The Upper Minnesota Valley Region

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

2013-2017

Upper Minnesota Valley
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Helping Communities Prosper
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Table of Contents

Executive Summary

CEDS Purpose

CEDS Process & Strategy Committee

Section One: CEDS Goals, Objectives and Strategies
- Goals, Objectives, Strategies
- Analysis of Regional Economic Development
- Analysis of Economic Development Clusters in the Region
- Support for State of Minnesota Economic Strategies
- Support for Local Workforce Investment Strategies
- Past & Present EDA Investments

Section Two: Demographic Background
- Geography
- Resources & Environment
- Population Trends & Projections
- Education

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Housing

Regional Transportation

Regional Economy & Workforce

Agricultural Perspective

Section Three: Action Plan / Projects

Priority Projects – Non-Infrastructure Projects

Priority Projects – Infrastructure / Community Needs

Performance Measures

Section Four: Disaster Resiliency

Pre-Disaster Action Steps

Post-Disaster Action Steps

Hazard Mitigation Projects

Appendices

Appendix A – CEDS Governing Board (UMVRDC)

Appendix B – Adopting Resolution

Appendix C – Regional Resource Acronyms

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Executive Summary

The Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission and its five counties make up Minnesota Region 6W. Economic Development Region 6W is unique among regions in Minnesota, not only for its many land types and natural amenities but also the makeup of its people and economy. While each county within the region faces a number of diverse issues and opportunities, there are distinct similarities among these five counties. Like other rural areas across the United States, the region faces serious economic challenges. Many of the challenges that our region faces are a direct result of population decline coupled with an increasing aging population.

Historically, the region has been strongly dependent on agriculture for its economic stability. Numerous larger market factors and our heavy dependence on the agricultural sector have left the region especially vulnerable to market fluctuations. It is also becoming more apparent that many of our rural communities' main streets are struggling to stay filled and vibrant.

Despite the tough economic climate within the region, the economy is starting to become more diverse by focusing on value-added manufacturing specialties and renewable energy sources. The background information analyzed reveals that the five counties of Region 6W are very similar in economic trends, population change, unemployment and other demographics. This information also shows that Region 6W often differs greatly when compared to the State of Minnesota as a whole. Because the region does not have a large population center and the landscape is conducive to agricultural activities across all five counties, most areas and populations in Region 6W face similar economic distress.

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy reflects a desire to promote and support a balanced approach to economic development in the region.

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CEDS Purpose

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is the result of a local planning process designed to guide the economic growth of Region 6W. The CEDS is submitted by the Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission (UMVRDC). The information contained within documents progress on economic development activities and reports on changing economic conditions in the economic development region (Region 6W). As a federally funded Economic Development Administration (EDA) planning grantee, Region 6W last revised its CEDS in 2003. Region 6W serves the local units of government in the western Minnesota counties of Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine (Region 6W).

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission is a planning and project implementation process designed to:

- Foster a more stable and diversified economy throughout the region
- Advance housing, entrepreneurship and business opportunities in our communities improving the quality of life
- Guide and coordinate economic development efforts within the region

EDA provides regions with both technical and financial assistance. Investments are focused in areas experiencing or threatened with economic stress. Projects are reviewed according to EDA's six "Investment Policy Guidelines":

1. **Collaborative Regional Innovation**
   Initiatives that support the development and growth of innovation clusters based on existing regional competitive strengths. Initiatives must engage stakeholders; facilitate collaboration among urban, suburban, and rural (including tribal) areas; provide stability for economic development through long-term intergovernmental and public/private collaboration; and support the growth of existing and emerging industries.

2. **Public/Private Partnerships**
   Investments that use both public- and private-sector resources and leverage complementary investments by other government/public entities and/or nonprofits.

3. **National Strategic Priorities**
   Initiatives that encourage job growth and business expansion related to advanced manufacturing; information technology (e.g., broadband, smart grid) infrastructure; natural disaster

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mitigation and resiliency; access to capital for small, medium-sized, and ethnically diverse enterprises; and innovations in science and health care.

4. **Global Competitiveness**
   Initiatives that support high-growth businesses and innovation-based entrepreneurs to expand and compete in global markets, especially investments that expand U.S. exports, encourage foreign direct investment, and promote the repatriation of jobs back to the U.S.

5. **Environmentally-Sustainable Development**
   Investments that promote job creation and economic prosperity through projects that enhance environmental quality and develop and implement green products, processes, places, and buildings as part of the green economy. This includes support for energy-efficient green technologies.

6. **Economically Distressed and Underserved Communities**
   Investments that strengthen diverse communities that have suffered disproportionate economic job losses and/or are rebuilding to become more competitive in the global economy.

This CEDS document is the result of a continuing economic development planning process, developed with broad based and diverse community participation and contains the following types of information:

- Background and history of the economic development situation of the region with a discussion of the economy, including geography, resources, population, labor force;
- An analysis of economic and community development problems and opportunities including incorporation of any relevant material or suggestions from other government sponsored or supported plans;
- A discussion of community participation in the planning efforts;
- A section setting forth goals, objectives and strategies for taking advantage of the opportunities of and solving the economic development problems of the area serviced.

Overall, the goal of the CEDS is to promote economic development (attracting new jobs while retaining existing jobs) as we preserve our quality of life.

CEDS Process & Strategy Committee

Process

This CEDS document was development by Region 6W staff in conjunction with the CEDS Strategy Committee and UMVRDC Board of Commissioners. The process for developing the CEDS consisted of the following:

1. A community development survey – completed in Spring 2012
2. An analysis of the regional and local economic conditions – Fall 2012
3. Identification of strengths and weaknesses – Fall 2012
4. Development of goals and strategies for addressing opportunities and challenges – Winter 2013 CEDS Strategy Committee
5. A CEDS meeting with 12 different local economic development authorities (EDA's) – Spring 2013
6. Development of an implementation plan – Spring 2013 CEDS Strategy Committee

Community and Private Sector Involvement

Community members, public sector agencies and the private sector had input in the development of the CEDS in the following ways:

- UMVRDC Meetings – a diverse board makeup, all public meetings that included two CEDS presentations and updates at every meeting
- Participation in meetings of the CEDS Strategy Committee with a majority representing private sector interests
- EDA focus groups meetings with local economic development authorities
- On-going feedback from regional economic development professionals (ED Pro's). ED Pro's conference call regarding the draft CEDS on May 31st, 2013.
- Utilization of the UMVRDC's website to post CEDS updates: www.umvrdc.org
- Outreach to partner agencies and Region 6W communities through email, phone calls and in-person meetings to confirm their role and partnership in the implementation of the CEDS.

The economic analysis and public outreach were completed throughout 2012 and January – May. 2013. A draft of the CEDS was made available for public review and comments from May – June, 2013 on the UMVRDC's website at www.umvrdc.org. Following the public comment period, a final draft was completed and submitted to EDA in June, 2013.

The CEDS document was made available for review and public comment for a minimum of 30 days. The document was made

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available on Region 6W's website and notices were provided to local units of government and the general public.

To lead the CEDS planning process, the regional planning authority is required to appoint or designate a "Strategy Committee". The Committee is responsible for overseeing the development of the plan and bringing diverse regional perspectives into the creation of new goals and strategies. The Committee is representative of the economic development community within the region including business, industry, government, service and non-profit organizations, minority populations, and training and educational entities.

The following were invited to participate in CEDS Strategy Committee. The end product would not have been possible without the commitment, hard work and guidance from those who participated representing diverse sectors both public and private organizations.

Regional Leaders	Representing	Industry
Paul Kittleson	Public	Mayor City of Benson
Jon Radermacher	Public	City Manager, Madison
Juanita Lauritsen	Public /Private	Executive Director Workforce Council
Ric Schrubb	Higher Education	MinnWest Community & Technical College
Neil Linscheid	Higher Education	University of Minnesota Extension
Angela Steinbach	Public	City of Montevideo
Julie Redepenning	Public / Community Leaders	MN Department of Employment
Joan Danielson	Public	MN Department of Employment
Rick Groothuis	Public	Mayor of Maynard
Becky Parker	Private Business / Community Leader	Finance
Dave Smiglewski	Private Business	Media
Scott Quick	Private Business	Agriculture
Dean Solem	Private Business	Finance
Roman Taffe	Private Business	Healthcare
Kevin Beyer	Private Business	Communications
John Virnig	Private Business	Finance
Scott Marquardt	Private Business	Foundation
Maynard Meyer	Private Business	Communications
Gary Hendrickx	Private Business	Entrepreneur / Small Business
Steve Scott	Private Business	Renewable Energy

CEDS Strategy Committee:
20 Representatives = 100%

Private Reps: 11 = 55%

Public Reps: 9 = 45%

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Section One: CEDS Goals, Objectives and Strategies

As the lead organization in developing the CEDS, Region 6W is committed to a collaborative approach with public, private and other community sectors in order to strengthen and diversify the regional economy in the Upper Minnesota Valley. The goal areas, objectives and strategies identified in this section will help the region move towards its vision:

To Develop and Implement Economic Development Strategies that Promote a More Diverse, Vibrant and Competitive Regional Economy that:
Strengthens our Communities;
Provides Quality Jobs;
Offers Opportunities for Residents and Youth to Remain in / Return to the Region
and
Improves the Quality of Life

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

The goals, objectives and strategies in this section may be approached on either a local or regional level depending on the needs and available resources to move initiatives forward. Working toward our goals and completing a comprehensive set of strategies over the next five years will require a substantial effort among all regional partners. The ultimate and overarching goal that has been identified by CEDS Strategy Committee members, EDA's and other stakeholders is to: **Improve the Quality of Life in the Region**. All the goal areas, objectives and strategies contribute to this overarching goal that is always evolving!

Goal Areas:

Building Communities

Supporting Businesses

Developing Talent

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Interconnected Circles of Success

The CEDS Strategy Committee has identified three areas that serve as overarching goal areas for objectives and strategies as part of the CEDS implementation. Although the objectives and strategies may be organized under the most logical goal area it should be noted that there are many overlapping objectives and strategies that support more than one or all of the goal areas. The three inter-connected circles represent goal areas that will help the region build a successful future.

GOAL AREA: BUILDING COMMUNITIES

Attract and retain residents and workers through building healthy sustainable communities.

