

Beyond the Borders

COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and LEADERSHIP NEWSLETTER

Issue Two - October 2000

Building Communities

"Practical Tools and Information"

Kathy Tweeten, NDSU Extension Service, Community Economic Development Specialist

This newsletter is meant to share with you practical tools and information to assist you in your important role in community and economic development work. We welcome comments on current letters plus encourage your advice for future articles. Kathy.

Newsletter Topics

[Editorial - Wanted:
Communities to Plan](#)

[Facilitation
101 part 2](#)

[Our Competitive
Landscape](#)

[Agritainment Is
Hot!](#)

[Strengthening
Tomorrow's Leaders
Today](#)

Wanted: Communities to Plan

Editorial

Planning is a positive word. Many times I hear from community leaders who are struggling to make things happen in their community that people are tired of planning, they just want to "do it."

"Do what?" Without a plan there is no direction. If there is no direction, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to make good decisions and to spend limited resources wisely.

North Dakota is lucky. Under the umbrella of the Rural Development Council, many federal, regional, state and local agencies including the NDSU Extension Service, have

developed a strategic planning handbook for community leaders. Facilitators have been trained from across the state to assist communities to implement the process. Previous planning conducted in a community is included in the process so that information already gathered through programs like BUILD only has to be updated and not redone.

It appears that written plans will be required in the future by many granting agencies because grantors will have to document that a need was present. They can only do this if the community also has documentation of the need. Funding is not the reason to plan, however. The reason to plan is to set direction so that activities can be prioritized and informed decisions made.

For more information about the Leadership Initiative for Community Strategic Planning you can contact your regional planning council, USDA Rural Development office, your NDSU Extension Service county office or the point of contact who is Mike Spletto at the Division of Community Services at 328-2308.

[Back to top](#)

Facilitation 101

Part 2- What You Do Before the Meeting

Successful meetings don't just happen. Someone once said it's in the details. Details that are important to take care of before the meeting include:

- Clarify the purpose with the person requesting your assistance. Write it down on a large piece of paper for display at the meeting.
- Set the meeting agenda. People want to know when breaks will be provided as well as the start and ending times.
- Determine when and where the meeting will be held. It's important to provide a comfortable and if a controversial issue a neutral setting.
- Identify who will participate including group recorders. Individual invitations should be sent as well as a personal reminder call just before the meeting. Recorders should arrive 30 minutes early for training if needed.
- Decide on process and materials that will be needed. A well defined process will keep the meeting moving ahead and will assist you in achieving the required outcomes.
- Market the meeting to a broader audience if a community issue, not just to the identified leaders.
- Provide participants with all relevant information including a participant list if possible.
- Prepare all materials needed for the meeting as well as arrangements for easels, overheads, breaks, table arrangements, etc.
- And last but not least - double check all arrangements.

[Back to top](#)

Our Competitive Landscape

"Our Competitive Landscape" is a summary of an economic study by RFA for the North Dakota Department of Economic Development and Finance. The report gives us the composition and performance of the North Dakota economy. It has both good and bad news. The good news - North Dakota created 63,000 jobs in the last decade. Individual growth is above the U.S. average. Dynamic and growing industries are expanding more rapidly than the state average. They are also increasing their concentration in the state more rapidly than in the nation as a whole.

North Dakota has a fairly positive business climate ranking 35th on the cost of doing business index. Quality of life remains a strong asset for the state.

The bad news - North Dakota's export base needs to grow to create new wealth and high paying job opportunities in the state. Slower-than-average income growth has aided in the population decline as people choose to go outside the state for better opportunities. North Dakota's per capita income is just 82.0 percent of the national average. Worker productivity is at almost 33 percent below the U.S. average. Worker productivity is based on output per worker. This does not mean that they do not work hard but rather it's the type of work they have. A high proportion of workers are employed by the state's least productive (low total output) industries. These industries make up over half the employment but produce only one-third of total outputs.

The report concludes that North Dakota is definitely an economy in transition. It stands out from competing states with the smallest number of stable industries and largest number of declining, dynamic and growing industries. It needs a large and stable manufacturing industry to support the economy during its transition and needs expansion into high-tech, high-wage jobs. RFA identified five challenges that we must address:

- Nurture dynamic and growing industries
- Encourage new industries to move up the value ladder.
- Promote Private investment.
- Emphasize continuous workforce training.
- Develop modern infrastructure.

For a complete report contact the North Dakota Department of Economic Development and Finance at 701-328-5300 or go to <http://www.growingnd.com/> select "ED&F Services," click on "Research and click on "Our Competitive Landscape."

[Back to top](#)

Agritainment Is Hot!

Agritainment or Farm and Ranch Recreation has become a new business for many North Dakota farm and ranch families who are looking to diversify their on the farm income. Growing in number are working ranches, ranches and farms with cabins and other sleeping facilities for hikers, bikers, birdwatchers, hunters and others who enjoy the outdoors . According to Joanne Burke, Deputy Director of the North Dakota Department of Tourism, adventure travel makes up 40 percent of all travel nationally. People want to experience new things, they want to become part of the activity and not just watch from the outside. Many travelers want to build relationships in the communities that they visit, not just see the sights and go, never to return. These trends give rural places like North Dakota an advantage in that we can offer what people are looking for - "real" experiences, prairie, wildlife, natural settings and sunsets that are not blocked by buildings, mountains or trees.

The next scheduled Agritainment workshop is January 23, 2001. Details will be provided in the January newsletter or call 701-328-5134 for information.

[Back to top](#)

Strengthening Tomorrow's Leaders Today

Are you looking for short, inspirational readings about leadership topics? Would you like to receive information about leadership without leaving your office? The Ohio State University Leadership Center has an opportunity that you don't want to miss. Every week the OSU Leadership Center offers (free of charge) an excerpt from a leadership resource available in the Leadership Center. To subscribe to Leadership Moments, please send an e-mail message to <mailto:flynn.61@osu.edu> with the message: subscribe Leadership Moments.

Source: Beth Flynn, Extension Associate, Leadership Education
OSU Leadership Center
109 Agricultural Administration Building
2120 Fyffe Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1084 -Phone: (614) 292-1251 Fax: (614) 292-9750 E-mail:
flynn.61@osu.edu

[Back to top](#)

****Check out the new Food Entrepreneur website:
<http://www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/cdfs/foodent/fex-2.html>

[Newsletter Homepage](#)

North Dakota State University
NDSU Extension Service