

Greater Beloit Economic Development Corporation Strategic Plan 2009 - 2013

Mission and Vision 2009

Mission Statement

The mission of the Greater Beloit Economic Development Corporation (GBEDC) is to act as the primary organization coordinating, facilitating and implementing economic development activities in the Greater Beloit area.

Vision Statement

We will be a broad-based, public/private partnership that creates a common focus for economic development activities in Great Beloit.

Guiding Principles

GBEDC seeks to fulfill its mission by:

- Promoting a positive image of the area including our industries, workforce, educational institutions and quality of life.
- Developing regional cooperative and collaborative partnerships with public and private bodies to support the local workforce and existing businesses.
- Developing a diverse group of leaders to actively build on our community's successes and continue to enhance our local economy.
- Promoting the growth of existing and new business to build an economic environment that will enhance our local economy.
- Working together to develop and recruit a skilled workforce to fill the knowledge-based needs of today's businesses and create tomorrow's jobs.

Strategic Planning Project

Introduction

A successful strategic planning process is one that uses both an organized quantitative analysis and qualitative intuition; it involves people who understand where the region is today and where it could be tomorrow; it identifies major opportunities and threats facing the region; and it positions the region toward a limited number of major directions where the greatest benefit can be realized. Ultimately, strategic planning results in a clear operational plan with broad-based strategies and measurable actions.

Components

The Greater Beloit Economic Development Corporation (GBEDC) Board of Directors and/or the Executive Committee participated in three critical planning components: an online SWOT Analysis Survey, several Strategic Planning Sessions and five Benchmark visits with high-performing economic development organizations in Wisconsin and Iowa. Additional detail on each component follows:

SWOT Analysis (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) (SWOT)

Using an online survey tool, GBEDC Board members, elected officials and members of the community were asked to answer questions related to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the Greater Beloit area. One hundred thirteen respondents completed the survey.

Major findings are shown in the table below. The table is organized with major headings and key topic categories listed under the headings. The topics are ranked (in a descending order) based on the number of responses received for each topic. Because the open-ended responses were so varied, the topics are combinations of sub-categories (e.g. "Leadership" includes responses related to leadership, vision, attitude and involvement. What did the analysis reveal?

The top ranked STRENGTH is Location; The top ranked WEAKNESS; the top ranked OPPORTUNITY is business development; and the top ranked THREAT is leadership/Cooperation. Furthermore, several topic categories appear under more than one major heading. For instance, Quality of Life is an important strength in the community; but it is also an opportunity for action. *Business Development is found under all four major headings - a critical finding for future planning.*

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Location	Employment/Workforce	Business Development	Leadership/Cooperation
Quality of Life/COL	Crime/Poverty	Education/Public Schools	Business Development
Education/Colleges	Image	Housing/Neighborhoods	Economy/COL
Leadership/Vision	Education/Public Schools	Downtown/ Redevelopment	Education/Public Schools
Business Development	Retail	Leadership/Cooperation	Crime/Poverty
Employment/Workforce	Business Development/ Competition	Image/Promotion	Workforce
Infrastructure	Housing	Quality of Life	Competition

Strategic Planning Sessions - Visions, Obstacles and Strategies

GBEDC board and committee members met three times over two months to: develop visions of the future, identify obstacles that could keep them from achieving their visions, and develop strategies to move them toward their visions.

Seven visions emerged from the discussions. Four were ranked as a good fit for GBEDC and are the foundation for the 2009 - 2012 strategies that are begin on page six. (Note: The number in parentheses represents the number of votes for that specific vision)

- **Diverse regional business environment actively focused on retention and attraction (10)**
- **A prepared diverse, multi-cultural workforce for tomorrow's jobs (8)**
- **Quality housing with mixed use amenities creates revitalized neighborhoods (6)**
- **Regional public services and expanded transportation supports economic development (6)**
- "First Choice" for vibrant arts, quality of life and a thriving economy
- Inclusive visionary leadership builds strong community
- Unique City Center restored as retail, cultural and commercial hub

Six broad-based strategies, along with objectives, actions and measurable results (beginning on page 5) are being recommended to drive the planning and future success of GBEDC in five specific areas: Business Development, Workforce Development, Housing, Infrastructure and Regional Cooperation. They emerged from the many discussions relating as the "best fit" based on the defined role of GBEDC. Other entities such as the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, Visit Beloit and the Downtown Beloit Association have (or are developing) strategic plans that are complementary and will be integrated into a larger vision for the Greater Beloit area.

