

**County Congress**  
**Follow up to Regional Economic Development Workshop**  
**October , 2007**

**Resources/Notes from**  
**Building Regional Economic**  
**Development workshop**  
**on September 20, 2007**

**Keynote**

Dr Jack Geller keynoted the day by outlining 5 steps in strengthening rural Minnesota.

1. **Enhance the investment strategy in rural places.** Invest in infrastructure as well as individuals.
2. **Make mistake-proof investments in people and infrastructure.** Utilize the “knowledge workers”. Encourage civic engagement and leaders. Attract youth by creating a vibrant place to live. Infrastructure is the foundation upon which economic development grows.
3. **Target sectors where the capital-to-labor ratio is lower.** Invest in employer expansions to create more jobs. Invest in high labor fields such as health care.
4. **Focus on regional economic development and local community development.** The economy doesn't function within geo-jurisdictional boundaries. Workers often live in one town and work in another. People live where the quality of life meets their expectations.
5. **Make you community ready for the “new rural economy”.** Many “knowledge workers” can and do work from home. Is the infrastructure and community support in lace to encourage development and growth of micro-businesses?



**Resources**

**SEED** Strategic Entrepreneurial Economic Development  
Technical support, investment and loans, public infrastructure programs

**Regional Job Fair**

**Community Economics Programs - U of M Extension**

Helping Communities Thrive

**Wired (Talent Driving Prosperity)**

**Minnesota's Ag Innovation Triangle Initiative**

Executive Team partners; Executive Leadership Board; Action Teams

**Academic & Corporate Relations Center – U of M**

Gold PASS (student/intern posting system)

**Riverbend Center for Entrepreneurial Facilitation**

Technical and professional assistance

**Creating a Value-Added Community (CVAC)**

community-based training to help communities

develop strategies for poverty reduction, while planning for ec development..

build capacity and fuel their economic engines toward a vibrant local economy.



**Bridging Brown County**

The Brown County Congress is sponsored by Bridging Brown County. This event provides an opportunity for key community leaders to come together, build partnerships and communicate with decision-makers. For more information about our organization and programs, please visit our web site, [www.bridgingbrowncounty.org](http://www.bridgingbrowncounty.org).

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**Actions Ideas**

- ✓ Breakdown/address political barriers
  - Meet-n-Eat
  - develop social capital
  - regional economic development meetings
- ✓ identify regional “low hanging fruit”
  - tourism
  - farm to market food
  - in/output analysis
- ✓ Convene shared marketing effort
  - Region 9
  - SMIF
- ✓ Identify e-commerce criteria and address
  - “industrial park” minimums
  - Labor skill requirements
- ✓ e-forum
  - incubator
  - mentors
  - \$ angels
  - Accounting/patents
  - Making the next step/expansion
  - Avoiding burn out
- ✓ Expand Brown County Economic Partners
  - Advertise loan program
  - Advertise technical assistance
  - Convene regional meetings
  - Explore “co-op” or other structure
  - Emphasis working together/pooling resources
  - Joint marketing/training
- ✓ Require leaders/decision makers attend Network Brown County &/or Network New Ulm
- ✓ Economic Conference
  - Include community members, leaders, civic groups, education leaders
- ✓ Business/Company sharing training
  - strategic planning resources
  - customer service
- ✓ Keep culture, entertainment, quality education, shopping variety
- ✓ Educate on
  - Changing economic realities
  - Changing definitions of community
  - Farm to agri business
  - Downtown to home based businesses
- ✓ Regional Job Fair
- ✓ Use BBC as clearing house for resources/information
- ✓ Focus on entrepreneur resources
- ✓ Collect/share regional data



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