Objective: *Encourage local development of proactive economic development initiatives to showcase the region's high quality of life that encompasses assets such as great schools, low crime, low housing costs and no traffic congestion.*

Strategies:

a. *Develop a communication plan for community information resources (pools, golf courses, community services, government websites, etc.).*
b. *Develop a regional brand.*
c. *Develop and market visitor (tourism) opportunities.*
d. *Collect positive case studies about people and/or businesses moving into the region.*
e. *Promote availability and use of broadband technology in the region.*
f. *Provide a resource (web portal) that allows potential newcomers to establish a personal connection to the region. (EDA Center Regional Recruitment Strategies, Ben Winchester, 2011 Report).*
g. *Disseminate a model of regional recruitment to local decision-makers (EDA Center Regional Recruitment Strategies, Ben Winchester, 2011 Report).*

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Objective: *Provide coordination, technical assistance and guidance toward potential funding sources to local units of government for projects and initiatives in the region.*

Strategies:

a. *Encourage arts based opportunities that support long-term community goals and needs.*
b. *Develop a list of topics that local units of government could partner on.*
c. *Support and promote community leadership programs.*
d. *Support housing development and redevelopment (e.g. affordable housing, transitional housing).*
e. *Support and encourage the maintenance, development, funding and proactive planning for infrastructure such as water, sewer, wastewater, broadband, commercial buildings, etc.*

GOAL AREA: SUPPORTING BUSINESSES

Keep and attract quality businesses and jobs in the region.

Objective: *Support the formation, retention and expansion of businesses to create vibrant business communities.*

Strategies:

a. *Promote and assist in the implementation of Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) best practices both regionally and locally.*
b. *Launch a regional marketing campaign for workforce awareness and attraction (SW MN Skills at Work Initiative).*
c. *Create a business leader network.*
d. *Improve, coordinate and streamline services to businesses and entrepreneurs.*
e. *Promote and develop financing tools for businesses and entrepreneurs.*
f. *Integration of business succession planning in recruitment efforts (EDA Center Regional Recruitment Strategies, Ben Winchester, 2011 Report).*

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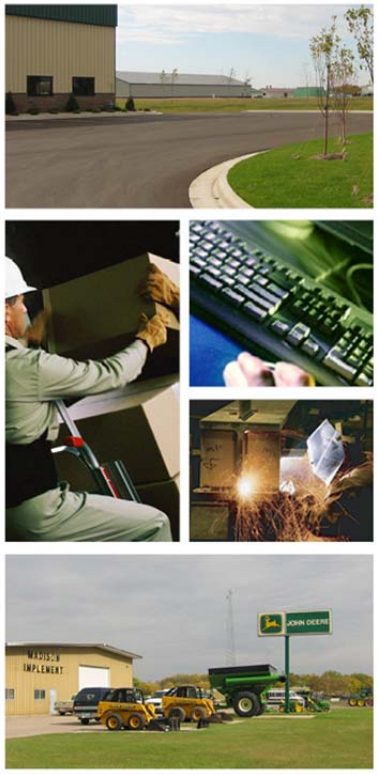
Objective: *Advance the competitiveness of individual communities and the region by maintaining and improving social and physical infrastructure that supports economic development and fosters public-private partnerships.*



Strategies:

a. *Provide strategic planning services to communities to better position them for long-term success/stability.*
b. *Identify best practices for rehabilitation or redevelopment of dilapidated and vacant properties.*
c. *Support and provide examples to economic development groups creating economic development marketing packets.*
d. *Invest and advocate for comprehensive infrastructure development and upgrades that support economic development.*
    i. *Especially infrastructure that address the region's transportation needs and challenges.*

GOAL AREA: DEVELOPING TALENT

Maximize knowledge, skills and talent in the region.

Objective: *Create, attract and maintain a globally competitive workforce to meet the demands of today's employers.*

Strategies:

a. *Design and implement a regional career academy structure for students and workers (SW MN Skills at Work Initiative).*
b. *Develop and promote programs to attract, retain and retrain employees.*
c. *Explore potential for certification of teleworkers and identify businesses that allow teleworking.*
d. *Work with education and workforce services to build and expand training opportunities to meet business labor need.*

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To highlight the interconnectedness of the goals and strategies we've developed a matrix to show which strategies strongly support multiple goal areas and the potential organizations available to support each strategy.

	Where strategies overlap in supporting goal areas	Building Communities	Supporting Businesses	Talent Development	Regional Resources*
1	*Develop a communication plan for community information resources (pools, golf courses, community services, government websites, etc.)*	✓			Community Ed, Chambers, LUG's
2	*Develop a regional brand*	✓	✓	✓	UMVRDC, SWIF, LUG's
3	*Develop and market visitor (tourism) opportunities*	✓	✓		Prairie Waters Tourism, Chambers, LUG's
4	*Collect positive case studies about people and/or businesses moving into the region*	✓	✓	✓	Local Media, Chambers, EDA's
5	*Promote availability and use of broadband technology in the region*	✓	✓	✓	EDA's, Chambers, LUG's
6	*Provide a resource (web portal) that allows potential newcomers to establish a personal connection to the region. (EDA Center Regional Recruitment Strategies, Ben Winchester, 2011 Report)*	✓	✓	✓	UMVRDC, Extension, EDA's, LUG's Realtors
7	*Disseminate a model of regional recruitment to local decision-makers (EDA Center Regional Recruitment Strategies, Ben Winchester, 2011 Report)*	✓		✓	UMVRDC, EDA's, Chambers
8	*Encourage arts based opportunities that support long-term community goals and needs*	✓	✓		SMACH, LUG's
9	*Develop a list of topics that local units of government could partner on*	✓		✓	UMVRDC, SWIF, Extension
10	*Support and promote community leadership programs*	✓	✓	✓	LUG's
11	*Support housing development and redevelopment (e.g. affordable housing, transitional housing)*	✓	✓		EDA's, LUG's, SW MN Housing Partnership, Prairie 5, DEED, UMVRDC
12	*Support and encourage the maintenance, development, funding and proactive planning for infrastructure such as water, sewer, wastewater, broadband, commercial buildings, etc.*	✓	✓		UMVRDC, USDA, LUG's, EDA's, DEED
13	*Provide strategic planning services to communities to better position them for long-term success/stability*	✓			UMVRDC, SWIF, Extension
14	*Identify best practices for rehabilitation or redevelopment of dilapidated and vacant properties*	✓			UMVRDC, Extension, SW MN Housing Partnership, EDA's, LUG's

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Where strategies overlap in supporting goal areas		Building Communities	Supporting Businesses	Talent Development	Regional Resources*
15	*Support and provide examples to economic development groups creating economic development marketing packets*	✓	✓	✓	UMVRDC
16	*Invest and advocate for comprehensive infrastructure development and upgrades that support economic development* *ii. especially infrastructure that address the region's transportation needs and challenges*	✓	✓		UMVRDC, EDA's, LUG's
17	*Promote and assist in the implementation of Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) best practices both regionally and locally*	✓	✓	✓	EDA's, Extension, UMVRDC
18	*Launch a regional marketing campaign for workforce awareness and attraction (SW MN Skills at Work Initiative)*		✓	✓	SW MN PIC, Workforce Council, Chambers, EDA's, Higher Ed
19	*Create a business leader network*			✓	EDA's, Chambers, SWIF
20	*Improve, coordinate and streamline services to businesses and entrepreneurs*		✓	✓	Local EDA's
21	*Promote and develop financing tools for businesses and entrepreneurs*		✓	✓	UMVRDC, SBDC, Loan EDA's
22	*Integration of business succession planning in recruitment efforts (EDA Center Regional Recruitment Strategies, Ben Winchester, 2011 Report)*		✓	✓	Local EDA's, SBDC
23	*Design and implement a regional career academy structure for students and workers (SW MN Skills at Work Initiative)*			✓	SWMNPIC, Workforce Council
24	*Develop and promote programs to attract, retain and retrain employees*			✓	Local EDA's, DEED SWMNPIC, Workforce Council
25	*Explore potential for certification of teleworkers and identify businesses that allow teleworking*		✓	✓	Local EDA's, DEED SWMNPIC, Workforce Council
26	*Work with education and workforce services to build and expand training opportunities to meet business labor*		✓	✓	Local EDA's, DEED, SWMNPIC, Workforce Council

* See Appendix C: Regional Resource Acronyms

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Support for Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development Investment Strategies

Every effort has been made to include State of Minnesota partner goals and objectives and mission into the CEDS document and implementation. The following goals and strategies were taken into consideration in the development with this plan and align with the resulting goals and priorities for the region.

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) has four main strategies for economic development in Minnesota:

- Help create a business climate for growth and new businesses
- Maximize talent development to meet demand
- Create a culture of sustainable collaboration
- Raise awareness of Minnesota's advantages and opportunities

The department has goals that support the above strategies:

- Create and retain jobs
- Cultivate entrepreneurs
- Enhance community vitality
- Strengthen the workforce
- Address economic change
- Foster self sufficiency
- Develop and distribute information

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Support for Local Workforce Investment Strategies

The Southwest Private Industry Council is the local workforce investment agency. It is a nonprofit employment and training agency and statewide partner in the region and is part of the Minnesota Workforce Center System. The agency's mission is to match job seekers, youth, businesses, and those seeking training with the resources available to them.

The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council, Inc. (SW MN PIC) serves the counties of Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock, Swift, and Yellow Medicine. There are 16 Workforce Service Areas (WSAs) across Minnesota. The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council serves Workforce Service Area #6 in the southwest corner of Minnesota. The SW MN Private Industry Council provides leadership and direction for local workforce development programs, which are tailored to meet the specific needs of each of our communities.

Mission Statement: Building Tomorrow's Workforce through Training, Leadership and Economic Development

Regional workforce strategies identified in the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council's 2012 Unified Plan show support for the Governor's Workforce Development Council Report titled "All Hands on Deck Report" which includes the following goals and strategies:

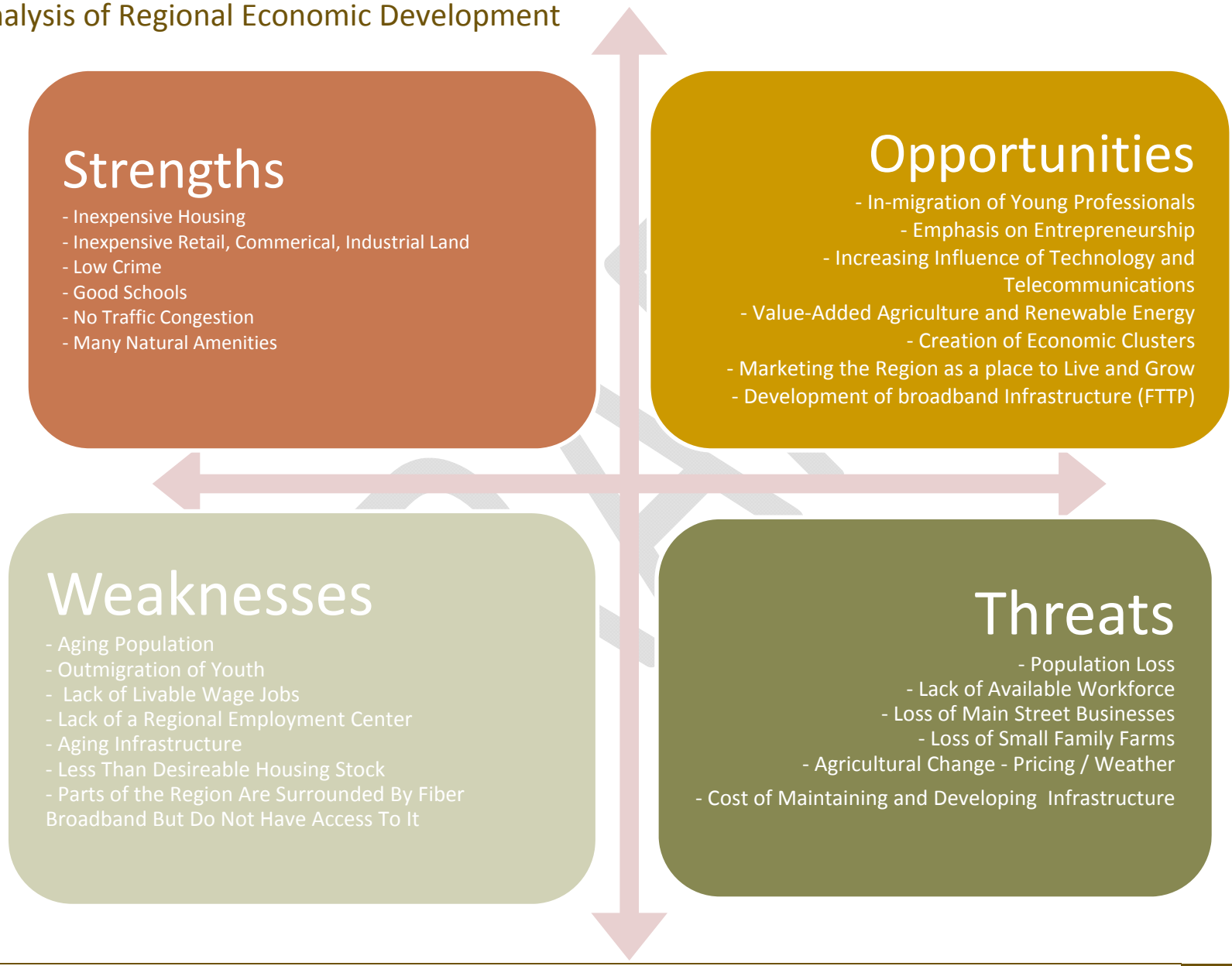
- Strengthening the skills of our current workforce
- Creating work and lifetime learning options for Minnesota's aging workers
- Expanding work opportunities for Minnesotans with disabilities
- Ensuring all high school graduates are ready for success

MINNESOTA WORKFORCE CENTER

A Workforce System Partner

Support and synchronization of these strategies are reflected in the employee development and economic development goals, objectives and strategies within this document.

Analysis of Regional Economic Development



Distinguishing Industries

- Mostly Related to Agriculture and Farm Products
- Construction of Buildings
- Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction
- Electric Power Generation
- Utility Repair and Maintenance
- Chemical Manufacturing
- Nursing and Resident Care Facilities
- Gambling and Recreation

Region 6W Distinguishing Industries	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	MN Loc. Quo.	Avg Annual Wages
Total, All Industries	1,611	17,754	1	$31,928
Other Crop Farming	21	64	11.3	$26,468
Oilseed and Grain Farming	34	132	10.2	$26,468
Petroleum and Petroleum Products Merchant	5	110	9.6	$47,476
Support Activities for Crop Production	11	82	8.2	$70,356
Farm Product Raw Material Merchant	29	425	8.1	$50,440
Hog and Pig Farming	10	138	6.7	$37,232
Miscellaneous Nondurable Goods Merchant	20	248	4.5	$46,124
Construction of Buildings	58	472	3.1	$46,072
Textile Product Mills	4	45	3	$14,508
Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	59	811	2.8	$48,152
Machinery Manufacturing	13	545	2.5	$48,932
Gasoline Stations	32	378	2.4	$16,952
Waste Management and Remediation Service	11	107	2.4	$34,060
Elementary and Secondary Schools	35	1,756	2.4	$35,152
Executive, Legislative, and Other General	41	1,045	2.3	$28,080
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	33	344	2.1	$44,824
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	29	1,369	1.9	$21,528
Postal Service	30	148	1.8	$41,444
Utility Repair and Maintenance	60	240	1.8	$31,200
Food Manufacturing	14	520	1.7	$35,308
Health and Personal Care Stores	17	165	1.7	$24,544
Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	19	480	1.7	$22,204
Truck Transportation	55	259	1.6	$35,984
Chemical Manufacturing	3	100	1.5	$51,636
Electric Power Generation Transmission	9	121	1.5	$67,704

Source: Cameron Macht DEED ED Pro's Presentation 05.30.13

Analysis of Economic Clusters within the Region Continued

The region is home to two ethanol producing facilities (Benson & Granite Falls). Major industries in the region include: healthcare and related services, trade, transportation and utilities and manufacturing.

Local economic clusters include (but are not limited to):

Benson, Swift County – Bioenergy Cluster
Home to: ethanol production, biomass gassifier and the nation's first poultry fueled biomass power plant.

Dawson, Lac qui Parle County – Agriculture Processing Cluster
Home to: soybean processor facility that is owned by the largest cooperative soybean processor in the world! And a kosher meat processing and cooking facility and a major trucking outfit that specializes in transporting dairy products.

Canby, Yellow Medicine County – Renewable Energy (Wind)
Home to: Minnesota West Community and Technical College Wind Energy Technology Program and a wind power operations and maintenance company.

Granite Falls, Yellow Medicine County – Industrial Manufacturing
Home to: the largest industrial park in the region with 17 lots privately held and used for manufacturing purposes.

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Past and Present EDA Investments

EDA Planning Partnership:

EDA has been a strong economic development partner for decades with the assistance of EDA Planning Grants for community and economic development planning that have resulted in immeasurable state and federal partnerships and projects. Today, the need for community and economic development assistance is stronger than ever. Currently only three of the region's thirty-seven communities have paid full-time economic development staff and only three out of the five counties have an economic development entity.

Working together with EDA to bring federal funding opportunities to Region 6W! Pictured left to right: Pat Lydic, EDA Area Director; Dennis Foldenauer, EDA Representative – Minnesota Point of Contact (POC); Jacki Anderson, UMVRDC Senior Planner; Dawn Hegland, UMVRDC Executive Director; and Matt Erskine, U.S. Department of Commerce Acting Assistant Deputy Secretary.

UMVRDC Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)

Since 1989 the RLF has helped over 100 businesses start-up and expand!

EDA Project Awards Over the Last 10 Years

UMVRDC RLF Disaster Response Fund – $400,000 EDA Award & $100,000 leveraged from 5 counties for a total of $500,000 to aid in disaster resiliency.

Dawson EDA Award 2012 – Industrial Park Expansion
EDA provided $1.2 million to help with infrastructure improvements. The improvements will finish roads in the existing industrial park, develop a new wastewater treatment plant to serve the park and will develop another 65 acres that will be available for sale. This will be the only shovel ready industrial park in the region.

Granite Falls EDA Award 2013 – EDA provided a $1.5 million for new lift station as a disaster response project to protect the economic base and create better resiliency from future flood impacts.

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Section Two Background: The Region and Our Economy

Geography of the Upper Minnesota Valley

Region 6W is located in west central Minnesota along the South Dakota border. Region 6W consists of Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift, and Yellow Medicine counties. The 2000 Census identifies 3,409.5 square miles of total area within the region.

The total area encompasses:

- 3346.11 sq. mi of land
- 63.39 sq. m of water
- Farmland makes up an average 90% of land use in each county

Resources and Environment

The topography of the region is closely related to glacial activity, which is responsible for most of the region's natural features. The region is characterized by a gently rolling glacial drift plain containing many closed depressions occupied by an abundance of small lakes and wetlands. The majority of the upland prairie is used for agriculture. Tree cover is concentrated on the banks of the Minnesota Review Valley and its tributaries and around many of the lakes.

The larger communities with populations over 1,000 include: Appleton (1,412), Benson (3,240), Canby (1,795), Clara City (1,360), Dawson (1,540), Granite Falls (2,897), Madison (1,551), Montevideo (5,383), and Ortonville (1,916).

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Population Trends 1960 – 2010

Historical Populations	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Total % Change
UMVRDC Region	***69,063***	***61,806***	***59,822***	***50,845***	***50,011***	***45,190***	***-34.57%***
Households	*19,428*	*19,367*	*NA*	*20,088*	*19,846*	*20,039*	*3.14%*
Big Stone County	8,954	7,941	7,716	6,285	5,820	5,269	-41.15%
Chippewa County	16,320	15,109	14,941	13,228	13,088	12,441	-23.77%
Lac qui Parle County	13,330	11,164	10,592	8,924	8,067	7,259	-45.54%
Swift County	14,936	13,177	12,920	10,724	11,956	9,783	-34.50%
Yellow Medicine County	15,523	14,415	13,653	11,684	11,080	10,438	-32.76%

Source: US Census Bureau

The Upper Minnesota Valley Region has seen an overall decrease in population from 1960 – 2010, although the population decrease often started before 1960 in many communities throughout the region. Over the past 50 years, the region has experienced a decrease in population of over 20,000. However, during the same period of time, the region has seen an increase in the number of households, meaning that there are fewer people per household now than ever before.

Population Projections	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	Total % Change
UMVRDC Region	***45,510***	***45,300***	***45,000***	***44,500***	***44,110***	***-3.08%***
Big Stone County	5,190	5,160	5,160	5,110	5,060	-2.50%
Chippewa County	12,890	13,040	13,200	13,130	13,130	1.86%
Lac qui Parle County	6,940	6,830	6,770	6,640	6,520	-6.05%
Swift County	10,510	10,300	10,150	9,960	9,800	-6.76%
Yellow Medicine County	9,980	9,970	9,720	9,660	9,600	-3.81%

Source: US Census Bureau

Population Projections 2015 – 2035

Projections show the region slightly decreasing in population over the next few decades, however less dramatically than over the past 50 years. Chippewa County is the only county showing potential population gain. Swift and Lac qui Parle Counties show the most dramatic projected losses at 6.76% and 6.05% respectively.

Education – School Enrollment Since 1999

School District	1999-2000	2005-2006	2010-2011	Total % Change
Benson School District	1,216	1,050	970	-20.23%
Canby School District	766	581	522	-31.85%
Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley School District	565	434	377	-33.27%
Dawson-Boyd School District	681	544	517	-24.08%
Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg School District	664	585	557	-16.11%
Lac qui Parle Valley School District	1,245	1,007	820	-34.14%
Lakeview School District	589	609	595	1.02%
M.A.C.C.R.A.Y. School District	986	790	674	-31.64%
Montevideo School District	1,599	1,459	1,342	-16.07%
Ortonville School District	717	530	527	-26.50%
Yellow Medicine East School District	1,299	1,081	862	-33.64%

Source: Minnesota Department of Education

All school districts in the Upper Minnesota Valley Region have experienced a decline of 15 to over 30% in school enrollment, except Lakeview School District, which includes the cities of Cottonwood (outside the Region) and Wood Lake. The decline in enrollment throughout the rest of the Region is consistent with the declining and aging population in the Region.

