

BOWMAN COUNTY NORTH DAKOTA

Economic Development Strategic Plan



Final Plan — September 2013



A Building Communities™
Strategic Plan

A project of



Vision
WEST ND

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Bowman County, North Dakota Economic Development Strategic Plan

Adopted X X, 20XX

Prepared for
Bowman County
and
Vision West North Dakota

Prepared by



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ABOUT VISION WEST ND

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



The 19 counties, along with the Three Affiliated

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

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

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

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

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Our Community and Vision

Progress is made in Bowman County.

Just as this is not our first rodeo, this is not the first economic development strategic plan for our county. In fact, it is our third. We implemented the first two very completely, and we are ready to continue to move our county forward with this one.

We are a county that works together to accomplish our goals. You can see this with our fairgrounds and the rodeo events that draw people from all over the region. You can see this with the strength of our businesses throughout the county. You can see this with the stability and cleanliness of our towns. You can see this in our schools, libraries, museums, hospital, day care facility and many other public places.

We are very fortunate to be in a place that has a strong economy and a quality of life that has not been negatively impacted by the growth experienced by many counties to our north. We care so much about our community that we recently packed a school activity bus and drove two hours north to study these impacts and develop proactive plans to avoid or mitigate the potential such problems in our county. The same school buses that transported our state-winning teams are transporting our community-winning teams of the future.

We believe we still live in the *original* North Dakota. While other communities are overwhelmed by the forces associated with economic growth, we still enjoy all the benefits of our relatively quiet, agrarian lifestyle while gaining from the emerging energy industry. We intend to be progressive about our future, defining the Bowman County we want and creating the Bowman County that our kids deserve.

Our biggest challenge as a county is to deepen our bench. We have a great starting line-up of people that show up, roll up their sleeves and get projects done like clockwork. One of the top priorities of this plan is to inspire a much larger cadre of people who care enough about the future of our county to volunteer their time and talent to the community. When it comes to getting things done, we know that it frequently falls to the Same Ten People (STP). What we will not let happen is for the implementation of this plan to fall to the Same Ten Old People (STOP!) This means that we must inspire new volunteers and create new leaders.

We are committed to creating our own progress. We know that if we do not, no one else will. With this plan, we focus on what it is that we should do, what we want to do...and what we CAN DO. This plan is an invitation for you to join us.

Background and Context for Planning

Bowman County has completed--and implemented--two previous community and economic development strategic plans. The people of the county already see the value in taking time to envision the future, and they remain poised to implement their plan.

This strategic planning document is the result of two visits by the Vision West ND team. The first meeting was in September of 2012, and then Plan Week was held in May of 2013. The county made significant progress with its previous plan--in fact, they actually implemented additional action steps beyond the activities originally identified in the plan.

Not only does this plan provide direction for the communities and people of Bowman County, but it adds context to the 19-county regional planning effort currently underway.

Scope of Plan

The scope of this plan is to serve all of Bowman County, including its four incorporated cities of Bowman, Scranton, Rhame and Gascoyne. This plan has a three-to-five-year time horizon.

Looking to the Future

Bowman County has a very bright future. The county is ideally situated on the edge of the Bakken Boom, without being overrun by the growth of the energy industry.

The Prioritized Strategy Report contains Strategy Scores never previously seen by Building Communities. The county has many Key Success Factor scores at the top of the scale. This means that the opportunities are vast for the county. The key is to strategically select the best options and then to mobilize the citizenry to achieve success.

Given the track record of the community, there is ver good reason to believe that Bowman County will be even more economically diversified and livable in the near future.

Community and Economic Development Strategies

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

Quality-of-life Initiatives

- Community Foundation
- Housing
- Leadership Sustainability
- Recreation Center Expansion
- Volunteering Initiative

Section 1:

Introduction

Planning Methodology & Approach

1 - Introduction

Planning Methodology

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

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

Vision and Mission

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

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

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

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

Objectives of Methodology

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

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

Major Components of Planning Approach

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

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

The People

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

Contrast this to traditional approaches in which often “detached” hired consultants do most or all of the analyses, interpret local conditions, write the plan, and community members accept the resulting plan as “their own.” Though this is the common formula, it in many cases leads to strategic plans being little more

than expensive dust collectors. This is no future, and the Building Communities methodology does not use this model.

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

- **Plan Director:** Teran Doerr, Executive Director, Bowman County Development Corporation- Serves as the liaison between Building Communities and Bowman County; oversees community outreach efforts; assists in creating the Steering Committee; coordinates all planning and implementation efforts over the life of the plan.
- **Plan Facilitator:** Brian Cole, Building Communities Inc. - Deploys the Building Communities Strategic Planning methodology, tools and software; provides guidance and assistance to the Plan Director; conducts planning, analysis and content-development sessions; delivers the plan in its various drafts and forms.
- **Building Communities Support Staff:** Though never visible to the community, Building Communities' support staff works behind the scenes to provide communities with effective and efficient planning tools, and to deliver a polished plan they can be proud of and use effectively.
- **Steering Committee:** Includes the Plan Director and represents the interests of Bowman County in the planning process; participates in all Plan Week work sessions; invites community participation in the planning process; weighs all community input; selects strategies and initiatives for implementation; reviews and provides feedback on the draft final plan; leads implementation efforts during the life of the plan. Bowman County Steering Committee members:
 - Pine Abrahamson
 - Andrea Bowman
 - Becky Brooks
 - Kevin Bucholz
 - Lynn Brackel
 - Becky Hansen
 - Scott Hardy
 - Lyn James
 - Julie Lockert
 - Sheila Ness
 - Dean Pearson
 - Dan Peterson
 - John Pretzer
 - Grace Rea
 - Kari Ruggles
 - Margie Russ
 - Jud Seaman
 - Les Snavelly
 - Sandy Tivis
 - Chanell Walby
 - Denny Walser
- **Citizens of Bowman County:** Includes all citizens and elected officials; provides crucial input during the Voice of Community Meeting and during plan review and adoption proceedings; assists and supports the Steering Committee during planning and implementation.

Overview of Plan Week

The bulk of the analysis and data gathering needed to build the strategic plan were accomplished during Plan Week—a term actually coined by a Building Communities client to describe the series of rapid-fire Building Communities planning sessions. For Bowman County, Plan Week consisted of the seven sessions listed previously and was conducted May 22-23, 2013.

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

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

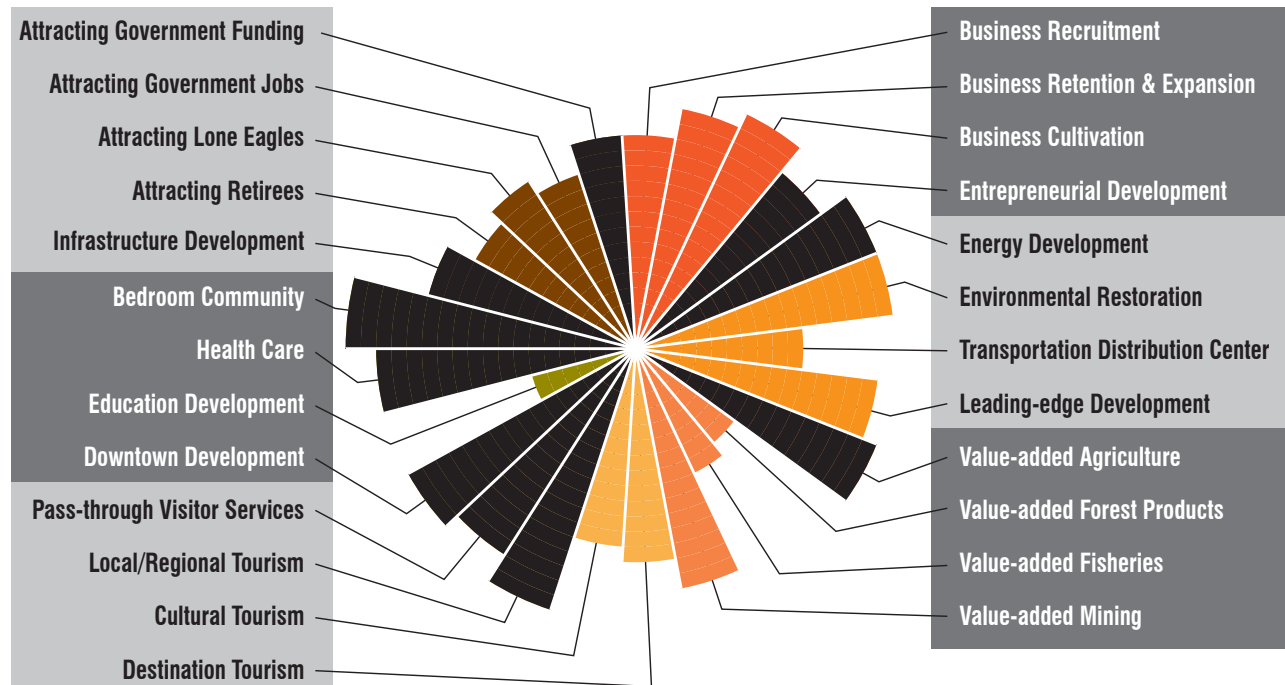
- A logical assessment of what the community **should do** based on the likelihood of success (the “mind”)
- The passion the community has to advance in a desired direction, or what it **wants to do** (the “heart”)
- The capacity of the community to advance based on its human, financial and technical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

Session 1: Key Success Factor Analysis



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

The graphic on the following page shows in “thumbprint” showing all the strategies the Steering Committee considered in this first session, and that the broader community also considered in a later session. Strategies ultimately selected appear as dark spokes, with the length of the spoke indicating the strategy’s potential for successful implementation.



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

Session 2: Quality-of-Life Initiatives



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

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

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

- Volunteering Initiative
- After-School Programming
- Housing
- Variety of Eating Establishments
- Community Foundation
- Highway System
- Lack of Building Codes
- Workforce
- Leadership Sustainability

- Buy-Local Campaign
- Emergency Management
- Law Enforcement
- Schools
- Recreation Center Expansion

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

Session 3: Community Organizer Assessment



and organizational stability.

One part of community and economic development strategic planning often ignored is determining the capacity of the community to implement its plan. *Capacity* relates to the human, financial and technical resources needed to generally engage in community and economic development activities, and considers such things as unity of vision, land-use policy, community attitude

The Building Communities planning approach addressed this critical element in Session 3—the *Community Organizer Assessment*—in which were presented a series of questions specific to the community and business development development aspirations of the community. This yielded a report detailing specific recommendations about how Bowman County can increase its capacity in order to successfully implement its strategic plan. The results of the *Community Organizer Assessment* can be found in Section 5 of this plan.

