

North
Dakota
Economic
Development
Foundation
Strategic Plan



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North Dakota Economic Development Foundation: Strategic Plan

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Executive Summary

In a proactive effort to accelerate North Dakota's economic growth rate, Governor John Hoeven proposed, and the General Assembly legislatively enabled, the creation of a new Department of Commerce (DOC) uniting formerly disconnected efforts tasked with economic growth initiatives. The DOC is charged with designing, coordinating and implementing a productive economic growth effort. The enabling legislation also mandated the establishment of the North Dakota Economic Development Foundation, a council of accomplished professional and corporate executives from a broad expanse of geography and constituency. The purpose of the Foundation is clearly defined in the Mission Statement. North Dakota is known for several strengths, most notably education, talented workforce, and quality of life. These factors build the launch pad for North Dakota's re-invigorated economic development program and provide the basis for continuing the reversal of the challenges identified in the Economic Assessment.

Without a doubt, North Dakota has a great many assets. Educational attainment is high. Workforce productivity is strong. Both of these enviable characteristics are displayed by the efforts non-resident companies make to recruit workers from North Dakota. In addition, the bold leadership currently in both the executive and legislative branches of state government demonstrates a commitment to address shortfalls in the state's traditional economic growth patterns. State leaders from both the public and private sectors repeatedly tout the state's quality of life including family values, four season recreational opportunities, environmental purity, the pioneer spirit and this almost universal commitment to address issues and promote the state's strengths is a unique display of unity that is often not seen in other states.

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By the same token the Foundation and North Dakota must continue the slow, but positive growth trends outlined in the Economic Assessment section if the state is to fully realize its potential. For example, in the 1990s the state was able to reverse its population and employment growth declines that occurred in the 1980s and post modest growth. It is clear that North Dakota faces challenges in continuing its recent population and employment growth, however, the forward thinking gubernatorial administration and legislature have placed the state on a path to economic expansion with the adoption of this plan.

Clearly, the Foundation Board members hold no fantasies about the difficulty and duration of the challenges ahead. They know full well that economic problems of fifty years cannot be cured overnight. They also recognize that progress will be incremental with the wisdom that every success breeds opportunities for further success.

Toward that end, the Foundation sought the assistance of an internationally known economic development consulting team. Working together, the Foundation and the consultants developed the following Vision and Mission Statements to guide deliberations and decision-making.

Vision:

With respect for North Dakota values and quality of life, the North Dakota Economic Development Foundation will be a catalyst in creating quality employment opportunities making North Dakota a competitive partner in the global economy.

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Mission:

The Foundation will advise and support the current and future Governors of North Dakota and the Department of Commerce by:

- Establishing aggressive, yet realistic performance goals for the state's economic development;
- Creating a system to monitor and evaluate the state's performance in meeting its economic development goals; and
- Facilitating productive collaboration among the state's legislators and economic development partners both public and private.

These statements clearly reflect the comprehensive and aggressive approach the state's political and business leadership is taking with regard to expanding economic opportunities for all current and future North Dakota residents. Consequently, the Foundation adopted a plan of goals and strategies that would redefine North Dakota's approach in a distinct and courageous way. The plan's uniqueness is depicted in four important points:

1. For this first time in North Dakota's history, all of the pertinent organizations have united in common purpose. The Executive and legislative branches of government, the Foundation, the newly organized North Dakota Department of Commerce, the Greater North Dakota Chamber of Commerce, higher education and local economic development professionals and their organizations have agreed on the direction of the strategic plan and committed to carry out their respective assignments in the plan.
2. The plan sets measurable, practical, yet ambitious benchmarks to reverse demographic and economic trends in existence since the 1950s. Equally important, this plan suggests that 10 years of aggressive and continuous effort

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can reverse this 50-year trend. The pioneering spirit and work ethic that contributed to North Dakota's early settlement remains strong and vibrant even today. It is those strengths that make the progress possible.

3. This plan requires a broad approach to economic growth. North Dakota will be driven by opportunity and strategy, not react to outdated opportunities. Business recruitment, business formation, and business expansion are all new formidable parts of this comprehensive strategy.
4. To develop more career path opportunities for emerging talent, North Dakota will build on the existing "centers of excellence" in the state university system to create a more fertile climate for entrepreneurial development.

