Gordy Wagner	Pope	County	Elected Official
Dwight Walvatne	Grant	County	Elected Official

## 2018-2019 STRATEGY COMMITTEE

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Public/ Private</u>	<u>Representation</u>
Stan Thurlow	Planning Consultant	Private	Community/Economic Development
Lisa Bode	City of Moorhead	Public	Housing
Nicole Fernholz	Alexandria Area Economic Development Commission	Private	Regional Economic Development
Gary Donovan	University of Minnesota Morris	Public	Education
Dianne Johnson	City of Hoffman	Public	Small Town Economic Development Real Estate
Amy Baldwin	Otter Tail County	Public	County Economic Development
Kevin Kiel	City of Perham	Public	Mid-City Economic Development
Teresa Jergensen	FAST Global Solutions	Private	Manufacturing
Janelle Negen	City of Glenwood Chamber of Commerce	Public	Business Association Interests
Kevin Beyer	Federated Telcom	Private	Broadband/ Telecommunications
Steve Schoenek	Otter Tail Power	Private	Finance/Utilities Entrepreneurship
Jay McNamar	Prairie Ridge Healthcare	Private	Healthcare
Greg Wagner	West Central Initiative	Private	Economic Development
Wayne Hurley	West Central Initiative	Private	Transportation
Jana Berndt	Bremer Bank	Private	Finance
Jana Berndt	Bremer Bank	Private	Finance
Chris Buckingham	Small Business Owner Entrepreneur	Private	Technology Small Business
Yuri Machkasov	Riverwood Bank/U of M Morris	Private	Latino/Hispanic Community Interests

## **Report on Economic Development Activities**

### **Technical Assistance**

WCI staff continues to work with communities in identifying projects appropriate for the CEDS and projects that may meet the criteria for applying for EDA Grants. In 2018, WCI assisted the City of Perham submit a preapplication. However, the preapplication and subsequent appeal were denied, because they could not meet distressed criteria that would warrant a competitive application.

WCI also provides technical assistance to communities on projects or proposals that fit with the goals and intent of the Federal EDA and WCI; and comply with goals and objectives outlined in the CEDS. In 2017-2018, WCI assisted the City of Battle Lake to complete a Business Retention and Expansion assessment/profile. At the conclusion of the project, WCI hosted a one-day BR&E introductory session as part of the quarterly gathering of economic development professionals. This included Battle Lake as a recent positive example. There were 15 attendees at the training representing at least 8 communities. WCI and Extension continue to work with communities who participated in evaluating if they should implement a BR&E program.

Housing: Fergus Falls Housing Task Force; Community Land Trust; other?

Child Care: Battle Lake Child Care Center; Forgivable Loans; research; state influence?

### **Partnerships in the Region**

WCI Staff continues to serve on the steering committee of the Dream it! Do it! Campaign. The campaign is intended to bring awareness to the age cohort of 16-24 year-olds on opportunities that exist in manufacturing careers. The target audience includes students, workers looking for a career change, educators at high school and college level, and parents. The most recent projects from the group include a second Tour of Manufacturing held in Detroit Lakes (2016), and Fergus Falls (2015). The events have all been deemed successful and the Tour's have taken on as a statewide initiative which includes many visits to manufacturers, extensive media coverage via, print, radio, and television. The Adopt-A-School Guide that serves as a resource to facilitate partnerships of local manufacturing firms and classrooms was also finalized, printed, and distributed to local manufacturers. The Brainerd Lakes area of MN has combined with West Central Dream it! Do it! Campaign. Beginning in mid-2015 a local Dream it! Do it! coordinator was hired for the west central region. Besides a focus on building connections between local manufacturers and schools, the coordinator implemented a video contest which allowed student teams to compete for prize money, while filming and developing a short spot called "What's So Cool About Manufacturing".

