

<b>GOAL 1: LEVERAGE THE MULTIPLE ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE A STAKE IN ALBERT LEA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS TO CREATE A STRONG ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Budget Impact</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>
<b>Determine roles of each partner organization in implementation of the economic development strategic plan.</b>					
Starting with the organizations that have been involved throughout this process, hold a work session to define the role that each organization or group will have in the support and implementation of the plan. Use the implementation map as a starting point, as it suggests both those groups who are already participating in some way as well as who should lead and/or support each tactic.	Core Partner Group	High	Q1 2020	Staff Time	Sign offs on roles Regular meetings and updates to the implementation map
Determine if there are gaps in terms of staffing or resources to successfully implement the plan. If there are gaps, develop a plan to address them. This might include forming committees, fundraising, hiring additional staff, etc.	Core Partner Group	High	Q1 2020	Staff Time	
With the core group of partners, hold regular meetings (recommending monthly or bi-monthly) to discuss the status of the plan and specific initiatives. This will help ensure accountability, mitigate the risk of redundant or competing efforts, and promote forward progress. - Incorporate into City/County/ALEDA bi-monthly 1-30 Wednesday meetings	Core Partner Group	High	Ongoing (monthly/bi-monthly)	Staff Time	
<b>Share the developed vision and goals with community members and stakeholders and update them regularly on the progress of the strategic plan.</b>					
Continue to engage stakeholders, include residents and business owners, to launch the economic development strategic plan and share the countywide vision and shared goals. Leverage local media and other channels (press releases, news articles, ALEDA and partner websites, etc.) to share the summary. Consider creating a website to track progress publicly. (core group does this together)	ALEDA Core Partner Group	Medium	Q1 2020 and Ongoing	Staff Time Potential costs for press releases or website	County-wide rollout completed Number of public input meetings held Number of public input meeting participants Overall buy-in of the public
Hold a public rollout of the economic development strategic plan to generate public interest and awareness of the plan, placing emphasis on the shared vision and common goals for all partners. This should be conducted after the roles of each partner organization are determined, so that information about how it will be implemented can be shared as well. (Feb 17th week?)	ALEDA Core Partner Group (Adv Advantage can assist)	High	Q1 2020	Staff Time	
Hold a bi-annual or annual public input meeting to update all community members on the status of the county-wide economic development strategic plan, share economic development successes, and ensure continued buy-in from community members. Be open for ways in which additional groups or individuals can support the initiative.	ALEDA Core Partner Group	Medium	Q3 2020 and Ongoing (annual or bi-annual)	Staff Time	
<b>Create a consolidated brand and marketing approach to promote living, working, visiting, and thriving in Albert Lea-Freeborn County.</b>					
Develop a marketing plan and creative brief to market the community to residents, business owners, people who work in the city/county, and visitors. (Joint plan between core group)	Core Partner Group (Adv Advantage can assist)	High	Q2 2020	Medium	Countywide brand created Clarity on messaging and roles Communications plan
Develop a shared brand for Albert Lea-Freeborn County and a campaign to build awareness and interest in the community. (Better together website idea, will be on the city page)	Core Partner Group (City/CVB Lead)	High	Q2 2020	Medium	
In addition to the branding and marketing components, also create a way to disseminate positive information about the community to various audiences so that people can learn about positive outcomes in the community as well as readily find out what is going on, how to get involved, etc. (City website, teresa already working on)	Core Partner Group (City Lead)	High	Q1 2020	TBD	
<b>GOAL 2: HELP CONNECT SCHOOLS/HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYERS TO STRENGTHEN THE TALENT PIPELINE.</b>					
<b>Facilitate coordination between the supply and demand sides of talent and determine how to address gaps.</b>					