Goals:

(1) Develop a unified front for economic development based on collaboration, accountability, and trust.

(2) Strengthen linkages between the state's higher education system, economic development organizations, and private businesses.

(3) Create quality jobs to retain North Dakota's current workforce, and attract new high-skilled labor.

(4) Create a strong marketing image to build on the state's numerous strengths, including workforce, education, and quality of place.

(5) Accelerate job growth in diversified industry targets to provide opportunities for the state's long-term economic future.

(6) Strengthen North Dakota's business climate to increase global competitiveness.

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A primary issue for the state is its traditional lack of collaboration among economic development stakeholders. North Dakota is blessed with many organizations and agencies dedicated to economic development, yet most of them work independently of one another without a common vision or message. The lack of a unified front for economic development has diluted North Dakota's limited resources, and the state cannot afford to allow this to continue if it is to become more economically competitive.

North Dakota must continue to develop the partnerships between the North Dakota University system, the private sector, and the economic development community to unlock the dynamic potential of this collaboration. The nation is shifting towards a research and knowledge-based economy, and North Dakota must accelerate its efforts to expand knowledge-based industries if the state is to compete successfully in the global economy.

In addition, local economic development agencies are critical to statewide success. By helping to lead each community to its fullest economic potential, the local professionals and their organizations can provide valuable feedback into needed progress; they can be a source for opportunity and essentially, the local partner to collective accomplishment. The Economic Development Association of North Dakota (EDND) can be a vital partner in the implementation of the strategic plan, and increased collaboration between the DOC and EDND is a strong step in improving the state's economic success.

The Department of Commerce has done a commendable job of forging partnerships with the local economic development agencies to present a common message to prospective clients; this trend must continue. The vigorous effort by DOC to

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communicate with stakeholders was commended in every workshop and telephone conference held with local and regional economic development professionals.

While each of these groups has done laudable and important work in moving North Dakota to the edge of new sophistication, each has its limitations. Strategies and goals outlined below recognize these strengths by suggesting that each group has a significant role to play: yet none, standing alone, can accomplish all the work needed to be done in the foreseeable future. The collective strengths of all the stakeholders will maximize productivity and improve results. Therefore, it is hoped that each suggested prime assignee will accept the lead and/or participatory responsibility in the spirit of the aggregate accomplishment.

The Foundation, with its stature and connections, can be the catalyst in developing a unified front for North Dakota's economic development. By bringing several parties together including the Department of Commerce, GNDCC, the North Dakota University System, the private sector, and the local economic developers (EDND), the Foundation can put North Dakota in a competitive position to attain its economic potential. Not only should the Foundation focus the state's strategic efforts through its role as the catalyst for collaboration, **the Foundation must also be aware of its responsibility for establishing continuity to the long term state's economic development efforts. To ensure the consistent implementation of a viable and enduring Strategic Plan, the Foundation must be the anchor that sustains stability in times of economic turbulence and prosperity.**

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Summary and Prioritization of Goals and Strategies

(Updated and approved by the Foundation on June 23, 2005)

Responsibility Responsibility Timeline

Goal 1 Develop a unified front for North Dakota based on collaboration, accountability and trust.				
Priority	Strategies:	Strategy Leader	Participate	Timeline
1	Expand Foundation membership to include greater representation from the North Dakota university system, agriculture industry and rural communities while maintaining private sector influence. <i>Initiatives:</i> <i>Continue to fill Foundation positions as they become vacant.</i>	Governor, ND Assembly	Foundation	Ongoing
2	Continue enhancement of communication and coordination between the Department of Commerce and local economic development organizations to foster more economic opportunities. <i>Initiatives:</i> <i>Have the Foundation better communicate with local developers on it's mission, not just the strategic plan.</i> <i>Schedule follow-up community visits to share measurements and results, after initial community roundtable meeting.</i> <i>Develop process for analysis and use of input received by community leaders at community roundtable meetings.</i>	DOC, Foundation	EDND	Ongoing
3	Expand the DOC's role as a lead generator for ND communities and provide a menu of services to support locally generated leads. <i>Initiatives:</i> <i>Continue to link Ambassador program with 2-year marketing plan.</i> <i>Continue to provide virtual environment for Ambassadors to exchange information.</i> <i>Continue to invite site selectors for familiarization tours of North Dakota.</i> <i>Enhance and continue The Dakota Manufacturing Extension Program.</i> <i>Implement local developers certification program as mandated by the 2005 Assembly.</i>	DOC	Governor, ND Assembly	Ongoing 2005-07 biennium