Other activities include the continued coordination of meetings of the Economic Development District (EDD) Board of Directors. Besides having the EDD Board approve the CEDS, annual Performance Reports, and annual RLF Recertification, speakers are invited from other organizations to discuss issues such as technology/telecommunications, housing, economic development and other subjects. A tour of a factory or business has also been part of the agenda in previous years. Staff

reports on District activities that have occurred between the board meetings. An additional part of the agenda includes an opportunity for each board member to share significant economic development activities that have been occurring in the communities they serve. Attendance at the Board meetings continues to remain steady. Recently, the EDD Board also received a presentation on the revised final product, and adopted a Resolution of Support for the Updated Mn/DOT Region 4 Transit Coordination Plan, which was developed in conjunction with and contains relevant information also contained in the CEDS. Due to redistricting and the recent elections the EDD Board transitioned five new members in 2013 and due to board terms expiring, two new members were added in early 2014, three new members replaced the outgoing members in 2015. The regions governing bodies show their continued support of the District by submitting nominations for new board representatives from the respective community and county boards. Face-to-face orientations were again offered for the new Board members.

WCI also continues to coordinate the regional Economic Development Professional (EDP) group. The next meeting will be held in May 2016 and will focus on redevelopment resources available to communities. March 2015 meeting included a presentation on the economic impact of the arts in the region, and a panel discussion on MNCup, an entrepreneur competition. May 2015 focused on the new office of Economic Development at the University of MN, and a new resource called MN Business First Stop. July 2015 focused on USDA RD programs, and a presentation on impacts of the Baby-Boom generation and housing. The February 2016 meeting included background on a regional marketing strategy that is in development, and on the DevelopMN greater MN development strategy.

The EDD Board did pass its annual resolution in support of the 2016 CEDS Performance Report at the March 17, 2016 meeting. The 2015 CEDS performance report was submitted to Chicago Regional Office by April 29, 2015. It followed the format guidance outlined in the quarterly conference calls. No changes were made to the document that required new ratification by any Boards or public comment period. Staff conducted annual visits to all the County Boards for county updates on the CEDS and the region's economy for 2015. This update has also been offered to the region's City governments as well, and 1 city visit occurred in June 2015. The 9 county board visits will take place starting in May through July 2016. These visits coincide with data releases to ensure the most current data available is being shared.

Promotion and awareness of the CEDS in communities around the region has been continuing. In addition to the presentation before all 9 County Boards, there have been numerous articles in local papers published regarding the CEDS and the current economic trends of the region and its counties. The CEDS document is web based, unless otherwise requested and a counter was recently placed on the webpage to track page hits. The CEDS continues to averages 1,200 hits per month according to Google Analytics. Demographic information found in the CEDS or related to the data in the CEDS was provided to the Elbow Lake Library, M-State Detroit Lakes, Alexandria Area Economic Development Commission, and the Small Business Development Center.

## Completed CEDS Projects for 2018 (Including projects that have broken ground)

1. City of Fergus Falls: Short Term Planning Technical Assistance grant to study the impacts of the impending closure of the Hoot Lake Power Plant: \$49,000 Economic Development Authority
2. City of Osakis: Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation: \$1,129,565 funded through Public Facilities Authority.
3. City of Evansville: Water-Waste Water: \$3,287,590, funded through the Public Facilities Authority: \$2,630,072 from the Water Infrastructure Fund grant and \$657,518 from the Drinking Water Revolving Fund.
4. City of Detroit Lakes: Waste Water: \$33,380,000 funded by the Public Facilities Authority: \$17,040,000 from Point Source Implementation, Clean Water Revolving Funds, and Water Infrastructure grants and \$16,340,000 in loans from the Clean Water Revolving Fund.
5. City of Dalton: Waste Water: \$3,522,000 funded by MN DEED Small Cities, Public Facilities Water Infrastructure Fund, and USDA Rural Development.
6. City of Wheaton: Drinking Water Plant rehabilitation: \$1,000,000 funded by Public Facilities Authority Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund.
7. City of Breckenridge: Treatment Lime Softening Plant: funded through Public Facilities Authority: \$1,000,000 Water Infrastructure grant and \$7,983,588 Clean Water Revolving Fund.