Note: Data was only available for public school districts in the Region. Both Clarkfield and Echo located in Yellow Medicine County are home to charter schools of their own. Enrollment for the Clarkfield Charter School during the 2011-2012 school year was 75 students in pre-kindergarten through 6th grade. The Echo Charter School enrollment for 2011-2012 was 182 students for kindergarten through 12th grade. Two other schools in the region include the Benson Christian School located in Benson and St. Peters Catholic School located in Canby, neither of which data was available.

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County	Median Home Value	Median Rent	Median Monthly Housing Costs
Big Stone	$81,900	$447	$924
Chippewa	$94,400	$542	$1,026
Lac qui Parle	$77,100	$449	$868
Swift County	$97,600	$453	$1,024
Yellow Medicine	$97,100	$505	$997
Minnesota	$206,200	$759	$1,549

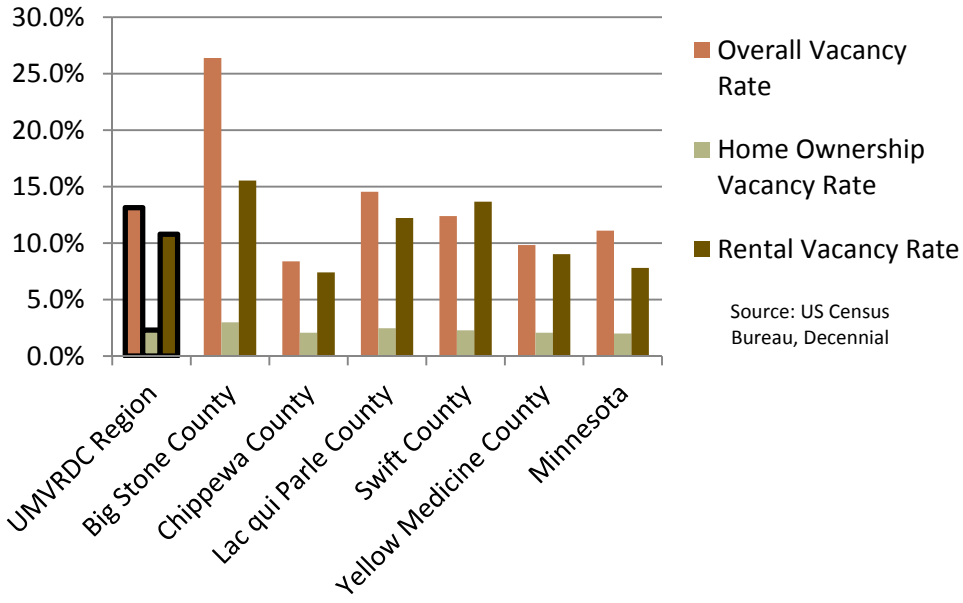
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS (2006-2010)

Housing Statistics

The median home value in the Upper Minnesota Valley Region is lower than the State of Minnesota. Most homes in the region fall between $75,000 and $95,000 or a range of about $20,000. Median monthly housing costs and the median monthly rent in all five counties are also lower than the State of Minnesota, but are fairly consistent in the Region with the difference between the highest and lowest costs less than $200. Chippewa County has the highest median rent and monthly housing costs, while Swift County has the highest median home value.

2010 Home Vacancies

Home ownership vacancy rate and rental vacancy rate are the proportion of the homeowner or rental inventory that is vacant "for sale" or vacant "for rent." The overall vacancy rate includes other vacancies such as vacant "sold – not occupied," seasonal housing and vacant "rented – not occupied." In 2010, the Upper Minnesota Valley Region had both slightly higher overall and rental vacancy rates than Minnesota as a whole. Within the Region, Big Stone County had the highest overall vacancy rates while Chippewa County had the lowest. The homeownership vacancy rate is relatively low for all five counties as well as the State of Minnesota.



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Regional Transportation

Roadway System

Region 6W has many roadway types throughout its boundaries. These roadways range from U.S. and State Highways to Township Roads and Municipal Streets. The following table shows the total miles of roadway by classification broken down by each county.

Miles of Roadway Type in Region 6W

	U.S. Highway	State Highway	County State Aid Highway	Municipal State Aid Streets	County Roads	Township Roads	Municipal Streets
Chippewa	6.8	126.0	243.6	8.2	55.0	706.9	62.2
Lac qui Parle	70.7	40.4	361.7	0.0	136.5	821.0	42.4
Yellow Medicine	42.4	92.9	345.9	0.0	165.6	800.4	53.7
Big Stone	51.7	59.0	210.6	0.0	197.8	349.5	15.1
Swift	65.4	67.7	329.5	0.0	131.5	734.0	17.2

Source: MnDOT Basemap and Region 6W County Engineers

Other transportation issues that have been identified include:

- Lack of available funding for our rural area
- Lack of funding particularly to small cities and townships (tax base cannot support needs)
- Lack of maintenance on the roads we have
- Improve heavy commercial routes (10-ton network)
- Safety issues (shoulders, speed limits, traffic lights, few passing lanes & turn lanes, train crossings, narrow 2-lane roads)
- More flexible bus service hours and routes
- Need for more trails

A commonly identified need in the region is a safe, efficient and reliable transportation system for the efficient movement of goods and people throughout the region and to and from major trade centers outside the region. Although there is not an interstate within the region, convenient access to interstates is important to business, industry and people in the region. There are several Corridor Coalitions advocating for safety improvements and additional capacity in the form of expanded four-lane highways, passing lanes and/or turn lanes for major roadways in the region. The most active Corridor Coalitions are in support of expanding capacity on U.S. Highway 212 and Minnesota Trunk Highway 23, however Minnesota Trunk Highway 7 and U.S. Highway 12 also have groups advocating for other types of improvements along those roadways. Mn/DOT's recent Interregional Corridor Study identified Regional Trade Centers for the state and prioritized interconnecting roadways. The region's highest-level roadways according to this study are U.S. Highway 212 and Minnesota Trunk Highway 23. Both were labeled as Medium Priority Interregional Corridors. Montevideo was Region 6W's only identified Regional Trade Center, with it being identified as a "shopping" center.

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Railroads

Railroad infrastructure is also important to the region. The railway lines that service the region are owned by three companies: Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, the Twin Cities and Western Railroad, and Minnesota Central Railroad. Although some goods can be shipped via railroad, other more perishable goods cannot because of the relatively low frequency of trains. Much of the goods transported by rail in Region 6W are agriculture based, with each line in the region connecting to local grain elevators.

Region 6W has developed a document called "Inventory of Grain Elevators and Feed Mills Licensed to Store and Buy Grain in Region 6W". The inventory document lists all of the elevators or mill information available in Region 6W. The document also includes the major rail generators to those facilities listed. Listed below are rail generators with 54-car loading facilities or greater from the document.

Major Rail Generators in Region 6W

1. Beardsley Farmers Elevator Co. = (54-car Multi-loading)
2. Big Bend City - Cargill Inc. = (110-car Multi-loading)
3. Clara City Farmers Co-op Elevator = (110-car Multi-loading)
4. Clarkfield – Prairie Grain Partners = (110-car Multi-loading)
5. Graceville – Cargill Inc. = (110-car Multi-loading)
6. Hanley Falls – Farmers Cooperative Elevator Co. = (110-car Multi-loading)
7. Holloway – Western Consolidated = (110-car Multi-loading)
8. Maynard – Cargill Inc. = (110-car Multi-loading)
9. Madison Farmers Mill & Elevator Co. = (110-car Multi-loading)
10. Montevideo – Harvest States Co-op = (54-car Multi-loading)
11. Murdock – Glacial Plains Cooperative = (110-car Multi-loading)

Source: UMVRDC Inventory of Grain Elevators and Feed Mills Licensed to Store and Buy Grain in Region 6W

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Transit Systems

Transit systems play an important part in the lives of residents of Region 6W. Seniors and youth especially, benefit from the network of available transit. Transit is available for people needing rides for any reason, such as medical appointments, social events, shopping, etc. in the region. The services also provide rides outside the region to places such as Minneapolis/St. Paul, Fargo/Moorhead, St. Cloud, Willmar, Marshall, and Watertown, SD.

6W Transit System Characteristics

Provider	Vehicles (Small buses)	Ridership	Annual Miles	Operating Cost
Benson	3	45,995	47,377	$186,675
Dawson (6 months) **	1	14,436	14,436	$26,913
Granite Falls	1	21,192	28,045	$130,030
Montevideo **	2.5*	40,437	53,508	$178,543
Prairie Five Rides	12	87,556	337,705	$936,543

Source: 2012 MNDOT Data

* 2.5 – one vehicle is operating only half of the time.

** Dawson and Montevideo merged with Prairie Five in 2012. Dawson merged half way through the year thus only showing 6 months while Montevideo merged at the end of the year.

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Airports

Region 6W has various size airports throughout the region. The majority of the region's airports do not support commercial service and are generally used for small private planes. The closest airports to Region 6W that support commercial service are located in Fergus Falls and St. Cloud. Depending upon future economic development activity in the region, airport facilities may require improvements.

In Big Stone County, the cities of Graceville and Ortonville have airports. The Kapaun-Wilson Airport near Graceville has a turf runway that is 2,495 ft. in length and 150 ft. wide. The Ortonville Municipal Airport has a paved, 3,417 ft. runway that is 75 ft. in width. It also has a turf runway 2,158 ft. long and 300 ft. wide.

In Chippewa County, the Montevideo/Chippewa County Airport has a paved runway 4,000 ft. in length and 75 ft. wide. The average number of planes landing at this facility per day is estimated at six. This airport also has a turf runway 2,400 ft. long and 150 ft. wide.

In Lac qui Parle County, the Madison/Lac qui Parle County Airport has a 3,300 ft. paved runway that is 75 ft. wide and a turf runway that is 2,600 ft. long and 150 ft. wide.

In Swift County, the cities of Appleton, Benson, and Murdock have airports. The Appleton Municipal Airport has a paved 3,500 ft. runway that is 75 ft. wide and a turf runway 2,700 ft. in length and 150 ft. in width. The Benson Municipal Airport has a paved 4,000 ft. runway that is 75 ft. wide and is estimated to land 6-8 planes per day. The Murdock Municipal Airport has a turf 3,415 ft. runway that is 150 ft. wide.

Yellow Medicine County also has two airports located in the cities of Canby and Granite Falls. The Canby Municipal Airport supports a 2,560 ft. paved runway that is 75 ft. wide. The Granite Falls Municipal Airport has a 3,700 ft. paved runway and is 75 ft. wide. It is estimated that the Granite Falls Municipal Airport lands 6 planes per day.

