



Battle Lake Economic Development Authority

Thursday, November 6, 2025

7:00 a.m. City Council Room

- Call to Order
- Approve Agenda
- Approve Minutes
- Approve Financials
- Update - Business Improvement Program – No Update
 - Request to City Council to Budget \$10,000 for 2026 Business Improvement Program?
- Request Approval – 2026 EDA Budget
- Joint Council/EDA Work Session – Follow-Up/Discussion
 - Review Goals/Consider Other Opportunities
 - Upcoming Joint Meeting on Tuesday, January 27, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.
- Follow-Up from Economic Development Programs Available through U of M
 - Review Recommendations from Fernando Quijano, Minnesota Extension – *One of these could assist with Goals and Strategies*
- CEDA Application Consideration
- Tri-City Collaborative Meeting Follow-Up
- Housing
 - ESMC Visioning Group Update
- School Updates
- LACC Updates

Upcoming:

- Securing State and Federal Funding for your Community – November 6th at 8:30 a.m. – Thumper Pond
- Next EDA Meeting – Thursday, December 4, 2025
- Annual Meeting Thursday, February 5, 2025 – School Commons Area – Ben Winchester, Speaker

“The mission of the Battle Lake Economic Development Authority is to promote diverse Economic Development and enhance quality of life through the retention and growth of business, industry & services in the Battle Lake area.”

**City of Battle Lake
Economic Development Authority
Tuesday, October 9, 2025**

The Battle Lake Economic Development Authority met in a regular session on Thursday, October 9, 2025, at 7:00 a.m. with Randy Dorn, Rich Bullard, Rob Nudell, Steve Young, Sharon Casey, Josie Thomopolous, Rob Nudell and Majorie Quammen present. Also present were Val Martin, Clerk/Treasurer/EDA Director, and Reba Gilliland representing the Battle Lake Arts Advisory Committee.

Nudell made a motion to approve the agenda. Young seconded. MCU Casey made a motion to approve the minutes. Quammen seconded. MCU Nudell made a motion to approve the financials as presented. Bullard seconded. MCU

Business Improvement Program. The commissioners discussed the Business Improvement Program, including additional applications that came in after the funding was distributed along with a future application to the CDA with matching funds. Martin suggested making a request to the City Council to add an amount for the Business Improvement Program for matching funds. The City's alley paving project will affect several of the applications because they must be done in conjunction with each other. It doesn't appear that the paving will happen this fall. The program guidelines state that the project must be completed within one year of the date that the grant was approved by the EDA. Young made a motion to extend the deadline for the 2025 projects to be completed by September 30, 2026. Dorn seconded. MCU

EDA Annual Meeting

- Thursday, February 5, 2025
- Location – School Commons Area – Possibly using the auditorium for the program
- Food – First choice is Shoreline – Second choice is Battle Lake Boathouse. Martin will work on this.
- Program – Ben Winchester, U of M talking about housing statistics

EDA Authority & Review of Bylaws and Enabling Resolution

The meeting focused on reviewing funding tools available through the Economic Development Authority (EDA), including traditional funding methods like the EDA levy, CDA, WC Initiative Fund, and Minnesota Investment Fund. Val said the limitations of the EDA are listed in statute along with the enabling resolution and bylaws. Information from Traci Ryan, financial advisor, that provided some ideas that All these ideas need to have council approval. The group also discussed the pros and cons of implementing a loan program, with Randy noting that City Attorney, JJ Cline has expressed caution based on past city losses, while others noted West Central Initiative's success with gap financing. The conversation ended with a discussion on the potential risks and benefits of a loan program, emphasizing the need to consider community needs and the city's risk tolerance. The group also had a conversation related to developing an "Angel Investor" loan program. This program would be funded through investors that choose to finance projects and developments in the community.

Joint City Council and EDA Meeting – Commissioners propose a date/time of October 28th starting at 5:00 p.m.

TriCity is holding a community collaborative meeting on Monday, October 27, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at the Ottertail Community Center. EDA members are encourage to attend.

Community Economic Development Strategies

The group discussed economic development strategies for their community, focusing on attracting new businesses and supporting existing ones. They explored ideas like winter marketing campaigns, utilizing community spaces, and collaborating with other towns.

