

# IDEAS/RECOMMENDATIONS

## Economic Development

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

Sector development: wood products, mining, local foods (cheese, etc.), tech sector

Manufacturing

Small business startups

Retail – large –e.g., Menards, Kohls, Walmart

Niche businesses – wild rice, cheese production, winery, butter production

Wood products

Mining

Health care – elder care

Tech sector – precision

Fasetto expanding into mass production of their “link” digital storage

Airplane manufacturing plant in Superior (Kestrel)

Utilize natural resources

The state of Wisconsin needs to streamline mining permit process

Manufacturing

Health care

Tourism does matter; people get to see the area

Business types that don't need to locate in a city, or need a large labor force

-- software/IT

-- micro manufacturing

-- outsourced labs, etc.

Enhance health care availability, while trying to keep costs down

Home occupations

Individuals reasonably working

Industrial parks

Healthcare

Manufacturing (hi tech)

Crucial to promote growth

Local foods

Manufacturing

Tech

Health care

Education

Medical: doctors that take time to get to the bottom of a problem vs “band-aid”; specialized medical for either elderly or those with any types of condition needing more than general practitioner

Education

Manufacturers – all types, micro/macro

Healthcare

Education

Small businesses of all types

Micro manufacturing

Health care

Forest products – new products

Mining

Manufacturers

Health care

Professional

Forest products – new/renewable energy

Education

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

Need road improvements, broadband, sewer and water funding

Transportation options for those with no license

Broadband

People who want to work

Business and school interactions

Exposition district and sewer and water funding

Exposition district

County and US and state highways

Internet

Upgrade infrastructure such as roads and bridges

Public landowners must lower timber stumpage lost

Continue to grow broadband

Natural gas

Health care

Broadband for some

Serve the needs of older residents, many of whom bring intellectual capabilities and \$ capital with them

Monitor and upgrade water, problems of roads, clean, fresh water will be big

Employ community goods that entrepreneurs and workers want, parks, community organizations, things for families, trails, etc.

Cell service

Broadband  
Natural gas  
Broadband  
K12 infrastructure  
Roads  
Public access to natural resources (parks, forests, lakes, etc.)  
Priorities/upgrades in region  
City water/sewer systems #1  
Schools – consolidate (like MN) (too small now to be efficient and effective)  
Transportation  
Decent housing  
“Things to do” when not working (after family or self)  
Variety  
Education  
Broadband  
Investment in schools  
Housing that is truly affordable and healthy, attractive  
Lack of community relationship support  
Broadband development  
Highway maintenance  
Expand four lane access  
Short line rail operations  
Recreation – trails  
Housing  
Improve broadband  
Overall infrastructure improvements  
Recreational – trails  
Affordable housing  
Professional housing  
Transportation  
Quality

- *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?*

Need quality of life improvements to attract entrepreneurs – downtown development, community leadership, business incentives  
Active county economic development organization in all counties  
Remote locale  
“Elder” population – fixed income  
Build or incorporate younger person activities

Have “big” events that become annual traditions that grow and show off area  
Spruce up smaller communities  
Micro brewery  
Internet website exporting of locally produced products  
Cultural amenities, lack of  
Upgrade broadband  
Upgrade healthcare facilities  
Lack of educated people in area  
Rural areas  
Lack of entertainment  
Education – options in the school, other electives  
Residents not wanting economic development  
Lack of perceived community of peers - things to do, the quality of life they’re looking for  
Lack of outreach  
Information for potential entrepreneurs in region on what opportunities exist  
Lack of brand  
Progressive sentiment (lack of)  
Coordination of assets  
Attract new business/market region  
Educated workforce – what keeps/stops new businesses and business growth  
Infrastructure – like utilities, phone, internet, cable - is expensive – because of low density  
Marketing – outdoors/rural lifestyle (both a positive and negative)  
Existing people within NW WI: Knowledge of “how-to” for “start-up”; funding – lack of personal cash injection to put into business and expectation that banks fund majority or 100% of start-up  
Education of workforce/lack of “desire”/“drive” to work.  
Wage scale  
Low-paying jobs  
Lack of “good” family supports; e.g.: playgrounds, family activities  
Expand quality of life: invest in recreational and cultural activities, provide trails, other recreational infrastructure  
Provide cultural resources – arts  
Education  
Lack of workers  
Keeps from considering: wage scale – need to increase to invest in quality of life but business owner needs to make profit  
Quality of life: desire – systems – hindrance  
How attract new business: improve infrastructure, invest in improvements; incentives to attract (government, townships, villages)  
Improve ability to retain workers