### Evaluation of Progress on Action Plan and Goals

A common theme in WCI's work is making this region a better place in which to live and work. We focus our investments in specific areas creating a more skilled workforce and creating higher wage jobs, all in order to make it possible for more people to remain in the region and facilitate more in-migration. The CEDS Strategy Committee believes these goals and objectives strongly align with the intent of the EDA guidance on goals and objectives for the CEDS, to assist in solving economic problems and capitalizing on resources. Included in this section are goals and implementation strategies identified and developed through extensive community and stakeholder dialogue, the WCI Executive Board, CEDS Strategy Committee, and the EDD Board.

#### 1. Maintaining and implementing a program of regional economic development planning – Resulting in a continuous economic development planning process.

##### Objectives:

- Supporting the planning functions of the Economic Development District;
- Assisting communities in planning and accessing resources for community and economic development projects;
- Linking communities to demographic data, especially those with 1,000 or less population and those that do not have access to technology that would enable them to access the data.

**Progress:** This is a continuing process. Progress of this goal has been outlined in the previous sections of this Performance Report.

- 2. Supporting Business Development to Create Employment and Wealth –** providing more job opportunities with higher wages; measured by net increase in jobs, net increase in average pay in the region and an increase in the total net worth of the people of the region.

**Objectives:**

**Loan Programs**

- Close \$2 million in new loans per year
- By 2016, attain a loan portfolio that exceeds \$10 million, representing a net growth of 25 percent in the loan portfolio balance of June 30, 2010
- Lend \$250,000 per year through small loan programs
- Apply to become a Micro Lender, anticipating that long-term financial support for this program will come from the USDA

**Progress:** The most recent data compiled on the progress of this goal for FY16 up to January 2016, show 350 jobs created, with a total of \$2,588,831 new loan activity. Total loan dollars leveraged has been \$13,400,000. (Leveraged dollars include dollars from WCI, public and private funding sources, banks, personal equity, and any other source of funding.) The last objective is no longer being explored at this time.

**Business Assistance**

During the next five years, we will continue to support a flexible mix of services to help entrepreneurs attempting to start-up, expand, stabilize and improve their operations. In some cases assistance will also be provided to help stabilize companies that have received financing through WCI to protect our investment. As a result, we anticipate the following measurable outcomes:

- 1000 entrepreneurs will receive business assistance services (200 per year)
- 80 percent of the entrepreneurs planning a new business will experience a definitive outcome (creation of a new business or a decision not to proceed with the proposed venture) as a result of the services provided
- 65 percent of the existing businesses participating will experience a net increase in profitability or productivity compared to their previous year of operation
- Flexible pilot projects to encourage business growth like New Solutions

**Progress:** The annual goal is continually being achieved. Year ending December 31, 2015, 292 clients have been assisted, with an annual goal of 240. The total goal for the five year period is 1000, and over 1,300 clients have received assistance.

### **Equity Investments**

We will continue to explore equity investment opportunities that fit the needs of our region and have broad impact.

**Progress:** This is ongoing, including working with the local and statewide angel networks, Anderson Center, and Granite Equities, and the MNCup.

### **Regional Industry Clusters**

- Monitor Labor Market Data to identify existing and emerging Industry Clusters
- Identify and promote business development that complements existing and emerging industry clusters, at the same time monitoring for single-event employment difficulties that can arise from a communities over-reliance on one cluster
- Encourage business development that focuses on technology innovation, renewable energy, and bio-business
- Develop strategies that maintains the viability of the clusters and provides enough diversity to balance the economies of the communities that rely on those industries

**Progress:** This is ongoing. The food manufacturing and aquaculture industry are emerging clusters in many locations throughout the region, as well as agricultural implement and construction equipment manufacturing, and the packaging equipment cluster.

