A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

In my new role as President of the BLAEDC Board of Directors for 2018, I anticipate celebrating the economic development successes of Crow Wing County and look forward to what 2018 and beyond may have in store for us. I have been engaged with BLAEDC in past years through BLAEDC’s “Tech Services” efforts and more recently, helped lead the way with establishing the new KEY Recruitment Program.

BLAEDC is truly an inspiration for all of us through strong community and business partnerships, private sector leadership, and impressive local and regional results. Our efforts to promote business growth and development in our area include our need to be progressive and competitive in making sure we have a community that is “expanding business, building community and growing jobs.”

Please connect with me, share ideas, and carry the message that “We’re Ready. Let’s Grow!”

2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**KEY RECRUITMENT** - Hires: 11
New People to Area: 22

**BLAEDC UNIFIED FUND** - Projects: 1
Total Project Investment: $96,000
Total BLAEDC Unified Fund Financing: $24,500
Jobs Retained: 2 Jobs Created: 3

431 projects
$693.98 million in capital investments
4,884 jobs created

2017 BLAEDC ACCOMPLISHMENTS
11 projects
$29.29 million in capital investments
153 jobs projected + 78 jobs retained

THE BLAEDC TEAM

Mike Bjorkness, Workforce Director
Sheila Haverkamp, Executive Director
Megan Rehbein, Office Administrator
Tyler Glynn, Economic Development Officer

**BLAEDC BOARD MEMBERS**
Chuck Albrecht, Mid-Minnesota Federal Credit Union
Tom Anderson, Integrated Retirement Initiatives
Timothy Bergin, Retired
Bruce Buxton, Retired
Conrad Bye, Communications Investments, Inc.
Reggie Clow, Clow Stamping Company
Amie Johnson, Johnson Enterprises, LLC
Jim Kraft, Franzen Bani & Trust
Kevin Larson, Consolidated Telecommunications Co.
Paul Lindblom, Retired
Terry McCullough, Retired
Clyt Nelson, Positive Realty
John Newhouse, Retired
Angela Roby, Oakridge Woodview Services

**BLAEDC BOARD RELATIONS**
Rosemary Franzen and Tim Houle, Crow Wing County
Ed Meink and Cassandra Torstensen, City of Brainerd
Darrel Olson and Brad Chapulin, City of Baxter
Matt Kilian, Brainerd Lakes Chamber
Eric Charpentier, CREDI

**BLAEDC UNIFIED FUND BOARD**
Chair, Eric Charpentier - CREDI Rep
Vice Chair, Brad Chapulin - Baxter Rep
Paul Means - BLAEDC Rep
Mike Larson - BLAEDC Rep
Char Knizer - Crow Wing Power Rep
Kevin Larson - CTC Rep
Bart Taylor - Crosslake Rep
Rosemary Franzen - Crow Wing City Rep
Gabe Johnson - Brainerd Rep
Theresa Goble - CWC HRA Rep

Brainerd Lakes Area ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Corporation
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PARTNERSHIPS

Working Together to Create Economic Development Opportunities
We are stronger unified.

By partnering with business, utilities, and government, the BLAEDC Unified Fund brings enhanced economic development opportunities to entrepreneurs and businesses in Crow Wing County.

BLAEDC’s vision is to assemble various funding resources into a BLAEDC Unified Fund that coordinates marketing and management processes to streamline access to financing for businesses in our area. Nearly a dozen utilities and government funding sources were pooled to create this Unified Fund. The total amount of money is nearly $2.5 million dollars. Current partners with BLAEDC include: City of Brainerd, City of Baxter, Crow Wing County, Crow Wing County HRA, Consolidated Telecommunications Company, City of Crosslake, and Crow Wing Power.

We can help.

BLAEDC’s introduction this year of the KEY Recruitment Program developed partnerships with local businesses, resulting in 11 new hires in high-tech, manufacturing, engineering, management and other positions.

The KEY Recruitment Program is offered through BLAEDC. It’s a fee-for-service program that’s available to all businesses in the Crow Wing County area. A program membership offers workforce assistance and valuable marketing benefits.

Our community. Our commitment.

The Brainerd River to Rail Initiative is an effort to coordinate several projects between the Mississippi River and the Northern Pacific Center. BLAEDC and partners are working on this momentum by bringing stakeholders to the table and developing and contributing to a comprehensive plan that brings new private sector investment to the area.

BLAEDC CEO, Bruce Buson, is leading the River to Rail effort. Meetings with stakeholders and potential developers, tours of properties, schematics, planning, and a resolution of support by the Brainerd City Council are just a few of the accomplishments that occurred in 2017.

Taking the lead as the first BLAEDC Unified Fund loan recipient, GreenForest Recycling signed the documents for their almost $100,000 expansion at the Brainerd Industrial Center this fall.

BLAEDC worked with GreenForest Recycling as their lender to make this project a success. Additional projects and financing opportunities are in the pipeline and BLAEDC looks forward to meeting with local lending institutions and companies to offer this exciting program.