The commissioners reviewed updates on property purchases and long-term planning with a suggestions to the council. They also discussed upcoming events and presentations, including the Christmas tree lighting, Battle Lake Craft Fair, Tour of Homes, Santa Day, etc. The group agreed to continue exploring opportunities and tourism initiatives to boost year-round economic activity.

The next meeting was scheduled for October 9th.

Adjourn at 8:02 a.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Valerie J. Martin".

Val Martin, Clerk/Treasurer

City of Battle Lake Joint EDA/Council Work Session – October 28, 2025

Mayor Rich Bullard called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 28, 2025, with Council members Marjorie Quammen, Derek Tysdal and Ryan Christensen present. Council member Don Maslow attended virtually due to medical issues. EDA member present include Randy Dorn, Steve Young, Sharon Casey, and Rob Nudell. Absent was Josie Thomopolous. Also, present at City Hall was Clerk/Treasurer, Val Martin and Amy Baldwin from Otter Tail County CDA.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited with Mayor Bullard turning the meeting over to Amy Baldwin as facilitator.

The meeting started with participants reflecting on the Economic Development Authority (EDA) of Battle Lake's accomplishments over the past 9-10 years. Participants discussed various projects and initiatives, including the school referendum, housing developments, and business improvements. Randy Dorn highlighted the decision not to pursue a loan pool program in 2016, while Rich Bullard and others praised the recent progress and collaboration between the EDA and city council. Derek Tysdal, a new council member, expressed interest in understanding the EDA's role and responsibilities. The group also touched on smaller initiatives like the Battle Lake Bucks program and school career fairs.

City Council and EDA Coordination

The attendees focused on the roles and coordination between the City Council and the Economic Development Authority (EDA) in the community. The group discussed the importance of ongoing communication and collaboration between these groups to ensure the town's vitality and growth. They also touched on the EDA's support for local projects, and its role in providing accurate information and direct communication with various community stakeholders.

EDA's Role in Development Projects

The EDA's role in development projects involves working through processes like tax abatements and TIFs for developers, with Tracy Ryan providing initial guidance on these tools. Val described how the EDA facilitates connections between developers and opportunities, highlighting successful projects like the Water Station Apartments and the involvement of Dave Shornack from Perham. The EDA sets community priorities, such as housing growth, and works collaboratively with stakeholders to align projects with these goals, ensuring shared understanding and actionable outcomes before presenting them to the City Council.

Battle Lake's Decade of Progress

The meeting focused on the strengths and achievements of the Economic Development Authority (EDA) and City Council in Battle Lake over the past decade. Participants highlighted supportive mayors and councils, expertise among community members, enhanced communication, strong volunteerism, and the community's reputation as an envy of other towns its size. They also discussed leveraging natural resources and collaboration with organizations like NBL and LACC to drive community development. The conversation emphasized the importance of ongoing discussions, prioritization of projects, and partnerships to secure funding and move projects forward.

Strategic Growth and Infrastructure Planning

The council discussed leveraging work groups to handle visioning and policy while focusing on governing tasks. They explored the challenges of attracting younger families and tradespeople, noting the lack of manufacturing and industry in the area. The discussion highlighted the importance of infrastructure, such as water and sewer access, in attracting businesses and mentioned past efforts to develop manufacturing opportunities. The council emphasized the need for a long-term growth plan and acknowledged areas lacking infrastructure that require future attention.

Battle Lake's Long-Term Planning Challenges

Participants discussed the challenges and opportunities for Battle Lake's long-term planning, highlighting the competition from surrounding areas and the need to address infrastructure, workforce, and housing issues. They also raised concerns about the aging population and the potential impact of the baby boomer generation's decline on the housing market, suggesting a need

to plan for future demographic shifts. The discussion also touched on the current trend of investors buying properties, which could affect the availability of housing for younger families. The group emphasized the importance of filling existing gaps in infrastructure and housing to attract new residents and prepare for future changes in the population.

Water Infrastructure and Succession Planning

Participants discussed the city's approach to providing water and sewer services, emphasizing the importance of having a clear roadmap to communicate timelines to the business community. They explored the potential benefits of expanding infrastructure to accommodate future growth and considered the cost-prohibitive nature of certain projects due to topography. Randy also highlighted the need for succession planning, particularly in light of Val's upcoming retirement, to ensure a smooth transition of knowledge and experience.

