

Pembina County Strategic Plan Implementation Workbook

A Development Plan

2015-2020



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Introduction

The 25 economic and community development strategies have been condensed into six categories including general business development, sector specific business development, value-added business development, tourism development, community development, and other.

Completing a strategic plan is fundamentally a worthless exercise if it does not stimulate action. Therefore, to help avoid this possibility for Pembina County's strategic plan, the Strategy Committee was tasked with identifying action steps which have been compiled and organized in this Plan Implementation Workbook.

The Strategy Committee was charged with developing specific action steps for each of the community's selected strategies and Quality-of-Life-Initiatives (QoLIs). Additionally, committee members defined multiple tasks to be done to execute each action step, identified resources needed and set target completion dates for each task. These action steps are initial implementation steps designed to quickly move the community from planning to action.

Unlike the Strategic Plan, which is intended to communicate to a broad audience the overall strategies, initiatives, motivation, and direction of Pembina County, this workbook is designed specifically for the community development professionals and volunteers implementing the plan. Accordingly, following are a few suggestions for using the workbook:

- **Use it.** The workbook is intended to be used, written on and even tattered! This document should constitute the agenda for regular Strategy Committee meetings for three to five years. Cross things off. Hold one another accountable. Celebrate accomplishments.

- **Be Flexible.** The action items at this stage represent two things. Primarily they are “getting started” instructions, but often they are actually “best guesses” about where and how to proceed against a largely unknown future. As such, be prepared to adapt your action steps as circumstances unfold and conditions change. The main point is to begin walking—taking the early steps on your journey of working together to implement the plan.

- **Create New Steps.** Even after the Strategic Plan is written and action steps are defined, Strategy Committees may identify and assign new action steps to keep the progress going. In fact, because all communities differ from one another in capacity and circumstance, it is almost universally understood that initial action steps will need to be added and/or modified over time. Therefore, you will need to be vigilant, attentive and adaptive as you implement your plan.

- **Consider Scrapping a Strategy or QoLI.** Sometimes Strategy Committees find that one or more strategies or initiatives are not being advanced—or cannot be. Communities encountering this situation may find it would be better to re-allocate its resources to more promising strategies/initiatives, or to those which are already being advanced successfully.

- **Keep the Master Copy of the Workbook.** This workbook is designed to guide the entire implementation process for the community's plan. Developing and keeping one clean master copy for your records is recommended. Doing so will help you gauge progress and measure success as implementation occurs, as well as provide valuable documentation of the entire effort.

- **Have Fun!** A major underlying theme in any strategic plan is the coordination of energies, desires, goals and activities of civic volunteers and the professionals who support them. Make the implementation of your plan enjoyable and work together.

Category 1

General Business Development Strategies

Business Recruitment

Business Recruitment is a set of activities designed to encourage businesses outside the community to relocate within it. This work is directed at shifting or expanding existing jobs from one location to another.

Business Retention & Expansion

Business Retention and Expansion focuses on encouraging existing local businesses to remain in the community and/or expanding their operations and workforce.

Business Cultivation

Business Cultivation combines import substitution opportunities and work by industrial cluster teams. This is a more in-depth approach to business retention and expansion.

Entrepreneurial Development

Entrepreneurial Development is a set of activities designed to encourage and support aspiring and existing entrepreneurs to establish and/or further develop their businesses.

Objective of Strategy Implementation

The Strategy Committee felt that by actively seeking existing businesses that are outside of the region to expand or relocate into Pembina County will help to improve the economy.

The Strategy Committee sees great value in a county-wide approach to its existing business base to extend support for their continued presence and growth and to cultivate new business opportunities.

The Strategy Committee believes it is important that we market our entrepreneurial development opportunities to capture the hopes and abilities of the citizens in the community.