Organization Benchmark Visits

The Benchmark visitation project was designed to learn what specific organizational factors, management decisions and innovations, among others, contribute to the development of high performance economic development organizations. Five organizations, with similar geographic, and demographic characteristics were identified as potential benchmark organizations. Three are Wisconsin organizations; two are in Iowa. Two are countywide organizations; three are citywide or greater. The visits produced some valuable ideas that could be incorporated into GBEDC's future strategic planning and organizational management.

- Fond du Lac County Economic Development (FCEDC), Fond du Lac, Wisconsin
- Racine County Economic Development Corporation (RCEDC), Racine, Wisconsin
- Kenosha Area Business Association (KABA), Kenosha, Wisconsin
- Greater Burlington Partnership (GBP), Burlington, Iowa
- Fairfield Area Chamber of Commerce/Economic Development Association, Fairfield, Iowa

Action Matrix

The appendix contains the strategies, objectives and actions in an eleven page matrix. The matrix shows the relative importance of each action, the timeline for completion, and the organizations responsible. The matrix is an easy to use reference tool to chart progress of the implementation effort.

Key Strategies

Practical Vision: Diverse regional business environment actively focused on retention and attraction.

Strategy 1 - Harness the power of existing businesses to grow and expand the economy.

Business retention remains the foundation of successful economic development efforts because knowledge of existing customers is the key to recruiting new ones. A more formalized “systematic” Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) program includes building a target list of companies to visit; choosing a trained visitation team; managing the visits closely and choosing some form of database technology to track information over time. The overall goal is to build information-sharing relationships with key business and industry leaders in the community that will result in GBEDC and the communities it serves being seen as value-added problem solvers.

- Strengths: Current BRE program; Location; broad base of regional and multinational existing manufacturers, industries
- Weaknesses: Need a more formal, sophisticated BRE program to support businesses operating in a global economy

Objective 1.0 - Create an effective BRE program targeting high-value companies to build one-on-one relationships using a trained retention team and state-of-the-art retention software.

- Primary: GBEDC/City of Beloit

Action 1: Target ‘select’ companies for BRE visits. Data obtained is used to gain an in-depth understanding of the firms and to deliver bottom-line benefits. “Select” companies are defined as those who have the greatest potential to create or retain the greatest number of high quality jobs in the community.

Action 2: Develop “best practices” training for team members.

Action 3: Get BRE database software for visits.

Action 4: Choose best method/time for visits.

Action 5: Update all information and share at BRE visits.

Measurable Results:

- **Creation of measurable criteria for selection of companies that would be most valuable for visits.**
- **Develop feedback satisfaction measurements from visits** (such as: “Did GBEDC solve the problem or deal with an opportunity to the company’s satisfaction”)?
- **Field a trained, broad-based team that has in-depth knowledge of economic development programs.** Team member skills, knowledge and abilities (SKA) should reflect needs and opportunities of target companies.
- **Purchased/developed software should be able to predict and quantify information that is gathered for tracking and comparison purposes** (be able to analyze visit information for individual and aggregate trends, current and future operating plans, exporting, workforce development needs, satisfaction with the community, among others).
- **Businesses clearly understand services and tools that could be available to them to assist with their expansion efforts** (e.g. TIF, RLF, development zones, customized training, among others).

Objective 1.1 - Focus board and community leaders on the coordinated strategic plans of GBEDC, the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit and Visit Beloit.

- Primary: GBEDC, Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, Visit Beloit

Action 1: Plan for community leaders buy-in.

Action 2: Communicate the plan.

Measurable Result:

- **Community leaders thoroughly understand, can communicate Beloit’s future integrated economic development strategies and actions and are willing to join the effort.**

Objective 1.2 - Develop a “World Class” Web site exclusively for GBEDC that is an effective vehicle for existing businesses, site consultants, relocating businesses and entrepreneurs to find succinct information and tools.