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Regional Transportation Map

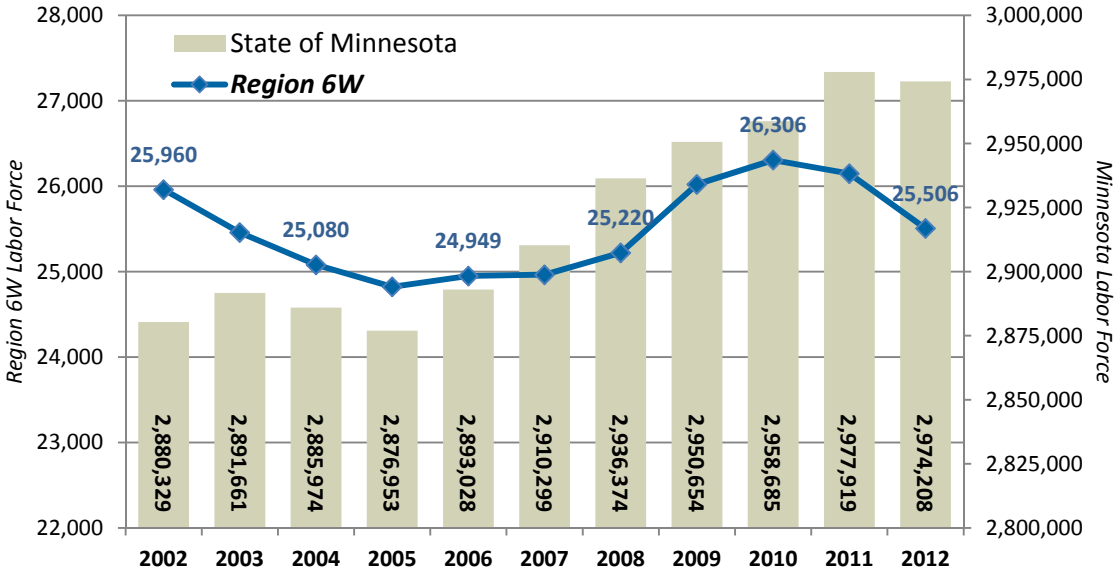
Regional Economy & Workforce

Current Economic Conditions

The labor forces in the region peaked in 2010 at 26,306 and have since declined to below 2002 levels of participation. The labor force estimate for the region as of 2012 is 25,506.

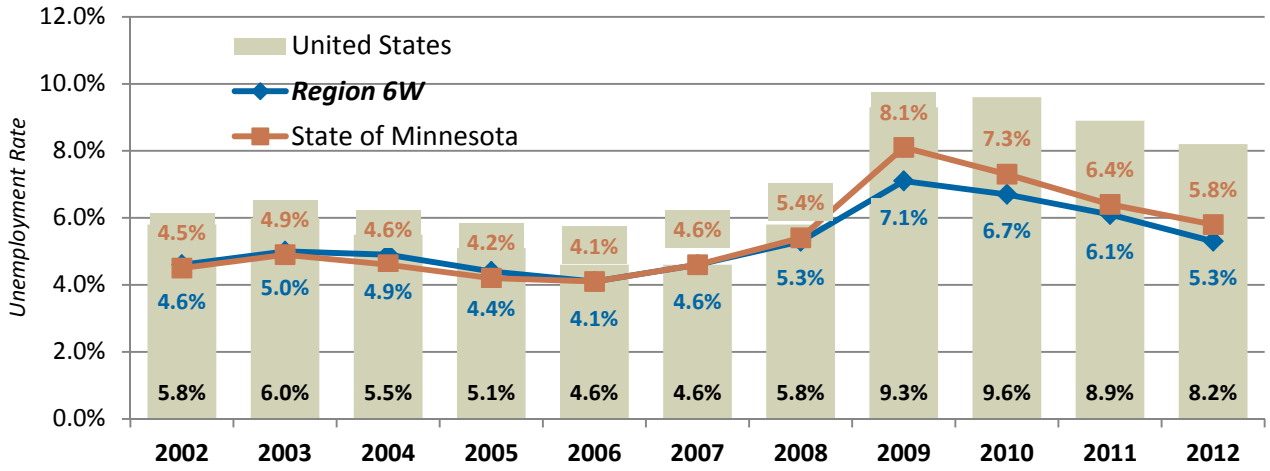
Unemployment rates for the region are traditionally less than the U.S. and State of Minnesota. However, the past decade shows the region having nearly equal unemployment rates to the State of Minnesota, which continue to be consistently less than the U.S. unemployment rate.

Labor Force Estimates, 2002 to 2012



Source: DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program

Unemployment Rates, 2002 to 2012

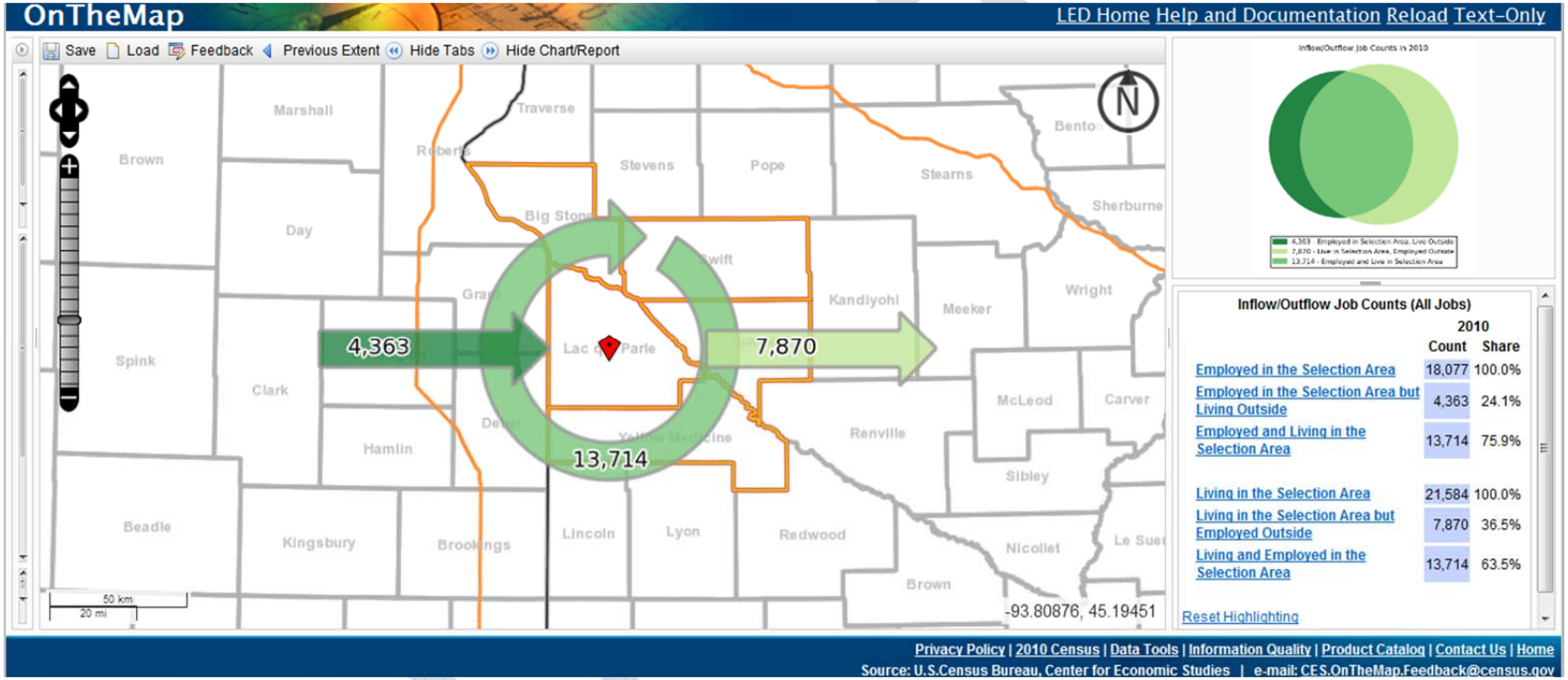


Source: DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program

The region experienced increases in unemployment between 2008 and 2010, with all counties now seeing declines in unemployment rates. Chippewa and Swift Counties peaked with the highest regional unemployment rates in 2008 and 2009 with rates of 8.1% and 8% respectively according to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (LAUS).

Workforce

Based on 2010 Census information the diagram below reflects the number of people that live in the region but are employed outside of the region (7,870), the number of people employed in the region that live outside of the region (4,363) and the number that both live and work in the region (13,714).



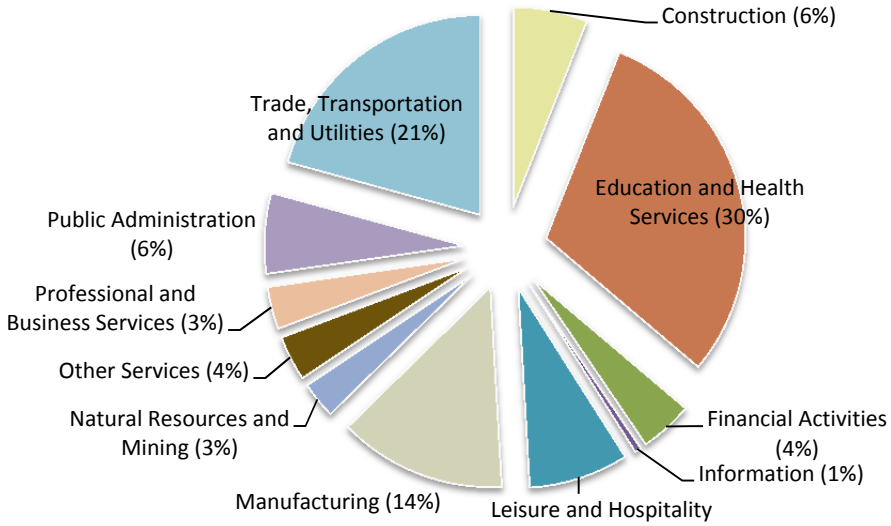
Employment in Region 6W

The top three major industries in the region include:

1. Education & Health Services
2. Trade, Transportation and Utilities
3. Manufacturing

The number of firms in the region peaked in 2006 at 1,707 and peaked with the number of jobs in 2008 with 18,871. Jobs have since been on the decline, while the number of firms has had a slight uptick in 2011 and 2012.

Regional Employment by Industry



Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) QCEW

Year	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs
2002	1663	18379
2003	1659	18125
2004	1637	18177
2005	1691	18334
2006	1707	18637
2007	1637	18772
2008	1624	18871
2009	1594	18611
2010	1588	18208
2011	1603	18058
2012	1611	17894

Source: DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program

According to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, the highest average weekly wage was $657 in Swift County. Montevideo the county seat for Chippewa County is the region's largest community and hub for jobs and shopping, this explains the significant number of employees and higher total wages found in Chippewa County.

