VISION PLAN
WATERTOWN, SOUTH DAKOTA

Submitted by Market Street Services Inc.
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INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the residents of Watertown, South Dakota have initiated multiple community visioning processes. These strategic planning processes have led to many success stories throughout the community. The desire to remain proactive, forward-thinking, and progressive in its approach to community improvement has resulted in a new strategic planning process to establish a vision for Watertown’s preferred future in 2020, accompanied by the objectives and action steps necessary to achieve that vision. As the City of Watertown and the rest of the nation emerge from the Great Recession, the time is ripe for such a process – one that will build on past successes, identify new opportunities, and unite the community behind a consensus blueprint to achieve its residents’ vision. This collaborative, community-driven process is being facilitated by the H2O-20 Steering Committee, a diverse group of leaders committed to realizing a more prosperous future for Watertown’s residents and businesses. However, it has been the tremendous participation of Watertown’s residents in this process that has resulted in a well-informed Vision Plan reflecting the type of community that Watertown’s residents and businesses want to call “home.” More than 2,200 residents – over ten percent of the population – have provided input through interviews, focus groups, and surveys regarding their vision of a preferred future for Watertown.

Beginning in May, 2012, the H2O-20 Steering Committee began work with Market Street Services, an Atlanta-based community, economic, and workforce development consulting firm, on a comprehensive process to solicit resident input; evaluate the community’s strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities; define the community’s vision for a preferred future; and develop guidelines for effectively implementing the actions necessary to achieve this vision.
Community Input

The community input process collected feedback from residents and businesses located in and around Watertown regarding the community’s key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges via a series of interviews, focus groups, and an online survey. Each component of the input phase has helped identify the community’s consensus vision for its future. As discussed in greater detail in subsequent sections, more than 2,200 residents of Watertown participated in the community input process.

Community Assessment

The qualitative feedback gathered in the community input phase was married with a quantitative analysis of Watertown and Codington County’s current competitive position in the Community Assessment. The community’s performance in a variety of demographic, socioeconomic, economic, and quality of life indicators was compared to three communities that Watertown and its larger labor shed compete with for jobs and workers. The findings of this assessment heavily inform the recommendations contained within the Vision Plan. A concise summary of the key findings form the Community Assessment is included in the following section as a preface to the Vision Plan.

H20-20 Vision Plan

This Vision Plan represent the culmination of the three-month research and resident input phases, and serves as a blueprint that unifies Watertown’s various organizations supporting community, economic, and workforce development behind a consensus vision for the future. The Vision Plan include goals and objectives that address community challenges and help bring opportunities to fruition, and is guided by a vision statement that accurately reflects resident and business input regarding the community’s preferred future. A variety of potential action steps to support these objectives has been provided, reflecting guidance from the Steering Committee, the Market Street Services project team, and the ideas of residents shared throughout the community input process. Best practices from communities around the country are cited when relevant and appropriate to provide examples of effective programs, projects, and partnerships have proven successful elsewhere. The potential action steps included within this Vision Plan will be further refined and developed by the Steering Committee and its key partners in implementing the Vision Plan in the months and years that follow the conclusion of the visioning process.

Implementation Guidelines

Following completion of the Vision Plan, the Market Street Services project team will work with the Steering Committee to develop Implementation Guidelines that will serve as a framework for more detailed development of action items by relevant implementation partners. The Implementation Guidelines will help prioritize objectives; identify appropriate partners to lead and support implementation; and define performance metrics to gauge implementation success.
STEERING COMMITTEE

The following individuals have served on the H20-20 Steering Committee, providing critical guidance throughout the visioning process. This diverse group of committed residents representing the public, private, and nonprofit sectors has helped solicit input from more than 2,200 Watertown residents, reviewed key research findings, helped define the community’s vision based on tremendous levels of residents input, and helped define the community’s strategic priorities based on its residents' vision for a preferred future. These individuals have committed to working on behalf of the entire community to help build consensus and strengthen partnerships, support effective and timely implementation of the Vision Plan’s various recommendations, and serve as advocates for the continued betterment of Watertown as a place to live, work, visit, and do business.

Rod and Michelle Arnold (co-leaders) Media Ventures Group
Ryan and Lisa Boschee (co-leaders) Great Western Bank; Watertown School District
Craig Atkins Watertown Development Company
Amy Batta Peschl & Associates
Lorie Blackwell Premier Bank Card
Joe Caywood Terex Utilities
Dale Christensen Watertown Community Foundation
Jan DeBerg Watertown Community Foundation
Greg Endres Willow Creek Farms
Bob Faehn KXLG Radio
Megan Gruman Watertown Chamber of Commerce
Lesli Jutting Watertown School District
Adam Karst Municipal Utilities
Todd Kays First District Association of Local Governments
Alex Kindopp Student
Kyle Lalim Haugan-Nelson Realty
Lee McPeek City of Watertown, Police Department
Steve Lehner Municipal Utilities
Kris Munger Prairie Lakes Healthcare System
Robb Peterson Minnesota Rubber
Sam Quinn Codington Clark Equipment
Julie Ranum Redlin Arts Center
Don Roby R&R Investments, LLC
Mark Schroeder City of Watertown, Watertown Regional Airport
Jan Schull Watertown School District
LuAnn Strait Lake Area Technical Institute
Jo Vitek City of Watertown, Police Department
Tricia Walker Watertown School District; Watertown Education Association
Mayor Gary Williams City of Watertown
COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT: KEY FINDINGS

The Community Assessment examined Watertown and Codington County’s performance in a variety of demographic, economic, socioeconomic, and quality of life indicators to help reveal the key strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities facing the community as it seeks to define its vision for 2020. Watertown and Codington County’s competitiveness was benchmarked against three other counties with similar attributes that the community may compete with for jobs and workers: Brown County, South Dakota (Aberdeen); Douglas County, Minnesota (Alexandria); and Effingham County, Illinois (Effingham). Performance was also compared to state and national averages to provide a larger context for Watertown’s competitiveness as a place to live, work, visit, and do business. This section provides a brief overview of the key findings from the Community Assessment, including both quantitative research and qualitative input from focus groups and the community survey. The findings are grouped into key themes that emerged during the research phase – themes that frame the primary issues facing the community as it emerges from the Great Recession and establishes a new vision for its future.

HOW IS WATERTOWN GROWING AND CHANGING?

- Watertown’s rate of population growth has slowed during the most recent decade, increasing only 5.7 percent between 2000 and 2010, down from 13.9 percent between 1990 and 2000. The slowing rate of population growth is largely attributed to net out-migration. Between 1990 and 1997, more new residents moved to Codington County each year than the number of existing residents who moved elsewhere (a trend referred to as net in-migration). However, this trend has reversed since 1998, with more residents moving outside of the county than the number of new residents moving into the county. With such a tight labor market characterized by low unemployment, this is a concerning trend for the community as it seeks to attract and retain workers, especially young workers, that can fill vacant positions and assume more senior roles as the Baby Boom generation approaches retirement.

- Watertown is gradually becoming more racially and ethnically diverse, but is not diversifying as rapidly as the average community nationwide. As of 2010, minorities represented just 5.4 percent of Codington’s population, as compared to 15.3 percent across the state of South Dakota. Minorities represented roughly 39 percent of all population growth between 2000 and 2010 in Codington County, as compared to 58 percent and 92 percent of state and national population growth, respectively. And while residents expressed that they would like for Watertown to be a welcoming community to diverse new residents, minority respondents to the community survey evaluated the community’s openness and welcomeness lower than their white counterparts.

THE SUSTAINABILITY OF WATERTOWN’S WORKFORCE

- Nationwide, 26.6 percent of the population is aged 25-44 (those workers moving into more experienced positions as the Baby Boom generation retires), just slightly larger than the 26.4 percent aged 45-64 (those at or approaching retirement age in the coming decade). However, Codington County’s population aged 25-44 (24.3 percent) – the age group that will be replacing impending retirees – is smaller than the 45-64 year-old impending retiree population (26.5 percent). Absent a reversal of recent net out-migration trends, Watertown’s workforce could shrink in the years and decades to come as Baby Boomers exit the workforce. This represents a tremendous threat to the
sustainability of the community’s workforce and its competitiveness for new employers considering Watertown as a prospective location. Considering that unemployment in Watertown is historically (and currently) extremely low relative to the average American community, this gap signifies that an even greater shortage of workers may prevail in the years and decades to come.

Without question, the community must increase its attractiveness to younger workers if it wishes to develop a more prosperous, diverse, and growing economy. Retaining high school and LATI graduates while also attracting four year degree holders back to Watertown is crucial to maintain a sustainable workforce for local employers. The majority of survey respondents indicated that Watertown was an attractive place for high school graduates with no interest in higher education but the majority of respondents also indicated that Watertown was not an attractive community to young workers that currently reside outside of South Dakota, and to a lesser degree, those with a college degree. In a world in which companies are increasingly following workers rather than vice versa, increasing the community’s appeal to younger workers is critical to its economic future.

The retention of high school graduates and LATI and Mount Marty graduates, as well as the attraction of former residents that left Watertown to pursue higher education elsewhere are critical to the community’s future workforce sustainability. When LATI and Mount Marty students were asked on the community survey to explain why they intended to either stay in Watertown after graduation or leave the community, the most common reasons for leaving the community were the pursuit of higher-paying employment opportunities and more diverse social and entertainment outlets, while the most common reasons for staying in Watertown were family, friends, and existing jobs.

While talent retention and attraction is critical to maintain and enhancing the size of Watertown’s workforce and in turn, its economy as a whole, the quality of that workforce in the eyes of prospective new employers is most commonly examined under the lens of education attainment. As a whole, Watertown’s adult residents have exhibited tremendous improvement in educational attainment levels over the course of the last decade, a quality that has and will continue to make Watertown increasingly attractive to diverse business sectors such as professional and technical services that require advanced degrees. Between 2000 and 2010, Watertown enjoyed a 5.2 percentage point increase in its percentage of the adult population (aged 25 years or older) with a bachelor’s degree or higher, outpacing state and national rates of improvement. While the region has a relatively small percentage of its adult population without a high school diploma (9.0 percent as compared to 10.3 percent statewide), it also has a relatively small percentage with an associate’s degree. This is somewhat surprising given the immense capacity at LATI but may signify that regional employers, particularly manufacturers, are more heavily reliant on on-the-job training as opposed to specific degree programs.

**BUILDING A HOMEGROWN TALENT PIPELINE**

Watertown’s public education system is an immense asset to the community. During focus group sessions, the community’s K-12 school system was frequently mentioned among the community’s greatest strengths, counter to resident input in most communities nationwide where school systems and student outcomes frequently rise to the top of the community’s challenges. Community survey results echoed these sentiments, with all aspects of K-12 education (from teacher quality to parental involvement to the use of technology) receiving ratings well above average. Dropout rates are exceptionally low as compared to the average school district nationwide and student outcomes as measured by average ACT scores are on par with the Aberdeen School District located within in-state competitor Brown County. The presence of the career-focused Lake Area Multi-District is also a great advantage for the community’s residents and employers.
Post-secondary education is also a tremendous asset to Watertown as the community is fortunate to be home to both LATI and Mount Marty College. LATI was recently recognized by the Aspen Institute as one of the nation’s top five community and technical colleges in 2011 for many reasons, from the quality and diversity of its programs to its first-year retention and three-year graduation rates to the percentage of students receiving degrees and certificates. LATI is a national leader in higher education; its social, educational, and economic impact on the community cannot be overstated.

THE RESILIENCY OF WATERTOWN’S LOCAL ECONOMY

Watertown’s local economy has proven relatively resilient during the Great Recession and many previous downturns. Although the community experienced a rapid and sharp increase in unemployment at the onset of the national recession, employers responded quickly to changes in the business cycle and the flexibility of the community’s manufacturers helped ensure that the Watertown – like many other communities in South Dakota – recovered quickly while the rest of the nation continues to endure a sluggish recovery. At the same time, business bankruptcy rates and home values showed remarkable stability during the recessionary and post-recession recovery periods. All things considered, the Great Recession was relatively short lived in the local economy and many vulnerable, smaller businesses were able to weather the recession relatively well as compared to the average community nationwide.

THE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF WATERTOWN’S FAMILIES

While Watertown’s business community endured the recession fairly well, trends in poverty and personal bankruptcy rates indicate that some families in Watertown were more adversely impacted. While the overall poverty rate in Codington County rose slower than the average increase across the state from 2000-2010 (3.0 vs. 3.3 percent), child poverty rates increased more rapidly in Codington County during the same time period when compared to the state (5.0 percent vs. 4.3 percent). This indicated that the average household in Watertown and Codington County moving into poverty over the course of the last decade was more likely to have children (or multiple children) than the average household moving into poverty across the state. This has significant implications for the social well-being of Watertown’s next generation of residents and workers, while also impacting social and educational programs.

