

# Meeting Minutes – Stronger Economies Together Session 3

Held: December 2, 2:00 – 6:00pm, Syracuse Public Library

## Attendance

**Present:** Brook Aken (OPPD), Lisa Beethe (SENDD), Kim Beger (Auburn), Tim Borchers (PSC), Khris Buettner, Darcy Carpenter (Seniors Help Seniors), Jeff Carpenter (USDA/RD), Beckie Cromer (Falls City EDGE), Jesse Dorman (PSC), Brenda Dutcher (Dutcher Farms), Jason Esser (OPPD), Stephanie Fisher (Auburn Dev), Brian Gaskill (NEDED), Carolyn Gigstad (Syracuse Dev Corp), Marguerite Himmelberg (SCC), Bob Jones (NEDED), Gary Jorn (Falls City), John Lauber (Brownville), Gary Lesoing (UNL), Bryan Mellage, (Mellage T&T), Mark Novak (Humboldt), Marilyn Schlake (UNL), Joshua Sheffield (NEDOL), Randall Smith (River Inn), Dan Watermeier (Leg. #1), Carroll Welte (UNL), Bud Whiteman (Nebraska MEP), Jane Witte (UNL)

## Action Items

Action Item	Assigned to	Due	Status
Using the Community Capitals definition and chart, begin to detail regional assets that can be used to develop each of the above regional opportunities.	Everyone	January 6th session	Open
Arrangements for next session at Falls City	Beckie Cromer	January 6th	
Add to calendar, February Session	Everyone	February 3 <sup>rd</sup>	

## Agenda

1. Workforce data
2. C.A.R.E. – potential strategies to support clusters
3. Identify key regional opportunities

## Meeting Notes

Workforce Data Overview by cluster -

- Arts, Entertainment & Tourism – Many occupations in the cluster need a high school diploma or less and have a lower pay scale. 47% growth in musicians and singers and 31% growth in writers and authors, which does pay higher wages rates. Other higher paying occupations within this cluster are not present in the region. Comments - Wineries are bringing musicians into the region.
- Business and Financial cluster – Overall all occupations require high school diploma minimum, some college, or professional degrees. Highest paid occupations had a loss in the region – 14% accountants and auditors, 19% management analysts, and 15% lawyers. Growth – 39% in personal financial advisors and general growth in lower administrative positions.
- Biotechnical/Biotechnical Cluster – 250% growth in EMTs and paramedics – explained by repositioning in fields such as ambulances. Growth in pharmacists and technicians. Loss of Nursing Assistances (12%). Comments – see a need for some higher degree professionals – doctors, particularly in the pediatrics area.
- Manufacturing – Growth in all areas. All but one occupation require high school diploma or equivalent. Overall this is a higher paying industry. Many are requiring tech skills and advanced training STEM training. Advance Materials sub-cluster showed some decline, particularly in the production supervisors and operating workers. **Comments** - STEAM- Science, Tech, Engineering, Arts and Math. Middle school is the optimal time to get kids involved.

**Bridging the Skills Gap** - Carroll Welte shared findings from 6 counties in Northeast Nebraska, conducted in March 2015. Research found a lot of soft skills gaps, not necessarily gaps in technical skills.

Key Findings that may be applicable to Southeast NE:

- Education Institutions
  - Need to promote greater awareness of vocational/career education and other non 4-year degree options that train area youth for opportunities in local businesses.
- Local Employers:
  - Need to do better job of outreach to youth and parents
  - Better job collaborating with local partners (i.e. schools)
  - Create high quality working and learning environments to attract and retain talents.
- Communities:
  - Need to do better job of marketing and outreach to attract and retain workers and encourage young people who have left to return.
- Challenges:
  - Aging population – replacement of workforce
  - Rising Health care costs
  - Changing (downturn) of ag economy
  - Shifts in the way people work, ideal work place is changing.
  - Low levels of unemployment – need to increase area of recruitment, possible to national
  - High school graduates aren't prepared to work.
  - Earnings of less than 35K not enough, wages still low for low entry and low level jobs.
  - Millennials – not concerned about being a member of workforce but they need/want a purpose.