County	Number of Employees	Number of Firms	Total Wages	Average Weekly
Yellow Medicine	4,259	356	$139,301,704	$628
Swift County	3,706	343	$126,756,509	$657
Lac qui Parle County	2,421	230	$75,823,158	$602
Chippewa County	5,697	455	$184,031,986	$621
Big Stone County	1,902	210	$58,389,854	$589
Regional Totals	17,985	1,594	$584,303,211	$619

Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, QCEW 2010

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Industry and Employment Outlook

The industry outlook for southwest Minnesota, which includes all of the Upper Minnesota Valley Region and counties to the south and east, shows the top ten industries projected to grow between 2010 and 2020. With all of the agricultural activity in southwest Minnesota it's no surprise that specialized freight trucking is projected to have the greatest increase. The median annual salaries of employees employed by these industries are encouraging considering the wages in the southwest region are the lowest in the state.

Industry	Estimated Employment 2010	Projected Percent Change 2010 - 2020	Median Annual Salary 2009
Specialized Freight Trucking	1,048	57.4%	$32,136
Building Equipment Contractors	1,824	43.1%	$39,936
Architectural and Structural Metals	429	42.4%	$44,304
Basic Chemical Manufacturing	499	37.1%	$50,960
Other Specialty Trade Contractors	877	34.5%	$32,188
Ag., Construction, and Mining Machinery	2,391	32.9%	$41,808
Offices of Physicians	1,848	29.9%	$68,328
Highway, Street, and Bridge Construction	528	28.8%	$53,612
Cement & Concrete Product Manufacturing	611	28.8%	$41,912
Utility System Construction	467	26.3%	$46,904

Source: DEED Employment Outlook Tool 05.15.15

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The jobs outlook below shows growth in industries that are either complementary to agriculture or accommodate the demographics of the area. Construction, Transportation and Warehousing and Health Care and Social Assistance are projected to have the greatest amount of employment changes between 2010 and 2020.

Southwest Minnesota Employment Outlook, 2010 to 2020				
NAICS Industry Title	**2010 Estimated Employment**	**2020 Projected Employment**	**Percent Change 2010-2020**	**Numeric Change 2010-2020**
Total, All Industries	206,339	227,716	10.4%	21,377
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	5,710	6,607	15.7%	897
Mining	333	350	5.1%	17
Construction	6,749	8,880	31.6%	2,131
Manufacturing	30,430	32,587	7.1%	2,157
Utilities	781	771	-1.3%	-10
Wholesale Trade	8,454	8,848	4.7%	394
Retail Trade	19,812	21,316	7.6%	1,504
Transportation and Warehousing	5,031	6,382	26.9%	1,351
Information	2,814	2,860	1.6%	46
Finance and Insurance	5,924	6,019	1.6%	95
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,221	1,426	16.8%	205
Professional and Technical Services	3,970	4,544	14.5%	574
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,080	2,600	25.0%	520
Administrative and Waste Services	3,649	4,514	23.7%	865
Educational Services	1,953	2,157	10.4%	204
Health Care and Social Assistance	25,555	33,607	31.5%	8,052
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,535	2,687	6.0%	152
Accommodation and Food Services	11,784	12,251	4.0%	467
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	8,423	8,763	4.0%	340
Public Administration	32,270	31,721	-1.7%	-549

Source: DEED 2010 to 2020 Employment Outlook tool

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Emerging Industries

- **Biggest job gains in Agriculture**
  - Crop Production;
  - Hog & Pig Farming
  - Support Activities for Agriculture
  - Petroleum Wholesalers
  - Admin. of Environmental Quality Programs
- **Construction**
  - Heavy & Civil Eng. Construction
  - Building Materials Services to Bldgs.
- **Manufacturing**
  - Plastics & Rubber
  - Transp. Equip.
  - Admin. Support
- **Financial Services**
  - Credit Intermed.
  - Mgmt of Companies
- **Health Care**
  - Nursing & Res. Care

Region 6W Emerging Industries	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	Change in Jobs 2011-2012		Avg Annual Wages
Total, All Industries	1,611	17,754	-1.50%	-263	$31,928
Building Material and Garden Equipment	35	177	35.10%	46	$23,868
Gasoline Stations	32	378	12.20%	41	$16,952
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	33	344	12.40%	38	$44,824
Oilseed and Grain Farming	34	132	32%	32	$26,468
Crop Production	52	203	14.70%	26	$28,236
Elementary and Secondary Schools	35	1,756	1.40%	24	$35,152
Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	3	117	23.20%	22	$40,820
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	3	67	26.40%	14	$29,640
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	29	1,369	1%	13	$21,528
Services to Buildings and Dwellings	13	82	13.90%	10	$21,528
Hog and Pig Farming	10	138	6.20%	8	$37,232
Petroleum and Petroleum Products Merchant	5	110	7.80%	8	$47,476
Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	41	424	1.90%	8	$39,624
Management of Companies and Enterprises	5	69	13.10%	8	$36,192
Administrative and Support Services	32	124	6.90%	8	$24,440
Administration of Environmental Quality	21	77	11.60%	8	$36,504
Support Activities for Agriculture and Forestry	11	82	9.30%	7	$70,356
Securities, Commodity Contracts and Other	6	14	75%	6	$52,000

Source: Cameron Macht DEED ED Pro's Presentation 05.30.13

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	2011 Per Capita Income	Percent of U.S. Per Capita	Percent of MN Per Capita
United States	**$27,915**	**100%**	**109%**
Minnesota	$30,310	109%	100%
Big Stone Co.	$24,960	89%	82%
Chippewa Co.	$24,211	87%	80%
Lac qui Parle Co.	$25,519	91%	84%
Swift Co.	$22,699	81%	75%
Yellow Medicine Co.	$23,718	85%	78%
UMVRDC (6W) Average	$24,221	87%	80%

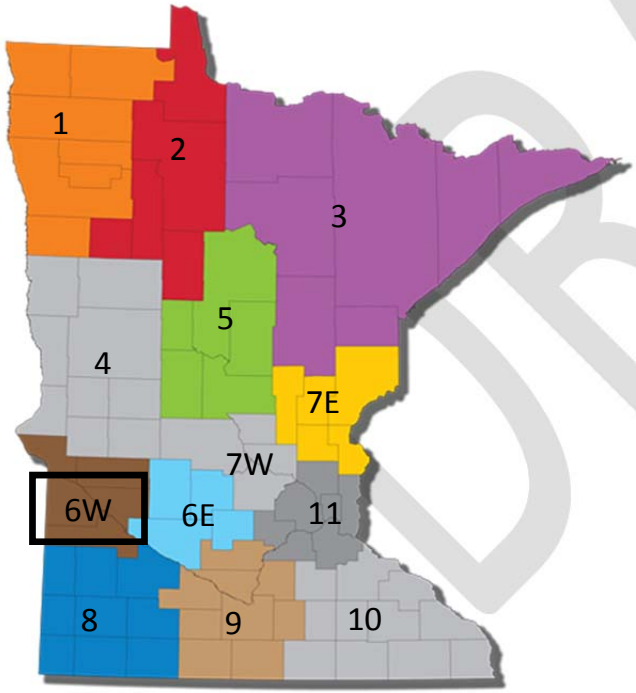
Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey

Per Capita Income

According to 2007-2011 ACS data all of the region's per capita income remains just above EDA's distress criteria. Swift County has the lowest per capita income at $22,699, while Lac qui Parle County has the greatest per capita income in the region at $25,519.

Regional Salaries

Region 6W region has one of the lowest in the state for median hourly wages in the state. The region's estimated employment is the smallest in the state.



Minnesota Economic Development Regions (EDRs)

Salary Survey, 4th Quarter 2011 Minnesota Regional Development Organizations	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Regional Employment
EDR 1 – Northwest	$16.08	34,890
EDR 2 – Headwaters	$14.21	27,930
EDR 3 – Arrowhead	$15.59	138,520
EDR 4 – West Central	$14.74	78,710
EDR 5 – North Central	$14.31	57,570
EDR 6E – Southwest Central	$15.04	47,730
EDR 6W – Upper MN Valley	**$14.02**	**17,690**
EDR 7E – East Central	$15.80	42,730
EDR 7W – Central	$15.65	142,780
EDR 8 – Southwest	$13.50	52,470
EDR 9 – South Central	$14.69	95,400
EDR 10 – Southeast	$17.09	216,320
EDR 11 – Twin Cities	$19.44	1,556,540

Source: DEED Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics (OES) program. WSA6 Regional

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Agricultural Perspective

	2002 Farms	2007 Farms	Principal Operators Farming	*Farming Percent*	Land in Farms (acres)	Market Value of Products Sold	Total Value Sales	Crop Sales	Livestock Sales
Big Stone Co.	446	452	281	*62.20%*	252,291	$86,834,000	57th	48th	55th
Chippewa Co.	694	720	399	*55.40%*	367,926	$169,002,000	37th	14th	57th
Lac qui Parle Co.	910	932	479	*51.40%*	412,051	$157,591,000	39th	26th	47th
Swift Co.	807	888	460	*51.80%*	388,442	$206,088,000	26th	27th	29th
Yellow Medicine Co.	989	986	542	*55.00%*	409,223	$209,046,000	25th	19th	35th
Region 6W	***3,846***	***3,978***	***2,161***	***54.30%***	***1,829,933***	***$828,561,000***			
State of Minnesota		**80,992**	**39,628**	***48.90%***	**26,917,962**	**$13,180,466,000**			

The chart above depicts data collected from the 2007 Census of Agriculture. Striking similarities exist among all counties. A summary of the statistics follows:

- Percentage of farming is just above 50% for all of the region's counties which is higher than the State of Minnesota's percentage of farming.
- Chippewa and Yellow Medicine Counties rank among the top 20 counties in the state for crop sales.
- Four out of the five counties have seen an increase in the number of farms.

As of the 2007 Ag Census, there are just fewer than 4,000 farms located in the region, with over 1.8 million acres of land in dedicated to farming. Farmland in the region makes up nearly 7% of the farmland in Minnesota. Crop production is dominant in the region, making up 64% of farmland use, while 36% of farmland is used for livestock production. The most common crops and livestock farmed in the region include:

Crops: Corn, Grain, Wheat, Oats, Soybeans, Hay

Livestock: Cattle, Milk Cows, Sheep, Hogs – Swift County also ranks #2 in the state for Turkey production.

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Section Three: Action Plan / Projects

The project list includes potential projects derived from a variety of sources including site visits with local staff, responses to regional surveys, projects listed, or in the process of being listed, within state, regional and/or local plans, and other related sources. The list is subject to change based on revised priorities for local governments, as funding opportunities from federal and state government evolve, and as other economic and community development opportunities present themselves over the next five years. Inclusion on the list does not guarantee funding, nor does exclusion from the list preclude other potential projects from being funded. This list is only a planning tool assessing potential projects that may proceed forward and may require technical assistance from Region 6W.