Catalogue current talent initiatives in the region, including those led by economic development, workforce development, educational institutions, employers, etc. This should capture the focus of the initiative (talent retention, development or attraction), the target audiences, and whether the strategy is geared towards short, medium or long-term results.	ALEDA/City/Chamber/ Foundation/ Schools Workforce Partners	High	Q1 2020	Staff Time or Low-Medium Consultant Budget	Existing talent initiatives defined All partners identified Number of employer surveys completed Talent summit completed Participation in talent summit Variety in talent initiatives (timeline, audience, retention/recruitment, etc.) Plan with specific action items
Survey existing employers to determine their key talent needs, including both current and future needs. This survey should also query their awareness of current talent initiatives in the region and any barriers they have to recruiting, retaining and developing talent.	ALEDA/City/Chamber/ Foundation/ Schools Workforce Partners	High	Q1 2020	Staff Time or Low-Medium Consultant Budget	
Using the findings from steps 1 and 2, hold a talent summit annually to connect the supply and demand sides of talent. This work session should include all workforce partners, as well as employers, and should work to identify gaps between the supply and demand sides.	ALEDA/City/Chamber/ Foundation/ Schools Workforce Partners	High	Q1 2021	Staff Time or Low-Medium Consultant Budget	
Jointly develop a plan to address any gaps in talent initiatives and supply on an ongoing basis.	ALEDA/City/Chamber/ Foundation/ Schools Workforce Partners	High	Q1 2020 and Ongoing	Staff Time	
<b>Educate students, parents and guidance counselors on the opportunities available at companies in Albert Lea and Freeborn County.</b>					
Help employers evaluate and participate in apprenticeship and internship programs. Encourage participation in the Minnesota Apprenticeship Initiative and help remove barriers that might exist for them offering these types of training opportunities.	ALEDA/City/Chamber/ Foundation/ Schools Workforce Partners	Medium	Ongoing	Staff Time	Number of employers with apprenticeship programs Number of students from Albert Lea schools who participate in apprenticeship programs Retention of Albert Lea graduates in the region
Partner with employers to build awareness of their facilities for not only students (potential employees) but parents and guidance counselors (the gatekeepers). Consider holding training, fun events or contests that allow all of these audiences to learn first-hand of the opportunities and to update any outdated perceptions they may have of what manufacturing is like as a career choice.	ALEDA/City/Chamber/ Foundation/ Schools Workforce Partners	Medium	Ongoing	Staff Time	
Create a shared resource where employers can share the job opportunities that they have available or anticipate in the coming 12-24 months, including a description of likely skills. This information should be coordinated systematically and on an ongoing basis with higher education resources to help ensure that the schools are providing students with as close a match to required skills as possible. (County open to developing a one stop shop online for this)	County	High	Q3 2020	TBD	
<b>GOAL 3: PROMOTE ALBERT LEA'S KEY ASSETS AND POINTS OF DIFFERENCE TO ITS TARGET INDUSTRIES.</b>					
<b>Increase the connectedness that residents feel to the community.</b>					
Create a two-way database of volunteer activities and volunteers. This can be used to promote volunteer opportunities throughout the community and encourage participation by new and existing residents to help them connect to the community.	Core Partner Group	Medium	Q3 2020	Staff Time	Increase in community volunteers Retention of new residents Number of community brand ambassadors
Consider creating a new resident package that helps new residents become acclimated to the community. This could be done as a group (Albert Lea-Freeborn County 101 for Young Singles, for Empty Nesters, for Young Families, etc.) or for individuals/executives. Options could include volunteer opportunities, mentors, as well as acts as simple as providing free tickets to an event/activity, having leaders take them out to dinner, providing contacts to key groups, such as realtors, bankers, etc.	ALEDA, CVB, Chamber, City	Medium	Q3 2020	Staff Time Potential low budget requirements for certain activities.	
As businesses bring potential new employees to town, do a private "fam tour" for executives and their spouses, including programs to help find employment for the trailing spouse. The prospective employee around Albert Lea and answering any questions they have about the community. (Tie into Welcome Ambassadors, HR Group)	ALEDA, CVB, Chamber, HR Group	Medium	Ongoing as needed	Staff Time	
Develop a marketing campaign that works to highlight all of the remarkable things happening in Albert Lea. The goal of this would be to increase community pride and the spread of positive news, as well as just make existing residents more aware of events and activities. Create a group of brand ambassadors from the community who will push out news through their social media accounts as well. (Part of goal 1 - joint market plan, also ties into better together website idea)	Core Partner Group (Adv Advantage can assist)	High	Q2 2020	Medium to High	
<b>Better promote Albert Lea's assets, events and activities to both residents as well as potential visitors.</b>					
Design a user-friendly and visible wayfinding system that will guide residents and visitors to and from Albert Lea (especially from the highway), as well as within Albert Lea. Wayfinding can also be used to market Albert Lea's unique assets. (Better promote the Fair and Fairgrounds)	City/County/Fair Board	Medium	Q4 2020 - Q2 2021	Medium to High	Increased visibility from the highway Tourism visitors
Create connections with tour companies and encourage them to stop in Albert Lea through promoting its unique assets, events and activities.	CVB, Hotels	Low	2021	Staff Time	
Create a tourism-focused marketing plan to increase the number of visitors to Albert Lea and Freeborn County. (utilize joint marketing plan)	CVB and Partner Groups Main Street	Medium	2021	Medium to High	
<b>Determine the feasibility of developing new quality of life amenities.</b>					
Using data from this plan and past resident surveys, determine which quality of life assets Albert Lea wants to focus on enhancing over the next few years, such as lakefront development, restaurants, nightlife entertainment, animals at state parks, etc.	City	Medium	Q2 2020 and Ongoing	Staff Time	New developments in downtown and around lake Ease of planning/zoning processes for developers
Using input from key stakeholders, determine what barriers/challenges might exist to further development of those prioritized enhancements.	City	Medium	Q2 2020 and Ongoing	Staff Time	
Develop a plan to address these challenges. This might include zoning changes, incentive options, partnership creation, etc.	City	Medium	Q3 2020 and Ongoing	TBD	
<b>Recruit talent from higher cost markets, leveraging Albert Lea's unique quality of life assets and more competitive costs.</b>					
Using data collected from business visits and/or surveys, determine which positions are most in-demand for existing employers and will be best suited to talent attraction more so than development.	ALEDA, City, Chamber, CVB (Adv Advantage can assist)	Low	2021 - 2022-2023	Medium	Population growth Campaign reach/impressions Resident retention
Create a targeted talent recruitment campaign focused on regional high cost markets. The media used for the campaign will depend on the target audience, but may include LinkedIn infeed campaigns, social media campaigns, direct mail, print advertising, etc.	ALEDA, City, Chamber, CVB (Adv Advantage can assist)	Low	2021 - 2022-2023	Medium-High	
Using results from the talent recruitment campaign, consider holding a familiarization tour that brings prospective residents/employees to Albert Lea to more tangibly show them the region.	ALEDA, City, Chamber, CVB (Adv Advantage can assist)	Low	2021 - 2022-2023	Medium-High	

<b>Goal</b>
<b>Strategy</b>
<b>Tactic</b>

<b>Work to remove barriers to attracting and retaining talent, such as housing, transportation and childcare.</b>					
Continue to survey residents and employers on these topics of housing, transportation and childcare to keep a pulse on changing needs. Consider asking employers about these topics as well, as recommended in Goal 2, Strategy 1.	City, ALEDA, Chamber, Main Street	Medium	Ongoing	Staff Time	Resident retention New housing development
Develop and maintain relationships with developers and determine the barriers to developing housing. Work to address those barriers to encourage development of the types of housing Albert Lea lacks according to the housing study, such as multi-family housing options.	ALEDA, City, HRA	High	Q1 2020 and Ongoing	Staff Time	
Look to other communities as case studies to see how they have addressed these types of challenges. Determine if those solutions can be applied in Albert Lea.	ALEDA, City (Adv Advantage can assist)	Medium	Q2 2020	Low	
<b>GOAL 4: PRIORITIZE ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE THE COUNTY IS PREPARED FOR BUSINESS GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES.</b>					
<b>Build stronger relationships with existing businesses to encourage growth.</b>					
Continue to conduct business retention and expansion (BRE) visits with employers. The focus for the EDA should be on the largest employers and those that are primary job creators. For other types of businesses, determine the organization that is best suited to conduct those BRE visits.	ALEDA, City, Chamber, Mainstreet	High	Ongoing	Staff Time	Prioritized BRE list Number of employer visits or surveys per year Existing business growth - jobs and investment
For those businesses that the EDA is not able to visit in a year, consider an online survey so there is still an opportunity to gain their input.	ALEDA	Medium	Ongoing	Staff Time	
Create and review Google alerts for existing companies to monitor any changes happening at the local or at the parent company level if there is outside control of the company. This will allow the EDA to be more proactive in identifying trends in their economic base industries and changes within the companies.	ALEDA, City	Medium	Q2 2020 and Ongoing	Staff Time	
Share positive business news from Albert Lea and Freeborn County's existing industries on social media channels throughout the region. This will help increase overall awareness of what is going on at the company's among residents, students, etc. (Utilize joint marketing plan)	ALEDA, Chamber and all Ambassadors	High	Q2 2020	Staff Time	
<b>Determine what types of projects the community will support and how.</b>					
Help prepare Albert Lea and Freeborn County for future opportunities, by facilitating a work session with city/county leadership that identifies the types of projects that the region will support, using hypothetical projects. The session should identify high, medium, and low priority projects. Consider types of jobs being created, wages, type and negative externalities of industries, etc. (Identify and prioritize based off completed industry study included in the plan)	ALEDA, City, County (Adv Advantage can assist)	High	Q1 2020	Medium	Clearly articulated incentives policy Consensus on types of projects Albert Lea and Freeborn County will support and work to attract
Based on the work session, develop an incentives policy that is aligned with the types of projects the community wants.	ALEDA, City, County	High	Q2 2020	TBD	
Conduct a feasibility study to determine Albert Lea's competitiveness for different industries.	ALEDA (Adv Advantage can assist)	Medium	Q1 2020	Medium-High	
<b>Ensure Albert Lea has a strong inventory of sites and buildings for the types of projects it wants to recruit.</b>					
Update sites and buildings database to include all available sites in the region. Where there are gaps in data, work with local partners to obtain the data and continually update the database.	ALEDA, City, County	High	Ongoing	Staff Time	Number of sites in databases Accuracy of site information Regularity in data being updated Total product pipeline Qualitative measure of site match with sub-sector focus Number of inquiries related to available sites
Feed the sites and buildings database into relevant real estate databases.	ALEDA, City, County	High	Ongoing	Staff Time	
In order to ensure a pipeline of product, identify all potential sites and buildings in the county (regardless of state of readiness) and prioritize them based on readiness, attractiveness, location, unique assets, etc.	ALEDA, City, County	High	Ongoing	Staff Time	
Match key sites and buildings with priority projects identified earlier. Evaluate recent RFIs at the state and local level to determine needs of industries. Consider using an outside engineering firm to identify key site needs for development for specific targeted sub-sectors key target industries.	ALEDA, City, County	High	Ongoing	Staff Time	
Ensure there is a plan in place to gain control and prepare sites and buildings that are not currently ready for sale. If infrastructure needs exist, proactively engage necessary stakeholders.	ALEDA, City, County	High	Ongoing as sites are identified	TBD	
<b>Market Albert Lea's existing business assets and quality of life assets to decision makers in key target industries.</b>					
Review all existing marketing tools, including website and print and digital marketing collaterals, and, as needed, revise/update them to integrate identified positioning messages for the region, as well as for each target industry. (Ties into joint marketing plan)	ALEDA/City/ County/ Chamber	High	Ongoing	TBD depending on audit of what needs to be updated.	Marketing materials updated Campaign reach/impressions Number of leads generated Number of prospects turned to projects New business projects - jobs and investment
Develop a regional profile that highlights the key positioning points of the region that can be used as a marketing tool for prospective businesses. This content can be repurposed to use on websites, campaigns, social media, etc.	ALEDA/City/ County/ Chamber	High	Ongoing	Low - \$4,500 - 6,000	
Develop target industry profiles for each recommended target industry that highlights the key positioning points for those markets. Again, this content can be repurposed to use on websites, campaigns, social media, etc.	ALEDA/City/ County/ Chamber	High	Ongoing	Low - \$3,000 - 4,000	
In order to build relationships with companies in the recommended target industries, consider attending industry-specific tradeshows, marketing in targeted trade publications or leveraging branded sponsorship/advertising opportunities with trade associations.	ALEDA/City/ County/ Chamber	Medium	Ongoing	Medium	
Determine which tradeshows and site selector events that MN DEED attends and evaluate the ROI of partnering with them to attend these events.	ALEDA/City/ County/ Chamber	Low	Ongoing	TBD	
Use lead generation to identify leads in each target industry and arrange prospect meetings via phone or at a tradeshow.	ALEDA/City/ County/ Chamber	Low	Ongoing	High - \$15,000+	
Create relationships with site selectors who focus on Albert Lea's target industries and target company size through a farm tour event. This will allow Albert Lea to show off its regional assets on-site.	ALEDA/City/ County/ Chamber	Low	Ongoing	Medium to High	