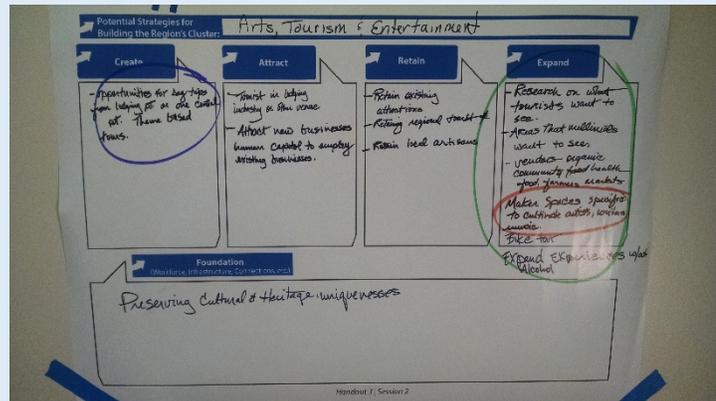
**Comments –**

- Richardson County is now taking recruitment from 'industrial' recruitment to 'people and talent' recruitment in Richardson county
- Soft skills is important. Can provide training and have skills development, BUT to have people accept the training and go thru the training is a different story -
- An Omaha company is looking at their "drug testing" policies as this is an issue for employment and they are seeing more and more people failing...legally how does this affect the company liability? So few people that they are hiring people they would not have hired 5 years ago. Also seeing companies move to rural areas to "suck the market up" to get employees and have the work force to compete.
- In dairy industry it is hard to find people to work. Traveling across the state and seems to happen across the state. Common thread in Lincoln looking at work force issues, manufacturing same theme in general, not aware of opportunities, generational work ethic, low unemployment. Issues is both rural and urban.
- Dept. of labor -- Most one will get if on unemployment is \$380 a week or \$9.50 an hour. Employers have to pay \$13.50 or more to get them off unemployment. If make more money with unemployment why work.

**C.A.R.E Chart Discussions** – Using background data, conversations with industry experts and other insights, small groups worked on completing a Creation, Attraction, Retention and Expansion chart, including Foundational needs for the industry cluster.

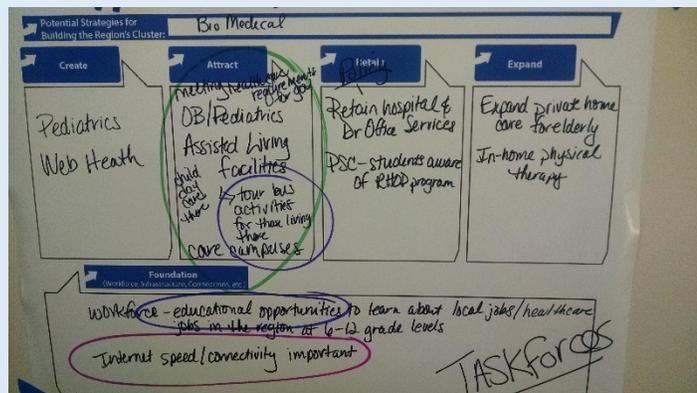
## Arts, Entertainment and Tourism Cluster

- Create**- focuses on tourism, capture the lodging industry bus tour out to the areas, own the bus and create a business instead of renting a tour bus. Taking day tours in the area. Theme-based tours
- Attract**-need to find people to the industry, attract businesses additional venue startups in the areas, attract the workforce in the tourism industry.
- Retention**-retain existing attractions we have, folk art museum, riverboat in Brownville, retain local people, retain local artists in the industry.
- Expansion**-research what do tourists want to do, what do millennials like to do (winery, brewery)? Need more vendors to fill these, farmers market, agritourism – wineries, different counties, CSA pasture poultry, green house, prairie land dairy, local food, composting, local food – buffalo, Amish quilts, wood working, etc. Different themes that already exist or find out what they want...history tour, bike tour, food tour, steam boat tour. Maker's space, studio, instead of finding place to rent and set up to buy oil/paint have a large area where several can come in Cork and Canvases, etc. Need to market. SE Nebraska tourism is already doing day trips, Gary's group is doing day trips, we could network with some of these groups
- Foundation**- Market the uniqueness of the area, cultural and heritage. Need to know the past so that you can go into the future. Artist in residence in Kimmel Orchard in NE City. Doesn't have to be about beer and wine, but do something that involves movement – hike, bike, etc. Wineries are big business, form partnerships with other attractions.