Battle Lake Population Transition Planning

Participants discussed the challenges of community transition with new and departing City Council members. They reviewed the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update, highlighting population growth and demographic trends in Battle Lake, including an aging population and rising property values. The group emphasized the community's appeal as a retirement destination and noted the benefits of remote work, which may attract younger families in the future. They also discussed the need to market the local schools to attract more students, despite the community's aging demographic.

Strategic Growth and Development Plan

Participants discussed the need for a clearer strategic plan for the EDA with assigned action items and timelines, particularly focusing on growth initiatives. They emphasized the importance of positioning the community for future development, including infrastructure improvements and expanding the tax base through new housing and jobs. The Council acknowledged past discussions about land acquisition and expressed a desire to align on future plans for recently purchased properties, and the need for EDA input on these new developments.

Strategic Planning Meeting

The group discussed plans for residential development on recently acquired city property, with agreement to develop a strategic plan, possibly within 6-8 months. They aligned on the need for better communication with the community about the property's future use, with Amy suggesting they leverage the existing comprehensive plan to guide development. The group decided to meet again on January 27th at 5pm to establish specific goals for both the EDA and City Council, with Amy facilitating the session. Other key discussion points included transforming the Hatchery Road space into a community center and focusing on business retention rather than just attraction.

Adjourn 6:55 p.m.



Val Martin, Clerk/Treasurer

**Economic Development Authority
Fund # 240
Statement of Revenue and Expenditures**

Dept	Acct		Current Period Oct 2025 Oct 2025 Actual	Year-To-Date Jan 2025 Oct 2025 Actual	Annual Budget Jan 2025 Dec 2025	Annual Budget Jan 2025 Dec 2025 Variance	Jan 2025 Dec 2025 Percent of Budget
Revenue & Expenditures							
Revenue							
Unallocated							
40000	36211	Now Acct Interest	7.11	30.89	0.00	(30.89)	0.0%
Unallocated Totals			\$7.11	\$30.89	\$0.00	(\$30.89)	
Business Grant Program							
46320	33600	Grants and Aid	0.00	14,619.84	0.00	(14,619.84)	0.0%
46320	36230	Contributions and Donations	0.00	1,400.00	0.00	(1,400.00)	0.0%
Business Grant Program Totals			\$0.00	\$16,019.84	\$0.00	(\$16,019.84)	
Economic Development							
46500	33600	Grants and Aid	0.00	334,225.00	0.00	(334,225.00)	0.0%
46500	36211	Now Acct Interest	0.00	27.25	0.00	(27.25)	0.0%
46500	36250	Refunds & Reimbursements	235.08	567.17	0.00	(567.17)	0.0%
46500	39203	Transfer from Liquor Fund	0.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	100.0%
Economic Development Totals			\$235.08	\$354,819.42	\$20,000.00	(\$334,819.42)	
Empowering Small Cities							
46510	33600	Grants and Aid	0.00	3,000.00	0.00	(3,000.00)	0.0%
Empowering Small Cities Totals			\$0.00	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	(\$3,000.00)	
Revenue			\$242.19	\$373,870.15	\$20,000.00	(\$353,870.15)	
Gross Profit			\$242.19	\$373,870.15	\$20,000.00	\$0.00	
Expenses							
Hatchery Row							
46316	319	Other Professional Services	1,125.00	14,579.23	0.00	(14,579.23)	0.0%
Hatchery Row Totals			\$1,125.00	\$14,579.23	\$0.00	(\$14,579.23)	
Business Grant Program							
46320	810	Refunds & Reimbursements	0.00	1,501.65	0.00	(1,501.65)	0.0%
Business Grant Program Totals			\$0.00	\$1,501.65	\$0.00	(\$1,501.65)	
Economic Development							
46500	100	Wages and Salaries	484.32	4,133.66	8,000.00	3,866.34	51.7%
46500	121	PERA	36.15	257.75	0.00	(257.75)	0.0%
46500	122	FICA	28.45	243.90	0.00	(243.90)	0.0%
46500	123	Medicare	6.66	57.05	0.00	(57.05)	0.0%
46500	131	Employer Paid Health	40.72	394.99	0.00	(394.99)	0.0%
46500	133	Employer Paid Dental	0.80	7.76	0.00	(7.76)	0.0%
46500	200	Office Supplies	0.00	38.40	0.00	(38.40)	0.0%
46500	319	Other Professional Services	0.00	2,479.75	4,000.00	1,520.25	62.0%
46500	322	Postage	0.00	124.89	500.00	375.11	25.0%
46500	340	Advertising	0.00	26.00	3,500.00	3,474.00	0.7%
46500	350	Print/Binding	0.00	3,163.09	2,000.00	(1,163.09)	158.2%
46500	351	Publishing	0.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.0%
46500	360	Insurance	0.00	30.94	120.00	89.06	25.8%
46500	430	Miscellaneous	470.16	2,767.51	1,000.00	(1,767.51)	276.8%
46500	433	Dues And Subscriptions	0.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.0%
46500	810	Refunds & Reimbursements	0.00	331,745.25	0.00	(331,745.25)	0.0%
Economic Development Totals			\$1,067.26	\$345,470.94	\$19,920.00	(\$325,550.94)	
Empowering Small Cities							
46510	430	Miscellaneous	300.65	824.59	0.00	(824.59)	0.0%
Empowering Small Cities Totals			\$300.65	\$824.59	\$0.00	(\$824.59)	
Expenses			\$2,492.91	\$362,376.41	\$19,920.00	(\$342,456.41)	
Revenue Less Expenditures			(\$2,250.72)	\$11,493.74	\$80.00	\$0.00	
Net Change in Fund Balance			(\$2,250.72)	\$11,493.74	\$80.00	\$0.00	