Regional Priority/Vital Projects – Non-Infrastructure

The following projects represent feedback from 12 local economic development authorities and are ranked according to their priority for the region; however all were viewed as important. These projects should be completed when time and financial resources are available to move them forward. The exercise of identifying priority economic development areas and ranking them showed wide-spread support and need for community and economic development efforts throughout the region.

Prioritization of Projects, Programs, Activities

The list of priority or vital projects, programs, and activities address the region's greatest needs and will best enhance the region's competitiveness. These projects have been prioritized collectively by local EDA's in the region and input from stakeholders and have been organized under the overarching goal that they must apply under. Potential project leads and project partners have been identified by Region 6W and CEDS Strategy Committee. These projects are overarching "themes" for regional economic development success and are anticipated to evolve during the CEDS five year implementation.

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GOAL AREA: BUILDING COMMUNITIES

PRIORITY #1 Marketing Our Local Assets – Work on strategies to attract and retain: residents, youth, visitors, newcomers and businesses
Project Lead: Coalition of entities potentially coordinated by Region 6W
Potential Project Partners and Regional Resources: Western Minnesota Prairie Waters Tourism, Local Chambers, Local EDA's, UMVRDC, Cities, Counties, Businesses, Minnesota West Community and Technical Colleges, Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF), Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), Schools, University of Minnesota Extension

PRIORITY #3 Infrastructure – Improve, maintain and finance infrastructure to support economic development in the region including but not limited to: housing, water/sewer, transportation (roads, air, trains, sidewalks, etc), broadband (fiber, wi-fi, cable), parks and trails, commercial buildings (innovation centers), industrial parks (lot development, spec buildings, incubators)
Project Lead: Local Units of Government
Potential Project Partners & Regional Resources: State and Federal Agencies, UMVRDC, Cities, Counties, local, EDA's Advisory Councils, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), University of Minnesota Extension

PRIORITY #6 Livability/Healthy Communities – Create an attractive environment for economic development by promoting, maintaining, and improving the quality of life in the region. Farmers markets, public art, safe routes to schools and addressing other healthy lifestyle factors in communities.
Project Lead: Individual local units of government
Potential Project Partners and Regional Resources: Cities, Counties, UMVRDC, Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF), University of Minnesota Extension, Schools

PRIORITY #8 Regional Coordination – Create opportunities for board members and staff from ED groups in the region to share ideas and discuss ways to work together. Develop joint marketing initiatives to let people know what opportunities exist in the region.
Project Lead: UMVRDC
Potential Project Partners and Regional Resources: University of Minnesota Extension, Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF), local EDA's, Prairie Five County Action Council local chambers, civic groups

PRIORITY #9 Regional Resiliency – Identify and invest in opportunities and projects that would increase the region's resiliency to natural and man-made disasters. Develop economic response plan, work with FEMA on hazard mitigation planning and projects, etc.
Project Lead: County Emergency Managers & local EDA's
Potential Project Partners and Regional Resources: State and Federal Agencies such as the Minnesota Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Cities, Counties, UMVRDC, University of Minnesota Extension

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GOAL AREA: SUPPORTING BUSINESS

PRIORITY #2 Entrepreneurs & Small Business – Promote services available to small businesses and entrepreneurs and help make resources easily accessible and easy to understand the path to creating a new business.
Project Lead: Local EDA's
Potential Project Partners and Regional Resources: Minnesota West Community and Technical Colleges, SBDC, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), SWMN PIC, UMVRDC, Lenders, Gap Lenders, Foundations, University of Minnesota Extension, Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF)

PRIORITY #5 Economic Competitiveness – Encourage the updating of information in existing economic development databases such as MNProspector, MNWorks, ISEEK, SW MN CORE. Make sure that the region is utilizing free tools to help entrepreneurs' to access business start-up resources.
Project Lead: Local EDA's
Potential Project Partners and Regional Resources: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF), UMVRDC, Cities, Counties, University of Minnesota Extension

PRIORITY #7 Shovel Ready Sites – Inventory available sites (industrial and commercial), identify gaps, develop shovel ready sites (by applying for state and federal funding) and market their availability to attract and retain commercial and industrial businesses.
Project Lead: Local EDA's
Potential Project Partners and Regional Resources: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), UMVRDC, Cities, Counties, local EDA's, University of Minnesota Extension

GOAL AREA: DEVELOPING TALENT

PRIORITY #4 Maximizing Skills & Talent in the Region – Develop and better utilize existing programs to keep, retain and retrain employees and residents in the region.
Project Lead: Southwest Minnesota Workforce Council
Potential Project Partners & Regional Resources: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF), local EDA's, University of Minnesota Extension, Schools, Minnesota West Community & Technical College

Regional Priority Projects – Infrastructure

For the purposes of the CEDS, infrastructure includes water, sewer, storm sewer, gas, electric, telecommunications (broadband), highways, streets, airports and railroads. All of these infrastructure components are vital to the economy of the region. As a result, infrastructure projects are listed as one of the priority project areas the Region 6W CEDS will focus on.

Region 6W works with many communities in the region on infrastructure planning and securing funding for infrastructure projects. The following is a list of potential infrastructure projects, project leads and estimated costs (if known). This information was requested from all cities and counties through an annual survey. As the CEDS is updated and reviewed each year, projects and funding sources will be added and/or removed as needed. The list of projects below was collected over time with a survey in April 2012 and project updates received in spring 2013.

Prioritization of Projects

Projects eligible for EDA funding will be prioritized as higher priority for purposes of this CEDS document. However, projects with community commitment combined with readily available resources from any source will move projects to the highest priority as we believe in moving projects forward as energy; resources and opportunities are available to initiate them.

The following indicators will help indicate the readiness of a project at any one given time. Yes responses to the checklist indicators will move a potential project into a priority project category. The UMVRDC will assist communities with moving their project from potential to priority and from application to implementation but each progression will require significant commitment from the community to move the project forward.

A Checklist: Six Indicators for EDA Grant Applications

1. Has the local entity identified project details and is the board in support of exploring funding for the project?
2. Has the local agency or organization staff meet with UMVRDC staff to discuss project to identify:
    - *Alignment with EDA funding goals/priorities*
    - *Readiness to apply to the EDA grant program*
    - *Readiness to implement locally*

3. Has the project been submitted to EDA for preliminary review of project alignment with EDA priorities?
4. Have project leaders prepared and obtained all necessary paperwork needed for application? This includes (but is not limited to):Local match (typically 50% needed locally)
    - *Engineering completed for public infrastructure*
    - *Environmental assessment complete*
    - *Company commitment stating number of jobs to be created or retained*
5. Is the local entity ready to contract with the UMVRDC to apply to EDA grant program through www.grants.gov?
6. Is the project prepared for an EDA review of grant application that can take anywhere from 3-12+ months

Community	Project(s)	Project Lead	Estimated Cost	EDA Eligible * Indicates Potential
Big Stone County				
Big Stone County	Relocate Correll Shop to Odessa	County	$175,000	
Big Stone County	Courthouse – energy efficiency upgrades (windows, lights and doors)	County	$300,000	
Big Stone County	Raise township roads left under water after the 2009/2010 floods. Identify roads that continually flood during spring and work to find funding resources to raise or stabilize roads as needed.	County	$1,000,000	*
Barry	Wastewater Needs	City	Unknown	
Graceville	Street Repairs	City	Unknown	
Graceville	Sewer Project - All new collection system, new main lift station, generator	City	$4,500,000	
Graceville	Water Project	City	$2,200,000	
Ortonville	City Improvements Streets Sewer	City	$13,156,200	

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	Water Airport			
Ortonville	Industrial Park Infrastructure (utilities)	City	$700,000	*
Ortonville	Water Treatment Plant Improvements	City	$600,000	
Ortonville	Trails (sidewalk trail – historical)	City	$175,000	
Ortonville	Protect the Peninsula infrastructure in Ortonville. Finish the three-fourths mile of replacing old sewer main, sealing manholes, and replacing bituminous materials.	City	$700,000	*
Ortonville	Storm water	City	Unknown	
Ortonville	Fill and improve vacant commercial spaces	City/EDA	Unknown	
Swift County				
Swift County	Work with BNRR to replace the bridge on MN Hwy 9 within Benson city limits.	County/City	Unknown	*
Appleton	Street Improvements	City	$2,500,000	
Appleton	Water Plant Improvements	City	$2,500,000	
Appleton Technology Hub	Creation of a Regional Broadband Intensive Community/Education/Training/Meeting Facility	City/Private Business/Library	Unknown	*
Appleton	City Broadband (FTTP) - Deploy fiber to the premise to all businesses and homes within the city limits of Appleton	City/Private Business	$4,000,000	*
Appleton	Replacement of deficient water main, loop dead-ends	City	$5,500,000	
Appleton	Elevated tank	City	$750,000	
Appleton	Sanitary sewer to serve Pederson's Estates and Industrial Park	City	$750,000 - $1,000,000	
Appleton	New well	City	$250,000	
Appleton	New sewer mains	City	$12,000,000	

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Holloway	Potential Business Expansion	Private Business	Unknown	*
Danvers	Park Improvements	City	Unknown	
Benson	Creamery/Downtown Redevelopment	City	Unknown	*
DeGraff	Community Center	City	Unknown	
DeGraff	Sewer Improvements	City	Unknown	
Kerkhoven	Well Project	City	Unknown	
Kerkhoven	Sewer Project	City	Unknown	
Kerkhoven	Street Improvements	City	Unknown	
Chippewa County				
Chippewa County	Replacing boilers and chillers with high efficiency natural gas forced air furnaces and air conditioner units.	County	$112,000	
Chippewa County	Replace outdated transformers.	County	$80,000	
Chippewa County	Replace emergency generator with one that will power entire courthouse building.	County	$260,000	
Chippewa County	Re-seal windows, repair outside of building	County	$22,000	
Chippewa County	Relocate salvage business. Work with the state and federal government to secure funding to relocate this non-conforming use.	County	$350,000	*
Chippewa County	Community Service Center	County	Unknown	
Chippewa County	Road and Bridge	County		
Chippewa County	Highway Projects: 2014 $1,260,000 2015 $1,370,000 2016 $3,975,000 2017 $1,525,000 2018 $2,680,000 2019 $3,010,000	County	$10,789,000	

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Chippewa County	Construct new cold storage building for emergency response equipment and other county equipment	County	$250,000	
Watson	New City Hall	City	Unknown	
Watson	Rail Redevelopment	City	Unknown	
Watson	City Park Improvements	City	Unknown	
Watson	Rehabilitation of housing, commercial and rental properties	City	Unknown	
Watson	Cable/Internet Network Exploration Management/Purchase	City	Unknown	*
Montevideo	New Fire Hall	City	$2,200,000	
Montevideo	Rebuild the levee in Montevideo to protect City and the wastewater treatment plant.	City	$6,000,000	*
Montevideo	Water tower improvements	City	$500,000	
Montevideo	New Rail Infrastructure for Business Development	City	Unknown	*
Clara City	Downtown Redevelopment	City/EDA	Unknown	*
Clara City	Build a berm along Hawk Creek to protect City and lift station.	City	Unknown	*
Clara City	Rehabilitation of housing, commercial and rental properties	City	Unknown	
Maynard	Build a berm along Hawk Creek to protect City and wastewater.	City	Unknown	*
Maynard	Fill vacant commercial/industrial spaces	City/Private Business	Unknown	*
Lac qui Parle County				
Lac qui Parle County	Data Center Recruitment	LqP EDA/County		*
Lac qui Parle County	Resident Recruitment Program	LqP EDA/ County	Unknown	*

