

# IDEAS/RECOMMENDATIONS

## Economic Development

*What types of **business or industry** sectors do you see as crucial to promote growth in the region?*

- Wood products – not paper – bio tech? - I
- Paper – with import tariffs – less EPA regulation
- Tourism – expanded, advertised - I
- Plastics
- Up North – shopping experience/Retail suppliers of everyday products – not many big box stores above highway 8 – Fleet Farm, Target, Walmart, etc. - II
- Branding upgrade - II
- Tech Industries – MFG - I
- Skilled labor – welding/machining
- Small businesses who can provide parts for large businesses
- Farming
- Retail - Trendy, hip, specialties, new start-ups - III
- Mining - II
- Natural Resources
- Health Care/Medical – I
- Quality Housing/Cottage Industry - II

*What do you see as the priorities in **infrastructure** upgrades needed in the region?*

- Broadband - I
- Roads – don't forget county and town roads – I
- Communications difficulties – II
- Rail – III
- Sewer and water regulations/upgrades/maintenance - III
- Lack of workforce – II
- Increase support for health care in the region
- Shopping/business development – III
- Transportation systems – III
- Airport
- Housing - III

*What do you feel keeps **entrepreneurs** from considering northwest Wisconsin as a place to locate and grow? How can we best market our region to attract new businesses?*

- Taxes – high - II
- No young people/skilled workers - IIIIIII
- Perception of no modern facilities - III
- Perception of too remote/limited amenities - IIIIIIIII
- Quality of life - IIII
- State should help with incentives
- Start-up funding - need to give a break on taxes, etc. (one year) so they want to move here - II
- EPA restrictions on electricity
- Population - III
- Lack of reliable internet - IIIIIII
- Health care
- Cost and logistics - II
- Rural vs. Urban
- Transportation – connectivity - II
- Activities for your people - II
- Lack of housing/facilities – IIIII
- Perception of the weather
- Median income – II
- Access to capital
- Competition with bordering state
- Business planning assistance - II

## **Education**

*What can the region's educational institutions do to more effectively support innovation and provide opportunities for educational attainment and career preparation?*

- Make more affordable - IIIIIII
- More employer offered tuition incentives including pre-employment/tuition assistance
- Encourage blue collar skilled jobs - III
- More high school/college/industry partnerships - IIIIIII
- K-12 preparation - III
- Advertise our (Midwest) educational successes
- More state loan opportunities
- Payback loan options from businesses
- Tech Ed – IIIII
- Focus on local needs – programming
- Internships and mentoring - II
- Assesses local needs and works with all sectors to meet those needs
- School Funding – K-12 and beyond - IIII
- Teaching work ethics in schools - II

## Workforce Development

*What do you see as our biggest **workforce concerns**? What keeps you awake at night when you think about the workforce of the future?*

- Lack of people/Qualified workers - I I I I I I I I I I
- Employment/employer closures - II
- Work ethic is weakening - I I I I I I I I I I
- Drugs – Recreational/Abuse - I I I I I I I I I I
- H.S to push advanced classes in H.S at techs and college
- Career Quest – Awareness of opportunities - II
- Middle school exposure to careers and their future
- Family sustaining wages - III
- Training/skills – I I I I
- Funding – Grants, etc
- Replacement workers/aging workforce – I I I I I I
- Communication skills

*How can we get **youth** excited about work **and the future** of the region?*

- Earlier career awareness - I I I I
- Promote local quality of life/natural resources/opportunities – I I I I I I I I I I I I I I
- Business and MFG – exposure – tours - Job shadowing/Apprenticeship Programs - I I I I
- Get the youth involved in community
- Develop Wisconsin PBS – shows
- Realistic expectations – II
- Availability of good jobs