### **Infrastructure Development**

- Work with communities to ensure there is adequate infrastructure capacity to maintain current businesses and allow for the expansion of new and existing businesses
- This infrastructure includes, but is not limited to public/private utilities, land, roads, and broadband

**Progress:** After several years of work WCI launched a Capital Improvement Plan grant program to provide city's with matching funds to develop CIPs. The funding will come from WCI's endowment. A two-year initiative with other MN RDC's wrapped-up in 2013 called Minnesota Intelligent Rural Communities (MIRC). The project focused on Broadband Access and Adoption in Greater MN, and was a public/private partnership between the RDC's, WCI, Blandin Foundation, and Department of Commerce's BTOP program. The partnership is continuing with Blandin Foundation's new program: Blandin Community Broadband Program. Continued efforts on broadband funding are now being made by promoting the State's Border to Border Broadband Program.

### **Public/Private Partnerships**

- Continue to foster the public/private partnerships in developing projects and potential business opportunities

- Encourage partnerships where public funding is combined with private funding

**Progress:** This is an ongoing goal that has been successfully implemented as evidenced by the amount of loan dollars leveraged as indicated previously, the MIRC program as indicated previously, and throughout the communities in the region that are able to fund projects from public and private sources. The Perham Interchange project and Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade and expansion addressed in the 2012 CEDS update are a tangible example of this.

#### **National Strategic Priorities**

- Promote projects and fall in line with EDA's National Strategic Priorities

**Progress:** This is ongoing. WCI only brings well developed, eligible projects that meet national strategic priorities forward for investment consideration to EDA.

- 3. Increasing the Skills of the Workforce** – supporting training to help workers become more productive, advance in their careers and become more valuable to their employers, measured by worker productivity and net increase in average pay for workers in the region.

#### **Objectives:**

##### **Workforce 2020 Training Grants**

We will provide grants to support training and retraining of the region's manufacturing workers. These grants will be focused on highly technical training not readily available in the region.

- 2,500 workers will be trained or retrained with direct support from WCI.
- Clients surveyed by Synovate will report impact on the following:
  - Sales increase
  - Sales retained
  - Cost savings in labor, materials, energy, overhead or other areas
  - Retained jobs
  - Created jobs
  - Investment in plant or equipment
  - Investment in information systems or software
  - Investment in workforce practices or employee skill
  - Investment in other areas of business

**Progress:** The annual goal is continually being achieved. At the time of this report final numbers for FY16 were 471 trained, and 3,313 for the entire five-year period

## Workforce Innovation Grants

WCI will provide grants to organizations to launch innovative workforce development programs.

- 25 new programs (five per year) will be implemented
- 75 percent of the programs will continue to be offered in the subsequent year

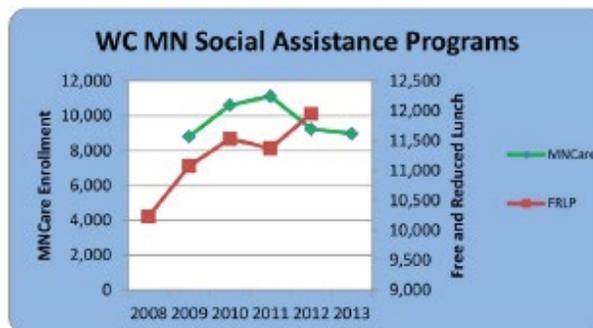
**Progress:** The annual goal is continually being achieved. The purpose of WCI's Competitive Workforce Grant (CWG) is to improve the economy of the region by funding innovative workforce development strategies that address skill shortages. WCI launched the 2013 Competitive Workforce Grant (CWG) grant round in January. Eight grants, totaling \$159,322 were approved by the WCI board in April 2013. In 2014, the board funded an additional \$100,000 for six projects, and 2015, one project was funded totaling \$18,000, in 2016 12 applications were received requesting well over \$500,000, a final decision on who will be awarded funding will be made in May 2016.