Essential Action Steps and Tasks

1. Inventory available land and buildings for commercial and industrial use.
 - Work with local realtors to inventory all available land, buildings, infrastructure, housing, recreation and office space for business use.
 -
2. Determine what services a new business could provide to an existing business.
 - Create and implement a survey for existing businesses that determines needs.
 -
3. Determine what services are lacking in the county (i.e. plumber, electrician, and dentist).
 - Create a business plan recruitment package for high priority services.
 - Determine the demand for the recruitment of new business to meet local needs.
 -
4. Identify business training needs and create educational opportunities for existing businesses.
 - Implement a survey to identify the training needs of area businesses owners, managers and employers.
 - Identify agencies that could offer education assistance (Train ND, Job Service North Dakota, Economic Development Agencies, SBDC, SBA, Lake Region State College and others).
 - Identify and promote resources for work-force training, business finance and business consulting.
 - Offer community education on succession planning.
 -
5. Identify businesses in need of succession planning.
 - Assist current businesses with succession planning programs that identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities.
 -
6. Develop and support community business associations in the area.
 -
7. Support entrepreneurial development within the county.
 - Market the entrepreneurial development opportunities.
 - Market the support services, financing options and available land and buildings for new entrepreneurs.
 - Encourage school district participation in entrepreneurial activities such as Marketplace for Kids.
 -
8. Maintain strong collaborative partnerships with economic and community development organizations within the region and the state.
 - Respond to Requests for Proposals solicited by the ND Department of Commerce.
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Category 2: Sector Specific Business Development Strategies

Energy Development

Energy Development is rapidly expanding in an industrial sector that increasingly focuses on renewable resources. Communities located close to such resources may be able to capitalize on them as well as traditional resources to create higher-paying jobs.

Environmental Restoration

Environmental Restoration presents the opportunity to create jobs by reclaiming land (Brownfield's initiatives, e.g.) for industrial and business parks, improving forest health, increasing potable water supplies, etc.

Leading-edge Development

Leading-edge Development is a strategy that harnesses the intellectual and creative capacity of a community to research and develop ideas into products, especially in new technologies, e.g., information processing, energy and bio-sciences.

Objectives of Strategy Implementation

Pembina County recognizes the potential for bio-mass energy production.

Pembina County recognizes that there are areas in its communities that are brown fields. Identifying these areas for hazard mitigation and/or demolition can create areas for new businesses.

Communities that provide sufficient telecommunications bandwidth have an advantage and may foster expansion of existing companies and even recruit new businesses.

Essential Action Steps and Tasks

1. Assess the potential for bio-mass energy production.
 - Engage with EmPower through the ND Department of Commerce to determine existing information and data on bio-mass energy production in the region.
 - Survey crops available for bio-mass energy production in the region.
 -
2. Identify sites in need of environmental restoration.
 - Identify resources to address hazard mitigation and/or demolition.
 - Inventory cleanup sites and resources for environmental restoration.
 - Identify potential resources available to assist with environmental restoration.
 -
3. Support development of leading edge technologies within the region.
 - Explore partnership and spin-off potential of targeted leading edge business with Grand Sky Development, precision agriculture, and other new technologies.
 - Compare and contrast technology infrastructure needs surrounding leading edge development with existing infrastructure.
 - Develop action plan to continue the development of leading edge infrastructure.
 - Partner with the Dakota Fiber Initiative to support further deployment of technology services throughout the region.
 - Encourage education of potential UAS technology.
 -
4. Research oil –field opportunities.
 - Cease opportunities to encourage business development growth associated with the Bakken region.
 - Inventory relevant service and manufacturing production capabilities that may be applicable to serve the oil field to meet the common goal of creating higher production efficiencies by service and manufacturing completing within North Dakota.
 - Establish partnerships with economic development organizations within the Bakken region to support business development within Pembina County.
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Category 3:

Value-added Business Development Strategies

Value-added Agriculture

Value-added Agriculture is the establishment or expansion of area businesses that add value to raw agricultural commodities before they are purchased locally or exported. Producing and selling sugar from sugar beets and organic fruit, nuts and vegetables are examples.

Objectives of Strategy Implementation

Like the rest of North Dakota, agriculture is a major backbone of the Pembina County economy. The Strategy Committee members believe that continued advancements can be made by supporting businesses that serve and support the agriculture industry throughout the entire county.

Essential Action Steps and Tasks

1. Explore the capability of existing local businesses or entrepreneurs to enter the market.
 - Inventory available land, buildings and infrastructure.
 - Research the availability of local/organic foods and locations for local food markets in season.
 - Identify current crops for future opportunities.
 - Conduct biomass research potential of crops in the region.
 -
2. Support new value-added business ventures and expansion of existing value-added businesses within the region.
 - Routinely consult with existing businesses on further development potential.
 - Assist with funding for expansion efforts through business consulting, financial projections, financial packaging and application development.
 - Support feasibility studies.
 - Support school gardens.
 - Provide financial support to business startup and expansion of value-added businesses.
- 3.