- Key:
- COE Commission = Centers of Excellence Commission
 - DOC = Department of Commerce
 - ED&F = DOC Division of Economic Development and Finance
 - EDND = Economic Development Association of North Dakota
 - Foundation = North Dakota Economic Development Foundation
 - GNDCC = Greater North Dakota Chamber of Commerce
 - NDUS = North Dakota University System
 - SBDC = Small Business Development Center
 - TDMEP = The Dakota Manufacturers Extension Partnership
 - Workforce Development = DOC Division of Workforce Development
 - Workforce Council = Workforce Development Council

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Goal 2 Strengthen collaboration between various entities, such as the North Dakota university system, economic development organizations, and the private sector.				
Priority	Strategies:	Strategy Leader	Participate	
1	Expand the promotion of the workforce development programs of Williston State College, Lake Region State College, Bismarck State College and the ND State College of Science to local employers.	NDUS, Workforce Development	Foundation	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>			
	<i>Present report on workforce development programs to Board of Higher Education.</i>			
	<i>Meet with Workforce Training Advisory Boards.</i>			
2	Better connect state and local economic developers with incubator programs to encourage greater knowledge and support of emerging companies.	DOC	EDND	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>			
	<i>Interact with Workforce Training Coordinators.</i>			
3	Develop a website that offers information about how North Dakota Universities meet the workforce needs of the state's target industries.	Job Service, NDUS	DOC	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>			
	<i>Review existing web-sites for training and development content materials.</i>			
	<i>Meet with Eddie Dunn and Robert Potts to discuss strategy hand-off.</i>			
4	Recommend the continuation of the North Dakota University System roundtable.	Governor, ND Assembly	Foundation, Commerce Cabinet	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives: Continue university roundtable meetings and present overview of report to the Board.</i>			
5	Recommend university system advisory boards to take a greater role in economic development.	NDUS	Foundation, Commerce Cabinet	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>			
	<i>Coordinate with workforce development on university roundtable meetings.</i>	Foundation		
6	Coordinate with current initiatives such as Centers of Excellence to enhance the state's economic development outcomes.	NDUS, DOC	Foundation, Commerce Cabinet	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>			
	<i>Develop new Centers of Excellence to spur economic growth around North Dakota's colleges and universities.</i>	COE Commission		
	<i>Work in conjunction with existing Centers of Excellence, the NDSU Research and Technology Park and the UND Center for Innovation, to develop North Dakota's high tech industries.</i>			
	<i>Coordinate in the development of the Red River Valley Research Corridor.</i>	ED&F		

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Goal 3 Create quality jobs to retain North Dakota's current workforce and attract new higher skilled labor.					
Priority	Strategies:	Strategy Leader	Participate		
1	Develop a set of business expansion initiatives.		EDND, DOC	SBDC, Governor, ND Assembly	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>	<i>Complete legislative agendas that promote attainment of goal #3.</i>			
		<i>Continue to provide viable resources for economic development at the state level.</i>	Governor, ND Assembly		
		<i>Study North Dakota's economic development incentives.</i>			2005-06 Interim
		<i>Develop, implement, and carry out the gathering and reporting of economic development incentives provided by the state and local entities.</i>			2005-07 Biennium
		<i>Create a North Dakota American Indian Business Office to develop and implement strategies to assist ND American Indian tribal and individual economic development representatives, businesses, and entrepreneurs with access to state and federal programs designed to assist their business interests.</i>			2005-07 Biennium
	<i>Implement the Office of International Business and trade for the purpose of assisting North Dakota businesses to expand exports to international markets.</i>	ED&F		2005-07 Biennium	
2	Refine workforce-training programs that provide the skills needed by target industries.		Workforce Development, Workforce Council	NDUS, Job Service	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>	<i>Finalize workforce training strategic plan.</i>			
3	Expand state government job training incentives for technical skills.		Governor, ND Assembly	DOC, Job Service, NDUS	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>	<i>Track progress of the cost/benefit of training programs.</i>	Job Service, NDUS		
		<i>Document needs for individually requested training that cannot be funded by Job Service.</i>	Job Service, NDUS		
		<i>Report on the cost/benefit of training programs and individual requests for training at each legislative session.</i>	Job Service, NDUS		
4	Augment the existing information clearinghouses for new businesses that provide financing, market intelligence and incentives information.		Bank of North Dakota	EDND, DOC	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>	<i>Meet with the Entrepreneurial Centers of ND and the DOC to discuss linking their database to the Entrepreneurial Centers of ND.</i>			
		<i>Define link between the Entrepreneurial Centers of ND and the DOC's database of information.</i>			
		<i>Implement a business hotline through which the department will provide assistance to in-state and out-of-state callers seeking information.</i>	DOC		2005-07 Biennium