## Biomedical/biotechnical

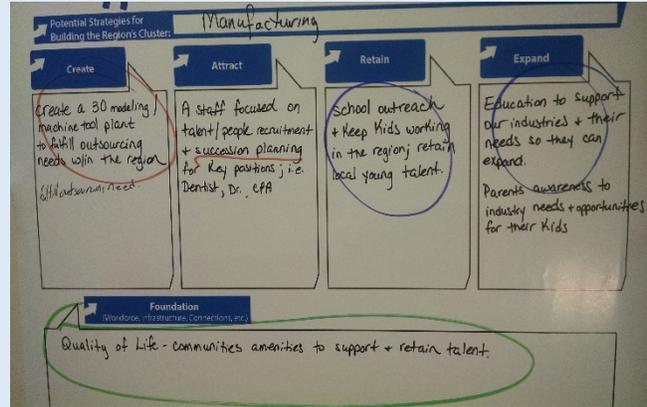
- Create**- Business that supports Pediatric care, Web Health business opportunity (growing trend talking with Dr. via computer)
- Attract**-OB/Pediatrics businesses, assisted living facilities will become a draw, need transitional places – attract interest building Care Campuses (trend - continuation of care, hospital, nursing home, shifting from home to hospital etc. Understanding the value of elderly; some are doing daycare that is nursing homes.
- Retention**- Retain hospital & Dr. office services, PSC students aware of RHOP program, involving people of these services. From interview with doctor - it is critical to attract other people within the hospital not just Doctors. Hospitals might have to close because the hospitals do not provide all of the services by law. This is timely with the change in the law. This may be an area of policy.
- Expansion**- expand private home care for elderly, in-home physical therapy. Have people available to provide those services. Expand CMA training in schools. Link to RHOP program at PSC



- **Foundation-** Workforce-educational opportunities to learn about local jobs/healthcare jobs in the region at 6-12 grade levels. Educational requirements geared toward medical or engineering (a math class that looks toward medical and engineering). Internet speed/connectivity important for health care. Establishing Taskforces to address different issues/needs would be a good.

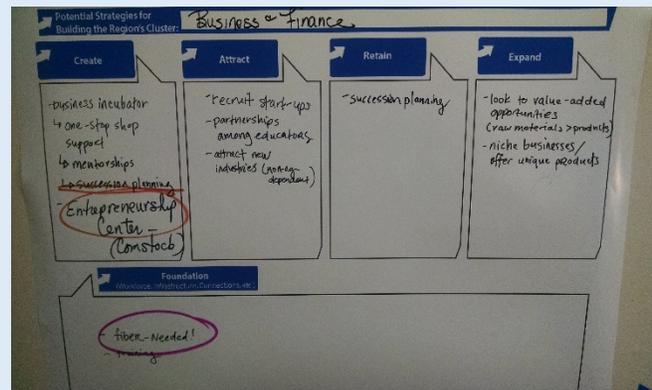
### Manufacturing/Advance Manufacturing Cluster

- **Create-** Create a 3-D modeling/machine tool plant to fulfill outsourcing needs within the region, to fulfill something that currently is outsourced.
- **Attract-** Hire a staff person focused on talent /people recruitment and filling key position and businesses – i.e. succession – dentists. Lincoln recently got NE, KS, IA together and hired a company to recruit talent.
- **Retention-** Get employers out in the schools, making parents aware of the opportunities and that college is not for everyone. Create a culture that you do not need 4-yr collage for many manufacturing jobs or that they provide on job training. Very powerful that a community business is interested in local students.
- **Expansion-** expand parent knowledge base, tie business with schools.
- **Foundation-** Need a high Quality of life to attract talent and employees. Need amenities to retain and support businesses. This is what employee do outside of work. Need a Baseline for community ... are they quality of life indicators good enough?



### Business and Finance Cluster

- **Create-** Business incubator, one-stop shop, mentorships, succession planning, entrepreneurship center, etc.
- **Attract-** Recruit start-ups. Partnerships among educators, attract new industries (non-ag dependent) Business center all in one, entrepreneurial, sell what you make.
- **Retention-** Succession planning to help businesses transition.
- **Expansion-** Look at value-added opportunities (raw materials, products, niche businesses/offer unique products.) Peru has a master's in entrepreneurship. Could have an entrepreneurial center at Peru. SCORE – retired business owners, maybe use them as resources.
- **Foundation-** Need high speed fiber to support the businesses. Employee training – workforce.



### Cross links between clusters:

- **Quality of Life** - for attracting employees, linked to Arts and Entertainment. Potential opportunity for missing QOL support businesses.
- **Creative Spaces** – All clusters involved, create space for individuals to creatively work together to address business opportunities. “Maker Spaces” for manufacturing, arts, medical, etc. (intentional

collision of ideas – creativity and industry) Millennials like the idea of co-managed spaces.. an idea that is really starting to take hold across the state.