Focus group participants frequently identified lower wage rates relative to the surrounding communities as a barrier to attracting young talent. This apprehension was, in some cases, verified by data covering average wages in Codington County. While manufacturing wages in Codington County are on par with, and actually slightly above, the statewide average, wages in professional services sectors (such as finance and insurance, information, accounting, legal services, and others) paid well below the state and national averages. Although manufacturing wages in Codington County are competitive with other communities around the state, and in some cases, quite a bit higher, the average annual manufacturing wage in the county ($42,012) was well below the national average ($58,676) in the third quarter of 2011. While this bodes well for the community’s ability to attract new manufacturers seeking advantageous labor costs, comparatively low average wages may serve as a deterrent for attracting and retaining the workforce necessary to fill existing and potential new vacancies. Resident input supported this assertion, with many individuals indicating that friends and family members had moved in search of higher-wage employment opportunities.
THE CHANGING STRUCTURE OF WATERTOWN’S ECONOMY

- Watertown and Codington County possess strong manufacturing economies; more than one in five jobs (20.7 percent) in the county was in manufacturing in 2003. Since that time, the sector has added 50 jobs, growing by 1.6 percent from 2003 to 2011 during a time when manufacturing has continued to decline nationwide (-17.9 percent). As a result, Watertown and Codington County have become increasingly specialized in manufacturing relative to the average American community.

- In addition to manufacturing, the wholesale trade (distributors) and administrative services (call centers, collection agencies, etc.) grew substantially from 2003 – 2011 during a time when both sectors were relatively stagnant nationwide. With more than 350 new jobs in these two sectors, combined with nearly 100 new jobs in professional and technical services (such as accounting, legal services, marketing and advertising, etc.) and strong growth in health care services over the course of the eight-year period, Watertown and Codington County are clearly diversifying, illustrating that the community can compete for new jobs in sectors outside its traditional manufacturing base.

- Watertown’s location along Interstate 29, roughly 50 miles from the next nearest major market (Brookings), has helped the community establish itself as a small but not insignificant magnet for retail expenditures from residents in surrounding, more rural areas. More than 16 percent of the county’s employment is in retail trade, as compared to less than 12 percent of the average community nationwide. While the community attracts retail expenditures from surrounding areas for basic goods such as everyday necessities and groceries, more than 75 percent of all survey respondents indicated that they leave Watertown for higher-end, specialty retail.

QUALITY OF LIFE IN WATERTOWN

- Survey respondents and focus group participants overwhelming voiced their high sense of personal safety in Watertown. Over 73 percent of residents responding to the community survey stated that they had a good or excellent sense of personal and property safety in Watertown. However, slightly higher crime rates as compared to the community’s competitors could become a concern and may erode some of the community’s sense of safety if left unabated.

- Survey respondents evaluated a variety of quality of life attributes highly, including personal safety, environmental quality, commute times, and health care capacity and quality. However, the majority of residents provided unfavorable evaluations of the community’s shopping opportunities, dining opportunities, entertainment and recreation amenities, and airline service. As previously mentioned, residents frequently mentioned the relative lack of diversity in retail offerings as one the community’s greatest weaknesses, while residents across the age spectrum called for greater development of entertainment options, recreational facilities, and community events to increase the livability and likeability of Watertown. Input participants also frequently mentioned a desire to see a more vibrant Uptown and a more aesthetically-appealing community, particularly emphasizing beautification along its key corridors and gateways.

- Residents frequently mentioned the community’s lakes – particularly Lake Kaneska – as among its greatest assets. However, they emphasized that it is also its most underutilized asset. Input participants have called for a cleaner lake with greater access and more recreational options for both residents and visitors.
ESTABLISHING WATERTOWN’S VISION

As previously mentioned, more than 2,200 residents participated in the community input phase, providing input through a series of interviews, focus groups, and an online survey. In each phase of the community input process, residents were asked to help establish a vision for Watertown in 2020. This section will briefly review the input received from residents with regards to their vision of a preferred future.

FOCUS GROUPS: VISIONING EXERCISE

More than 100 residents and business leaders participated in a series of focus groups conducted on July 10th and 11th, 2012. Focus groups were conducted with small business owners; large employers; young professionals; K-12 administrators and teachers; high school students and LATI students; LATI administrators and instructors; human resource managers; elected officials; farmers and representatives of the agricultural community; representatives from the travel, tourism, and hospitality sectors; and members of the health care community. Most focus groups concluded their sessions by completing a visioning exercise in which each focus group was divided into smaller subgroups of three to five individuals. Each subgroup was tasked with developing a list of roughly ten words or phrases that they hope will define Watertown in 2020. They were then tasked with developing a concise vision statement for the community based on those key words and phrases. Over the course of two days, 38 subgroups within the various focus groups completed this exercise. The following graphic displays the words that were frequently cited during these exercises with the most frequently mentioned words appearing larger.
These words and phrases were then incorporated into a **vision statement** by each subgroup. The following vision statements are just a few examples of those submitted during the various focus groups:

“In 2020, we see Watertown developing the community and more job opportunities but maintaining the small town atmosphere. Watertown needs to make a good impression appearance-wise coming into town while maintaining and creating more opportunities for recreation and entertainment.”

“Watertown strives to be a vibrant, growing community where people can find fulfillment through living, working, and playing.”

“Welcome to Watertown, where prosperity, development, and quality of life are endless.”

“Our community will be more initially attractive to tourists and future residents by creating cleaner neighborhoods with affordable living as well as more living and career opportunities.”

“Our community will strive to be affordable, attractive, and clean. To have family-friendly entertainment and a variety of job opportunities is necessary to continue the growth of the town. Watertown will have the privileges of a big city, but the unity and safety of a small town.”

“Watertown is working towards a stronger future as ‘the place to be.’ Partnerships between local government, businesses, and educational institutions will develop the social, physical, and cultural infrastructure necessary for the entire community to thrive.”

“Watertown welcomes you to a progressive, attractive, and safe community that encourages you to prosper, grow, and thrive in a fun, opportunity-filled, contemporary setting.”

“Build pride in our community by supporting a progressive family-friendly image as well as a safe community with diverse entertainment and business opportunities.”

**STEERING COMMITTEE: VISIONING EXERCISE**

The H20-20 Steering Committee participated in a similar visioning exercise as focus group participants, breaking out into subgroups and then working within their breakout groups to identify the key words and phrases that they would like to see define the community in 2020. These words and phrases were then incorporated into concise vision statements. Steering Committee members conducted this exercise after they were presented with the results of the Community Assessment. As a result, the Steering Committee members had additional background from *Market Street Services*’ objective analysis of the community’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges.
The following graphic displays those themes mentioned more than once during the Steering Committee’s visioning exercise. The frequency that certain themes were mentioned is included in parentheses.

progressive, innovative, and forward-thinking (4)
prosperous and economically diverse (3)
variety of social, cultural, and entertainment options (3)
friendly and welcoming (3)
               safe (3)
community pride (2)
family-oriented (2)
high-quality education system (2)
vibrant and clean lakes (2)

The following vision statements were among those submitted by the Steering Committee’s subgroups:

“Watertown is a progressive family-oriented destination that provides a safe, welcoming environment with a strong sense of pride in our community.”

“Watertown strives to be a vibrant and growing community where people can find fulfillment through living, working, and playing.”

“Watertown is a socially and economically diverse community that provides a welcoming and safe environment for individuals as well as families. It is a progressive place that offers opportunity for prosperity.”

COMMUNITY SURVEY: VISIONING QUESTIONS

From July to August, 2012, a total of 2,219 residents responded to an online survey that gathered residents input on a wide variety of community attributes, from public education to the economy to quality of life. The tremendous response rate from Watertown’s residents – more than 10 percent of total population – shattered Market Street Services’ records for response by a community (as measured by percentage of population) to an online survey. At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were asked a few general questions regarding the community’s key strengths and weaknesses, while also soliciting input on what residents would like to see differently – if anything – about Watertown in 2020. Respondents were also given the opportunity to submit a “phrase, quote, or slogan” that could help define Watertown’s vision statement. The following graphics illustrate which words were most commonly cited in responses to these questions, with the most frequently mentioned words appearing larger.
What is Watertown’s greatest strength?

What is Watertown’s greatest challenge to overcome?
If you were to leave the region and not return until 2020, what would you want to see differently about Watertown - if anything - when you return?

Imagine that you were asked to develop a “vision statement” describing an ideal Watertown in 2020. Please share with us a phrase, quote, or slogan that might appropriately describe Watertown's vision for 2020?
Out of the 2,219 responses to the online survey, 615 individuals chose to provide a “phrase, quote, or slogan” to describe Watertown’s vision for 2020. The following vision statements are a sample of those submitted by residents responding to the online survey:

“Watertown is a friendly, safe, mid-size community with employment opportunities for all levels of skills and education. The community offers an exemplary educational system for families as well as diverse recreational, cultural, and social possibilities for all generations. Natural resources abound with our local and regional lake access and outdoor activities.”

“Watertown is a prosperous community that has developed its underused assets, exploited its tourism opportunities, and become a state leader in professional job opportunities.”

“Ask not what your city can do for you, but what you can for your city.”

“A progressive, family-friendly community that offers plentiful job and entertainment opportunities for everyone.”

“By 2020, Watertown, South Dakota will offer great shopping, competitive air travel, and have more white-collar jobs for young professionals.”

“To be a city of diversity and acceptance where there are ample opportunities for success and a high quality education for our youth.”

“A place to live, have fun, grow, dream and live happily ever after.”

“Watertown is a community where diversity is encouraged and celebrated by offering opportunities for every interest including cultural, arts, and sciences.”

“A happy, friendly, progressive community filled with strong values and a deep commitment to family and success.”

“A friendly place to live with lots of job opportunities and clean neighborhoods.”

“Watertown is the best mid-sized community in South Dakota for its support of entrepreneurs; for its parks, greenway space, and recreational spaces; for its social offerings, including the arts; and for the strong sense of community that its residents feel towards each other.”

“Watertown, an ever-diverse town, works to maintain the values of a small town while meeting the needs of its residents by providing choice.”

“Watertown is a progressive, innovative, and can-do community that provides outstanding start-to-finish educational opportunities, a strong business climate, exceptional healthcare, and quality of life opportunities for all ages.”

“A community where everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, play, and prosper.”

“A community where everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, play, and prosper.”
VISION PLAN

While each and every resident has their own unique vision of Watertown in 2020, the visioning exercises conducted with focus group participants, the H2O-20 Steering Committee, and the thousands of residents that responded to the community survey reveal that there is a great deal of consensus within the community about the community’s desired attributes. The tremendous amount of community input has demonstrated that residents value high-quality public education in Watertown; enjoy living in a safe community; desire more aesthetically-appealing neighborhoods and business corridors; seek greater diversity in retail, dining, and entertainment options; understand that the community must be attractive to younger generations to support its future growth; support the expansion of diverse and high-wage employment opportunities; and want to maintain a quality of life that is attractive to families and retirees. The Vision Plan that follows is guided by a single vision statement that acknowledges the aforementioned attributes desired by residents and seeks to define a community in 2020 that residents and businesses will be proud to call “home.” The vision statement that is presented below can serve as a unifying principle to guide collaborative community improvement in the years ahead, respecting that thousands of Watertown residents have taken the time to share their opinions and help build a better Watertown.

“Watertown is a progressive community with collaborative leadership, characterized by our commitment to public education, diversity of employment opportunities, safe and attractive neighborhoods and business districts, and vibrant cultural and recreational amenities. Our dedication to developing and maintaining these attributes will ensure that our community is welcoming, family-friendly, and appealing to all ages for many generations to come.”

The Vision Plan that follows is designed to provide local leaders in the public, private, and non-profit sectors with the guidance that is necessary to help the community achieve its vision for the future. The structure of the Vision Plan is derived from the vision statement itself, with five key phrases describing desired community attributes serving as the goal areas of this Vision Plan. Objectives and lists of potential action steps are provided for each of these five goal areas. Best practice programs from around the country are referenced when relevant to a potential action step, with descriptions of best practices included in an appendix. The five key phrases that define the Vision Plan’s goal areas are emphasized below:

“Watertown is a progressive community with collaborative leadership, characterized by our commitment to public education, diversity of employment opportunities, safe and attractive neighborhoods and business districts, and vibrant cultural and recreational amenities. Our dedication to developing and maintaining these attributes will ensure that our community is welcoming, family-friendly, and appealing to all ages for many generations to come.”
...commitment to public education...

There are many features that define Watertown in 2012; among them is a tremendous public education system, from elementary to post-secondary education. Maintaining and enhancing this feature is vital to Watertown’s success as a place to raise a family, but equally as important, as a place to do business. Residents evaluated the community’s public education system highly and the system shows admirable results in terms of student outcomes, from low dropout rates to ACT scores that exceed the national and state averages. In addition, the region is fortunate to have a strong continuum of career and technical education, from the Lake Area Multi-District to Lake Area Technical Institute (LATI). And while the community is certainly proud of these assets, there is always room for progress and residents want to make sure that education remains a top community priority. Furthermore, community input revealed that education is in many ways the tie that binds the community; many residents indicated that a second high school would divide the community in a detrimental way.

