BLADC’s 2020 Economic Development Plan Progress

In the Fall of 2002, as a result of the Potlatch Paper mill closing, a 2020 economic development assessment and visioning process occurred. Several areas were assessed including local industries, community strengths, and economic development organization capacity. With community input, a long-term vision and action plan was developed to enhance existing economic development efforts known as the 2020 Plan.

2009 Work Plan Included:

- Development of an Airport Initiative
- Assistance with an Industrial Park Analysis
- Participation in Positive Minnesota
- Coordination of a Networking Event
- Creation of new Marketing Materials
- Launch of an Advertising Campaign
- Development of a Prospect List (phase 1)
- Execution of Workforce and Training Initiatives

2009 Work Plan Included:

- Implementation of Site Initiatives including a Shovel Ready Certification
- Exploration of Alternative Energy Industry Opportunities
- Development of a Prospect List (phase 2)
- Creation of additional Marketing Materials
- Coordination of Workforce and Training Initiatives

2007 – 2008 Work Plan Included:

- 36 projects and $25 million in capital investments which created 217 new jobs.
- Since 1988, BLADC has coordinated 320 projects and facilitated more than $258 million in capital investments which created 3,200 new jobs.

The Brainerd Lakes Area Development Corporation (BLADC) is a community-driven, non-profit economic development organization designed to encourage economic growth and prosperity through the creation of jobs, and to promote & facilitate community development.

The 2020 Plan

The plan incorporates strategic initiatives to pro-actively market Crow Wing County to targeted industries including:

1. Manufacturing Companies (Metals, Plastics, and Wood)
2. Healthcare / Human Service / Eldercare Entities
3. Professional and Back Office Operations

The 2020 Plan was developed to:

- Build an economic development and airport messages.
- Create in-ceiling audio system.
- New high definition TV monitors have been installed in the Brainerd Lakes Area Regional Airport along with substantial upgrades to the terminal’s in-ceiling audio system. Travelers will now enjoy national news, weather, sports, and more via satellite. Plus, this broadcast coverage also includes exclusive new video segments featuring Crow Wing County economic development and airport messages.

2010 New Business and Job Goals

- Manufacturing Companies (Metals, Plastics, and Wood): 7 New Companies, 140 New Jobs
- Healthcare / Human Service / Eldercare Entities: 5 New Companies, 125 New Jobs

The 2020 new business and job goals are in addition to BLADC’s annual economic development goals.

2020 Featured Project: Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport ED Initiative

As part of the 2020 Marketing Plan, an Airport Initiative was developed to build awareness of the Brainerd Lakes Area.

The Airport is a hub of travel activity throughout the year. Travelers will now enjoy national news, weather, sports, and more via satellite. Plus, this broadcast coverage also includes exclusive new video segments featuring Crow Wing County economic development and airport messages.

During the past two years alone, BLADC has coordinated:

- 36 projects and $25 million in capital investments which created 217 new jobs.
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The Brainerd Lakes Area Development Corporation (BLADC) is a community-driven, non-profit organization designed to encourage economic growth and prosperity through the creation of jobs, and to promote & facilitate community development.

BLADC strives to stimulate growth and private investment in the Brainerd Lakes Area by offering quality economic development services. We offer:

- Business Retention and Expansion Services
- Assistance with Site Location
- Financial Structure and Package Programs
- Technical and Business Planning Assistance
- Assistance with Government Resources and Processes
- Coordination of Community Development Initiatives
- Targeted Marketing Efforts to Attract Business

BLADC is by our side, ready to support us.

We help make it happen.

The potential for the Brainerd Lakes Area is tremendous. We can pursue our individual areas of expertise while also supporting BLADC to achieve economic prosperity for our region.

Thank you.
— Kevin Larson
BLADC President

The Brainerd Lakes Area Development Corporation continues to pursue and accomplish its mission of economic diversification and job creation.

As individual businesses in these tough economic times, we strive to stay vital and valuable. We take risks, and it’s nice to know that BLADC is by our side, ready to support us.

Thank you.
BLADC HELPS FIND THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO SUCCEED.

BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

To strengthen and grow the Brainerd Lakes Area economy, BLADC has been actively leading a Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program since 1985. This program identifies and builds on the area’s existing business base.

Most of BLADC’s projects and accomplishments are the result of working with existing lakes area businesses.

BLADC has expanded its Business Retention and Expansion Program by partnering with the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and the Brainerd Lakes Chamber through their Crow Wing program.

Facts from the 2007-2008 BRE Visits

- 66% have headquarters located in Crow Wing County
- 35% are family owned
- 40% have locations outside of the Brainerd Lakes Area
- 45% have more than 50 employees
- 33% plan to expand within the next two years and
- 92% of these businesses plan to expand in Crow Wing County

In addition to supporting individual businesses, BLADC assists cities in Crow Wing County with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs.

BLADC saw the need in the Cuyuna Range communities of Crosby, Iron, Deerwood and Emily and sought a grant of more than $750,000 through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Small Cities Development Program. This program provides federal funds to local units of government for community development projects that are intended to improve a community’s quality of life.

BLADC assisted in securing a second grant to help save and restore the historic Deerwood Auditorium. This project will only stimulate the construction industry, but also renew a sense of pride within the entire community.

While these programs help make Brainerd a more green, affordable and viable city.

“During these tentative economic times, community support is a key consideration when making significant investment decisions. The ready response and diligence of staff was an unquestionable demonstration of BLADC’s commitment to helping us find the resources to be successful in the Brainerd Lakes Area.” — Anna Skrobecki, Wausau Paper Printing and Writing LLC

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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“BLADC has helped provide loan/grant programs to convert to dual fuel electric heat in several downtown buildings. Funding these programs helps make Brainerd a more green, affordable and viable city.” — Dave Pflueger, Pueringer Investments

“We could never have afforded to make these improvements to our downtown buildings without the excellent help of the BLADC.”

“BLADC has helped provide loan/grant programs to convert to dual fuel electric heat in several downtown buildings. Funding these programs helps make Brainerd a more green, affordable and viable city.” — Mike Aulie, Mayor of Deerwood

Wausau Paper Printing and Writing LLC

City of Brainerd

Since purchasing the paper mill in 2004, employment at Wausau Paper has steadily increased to 175, making it one of Brainerd’s largest employers. An attractive financing package was created for Wausau to support its efforts to refurbish its cut mill, shippers and expand its Brainerd operations. Wausau estimates that 8-9 high paying jobs will be created as a result of the equipment to be located at the Brainerd mill.