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Lac qui Parle County	Micro-loan Program	LqP EDA/County		*
Lac qui Parle County	Create a large structure on the Lac qui Parle River that can encompass 150 square miles and act as a reservoir for 9,000 acre feet of water. This would be located in the South Branch Watershed and would protect county residents and businesses from future flood events.	County	$15-20 million	*
Louisburg	Individual sewer systems and clusters	City	$360,000	
Bellingham	Community Center / City Hall	City	Unknown	
Nassau	Removal of abandoned properties – removal of buildings that pose safety threat	City	Unknown	
Nassau	Hard Surfacing Streets	City	Unknown	
Madison	WWTP Renovation	City	PFA Financed $3,410,000	
Madison City Broadband Project/Underground Electric Service Lines (no approval yet, only in information gathering stage)	The local government will partner with a local communication cooperative to provide an all fiber network to each building in the entire Madison, Minnesota exchange. This fiber network will also connect to a regional and statewide fiber optic ring system.	City	$4,000,000+	*
Madison	Swimming Pool Renovations – create zero-depth entry area and waterslide	City	$750,000	
Madison Fire Department	Replace Fire Rescue Vehicle	City	$69,000	
Madison	Playground Equipment – install new equipment in a couple parks	City	$50,000	
Madison EDA	Fairway View Addition – Housing Development, developed 6 new residential	EDA	$160,000	

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	lots in the Fairway View 1st Addition			
Dawson	Water & Wastewater Treatment Improvements	City	$3,000,000	
Dawson	Sports Complex Improvements (bathrooms/concessions)	City	Unknown	
Dawson	Community Trail	City	Unknown	
Dawson	Implementation of Comprehensive Street Plan	City	$2,500,000	
Dawson	Industrial Park Road Completion	City	$500,000	*
Dawson	Public Works Building	City	$2,500,000	
Dawson	Street Reconstruction & Pumping Station	City	$3-4,000,000	
Dawson	Housing Ready Lots	City/Developer	Unknown	
Yellow Medicine County				
Canby	Additional industrial park space	City	Unknown	*
Canby	Industrial Park – business development (including paved road)	City/Private Business	$1,200,000	*
Canby	Infrastructure for SE Hwy 75 and SW 65	City	Unknown	*
Canby	Theater Project	City/Community/ Private Business	$200,000	
Canby	Conversion of residential to commercial property space	City	Unknown	
Canby	New trails and trail connections	City/State	Unknown	
Clarkfield	Community Center	City	$239,000	
Clarkfield	Wastewater Improvements (bees mixers)	City	Unknown	
Granite Falls	Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvements	City	$5,390,000	
Granite Falls	Industrial Park Building	City	$1,000,000	
Granite Falls	Library / Senior Center	City	$3,000,000	
Granite Falls	Fire Hall – move out of floodplain	City	$2,500,000	
Granite Falls	School Building – preservation, renovation and maintenance	City/School District	$9,481,850	

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Wood Lake	Park and street improvements	City	Unknown	

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Performance Measures

EDA defines the use of the following performance indicators to measure the success of this strategy in strengthening and diversifying Region 6W:

- The level and frequency of participation by government, business and community leaders in projects.
- The level and frequency to which UMVRDC staff interacts with communities within the region to provide assistance toward identified projects and programs.
- Number of jobs created per project.

Over the next five years, the anticipated results will come from implementing strategies identified in Section 1, efforts to move forward the non-infrastructure priority projects in Section Four and the completion of infrastructure projects also identified in Section Four.

Jobs to be created:
According to the MN Department of Employment and Economic Development available data, it is estimated that the average number of jobs in the region is 18,370. We anticipate losing 550 jobs over the next five years or 3% of existing jobs due to the changing demographics (declining workforce, aging population and overall decrease in population) and modernization of technologies. However, we anticipate the region will gain approximately the same amount of jobs due to newcomers to the region and expansion of economic clusters and niche industries which would equal a retention rate of approximately 3%.

Number of Investments:
It is estimated that over the next five years a minimum of three new EDA investments will be undertaken in the region representing an anticipated investment of greater than $1,000,000. These estimates were based on analysis of past Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) reports.

It is anticipated that over the next five years, the private sector will invest more than $3,000,000 in the region after the CEDS is implemented. This estimate is based on analysis of past CEDS reporting and potential investments discussed as part of the planning process.

Changes in the economic environment of the region are anticipated to include:

- existing clusters will grow and new clusters will be added
- manufacturing will remain stable or grow slightly

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- entrepreneurs will be attracted to the area due to its natural amenities and entrepreneurial friendly atmosphere
- the region's tourism economy will continue to grow
- the area will retain its existing population, increasing the need for healthcare related services
- the number of small business start-up will increase
- the number of youth (former residents) returning to the region to live and work will increase
- housing issues in the region will be addressed to accommodate new demands from newcomers and the transitional housing needs of current residents

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Section Four: Disaster Recovery and Economic Resiliency

Pre-Disaster Preparedness

Each of the Upper Minnesota Valley's five counties and the Upper Sioux Community have their own FEMA approved All-Hazard Mitigation Plan. These plans are updated every 5 years and identify goals and strategies to reduce the impact of potential disasters. Region 6W actively works with county emergency managers on keeping the plans updated and implementing the projects identified within the plans

Region 6W will continue to provide education and awareness about the economic impacts of disasters, recovery, best practices and customize action steps that work towards economic resiliency.

Post-Disaster Action Steps

In the event that any one of our communities needs to respond to disaster, the following steps shall be attempted to assist the community with their economic recovery efforts.

Step 1: Contact the community and (if desired) establish a business recovery center (BRC) as quickly as possible

Step 2: Select an appropriate location for the business recovery center

Communities typically establish recovery centers in a central location to provide close access to affected businesses. Examples include conference space of a local business, the local chamber office, a vacant building space, or a FEMA trailer.

Step 3: Reach out to local, regional and federal partners

Coordinate the outreach to local, regional and federal partners so the center has representation from a multitude of private, nonprofit, and government service providers. Counselors should be prepared to educate businesses on the various financial and technical assistance services available, as well as to provide guidance for application processes.

Step 4: Develop a marketing and promotion campaign to advertise the center's location and services

Communication with businesses could be a major issue if telecommunication lines are down. Alternative promotion methods should be considered, such as canvassing flyers directly to impacted businesses, using the local media, particularly radio advertising and advertising on billboards with a hotline number.

Bringing together the various economic development organizations within the affected area will ensure out-reach to a variety of networks and help maximize advertising efforts; about available resources. For example, chambers of

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commerce are likely to have the largest network of small businesses. Make sure the local government is advertising the BRC on its website for emergency information as well as posters/flyers at city hall and the disaster recovery center.

Step 5: Gather intelligence on how the local businesses have been impacted economically by the disaster

Consider disseminating an outreach survey for local business owners to complete to gather intelligence on how the local businesses have been impacted economically by the disaster, and determine what programs or information they need in the short and long term.

Step 6: Be prepared to keep the Business Recovery Center open anywhere from a few months up to a year.

Hazard Mitigation Projects

Relevant projects identified within the county hazard mitigation plans have been included in the community projects / identified needs list within this document. Identified projects are to be implemented as soon as funding and resources are available to move them forward.

Steps and guidance taken from: http://restoreyoureconomy.org/recovery/economic-development-professional-role/

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Appendix A: UMVRDC Commissioners / CEDS Governing Board

BIG STONE COUNTY:

Brent Olson, Ortonville – County Board

Scott Rixe – Graceville – Municipalities

Harold Rusty Dimberg, Ortonville – Townships

CHIPPEWA COUNTY:

Jim Dahlvang, Montevideo – County Board

Debra Lee Fader, Montevideo – Municipalities

Jim Schmaedeka, Clara City – Townships

LAC QUI PARLE COUNTY:

Graylen Carlson, Madison – County Board

Jeff Olson, Dawson – Municipalities

Mark Bourne, Dawson – Townships

SWIFT COUNTY:

Gary Hendrickx, Appleton – County Board

VACANT – Municipalities

Warren Rau, Appleton - Townships

YELLOW MEDICINE COUNTY:

Gary L. Johnson, Montevideo – County Board

Scott Peterson, Granite Falls – Municipalities

VACANT – Townships

TRIBAL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE:

VACANT – Upper Sioux Community

SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVES:

Brett Buer – Dawson-Boyd School Board

Kathi Thymian – Ortonville School Board

PUBLIC INTEREST GROUP REPRESENTATIVES:

Bruce Swigerd, Ortonville – Prairie Five CAC, Inc.

Juanita Lauritsen, Montevideo – Work Force Council

Vicki Oakes, Ortonville - EDA

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Appendix B: Adopting Resolution

RESOLUTION 13-09
Adopting the Region 6W
2013 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

WHEREAS, the Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission (UMVRDC) is committed to improving the economic conditions of Region 6W (counties of Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine) and its people, businesses and local governments; and

WHEREAS, Region 6W serves as the Region 6W Economic Development District (EDD); and

WHEREAS, a CEDS was developed in 2013 that reflects the specific economic challenges and opportunities of the region and contains the key CEDS elements of analysis, vision, action plan and evaluation; and

WHEREAS, input from communities in each county was solicited in order to ensure broad geographic representation; and

WHEREAS, the CEDS Strategy Committee has recommended that the 2013 CEDS be approved by the CEDS Governing Board for submission to the Economic Development Administration; now,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the CEDS Governing Board, in making a commitment to support the economic development activities of the region, hereby adopt the Region 6W 2013 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) as presented.

Adopted this 25th, day of June, 2013

By:	Attest:
_____	_____
Gary Hendrickx	Dawn E. Hegland
UMVRDC Chairman	UMVRDC Executive Director

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Appendix C: Regional Resource Acronyms

- LUGs = Local Units of Government (Cities, Counties, Townships, Schools, Tribal Communities)
- Prairie Waters = Western Minnesota Prairie Waters Tourism
- Local Economic Development Authorities = Local EDA's UMVRDC
- Higher Ed or MNWest = Minnesota West Community and Technical Colleges
- SWIF = Southwest Initiative Foundation
- DEED = Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
- Extension = University of Minnesota Extension
- SBDC = Small Business Development Centers
- SW MN PIC = Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council
- Workforce = Southwest Minnesota Workforce Council

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