

LEADERSHIP, PLANNING, FOCUS

20th Annual Community Economic Development Conference

April 9-10, 2008

EIGHT STEPS TO OUR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

RENO COUNTY 2020 GROWTH COALITION, INC.

RENO COUNTY BACKGROUND INFORMATION

STEP ONE – IDENTIFY A COMMON PROBLEM(S) (18-24 months)

Reno County and Western Kansas...declining population
2003 – 77 Counties lost population in Kansas...55 were west of US 81
Impact on Retail, Medical, Retirement, and our Workforce
Groups not working together (little focus on community development)

STEP TWO – INITIAL ORGANIZATION

A few leaders
A core of stakeholders representing all viewpoints

STEP THREE – OPEN MINDS

Collaboration, not just limited coordination
No Agendas
No preconceived ideas
“Don’t care about credit, care about results”

STEP FOUR - MIX OF LOCAL KNOWLEDGE/WISDOM with OUTSIDE EXPERTISE

Chamber + Quest Center + HCC + Community Foundation + Hutch Hospital + Rural
+ Manufacturing + Agricultural Interests

AND

Dr. Crider, Genna Hurd, and the Staff of Policy Research Institute (KU/KSU)
Gould, Evans, Goodman & Associates (Kansas City)

**THE IDEA IS THAT OUTSIDE EXPERTISE CAN BRING ALL VIEWPOINTS TO
THE TABLE TO SEEK COMMON GROUND AND ACCEPTABLE SOLUTIONS**

STEP FIVE – BROAD INCLUSION

Elected officials were in from the start
Frequent, well-publicized events...open to the public
Four one-day CLUSTER meetings
Corridor Development (led to formation of K96 Corridor Association)
Tourism (ongoing meetings with a goal of increasing Reno County tourism
from 1,500,000 visitors per year to 3,000,000 per year by 2020)
Agriculture and Food Processing in Reno County (limited impact)
Health Care and Retirement Care (limited impact)
Blueprint for Growth
2000- participants (survey, interviews, area meetings)
Over 30 partners (Municipalities, School Boards, Chambers, Quest Center)

STEP SIX – ORGANIZATION

DR. CRIDER (To be successful, we must have: STRUCTURE, STAFF, FUNDING)

Structure – 20 member board meets monthly

Staff – Growth Coordinator, County Planner, #2 at Quest Center

Funding – Reno County, Hutchinson, + smaller municipalities = \$75,000 budget

STEP SEVEN – EARLY WINS

K-96 Corridor Association

Tourism Task Force

Mayors Task Force

Affordable Housing for Rural Communities

FEMA assistance after 2006 ice storm

Reno County Wind Workshop (this has led to the formation of the

Reno County Wind Energy Task Force...a very active group with 50

Teen Summer Job Initiative – placing 14-18 year old Reno County teens in summer jobs

STEP EIGHT – IT TAKES TIME (and patience)

Ocean liner – Course

Careful about goals – 80,000 Goal vs Settling for an uptrend in Reno County population

IF YOU WOULD LIKE GUIDANCE IN STARTING A SIMILAR PROGRAM IN YOUR CITY, COUNTY, OR REGION, I AM AVAILABLE FOR CONSULTING:

Jim Davis, Past Chair

Reno County 2020 Growth Coalition, Inc.

111 East 30th

Hutchinson, KS 67502

620.662.7577 (wk)

jim@re4r.com