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5	Build a privately funded seed stage or early venture capital fund with the assistance of the public sector.	Bank of North Dakota	The Foundation, DOC, ND Assembly, GNDCC	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>	<i>Continuation of public venture capital fund.</i>		
	<i>Creation of a private venture capital fund.</i>			
6	Actively market entrepreneurial development successes.	DOC	NDUS, EDND	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>	<i>Continue to work with Center for Innovation on marketing successes.</i>		
	<i>Continue to have ED&F and Tourism marketing work together on effort.</i>			

Goal 4 Create a strong marketing image to build on the state's numerous strengths, including workforce, education and quality of place.

Priority	Strategies:	Strategy Leader	Participate	
1	Measure ND's image in various in state and out of state constituencies.	DOC	GNDCC	Ongoing
2	Continue statewide internal marketing effort to improve ND's self image.	DOC, Commerce Cabinet	EDND	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>			Jan. 2006
	<i>Complete marketing plan for 2005-07 biennium.</i>			
	<i>Host receptions, etc... to inform public on ambassadors by invitation only.</i>			
	<i>Host ambassador trainings following receptions, etc... invitations are sent out.</i>			
	<i>Develop and implement a program to assist other state agencies and state agencies' employees to present a positive image of the state.</i>			2005-07 Biennium
3	Continue and expand volunteer participation in external marketing trips.	Foundation	DOC	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>			
	<i>Quarterly Foundation meetings with broader community participation to create interest in the economic development of ND.</i>			
	<i>Provide Foundation with yearly schedule of marketing events so they can attend.</i>	DOC		
4	Improve the common portal that presents the state's marketing message and include demographic, economic and cultural information about the communities in the state.	DOC	EDND	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>			
	<i>Maintain prominent web presence through www.ndcommerce.com</i>			
	<i>Continuously improve and enhance on-line project RFP system.</i>			
5	Calculate cost of doing business indicators and compare against regional and national competitors every two years.	DOC	Business Congress	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i>			
	<i>Continue to calculate cost of doing business (tax analysis) in ND. (costs are often calculated on a project-by-project basis)</i>			
	<i>Continue to use quality of life surveys from site selectors.</i>			

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Goal 5 Accelerate job growth in diversified industry targets to provide opportunities for the state's long-term economic future.

Priority	Strategies:	Strategy Leader	Participate	
1	Encourage cross-selling through Supply Side Management.	TDMEP	EDND	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i> Continue to publish formal newsletter highlighting one territory in each issue educating ND businesses on other businesses in the state.	GNDCC		
	The Dakota Manufacturing Extension Partnership will build a membership association of manufacturers in North Dakota.			2005-07 Biennium
2	Recruit industries that complement supply chains for target industries and encourage entrepreneurial growth.	DOC	EDND, GNDCC	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i> Continue industry needs (supply chain needs) survey.			
	Identify target industries to focus development efforts and report to legislative council.			2005-06 Interim
	Implement the Office of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency to assist in the development of renewable energy within this state to provide secure, diverse, sustainable, and competitive renewable energy supplies and promote the conservation of energy and the wise use of energy resources in both the public and private sectors.			2005-07 Biennium
3	Focus state tax incentives to support target industry development.	Governor, ND Assembly	Commerce Cabinet, DOC	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i> Monitor state tax incentives to support target industry development.			

Goal 6 Strengthen ND's business climate to increase global competitiveness.