- Primary: GBEDC

Action 1: Review business services model. Ask: Who are its target audiences and primary clients? What services do these audiences need? Once done, a Web site design can be established.

Action 2: Design an effective Web site.

Action 3: Update site monthly; review annually.

Action 4: Link site with economic development partners. City of Beloit Economic Development, Rock County Planning & Development, THRIVE, Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Blackhawk Technical College, Southwest WI Workforce Development Board, Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, Visit Beloit

Action 5: Benchmark against competitors.

Measurable Results:

- **A clearly defined layout of service(s) and programs for the Web page(s)** that target audiences will find easy to use and will include links to local and state partner agencies.
- **Web site is primary marketing vehicle and as such is updated monthly and reassessed annually.**

Objective 1.3 - Support development of the area's retail base.

- Primary: GBEDC, Communities, Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, Downtown Beloit Association, Visit Beloit

Action 1: Collaborate with the Chamber and Downtown Beloit to retain and attract retail and commercial businesses.

Action 2: Provide incentives, information to businesses.

Measurable results:

- **Written and Web-based materials are readily available to prospective businesses.**
- **Established an active retail recruitment marketing program for prospects interested in locating in the Greater Beloit region.**

Objective 1.4 – Support partners' efforts to improve the image of Beloit including the perception of its citizens, and of regional, state and national audiences.

- Primary: Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, Downtown Beloit Association, Visit Beloit, Beloit 2020

Action 1: Enhance regional image through art, cultural programs, promotions and image outreach campaigns.

Measurable result:

- **GBEDC demonstrates support for Greater Beloit area programs designed to improve the City's image.**

Objective 1.5 - Support development of the City Center.

- Primary: GBEDC, Beloit 2020, City of Beloit, Downtown Beloit Association, Communities, Visit Beloit

Action 1: Support implementation of the City Center plan.

Action 2: Support implementation of Downtown Plan.

Measurable result:

- **GBEDC demonstrates support for City Center plan implementation activities.**

Objective 1.6 - Support Entrepreneurs with Web-based information and services.

Provide Web-based information to individuals seeking information and services about how to turn a business idea into reality. The information should link entrepreneurs with organizations offering entrepreneurial business planning services such as Wisconsin Entrepreneur Network (WEN), Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and SCORE.

- Set-up: GBEDC
- Follow up: WEN, SBDC, , Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, Rock County Development Alliance

Action 1: Add information to the Web site pertaining to business startup with links to entrepreneur service organizations. The site could contain: Steps to follow; links of successful programs; profiles of successful local entrepreneurs; potential mentors. See www.fcedc.com and www.wenportal.org.

Measurable result:

- **Review the Web site with entrepreneurs and entrepreneur organizations to assess the degree of helpfulness of the Web site to local entrepreneurs.**

Strategy 2: Target and aggressively recruit complementary business and industry.

Beloit has a strong base of businesses, several of them world class corporations to build on. Of special note is the food processing, packaging and distribution sector. Beloit needs to focus on actively recruiting companies that will complement and diversify the existing business base but also create high quality, higher wage jobs for its current and future workforce.

- Strengths: Strong base of businesses, some of whom are multinational business operations
- Weaknesses: Need concise brand and marketing plan to successfully recruit appropriate new businesses; Need to fully understand the potential of the food industry sector

Objective 2.0 - Build on existing Food Industry sector with a cluster-based approach.

Clusters are geographic concentrations of related businesses. They may be complementary or competing; however they “cluster” because of the benefits from the proximity such as sharing resources, suppliers, technology and workforce. The synergies that result often develop into competitive advantages.

- Primary: GBEDC; City of Beloit; Chamber of Commerce for Greater Beloit; Major food sector employers

Action 1: Further define the Food cluster sector. (e.g. collect industry sector information regarding employment; suppliers of goods and services; the percentage of production and customers from within the region; how many groups of industries are located within the sector.

Action 2: Determine the common needs and critical resources of Food Industry sector. Create a comprehensive chart that shows how the sector operates; how segments relate; what resources they share; what issues they have in common.

Action 3: Continue a targeted marketing campaign. To be effective over time, the sector needs to find a “champion”, fund the effort and make the cluster effort a priority.