POTENTIAL COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES:

- Achieve a 100% Graduation rate from the Watertown School District.
- Prepare all graduates not pursuing higher education for local employment opportunities.
- Provide opportunities for parents to become more actively engaged in their child’s educational endeavors.
- Maintain prestige as a national leader in the delivery of quality career and technical education at Lake Area Technical Institute.
- Adequately prepare students for careers in emerging sectors.
- Increase adult educational attainment levels at a rate that exceeds the statewide and national rate of improvement.
POTENTIAL STRATEGIC ACTIONS

The following potential strategic actions represent those initiatives that the H20-20 Steering Committee has endorsed as necessary and supportive of the aforementioned objectives and Watertown’s vision of demonstrating a “commitment to public education.” In some cases, recommended actions have come directly from resident and Steering Committee input.

Develop and launch DEAR Watertown (Diploma Equivalency for All Residents), a comprehensive and collaborative program that provides every Watertown resident without a high school diploma with access to a free GED completion program.

According to the United States Census Bureau, there were 915 residents of Watertown between the ages of 18 and 64 that had not earned a high school diploma or equivalency as of 2010. Many of these individuals are likely 18 year olds who are still enrolled in high school; it is reasonable to assume that there are upwards of 700 individuals without a high school diploma that are not currently enrolled in school. The DEAR Watertown initiative would seek to provide each of these individuals with the opportunity to receive their GED at no cost. The initiative could be a collaborative and multi-faceted program, providing interested individuals with free access to online test preparation tools; a basic educational evaluation to determine if they need more hands-on remedial education; and an evening test preparation course potentially taught by local secondary or post-secondary educators. When each individual is ready to take the test, the community would provide financial support and waive testing fees ($95). The collaborative initiative would be supported by charitable funding and in-kind donations such as classroom space and staff time to support test preparation and evaluation. The Watertown School District could help identify recent dropouts that would potentially be interested in participating in the program. The state’s Career Learning Centers (CLCs) are designated GED testing sites and would be a critical partner in coordinating the implementation of the DEAR Watertown initiative.

The goal of the initiative is to become the first and only community in the United States that will guarantee all adults a high school diploma or graduate equivalency (GED). If fully-funded, effectively organized, and successfully marketed, the initiative could generate tremendous positive press for Watertown and send a positive message to employers that the community is dedicated to improving the lives of its residents and providing a sustainable workforce.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): H20-20 Implementation Committee; Goal 1 subcommittee
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR), Career Learning Center; Watertown School District; Lake Area Technical Institute (LATI); Watertown Community Foundation; individual employers
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2014
POTENTIAL COST: Up to $100,000 to cover full testing fees, materials, and remedial instruction if all residents without a diploma participated in the initiative. Program costs are likely to be significantly lower along with participation.
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Grants from local and national charitable organizations and foundations supporting educational improvement; state monies from DLR may be available
Implement The Leader in Me model into elementary schools throughout Watertown.

In addition to programs targeting parental involvement, programs focusing on building character at a young age can also help improve student outcomes and reduce the likelihood that adolescents will develop disciplinary concerns or engage in risky behaviors that could jeopardize their ability to reach their full potential. One such highly-successful program is the Leader in Me model, a leadership development program implemented in elementary schools that is based on Steven Covey’s *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. It is not a leadership development curriculum and does not replace any existing curriculum but rather, it is an approach to teaching and interaction that integrates leadership principles into all aspects of the school day, instilling self-confidence by focusing on accountability, initiative and self-direction, problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and creativity. The program has been implemented around the world with remarkable results. Participating schools report improvement in end-of-course testing, greater teacher and parent satisfaction, fewer discipline problems, better at-home behavior, and a variety of other benefits.

**BEST PRACTICE:** THE LEADER IN ME, A.B. COMBS ELEMENTARY (RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA); DECATUR CITY SCHOOLS (DECATUR, ALABAMA), NATIONWIDE

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** Watertown School District  
**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** South Dakota Department of Education (DOE); BISCO; Arrow Education Foundation  
**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2015  
**POTENTIAL COST:** Startup costs are typically between $15,000 and $25,000 per school, covering training and materials. Annual implementation costs are typically lower than $10,000 per school.  
**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** I Am A Leader Foundation; WSD funds; local charitable organizations and foundations supporting educational improvement

Develop a Parent University that supports greater parental involvement in child development and learning.

The Watertown School District and the Business Industry School Coalition (BISCO) have engaged in a variety of efforts to support parental involvement in education for many years. The school district provides parents with online access to student performance reporting and hosts events for parents during school functions such as dances. BISCO has previously hosted parenting seminars and brown bag lunches. Advancing such efforts by formalizing a Parent University offering free, regularly-scheduled courses and seminars covering a variety of topics could help the community address a variety of problems that arose during the community input process related to education, including reports of some discipline-related issues, drug and alcohol use, and bullying.

**BEST PRACTICE:** PARENT UNIVERSITY, MESA PUBLIC SCHOOLS (MESA, ARIZONA)

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** Watertown School District  
**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** BISCO; Arrow Education Foundation  
**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2016  
**POTENTIAL COST:** Startup and annual implementation costs should not exceed $5,000 per school.
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: District funds; local and national charitable organizations and foundations supporting educational improvement

**Develop a middle college program in the Watertown School District.**

A middle college program (also known as “early college”) allows high school students to accumulate college credits while simultaneously completing their requirements for high school graduation. The goal of such a program is to provide a clear pathway for students into college, either two- or four-year programs, while also reducing the amount of time it takes for a student to earn a college degree. A middle college in Watertown would be an ideal complement to existing career and technical education programs at Lake Area Multi District and Lake Area Technical Institute while potentially helping the community create a stronger pipeline of homegrown talent to support the sustainability of its workforce.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** Watertown School District

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** LATI; South Dakota DOE

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2015

**POTENTIAL COST:** Planning and start-up costs for middle college programs located at existing high school or college facilities could have ranged from $40,000 - $100,000 on average depending upon scale and scope according to the Early College High School Initiative. Annual implementation costs vary based on enrollment and many other factors related to the manner in which instructional and administrative resources are distributed. Costs should not vary tremendously from existing per pupil expenditures within the district.

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** School district and LATI funds

**Develop a regional Education Advocacy Agenda.**

A number of input participants, including educators and representatives of the business community, emphasized that increased state funding for public education is a priority, not just for Watertown, but for all communities in South Dakota. Many mentioned the need for a concerted and coordinated advocacy effort, supported by the business community, and implemented on a regional scale. An Education Day at the Capitol could leverage the influence of the business community in Watertown and the surrounding region to emphasize the importance of investments in education and to discuss a variety of specific state policy issues impacting the delivery of quality education in Watertown. The development of a regional education advocacy agenda and the coordination of such a trip to Pierre to meet with local representatives and leadership in the legislature could be coordinated by the Watertown Chamber of Commerce, BISCO, and other relevant partners in surrounding communities.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** Watertown Chamber of Commerce

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** BISCO; Watertown School District; LATI; Mount Marty College; chambers of commerce, school districts, and higher education institutions throughout the larger region surrounding Watertown

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2014
POTENTIAL COST: Minimal administrative and meeting expenses to develop the agenda; travel expenses associated with an Education Day at the Capitol could vary depending on the size of the delegation.

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Watertown Chamber of Commerce; BISCO

**Implement an annual Reach out to Dropouts campaign.**

The Watertown School District has continued to improve its on-time graduation rate, but eliminating all dropouts is a difficult goal to attain. The community could complement its existing dropout prevention efforts (including graduation coaches, evening courses, and proactively identifying student at-risk of dropping out) by implementing a program that has proven successful in a number of communities throughout the state of Texas. Reach out to Dropouts is an annual event in which volunteer teams of educators, administrators, community leaders (business and elected leaders), and other concerned citizens go door-to-door to visit families of students that have not re-enrolled within the first few weeks of a new school year or failed to graduate the previous year. The campaign has successfully re-enrolled hundreds of teenagers in districts around the Houston metropolitan area since various districts have begun implementing the campaign.

**BEST PRACTICE: REACH OUT TO DROPOUTS, HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT (HOUSTON, TEXAS)**

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

- **POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** Watertown School District
- **SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** BISCO
- **TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2015
- **POTENTIAL COST:** Campaign should largely be supported by volunteer time; some minimal expenses could be incurred in developing campaign materials
- **POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** If necessary, local charitable organizations and foundations supporting educational improvement could provide funds and volunteers

**Expand four-year degree opportunities in Watertown.**

Watertown’s four-year degree options are currently limited to the ten bachelor’s degree programs offered at Mount Marty College’s Watertown campus. While the community is fortunate to be able to offer residents access to four-year degrees in areas such as business administration, accounting, elementary education, and others, residents and business have acknowledged that additional programs and capacity would have tremendous benefits from a workforce and economic development perspective. The community’s leadership should work with relevant partners to evaluate and advance a variety of options to expand four-year degree capacity in the community. Such options include but are not limited to continued expansion of Mount Marty’s degree programs and the establishment of a satellite campus of one of the state’s public institutions. LATI’s facilities could potentially be used as a temporary or permanent location for evening instruction by a state institution that does not currently have a presence in Watertown. Potential may exist to establish a collaborative space similar to the University Center in Sioux Falls on a smaller scale in Watertown.

Potential also exists to leverage four-year degree expansion as a catalytic project in Uptown Watertown. While LATI and Mount Marty College are both only one mile from Uptown, students participating in the input process through focus groups and the online survey noted that they rarely visited Uptown. Colleges and universities have been catalysts for downtown development efforts in countless communities nationwide. The community’s leadership could work with Mount Marty and public institutions lacking an existing presence in Watertown to
evaluate their long-term interest in potentially establishing a presence in the Uptown area. An influx of students would increase daytime traffic to restaurants, increase the viability of new retail establishments, and potentially support demand for residential development such as lofts above storefronets.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** H2O-20 Implementation Committee, Goal 1 subcommittee

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** Higher education institutions throughout the region and state; South Dakota Board of Regents; Watertown Development Company; Watertown Chamber of Commerce; City of Watertown

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2013

**POTENTIAL COST:** Costs of recruiting, planning, and constructing new higher education institutions and/or facilities will vary tremendously

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** Varies depending upon the institution and type of development
...diversity of employment opportunities...

Watertown’s relatively resilient economy has weathered the Great Recession rather well as compared to many other communities nationwide; it has recovered quickly and manufacturers have re-filled many of the positions that were cut during the onset of the national recession. And despite strong growth in areas such as administrative, back-office, professional, and technical services, the community is still heavily reliant on manufacturing and predominantly local-serving sectors such as retail, health care, and education. The expansion of more export-oriented sectors, particularly higher-wage opportunities, was cited as a key priority for the community by residents and businesses. High school students, college students, and young professionals all cited a limited availability of diverse job opportunities in higher-wage sectors as primary reason for their planned or potential departure from Watertown in the near future. And while new business recruitment will play an important role in the community’s economic future, a focus on existing business expansion and small business development will be equally if not more critical to the community’s ability to provide the aforementioned job opportunities to existing and potential future residents. A number of studies in recent decades have illustrated that existing businesses – large and small – are responsible for between 50 and 80 percent of all job growth in a community, outpacing the amount of job growth attributable to new firm recruitments. Accordingly, Watertown will need to ensure that its vision of providing a "diversity of employment opportunities" is supported by a holistic approach to economic development.

POTENTIAL COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES:

✔ DEVELOP CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE TO INCREASE COMPETITIVENESS FOR NEW, DIVERSE, HIGH-WAGE JOBS IN A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT SECTORS.

✔ PROVIDE NECESSARY ASSISTANCE TO HELP EXISTING BUSINESSES THRIVE AND GROW IN WATERTOWN.

✔ BUILD AND MAINTAIN A SUPPORTIVE CULTURE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP THAT BREEDS SUCCESSFUL SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH.

✔ REDUCE EXPENDITURE LEAKAGE FROM WATERTOWN BY ATTRACTING AND DEVELOPING NEW RETAIL AND DINING ESTABLISHMENTS.
POTENTIAL STRATEGIC ACTIONS

The following potential strategic actions represent those initiatives that the H₂O-20 Steering Committee has endorsed as necessary and supportive of the aforementioned objectives and Watertown’s vision of providing a “diversity of employment opportunities.” In some cases, recommended actions have come directly from resident and Steering Committee input.

Pursue site certification for primary development opportunities through the state’s new Certified Ready Site program.

Watertown and Codington County have a number of available sites for heavy industrial, light industrial, and office uses that could be attractive to prospective companies. The Watertown Development Company (WDC) is actively involved in increasing the attractiveness of these sites to prospective companies.

The Governor’s Office of Economic Development has recently launched the state’s first Certified Ready Site program, an initiative that seeks to evaluate and certify properties as “shovel-ready,” helping prospective companies and site selectors increase the ease and speed with which they can identify suitable sites in South Dakota. Such certification programs are increasingly popular at the state-level as the site selection process is incredibly time-sensitive and prospective companies seek sites which are “ready-to-go” and have already completed the necessary site preparation (such as grading), environmental studies, and infrastructure extension, among other requirements. Site certification is frequently mentioned by site selectors as an effective way to increase the visibility of your community and the likelihood that your community will be considered for prospective relocations and new developments.