		Receipts	\$ 235.08	LACC paid 1/2 of quarterly meeting
9-Oct	49046	BL Boathouse	\$ 300.65	ESMC Visioning Meeting
14-Oct	49076	Shoreline	\$ 470.16	Quarterly Roundtable Meeting
29-Oct	49133	MN Pollution Control	\$ 1,125.00	Final Oversight bill for Hatchery Row
		Total Expenses	\$ 1,895.81	
1-Jan	Balance		\$40,952.50	
31-Oct	Balance		\$38,701.78	

EDA Budget

2023 Budget	2023 YE	2024 YE	2024 Budget	2025 Budget	2025 as of 10/31	2026 Budget	
							Hatcher Row
	\$ 22,519.00	\$ 31,468.00					240-46316-36211 Grants and Aids
							240-46316-36250 Refunds and Reimbursements
					\$ 14,620.00		240-46320-36211 Grants and Aids Business Grant Program
					\$ 1,400.00		240-46320-36230 Contributions & Donations Business Grant Program
							Economic Development
					\$ 334,225.00		240-46500-36211 Grants and Aids
	\$ 10,000.00						Contributions and Donations
\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	240-46500-39203 Transfer from Liquor Store - additional funds to pay for OT Lakes Membership
							240-46500-36200 Misc. Revenue (Business Assistance app)
							BR&E and Blandin Grant
	\$ 44.00	\$ 57.00			\$ 58.00		240-46500-36211 Interest Earning (Checking)
					\$ 567.00		240-46500-36250 Refunds and Reimbursement (LACC pays 1/2 of Roundtable mtgs)
\$ 5,200.00			\$ 5,500.00				240-46500-70000 Transfer from General Fund - TIF Payback (Hammer Project)
							Payback to EDA Capital Fund
					\$ 3,000.00		240-46520-33800 Grants and Aids - Empowering MN Cities
\$ 25,200.00	\$ 52,563.00	\$ 51,525.00	\$ 25,500.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 373,870.00	\$ 25,000.00	

2023 Budget	2023 YE	2024 YE	2024 Budget	2025 Budget	2025 as of 10/31	2026 Budget	
							240-46316-303 Engineering Fees - Hatchery Row
							240-46316-304 Legal Fees - Hatchery row
	\$ 45,744.00				\$ 14,579.00		240-46316-319 Other Professional Services (Property Switch, Ryan Consulting, Asbestos Abatement)
							240-46316-322 Postage
							240-46316-331 Mileage
							240-46316-381 Electricity
							240-46316-430 Miscellaneous
							240-46316-510 Land
							240-46316-430 Capital Improvements Other than Building
		\$ 31,468.00					240-46316-801 Refunds & Reimbursements DEED grant payback
\$ 0.00	\$45,744.00	\$31,468.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$14,579.00	\$ 0.00	
					\$1,501.00		240-46320-810 Refunds and Reimbursements - Business Imp Program Funds to be paid out in 2026 but not part of the normal budget
					\$825.00		240-46510-430 Miscellaneous - Empowering MN Cities
\$ 8,000.00	\$ 7,138.00	\$ 7,568.00	\$ 8,300.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 5,097.00	\$ 8,000.00	240-46500-100 Wages EDA Director (also included Commissioners)
\$ 5,000.00		\$ 9,175.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,479.00	\$ 4,000.00	240-46500-319 Other Professional Services
\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,296.00	\$ 2,146.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 26.00	\$ 3,500.00	240-46500-340 Advertising
\$ 2,000.00	\$ 993.00		\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 3,164.00	\$ 2,000.00	240-46500-350 Print/Binding EDA Brochure
\$ 500.00			\$ 500.00	\$ -			240-46500-306 Commissioners/Director Training
\$ 300.00		\$ 236.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00			240-46500-311 Childcare center
\$ 500.00			\$ 500.00				240-46500-351 Publishing
\$ 120.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 44.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 31.00	\$ 120.00	240-46500-331 Travel - Related to Training
\$ 500.00	\$ 162.00		\$ 500.00				240-46500-360 Insurance
\$ 300.00		\$ 10.00	\$ 300.00		\$ 38.00		240-46500-210 Operating Supplies
	\$ 1.00						240-46500-200 Office Supplies
\$ 500.00			\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00		\$ 5,000.00	240-46500-240 Small Tool and Minor Equip
\$ 500.00	\$ 86.00	\$ 188.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 125.00	\$ 500.00	240-46500-433 Dues and Subscriptions - council approved additional funds from the Liquor Store to pay the full amount
\$ 300.00			\$ 300.00				240-46500-322 Postage
\$ 1,000.00	\$ 11,177.00	\$ 1,333.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,767.00	\$ 1,000.00	240-46500-384 Refuse/Garbage (County)
					\$ 331,746.00		240-46500-413 Office Equipment Rental
							240-46500-430 Misc
							240-46500-810 Refunds and Reimbursements
\$ 23,520.00	\$ 21,898.00	\$ 20,700.00	\$ 23,820.00	\$ 19,920.00	\$ 362,378.00	\$ 24,120.00	

\$ 23,520.00 \$ 67,642.00 \$ 52,168.00 \$ 23,820.00 \$ 19,920.00 \$ 376,957.00 \$ 24,120.00 Total EDA/Hatchery Row



Battle Lake Economic Development Authority **Ongoing Goals and Priorities**

Goals

1. Foster the relationship with area townships for economic development growth – invite members of Everts and Clitherall Townships to participate in EDA meetings by sending email packets and inviting them to attend meetings. Invite them to the March EDA meeting and provide breakfast either at City Hall or at Shoreline.
2. Continue Business, Retention and Expansion Process
 - Continued communication with Network Battle Lake – work with them on projects as needed.
 - Continued communication with the Lakes Area Community Center Board.
 - Business communication – hold an annual breakfast & and business appreciation meeting each year in February and follow up with a newspaper article detailing the work of the EDA.
 - On-going yearly surveys to businesses.
3. Continued work on a group advertising & marketing campaign.
4. Keep the website up to date with information on the EDA.
5. Assist businesses with staffing needs by working with Otter Tail County's job opening portal.
6. Provide training opportunities for area businesses.
7. Fully utilize all real estate within City limits for residential and commercial expansion.
8. Housing – work on both single-family and multifamily options including new locations to expand housing. Look at public/private partnerships for development.

Ongoing Priorities

1. Keep an inventory of available commercial property on the City's website by including a link to area realtors.
2. Reach out to prospective businesses when members have heard of possible interest in the community.
3. Identify business gaps in the community and seek prospective business owners.
4. Broadband – continue to work with the County on options and reach out to internet suppliers to hear about future projects and priorities.
5. Support the school.
6. Parking – educating the businesses and public on availability – keep a map in the Battle Lake brochure.
7. On-going training for business owners.
8. Continue the working relationship with surrounding communities, employers, and partners - i.e., Tri-City Living, Otter Tail Tourism, Otter Tail County Community Development Agency and Live Wide Open.
9. Continue to meet quarterly with the business/community collaboration and the LACC.

“The mission of the Battle Lake Economic Development Authority is to promote diverse Economic Development and enhance quality of life through the retention and growth of business, industry & services in the Battle Lake area.”

From: Fernando Quijano <fquijano@umn.edu>
Sent: Monday, August 11, 2025 9:28 AM
To: Val Martin <cityclerk@battlelakemn.org>
Subject: Follow up on meeting with Extension

Hello Val!

Thank you for having me as a guest at the August 2025 EDA meeting. It was truly an honor to attend. I thought I should follow up and see if you agree with some of my impressions.

After listening to the perspectives and concerns of board members, I came away with a sense that Community Development, and Community Economics in particular, could certainly help you in guiding your decisions as you navigate this time of change. Here are some thoughts.

Battle Lake is a small, thriving community experiencing fast growth, as reflected by the rapid rise in home valuations and tourism. Growth is great but also comes with its own set of challenges. The main two concerns I heard were the rapid rise in land valuations and the growth of tourism. I have two suggestions for your consideration:

1. A listening session concerning the rapid pace of growth
Community Economics at UMN could partner with the EDA in organizing a listening session around economic resilience during times of fast economic growth, which can bring challenges for long-term residents. For example, rising property values and rental costs could fall on local workers, young families, and seniors. Property owners and investors benefit from tourism, but the jobs are often insufficient to earn a living wage and save for a home.

The listening session could be extended into a more in-depth analysis and data gathering, or be limited to the one-day session format, in which community members gather in small groups to share their experiences and concerns and identify action items to place in the ideas board.

Ideas are collected and assigned to action groups that will tackle the items selected for priority consideration.

2. A consultation with tourism experts in Community Development at UMN to formulate a tourism strategy

Community Development has experts in tourism that can help Battle Lake in planning a strategy that conforms to the parameters of your community.

But of course, these are just two ideas to get you thinking, but please feel free to add to this list any other topics where you see opportunities for collaboration with us.

Once again, it was a delight to have been invited to your group. I look forward to our continued partnership and hopefully I will see you again soon!

Sincerely,

Fernando

Fernando Quijano
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University of Minnesota Extension | extension.umn.edu
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FQuijano@umn.edu | c. 515-480-7155 office 218-236-2437
Change moves at the speed of trust. Stephen Covey



Rural Capacity Program GRANT PROGRAM Round #2

Are you a small city with under 3,000 population? Are you dreaming of growth, development, and a brighter future? The Rural Capacity Program is your opportunity to turn those dreams into reality.

Why Apply? Your city will receive from CEDA, through a special appropriation from the State of Minnesota;

- Up to 135 hours of Technical Assistance, fees covered by a special appropriation from the State of Minnesota, as well as up to \$13,500 in the form of a grant to your city to help implement your program.
- Expert Guidance: CEDA's team of professionals will work hand-in-hand with your city to create a tailored plan that meets your unique needs.
- Proven Success: CEDA has a proven track record of helping small cities like yours thrive and prosper.
- Strong Community Partnerships: CEDA collaborates with local businesses, organizations, and government agencies to maximize the impact of our programs.

CEDA's tailored programs are dedicated to addressing the specific challenges faced by small communities like yours. CEDA will work with your city to develop and implement a tailored program that specifically addresses your city's needs and fits into one of the categories below. We'll give you the tools and resources to implement 1 of the following:

Revolving Loan Funds: Jumpstart your local economy by offering low-interest, gap financing designed to support entrepreneurs looking to start or expand their businesses. Our expert team will guide you through the complex world of creditworthiness, finance and loan administration.

Commercial Exterior Improvement Grants/Loans: Enhance the beauty and vitality of your community by developing grants and loans. Whether it's sprucing up a specific area or beautifying the entire community, we can help you develop a program unique to your city's needs.

Childcare Incentive Programs: Ensure a brighter future for your youngest residents by supporting existing or new childcare providers. The program we've developed assists with licensure fees and continuing education, promoting increased capacity and higher-quality care.

Business Retention and Expansion Program: Building a strong local economy starts with understanding your businesses. Our program facilitates meaningful conversations with local businesses, helping you identify challenges, prioritize solutions, and seize new opportunities for growth.

For samples of potential programs, and eligibility requirements; please see the application by clicking on the QR Code or visiting CEDAUSA.com

Rural cities with limited staff, budget, and economic development experience are encouraged to apply. The purpose of this Minnesota State appropriation is to help the smallest and most rural cities in Minnesota take advantage of development opportunities in their communities! You do not need to have an EDA to apply.

To apply and /or sign up for the webinar: <https://linktr.ee/amy.schaefer>

Visit <https://www.cedausa.com/> | Contact us at 507-867-3164 |

Email us at amy.schaefer@cedausa.com

Deadline for applications is November 26th, 2025





**Tri-City Living Collaboration
Community Meeting, Monday October 27, 2025
Ottertail Community Center
Minutes**

- **Welcome & Introductions – About 25 people in attendance**
- **Historical Overview of Collaboration of the group created in 2015.**
- **Regional Visioning Session**
 - No empty store fronts
 - Housing for everyone that needs it
 - More employment opportunities
 - Profitable winters
 - Transportation between communities
 - Higher paying jobs
 - More trades and opportunities for them to start their own business – work with the schools on opportunities for students.
 - Cultural seamlessness – reframing as one community combined, we are all better off together mindset
 - Increase in population and more year-round residents.
- **Tri-City Project Opportunities, Ideas and Discussion**
 - Discussion on Ottertail's new childcare centers offering opportunities for people to have their daycare business in a location that is not their home. This also should provide less expensive childcare costs. Their plan also includes a community center to provide opportunities for people of all ages.
 - Discussion on the importance of the schools and looking at opportunities to work together. Thinking outside the box.
 - There is a need to help developers/city staff prepare grant applications.
 - Henning discussed their need for a new employer employing 20-plus people after losing a critical business that employed 20 people or more.
 - Consider job shadowing opportunities for high school students such as job shadowing. There are good programs out there that we can check out.
 - Do a shared mailer that lists all the opportunities and events for the three communities.
 - Transitional training – Val said that the Small Business Development Center is a good option and will work with owner's one-on-one.
 - Market what we have and educate the public.
 - Larger collaboration – connect with Otter Tail Lakes Association, West Central Initiative, etc.
- **Action Planning & Next Steps**
 - Need a joint vision.
 - Will need to meet more often.
 - Need to recruit additional members.
 - We need a point-person to gather information and events. Sharon suggested the use of the Lakes Connect website which can add businesses, events and so on.
- **Share One Thought or Idea That Came Out of this Meeting:**

- Importance of Collaboration
- Create five key strategies to work on and develop smaller groups to get these strategies completed
- Promotion
- Look at ourselves as one community.
- Housing for all three communities.
- Work with community education to provide new opportunities.
- Shared ideas and hearing what others had to say
- Excited to be a part of the group – need a little more foundation
- Get the ball rolling and set action plans to create momentum
- I heard a lot of great ideas
- I am energized by the things and ideas happening already
- Passionate about the group and excited about the number of people showing up
- Sharing of ideas and information
- Excited for the next steps
- Good to hear positive ideas

The next steps include setting up another meeting, possibly December, to come up with action plans. Invite others to attend the meeting.

Battle Lake Housing Community Design

October 8, 2025. Zins and Fernando Burgo from UMM, along with staff members Karalee Brandner, Val Martin, and Trevor Meece. Mayor Bullard and Councilmember Quammen were present from the council.

Others present were:

Jamie Cline
 Marjorie Quammen
 Rich Bullard
 Patrick Hollister
 Reba Gilliland
 Kurt Mortenson
 Sharon Casey
 Doug Stave
 Jamie Cline
 Craig Haukebo
 Trevor Meece
 Val Martin
 Karalee Brandner
 Tracy Anderson

Members absent: John Krenz, Rezin Everts, John Everts, Scott Gravning, Tim Carlson, Steve Young, Kristi Kuder and Melissa Hoffman.

Open House Planning and Promotion

The meeting focused on planning an open house event scheduled for December 20th. Fernando outlined the agenda, which includes discussions on promotion, marketing, focus group recruitment, and refining the event agenda. The group was divided into three smaller groups to work on these topics. Fernando emphasized the importance of recruiting participants for focus groups to be conducted in November, aiming for four sessions with 4-5 participants each. The team also discussed rebranding the event to avoid potential confusion with the term "open house" and considered alternative names like "housing dialogue" or "community visioning."