Action 4: Support partners with Annual Food Event. The Greater Beloit/Stateline area has other clusters that haven’t yet been thoroughly defined.

Action 5: Organize networks around important issues of companies.

Action 6: Research other potential clusters for marketing efforts.

Measurable results:

- **Developed a comprehensive inventory of the Food Industry sector (including all employers, employment, goods and services, buyers and suppliers, customers inside and outside the region, interrelationships, among others).**
- **Selected a cross-section of key Food Industry representatives to promote the approach and fund it.**
- **Found a committed champion to lead the Food Industry sector cluster-based approach.**

Objective 2.1 - Consider commissioning a TIA - Targeted Industry Analysis for the region as resources and time permit.

A targeted industry study identifies specific industries that best match the competitive advantages of an area such as: location, labor force, existing economic base, supplier linkages, infrastructure, transportation, among others. Study results become the basis for a proactive marketing program for business recruitment.

- Primary: GBEDC

Action 1: Complete a Target Industry Analysis to develop/confirm a list of industry sectors that are the best match for Greater Beloit's base.

Measurable result:

- **Complete a TIA study with list of three to-five additional marketing targets (as need, time and resources allow)**

Objective 2.2 - Consider developing a brand and marketing plan for business recruitment.

Greater Beloit needs a unique, believable and identifiable marketing brand and materials package for regional and national business attraction and recruitment purposes. The brand should complement and dovetail with other existing community brand efforts.

- Primary: GBEDC
- Secondary: Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, Visit Beloit, Beloit 2020

Action 1: Consider a complete branding and marketing plan for GBEDC attraction and recruitment efforts.

Action 2: Schedule site visits, trade shows and conferences.

Action 3: Communicate brand through Web site and other media.

Action 4: Expand “Choose Greater Beloit” initiative for retention and recruitment of Human Talent.

Measurable results:

- **GBEDC is successful in communicating its “Brand”. (Success is measured by survey of business leaders and citizens to assess recognition of the brand and what it represents). Brand complements other existing Chamber and Visit Beloit logos and slogans.**
- **Packets are sent to and followed up with identified targets (developed from work with the Food Industry and other identified business sectors).**
- **Corporate visits are held with existing and new business targets (gleaned from BRE visits and TIA information).**
- **Three regional trade shows or conferences are attended in locations such as: Chicago, Kansas City, Minneapolis to research business targets.**

Objective 2.3 - Continue to update and refresh incentive toolbox materials for use in regional stateline efforts.

- Primary: GBEDC, communities

Action 1: Develop/communicate Web information and written materials on local and state incentives.

Measurable result:

- **Regional elected officials and professional developers understand and can communicate incentive programs/policies.**

Objective 2.4 - Consider development of Angel Investment Fund for region.

- Primary: GBEDC; Rock County Development Agency

Action 1: Research existing Angel Funds networks in Midwest.

Action 2: Convene an investment relations group to assess potential for success.

Measurable result:

- **Be able to make a decision whether an investment fund could be implemented successfully in the region before proceeding further.**

Objective 2.5 – Provide loans to local businesses via the RLF and Multi-Bank Loan Pool.

- Primary: GBEDC
- Secondary: City of Beloit

Action 1: Aggressively market loan programs.

Action 2: Process loan applications and close in a timely manner.

Strategy 3: Facilitate education and business-driven changes to build and retain a skilled workforce.

The Greater Rock County region has a broad educational system including: nine separate school districts; four-year Beloit College; two-year Blackhawk Technical College and two-year UW-Rock County. All are engaged in educating either an existing or future workforce. However, there are institutional, societal and business pressures that are making the job increasingly difficult. The 2007 Business and Education Summit highlighted some of the key obstacles needing to be addressed.

- Strengths: Education was cited as a major “asset” of the region in the SWOT survey
- Weaknesses: Education was also cited as a weakness, an opportunity and a threat in the same survey

Objective 3.0 - Support the strategic-level regional Business-Education Partnership of Stateline Career and Technical Education Academy (SCTEA).

Consisting of high level education, business and community leaders and elected officials, this partnership will help develop solutions to major education/workforce issues.