Priority	Strategies:	Strategy Leader	Participate	
1	Conduct annual business climate surveys of private sector leaders to identify strengths and weaknesses.	Governor, ND Assembly	DOC	Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i> Organize focus groups to evaluate the needs of developers and the needs of the business community and conduct a business congress to present findings.			2005-06 Interim
	Study North Dakota's intellectual property laws.	DOC		2005-06 Interim
2	Enhance communications with regard to GNDCC constituents.	GNDCC		Ongoing
	<i>Initiatives:</i> Reintroduce territory leaders to local Chamber of Commerce.			
	Host meetings in each of the 8 territories.			
	Complete state legislative agenda promoting a healthy business environment.			
	Complete federal legislative agenda promoting a healthy business environment in ND.			

Plan Overview

The consulting team of AngelouEconomics, MGT of America, and Paragon Decision Resources is pleased to present the Strategic Plan for the North Dakota Economic Development Foundation (the Foundation). This plan contains the Foundation's vision and mission statements, goals, and strategies to fulfill them. In addition, the strategic plan outlines a series of next steps for the Foundation and defines its role in relation to the Department of Commerce. Finally, the plan proposes an economic development performance measurement system for North Dakota, including specific indicators and targets that can be used to monitor and evaluate the state's economic progress.

The Strategic Plan for the North Dakota Economic Development Foundation is composed of three main sections: Economic Assessment of North Dakota, the plan itself, and the implementation and performance measurement section. The economic assessment provides an analysis of the prevailing economic trends affecting North Dakota, providing the basis for the development of the goals and strategies described in the plan. The second section details the vision and mission, and goals and strategies to reach them. Each of the goals is followed by a rationale that explains the relevance of each goal to the North Dakota economy along with timelines to complete the strategies. In addition, each strategy is assigned to a particular agency or institution for implementation. Lastly, the final section of the plan is the implementation and performance measurement system. This section includes the proposed structure and the core functions for the Foundation, a monitoring system for evaluating the state's economic performance, and specific performance indicators and targets through 2012.

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The Strategic Plan proposes strategies that require participation from stakeholders other than the Foundation. The role of the Foundation is primarily to monitor the progress of those strategies to ensure that implementation occurs and measurable improvements result. The Department of Commerce is assigned the responsibility for the bulk of the strategies, since it is the implementing agency for this Strategic Plan. However, the Strategic Plan has several strategies where the direct participation of the Foundation in partnership with other organizations will be required. An explanation for the direct involvement of the Foundation and other organizations will be included under the respective strategies where they occur.

Developing an ambitious and comprehensive strategic plan for economic development is a major accomplishment for the Foundation. However, the Foundation's job is not over simply because the strategic plan has been completed. In some ways, the Foundation's work has just begun.

To help guide the Foundation into the future, this final section of the strategic plan:

- Proposes an operational structure for the Foundation based on input received during and after the April strategic planning workshops and the consulting team's best practice research.
- Proposes a method for monitoring and evaluating the state's economic performance and the implementation of this strategic plan; and
- Proposes specific performance indicators and targets through 2012.

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Background

During the 2001 session, the North Dakota Legislative Assembly created the North Dakota Economic Development Foundation. The Foundation's enabling legislation (SB 2032) detailed a number of items, including membership, funding and key functions. Highlights of key statutory mandates related to the Foundation are presented in the table below.

Table X: Key SB 2032 Statutory Mandates for the North Dakota Economic Development Foundation

Number of Members	15 - 30 members.
Appointment Process	Governor appoints all Foundation members.
Terms	Members serve two-year terms, half of initial members were granted one-year terms to initiate a cycle of staggered terms.
Required Representation	Cross-section of business, tourism, economic development; at least one member representing rural concerns.
Committees	Foundation required to elect Executive Committee composed of 5-7 members.
Funding	Foundation required to seek private sector funding for administrative expenses and to raise and distribute private funds for commerce-related activities.
Mandated Responsibilities	Advising Governor on selection of a Commissioner for the North Dakota Department of Commerce (DOC); Advising the DOC Commissioner; Developing a strategic plan for economic development in the state; Developing accountability standards, measurements, and benchmarks to evaluate the effectiveness of the DOC in implementing the strategic plan; Monitoring DOC tourism and economic development activities.