## Education

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

Regions: flexibility to students' involving employees to support their efforts

Internships support students

Housing assistance

Financial support

Continue educational efforts in school systems

Tours

Soft skills

Provide technical skills of high school level to move into tech college

Provide additional soft skill development at K-12 level

Not "one size fits all" curriculum

Customer service skills

Funding for practitioners to be on site/joint appointment so they learn industry challenges; teachers/RNs

More student practicums but with support (faculty engagement on site)

Involved in community

Professional development to charitable organizations that do not have funding but have professional needs

Get kids introduced to multiple fields at early age, 1x@elem

"Manufacturing set-ups" in schools (Webster School, 1x@elem)

Tours of businesses at varying grades

WITC – manufacturing. Where buses of kids brought to; i.e. several years ago WITC in Superior held a gathering of several manufacturers, invited community, discovered positives

Showcased their business and how you can get education at WITC

Consolidate K-12: build awareness of good-paying tech jobs, on-the-job training

You can't support innovation and offer latest quality education for kids when you only have enrollment of 20-39 kids in a graduating class.

Push kids into tech schools – not all are going to succeed in 4-year colleges

Camp for middle school students to expose them to higher education careers

Partnering with school districts to overcome students' lack of motivation for educational attainment

Enhance the 12-post-secondary community work with businesses

Educate students on opportunities here...and what could be here if they wanted to start it...entrepreneurship

Parents and children meeting tours of school

On-the-job training.

School participation with workforce.

Job and career center in high school – room with volunteers and information.

More outreach to educate young people about the harm of drug use. Maybe require colleges and vo-techs to drug test students.

Fab labs in high school and colleges

The trades job fairs in high school and middle school

Business – school linkages and shared ideas

Consolidate schools

More community involvement in schools

Specific on-the-job training coupled with classroom

Internet in schools and homes

Innovation competition – local and states and nation

More exposure to career – career fairs with representative from profession

Develop community/county career

Alliance with educators/business/economic development staff

## **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?*

Brain drain – aging population and moving out of area

Long-time assistance and how to move out of government assistance and on own with entitlement abuse

Soft skills

Low paid wages

Entitlements soft skills – teach this somehow

Substance abuse

Entitlement abuse

Low-paying wages for front line staff in health care. Re: rise in aging population. How to recruit and retain with 69% turnover rate

Lack of highly skilled, competent workforce who can meet stringent regulations and administrative requirements

Sheltered kids that haven't been held accountable and parents that have sheltered them so much that kids can't think for/defend themselves

Attitude of entitlement with youth – hours of employment, vacation, pay, position

Lack of parenting (friend vs parent) and kids not “strong” enough to stand on own – not staying with job/sport/commitment

Motivating people to “want” to work – where it's more beneficial to work than not

Aging workforce, entitlements: Concern is that fewer people will be working and more will be not working. Who is going to pay for all these programs – to keep us going (tax revenue)

Lack of technically skilled workers to replace and staff manufacturing industry  
Aging population – need for workforce to staff those services and fill retirement  
Attraction/retention difficult  
Staff to fill the jobs  
Younger workforce to stay in our community  
Technologies  
More vocational education, wood shop, construction trades, mechanics, teaching high level computer skills. Teaching pride in a job as a mechanic  
Aging population  
Population decrease  
Labor force participation rate for younger generation is lower than Baby Boomers  
Decrease in tax revenue  
People who want to work  
Financial disincentives  
Drug problems  
Poverty  
Lack of educated workers  
Labor force participation  
Decreased taxes due to retirement  
Job creating  
Staying connected  
Younger workforce  
Lack of skills and readiness to work

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

Create atmosphere to join youth with different organizations/government and be an active member to offer ideas and make it happen  
Show benefits and experience of area  
Provide technical skills for local jobs  
Provide quality of life infrastructure in community  
Need flexibility; info/technology access, and quality of life  
Show them benefits/experiences sooner in life  
Reduce incentives to those who don't work ("Why should I work when I get more to stay home" is what you hear)  
Pay them well  
Offer perks beyond salary, flex time  
Benefits like PTO to volunteer  
Show young workers that their work contribution is meaningful; makes a difference. This is important to them.  
Teach soft skills (communication skills, work ethics)

Get them exposed early (middle school and earlier) to opportunities in the region  
Show them opportunities and entrepreneurship opportunities around here. Bring them to those businesses so they can see what's possible  
Build community that they want too. They may not want to go to county board or something similar, but maybe they'd take part in community discussion where they are.  
Role models for the children of successful people  
Exposing teens to different opportunities  
Youth "job fairs"  
Convince them that trees are their friends  
Business-career interventions starting in grade school  
Funds for vocational activities  
Immersion for students to quality of life and work  
Work on soft skills starting in grade school  
Get youth out into the community helping with events, projects – experiencing community life and resources