- Primary: GBEDC, SCTEA Executive Council, Industry CEOs, Southwest WI Workforce Development Board, Blackhawk Technical College, school districts, Blackhawk Human Resource Association.

Action 1: Support SCTEA Executive Council initiative in efforts to develop career and tech education programs for regional high schools.

Action 2: Build information conduit with Southwest WI Workforce Development Board to work together.

Measurable results:

- **Promote the development of and funding for the Stateline Career and Technical Education Academy.**
- **SCTEA Executive Council representative will join Southwest WI Workforce Development Board of Directors; Southwest WI WDB Executive Director will join SCTEA initiative.**

Objective 3.1 - Promote community understanding and support of education as the path to economic prosperity.

- Primary: GBEDC, communities, Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, Visit Beloit, Business Education Partnership

Action 1: GBEDC works with primary stakeholders to plan to support life long education.

Action 2: GBEDC begins ongoing conversations with communities regarding the importance of education.

Action 3: Consider continuing Lunch & Learn Program.

Measurable result:

- **Plan to elevate education, the value of getting an education and the support of education is begun (could be a series on the value of getting an education and the impact over your life time).**

Objective 3.2 - Facilitate existing business workforce recruitment and retention in the region.

- Primary: GBEDC, communities, Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, FLBA, DECA, Junior Achievement, Blackhawk Human Resource Association, Business Education Partnership Committee.
- Secondary: Blackhawk Technical College, UW-Rock County, Beloit College, Business Education Partnership Committee.

Action 1: Continue Connections Initiative program to introduce students to career opportunities.

Action 2: Continue sponsorship of Business-Education Summit.

Action 3: Share education and workforce information from BRE visits with partners.

Action 4: Assist in placing SCTEA students in coop employment and apprenticeship programs.

Action 5: Support Chamber Career Fair.

Action 6: Support tutoring and mentoring in all grades in the district schools, emphasis on "Dare to Dream".

Action 7: Support all regional workforce skill training programs.

Action 8: Support Business Education Partnership Taskforces.

Measurable results:

- **Continue Connections Initiative - In 2008 introduced 550 high school freshmen to potential work opportunities in 24 diverse local businesses.**
- **Developed summer internships for educators to develop direct understanding of math, science and language use in the workplace.**
- **GBEDC continues to host the Business-Education Summit and has developed actions to be achieved over a desired timeline.**
- **Developed effective method of sharing information from businesses on workforce and education needs on a regular basis with partners.**
- **Tracked the number of students participating in apprenticeship and other cooperative work programs through SCTEA efforts.**
- **GBEDC has demonstrated support for the Chamber's Career Expo event and continues to promote tutoring and mentoring the in region's district schools.**
- **Overall GBEDC promotes support for all regional programs providing workforce training and education.**

Objective 3.3 - Develop a pool of young, diverse leaders involved in planning for Beloit's future.

- **Primary: Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit**
- **Secondary: GBEDC, local units of government, UW Rock County, Rock County Development Alliance, BHRA**

Action 1: Encourage the recruitment of minorities and young professionals to serve in community leadership positions.

Action 2: Encourage the development of a Leadership Program.

Measurable results:

- **GBEDC has added minority and/or younger members to its Board of Directors and helped other community organizations to diversify their boards.**
- **A broad consortium of business leaders and units of government agree to develop and implement a Leadership Institute for Rock County.**

Measurable result:
Practical Vision: Quality housing with mixed use amenities creates revitalized neighborhoods

Strategy 4: Promote quality housing and revitalized neighborhoods as a foundation for a vibrant growing community.

Objective 4.0 - Review the City Council's efforts in achieving results from the City of Beloit's comprehensive plan.

- Primary: City of Beloit Planning Division
- Secondary: GBEDC

Action 1: Obtain copy and review City's comprehensive plan.

Measurable result:

- **Have monitored the plan for progress made toward specific goals and the impact on GBEDC.**

Objective 4.1 – Have an awareness of various municipal comprehensive plans, including but not limited to, South Beloit, Town of Beloit and Town of Turtle.

- Primary: Local Government Planning Agencies
- Secondary: GBEDC

Action 1: Be aware of code enforcement methods that the City of Beloit uses to make rental owners more responsive to property upkeep.