Session 4: Voice of the Community Meeting



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

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

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

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

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



STRATEGY SELECTOR

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

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

Session 6: Assigning Essential Action Steps



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

With these points in mind, during Session 6, each selected strategy and initiative was individually assigned to Steering Committee members or community organizations to act as “lead.” Committee members were then introduced to an online tool designed by Building Communities to help them identify *Essential Action Steps* (EASs) for each strategy/initiative and “Tasks” for each *EAS*. Essentially, designated Steering Committee members were assigned to detail “who will do what by when, and with what resources” for each strategy and initiative.

Session 7: Elevator Speech



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

Objectivity of Planning Methodology

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

Conclusion

The greatest key to Bowman County’s success will be an effective effort to “deepen the bench.” The small cadre of people in the county that “gets it done” is well motivated and skilled but needs support from the broader community.

Given that leadership and volunteer development are two crucial initiatives in this plan, the mechanism is soon to be in place to accomplish these goals. The combination of a broader group of civic activists, the sharp focus of this plan, and the high-scoring Key Success Factors strongly indicates great future success for Bowman County.

Section 2:

Plan Week Results

Plan Week Results

Overview

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

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

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

- Community Foundation
- Housing
- Leadership Sustainability
- Recreation Center Expansion
- Volunteering Initiative

Strategy Selection Process

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

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

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

The scores in the *Prioritized Strategy Report* are remarkable. As a whole, the scores are the highest that Building Communities has ever seen. Over half the scores are over 70, and 19 of the 25 are over 60. This means that Bowman County has many strategic options available. The primary limitation for strategy selection is the capacity of the community to juggle multiple initiatives.

This initial *Prioritized Strategy Report* provided the Steering Committee with a solid foundation from which it could begin considering which of the 25 strategies the community should ultimately pursue. As the Building Communities approach recognizes that making wise choices in representative government requires not only capable leaders but an involved citizenry, the views of the community were also sought, in order that the collective voice of the community could be heard and given weight in the decision-making process. This began in the *Voice of the Community Meeting* in which the community at large was asked whether or not it would like to see the community advance each of the 25 strategies, and whether or not it believes the community could successfully do so.

Prioritized Strategy Report

STRATEGY	SCORE	STRATEGY GROUP
Bedroom Community	95	Community Development
Local/Regional Tourism	88	Tourism
Health Care	86	Community Development
Environmental Restoration	85	Sector-specific
Downtown Development	85	Community Development
Business Cultivation	84	General Business
Energy Development	84	Sector-specific
Value-added Agriculture	82	Value-added
Pass-through Visitor Services	80	Tourism
Business Retention and Expansion	76	General Business
Leading-edge Development	76	Sector-specific
Entrepreneurial Development	75	General Business
Value-added Mining	75	Value-added
Business Recruitment	69	General Business
Destination Tourism	69	Tourism
Infrastructure Development	69	Other
Attracting Government Funding	68	Other
Attracting Lone Eagles	65	Other
Cultural Tourism	64	Tourism
Attracting Retirees	59	Other
Attracting Government Jobs	54	Other
Transportation Distribution Center	46	Sector-specific
Value-added Fisheries	37	Value-added
Education Development	33	Community Development
Value-added Forest Products	30	Value-added

The results of the *Voice of the Community Meeting* were then weighed, factored and combined with the results of the *Key Success Factor Analysis* to produce the *Enhanced Strategy Report*. This report provided the Steering Committee with a more complete view about the desires and confidence level of both leaders and citizens with respect to each of the 25 potential strategies. This information, along with the *Prioritized Strategy Report*, served as the foundation for the final strategy selection process. In addition, before strategies were actually selected, the Steering Committee was asked to assess the capacity of the community to carry out both general and specific community and economic development activities. This was done during the *Community Organizer Assessment* session during *Plan Week*. The recommendations that resulted from that session will help the community refine and increase its capacity to work together and succeed as it begins implementing the strategic plan.

Enhanced Strategy Report

STRATEGY	SCORE	WANT	CAN	STRATEGY GROUP
✓ Health Care	286	100%	100%	Community Development
✓ Downtown Development	285	100%	100%	Community Development
✓ Pass-through Visitor Services	280	100%	100%	Tourism
✓ Business Retention and Expansion	276	100%	100%	General Business
✓ Local/Regional Tourism	262	94%	93%	Tourism
✓ Value-added Agriculture	257	88%	100%	Value-added
✓ Energy Development	256	93%	93%	Sector-specific
Business Recruitment	253	100%	92%	General Business
✓ Infrastructure Development	253	100%	92%	Other
Business Cultivation	236	85%	91%	General Business
Value-added Mining	227	85%	91%	Value-added
✓ Entrepreneurial Development	201	86%	77%	General Business
✓ Attracting Government Funding	188	87%	73%	Other
✓ Bedroom Community	151	58%	70%	Community Development
Environmental Restoration	29	29%	43%	Sector-specific
Attracting Lone Eagles	17	43%	33%	Other
Attracting Retirees	-35	23%	30%	Other
Cultural Tourism	-50	23%	20%	Tourism
Destination Tourism	-55	20%	18%	Tourism
Transportation Distribution Center	-96	15%	14%	Sector-specific
Leading-edge Development	-96	14%	0%	Sector-specific
Education Development	-111	20%	8%	Community Development
Attracting Government Jobs	-114	8%	8%	Other
Value-added Fisheries	-163	0%	0%	Value-added
Value-added Forest Products	-170	0%	0%	Value-added

With these various analyses and assessments in place, the Steering Committee's task was to choose the strategies which the community would ultimately advance. Consideration of the *Prioritized Strategy Report* yielded an initial selection of the "most viable" strategies. The *Enhanced Strategy Report* served to reinforce the *Prioritized Strategy Report*. That is, there is a relatively high positive correlation between the strategies the community wants and the strategies that scored high from the *Key Success Factor Analysis*.

Importance of Recommendations

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

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

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

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

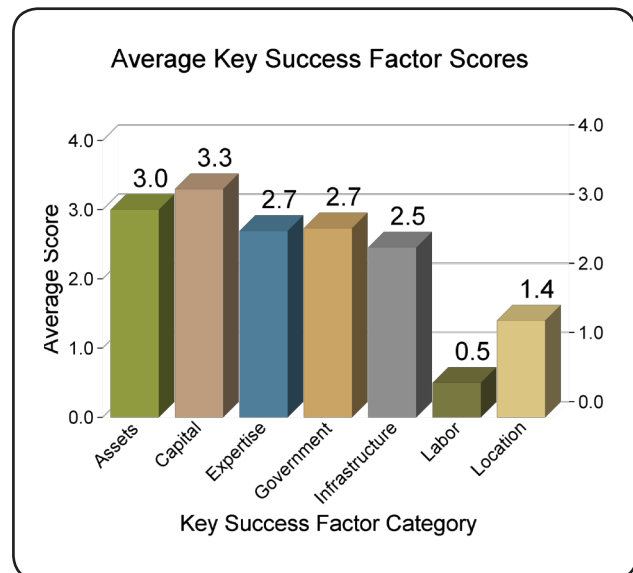
SWOT Analysis

Overall SWOT Summary

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

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

- Assets
- Capital
- Expertise
- Government
- Infrastructure
- Labor
- Location



The table below presents a brief description of each category and the average score of the community in each of those categories.

In general, any category score that is 2.7 or above represents a very high level of capacity. For Bowman County, fully four of the seven categories reach this level. Furthermore, the 2.5 score for Infrastructure is very high compared to other communities in the Vision West ND territory.

The 3.0 score for Assets sets the stage for a wide variety of strategic options for the county.

While the score of 0.5 for Labor is alarmingly low, it is consistent with all of the other counties in the economically booming region of western North Dakota. The demand for labor far outweighs the supply, and probably will for years to come.

Key Success Factor Categories		AVG SCORE
Assets	Industry-specific or activity-specific conditions or dynamics critical to certain strategies.	3.0
Capital	Business debt and equity funding as well as consistent funding for development organizations to succeed.	3.3
Expertise	The skills, connections and abilities of local professionals.	2.7
Government	The citizenry and government agencies/committees, whose decisions and opinions shape the community's actions.	2.7
Infrastructure	The land, buildings and infrastructure necessary to advance many of the business development strategies.	2.5
Labor	The labor force of a community.	0.5
Location	The relative proximity of the community to the marketplace.	1.4
Scores reflect the community's relative capacity in each category on a scale from 0 to 4.		

Assets

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

Fully one-half of the Assets Key Success Factors scored a 4, indicating that Bowman County has a competitive advantage in many essential factors specific to at least one strategy. Also significant is that the majority of the remainder of the factors scored a 3 (still an advantage).

The only significant negative in this category is the lack of available housing.

Key Success Factors - Assets

Availability of energy resources	4
Financially sound existing health care facility	4
High availability of urban services	4
Proximity to large volumes of agricultural commodities	4
Proximity to nationally recognized attractions	4
Proximity to raw materials and minerals	4
Proximity to travel routes	4
Proximity to urban population and workforce centers	4
Sufficient base of local businesses	4
Sufficient local entrepreneurial base	4
Insulation from industrial business annoyances	4
Quality residential neighborhoods	3
Accurate, long-term analysis of infrastructure needs and costs	3
Desirable climate	3
Existence of recreational amenities	3
Existing or prospective cultural attraction	3
Local recreational and visitor attractions	3
Recognizable central business district/downtown	3
Available, desirable housing	1
Expandable educational institution	0
Proximity and access to forests and forest products	0
Proximity to fisheries commodities	0

Capital

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

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

Key Success Factors - Capital

Access to small business financing	4
Access to large-scale capital	4
Access to long-term infrastructure loans and grants	4
Competitive recruitment incentives	4
Dedicated local financial resources for staffing recruiters	4
Local funding for downtown development	4
Sufficient marketing, promotion, or public relations budget	4
Ability to secure power-purchase agreements	3
Availability of appropriated funds	2
Ability to secure long-term contracts for forest materials	0

For development organizations, reliable funding is necessary so the board and staff can engage primarily in activities consistent with the organizational mission, rather than regularly chasing funding sources for the preservation of the organization itself.

The Capital category scores are exceptionally high, indicating that funding is generally available not only for business expansion and retention, but also for funding local community and economic development operations.

A continued commitment by the cities and county to support their community development office is key for plan implementation.

Expertise

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

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

The Expertise category scores are also very strong for Bowman County. For such a rural area, the county has many professionals serving it who have effective connections to needed development resources.

Key Success Factors - Expertise

Ability to build a team comprised of energy-development experts	4
Ability to compete in a global market	4
Ability to identify product and service gaps	4
Ability to successfully market materials	4
Capable, experienced economic development professionals	4
Competent, strategic-minded hospital and health-care executives	4
Downtown organization and staff	4
Relative sophistication in coordinating and marketing local events	4
Ability to understand industry trends and opportunities	3
Cooperation of economic development staff and educational community	3
Dedicated business coaching staff	3
Existing excellence in local health care	3
Implementation of national Main Street Four-Point Approach™	3
Local ability to identify and advance a funding proposal	3
Sophisticated use of the internet for marketing	3
Team approach to infrastructure finance	3
Ability to network and attend relevant trade shows	1
Cultural development and advocacy organization	1
Sophisticated tourism development & promotion	1
Staff focused on attracting retirees and/or lone eagles	1
Support from local education professionals at all levels	1
Supportive post-secondary education training program	1

Government

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

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

The high Government scores highlight the attitude of cooperation throughout the county to envision and enact its future.