The WDC has recently worked with the state in the program’s infancy, serving as a pilot for the site certification program. The WDC should continue its efforts to enhance the marketability of existing available sites and work with necessary partners including utilities and property owners to move towards certification for viable properties.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Watertown Development Company (WDC)

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Governor’s Office of Economic Development; City of Watertown; Codington County; Watertown Municipal Utilities

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013

POTENTIAL COST: Variable depending upon site ownership and types of site improvements necessary to pursue certification

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Variable depending upon site ownership and types of site improvements necessary to pursue certification
**Frequently update a detailed inventory of available sites and buildings in Watertown.**

The Watertown Development Company currently maintains an inventory of available sites and buildings on its website. However, the inventory does not include all available land and buildings and is lacking detailed information about individual facilities and sites that prospective companies and site selection consultants need to have at their fingertips. Such information includes details about buildings (from ceiling height to square footage to any environmental remediation concerns), available land (from environmental issues such as flood plain information and soil characteristics to available infrastructure and rail connectivity), as well as other relevant information to the site (such as available incentives and distance to the interstate). Property owners can work with the Watertown Development Company to improve its existing database with more detailed information. This will help elevate an already strong local economic development website.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Watertown Development Company  
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Property owners  
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013  
POTENTIAL COST: Up to $1,000 annually for collection of information and website maintenance  
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: WDC

**Develop a target business sector strategy to identify the community’s most viable growth sectors and the strategies necessary to support their development.**

While this Vision Plan outlines a variety of potential actions to support the community’s economic diversification and growth, Watertown and the surrounding region would benefit from a comprehensive analysis of the region’s business sector composition, workforce characteristics, regional assets, and national growth trends to identify the niche business sectors that it is most competitive for, and the actions necessary to support their growth. Such an analysis and strategy could effectively be done at the regional level, engaging partners in surrounding jurisdictions, as economic clusters of related businesses form regionally and irrespective of jurisdictional borders. The analysis and corresponding strategy should emphasize investment in areas where Watertown and the surrounding region possesses some competitive advantage, and should not seek to develop sectors where the return on investment is limited or negligible given immense competition from areas with more attractive assets. This effort would most appropriately be a component of the Watertown Development Company’s next strategic planning cycle. Without question, a comprehensive yet targeted approach to developing the community’s asset base in support of economic diversification will require a significant financial commitment from the WDC and its many public and private investors.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Watertown Development Company  
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Regional partners in economic and workforce development  
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2014  
POTENTIAL COST: $30,000 - $100,000 for research and strategic planning consulting fees; costs could be absorbed as a component of the WDC’s broader strategic planning efforts  
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: WDC
Advance the implementation of a comprehensive and collaborative approach to existing business retention and expansion (BRE) that engages large and small employers alike.

Numerous studies have illustrated that up to and in some cases more than 80 percent of a community’s job growth arises from existing business expansions, with the remaining portion coming from new business starts and relocations. Economic development organizations across the country, including the Watertown Development Company, are increasingly engaged in proactive BRE outreach efforts to help identify the challenges and opportunities facing existing businesses, and to identify both reactive and proactive measures to expedite business investments, mitigate reductions in labor force, and support expansions leading to new jobs. The scale and scope of such outreach varies tremendously, but typically involves site visits to speak with executive leadership at a community’s largest employers, complemented by phone- or web-based interviews and surveys of other businesses in a community.

The WDC should continue to engage the community’s largest employers while expanding the BRE program to include more proactive outreach to smaller employers in the community. The WDC should work with the City of Watertown, Codington County, the Watertown Chamber of Commerce, and all relevant partners to develop a collaborative outreach program that engages smaller businesses in a variety of sectors and provides targeted assistance to these companies based on sector-specific and business-specific needs. Such a program would include a variety of types of assistance, including but not limited to: focused mentorship from experienced entrepreneurs and/or trained practitioners; the provision of market research and customer analytics; assistance with marketing technologies such as search engine optimization; and marketing plan development and. The goal of a more comprehensive BRE program would be to improve communication with and understanding of the small business community’s needs and challenges, and in turn, providing hands-on assistance in identifying the barriers to company growth, identifying new revenue opportunities, and providing small business owners with the necessary information, tools, and technology to alleviate the barriers and capitalize upon the opportunities.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Watertown Development Company
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Watertown Chamber of Commerce; City of Watertown; Codington County; all relevant partners supporting economic and workforce development
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013
POTENTIAL COST: Program costs could range from $20,000 - $40,000 annually depending upon the technologies used, the types of market research provided, and the methods of outreach, among many other variables. A truly comprehensive and proactive BRE program would be supported by a full-time staff member whose salary and benefits would raise total costs above the initial estimate. Some costs may already be captured by existing programs and efforts included in the WDC’s current budget.

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: WDC, with some expenditures coming from supporting partners as necessary to address specific issues facing businesses in the community
Conduct supply chain mapping exercises with large employers in and around Watertown.

Existing companies can be a community’s greatest lead for potential relocation prospects. Buyers and suppliers of a major manufacturer are among the types of companies that could derive tremendous benefits – from product research and development to reduced transportation costs – as a result of co-locating near the major manufacturer that they purchase from or supply. This is one of the primary mechanisms that generates regional economic clusters of related businesses. The Watertown Development Company could work with some of the community’s largest employers to map their supply chains and identify companies that could potential benefit from relocating to Watertown or opening a small, new facility in Watertown. Any identified leads would be pursued by collaborative and proactive outreach to the prospective company by the local employer, the Watertown Development Company, and relevant state-level economic development partners.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS
POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Watertown Development Company
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Governor’s Office of Economic Development; Watertown Chamber of Commerce; private employers
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2015
POTENTIAL COST: Up to $5,000; cost is primarily staff time; cost could rise substantially if outside assistance is retained to facilitate supply chain mapping
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: WDC

Assist existing employers in identifying and developing new international trade relationships by increasing utilization of existing state and federal programs.

Federal and state resources located in South Dakota provide a variety of targeted international trade programs to promote South Dakota exports. The Governor’s Office of Economic Development, the Great Plains International Trade Association (GPITA), the International Trade Center (ITC), and the South Dakota International Business Institute (SDIBI) all provide various forms of assistance to exporters, with services including corporate consultations, lead generation, market research, export financing, trade missions, and many others. The federally-supported Siouxland Export Assistance Center (Department of Commerce) and the Office of International Trade (Small Business Administration) provide complementary services. There are also a number of other under-utilized assets at the federal level such as the Export-Import (EX-IM) Bank of the United States and its financing for international buyers of U.S. exports.

With such a large base of manufacturers producing products with global appeal, every effort should be made to ensure that local employers are utilizing the resources available to them to identify new market opportunities, increase revenue streams, and in turn, elevate local employment. The WDC has recently worked with the Governor’s Office of Economic Development to develop a workshop educating employers about such opportunities and resources. This workshop concept should be expanded to include representatives from the various organizations mentioned above, with workshops hosted on a regular basis in Watertown to educate employers and help schedule appointments for one-on-one consultations.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS
POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Watertown Development Company
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Governor’s Office of Economic Development; Great Plains International Trade Association (GPITA); International Trade Center (ITC); South Dakota
International Business Institute (SDIBI); Siouxland Export Assistance Center; SBA Office of International Trade; EX-IM Bank; all other relevant partners engaged in international trade development and export promotion

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2015
POTENTIAL COST: $1,000 - $5,000 annually
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: WDC and supporting partner funds

**Expand availability and eligibility for Watertown and/or Codington County incentives to support high-wage job growth in diverse business sectors.**

While South Dakota and its various communities are widely regarded as having business-friendly tax environments, the community can do more to encourage business development in specific sectors that it is targeting for growth. Codington County currently offers five-year property tax abatements on new construction, but local communities nationwide often pursue a variety of other types of targeted incentives. The City of Watertown and Codington County should evaluate the viability of offering local incentives such as permit fee waivers and sales tax exemptions for new construction, with eligibility tied to a variety of potential criteria such as wage levels above the county average and/or job creation above a certain level and within specific targeted sectors (such as alternative energy, professional services, or regional headquarters, simply as examples).

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): City of Watertown; Codington County; H20-20 Implementation Committee, Goal 2 subcommittee

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Watertown Development Company

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2015
POTENTIAL COST: Cost of incentives review, evaluation of economic and fiscal impacts, and development of recommendations should not exceed $5,000.

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: City of Watertown; Codington County

**Host an in-bound familiarization tour for state-level partners in economic development.**

Effective economic development requires strong relationships and partnerships at the local, regional, and state levels. Prospective companies often contact the state’s office of economic development before making contact with local entities; strong relationships with state level economic development staff can greatly increase a community’s likelihood of receiving leads and prospect inquiries. However, in addition to the relationship, such leads and inquiries can be enhanced by ensuring that state partners are intimately familiar with the assets available in your community.

Hosting an inbound familiarization tour for staff from the Governor’s Office of Economic Development could be an effective means to strengthen relationships that already exist, educate staff about the community’s assets and its strategic plans, and cement positive impressions about what the community has to offer a prospective company. Such a tour would showcase available sites and buildings, infrastructure, educational facilities, key amenities, and highlight planned developments and strategic initiatives. The WDC has hosted such tours before, and should continue these efforts on a regular basis as turnover in appointed leadership occurs.
**UTILIZE CONSUMER AND RETAIL ANALYTICS TO DEVELOP NEW RETAIL AND RESTAURANT MARKET OPPORTUNITIES IN WATERTOWN.**

Public input participants frequently cited a desire to see more diverse retail and dining opportunities in Watertown. More than 75 percent of all survey respondents indicated that they left Watertown for specialty retail. While attracting new retail and dining establishments to the community would be attractive to residents and potentially help reduce expenditure leakage, existing businesses can likely benefit from better understanding the market that they currently serve.

A number of communities nationwide have supported expansion of retail and dining options by conducting a comprehensive market analysis of the retail and dining sectors. By providing local retailers with deep information into their retail audience and buying preferences, they are more able to make better purchasing and inventory decisions and are more likely to succeed. Potential components of a comprehensive retail analysis include:

- Leakage and surplus analysis: provides information on which retail sectors are losing expenditures to other communities and which have managed to attract expenditures from outside the community.
- Consumer profiling: catalogues in very fine detail the community's spending habits, including preferences for more than 5,000 specific brands and products.

The Watertown Development Company has engaged Buxton, a market-leading retail analytics firm, in recent years, leveraging such aforementioned analyses to evaluate retail recruitment opportunities. These same analyses can be used to help existing businesses better understand their customers, the types of products they demand, and the types of products and services that they are leaving town to purchase elsewhere. As a component of its existing business retention and expansion (BRE) outreach efforts, the Watertown Development Company could maintain up-to-date leakage and surplus information and consumer profiling, providing this information to local retailers and dining establishments to help improve their ability to meet the demands of residents.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** Watertown Development Company; Watertown Chamber of Commerce  
**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** Local retailers and dining/food service establishments  
**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2014  
**POTENTIAL COST:** $5,000 – $10,000 annually  
**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** WDC; Watertown Chamber of Commerce; potential exits to share costs with retailers and/or groups such as the Urban Renewal Board
Implement a Watertown Weekends campaign to support patronage of local businesses.

Countless communities nationwide implement a variety of “buy local” programs to increase the percentage of income that is spent at locally-owned businesses within their community. According to the national 3/50 Project, out of every $100 that is spent at local businesses, $68 is recycled within the local economy as compared to $43 from national chain retailers or food service establishments.

While the community has implemented a variety of buy local initiatives supported by the Watertown Chamber of Commerce and the Urban Renewal Board among others, a new initiative that promotes concentrated expenditure through targeted sales on specific “Watertown Weekends” throughout the year could complement existing initiatives. Locally-owned businesses would be asked to participate in a quarterly program in which all local businesses offer specific discounts – perhaps 15-20% off all items – during four weekends throughout the year. Business would also be asked to commit to extended hours if relevant, ensuring that they remain open during the evening when many working families are able to shop. The quarterly Watertown Weekends would ideally be scheduled to coincide with specific events such as the holiday shopping season or the start of the school year. A special advertising section in local media could be provided offering reduced rates to local retailers and other businesses.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Watertown Chamber of Commerce; Mayor’s Office

SUPPORTING PARTNERS: H2O-20 Implementation Committee, Goal 2 subcommittee; City of Watertown; Watertown Development Company; local retailers and dining/food service establishments

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2014

POTENTIAL COST: TBD

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: TBD

Develop an angel investment fund to support the development of new startups in a diverse array of business sectors.

Unlike venture capital, angel investment often targets very early stage startups, providing relatively small investments (often between $20,000 and $50,000) as opposed to larger investments to more mature companies. Furthermore, angel investment is sourced from individuals rather than a privately-managed fund. Such capital is an important complement to more traditional forms of capital that are unwilling to take on the risk that angel investors are willing to assume.

The Watertown Development Company should continue its efforts to identify potential investors, working with the Enterprise Institute to advance the launch of a local angel fund. With complementary funds from the WDC, a well-capitalized angel fund would be capable of providing multiple investments annually to local entrepreneurs, while also potentially attracting startups from around the larger region and state to locate in Watertown. Once a pool of interested and qualified investors has been identified and a fund formally established, the fund should work with the WDC, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), the Enterprise Institute and other relevant partners to develop a conference and forum providing entrepreneurs with an opportunity to “pitch” their ideas and identify the types of assistance – both financial and non-financial – that they need to make their concept and/or business viable.
IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): H20-20 Implementation Committee, Goal 2 subcommittee
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Enterprise Institute of South Dakota
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013
POTENTIAL COST: Cost to develop the fund will depend largely on methods for recruiting investors; fund management and administration will depend on interest levels and the degree to which fund management engages with funded entities
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Private investments

Support improvements in utilization, connectivity, and reliability at Watertown Regional Airport.

Watertown is fortunate to possess essential air service (EAS) at Watertown Regional Airport, supporting guaranteed commercial air service to the community through dedicated federal funding. While residents acknowledge the economic impact of the airport and are thankful to have commercial air service in Watertown, many have cited poor connectivity, affordability, and reliability as concerns that have led them to choose other, nearby airports for their personal and business travel needs.

Residents have cited three items in particular that would like to see in terms of better leveraging the airport for economic development. First, residents would like to see the airport marketed more effectively to the larger region to boost enplanements and potentially help secure additional flights and/or routes. Marketing the airport to large groups that could use Watertown Regional Airport for departures and/or arrivals as a potentially lower-cost alternative to other airports in surrounding areas was specifically mentioned. Second, residents have cited a desire to see direct flights to destinations other than Minneapolis-St. Paul, with connection to a hub in the Western United States – such as Denver – mentioned as a desirable addition. Third, input participants (particularly businesses) have cited a desire to see new rental car capacity at the airport to support greater use by business travelers coming to Watertown and the surrounding region.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Watertown Regional Airport
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Watertown Development Company; City of Watertown
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013
POTENTIAL COST: Variable depending upon nature of business development efforts
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Watertown Regional Airport; Watertown Development Company
...safe and attractive neighborhoods and business districts...

Watertown’s residents frequently mentioned the community’s aesthetic character as an area they would like to see improve by 2020. The city’s gateways (including I-29 at Highway 212 and Highway 20 by the airport), its key corridors (particularly Highway 212), and its primary activity centers (particularly Uptown) were frequently mentioned as the areas that should be prioritized for beautification. Residents cited actions such as litter removal, landscaping and streetscaping, public art, signage, and code enforcement as essential elements to community beautification. In addition, while residents currently feel very safe in Watertown, many expressed a desire to see clean neighborhoods and safe neighborhoods as descriptors of the community’s residential and commercial areas in 2020. Simply put, first impressions matter. A community’s visual appeal, cleanliness, and aesthetic character are quite often the first things that visitors notice, and every visitor is a potential new resident, employee, student, shopper, or business owner. Furthermore, the attractiveness and vibrancy of a neighborhood or business district is more heavily reliant on a single critical element above all others: people. Our neighborhoods, business districts, and public spaces – the places we gather – are limited in value without human interaction. Developing a more beautiful community, one that continues to make residents feel safe, and one that invites its residents to interact with each other and their surroundings will greatly improve the community’s ability to attract and retain both residents and employers.

POTENTIAL COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES:

- BEAUTIFY OUR KEY GATEWAYS, CORRIDORS, AND ACTIVITY CENTERS.
- TRANSFORM UPTOWN WATERTOWN INTO A VIBRANT CITY CENTER WHILE PRESERVING ITS HISTORIC APPEAL.
- BUILD COMMUNITY PRIDE THROUGH VOLUNTEER-LED BEAUTIFICATION PROJECTS.
- PROMOTE POLICIES AND SERVICES THAT CONTINUE TO IMPROVE PUBLIC SAFETY IN WATERTOWN.
POTENTIAL STRATEGIC ACTIONS

The following potential strategic actions represent those initiatives that the H20-20 Steering Committee has endorsed as necessary and supportive of the aforementioned objectives and Watertown's vision of developing and maintaining "safe and attractive neighborhoods and business districts." In some cases, recommended actions have come directly from resident and Steering Committee input.

Form a Keep Watertown Beautiful chapter to coordinate a variety of volunteer-led community beautification efforts.

Keep America Beautiful is a national organization, supported by more than 1,200 local affiliates, that works to engage individuals in taking greater ownership over their community’s aesthetic and natural environment. The Keep America Beautiful (KAB) model focuses on three core issues: litter prevention, waste reduction and recycling, and beautification and community greening. Watertown should establish an affiliate – Keep Watertown Beautiful (KWB) – to provide leadership and coordination for a variety of volunteer-led community beautification efforts. KWB would focus on education (litter prevention, recycling education, plant and flower care, etc.) in addition to its role in leading community clean-up and beautification efforts (such as graffiti removal, tree and flower plantings, litter pick-ups, etc.). Keep America Beautiful provides guidance and assistance for communities interested in becoming an affiliate.

BEST PRACTICE: KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AND KEEP INDIANAPOLIS BEAUTIFUL

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): H20-20 Implementation Committee, Goal 3 subcommittee
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: City of Watertown
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013
POTENTIAL COST: $3,000 initial program setup and certification costs to become a Keep America Beautiful affiliate and receive access to all training and resources from KAB; annual budget will vary based on donations secured and the scale/scope of beautification projects pursued. A reasonable affiliate budget would range from $20,000 - $40,000.

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Private donations; local and regional charitable foundations and organizations

Develop a matching neighborhood beautification grant program.

Residents frequently mentioned a desire to see greater support for neighborhood-level beautification efforts, such as the plantings of petunias along Highway 81 (5th St.). Many residents also noted that the community has great capacity and interest in volunteerism that may go untapped. One way to kick-start neighborhood beautification efforts to establish a small matching grant program that would reward neighborhood and homeowners' associations, as well as private businesses, for working together to identify and raise money for local projects that improve a specific public or shared space. Projects can include landscape architecture for public space and parks; planting shade trees, perennial, or annual flowers; installing community benches or picnic tables; or maintaining medians. Such a program would grant funds via a 1:1 matching formula, based on the money raised by the local association up to a specified maximum (potentially $1,000). The community should
strive to publicize neighborhood accomplishments. The aforementioned Keep Watertown Beautiful (KWB) could help advance participation in the program as well as effective and efficient use of matching grant monies.

**BEST PRACTICE: TULSA BEAUTIFICATION FOUNDATION, MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM (TULSA, OKLAHOMA)**

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** First District Association of Local Governments; Watertown Community Foundation

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** City of Watertown

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2014

**POTENTIAL COST:** Cost will vary based on the size of grants awarded and utilization

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** Private donations; local and regional charitable foundations and organizations

**Develop a corporate-sponsored community beautification competition.**

Complementing neighborhood-led efforts, a community beautification competition would challenge local businesses to “adopt” a key intersection, street, park, or other area of town for beautification projects. Businesses would support projects through private monies and employee volunteerism, representative of their corporate stewardship. Participating businesses would be recognized with tasteful signage at the location they chose to adopt. Each year the community’s residents could vote on the project(s) that were perceived to have the greatest positive impact, with the winning business potentially receiving access to grant monies from the aforementioned matching grant program to increase and improve their efforts in the following year.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** H20-20 Implementation Committee, Goal 3 subcommittee

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** Keep Watertown Beautiful (recommended); City of Watertown; Watertown Chamber of Commerce; Watertown Community Foundation

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2015

**POTENTIAL COST:** $4,000 - $8,000 annually to cover costs of maintaining a website to solicit ideas and allow for resident voting on specific beautification projects, publicizing and marketing the competition, recruiting corporate sponsors, developing signage recognizing corporate sponsors, and other relevant expenses. Corporate sponsorships would cover the cost of specific beautification projects.

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** Corporate sponsorships and private donations

**Continue to invest in cameras, lighting, and other features that improve public safety in Uptown and throughout the city.**

The Watertown Police Department has recently invested in new cameras and lighting in the Uptown area in an attempt to cut down on crimes, particularly assaults in the evening hours. Efforts to map crimes throughout the City and work with business owners and residential associations to identify other potential “hot spots” potentially in need of increased lighting and/or cameras could prove useful in combating crimes in other parts of the city. Increased lighting not only impacts public safety but also impacts economic vitality as improved lighting and a
sense of personal safety may increase the likelihood that some residents will utilize public spaces and frequent private establishments at nighttime.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS
POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): City of Watertown; Watertown Police Department
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Private property owners
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013
POTENTIAL COST: Cost varies depending upon scale and scope of improvements recommended
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: City of Watertown; state and federal grant monies supporting public safety initiatives

Establish a Watertown 311 website and mobile application to support resident reporting of issues related to community beautification and public safety.

Some input participants and survey respondents highlighted very specific areas of concern around the community that they felt needed to be addressed from a beautification or public safety standpoint. Such issues included potholes, sidewalk maintenance, curb cuts inhibiting wheelchair use, and properties that are an eyesore and/or in violation of city codes. The City could develop a “Watertown 311” website and mobile application that provides residents with the opportunity to report problems needing attention. Similar efforts have proven successful in other communities by expediting city response to resident complaints while improving transparency by providing updates to each reported incident on the website and mobile application.

BEST PRACTICE: CITIZEN’S CONNECT (BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS)

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS
POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): City of Watertown
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Watertown Police Department
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2014
POTENTIAL COST: $5,000 - $50,000; cost varies based on technology used and features included such as geographic information systems (GIS).
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: City of Watertown; state and federal grant monies supporting non-emergency technology initiatives (Department of Justice; Department of Homeland Security)

Develop an “Art for Adoption” program.

An “art for adoption” program would complement the aforementioned corporate-sponsored community beautification competition while also elevating the visibility of Watertown as a community that values and supports the arts. Public art can be a unique way of distinguishing a community and improving its visual appeal. Public art can appear in just about any form; in addition to murals and sculptures, common public features such as benches, bicycle racks, fire hydrants, and garbage cans can be transformed through public art projects. Many cities have worked with businesses and local artists to put up identical sculptures that are painted differently throughout the city while others have supported the proliferation of murals in their downtowns.

Watertown could develop a program that encourages private businesses (and individuals) to sponsor public art projects. Such projects could be targeted at key gateways, corridors, and activity centers. The program could be
managed by the City or a charitable foundation, issuing requests for proposals (RFPs) for local artists and sculptors from Watertown and the surrounding region to submit proposals for public art projects. Artists submitting proposals would be required to place a "cost" on the project for their services, while being encouraged to keep their projects affordable. Artists could be recognized with nameplates alongside their work. A website would be established to coordinate artist proposals and corporate sponsor commitments. Once a sponsor is identified for a specific project, the artist and sponsor would work with the City of Watertown to evaluate a variety of locations that the City has identified as ideal locations for public art.

BEST PRACTICE: MURALS, PUBLIC ART, AND DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION (DOTHAN, ALABAMA)

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): H2O-20 Implementation Committee, Goal 3 subcommittee
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Watertown Chamber of Commerce; City of Watertown; Watertown Community Foundation
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2015
POTENTIAL COST: $4,000 - $8,000 annually to cover costs of maintaining a website to solicit artist proposals, publicizing and marketing the program, recruiting corporate sponsors, reviewing developing signage recognizing artists and corporate sponsors, and other relevant expenses. Corporate sponsorships would cover the cost of specific art projects/installations.
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Corporate sponsorships and private donations

Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to increase parking capacity and allow overnight parking in Uptown Watertown.

Numerous residents mentioned a variety of challenges associated with parking in Uptown. While some business owners were concerned with capacity, some residents were frustrated with the inability to park their cars overnight in Uptown. There are a number of issues, including but not limited to snow removal in the winter, that complicate the issue. The community should evaluate a variety of methods to increase parking capacity for the general public in Uptown by utilizing vacant properties. Such an evaluation should consider the viability of constructing a parking deck as well as other options that would increase capacity for businesses and event traffic, and allow residents to park in Uptown overnight.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): City of Watertown; Watertown Police Department
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: H2O-20 Implementation Committee, Goal 3 subcommittee; Urban Renewal Board; Uptown property owners
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013
POTENTIAL COST: Cost of initial evaluation and solicitation of public input is minimal. Cost of developing a formal strategy and implementing such a strategy will vary tremendously based upon the recommended solutions.
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Dependent upon the recommended solution
Develop one or more catalytic projects in Uptown Watertown.

Residents occasionally mentioned a central public space in Uptown as a feature that was missing from the community that they had admired in other communities that they visited. Not surprisingly, residents and business owners frequently mentioned the lack of people and their desire to stay in Uptown for more than one purpose as a primary barrier to further revitalization of Uptown. The community should seek to identify one or more catalytic projects that can help kick start revitalization and bring new vibrancy and activity to Uptown Watertown. The following are examples of potential projects, with many ideas coming directly from residents and steering committee members:

- **Higher education presence**: Many communities benefit greatly from the presence of higher education in their downtowns, even when this presence is not an entire campus but simply one or two buildings housing a few programs. Such a presence could bring new employment and student populations to Uptown, potentially increasing demand for residential housing in Uptown (such as loft development) as well as increased demand for services, retail, dining, and entertainment options in Uptown.