Measurable result:

- **Regularly review the plans for progress made toward goals and impact of their plans on GBEDC.**

Objective 4.2 - Encourage continued enhanced code enforcement to the City of Beloit.

- Primary: City of Beloit

Action 1: Consider additional code enforcement methods to make rental owners more responsive to property upkeep.

Measurable result:

- **New code enforcement methods are in place that positively affect the safety and quality of City housing stock and help to revitalize specific neighborhoods.**

Objective 4.3 - Continue work to make construction design standards more flexible and able to be customized for existing small businesses.

- Primary: City of Beloit Planning Division, GBEDC
- Secondary: Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, Downtown Beloit Association

Action 1: Use informal listening sessions to further refine City construction design standards affecting small businesses.

Measurable result:

- **Construction design standards are fine-tuned to be more flexible to the needs of small businesses.**

Objective 4.4 - Encourage the promotion of home ownership through consumer education, home buying incentives and awareness of available resources.

- Primary: Bankers, Realtors, City of Beloit, Neighborhood Housing Services
- Secondary: GBEDC, Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, Public Schools

Action 1: Promote home ownership through consumer education, home buying incentives and resource awareness.

Action 2: Encourage the development of Financial Literacy Program in public schools.

Measurable result:

- **Financial literacy classes are held for high school students and low-income families outside of the high school curriculum (e.g. at community centers, neighborhood centers, banks)**

Additionally, the following recommendations arose from the planning process:

Recommendation: Consider Development of “healthy neighborhood” indicators to be an early warning system for predicting and tracking neighborhood health.

Indicators could include a broad range of data points from schools, health agencies, housing inspectors, police, among others to compare how individual neighborhoods are doing and when they are declining. The key is to respond quickly when a neighborhood starts to decline. The model for indicators is Charlotte, NC where more than 20 indicators are used.

- Primary: City of Beloit, Neighborhood Housing Services, Community Action
- Secondary: GBEDC, Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, Beloit College, Visit Beloit

Action 1: Consider the potential use of “healthy neighborhood” indicators to monitor the stability of neighborhoods. A potential draft list of indicators could include: a statistical profile, public safety calls and crime rates, health and educational data, household income, unemployment/public assistance, housing inspections/violations, real estate values, home ownership.

Action 2: Share information on GBEDC Web site and through the Chamber to improve community image.

Measurable result:

- **Completed the research and reviewed the cost/benefit of using the “healthy neighborhoods” indicators.**

Recommendation: Provide organizational and financial support for neighborhood organizations to develop revitalization plans.

- Primary: City of Beloit, Community Housing Authority, Neighborhood Housing Services, Community Action
- Secondary: GBEDC, Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit

Action 1: Expand the City Neighborhood Initiative to help strengthen neighborhoods, improve housing stock and increase home buying in the city.

Measurable result:

- **Develop the plan to expand the City Neighborhood initiative and communicate the plan to the public.**

- **Develop measurements to judge the impact of changes to the program. (e.g. Did the changes make the program more accessible? Did residents use the program more?)**

Recommendation: Develop inclusive diverse housing partnership as way to responsively deal with housing issues.

Many of the suggestions for dealing with housing issues had to do with education and code enforcement. For instance: improve financial literacy; educate about home rehabilitation; support current high school housing remodeling program; enhance and enforce housing codes.

- Primary: City of Beloit, Beloit Housing Authority, Neighborhood Housing Services, Community Action, Community Development Authority
- Secondary: GBEDC, Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, Visit Beloit, Realtors Association, Bankers Association

Action 1: Bring all housing organizations together to “map” City housing roles, responsibilities and ideas.

Action 2: Develop housing “facts” such as: quantity, quality, value, rental, ownership of housing stock to share with the public.

Measurable results:

- **A map of housing roles, responsibilities is developed.**
- **A summary of housing facts is developed and disseminated to the public.**
- **A new housing survey is commissioned as part of the 2010 US Census.**

Strategy 5: Foster regional community and economic development through cooperative relationships in the county and region.