- **Workforce** - Common link between manufacturing and arts and entertainment... getting out of the office to get out and enjoy the arts, etc. But can't do those things unless you make more than \$9.50. Bus tours are an overlap, education is another overlap. Relationships about people collaborating, focus groups, task forces—workforce/task force.
- **Connectivity** – Need high speed fiber, internet connections for education, business, industry.
- **Education** – Industry and businesses working with education to increase awareness, skills, retention of students in the area.

**Video** – The group watched a video, *Reality Check – Guiding your Children to Career Success*, published by the NE Department of Education. The video emphasizes the need to have education/career paths catered to the interests and talents of students. Question is what can the community do to help students develop those talents and skills?

[http://www.education.ne.gov/NCE/documents/Reality%20Check%20Materials/Reality%20Check\\_%20Guiding%20Your%20Children%20to%20Career%20Success-HD.mp4](http://www.education.ne.gov/NCE/documents/Reality%20Check%20Materials/Reality%20Check_%20Guiding%20Your%20Children%20to%20Career%20Success-HD.mp4)

### **Narrow the Field of the Regional Opportunities**

Individuals were asked to write down 3-5 broad ideas on what he/she would really like to see done for this region. Individuals then shared their written ideas on postcards taped to the wall. Ideas were organized into the areas of opportunity below:

- **Entrepreneurship**
  - Create a 3D modeling machine tool plant (2)
  - Maker space ( for artists, writers, musicians) (7)
  - Entrepreneurship Center/maker space that connects those with mentors, succession planning, opportunities, crowd funding, resource potentials (4)
    - Connected with PSC
  - Small business development
  - Innovation center
  - Niche business
  - Create SCORE chapter
- **Industry and Education**
  - Education – Jr. High/High School levels
    - Incorporate information into curriculum so they are aware of local industries and what skills they need
  - Better cooperation and communication between industry and education
  - Education connections and partnerships
  - Education to support industries parent awareness/outreach
  - Education tours – student tour different industries throughout SE Nebraska
  - Create an education center with specific programs that meet the needs of the industries who provide primary jobs that help support Quality of Life amenities
- **Cultural Tourism**
  - 4th grade 'Nebraska History Tours' developed with Peru State Teacher Education Dept
  - Expand activities in tourism such as painting workshops, writing workshops or facility
  - Start the tourism business with bus
  - Bus tours (3)
  - Local travel business day trips/tours

- Tour Bus Company owned and operated by '5 County Consortium' which would operate daily Memorial Day through Labor Day with marketing/promotion component
- Arts tours, galleries, museums, and artist studios
- Promote agritourism activities (wine tours, art tours)(3)
- **Marketing/branding and sales - overlap with Quality of life**
  - Marketing for local area
  - Marketing team to Cross-promote
  - Brand ambassadors
  - Help existing tourism business to promote their venues – and to be ready and open with tourism arrives
  - Create marketing opportunities to bring tourists to our attractions
  - You tube channel, Facebook page
  - Outside survey – honest ~ Panel~ cross section
- **Quality of life issues**
  - Increase connectivity
  - Community amenities
  - Focus on Infrastructure to improve Q of L (fiber and housing)
  - Assess Q of L opportunities
  - Focus on Q of L enhancements
  - Have a community task force to help improve the quality of community parks to work with equipment and manufacturing for bulk purchases, civil engineers for planning ideas, H.S. groups for labor and improve quality of family life
  - Pediatrician/OBGyn – with more young people moving back to Auburn, we need to keep them in town when having families. When going to Omaha or Lincoln, they lose a day of work, then they shop, eat and buy groceries when out of town.
- **Workforce/ recruitment/development/talent People**
  - Research what Millennials want in recreational/tourism and workforce
  - Create a regional coalition to increase workforce
  - Hire a dedicated staff person to focus on regional people and talent recruitment
  - People recruitment
  - Succession planning (2)

**Next Steps:** The broad areas of opportunity will be further assessed at the January 6<sup>th</sup> meeting in Falls City. The team will look at regional assets that could be used to address this opportunity, along with potential roadblocks/barriers that need to be considered. From there the team will develop the 2-3 regional goals that can be achievable and create significant impact for the region.

**Homework** – Using the Community Capitals definition and chart, begin to detail regional assets that can be used to develop each of the above regional opportunities.

**Next meeting January 6<sup>th</sup> in Falls City. Host Beckie Cromer, Falls City EDGE**

**Additional meeting – February 3<sup>rd</sup>, tentatively set for River Inn, Brownville. Hosts Randall and Jane Smith**

**For prior information on P4P/SET – <http://sendd.org/economic-development/set/> - Thank you Lisa Beethe for creating and hosting the website for SET.**