- **Public park**: A new public park could be developed on a currently underutilized parcel of land in the Uptown area, providing a location for families in the surrounding residential areas, employees and patrons of Uptown businesses, and visitors to the area to gather year-round. A public park could have a variety of features from playgrounds and picnic tables to a small amphitheater or outdoor skating rink.

- **Pedestrian mall**: A pedestrian mall could be developed by closing a few blocks of one street in the heart of Uptown, eliminating curbs, resurfacing the road, and filling the space with benches, dining areas, public art, and other features. A pedestrian mall would provide a place for residents to gather and for events to be hosted while creating a public space to anchor Uptown. A comprehensive traffic analysis to identify the areas that are most viable for such a transformation and outreach to the Uptown business community to evaluate their opinions on the potential pros and cons of such a change would be critical first steps in the process.

- **Children’s museum**: A children’s museum could be developed in an existing underutilized building or site if the appropriate private and/or non-profit partners and investors are identified. Such a museum would complement the community’s existing family-friendly amenities for both residents and visitors, while helping drive traffic to neighboring businesses.

**BEST PRACTICE: RIVERPARK CAMPUS, COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY (COLUMBUS, GEORGIA)**

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

- **POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S)**: H2O-20 Implementation Committee; City of Watertown
- **SUPPORTING PARTNERS**: Urban Renewal Board; Watertown Chamber of Commerce; Watertown Convention and Visitors Bureau; Watertown Development Company; Higher education institutions; Uptown property owners
- **TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION**: 2013
- **POTENTIAL COST**: Highly variable depending upon the project(s) pursued
- **POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING**: Highly variable depending upon the project(s) pursued
Host an Uptown Opportunity Day.
The Urban Renewal Board, the Watertown Chamber of Commerce, the Watertown Development Company, the City of Watertown, and other relevant partners could host an annual Uptown Opportunity Day to showcase redevelopment opportunities in Uptown to the development community in Watertown and South Dakota. Developers and potential investors from around the state would be invited to a day showcasing available properties and informing them of ongoing revitalization efforts. A program could include a tour of the area, a tour of specific properties, and an information session on available incentives (such as the façade grant program).

BEST PRACTICE: DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DAY, CENTRAL ATLANTA PROGRESS (ATLANTA, GEORGIA)

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS
POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Watertown Chamber of Commerce; Watertown Development Company
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Urban Renewal Board; Uptown property owners
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2016
POTENTIAL COST: $1,000 - $2,000
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Cost of hosting such an event could be shared by the lead implementers and supporting partners
...vibrant cultural and recreational amenities...

Simply put, Watertown’s residents want more things to do. When asked about their vision for Watertown in 2020, a desire to see continued investment to improve the community’s cultural and recreational assets was among the most common responses. Lake Kampeska was frequently cited as the community’s greatest asset, but many indicated that it was also the community’s most underutilized asset. In addition, residents lamented the lack of options for recreation in the wintertime, particularly facilities offering sufficient indoor capacity for children and adults to enjoy. And while residents desired these improvements for their own benefit and enjoyment, many also recognized the existing and potential economic impact of the community’s cultural and recreational assets from a tourism perspective. Building a more complete set of amenities for residents will also help develop the community’s tourism “product,” hopefully increasing the likelihood that travelers and tourists remain in Watertown overnight, as opposed to day-trips or quick stops off the interstate.

POTENTIAL COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES:

✔ PROVIDE RESIDENTS AND VISITORS WITH A CLEAN AND AMENITY-RICH LAKE KAMPESKA.

✔ MAXIMIZE THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF OUR CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL ASSETS.

✔ DEVELOP NEW FACILITIES AND EVENTS THAT IMPROVE ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION OPTIONS IN WATERTOWN.

✔ PROVIDE NECESSARY AMENITIES TO MEET THE VARIED INTERESTS OF RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.
POTENTIAL STRATEGIC ACTIONS

The following potential strategic actions represent those initiatives that the H20-20 Steering Committee has endorsed as necessary and supportive of the aforementioned objectives and Watertown’s vision of providing “vibrant cultural and recreational amenities.” In some cases, recommended actions have come directly from resident and Steering Committee input.

*Develop a marina and system of boardwalks at Lake Kampuska that can serve as a home for new entertainment and recreational uses.*

When asked what kinds of amenities they would like to see at Lake Kampuska, residents frequently mentioned a place for boats to dock and enjoy waterfront dining; a place to rent jet skis, canoes, kayaks, and other equipment; and piers for fishing. The development of a multi-purpose marina and system of boardwalks could support such uses. A small above-water boardwalk could be constructed in rather shallow areas, allowing greater access for fishing to those without a boat, while providing a new lake-front amenity. The boardwalk could potentially connect to one or more of the aforementioned man-made islands. A marina could complement the boardwalk, seeking anchor establishments such as a restaurant and an equipment rental business. The City could work with private property owners, the state, and other relevant partners to identify potential locations for such a development, with recent and planned future investments at Stokes-Thomas Lake City Park serving as a potential starting point.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** City of Watertown; Watertown Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Board; Lake Kampuska Water Project District

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** Private property owners

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2015

**POTENTIAL COST:** Highly variable depending on the nature of development (public or private ownership) and the scale and scope of development

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** Dependent upon the nature of development

*Continue to develop the Watertown Recreational Trail System into a more comprehensive amenity that appeals to residents and visitors alike.*

Watertown’s trail system, often referred to by residents as “the bike trail” was viewed by many as simply an amenity for bicyclists. Continued development of the trail and the amenities alongside it should be pursued in order to develop a more complete amenity that is attractive to residents and tourists. In its entirety, the trail connects some of the community’s greatest tourism assets from Lake Kampuska to Bramble Park Zoo to the Redlin Art Center. Bicycle rental stations could be implemented around the community alongside the trail at various key access points. The trail system could be developed into a more comprehensive linear park in certain areas (such as portions connecting Bramble Park Zoo and Riverside Park). Riverfront development would complement the trail. Public art installations (see preceding section “…safe and attractive neighborhoods and business districts…” could line the trail. Signage and wayfinding with mileage to key attractions would help brand the trail and orient users. Water fountains, rest stops, and public bathrooms could be developed at key access points. Expansion of the trail system could better connect existing trails to Uptown and the education center (LATI, Mount Marty College, and Watertown Senior High School).
IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** Watertown Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Board

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** Watertown Convention and Visitors Bureau; Watertown Bicycle Club; Watertown recreational clubs

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2013

**POTENTIAL COST:** Highly variable depending upon the types of amenities, signage, infrastructure, and other investments made throughout the system

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** City of Watertown; Watertown Convention and Visitors Bureau

*Evaluate interest in and feasibility of riverfront amenities.*

In addition to Lake Kampeska, which residents often referred to as an underutilized asset, residents often mentioned the riverfront development along the Big Sioux River as an untapped opportunity. Input participants envisioned an area with restaurants and retail integrated with public park space and walking trails. While barriers to certain types of development may exist (such as floodplain issues), there may be opportunities to alleviate such barriers and support the development of new riverfront amenities that appeal to residents and tourists.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** H20-20 Implementation Committee, Goal 4 subcommittee;

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** City of Watertown

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2016

**POTENTIAL COST:** Initial cost of informal evaluation of interest and feasibility will be minimal. Formal feasibility studies examining environmental, engineering, and/or economic issues could have significant costs. Cost of developing certain amenities will vary tremendously, from as little as a few thousand dollars for community events to hundreds of thousands for physical developments.

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** Variable depending upon the types of riverfront amenities pursued

*Develop a multi-purpose recreational center.*

Residents and community leadership frequently acknowledged the need for greater capacity at the community’s recreational facilities. Residents desire greater aquatics capacity, additional athletic courts, an additional rink for ice skating and hockey capacity, and longer hours so that adults can utilize facilities in later hours of the evening, particularly on weekends. Residents have also emphasized that any new recreational development should accommodate future growth and should not simply meet existing demand.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** H20-20 Implementation Committee, Goal 4 subcommittee; Mayor’s Office; City of Watertown; Watertown Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Board

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** Watertown Convention and Visitors Bureau

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2015

**POTENTIAL COST:** $15 million +

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** City of Watertown
**Build out additional athletic fields to support local use and increase the attractiveness of Watertown as a destination for youth and adult sports tournaments.**

Some input participants noted that Watertown could better capitalize on regional and statewide demand for athletic fields in hosting youth and adult sports tournaments. Athletic fields currently located on the south side of the city off 17th St. could potentially be expanded to include additional soccer fields, softball and baseball fields, and multi-purpose fields. The site is an ideal location for hosting youth tournaments to attract travelers from outside the community given its proximity to the interstate and the hotels, retail, restaurants, and other tourism attractions located on nearby Highway 212.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** City of Watertown; Watertown Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Board  
**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** Watertown Convention and Visitors Bureau  
**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2013  
**POTENTIAL COST:** Cost will vary based on scale and scope of new fields. Competition-quality soccer, softball, and baseball fields can cost between $15,000 and $75,000 per field to develop depending on existing site conditions and the types of amenities installed at the complex.

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** City of Watertown

**Complete the planning and construction of a dam along the Big Sioux River once federal funding is approved.**

Flood prevention is unquestionably a concern for residents around Lake Kampeska and other parts of the Big Sioux River watershed. The community has worked with partners in surrounding areas to explore the viability of developing a dam on the Big Sioux River, but the project is contingent upon federal funding and analysis from the Army Corps of Engineers. Such a dam would protect the community from flooding while mitigating risks associated with potential new public and private developments around Lake Kampeska and the Big Sioux River.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** Lake Kampeska Water Project District; Upper Big Sioux River Watershed Project, Advisory Board  
**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** Private property owners; South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR); U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** Long-term; timeframe to be determined based upon project feasibility  
**POTENTIAL COST:** Highly variable  
**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** Public (state and federal) and private funds would likely be used in combination for dam construction

**Remove algae-generating phosphates to increase the attractiveness of Lake Kampeska.**

Community input participants often mentioned the presence of algae as a deterrent to recreational use of Lake Kampeska. Algae growth at the lake is supported by high phosphorous levels; there are a variety of methods that communities can use to reduce and manage phosphorous and other nutrient levels. Chief among these solutions is reducing and managing sources of runoff, particularly fertilizers and waste from nearby agricultural operations. There are also many different interventions such as dredging to reduce nutrient-rich sediment as well as artificial circulation and aeration techniques. A new facility on Lake Kampeska is currently under construction to remove
phosphorous from the lake and re-inject clean water. The City should continue to work with relevant partners including but certainly not limited to the Lake Kampeska Water District and the U.S. Geological Survey to develop and pursue the most efficient and cost-effective short-term and long-term strategies for algae reduction.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** City of Watertown  
**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** Lake Kampeska Water Project District; Upper Big Sioux River Watershed Project, Advisory Board; South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; U.S. Department of Agriculture

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2013  
**POTENTIAL COST:** Highly variable depending upon the scale and scope of phosphorous removal efforts and available federal grant monies  
**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** Federal grants (EPA; USDA); state funds (DENR); variety of local sources (public and private)

**Dredge Lake Kampeska and create a small man-made island(s).**

Dredging Lake Kampeska – mentioned above as one potential solution for removing phosphates – could not only have environmental benefits. If firmer clay is dredged in addition to the phosphorous-filled silt that is removed, firmer clay could be used to construct one or more man-made islands. The island could be accessible by watercraft, potentially featuring its own pier and public beach. Depending upon location and proximity to the shoreline, the island(s) could be connected to the mainland by the boardwalk and pier system referenced below.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** City of Watertown  
**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** Lake Kampeska Water Project District; Upper Big Sioux River Watershed Project, Advisory Board; South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources; private property owners

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** Long-term; timeframe to be determined based upon project feasibility  
**POTENTIAL COST:** Highly variable  
**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** Federal and state monies depending upon the primary purpose of the dredging activity; variety of local sources (public and private)
...welcoming, family-friendly, and appealing to all ages...

When focus group participants were asked what they would tell a friend that was thinking about relocating to Watertown, many participants first response was that Watertown is “family-friendly.” A few survey respondents went so far as to suggest that Watertown “has family-friendly covered” and that it needed to focus on attractiveness to college students, young and single professionals, and retirees. Both quantitative and qualitative research revealed that the attraction and retention of young workers is among the community’s greatest challenges. And while strategic efforts covered in other sections of the Vision Plan will have a direct impact on the community’s attractiveness to young workers, a variety of other targeted efforts that seek to attract and retain this key demographic are necessary. On the other end of the spectrum, research also revealed that many Watertown residents were choosing to age in place and retire in the community that they have lived in for much of their lives. Watertown must be proactive in preparing for the needs of retirees as members of the Baby Boom generation begin exiting the workforce.

While Watertown is aging, it also becoming increasingly diverse. However, minorities represent less than six percent of the total population and minority survey respondents were more likely to evaluate the community unfavorably in terms of its welcomeness and inclusivity. And although very few community input participants expressed concerns about tolerance, many did express that the community could do a better job welcoming new residents of all races, ethnicities, and ages, and helping to integrate them into the community’s social, economic, and cultural fabric.