Methodology

To produce the Foundation's strategic plan, the project team collected input from a variety of sources, including North Dakota's university system, state and local economic development, the private sector, and government interests. The list of participants in the plan will be detailed in the succeeding pages. Interviews via telephone and in person along with three workshops were the primary sources of input that the project team gathered. The workshops allowed Foundation members, local economic developers, and Department of Commerce employees to describe the issues that impact North Dakota's economic development efforts and offer ideas on how the state may focus its efforts to meet its challenges and opportunities. Local economic developers and North Dakota university system leaders comprised the first workshop and they provided candid observations about the state's economic status and how it might be addressed. The second workshop featured Paragon Decision Resources, a site selection consultant with extensive experience in North Dakota, offering local economic developers and Foundation members its perspective on the state's strengths and weaknesses. The final workshop allowed the Foundation members to consider feedback generated in the previous two sessions, develop preliminary vision and mission statements, and set goals to guide the state's economic development efforts. Following the workshop, the project team interviewed several other stakeholders including leaders from North Dakota's university system and the recently organized New Economy Initiative to gather additional input on North Dakota's economic development efforts.

Prior to conducting the workshops, the project team reviewed several reports, plans, and studies that illustrated North Dakota's previous economic development efforts. The review of the state's prior efforts provided a basis for the project team to structure the workshops and develop preliminary ideas for the Foundation's strategic plan.

The logo for the North Dakota Economic Development Foundation (NDEDF) features the acronym "NDEDF" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The text is centered within a dark blue silhouette of the state of North Dakota.

Board Members

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Other valuable contributors to the strategic planning process:

John	Hoeven	Governor of North Dakota
Dale	Anderson	Greater North Dakota Chamber of Commerce
Rick	Anderson	North Central Planning Council
Gaylon	Baker	Stark Development Corporation
Dana	Bohn	Greater North Dakota Chamber of Commerce
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Judy	Sauter	Bismarck-Mandan Dev. Assoc.
Karen	Selensky	Greater North Dakota Chamber of Commerce
Mark	Sovig	Tri-County Regional Dev. Council
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Lee	Vickers	Dickinson State University
Julius	Wangler	Red River Regional Council
Laura	Willard	ND Department of Commerce

This strategic plan was prepared with the assistance of the consulting team comprised of the following firms: AngelouEconomics, MGT of America, and Paragon Decision Resources. A profile of each firm is provided below.

AngelouEconomics (AE) is comprised of economic development and technology consultants with extensive experience in applying state-of-the-art approaches to strategic planning, marketing, site selection, and plan implementation in the most dynamic regions, both in the United States and abroad.

AE's is nationally known for providing a unique blend of consulting solutions to public and private sector clients. The firm emphasizes a practitioner's approach to economic development that involves not only development of strategies, but also implementation. Prior and ongoing experience in economic development and technology consulting qualify AE as preeminent in the field of technology recruitment and strategic planning.

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In short, AE is an economic development consulting firm focusing on the needs of high technology companies and the communities seeking to recruit them.

MGT of America, Inc. (MGT) is a national public sector management consulting firm founded in Tallahassee, Florida in 1974. MGT has grown to employ more than 140 professionals in Texas, Washington, South Carolina, Florida, and California. The firm has conducted over 1,900 client engagements in 49 states, Puerto Rico, and several foreign countries.

The Austin regional office was founded in 1995 and specializes in organizational development, state and local government performance reviews, public policy research, and strategic planning. MGT has conducted organizational reviews, business process analysis, and planning and reengineering for state and local clients in Texas, Florida, California, Virginia, and Puerto Rico. Current Austin-office clients include the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, The University of Texas Athletics Department, the Houston Community College System, the U.S./Mexico Border Counties Coalition, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and most recently, the Fort Worth Independent School District.

Paragon Decision Resources (Paragon) has a history which dates back to 1987 when Premier Decision Management, (their predecessor), a division of Premier Relocation Services, Inc. (a Weyerhaeuser Company) was founded to provide corporate mobility consulting services. In 1991, the senior management of Premier Decision Management acquired the corporate consulting division of Premier Relocation Services, Inc. from Weyerhaeuser Mortgage Company and renamed the entire organization to Paragon Decision Resources, Inc.

Paragon's primary service areas include: Facility & Economic Development; International and Domestic Relocation; and Group Move Planning and Implementation.