Both local government and the community at large see the glass half full (or totally full), and see a very positive future ahead.

Key Success Factors - Government

Community acceptance of the visitor industry	4
Local government support	4
Strong community support	4
Strong relations between economic development organization and local businesses	4
Local policies and ordinances supporting quality neighborhood development	4
Active engagement of downtown building and business owners	3
Local focus on revenues from visitors	3
Local pro-business climate	3
Support from local businesses	3
Supportive state energy policies and incentives	3
Strong state and/or federal legislative delegation	2
Community support for needed infrastructure rate increases	1
Favorable state policies with respect to office locations	1
Projected growth in government budgets	1
Support for attracting retirees	1

Infrastructure

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

While the Infrastructure category scores are lower than other categories for Bowman County, the numbers are actually favorable compared to other cities and counties affected by the growth stemming from the oil boom.

The City of Bowman has been proactive over the years to identify and advance smaller infrastructure projects in order that the community does not fall behind in meeting its infrastructure needs.

Key Success Factors - Infrastructure

Adequate telecommunications infrastructure	4
Availability of industrial-zoned land for industrial park development	4
High-speed internet	4
Availability of brownfield sites	3
Availability of land for business prospects	3
Availability of local infrastructure	3
Excess water and sewer infrastructure capacity	3
Adequate housing for labor force	1
Availability of local buildings	1
Land/Buildings/Campus for education development	1
Proximity to transmission lines with excess capacity	0

Labor

It takes a deeper bench than simply the “experts” to successfully implement many strategies. The availability and skills of the local labor force are critical to the implementation of many strategies.

Key Success Factors - Labor

Local, available, low-skill labor pool	1
Local, available, high-skill labor pool	0

Every city and county participating in a Vision West ND Plan Week has scored Labor a 0 or a 1. With the state unemployment rate at about three percent and the Vision West ND unemployment rate at about one percent, availability of labor is in very short supply, causing real stress on area businesses.

Location

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

Key Success Factors - Location

Prospect of an expanded geographic market for health care	3
Proximity and access to markets	3
Advantageous location for government or education expansion	1
Proximity to scheduled air service	0
Strategic location for distribution centers	0

While Bowman County and North Dakota in general are quite distant from urban markets, a couple of the scores were relatively strong.

The prospects for expanding health care services are positive due to the expanding local economy. The Steering Committee considered specific businesses in the county, and recognized that these businesses are able to get their goods and services to market. Specifically, the Steering Committee mentioned key businesses such as Scranton Equity, Paulson Seed, cattle production and oil/gas operations.

Distance to scheduled air service is a challenge for the community as is its location for implementing certain strategies such as education development.

Section 3:

Selected Strategies

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

Selected Strategies

Bowman County's Selected Strategies

Ultimately, the Steering Committee recommended the advancement of 11 strategies to enhance the economic condition and overall quality of life for Bowman County.

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

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

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

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

The strategies selected by the Bowman County Steering Committee are:

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

Strategies not selected include:

- Attracting Government Jobs
- Attracting Lone Eagles
- Attracting Retirees
- Business Cultivation
- Business Recruitment
- Cultural Tourism
- Destination Tourism
- Education Development
- Environmental Restoration
- Leading Edge Development
- Transportation Distribution Center
- Value-added Fisheries
- Value-added Forest Products
- Value-added Mining

There were a few strategies that did not get selected that were still highly valued. This is primarily due to the challenge a very small population base (and especially volunteer leaders) would have in juggling even more strategies.

Of particular note is Value-added Mining. Steering Committee members were able to list many natural resources (scoria, gravel, coal, uranium, oil/natural gas, bentonite, aluminum, and leonardite) that form the basis for the mining industry. The Steering Committee supports Value-added Mining, but did not select the strategy for proactive implementation.

Recommendations for Implementation

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

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

Attracting Government Funding





Attracting Government Funding

SCORE: 68

RANK: 17

Strategy Summary

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

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

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

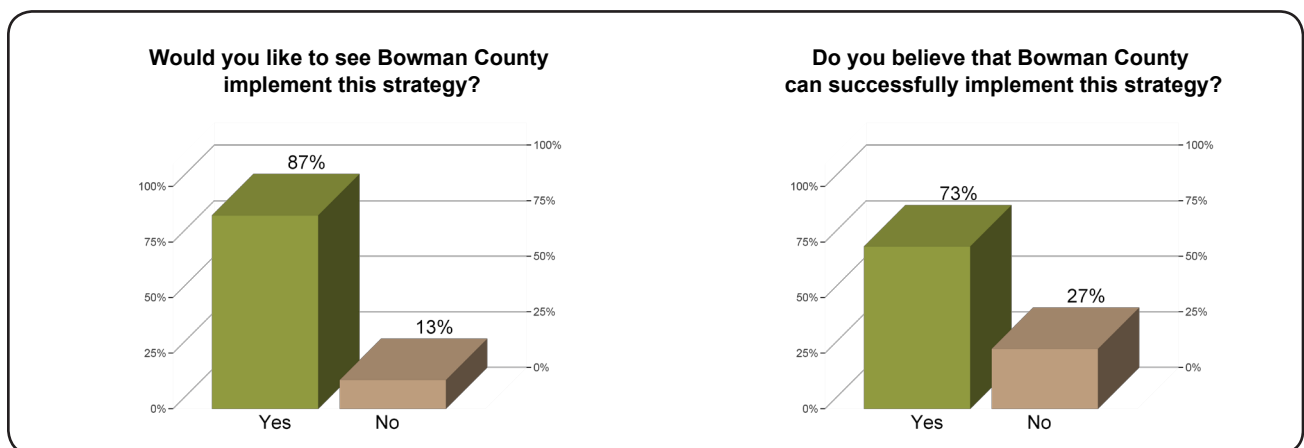
Often maligned as “pork barrel spending”, this strategy may face local opposition by individuals that are principled against such redistribution of government funding.

Voice of the Community Survey Results

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

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

Below is a summary of community responses:



Objectives of Strategy Implementation

The Steering Committee recognized that the implementation of many of the strategies and quality-of-life initiatives will require the area to secure funding from the state and federal government.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

The Key Success Factors are positive for this strategy, yet the county must be diligent in order to overcome the challenge rural communities face when competing for federal, and especially, state funds.

Strong community and economic development staffing helps to elevate the ability of the county to gain financial support for priorities.

Notably, the table below only references two of the four Key Success Factors. The other two, availability of appropriated funds and the strength of the state and federal delegations, scored a 2. As such, these two factors are neither a strength nor a weakness.

Key Success Factor Report - Attracting Government Funding

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON	
Major Comparative Advantages Strong community support	Slight Comparative Advantages Local ability to identify and advance a funding proposal
CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME	
Slight Comparative Disadvantages No Entries	Major Comparative Disadvantages No Entries

Selected Strategy:

Bedroom Community





Bedroom Community

SCORE: 95

RANK: 1

Strategy Summary

Many communities, particularly suburbs, have established themselves—intentionally or not—as bedroom communities.

A “bedroom community” refers to a city that is largely void of industrial and other basic industry activity. “Basic industry” refers to businesses that sell their goods and services largely outside of the local market area. Basic industry businesses are typically pursued by economic development professionals because they do more than simply exchange money and income within a community.

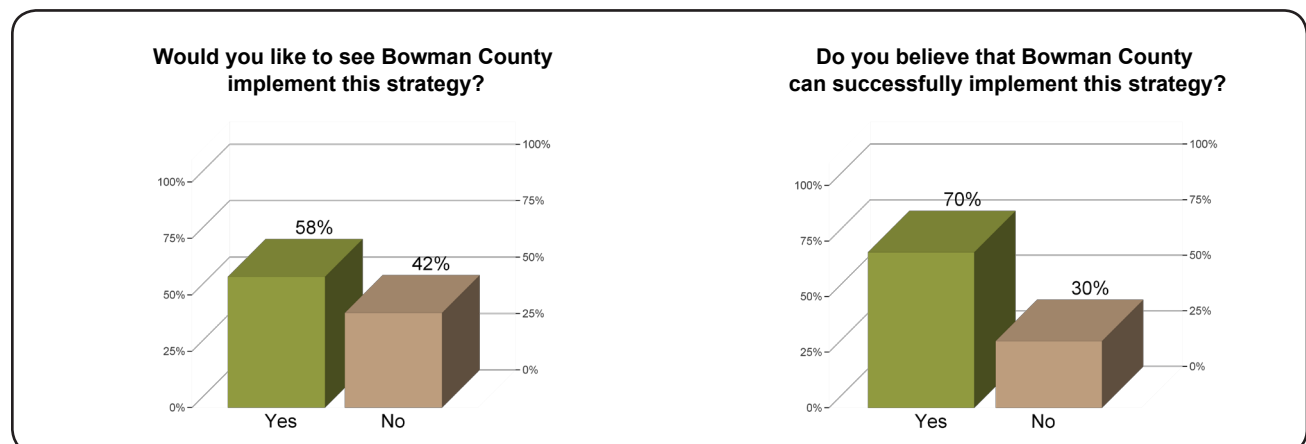
Urban areas and their suburbs have outperformed the rest of the nation economically over the past three decades. Consequently, many communities proximate to urban centers have experienced extraordinary housing construction and residential growth. As these communities get established and grow, frequently public opinion forms that commercial and residential development is welcomed but industrial development is not. A not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) attitude forms.

A “bedroom community” strategy is unlike virtually all of the other strategies in that it excludes the pursuit of some of the other strategies. For example, bedroom communities are unlikely to pursue business recruitment, distribution centers, value-added industry activity, and possibly even business retention and expansion strategies.

While a bedroom community strategy might optimize real estate values, there are relatively few other economic benefits other than the preservation and enhancement of local quality of life.

Voice of the Community Survey Results

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



Objectives of Strategy Implementation

On one hand, the selection of the Bedroom Community strategy is natural, as the communities of the county (and the county itself) are being very proactive with local land-use ordinances and codes designed to manage future growth.

On the other hand, Steering Committee members do not want the selection of this strategy to send a message that they are not open to other strategies that bring industrial operations to the county.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

With a Prioritized Strategy Report score of 95, Bowman County has all of the ingredients to successfully implement this strategy.

The Steering Committee recognizes that a continued effort to build the commercial business base through two of the business development strategies (Business Retention and Expansion, as well as Entrepreneurial Development) will also contribute to the success of this strategy.