POTENTIAL COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES:

✔ PROMOTE EVENTS THAT ARE ATTRACTIVE TO FAMILIES, STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY PRIDE, AND ENHANCE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS.

✔ PROMOTE COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS THAT MAKE WATERTOWN A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY FOR EXISTING AND POTENTIAL FUTURE RESIDENTS.

✔ ADEQUATELY PREPARE THE COMMUNITY FOR THE DEMANDS OF A GROWING RETIREE-AGED POPULATION.

✔ ELIMINATE EXISTING AND POTENTIAL FUTURE WORKFORCE SHORTAGES BY ATTRACTING AND RETAINING THE NEXT GENERATION OF WORKERS.
POTENTIAL STRATEGIC ACTIONS

The following potential strategic actions represent those initiatives that the H20-20 Steering Committee has endorsed as necessary and supportive of the aforementioned objectives and Watertown’s vision of developing and maintaining a community that is “welcoming, family-friendly, and appealing to all ages.” In some cases, recommended actions have come directly from resident and Steering Committee input.

Launch an “Intern in Watertown” campaign.

Internships are an effective way to increase the likelihood that a given student will remain in or return to a community after graduation from high school or college. Internships can help recent high school and college graduates from Watertown institutions – as well as students attending college elsewhere that return to Watertown for the summertime – increase their professional network, establish ties to a specific employer, and gain experience as a working resident in Watertown. An “Intern in Watertown” campaign would solicit information from regional employers regarding existing summer internship programs and could challenge those without existing programs to develop at least one summer internship targeting recent high school graduates or college students. The campaign could set a goal of inventorying a minimum of 100 internship opportunities throughout the community in the first year of the campaign, with increased capacity in subsequent years. The Watertown Chamber of Commerce and various trade associations could be leveraged in soliciting commitments from their memberships. A marketing campaign could be developed including media outreach, targeted advertising, and an interactive website that allows students to search for internship opportunities. Utilizing alumni associations to conduct outreach to recent graduates from Watertown that are currently attending college in other parts of the country could help increase demand and participation from students.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): Watertown Chamber of Commerce
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: Local employers; higher education institutions throughout the state and surrounding region
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2014
POTENTIAL COST: $5,000 - $15,000 to cover marketing and communications expenses as well as website development
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Watertown Chamber of Commerce

Host an annual community homecoming event to re-introduce alumni and former residents to life and opportunities in Watertown.

The Watertown School District’s annual tradition of hosting the Ki-Yi parade and other homecoming festivities certainly helps re-expose alumni to life in Watertown while providing the community with a prideful event. The development of a more comprehensive and community-wide “homecoming” event for all former residents of Watertown, potentially coinciding with Ki-Yi festivities – would seek to develop complementary events that would draw more former residents back to Watertown: a festival could be held in Uptown; concerts could be held on the lawn at the Redlin Art Center; a career fair could be held in the Auditorium or Community Rec Center; a race/walk/bike for charity could be held on the trail system. Other activities discussed in this section – such as the Brew at the Zoo and Screen on the Green – could also be held during the homecoming event.
IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** Arrow Education Foundation; City of Watertown; Watertown Chamber of Commerce

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** All relevant partners in the community that can and should be engaged in welcoming new residents

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2015

**POTENTIAL COST:** Highly variable depending upon the scale and scope of event activities and marketing efforts

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** Corporate sponsorships; grant monies from local charitable foundations and organizations

*Establish an outdoor movie series that is free to the public in the summertime.*

When focus group participants asked for “more things to do” they frequently cited events like the summertime concert series at Redlin Art Center and the Cookin’ on Kampeska Wing Fling and Barbeque Thing. A number of communities nationwide show movies in the evening at a large outdoor space, free to the public, with residents bringing lawn chairs and blankets to view the film. For example, films are shown at Piedmont Park and on Georgia Tech’s campus in Atlanta, Georgia (Screen on the Green and Flicks on Fifth); at riverfront amphitheaters in Little Rock, Arkansas and Columbus, Georgia (Movies in the Park and Uptown Screen on the Green); and projected on the wall of an art museum in Raleigh, North Carolina (the Summer Movie Series at the North Carolina Museum of Art). The Redlin Art Center and its surrounding land is a valuable asset for the community that could potentially be used for other community purposes. Hosting the series in Uptown by closing down a certain street at night could be yet another contribution to the Uptown area’s revitalization.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** Redlin Art Center

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** All relevant partners interested in sponsoring or otherwise supporting such community events

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2014

**POTENTIAL COST:** Public performance/screening licenses range from $200 - $500; cost of technology (projector, A/V, screen etc.) will vary but could range from $3,000 - $10,000.

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** Private donations and/or corporate sponsorships

*Organize events that appeal to adults, such as an annual “Brew at the Zoo” event at Bramble Park Zoo.*

While the vast majority of the input related to creating a family-friendly community and one that appealed to younger workers focused on amenities and events that would appeal to all ages, some adults lamented that some facilities and amenities close around dinnertime, while others mentioned a desire to see more events that were specifically attractive to adults for “date-night” outings.

Multiple zoos nationwide host annual or semiannual “Brew at the Zoo” events, including but not limited to zoos in Denver, Miami, Seattle, Atlanta, and Louisville. These adult-only (age 21+) events are hosted after regular hours at the zoo and allow adults to enjoy the zoo without the presence of children. Adult beverage vendors, typically breweries that sponsor the event, are located at small serving stations throughout the zoo property. A
similar “Brew at the Zoo” at Bramble Park Zoo could feature microbreweries and wineries from South Dakota. An entrance fee could cover the regular cost of admission to the zoo as well an additional fee that could provide the purchaser with a limited number of tickets for beer or wine samples. Some events issue wristbands and impose no age limit, but ensure that adequate taxi service is available while also issuing “designated driver tickets” (accompanied by special wristbands) that are available for half price.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** Bramble Park Zoo

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** City of Watertown, Watertown Police Department

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2014

**POTENTIAL COST:** Cost to produce the event should not significantly exceed regular hourly operating costs for the zoo’s facilities. A marketing budget of $1,000 - $2,500 should be sufficient.

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** All costs to produce the event should be recouped through admission fees.

*Increase awareness of existing and new community events through proactive outreach to residents, businesses, and visitors.*

Residents and steering committee members noted that - while the community could benefit from a variety of new events - there are already a number of events that many residents may be interested in but are currently unaware of for a variety of reasons. The development of a comprehensive web-based community calendar could provide residents with a single go-to source for information about events and happenings in and around Watertown. Such a website can be effective if updated daily by an administrator and if events are frequently submitted by users. A weekly and/or monthly email newsletter could be sent to those who sign up for email distribution. Employers could be encouraged to help publicize events by providing them with a printer-friendly version of a weekly and/or monthly calendar that could be displayed in their business. Partnerships with local radio stations and newspapers could help publicize events and the web-based community calendar, helping to encourage attendance at events as well use of the website. The community calendar and/or a link to the website should be prominently featured on various community-focused websites such as those of the Watertown Chamber of Commerce, the Watertown Convention and Visitors Bureau, the City of Watertown, and those of local hotels and attractions.

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** H2O-20 Implementation Committee, Goal 5 subcommittee;

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** Local radio stations; Watertown Public Opinion; Watertown Convention and Visitors Bureau; Watertown Chamber of Commerce

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2013

**POTENTIAL COST:** Annual website development and maintenance costs could range from $500 to $5,000. Other costs will vary depending upon method of communication. Social media, email, and other forms of electronic communication will have little to no cost. Advertisements (web, print, radio, etc.), printed communications, and other forms of event marketing will have variable costs depending upon the scale and scope of outreach efforts.

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** In-kind contributions and private donations
**Develop cooperative programs in partnership with the Benedictine Multicultural Center in support of community inclusivity.**

Although Watertown is not currently as ethnically diverse as the average community nationwide, much of its recent growth has been fueled by the growth of Hispanic and African-American populations. As the state and nation will continue to see rapid growth in minority populations and varied cultures, it is important for residents, employers, and service providers to understand these cultures, their specific needs in terms of goods and services demanded, and any specific hurdles to their integration into the community (such as language barriers). The Benedictine Multicultural Center currently seeks to “embrace and celebrate diverse cultures by promoting understanding and respect for all and by providing education, referrals, and multicultural resources.”

Communities across the world frequently conduct inter-city visits to learn about successful programs, policies, projects, and organizations that may be adaptable to help address similar challenges and issues in their own communities. A group of Watertown’s community leaders representing the public, private, and non-profit sectors could potentially benefit from examining the many successful efforts related to diversity education and inclusivity in the Sioux Falls metropolitan area. While Watertown has not diversified as rapidly as Sioux Falls, and is not home to the relatively large refugee population that Sioux Falls has attracted, Sioux Falls has learned many lessons and developed best practice programs (particularly through its Multi-Cultural Center of Sioux Falls) supporting the integration of minorities and foreign-born residents into the community; these lessons could be shared with Watertown leaders and relevant programs could be adapted for the benefit of Watertown’s increasingly diverse population. An inter-city visit to Sioux Falls conducted in cooperation with the Benedictine Multicultural Center could help identify ways in which other community organizations and the City of Watertown can best support and complement the efforts of the Center.

**BEST PRACTICE: SIOUX FALLS MULTI-CULTURAL CENTER (SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA)**

**IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

**POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S):** H2O-20 Implementation Committee, Goal 5 subcommittee; Benedictine Multicultural Center

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS:** City of Watertown; Watertown Community Foundation

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION:** 2015

**POTENTIAL COST:** Variable depending on the scale and scope of programs and services

**POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING:** Variable depending on the scale and scope of programs and services

**Improve signage and wayfinding to help orient residents and visitors.**

New, tasteful, uniform signage around the community could help visitors recognize other tourism opportunities in Watertown that they were previously unaware of while helping remind residents of the assets in the community that are available. New signage that is potentially differentiated from existing roadway signage in look and feel could be placed in strategic locations around the community indicating the direction and mileage to various attractions. For example, signage near the exit of the Redlin Art Center onto Highway 212 could inform visitors that the Bramble Park Zoo, the Mellette House, Codington County Heritage Museum, Lake Kampeska’s recreational areas, and a variety of other points of interest from the Veterans Memorial to the Events Center are only a few short miles away. The primary purpose is to make Watertown a more welcoming and visitor-friendly community; such signage could also help increase the average expenditure and length of visit for the average visitor to Watertown.
IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): City of Watertown; Watertown Convention and Visitors Bureau
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: All relevant destinations and partners in promoting travel and tourism
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2015
POTENTIAL COST: $10,000 - $40,000
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: City of Watertown; Watertown Convention and Visitors Bureau

*Host regular ‘Watertown Welcome” events for new residents.*

When discussing how welcoming the community is to new residents, a number of input participants mentioned the presence of Welcome Wagons in Watertown in years and decades past, and wondered what happened to this organized approach to welcoming new members of the community. The community could develop a series of quarterly events designed to provide a social setting to welcome new residents and families to Watertown. Events could be held at various, rotating locations throughout the community, potentially sponsored by businesses, and could seek to expose new residents to what Watertown has to offer in terms of amenities and services while also helping new members of the community establish new friendships.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

POTENTIAL LEAD IMPLEMENTER(S): H2O-20 Implementation Committee, Goal 5 subcommittee; KXLG; Watertown Municipal Utilities
SUPPORTING PARTNERS: City of Watertown; Watertown Chamber of Commerce
TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION: 2013
POTENTIAL COST: $1,000 - $2,500 per event
POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING: Corporate sponsorships; private donations
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

While the Vision Plan defines “what” Watertown should pursue to advance its achieve the community’s collective vision, these Implementation Guidelines will help define the ways in which the community and its leadership can support and measure the Vision Plan’s effective implementation. Much of the core content of the Implementation Guidelines has been integrated into the Vision Plan itself; key implementation considerations have been included beneath each potential action step. These considerations include the identification of potential lead implementer(s), supporting partners, a timeframe for implementation, potential costs, and potential sources of funding.¹ This section will go beyond these specific considerations for individual action steps and present a discussion of three key issues related to the collaborative and volunteer-driven nature of implementation efforts supporting Watertown’s Vision for 2020:

1. Implementation Roles and Responsibilities
2. Implementation Priorities
3. Performance Measurement

IMPLEMENTATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

If there is one single element of the Watertown community that has been evident throughout this visioning process it has been engagement of residents as volunteers in defining the community’s vision and demonstrating a commitment to achieving that vision. More than 2,300 residents volunteered their time to provide their onions, suggestions, and input related to the community’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges. A total of 27 individuals have volunteered their time throughout 2012 to serve on the H₂O-20 Steering Committee, reviewing resident input, examining the community’s competitiveness and attractiveness, and shaping the recommendations necessary to achieve the community’s collective vision for the future. Organizations from the public, private, and non-profit sectors throughout the community have volunteered their resources to support the visioning process and its effective implementation. Without question, this has truly been a volunteer-led visioning process, by the community, for the community. In this regard, communities around the country have much to learn from Watertown, its residents, and its volunteer leadership.