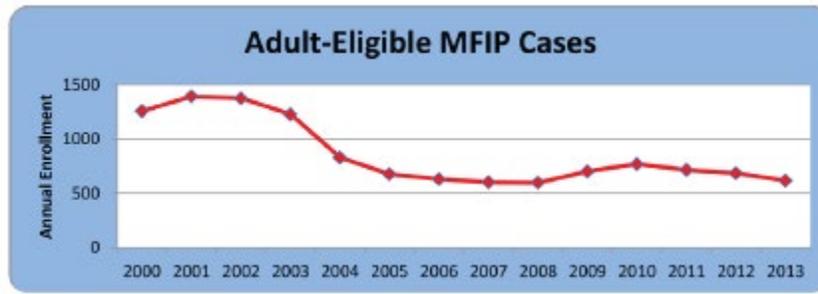
- 4. Increasing net migration to the region** – increasing the number of people in the nine-county region; measured by changes in population numbers, including births and deaths. **Objective: We strive to increase the number of people in the nine-county region over the next five years.**

**Progress:** As indicated in the most current population estimates available, the regional population grew by over 14,000 people according to 2014 estimates since the year 2000.

- 5. Diminishing the Need for Social Programs** – bringing people and organizations together to coordinate services and supports for people working to improve their economic stability; measured by an overall reduction of the use of public support programs within our region in the next five years. **Objective: We strive to decrease the percentage of our population relying on public assistance.**

**Progress:** There is a data lag based on the sources of the published data, the following tables are an indicator of the most current progress:





Source: MN Dept of Human Services and Annie E Casey Foundation \*2008 MNCare and 2013 Free and Reduced Lunch Program (FRLP) numbers not available

**6. Increasing Collaboration Among Empowered Citizens** – offering supports and services to communities seeking positive change, making them more prosperous communities in which to live; measured by the number of individuals and community groups actively involved in community planning, broad-based community efforts such as Early Childhood Initiative coalitions and component funds. **Objective: We strive to increase the number of people engaged in working toward the future success of their communities.**

**Progress:** There is difficulty finding a quantitative source to demonstrate progress on this goal, but work is continuing to engage more people in the region’s communities through leadership training programs, and the community dialogues hosted by WCI, as well as the community mobilization grants funded by WCI. These grants are intended to bring a group of community members together to identify a specific common objective/ issue for the community to work on.

**7. Promoting Philanthropy** – offering community foundation services for the development of local funds and the continued enhancement of an endowment fund to benefit the region; measured by the increase in philanthropic assets held and invested in the region each year. **Objective: We strive to increase the permanent philanthropic assets per capita in our region.**

**Progress:** There is a data lag based on the sources of the published data, the following tables are an indicator of the most current progress:

Year	Registered Organizations	Organizations Filing Form 990 *	Assets Reported on Form 990 *	Annual % Change
2006	1,557	547	\$808,424,908	
2007	1,581	572	\$1,163,272,286	44%
2008	1,707	860	\$1,267,104,155	9%
2009	1,709	1,052	\$1,238,726,352	-2%
2010	1,812	1,287	\$1,299,109,111	5%
2011	1,820	1,397	\$1,483,221,008	14%
2012	1,721	1,312	\$1,563,534,371	5%
2013	1,633	1,288	\$1,543,769,817	-1%

2014	1,729	1,339	\$1,730,853,035	12%
2015	1,780	1,399	\$1,815,120,587	4.87%
2016 (APR)	1,779	1,361	\$1,832,283,619	0.95%

**8. Supporting Diversity** – welcoming new people to the region by supporting communities as their demographics change and helping to address a worker shortage in the region; measured by population and demographic data.

**Objectives:**

We strive to welcome more new people to our region in the next five years.