Key Success Factor Report - Bedroom Community

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON	
<p>Major Comparative Advantages</p> <p>Proximity to urban population and workforce centers Insulation from industrial business annoyances Sufficient marketing, promotion, or public relations budget Local policies and ordinances supporting quality neighborhood development</p>	<p>Slight Comparative Advantages</p> <p>Quality residential neighborhoods</p>
CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME	
<p>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</p> <p>No Entries</p>	<p>Major Comparative Disadvantages</p> <p>No Entries</p>

Business Retention & Expansion





Business Retention & Expansion

SCORE: 76

RANK: 10

Strategy Summary

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

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

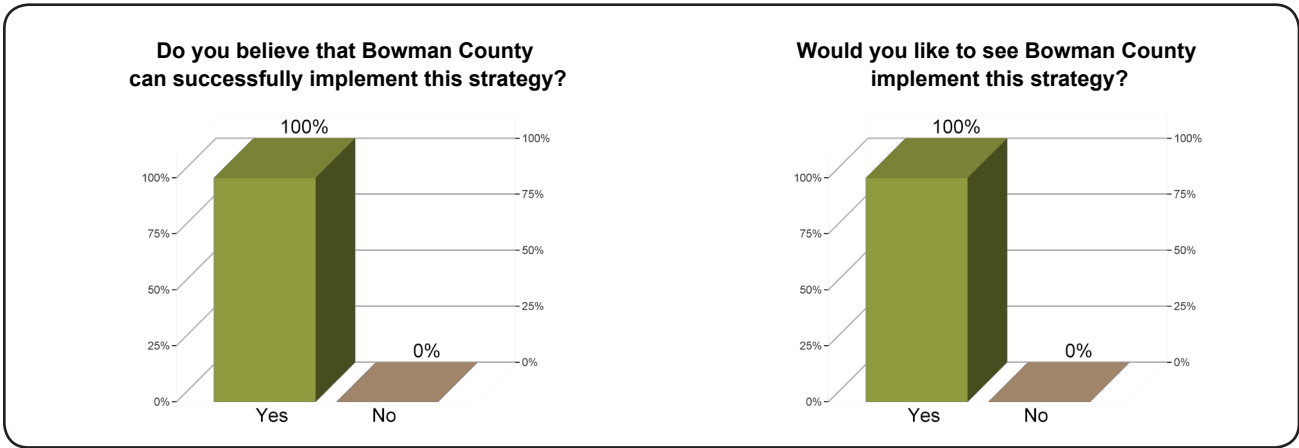
Benefits of the BR&E approach include:

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

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

Voice of the Community Survey Results

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



Objectives of Strategy Implementation

While the Steering Committee believes that the community has done a good job of supporting existing businesses, the Bowman Community Development Corporation (BCDC) believes that now is the time for a more comprehensive, proactive outreach to businesses through a Business Retention and Expansion program. BCDC will review best practices and survey templates for this strategy before moving forward.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

In general, the Key Success Factors for this strategy are positive but challenges come in the form of a tight labor force, the lack of local vacant commercial and industrial buildings and some capacity concerns for large demands on infrastructure.

Key Success Factor Report - Business Retention and Expansion

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON	
<p>Major Comparative Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient base of local businesses Access to small business financing Ability to compete in a global market Capable, experienced economic development professionals Strong relations between economic development organization and local businesses 	<p>Slight Comparative Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of land for business prospects Local pro-business climate Availability of local infrastructure
CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME	
<p>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support from local education professionals at all levels Local, available, low-skill labor pool Availability of local buildings 	<p>Major Comparative Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local, available, high-skill labor pool

Downtown Development





Downtown Development

SCORE: 85

RANK: 5

Strategy Summary

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

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

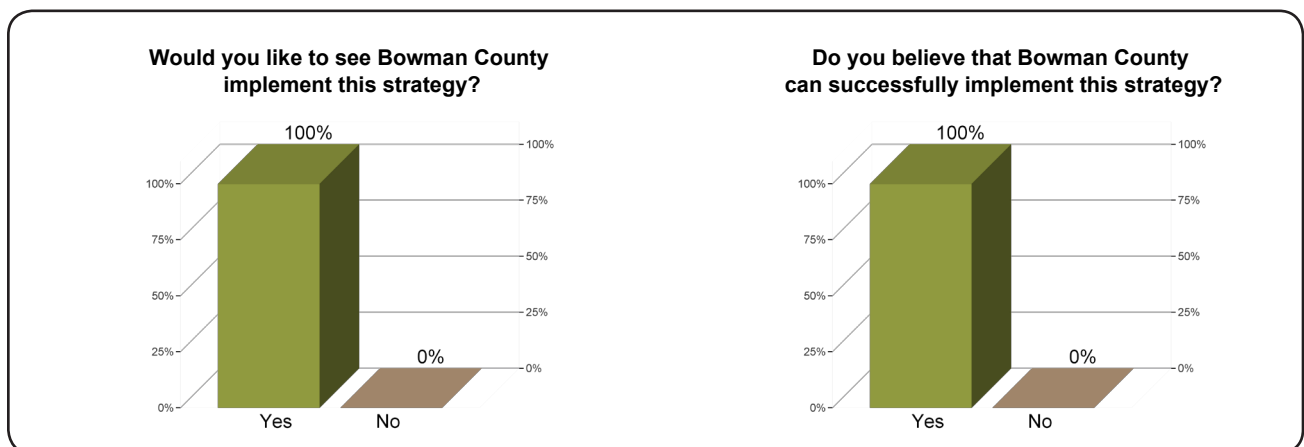
- Organization (volunteers, staffing, board of directors)
- Promotion (events, public relations, advertising)
- Design (building and amenity stabilization, preservation, beautification)
- Economic Restructuring (supporting existing businesses; promoting new businesses)

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

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

Voice of the Community Survey Results

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



Objectives of Strategy Implementation

The Steering Committee gave considerable attention to this strategy, including discussing differences between the communities of the county. Understanding that this strategy is bolstered by communities that have a recognizable central business district, the Steering Committee gave high marks for this factor for Bowman, fairly high for Scranton, and recognized that Rhame may be limited in its implementation of this strategy.

Nonetheless, the strategy was selected with the entire county in mind.

While the county is not utilizing the National Main Street Center approach to downtown development, it is capitalizing of the North Dakota Renaissance Program for commercial development.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

Successful implementation of this strategy requires a commitment to staffing such activity (through the Chamber and BCDC), as well as funding for promotions and public relations. Such commitments are currently in place.

All of the Key Success Factors for this strategy are positively rated.

Key Success Factor Report - Downtown Development

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON	
<p>Major Comparative Advantages</p> <p>Local funding for downtown development Downtown organization and staff Local government support</p>	<p>Slight Comparative Advantages</p> <p>Recognizable central business district/downtown Implementation of national Main Street Four-Point Approach™ Active engagement of downtown building and business owners</p>
CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME	
<p>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</p> <p>No Entries</p>	<p>Major Comparative Disadvantages</p> <p>No Entries</p>

Selected Strategy:

Energy Development





Energy Development

SCORE: 84

RANK: 7

Strategy Summary

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

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

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

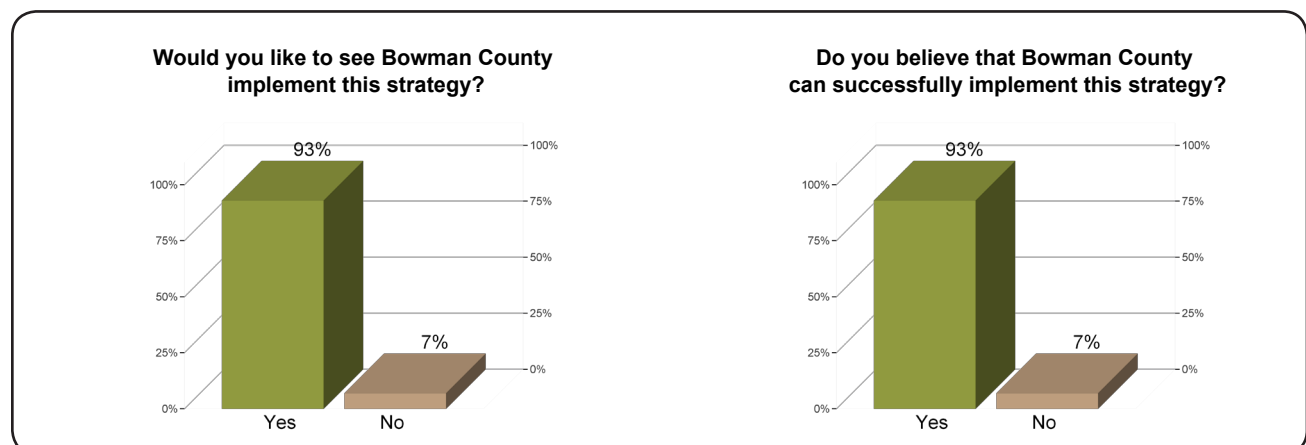
While larger, established companies may have an edge in capitalizing on many of these business opportunities, viable start-up options exist based upon proximity to renewable energy supplies and local market demand.

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

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

Voice of the Community Survey Results

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



Objectives of Strategy Implementation

Bowman County has consistently benefited from the presence of the oil and gas industry for many years, different than the recent resurgence of the industry that many counties in the region are experiencing. For this reason, this strategy was selected.

In many respects, this strategy is on “auto-pilot,” meaning that activity in this industry will likely occur regardless of the advocacy coming from the community.

Nonetheless, this strategy was selected as a statement of the value of the industry and an expression to the industry that the community is ready to roll up its sleeves and work for its advancement.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

Virtually all of the factors for this strategy are positive, underscoring how the industry has thrived for decades.

The only low-scoring factor is the current status of power transmission lines. This limitation is not a paramount concern at present.

Key Success Factor Report - Energy Development

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON	
<p>Major Comparative Advantages</p> <hr/> Availability of energy resources Access to large-scale capital Ability to build a team comprised of energy-development experts Capable, experienced economic development professionals Local government support	<p>Slight Comparative Advantages</p> <hr/> Ability to secure power-purchase agreements Supportive state energy policies and incentives
CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME	
<p>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</p> <hr/> No Entries	<p>Major Comparative Disadvantages</p> <hr/> Proximity to transmission lines with excess capacity

Selected Strategy:

Entrepreneurial Development





Entrepreneurial Development

SCORE: 75

RANK: 12

Strategy Summary

Small businesses represent over 99% of all employers in the United States. People establish businesses based on unique skills, passion or a perceived market opportunity.