Notes:

Category 4:

Tourism Development Strategies

Cultural Tourism

Cultural Tourism relies on a community's capacity to provide visitors from out-of-state with high quality experiences related to the arts, including performing and visual, local history and seasonal events such as large agricultural fairs.

Local/Regional Tourism

Local/Regional Tourism is a strategy communities may pursue that do not have a destination attraction or significant cultural/historic assets in their immediate area but can provide events and other experiences that draw visitors from within the region.

Pass-through Visitor Services

Pass-through Visitor Services is a strategy that may be employed by communities to capture dollars spent by visitors for services they need and want on their way to other destinations.

Objectives of Strategy Implementation

Pembina County has a sufficient amount of recreational and historical amenities that can draw visitors within a one-day drive. This will stimulate the local economy.

Because of the proximity of Pembina County to Interstate 29 and the Canadian border there is a great opportunity of non-destination expenditures for businesses in Pembina County. These expenditures are typically fuel, meals and sometimes lodging.

Essential Action Steps and Tasks

1. Support the continued development of tourism and recreation amenities throughout the county.
 - Update tourism information on the county website.
 - Determine the county-wide interest by surveying the county businesses.
 - Reestablish the Rendezvous Region Tourism Council, inviting new members.
 - Research funding options (grants) for tourism.
 - Develop amenities along local rivers, providing nature-based recreation for all seasons.
 - Support lodging development.
 - Create wetlands/sportsmen maps.
 - Partner with the Red River Riparian Program to support recreation development in conjunction with riparian restoration projects.
 -
2. Continue to market tourism and recreational events within the county.
 - Inventory area attractions.
 - Inventory existing market for cultural events
 - Create a regional map that defines each towns amenities and for pass through tourism.
 - Explore the benefits of establishing a regional marketing position that would promote the county as a whole.
 - Promote tourism and recreation activities and awareness through social media and by establishing strong media relations within the region as well as a broader region to include Manitoba, Minnesota, North Dakota.
 -
3. Establish a broader awareness of tourism and recreational opportunities in the region.
 - Research a legislature day in the Pembina Gorge with an informational short bus tour.
 - Host local, regional, and state tourism and recreation staff for an educational day on amenities.
 - Support continued adventure races and fossil digs in association.
 -
4. Consider the development of a more regional tourism and recreational development coalition or task force.
 - Establish partnerships with local and regional tourism and recreation partners to create broad-based support for new and expanded developments as well as develop a cohesive regional development strategy.
 - Create regional attractions that encourage longer stays and visits to multiple towns.
 - Link historic preservation to recreation and scenic tourism.
 -
5. Support the completion and implementation of the Pembina Gorge State Recreation Area Master Plan.
 - Support a Glacial Ridge Byway sites for tour buses and recreational tourism.
 - Encourage use of the Outdoor Heritage Fund to provide financial support of project development.
 - Advocate for financial investments within the region.
 -
6. Consider the development of a “Pembina Gorge Foundation” to further support development activities in and around the Pembina Gorge.
 - Convene initial conversations with key stakeholders to explore feasibility of establishing a foundation.
 - Research the foundational steps and ongoing business operations of the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation
 - Establish task force of key stakeholders to champion the foundation development.

- Create an action plan of short and long term steps to establish the foundation.
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Category 5: Community Development Strategies

Downtown Development

Downtown Development includes a wide range of activities a community can undertake to preserve, develop and promote its downtown/central business district in order to increase business investment and activity.

Health Care Expansion

Health Care Expansion is a strategy communities may pursue to increase quality of life and develop new businesses. The aging US population and increasing demand for more specialized services and products gives this strategy long-term viability.

Education Development

Education Development presents communities the opportunity to retain, upgrade and create jobs, including higher paying jobs, by providing post-secondary education and training.

Objectives of Strategy Implementation

Pembina County has 13 cities, many of which have a main street business district that forms the basis for a downtown development focus. Similar to other counties throughout the state, the agricultural heritage of the state created downtowns with character and charm, yet the passing years have left the downtowns behind. Communities within the county could jointly promote downtown events and identify the means to rehabilitate and spruce up their community cores.

The Strategy Committee agrees that having broad-based health care facilities is important for Pembina County.

Pembina County believes that all citizens should have access to education, state of the art schools and adult education.

