

2021 Action Plan

Red River Regional Council



PREPARED BY: **DAWN MANDT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

PREPARED FOR: **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
FEBRUARY 17, 2021

2021 Action Plan

The Red River Regional Council is an independent quasi-governmental organization focused on collaboratively building the economy and communities in four counties in northeastern North Dakota since 1973. The 2021 Action Plan is rooted in the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan which was completed in summer 2019 with the input of approximately 40 regional leaders and adopted by the Board of Directors in August 2019. The Strategic Plan has also been approved by the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) and provides basic eligibility for regional partners to make funding requests to EDA. This document summarizes the strategic plan, 2021 action plan, operations, budget, governance and staff.



1

Support New and Existing Businesses

Align businesses and communities with capital

Provide funding expertise to leverage funds to support business development

Continue to develop the NE Manufacturing Group

- Complete BR+E interviews and determine next steps
- Convene quarterly mtgs of Walsh and Pembina County companies
- Complete strategic plan and begin implementation
- Utilize 10 social media manufacturing videos and initiate a public campaign
- Facilitate placement of 10 student interns
- Explore feasibility of implementing a registered apprenticeship program

Continue to lead the 21st Century Workforce Development Initiative

- Continue partnership with North Valley Career and Technology Center to implement job shadow of 200-250 students
- Organize and/or assist in implementing Marketplace for Kids, MFG Day, entrepreneurship camp and more

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Support Vibrant Community Development

Initiate placemaking activities

- Support ND Council on the Arts in regional public arts initiative
- Continue partnership with NDSU Architecture Dept on community design

Provide technical support for community assets

Provide CDBG and other grant management to complete the following projects:

- Nelson County Housing Rehabilitation - multi-year project beginning in 2021
- Lakota Emergency Water Main Replacement
- Aneta Emergency Water Line Replacement
- Fordville Senior Center Improvements
- Crystal Multi-Family Rehabilitation
- Mountain Multi-Family Rehabilitation
- Minto Main Street Improvements
- Crystal Fire Hall Construction
- Nelson County Health System Handicap Accessibility
- Minto Single-family Housing Rehabilitation

Consider regional community foundation or partnership

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Support Visitor and Destination Development

Continue support and development of the Rendezvous Region Tourism Council

- Convene Board monthly meetings
- Implement annual strategic plan
- Continue to strengthen state and federal partnership

Support redevelopment and expansion of recreation and cultural amenities

Provide funding expertise to:

- Community parks and recreation dept
- Pembina Gorge Foundation - Frost Fire
- Advocate implementation of the Pembina Gorge State Recreation Area Master Plan (2014)
- Support and engage in the development of Icelandic State Park Master Plan

Initiate and complete long-range destination development plan for six counties in northeastern ND

Support development and marketing amenities, niche business and activities

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Foster Regionalism

Convene regional discussions with networking, education and comradery

Provide positive regional messaging

Cultivate regional partnerships

Provide regional link on behalf of projects/initiatives

Support local and county development organizations

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Disaster Resiliency

Maintain strong knowledge on mitigation and recovery programs

Provide grant management assistance to:

- Unity Medical Center Generator
- Walsh County Emergency Generators
- Homme Dam Storm Shelter

Provide public awareness on availability of funding

Encourage and support planning with county emergency management teams

Engage in county emergency management hazard mitigation planning

COVID Recovery & Resiliency

In response to the COVID pandemic, the RRRC has received supplemental funding from the US Department of Commerce: Economic Development Administration for the period July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2022, to support economic recovery and resiliency in Region 4 and have been allocated to:

- Creation of the Catalyst Fund - a new \$1.26M business loan program
- Contribution of \$40k to a long-range destination/community improvement strategic plan
- Increased staff to complete a strategic plan - initiated with a region-wide business retention and expansion program
- Technological upgrades

What do we really do?

Develop Projects • Construct Funding Packages • Write Grants • Provide Grants • Administer Grants • Lend Money • Manage Projects/Programs
Fiscal Management/Sponsorship • Provide Mentorships • Convene People • Create Programs • Foster Regional Collaboration • Inspire Bold Thinking
Build and Extend Relationships • Conduct Research • Track Trends

Ideas to Actions to Results

Management and Operations

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Program Management

Community Development Block Grant
Create 2021 Program Statement, hold a public hearing, and solicit applications for approximately \$200,000 in funding

Progress Fund, Red River Revolving Loan Fund, and Catalyst Fund
Manage loan portfolio, complete semi-annual reports to EDA, review loans in default, conduct site visits of active loans, solicit new applicants

EDA Partners in Planning
Prepare annual work plan, application reports for EDA

Job Development Authorities

- Continue management and development services to Nelson and Pembina County JDA
- Convene bi-monthly meetings
- Implement JDA strategic plans - update PCJDA plan and initiate new strategic plan with NCJDA

Self-Help
Solicit and present requests to Pembina and Walsh County Commissions

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Governance and Management

Manage Board of Directors activities

- Convene bi-monthly Board meetings
- Convene bi-monthly Executive Committee meetings (as needed)
- Manage membership, bylaws, and other organizational documents
- Complete review of mission, vision and core values

Fiscal Management
Provide plans to support sound and sustainable fiscal management of the organization, complete annual audit

Maintain efficient and effective operations

- Support a culture of continuous learning, collaboration, preparedness, use of technology, nimbleness, positivity, forward-thinking and flexibility
- Complete update of personnel handbook
- Convene bi-weekly staff meetings
- Conduct quarterly review of budget and action plan and inform Board of notable changes
- Complete performance conversations with all staff
- Hire and train one new full time developer

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Public Relations

Provide organizational updates to county commissions and cities

- Complete 15-minute presentations within first two quarters to each county commission with annual report, action plan
- Host four city council/development organization informational meetings

Website and social media management, press releases, e-newsletters and annual report

- Prepare and release relevant information
- Complete website update
- Provide daily/weekly social media updates
- Prepare and release annual report

Fine-tune messaging
Seek assistance on developing communications strategy and fine-tune messaging

Public Speaking
Seize opportunities for public speaking and/or training presentations

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Memberships and Engagement

Boards of Directors

- ND Rural Development Council
- Pembina Gorge Foundation
- Rendezvous Region Tourism Council
- ND Association of Regional Councils

Memberships

- Greater North Dakota Chamber
- Grafton Area Chamber of Commerce
- Economic Development Association of North Dakota (EDND)
- National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)
- The Chamber of GF/EGF
- Destination Development Association
- Northeastern ND Developers Group

Conferences / Professional Dev.

- ND Travel Industry Conference
- EDND - summer and fall
- NADO/EDA
- Main Street Summit

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Opportunities

ND Partners in Planning
Develop abbreviated community planning process and solicit two clients and in alignment with the Main Street Initiative

Provide contracted management and development services
Cultivate contracting opportunities that support the continued development of the region

Federal Disaster Aid
Continue to monitor and provide public information updates on federal and state disaster aid related to COVID

State Programs
Continue to monitor state programs that may benefit the region

Other
The Regional Council is continually cultivating opportunities that strive to continue community-building throughout the region as well as assist with the sustainability of this independent organization

Board of Directors

Chris Lipsh, President

Local Development Corps.

Cynthia Pic, Vice President

Grand Forks County

Mike Dunn, Treasurer

Private Sector - Construction Engineers

Dawn Mandt, Secretary

RRRC

Dan Stenvold, Past President

Walsh County Mayors

Kristi Britnell

Walsh County

Lacey Hinkle

Pembina County Mayors

Mary Houdek

Job Service ND

Maynard Loibl

Nelson County Commission

Nick Rutherford

Pembina County Commission

Korrey Tweed

Nelson County Soil Conservation District

Gerald Uglem

Grand Forks County Mayors

Bret Weber

City of Grand Forks

Todd Whitman

Nelson County Mayors

Barry Wilfahrt

Business Sector - The Chamber of GF / EGF

Advisory Members

Gary Paulson

Retired Lender

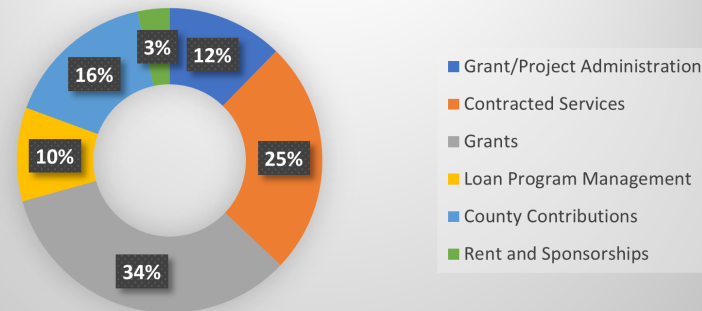
Shelley Popiel

Walsh County Housing Authority

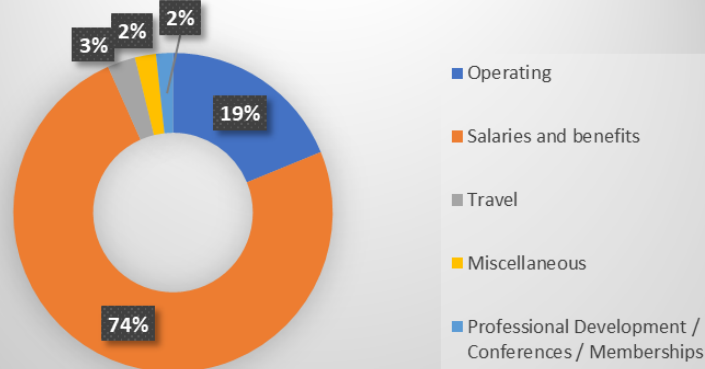
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Budget Summary

2021 Projected Income: \$749,615



2021 Projected Expenses: \$704,429



Professional Team

Dawn Mandt, Executive Director (22 years of service)

Dawn provides overall management and leadership of the regional council and has been engaged in rural development in North Dakota since 1992. She was the Governor's Choice for Small Community Economic Developer of the Year in 2016. She holds a Bachelors and will soon have a Master of Arts in Leadership, both from the University of Jamestown.

Lori Estad, Office and Fiscal Manager (24 years of service)

Lori is responsible for office and project/program fiscal management. Lori has been with the organization 23 years. AA – Business Manager, Aakers Business School.

Stacie Sevigny, Developer (6 years of service)

Stacie manages community development (infrastructure, housing rehabilitation, disaster recovery and mitigation, and more). Stacie also manages the CDBG program and all funded projects. Stacie has taken ongoing training on FEMA programs, CDBG, and housing programs. Prior to joining the RRRC, Stacie had 17 years of relevant experience. BA - English with minor in Mass Communications, NDSU.

Vacant, Developer

This position will be filled in Q1 2021.

Part-Time Staff

Cheryl Osowski, Special Projects Coord. (7 years of service)

Cheryl provides assistance on an as-needed basis with special projects.

Peyton Cole, Rendezvous Region Marketing (2+ years of service)

Peyton provides marketing assistance to the Rendezvous Region Tourism Council.

Additional part-time or contract staff will be utilized in 2021 to complete EDA-funded strategic plan and full disbursement of the Catalyst Fund.