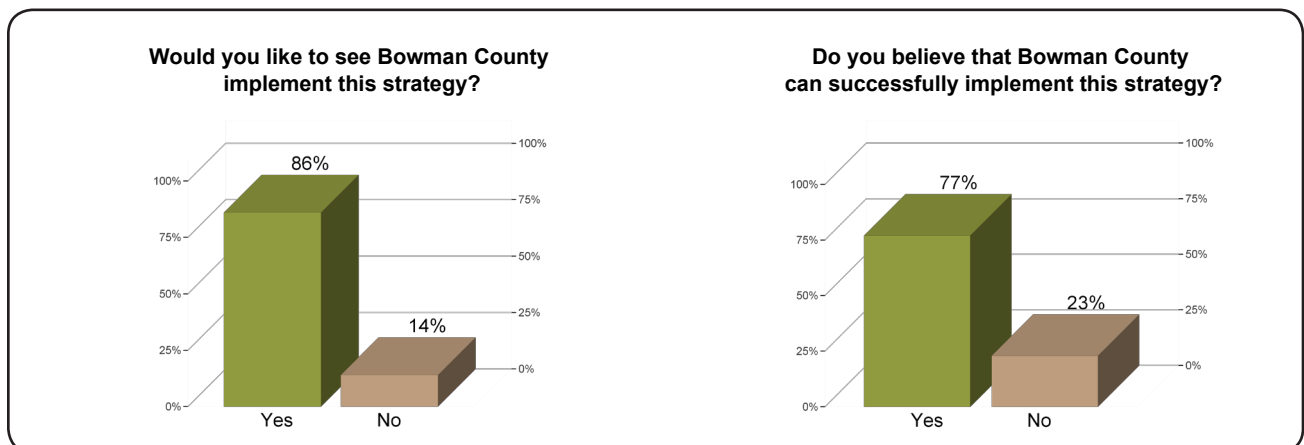
Frequently missing in a community-based economic development strategy is a concerted approach to facilitating the start-up and growth of entrepreneurial ventures.

Often referred to as microenterprise development, some programming exists to assist businesses with access to capital, resources for labor force improvement, business coaching and/or partnerships with local educational institutions.

One approach used by several communities in the United States is Enterprise Facilitation[®] advanced by the Sirolli Institute. Ernesto Sirolli presents the Trinity of Management approach that recognizes that individuals have passions (and therefore business ability) either with their product/service or marketing their product/service or financial management. Sirolli asserts that no one individual possesses all three skills/passions and very few possess two of the three skills/passions. Enterprise Facilitation engages an Enterprise Facilitator advised by a local board to respond to the passion and interests of local entrepreneurs to facilitate their successful establishment and expansion.

Voice of the Community Survey Results

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



Objectives of Strategy Implementation

One of the primary functions of BCDC is to support existing entrepreneurs to establish and grow their businesses. With training available through the Small Business Development Center network, the county is well served in this respect.

This strategy is integrated with the Business Retention and Expansion strategy, as all action steps will be coordinated through BCDC.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

The community is confident that an adequate base of people seeking to advance new business ideas is in place. The ability to help businesses secure financing and “coach” other aspects of business development (business planning, for example) also supports strategy implementation.

The lack of a nearby post-secondary education institution is the only negative for this strategy.

Key Success Factor Report - Entrepreneurial Development

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON	
<p>Major Comparative Advantages</p> <p>Sufficient local entrepreneurial base Access to small business financing High-speed internet</p>	<p>Slight Comparative Advantages</p> <p>Dedicated business coaching staff Local pro-business climate</p>
CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME	
<p>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</p> <p>Supportive post-secondary education training program</p>	<p>Major Comparative Disadvantages</p> <p>No Entries</p>

Selected Strategy:

Health Care





Health Care

SCORE: 86

RANK: 3

Strategy Summary

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

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

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

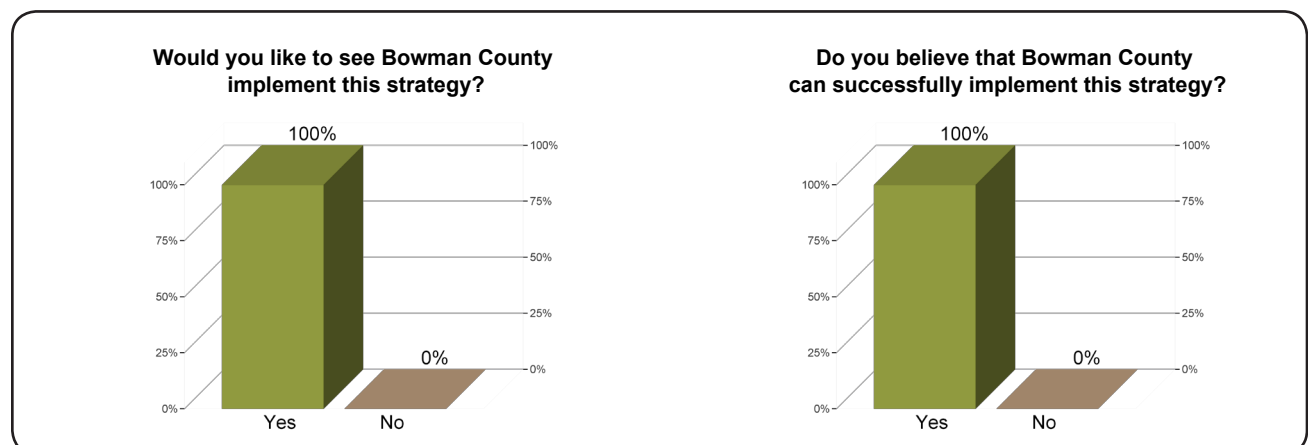
Additionally, federal policies on Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements have created a significant financial challenge for rural hospitals.

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

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

Voice of the Community Survey Results

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



Objectives of Strategy Implementation

Expansion efforts by the local hospital are the primary focus of this health care strategy. The community was successful working with the 2013 North Dakota Legislature to pass specific legislation that will substantially lower the cost of capital for hospital expansion, helping to make large-scale improvements possible.

The hospital expansion project is the most important and urgent community undertaking currently underway.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

With the exception of the tight labor force, which does impact the ability of the local health care system to operate, the Key Success Factors for this strategy are positive.

Like many rural hospitals, the local hospital has financial constraints (in part, due to its mission to serve all people regardless of ability to pay). The creative solution supported by the legislature helped to turn this weakness into a strength.

Key Success Factor Report - Health Care

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON	
<p>Major Comparative Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financially sound existing health care facility Sufficient marketing, promotion, or public relations budget Competent, strategic-minded hospital and health-care executives Strong community support 	<p>Slight Comparative Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prospect of an expanded geographic market for health care Existing excellence in local health care
CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME	
<p>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local, available, low-skill labor pool 	<p>Major Comparative Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local, available, high-skill labor pool

Infrastructure Development





Infrastructure Development

SCORE: 69

RANK: 16

Strategy Summary

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

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

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

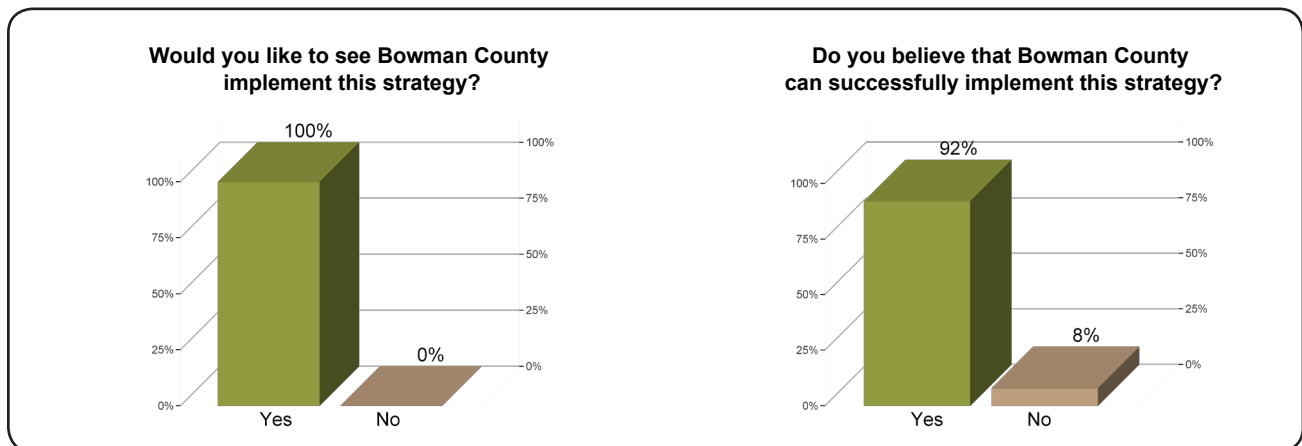
Communities need to examine the infrastructure requirements both of their current residents, as well as their projection of future residential, commercial, and industrial demands.

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

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

Voice of the Community Survey Results

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



Objectives of Strategy Implementation

While Bowman County may have infrastructure that is in better condition than in many other boom-town counties, the Steering Committee included this strategy in the plan as a statement that the county needs support from the oil and gas impact fund. The county is hopeful that the outcome of the 2015 legislative session will be more understanding of the needs of the western part of the state.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

A consistent diligence from the county, and the City of Bowman in particular, has helped to address infrastructure needs over the years. The City of Scranton benefited from the Vision West ND municipal infrastructure analysis, and now has a current, accurate understanding of its condition and needs.

One key factor is the willingness of community members to accept water and/or sewer rate increases as a local match for future projects. This could be a challenging factor in the future.

Key Success Factor Report - Infrastructure Development

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON	
<p>Major Comparative Advantages</p> <p>Access to long-term infrastructure loans and grants</p>	<p>Slight Comparative Advantages</p> <p>Accurate, long-term analysis of infrastructure needs and costs Team approach to infrastructure finance</p>
CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME	
<p>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</p> <p>Community support for needed infrastructure rate increases</p>	<p>Major Comparative Disadvantages</p> <p>No Entries</p>

Selected Strategy:

Local/Regional Tourism





Local/Regional Tourism

SCORE: 88

RANK: 2

Strategy Summary

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

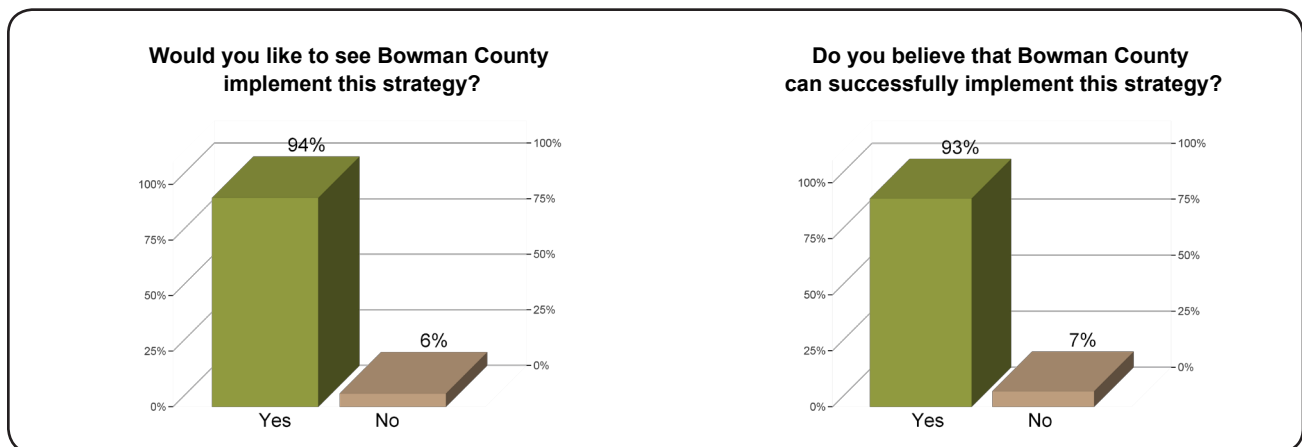
Many communities have successful weekend events designed to celebrate the community's history and/or culture. These events have potential to draw people from a county or two away.