Battle Lake Housing Crisis Solution

The group discussed the housing crisis in Battle Lake, where 25% of homes are owned by seasonal residents, making it difficult for teachers, church leaders, and families to find affordable housing. They explored the need to develop a compelling narrative around this issue, suggesting a three-part story arc: first acknowledging the problem, then seeking community input on solutions, and finally presenting potential prototypes and innovations. The discussion highlighted both challenges, such as rising property prices and vacation homes, and opportunities, including available housing inventory, a strong main street, and natural amenities, while emphasizing the importance of framing the community's efforts as innovative and forward-thinking.

Group Discussion on Survey Content

There participants were organized into three groups for a collaborative discussion, assigning them to different stations with the aim of developing answers and responses to questions over a 30-minute period. Fernando emphasized that the focus was on contributing ideas and not achieving perfection, and participants were encouraged to self-organize into their respective groups. The groups were assigned specific topics, including focus group recruitment, promotion and marketing, and agenda/logistics.

Battle Lake Event Promotion Strategy

The group discussed strategies for promoting the upcoming event in Battle Lake, focusing on various communication channels including newspapers, Facebook, city websites, family associations, and a Partnership for Health newsletter. They decided to create digital flyers and potentially use a local school's marketing class to assist with design, while also exploring options like church bulletins, radio shows, and the city YouTube channel. The team agreed to hold the event without RSVPs and considered two waves of

promotion, targeting November 20th and December 2nd, along with a “save the date” promotion November 6th & 7th, though the exact capacity and logistics remain undecided.

Battle Lake Community Innovation Event

The team discussed plans for an event titled "Innovating the Future of Battle Lake" featuring interactive stations and personal stories from community members, including home buyers, single parents, and seniors. They explored potential timing options for the event, considering school activities and parent pickup schedules, with suggestions ranging from 5:30 PM to 6:00 PM on Wednesdays. It was agreed to capture these timing details in the notes and mentioned the need to inform the focus group recruitment team.

Battle Lake Focus Group Recruitment

The team discussed developing focus groups for different demographics in Battle Lake, including new residents, permanent residents considering moves, workers who don't live in the area, and renters. They agreed to work on creating questionnaires for these groups, with Fernando offering to provide standardized templates for the team to refine. The group also planned to develop a name and tagline for the event by November 5th, with a goal of distributing promotional materials by November 20th.

The group discussed the possibility of creating t-shirts as part of the branding effort and agreed to refine the event details and promotional materials in their next meeting.

The team discussed refining focus group questions and branding strategy for a housing initiative and emphasizing the need to balance specific housing discussions with broader community amenities and lifestyle considerations. They agreed to explore messaging and to develop visual materials showing potential community designs, including examples from other similar towns. Fernando committed to providing framework questions for both housing and non-housing aspects, while the team will continue developing branding and digital work with student assistance. They also discussed potentially using John Kranz's 3-acre property as a case study for future development considerations.

The team discussed key dates and planning for upcoming events, including a focus group session tentatively scheduled for the week of November 17th, with final decisions on dates to be confirmed. They agreed to workshop language and branding on November 5th, with the first wave of save-the-date announcements to follow within a few days, targeting early November. The team also discussed the need for an action team meeting, potentially in the week of October 27th.

Share your experience of being a resident in Battle Lake

You are invited to be in a focus group discussion about living in your community and considering its amenities and housing challenges.



We plan to use the results to help community leaders with the housing visioning in Battle Lake. The focus group will last from 60 to 90 minutes.

Date: **Wednesday, November 19th**

Time: **5:30 to 9pm (Specific time frame TBD)**

Location: **Battle lake City Office: 108 Main St. E, Battle Lake, MN 56515**

WE ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THE FOLLOWING GROUPS OF RESIDENTS:

- NEW (5 YEARS OR LESS)
- RENTERS
- WORK BUT NOT LIVE IN BATTLE LAKE
- PERMANENT

***** LIGHT REFRESHMENTS AND SNACKS WILL BE PROVIDED ****.

Contact Val Martin City of Battle Lake. Clerk/Treasurer/EDA Director. 218-864-0424 or cityclerk@battlelakemn.org