Cooperation and collaboration are the key to future successful community and economic development planning. Most recent efforts in planning, retention, recruitment and funding throughout the state and nation are structured as multi-community and/or multi-county collaborations. Strong regional relationships are built through shared visions, committed leadership and trusting relationships.

Objective 5.0 - Continue to build relationships with regional leaders (elected officials, business leaders) about the need for regional cooperation and for balanced sustainable growth.

- Primary: Rock County Municipalities, Rock County Development Alliance
- Secondary: Visit Beloit, Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, GBEDC

Action 1: Continue conversations with elected officials from various units of government throughout the region to find shared areas for cooperation.

Action 2: Support sustainability programs.

Action 3: Participate in the Rock County Economic Roundtables

Measurable result:

- **Various elected officials and business leaders further understand the need to use regional economies of scale to develop economic development solutions**

Objective 5.1 - Continue regional collaboration with Rock County Economic Roundtables, multi-county THRIVE, I-39 Corridor Association and the Tri-State Alliance to maximize economic development success.

- Primary: GBEDC, City of Beloit, Rock County Development Alliance
- Secondary: Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit, Visit Beloit

Action 1: Attend regular meetings of RCDA, THRIVE, Tri-State Alliance.

Action 2: Partner with Rock County in the completion of the CEDS plan for EDA.

Measurable result:

- Participated in the majority of Rock County, THRIVE and Tri-State Alliance meetings.
- Completed the regional CEDS plan for the EDA.

Objective 5.2 - Develop and promote a legislative agenda that supports Economic Development.

- Primary: GBEDC, City of Beloit, Rock County Development Alliance
- Secondary: WEDA, Chamber of Commerce of Greater Beloit

Action 1: Continue legislative efforts to develop ED incentives for WI that would equalize tools in other states.

Measurable result:

- Implemented an effective lobbying agenda and schedule for the 2009 and beyond WI legislative session.

Objective 5.3 Continue to monitor the emergence of national and regional economic development trends.

- Primary: GBEDC, City of Beloit

Action 1: Continue IEDC membership; attend WEDA conferences; monitor trend publications.

Action 2: Build on staff economic development knowledge and expertise.

Measurable results:

- GBEDC Executive Director continues membership in IEDC.
- GBEDC designs a staff development plan that includes, among others, attendance at an IEDC Basic Development Course.

Objective 5.4 - Continue to collaborate with the Rock County Development Alliance.

- Primary: Rock County Development Alliance, GBEDC

Action 1: Pool scarce resources with other County community agencies to collectively promote/market the County.

Action 2: Utilize the resources of Economic Development Specialist to develop an Economic Gardening Program.

Action 3: Implement 5 EDA Grant strategies.

Action 4: Participate in the EDA Advisory Board.

Action 5: Apply for additional EDA funds.

Measurable results:

- **A comprehensive Countywide marketing effort is in place.**
- **Rock County companies are able to access data to help make strategic decisions.**
- **EDA grant strategies are implemented and measured.**
- **Rock County is successful in obtaining a second EDA grant.**

Strategy 6: Provide infrastructure that supports needed services, transportation and developable land.

Objective 6.0 - Continue to make land available for development.

- Primary: GBEDC, municipalities

Action 1: Promote additional development in the Gateway project area.

Action 2: Continue to marketing of I-90 Industrial Park.

Action 3: Identify new opportunities throughout Greater Beloit, including the west side.

Measurable results:

- **Active marketing efforts bring complementary new development and high quality jobs to the Gateway area.**
- **Remaining sites in I-90 Industrial Park are filled.**
- **Future development sites are identified and secured.**

Objective 6.1 - Plan for and support future local and regional infrastructure such as water, sewer, roads, rail, air, utilities.

- Primary: GBEDC, City of Beloit, SLATS

Action 1: Monitor the need for local and regional infrastructure that supports business and the regional economy.

Measurable result:

- **Understand and support plans for future infrastructure in the region that supports business and the regional economy.**

Objective 6.2 – Support the infrastructure development that supports inner city development.

- Primary: GBEDC, municipalities, Beloit 2020

Action 1: Inventory redevelopment sites.

Action 2: Support the creation and utilization of TIF Districts.

Action 3: Support Beloit 2020 initiatives.