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

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

Voice of the Community Survey Results

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



Objectives of Strategy Implementation

Visitors to Bowman County are already benefiting from a good, informative website and printed materials that showcase the tourism assets of the county.

The Steering Committee recognizes that Bowman County is not a "big league" tourism destination but the county does offer an excellent central location for visitors to enjoy many events and attractions. Specific tourism attributes include the local rodeo grounds (fair grounds), proximity to Medora, Sturgis, motocross activity, barrel racing and many additional attractions.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

The community currently manages many local events, and has a demonstrated track record of supporting and promoting such events. Backed by strong community support, the community can expect the continuation of such events well into the future.

Key Success Factor Report - Local/Regional Tourism

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON	
<p>Major Comparative Advantages</p> <p>Sufficient marketing, promotion, or public relations budget Relative sophistication in coordinating and marketing local events Strong community support</p>	<p>Slight Comparative Advantages</p> <p>Local recreational and visitor attractions</p>
CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME	
<p>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</p> <p>No Entries</p>	<p>Major Comparative Disadvantages</p> <p>No Entries</p>

Pass-through Visitor Services





Pass-through Visitor Services

SCORE: 80

RANK: 9

Strategy Summary

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

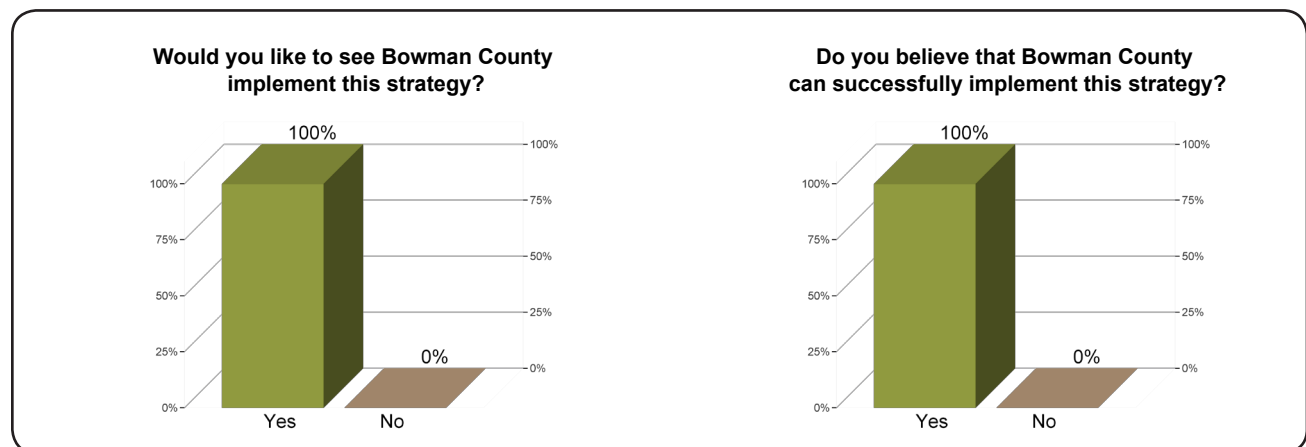
Travel expenditures can be categorized as destination travel expenditures or pass-through travel expenditures. Unlike destination travel, pass-through travel simply represents the activity that a traveler conducts on the way to their destination. These expenditures are typically fuel, meals, and sometimes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

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

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

Voice of the Community Survey Results

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



Objectives of Strategy Implementation

In addition to managing local events and activities, Bowman County also benefits from tourism expenditures by pass-through visitors. Whether tourists are on their way to Lake Sakakawea, the Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Strugis, Mount Rushmore or other attractions, Bowman County and its two state highways is a significant route for such tourist travel.

Slowing down traffic and tourists to eat, gas up, shop and perhaps stay a night is the objective of this strategy.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

This strategy is a relatively easy one to implement for the county, and fits within the current activities of the Chamber of Commerce and BCDC. The community already has an effective website and promotional materials. Efforts to elevate the county as a place to stop along the way is the key.

Key Success Factor Report - Pass-through Visitor Services

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON	
<p>Major Comparative Advantages</p> <hr/> <p>Proximity to travel routes</p>	<p>Slight Comparative Advantages</p> <hr/> <p>Local focus on revenues from visitors</p>
CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME	
<p>Slight Comparative Disadvantages</p> <hr/> <p>Local, available, low-skill labor pool</p>	<p>Major Comparative Disadvantages</p> <hr/> <p>Local, available, high-skill labor pool</p>

Value-added Agriculture





Value-added Agriculture

SCORE: 82

RANK: 8

Strategy Summary

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

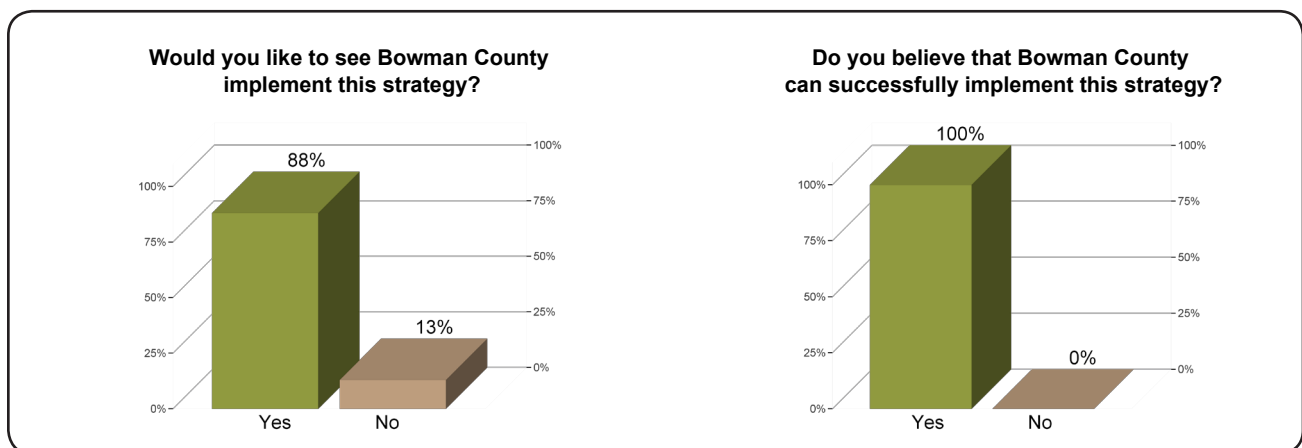
If sufficient volumes of individual raw materials are produced, communities may have an opportunity to “add value” to the raw commodities through processing. Examples include producing french fries from potatoes, sugar from sugar beets/sugar cane, steaks from cattle, and wine from grapes.

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

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

Voice of the Community Survey Results

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



Objectives of Strategy Implementation

Like the rest of the state, agriculture is a mainstay of the local economy. The Steering Committee selected this strategy out of respect for the importance of the industry to the economy, and as a statement that the civic sector is open to working with industry leaders to identify efforts to support the people and businesses in agriculture.

Findings from the Key Success Factor Analysis

With the exception of the tight labor supply, Bowman County has what it takes to support and grow its value-added agriculture sector. The sector is already benefited by strong, strategic businesses that understand their markets and how to reach them.

Key Success Factor Report - Value-added Agriculture

STRENGTHS TO BUILD UPON	
Major Comparative Advantages	Slight Comparative Advantages
Proximity to large volumes of agricultural commodities Access to large-scale capital Ability to successfully market materials	Proximity and access to markets Ability to understand industry trends and opportunities Availability of land for business prospects Excess water and sewer infrastructure capacity Availability of local infrastructure
CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME	
Slight Comparative Disadvantages	Major Comparative Disadvantages
Local, available, low-skill labor pool Availability of local buildings	Local, available, high-skill labor pool

Section 4:

Quality-of-Life Initiatives

Quality-of-life initiatives

Summary

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

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

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

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

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

Example Projects and Initiatives

- New or expanded transit services connecting housing to jobs and services
- Affordable housing development strategically situated to minimize traditional transportation time and costs
- Mixed-use development projects combining housing, services, and work opportunities
- Proactive zoning to facilitate growth
- Health and fitness walking path systems/promotional campaigns urging pedestrian and bicycle transportation activity
- Sustainable local foods initiatives Forest stewardship initiatives

Housing and Urban Development’s Livability Principles	
Provide more transportation choices	Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation’s dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.
Promote equitable, affordable housing	Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.
Enhance economic competitiveness	Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs of workers, as well as expanded business access to markets.
Support existing communities	Target federal funding toward existing communities—through strategies like transit oriented, mixed-use development, and land recycling—to increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments and safeguard rural landscapes.
Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment	Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.
Value communities and neighborhoods	Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.

- Energy conservation activities
- Establishment of arts and crafts coops
- Green jobs initiatives
- Strategic use of treated wastewater
- Development of Parks and Recreational Facilities

Potential Advantages to Implementing these Initiatives

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

Potential Drawbacks to Implementing these Initiatives

- Effort-to-visible-benefit ratio sometimes challenging
- Perception that local resources are being redirected to benign initiatives

Brief Overview of Selected Initiatives

The quality-of-life discussion differed from such discussions in other Vision West ND communities.

The session starts with a single question: “So what would increase the quality of life in your community?” Almost always, this sparks a conversation about all of the trends and issues that are negatively affecting the county. Not so in Bowman County.

The majority of the early reflections of the Steering Committee members were about the positive attributes of the county.

After about an hour’s discussion, the Steering Committee amassed 43 issues, and fully 18 of them were positive attributes about their county.

The Voice of the Community session served to validate the list, and to advise the Steering Committee to shorten the list to a manageable number of initiatives.

During the Quality-of-life Initiatives selection session, the group settled on five initiatives of utmost importance to the county. A description of these five initiatives is listed immediately below, followed by a list of concerns that did not “make the cut” of the initiatives (five item) short list. Finally, a summary of the positive comments concludes this section of the plan.

Community Foundation

The Steering Committee recognized that there is a lot of wealth in the community and many people desire to contribute to their community. However, there is no good mechanism whereby people can donate to a local community foundation to retain and reinvest such funds in the community itself. The establishment of a community-based foundation was strongly supported. Out -of-county options were found to be less desirable than a locally managed fund.

Housing

Housing construction has not kept pace with the growth of the community, leaving the area with a significant shortage. Homes that are available are frequently more expensive than residents can afford. Notably, 18 lots recently came on the market in nearby Dickinson at a price of \$70,000 per lot. This exacerbates the primary problem people have: establishing sufficient credit.

Large developers are generally able to amass sufficient capital to develop larger-scale developments, but the remaining small contractors are not able to keep up. An initiative that would make smaller projects affordable for local contractors would create a win/win for the county.

Perhaps the most innovative idea is the Vacant Homes Initiative. This would be a community-wide effort to target homes that are so dilapidated that they cannot be inhabited. Such homes would be demolished. Already the community offers free use of the solid waste dump for such activity as an incentive. The Steering Committee described the benefit of reusing lots that already have water and sewer infrastructure, as opposed to bearing the cost of extending new infrastructure to green fields sites.

There are still some homes available at the upper end of the price range.

Leadership Sustainability

The county would benefit from a leadership development program that greatly expands the number of local leaders beyond the “same ten people” who seem to do it all in the community. The leadership program would have a special focus on the youth and young adults of the community. BCDC is currently seeking grant funding for such a program.

Recreation Center Expansion

Bowman County only needs to look to neighboring Dickinson’s West River Community Center to see an example of a very successful Community Recreation Center, and the benefits that are offered to the community in terms of health and safe entertainment options.

A preliminary plan exists for such a facility in Bowman. The estimated cost for such a facility is \$6 million. The most likely funding source is the establishment of a dedicated sales tax for such purposes. The sales tax rate would be between one-half and one percent.

The Steering Committee recognizes that the hospital expansion is more urgent and funding is gelling for that development. As such, the recreation center expansion project would likely be delayed until the hospital project gains firm footing.

Volunteering Initiative

The Steering Committee is highly motivated to create and implement an initiative that increases the number of volunteers serving the community (and serving on the Steering Committee). One specific activity might be the establishment of an all-inclusive “connections initiative” (perhaps a website) that would alert people in the community of all of their opportunities for service. Another initiative would be to expand the initiatives that several of local banks have implemented to incent employees to take a few of their weekly work hours and dedicate them to the community.

One special focus could be on the newcomers to the county. With the growth of Bowman County, there are many new faces in the community, and some may desire to better integrate themselves into their new home.

One noticeable area where less community spirit is apparent is in the schools. Once a focal area of civic engagement and participation, the schools today have significantly less participation at events and games.

Quality-of-life Issues (Identified but not Scheduled for Action)

The Steering Committee identified more quality-of-life issues than could be selected for implementation. Other concepts and potential initiatives include:

- More after school programs
- Increased variety of eating establishments
- Improvements to area state highways to increase safety
- Workforce development efforts
- Creation of local building codes
- Establishment of a buy-local campaign (offsetting the very high use of the Internet for shopping)
- More resources for local emergency management (the Steering Committee recognized that excellent service still exists primarily due to the high quality of local leadership in emergency management)
- More law enforcement officers
- More outreach to newcomers
- Support for schools to maintain class size and service levels

Positive Attributes of the County

Finally, the Steering Committee created a list of very positive attributes that contribute to the quality of life of the community:

- Excellent local museum, library and cultural center
- Strong leaders in agriculture
- New airport to be constructed
- New day care facility (has virtually solved the day care issue for the county)
- Connection of Rhame to SW Water
- Significant improvements to the Bowman school facilities (connecting the buildings)
- Outstanding fairgrounds facility and rodeo programs and events
- A strong local economy with manageable growth (thus far)
- Good local law enforcement
- Very good community centers in Bowman, Scranton and Rhame
- Successful pending hospital expansion (\$18 million)
- Golf course
- Parks throughout the county
- Youth programming such as 4-H, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts
- Growth of the local energy sector

Key Considerations

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

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

Section 5:

Community Organizer Results

Community Organizer Results

Overview

Communities should advance a strategic plan that considers what they should do, what they want to do, and what they can do.

The Key Success Factor analysis (Session One of Plan Week) addresses what communities should do. Considering the results of the Voice of the Community Meeting (Session Two of Plan Week) addresses what communities want to do. The Community Organizer Tool provides the analysis needed for Steering Committees to fully consider what they can do based upon their current and desired levels of capacity to implement strategies--what they can do.

Building Communities administers the Community Organizer Tool analysis by asking a series of up to 142 questions related to 66 capacity factors. Just as there are 88 Key Success Factors that shape what communities should do in terms of strategy selection, these 66 capacity factors inform the community of how it can implement the plan. Forty-two of the capacity factors relate to business development capacity while the remaining 24 capacity factors are specific to community development.

This analysis of capacity is intended to be comprehensive (considering all relevant capacity factors), objective (specific, factual considerations) and expeditious (the Community Organizer Tool session takes less than three hours and yields an instantaneous report).

Community Organizer Capacity Report

This Community Organizer Capacity Report has two ultimate functions:

- Informs Steering Committees of capacity implications during the Strategy Selector Session of Plan Week
- Advises the community of the current and potential business and community development capacity in order to implement the plan

Addressing Capacity and Implementing Strategies Should Begin Immediately

Implementing the capacity building elements of the Strategic Plan is intended to be parallel to implementing the Strategies and Quality-of-life Initiatives. While it would be ideal to establish “perfect capacity” prior to implementing Strategies and Initiatives, it is even more important to generate momentum by immediately addressing the Essential Action Steps of the Plan.

By simultaneously addressing capacity while implementing Strategies and Initiatives, the community makes immediate short-term progress while laying the long-term foundation for success.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY**SCORE: 178****1. Business Development Strategy****1a. Priority of Business Development in Community's Strategic Plan**

The community has a current strategic plan, in which moderate priority is given to business development and in which specific business development objectives are clearly identified.

1b. Interest in Business Development Activity

The community has a moderate level of interest in business development activity and is moderately interested in seeing its population grow.

1c. Appropriateness of Business Development Activities

After considering existing "uncontrollable factors" (e.g., community location, available labor force, access to markets, available infrastructure, business climate), the community still has high business development potential. In spite of this, however, the community is only somewhat focused on its most promising business development priorities.

1d. Foundation of Support for and from Existing Businesses

The community has not conducted an outreach effort to local businesses in the recent past.

1e. Business Climate

The perception among local businesses is that the overall business climate in the community could be improved.

2. Local Staff and Team Development**2a. Focused Business Development Organization**

The community has at least one business development organization that consistently advances all of the community's outlined business development priorities.

2b. Business Development Organization Stability

Only between 0% - 4% of the business development organization staff's time is spent raising funds for the organization.

2c. Frequency of Meetings

The business development organization holds meetings on at least a monthly basis and holds subcommittee meetings on a regular basis.

2d. Business Development Staff

The business development organization has professional staff that is highly skilled, well-connected and which is experienced in carrying out business development activities.

2e. Business Development Training

The staff has received effective, professional business development training and participates in such training on a regular basis.

2f. Administrative Support Staff

The business development organization has sufficient administrative support.

2g. Volunteer Training

Not all community volunteers, including current organization board members, have received relevant business development training.

3. Industrial Land and Infrastructure

3a. Availability of Industrially Zoned Land

The community has land that is sufficient in size and configuration to accommodate business development priorities.

3b. Potential for Land

The community has existing land that could be zoned and developed as industrial land and is motivated to take measures to add new land to its industrial land inventory.

3c. Public Control of Land

The community does not have public control over the price and availability of its industrial land, but the owner of the majority of industrial land is motivated to sell. Additionally, the final price of the land should remain competitive during final negotiations.

3d. Environmental Considerations

The community is very confident that its industrial land is environmentally safe and clean and has documentation to support this conclusion.

3e. Land Price

The price of the community's industrial land is very competitive, as compared to other communities.

3f. Availability of Buildings

The community does not have existing industrial buildings for sale.

3g. Basic Infrastructure

The industrial land is not generally served by basic infrastructure and the community will not likely be able to offer such services within the next year.

3h. Access Infrastructure—Roads

The industrial land site is served by an existing paved street.

3i. Access Infrastructure—Interstate Access

The industrial land site is not within five minutes of an interstate highway system.

3j. Access Infrastructure—Barging Service

The industrial land site is not adjacent to a body of water on which goods are transported via barge.

3k. Access Infrastructure—Rail Access

The industrial land site is not served by a rail spur.

3l. Access Infrastructure—Air Service

The industrial land site is not within 40 miles of scheduled air service.

3m. Special Infrastructure

The community is generally unaware of additional, specialized infrastructure requirements which might be important for particular business development prospects (e.g., broadband telecommunications, high volumes of low-cost power, immediate proximity to an international airport, etc.).

3n. Land/Target Compatibility

The community understands the specific land requirements of the types of businesses most likely to locate in the community and is confident that it could meet such land requirements.

4. Targeted Industries**4a. Import Substitution Analysis**

The community has not conducted an import substitution analysis within the last four years, but could likely determine viable import substitution possibilities with some accuracy even without such a study.

4b. Economic Clusters Analysis

The community has not conducted an economic clusters analysis within the last four years.

4c. Targeted Industry Analysis

It has been more than four years since the community has professionally conducted a targeted industry analysis.

5. Marketing

5a. Marketing Track Record

The community has a fairly successful business development marketing track record.

5b. Professional Marketing Advice

The community has engaged a professional business development marketing firm during the last year and has provided local insight and strategic direction to the firm on a continual basis.

5c. Diversification of Marketing Techniques

The community utilizes a variety of marketing tools to achieve its business development objectives. (e.g., cold calling, direct mail, search-engine marketing, trade shows, etc.)

5d. Financial Resources

The community's annual marketing budget is between \$5,000 and \$20,000.

5e. Internet Presence

The community has a website dedicated to promoting business development which contains sufficient information about its living and business environments to satisfy the needs of businesses conducting preliminary relocation/expansion searches.

5f. Community Profile

The community utilizes some printed community profile documents whose contents are also readily accessible online.

6. Prospect and Lead Management

6a. Professional Community Response

The community has a team specifically assigned to respond to business development leads which typically responds to such leads within three days, ultimately putting together an information package custom-tailored to the inquiring business's needs.

6b. Availability to Travel

The community regularly sends representatives to meet with business development prospects and close deals.

7. Closing the Deal**7a. Deal Making Experience**

The community has successfully negotiated and closed at least one business development deal within the last four years.

7b. Experience with Incentives

The community has a good relationship with state business development officers and is currently aware of available business development incentives and/or resources, in addition to being able to competitively package such incentives in the final stages of business development deals.

7c. A Winning Attitude

The community generally exudes a "winning attitude" with regard to its business development prospects.

7d. Community Sophistication

The community has an in-house attorney, but he/she is not experienced in negotiating business development contracts.

7e. Project/Contract Monitoring

The community is not currently able to monitor its business development deals to ensure contractual compliance over time, but is able to develop a system to accomplish this.

1a. Existence of Community-wide Strategic Planning Document

The community completed a community and economic development strategic plan within the last year.

1b. Acceptance of Strategic Plan

The plan was formally accepted by the community's governing body praised by the broader community.

1c. Professional Development of Plan

The plan was generated by professionals skilled in economic development strategic planning.

1d. Use of the Strategic Plan

Since its completion, the strategic plan has been referenced constantly and implemented extensively.

1e. Plan Updating

The current strategic plan is one of three "plan updates" completed within the last 15 years.

2. Project and Issue Development

2a. Identification of Specific Community Development Priorities

Specific community development priorities are identified in the current strategic plan and some of these priorities have been assigned to community development organizations for advancement. Additionally, there is a moderately strong relationship between the community development priorities and the the community's formal municipal facilities plan.

2b. Identification of Regional Strategic Issues

The community is aware of strategic regional issues which are expected to impact the community and is currently involved in the advancement or resolution of at least one such issue, coordinating its efforts with those of other communities in the region.

2c. Large-scale Project Advocacy

The community has successfully advanced more than one large-scale community development project within the last four years, which reflects its ongoing track record of success with such projects over the last 15 years. Additionally, the community consistently utilizes advocacy groups to advance such projects, which groups meet at least twice a month while project advancement is active.

2d. Coordinating Projects with State and Federal Processes

The community participates in state and/or federally coordinated project funding processes on a routine basis.

3. Organizational Capacity

3a. Organizational Connectedness

The community has an organization in place to advance community development priorities.

3b. Organizational Stability

The community development organization is adequately and consistently funded.

3c. Organizational Focus

Defined community development priorities are routinely advanced by the community development organization.

3d. Frequency of Meetings

The community development organization holds meetings at least monthly, , but subcommittees meet less frequently.

3e. Organizational Board Training

Not all organization members and volunteers are given adequate community development training.

4. Staffing

4a. Staff Person's Profile

The community development organization has at least one staff person dedicated to advancing community development interests. This person is well-networked and well-respected in the community. Additionally, this person is highly skilled and is highly self-motivated, in addition to having a very successful track record in the field of community development.

4b. Administrative Support Staff

The community development staff person has administrative support, but additional training is needed to maximize support staff's effectiveness.

4c. Staff Focused on Organizational Objectives

The main community development staff person spends less than 4% of his/her time seeking funding for the organization.

4d. Staff Training

The main staff person is aware of regional, state and national community development training opportunities and takes advantage of such opportunities on a consistent basis.

5. Civic Volunteerism

5a. Opportunities for Service

Civic volunteerism is widely encouraged in the community and widespread opportunities exist for citizens to serve on boards and commissions, or in ad-hoc project groups.

5b. Celebration of Volunteerism

The community regularly recognizes civic volunteerism, such as during annual Chamber of Commerce banquets or other similar events.

6. Community Attitude

6a. Proactive versus Reactive Communities

The community is generally proactive to community development opportunities, but does not have a clear direction for the future.

6b. Viewing the Glass Half Full

The community generally views its community development posture and opportunities as a glass "half full."

7. Maintaining the "Community" as the Goal

7a. Commitment to Strategic Direction

The community has a clearly defined strategic direction, but it is only accepted by the community's leaders.

Appendices

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

Appendix A

Prioritized Strategy Report

STRATEGY	SCORE	WANT	CAN	STRATEGY GROUP
Bedroom Community	95	58%	70%	Community Development
Local/Regional Tourism	88	94%	93%	Tourism
Health Care	86	100%	100%	Community Development
Environmental Restoration	85	29%	43%	Sector-specific
Downtown Development	85	100%	100%	Community Development
Business Cultivation	84	85%	91%	General Business
Energy Development	84	93%	93%	Sector-specific
Value-added Agriculture	82	88%	100%	Value-added
Pass-through Visitor Services	80	100%	100%	Tourism
Business Retention and Expansion	76	100%	100%	General Business
Leading-edge Development	76	14%	0%	Sector-specific
Entrepreneurial Development	75	86%	77%	General Business
Value-added Mining	75	85%	91%	Value-added
Business Recruitment	69	100%	92%	General Business
Destination Tourism	69	20%	18%	Tourism
Infrastructure Development	69	100%	92%	Other
Attracting Government Funding	68	87%	73%	Other
Attracting Lone Eagles	65	43%	33%	Other
Cultural Tourism	64	23%	20%	Tourism
Attracting Retirees	59	23%	30%	Other
Attracting Government Jobs	54	8%	8%	Other
Transportation Distribution Center	46	15%	14%	Sector-specific
Value-added Fisheries	37	0%	0%	Value-added
Education Development	33	20%	8%	Community Development

Appendix B

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

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

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

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

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

- Bedroom Community
- Local/Regional Tourism
- Business Cultivation
- Health Care
- Environmental Restoration
- Downtown Development

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

- Energy Development
- Value-added Agriculture
- Value-added Mining
- Pass-through Visitor Services
- Leading-edge Development
- Business Retention and Expansion
- Entrepreneurial Development

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

- Business Recruitment
- Destination Tourism
- Infrastructure Development
- Attracting Government Funding
- Attracting Lone Eagles
- Cultural Tourism
- Attracting Retirees
- Attracting Government Jobs
- Transportation Distribution Center
- Value-added Fisheries
- Value-added Forest Products
- Education Development

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

Appendix C

Strategies by Group

STRATEGY	SCORE	STRATEGY GROUP
Business Recruitment	69	General Business
Business Retention and Expansion	76	General Business
Business Cultivation	84	General Business
Entrepreneurial Development	75	General Business
Energy Development	84	Sector-specific
Environmental Restoration	85	Sector-specific
Transportation Distribution Center	46	Sector-specific
Leading-edge Development	76	Sector-specific
Value-added Agriculture	82	Value-added
Value-added Forest Products	30	Value-added
Value-added Fisheries	37	Value-added
Value-added Mining	75	Value-added
Destination Tourism	69	Tourism
Cultural Tourism	64	Tourism
Local/Regional Tourism	88	Tourism
Pass-through Visitor Services	80	Tourism
Downtown Development	85	Community Development
Education Development	33	Community Development
Health Care	86	Community Development
Bedroom Community	95	Community Development
Infrastructure Development	69	Other
Attracting Retirees	59	Other
Attracting Lone Eagles	65	Other
Attracting Government Jobs	54	Other

Appendix D

Alphabetical Listing of Strategies

STRATEGY	SCORE	STRATEGY GROUP
Attracting Government Funding	68	Other
Attracting Government Jobs	54	Other
Attracting Lone Eagles	65	Other
Attracting Retirees	59	Other
Bedroom Community	95	Community Development
Business Cultivation	84	General Business
Business Recruitment	69	General Business
Business Retention and Expansion	76	General Business
Cultural Tourism	64	Tourism
Destination Tourism	69	Tourism
Downtown Development	85	Community Development
Education Development	33	Community Development
Energy Development	84	Sector-specific
Entrepreneurial Development	75	General Business
Environmental Restoration	85	Sector-specific
Health Care	86	Community Development
Infrastructure Development	69	Other
Leading-edge Development	76	Sector-specific
Local/Regional Tourism	88	Tourism
Pass-through Visitor Services	80	Tourism
Transportation Distribution Center	46	Sector-specific
Value-added Agriculture	82	Value-added
Value-added Fisheries	37	Value-added
Value-added Forest Products	30	Value-added

Appendix E - Key Success Factor Report

Key Success Factors with a Score of “4”:

Availability of energy resources
 Financially sound existing health care facility
 High availability of urban services
 Proximity to large volumes of agricultural commodities
 Proximity to nationally recognized attractions
 Proximity to raw materials and minerals
 Proximity to travel routes
 Proximity to urban population and workforce centers
 Sufficient base of local businesses
 Sufficient local entrepreneurial base
 Insulation from industrial business annoyances
 Access to small business financing
 Access to large-scale capital
 Access to long-term infrastructure loans and grants
 Competitive recruitment incentives
 Dedicated local financial resources for staffing recruiters
 Local funding for downtown development
 Sufficient marketing, promotion, or public relations budget
 Ability to build a team comprised of energy-development experts
 Ability to compete in a global market
 Ability to identify product and service gaps
 Ability to successfully market materials
 Capable, experienced economic development professionals
 Competent, strategic-minded hospital and health-care executives
 Downtown organization and staff
 Relative sophistication in coordinating and marketing local events
 Community acceptance of the visitor industry
 Local government support
 Strong community support
 Strong relations between economic development organization and local businesses
 Supportive local government policy and focus
 Adequate telecommunications infrastructure
 Availability of industrial-zoned land for industrial park development
 High-speed internet

Key Success Factors with a Score of “3”:

Quality residential neighborhoods
 Accurate, long-term analysis of infrastructure needs and costs
 Desirable climate
 Existence of recreational amenities
 Existing or prospective cultural attraction
 Local recreational and visitor attractions
 Recognizable central business district/downtown
 Ability to secure power-purchase agreements
 Ability to understand industry trends and opportunities
 Cooperation of economic development staff and educational community

- Dedicated business coaching staff
- Existing excellence in local health care
- Implementation of national Main Street Four-Point Approach™
- Local ability to identify and advance a funding proposal
- Sophisticated use of the internet for marketing
- Team approach to infrastructure finance
- Active engagement of downtown building and business owners
- Local focus on revenues from visitors
- Local pro-business climate
- Support from local businesses
- Supportive state energy policies and incentives
- Availability of brownfield sites
- Availability of local land
- Availability of local infrastructure
- Excess water and sewer infrastructure capacity
- Prospect of an expanded geographic market for health care
- Proximity and access to markets

Key Success Factors with a Score of “2”:

- Availability of appropriated funds
- Strong state and/or federal legislative delegation

Key Success Factors with a Score of “1”:

- Available, desirable housing
- Ability to network and attend relevant trade shows
- Cultural development and advocacy organization
- Sophisticated tourism development & promotion
- Staff focused on recruitment objectives
- Support from local education professionals at all levels
- Supportive post-secondary education training program
- Community support for needed infrastructure rate increases
- Favorable state policies with respect to office locations
- Projected growth in government budgets
- Support for attracting retirees
- Adequate housing for labor force
- Availability of local buildings
- Land/Buildings/Campus for education development
- Local, available, low-skill labor pool
- Advantageous location for government or education expansion

Key Success Factors with a Score of “0”:

- Expandable educational institution
- Proximity and access to forests and forest products
- Proximity to fisheries commodities
- Ability to secure long-term contracts for forest materials
- Relationship with site selectors
- Proximity to transmission lines with excess capacity
- Local, available, high-skill labor pool
- Proximity to scheduled air service
- Strategic location for distribution centers



Bowman County

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