Essential Action Steps and Tasks

- Establish a county-wide development plan through the Pembina County JDA.
 - Develop a local main street improvement program.
 -
- Define current business needs.
 - Inventory current business expansion needs or desires.
 -
- Assist healthcare organizations on maintenance and improvements of facilities and programming to be responsive to the needs of the community and populations.
 - Review the PCMH needs assessment.
 - Specialist recruitment to Pembina County.
 - Define the need for types of health care practitioners (i.e. dentist, chiropractor, physicians.)
 - Work with local healthcare professionals to assess the potential for increasing or expanding healthcare services.
 - Maintain and support current providers.
 -
- Create greater communication between schools and community members.
 - Bridge communication with school administration, city councils and county commissioners by creating a Pembina County Educators group.
 - Tour the schools to bring awareness of the assets.
 - Support state of the art schools.
 - Foster linkage between industry and school internships.
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Category 6: Other Development Strategies

Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure Development is a strategy that communities may use to invest in water, sewer, transportation and other infrastructure to encourage additional investment, create employment opportunities, increase capacity and stimulate future desired development.

Attracting Lone Eagles

Attracting Lone Eagles is a strategy that recognizes many professionals and small businesses can now locate almost anywhere they want because of increasing telecommunications capacity. The challenge is providing the amenities they expect.

Attracting Funding

Attracting Funding is a strategy communities may use to secure money for economic and community development projects.

Objectives of Strategy Implementation

With a full complement of 18 strategies and 4 quality of life initiatives, the need to attract outside sources of funding is very important. For this reason, the Steering Committee selected Attracting Funding.

Creating greater awareness of the infrastructure status and needs in the county will set the stage for effectively advocating for the resources needed to implement this strategy.

The strategy committee felt that by attracting lone eagles to Pembina County, has the advantage of bringing high-income individuals into the community while having a low impact on infrastructure and other public amenities.

Essential Action Steps and Tasks

1. Assess the infrastructure needs of municipalities and the county as a whole.
 - Create and implement a survey that address the infrastructure needs of municipalities and the county as a whole
 - Relay the needs identified in the survey to local, state and federal government representatives
 - Combine the city plans to create a county wide plan for infrastructure needs.
 - Maintain ongoing knowledge of available funding opportunities in partnership with the Red River Regional Council.
 - Inventory available land, buildings, and infrastructure, including telecommunications.
 - Prepare and submit funding applications for projects identified as supporting the implementation of the strategies in the strategic plan.
 -
2. Inventory community attributes that would be attractive to retirees.
 - Work with area realtors to compile a list of lots and homes that are currently available that would be attractive to retirees.
 - Create an inventory of attributes a retiree would find attractive (i.e. access to high speed internet for staying in contact with family out of the area), local healthcare, transportation, handicap accessible curbs and sidewalks.
 - Update county website, adding resources available and including recreational amenities available.
 -
3. Inventory community attributes desirable to lone eagles.
 - Use web marketing to promote local art community and attract new artists.
 - Use survey information to target the market.
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Quality of Life Strategies

Housing

The Strategy Committee wants to see improved housing in Pembina County. It is important to have senior housing and assisted living, affordable housing for low-income. It is also important to rehab or demolition the existing sub-standard housing locating in Pembina County.

Community Beautification

The Strategy Committee believes that when a community takes pride in how it looks, others will also. Having community beautification programs will help to improve the declining population and bring in new families to live in the area.

Community Wellness

Pembina County believes that communities are healthier when wellness is offered to all ages.

Schools

It is important that education is available to everyone in Pembina County.

Essential Action Steps and Tasks

1. Improve housing options available in Pembina County.
 - Survey the need for senior housing
 - Increase senior accessible and assisted living housing.
 - Increase the amount of affordable apartments and family dwellings.
 - Support a housing rehabilitation project(s) for the county's low and moderate income residents to maintain existing housing stock.
 - Demolish the existing sub-standard housing to make lot available to new construction.
 - Develop a county-wide slum/blight program.
 - Encourage use of the Homestead Tax Credit as a means for payment of property tax for low and moderate income households.
 -
2. Create communities that are beautiful.
 - Encourage/support neighborhood cleanup programs.
 - Support county-wide main street facelift programs.
 - Rehab/enhance available buildings.
 - Promote a county-wide recycling program.
 -
3. Improve on community wellness and senior programs.
 - Support wellness and fitness programs for all age groups.
 -
4. Improve education for all citizens of Pembina County.
 - Make the schools state of the art.
 - Establish quality extended school programs.
 - Ensure viability and quality of area libraries.
 - Make adult education accessible.
 - Support continual professional development through partnerships with Train ND, North Valley Career and Technology Center, and higher education.
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Notes: