

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

KEY COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

REFERENCE [Link to ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT](#)

The following key planning issues were identified during the planning process regarding economic development in

DEVELOPMENT ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY EMPLOYERS, CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE & CITIES

Development issues were surfaced through:

- interviews with 10 major employers
- interviews of city and workforce development staff
- a focus group with chamber volunteers and staff.
- Issues were clarified and possible solutions identified in X facilitated sessions attended by xx-xx business and community leaders.

Issues Identified by Employers

Employer issues were clearly concentrated in three areas, with greater detail provided below.

- Workforce
- Transportation
- Housing

Issue: Aging/changing manufacturing workforce

- Possible responses: Workforce housing
- Transit to employment concentrations
- Supportive environment for more diverse population

Issue: Attracting technical, professional, managerial workers. Traffic congestion in the metro area limits the labor pool and recent graduates prefer a more urban environment.

Possible responses:

Commuter rail
 Transportation investments
 Strong quality of life, parks & trails

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Issue: Affordable housing – especially for lower & younger middle income workers with families

Possible responses:

- Workforce housing, especially for families
- First-time home buyer programs

Issue: Large employers concerned about safe access to facilities for trucks and people due to growth in employment and traffic.

Possible response:

- Increased communication & intergovernmental focus on transportation planning & traffic management associated with access to major employers & business parks.

Issues Identified by Chambers of Commerce and City Development Professionals

Chamber and city development professionals were concerned about

- Rapid growth
- Community capacity
- Increased cost of land and rent
- Transportation, traffic & transit
- Land development
- Quality of life

Issue: Improvements to US Highway 212 will bring Carver County communities 15 minutes closer to downtown Minneapolis, creating an unprecedented opportunity for growth. It's important to share a vision for the future and shape the growth.

Possible responses:

- Increased cooperation between local units of government, including planning and infrastructure development
- Joint planning along major transportation corridors

Issue: Rapid growth is very challenging; smaller communities may not have the capacity to plan for and manage growth.

Possible responses:

- Technical assistance workshops
- County planning support for major transportation corridors
- "Carrots" to encourage transit oriented design, downtown revitalization, etc.

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Issue: The higher cost of land & leasing space in eastern Carver County impacts entrepreneurship & small family businesses

Possible responses:

- Long-term planning for adequate commercial/industrial space
- Development of business/industrial parks in western Carver County
- Downtown revitalization

Issue: Traffic congestion in the metro area and congestion/safety issues impact employees and the ability to recruit prospective personnel.

Opportunities: Improved Highway 212 and Twin Cities & Western Railroad

Possible responses:

- TC & W commuter rail including stops near major employment locations
- Increase bus transit service
- TC & W transload facility
- Long-term planning for transit oriented development sites
- Transportation system investments

Issue: Development & redevelopment projects are challenging & expensive (contaminated sites, downtowns, business & industrial parks, transit oriented development)

Possible responses:

- Cooperation between cities, county & CDA on development & redevelopment sites
- Transportation and transit corridor planning, master planning, and/or land banking for key sites
- CDA & environmental services coordination on contaminated site redevelopment

Issue: Limited higher education resources in Carver County; adjacent resources aren't a good match for county needs. Traffic congestion limits access to 4-year & Master's programs

Possible responses:

- Educational partnerships
- Facility open to various educational institutions

COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

REFERENCE: [Link to ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT](#)

COUNTY GOAL ED-1

Workforce

Carver County employers compete successfully in the global marketplace because they can attract and retain an adaptable, diverse, high quality workforce.

COUNTY GOAL ED-2

Strategic development of land, transportation, and infrastructure

Work with local governments to manage growth to create a broad and diverse commercial/ industrial tax base and quality employment opportunities through strategic development of land, transportation, and infrastructure

COUNTY GOAL ED-3

Transportation and transit

Efficient transportation, safe access, and relatively low congestion support the productivity of the workforce and the competitiveness of Carver County businesses. Efficient transportation and transit make Carver County a competitive business location.

COUNTY GOAL ED-4

Economic Development Capacity

Carver County and the Carver County Community Development Agency listen to the changing needs of employers in the county and partner with communities, chambers, financing, education and workforce partners to provide a competitive environment for businesses and a comprehensive, non-duplicative array of economic development services.

COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIESREFERENCE: *Link to* [ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT](#)

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- COUNTY POLICY ED-1.1** Support efforts to strengthen higher education opportunities in the county, including links between K-12 and higher education, and highly adaptable programs for adult learners in technical fields, adult basic education, retraining, two and four year degree, and advanced degree programs. Encourage the creation of highly flexible approaches that can accommodate the rapid pace of change facing businesses today.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-1.2** Create affordable housing for working families in Carver County – including personnel in education, health care, manufacturing, government, and the retail/service sector.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-1.3** Incorporate transit and trail planning into the development of major commercial/industrial development projects and increase transit and trail access to major employment centers. Strengthen transit links to attract/retain workers from urban population centers.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-1.4** Maintain a high quality of life including great parks, schools, health care, open space, natural resources, and recreational opportunities to attract and retain a broad cross-section of employees, including managerial, technical and professional workers.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-1.5** Accommodate an increasingly diverse workforce and population – including racial/ethnic diversity and the aging workforce.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-1.6** Encourage Carver County businesses and institutions involved with workforce to effectively work together to address near and long term gaps in labor supply.

COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

- COUNTY POLICY ED-2.1** Work with cities to preserve and develop well-located land for business/industrial park and commercial growth to:
- ensure the development of well-located business/industrial parks that accommodate the growth of existing*
 - employers and attract new businesses;*
 - ensure a healthy employment base and a strong and balanced tax base;*
 - concentrate development in cities, preserve ag land and open space;*
 - provide convenient access to goods and services for residents and businesses.*
- COUNTY POLICY ED-2.2** Work with cities to encourage the development of business and industrial parks that
- incorporate competitive telecommunications/technology features;*
 - incorporate pedestrian, transit and bicycle capacity to the greatest extent possible;*
 - incorporate features that support the health of employees and the environment*
- COUNTY POLICY ED-2.3** Support city downtown redevelopment efforts.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-2.4** Facilitate joint planning among local jurisdictions to plan development along major transportation corridors and provide quality sites for growing Carver County employers.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-2.5** Identify sites with significant development potential due to location and access characteristics. If such sites involve more than one jurisdiction, work with local governments to prepare small area plans to maximize tax base, employment and quality of life potential, transportation access and transit/ trail connections.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-2.6** Work cooperatively with local governments to plan for and support the development of transportation/utility infrastructure as well as telecommunications, technology, and data communication infrastructure that form a foundation for a competitive business environment.

COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

- COUNTY POLICY ED-3.1** Provide leadership and invest in transportation, rail, transit and trail planning and infrastructure to accommodate the needs of growing employers, a growing population, and workforce.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-3.2** Provide leadership for the effort to develop commuter rail and transit links, with an emphasis on bringing workers to Carver County employers.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-4.1** Actively seek the involvement of businesses and communities in developing and implementing economic development initiatives that keep pace with constant change affecting businesses competing in the global market.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-4.2** Respond to the unique economic development needs and opportunities of Carver County communities.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-4.3** Differentiate the county role in economic development from city roles to avoid duplication. Support local units of government in their economic development efforts and foster cooperation among Carver County communities.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-4.4** Integrate consideration of economic development into county policies, planning, programs and activities, including land use, transportation, transit, housing, public health, aging, workforce development, trails, parks and recreation, and open space.

COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

- COUNTY POLICY ED-4.5** Carver County may choose to be involved in economic development projects and services that
- involve transportation and transit corridors – including rail lines, county and state roads, that pass through more than one community;
 - involve downtown revitalization or the development of business and industrial parks;
 - enhance the supply and capabilities of the workforce sought by area businesses;
 - are highly visible and regionally significant in the Twin Cities metro area;
 - are physically located in more than one city or township;
 - are most efficiently provided at the county level;
 - create a significant employment, infrastructure or tax base impact;
 - demonstrate a positive return on investment, or
 - preserve, enhance or remediate environmental quality.
- COUNTY POLICY ED-4.6** The County will consider development project costs and benefits when evaluating economic development strategies, actions and investments
- COUNTY POLICY ED-4.7** The County will consider workforce, employment, and tax base implications when making long-term plans and investment decisions.

COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION

REFERENCE *Link to* [ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT](#)

The following strategies will be implemented to achieve the economic development goals as guided by the economic development policies.

Workforce

- a. Workforce – Strengthen the capacity of workforce development, higher ed, K-12 and other resources to work together as a team to address to employer concerns regarding near and long term gaps in workforce supply, skills and development.
- b. Develop and implement strategies to create an adequate supply of affordable housing for working families in Carver County – including personnel in education, health care, manufacturing, government, and the retail/service sector.

Strategic Development of land, transportation and infrastructure

- c. Explore options to improve transit service to existing and planned business and industrial parks.
- d. Ensure that pedestrian and bicycle trails provide access to major employment locations – including business and industrial parks and consumer retail/service areas.
- e. Designate areas in Carver County for the development of a rail-served, multi -modal industrial park.
- f. Assist cities with the creation of “buildable” sites to attract new commercial/industrial development. Serve as a technical assistance resource to cities regarding downtown revitalization. (CDA)
- g. Telecommunications/data communications infrastructure
- h. Identify key development areas in the three transportation corridors identified for economic development. Convene related jurisdictions to develop small area plans that express a shared vision for development of the area to provide infrastructure, maximize tax base, employment; integrate transportation, trail and transit infrastructure; and preserve environmental quality.

COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION

The following strategies will be implemented to achieve the economic development goals as guided by the economic development policies.

Transportation and Transit

- i. Bring together major employers with appropriate officials (county, state, local) to address traffic congestion and safety issues for employees and trucks, particularly at shift change.
- j. Continue to explore options and support development of transit links to bring workers TO major Carver County employment locations, including the use of commuter rail, circulators and other forms of mass transit.

Retention, Expansion, Attraction and Start-up of Businesses

- k. Identify major employers located in facilities and sites that lack additional capacity for growth. Work with the cities in which these employers are located to begin identifying options for future growth of these companies in Carver County.
- l. Participate with cities, chambers and the MN Department of Employment and Economic Development in business retention visits as requested.
- m. Assist cities with their key economic development goals and projects.
- n. Develop effective systems and capacity for responding to economic development prospects in cooperation with Carver County communities.
- o. Identify and implement effective approaches to marketing the area as a business location.
- p. Focus on priority industry clusters to ensure Carver County's capacity to help businesses in these sectors grow and expand. Build education, financing and real estate and marketing resources to attract additional workers and/or firms in these industry clusters.
- q. Develop and implement a communications strategy designed to build an understanding of economic development among local stakeholders and residents, include impact measures for economic development projects.
- r. Support intergovernmental cooperation and mentorship between communities regarding economic development.