- Identify and engage key leaders in the immigrant community that will assist us in reaching potential entrepreneurs looking to start a business
- Identify and engage minority-owned businesses and those seeking to start a business
- Share resources and programs with the above groups that facilitates start-ups and expansions of businesses
- Develop and foster relationships with stakeholders that work to develop programs that integrate new residents into their respective communities

**Progress:** This effort is on-going, such as our continued work with the Immigrant Development Center based out of Fargo/Moorhead, and our partnership and annual financial support of the Small Business Development Center for west central Minnesota. The West Central MN SBDC was recently named the 2015 MN SBA Small Business Development Center of Excellence and Innovation. We are also working on developing a stronger relationship with the White Earth Tribal government in relation to economic development initiatives.

**CEDS Plan of Action:**

The plan of action, as described in the CEDS, implements the goals and objectives of the CEDS in a manner that-

- Promotes economic development and opportunity
- Fosters effective transportation access
- Enhances and protects the environment
- Maximizes effective development and use of the workforce consistent with any applicable State or local workforce investment strategy;
- Promotes the use of technology in economic development, including access to high-speed telecommunications;
- Balances resources through sound management of physical development; and
- Obtains and utilizes adequate funds and other resources.

**Statewide Economic Development Objectives:**

As identified in the partners and resources section, WCI will continue to work with our statewide partners such as the SBDC and DEED and other Regional Development Organizations to ensure the overall statewide objectives and priorities for economic

development are being incorporated in our efforts. This includes our continued role in the JOBZ program and the development of the Develop MN framework.

**Performance Measures:**

On an annual basis, during the review of the CEDS document for its annual update, staff will evaluate and annotate the progress of the identified goals and objectives as well as a review of the status of the projects listed in the CEDS. This review will include the following key areas of evaluation:

- Number of jobs created and retained after implementation of the CEDS  
**For FY16 up to January 2016 WCI programs have directly contributed to the creation of 350 jobs. Based on projects included in the CEDS 346 additional jobs were created as indicated in the 2012 GPRA. The 2013 GPRA provided data that an additional 125 jobs were created.**
- Number and types of investments undertaken in the region  
**For FY16 up to January 2016 WCI programs have directly loaned \$2,588,831 leveraged \$13,400,000 and provided \$1,461,121 in grants.**
- Amount of private sector investment in the region after implementation of the CEDS  
**According to the 2012 GPRA there has been \$3,859,000 of private sector investment provided to or pledged for the region. The 2013 GPRA number is \$24,000,000 in private sector investment.**
- Changes in the economic environment of the region  
**The growing lack available workforce to fill existing jobs has been brought to the forefront of discussion amongst all stakeholders. Another emerging trend is the interest in business incubators, and BR&E programs, in addition to housing, cost of utilities, and broadband access, and most recently available childcare, especially infant care.**

**Schedule of Goals for the Next Year**

The goals and objectives contained in the CEDS closely relate to the goals and objectives outlined in WCI's Strategic Plan. Therefore, as an organization all the existing goals currently in the CEDS will be worked on throughout the next year. As an organization WCI conducts a mid-point review on status and progress of the goals outlined in the plan. These goals were developed with the intention that they would be worked on throughout the course of the year as opportunities arise, and therefore a detailed schedule is not believed to be necessary to accomplish these goals.

Priority Areas and additional focus that will be addressed in the next year include the following:

1. Continue to work with partners on addressing workforce shortages and the skills gap throughout the region and evaluate a role for WCI in housing discussions. (July-September).
2. Work with interested communities, including Pelican Rapids to implement business retention and expansion programs (May-September).
3. Partnering and working with organizations to develop opportunities and programs for entrepreneurs (September-June).

4. Monitor industry clusters existing in the region and provide necessary support for those that have the potential for growth in the region (July-August).
5. Public/Private Partnerships: Identify successful models and quantify impact (November-June).
6. Supporting Diversity, work with existing organizations and develop stronger relationships with those organization and tribal partners (February-June).
7. Continue to develop opportunities for communities to access financial capital and workforce training, and support (May-August).
8. Develop a business continuity planning resource for regional businesses and childcare providers (May-Dec).