As Watertown moves from the strategic planning phase to the implementation phase, the same level of cooperation, collaboration, and commitment that was evident during the visioning process must be carried forward in order for the community to fully achieve the vision that its residents have so thoughtfully defined. The H₂O-20 Steering Committee has embodied these qualities throughout the visioning process, and has pledged to carry forward these characteristics in guiding implementation.

¹ It is important to emphasize that these considerations are intended to be guidelines and not are intended to be prescriptive and inflexible. Rather, they should serve as a starting point for the H₂O-20 Implementation Committee as it begins work advancing individual actions.
H₂₀-₂₀ Implementation Committee

As 2012 draws to a close and a new year begins, the H₂₀-₂₀ Steering Committee will transition from steering the community’s visioning process to implementing the community’s vision. Accordingly, it will transition from the H₂₀-₂₀ Steering Committee to the H₂₀-₂₀ Implementation Committee.

Composition: The H₂₀-₂₀ Implementation Committee would ideally be comprised of roughly 25-35 individuals that are interested and willing to make a multi-year time commitment to advance the implementation of the various recommendations that the Steering Committee helped develop during the visioning process. The Implementation Committee will ideally include those members of the Steering Committee that are interested in continuing their leadership and service, as well as other members of the community that the Steering Committee believes should be engaged at a high-level in guiding implementation efforts. The original members of the Steering Committee should help develop and evaluate a list of potential invitees who did not serve on the Steering Committee during the visioning phase but have much to contribute in coordinating and guiding implementation. Consistent with the composition of the Steering Committee, it is important that the Implementation Committee includes key leadership from the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

Leadership: The Implementation Committee would ideally be chaired by two or three individuals who have demonstrated an interest in playing an active leadership role in shepherding the visioning process and implementation efforts. Continuity between the Steering Committee’s co-chairs and the Implementation Committee’s co-chairs during the first year of implementation will help ensure that a smooth transition takes place. The co-chairs (or tri-chairs) could rotate on an annual basis, nominated and elected by the Implementation Committee. All co-chairs should be required to serve on the Implementation Committee, at a minimum, during the years immediately preceding and following their service as a co-chair. The appointment of multiple chairs – either two or three – should be done to help ensure that one or more chairs are able to attend all meetings, and that one chair can seamlessly assume responsibilities if another chair is absent for a single meeting or a prolonged period, or in unforeseen circumstances, must vacate their position as a chair.

Meetings: The Steering Committee has indicated that the Implementation Committee should initially meet monthly throughout the first year of implementation efforts to ensure that positive momentum and enthusiasm is maintained. Subsequently, the Implementation Committee could meet less frequently, likely on a quarterly basis. The first meeting of the Implementation Committee would ideally occur in January 2013, one month from the conclusion of the visioning process, and in anticipation of a public rollout event. This initial meeting of the Implementation Committee should include any and all new invitees/members.

Responsibilities: The Implementation Committee will fulfill multiple roles throughout implementation. First and foremost, the Implementation Committee should serve as public advocates for the various recommendations contained with the H₂₀-₂₀ Vision Plan, working directly with relevant partners throughout the community to build support for implementation. The members of the Implementation Committee should personify the collaborative, visionary, and proactive leadership that was demonstrated throughout the strategic visioning process. In this role, the Implementation Committee members will serve as community ambassadors, educating implementation partners, the media, and the community at large.
regarding the Vision Plan’s various components and progress towards implementation. A standard speaker’s bureau presentation should be developed for use by all Implementation Committee members to present the community’s vision and its plan for achieving that vision.

As the primary coordinating body for implementation efforts, the H20-20 Implementation Committee will receive quarterly updates from the goal area subcommittees (see next section) and help the members of these subcommittees develop collaborative solutions to address any potential barriers to effective implementation. All members of the Implementation Committee should serve on one or more subcommittees that closely align with their interests, their areas of expertise, and the mission of the organization they represent. The Implementation Committee will also be responsible for maintaining an accurate record of progress towards implementing the various actions contained within the Vision Plan, leveraging the reports of the goal area subcommittees.

**Goal Area Subcommittees**

The H20-20 Steering Committee has endorsed a recommendation to form five subcommittees of the Implementation Committee, each of which will be focused on guiding the tactical implementation of the actions contained within each of the Vision Plan’s five sections or “goal areas.”

**Composition:** Each subcommittee should include between 15 and 20 individuals from throughout the community including key leadership from the relevant “lead implementer(s)” and “supporting partners” identified for individual actions within each goal area throughout the Vision Plan. Accordingly, these five subcommittees will be inclusive of individuals who are working on a daily basis to implement the various recommendations within the Vision Plan. As previously mentioned, all members of the Implementation Committee should serve on one or more subcommittees that closely align with their interests, their areas of expertise, and the mission of the organization they represent. However, the H20-20 Steering Committee has emphasized that diversity in representation is essential for each subcommittee. For example, the “...commitment to public education...” subcommittee (also referred to as the Goal 1 subcommittee) should not solely be comprised of representatives form the education community.

**Leadership:** Each subcommittee should be chaired by one or two members of the Implementation Committee. These individuals will serve important roles on each subcommittee: facilitating and scheduling meetings; communicating with all subcommittee members; and reporting back to the Implementation Committee regarding subcommittee actions and implementation progress.

**Meetings:** Subcommittees should ideally meet monthly throughout the duration of implementation efforts. Some subcommittees may determine that they need to meet more frequently at times, or less frequently as progress is made. Meeting schedules may also vary as the subcommittees attempt to adhere to the implementation timeframes for individual actions identified in the Vision Plan.

**Responsibilities:** The various subcommittees will be tasked with working directly with the various implementers and supporting partners – many of whom will ideally serve on the subcommittees themselves – to advance implementation of individual recommendations. Working in accordance with the implementation timeframes and priorities identified by the H20-20 Steering Committee, the subcommittees will help keep implementation on track and will maintain regular status updates of specific implementation
efforts. The subcommittees will also have the important task of identifying obstacles to implementation and developing tactics to overcome any obstacles. In addition, they will need to constantly evaluate the viability of implementing specific actions and make recommendations to the Implementation Committee to revise the Vision Plan and/or adjust implementation priorities when appropriate and as necessary.

The H20-20 Steering Committee has also indicated that it may be necessary to develop even smaller working groups that focus on implementing single action steps. These working groups should be created at the discretion of the Implementation Committee, with at least one member of the Implementation Committee serving on any ad-hoc working groups. Such working groups would meet for length of time necessary to advance implementation and would dissolve when coordination of implementation efforts is complete, or when group members feel that such meetings are no longer necessary.

**Watertown Community Foundation**

The Watertown Community Foundation has played an important role throughout the H20-20 visioning process, providing administrative support to the H20-20 Steering Committee. It has helped coordinate meetings, communicate with the Steering Committee, and provide staff support to the Committee and the Market Street Services team.

The Foundation has committed to maintaining a similar role throughout implementation, aiding the H20-20 Implementation Committee as needed with meeting logistics and scheduling, communications, public relations, and other relevant administrative support activities. Ultimately, the Implementation Committee should become a self-governing and self-sufficient entity that is capable of assuming the majority of these responsibilities. This is certainly true for the various subcommittees, as the Foundation cannot possibly provide resource and/or staff support to all subcommittees.

Without question, the Foundation has and will continue to be a proponent of community improvement initiatives throughout Watertown, as it has for more than three decades. And as with previous visioning initiatives carried out in Watertown, the Foundation will evaluate opportunities to support specific initiatives that align with its mission.

**Community Partners**

While the H20-20 Implementation Committee will coordinate a collaborative approach to implementing the various components of the H20-20 Vision Plan, there are numerous community partners – organizations, local governments, schools, etc. – that will be working day-to-day on implementing the various recommendations. Many of these organizations have been engaged during the visioning process while others will be engaged as Implementation Committee and/or subcommittee members. Although the H20-20 Implementation Committee has committed to a volunteer-led implementation effort, there will unquestionably be demands on staff members and financial resources from the various community partners that will lead and support implementation. For example, the Watertown Development Company and its staff will principally lead the implementation of efforts contained within the “...diversity of employment opportunities...” goal area, while the Watertown School District will be integral to the implementation of recommendations contained within the “...commitment to public education...” goal area.
Note: The graphic above is not intended to include an exhaustive list of all potential implementation partners. Although unnamed, many other organizations throughout the community will be engaged in implementation.
IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

This section presents the average ratings, as well as the number of responses per rating, provided by Steering Committee members in their evaluation of the Vision Plan’s potential actions and their relative priority. A value of “1” was assigned to actions that were perceived to be a low priority while a value of “3” was assigned to actions that were perceived to be critical implementation priorities. These ratings have helped inform the establishment of the appropriate “implementation timeframe” for each potential action, as cited in the Vision Plan.

While these ratings and the timeframes they informed reflect the community’s and the Steering Committee’s evaluation of priorities, it is important to emphasize that the Vision Plan is a “living document.” That is to say, the potential actions necessary to achieve the community’s vision, and the prioritization of those actions, should be revisited by the Implementation Committee on a frequent basis. Unexpected circumstances may arise that necessitate a reprioritization. Likewise, new opportunities that may present themselves, and if consistent with the community’s vision, the Implementation Committee should, at its discretion, pursue such initiatives and revise implementation priorities and associated timeframes accordingly.

“...commitment to public education...”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Action</th>
<th>1 (Low Priority)</th>
<th>2 (Medium Priority)</th>
<th>3 (High Priority)</th>
<th>Average Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implement The Leader in Me model into elementary schools throughout Watertown.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and launch DEAR Watertown (Diploma Equivalency for All Residents)...</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a middle college program in the Watertown School District.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement an annual Reach out to Dropouts campaign.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a Parent University...</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a regional Education Advocacy Agenda.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### “…diversity of employment opportunities…”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Action</th>
<th>1 (Low Priority)</th>
<th>2 (Medium Priority)</th>
<th>3 (High Priority)</th>
<th>Average Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop a target business sector strategy to identify the community’s most viable growth sectors...</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand availability and eligibility for Watertown and/or Codington County incentives...</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently update a detailed inventory of available sites and buildings in Watertown.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursue site certification for primary development opportunities...</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop an economic gardening program to support small business growth.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist existing employers in identifying and developing new international trade relationships...</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct supply chain mapping exercises with large employers in and around Watertown.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host an in-bound familiarization tour for state-level partners in economic development.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### “…safe and attractive neighborhoods and business districts…”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Action</th>
<th>1 (Low Priority)</th>
<th>2 (Medium Priority)</th>
<th>3 (High Priority)</th>
<th>Average Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish a Watertown 311 website and mobile application...</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek to establish a higher education presence in Uptown Watertown.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form a Keep Watertown Beautiful chapter...</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to increase parking capacity...</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a corporate-sponsored community beautification competition.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host an Uptown Opportunity Day.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to invest in cameras, lighting, and other features that improve public safety...</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop an &quot;Art for Adoption&quot; program.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a matching neighborhood beautification grant program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a pedestrian mall in Uptown Watertown.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“...vibrant cultural and recreational amenities...”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Action</th>
<th>1 (Low Priority)</th>
<th>2 (Medium Priority)</th>
<th>3 (High Priority)</th>
<th>Average Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop a multi-purpose recreational center.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build out additional athletic fields to support local use and increase the attractiveness of Watertown...</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to develop the Watertown Recreational Trail System into a more comprehensive amenity...</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove algae-generating phosphates to increase the attractiveness of Lake Kampeska.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a marina and system of boardwalks at Lake Kampeska...</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete the planning and construction of a dam along the Big Sioux River...</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dredge Lake Kampeska and create a small man-made island(s).</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support riverfront development near existing amenities.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“...welcoming, family-friendly, and appealing to all ages...”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Action</th>
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<th>2 (Medium Priority)</th>
<th>3 (High Priority)</th>
<th>Average Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organize an annual “Brew at the Zoo” event at Bramble Park Zoo.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host regular “Watertown Welcome” events for new residents.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve signage and wayfinding to help orient residents and visitors.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host an annual community homecoming event...</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launch an “Intern in Watertown” campaign.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish an outdoor movie series that is free to the public in the summertime...</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead an inter-city visit to...the Sioux Falls Multicultural Center.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Performance metrics will allow the H20-20 Implementation Committee, its community partners, potential investors and funders, and the community-at-large to monitor and assess the progress towards implementing the H20-20 Vision Plan. Performance measurement is critical to tracking:

- The community’s collective success in implementing the various recommendations
- The impact of these implementation efforts
- The potential return on investment from implementation of the Vision Plan

The following tables present two sets of performance metrics.

1. **Community Context**: This table includes a set of performance metrics that may be impacted by effective implementation of the Vision Plan’s recommendations, but are heavily influenced by a variety of other factors unrelated to implementation. Measuring performance in various indicators – employment, high school graduation rates, average wages, etc. – can help provide the appropriate context for understanding community vitality, economic prosperity, and workforce preparedness. All data is for Codington County unless otherwise indicated.

2. **Implementation Progress**: This table includes a set of performance metrics that are more closely tied to individual recommendations within the Vision Plan. Many of these metrics will need to be established by the Implementation Committee in partnership with the various lead implementers.

In both tables, data has been included for the following periods when available and relevant:

- **Latest figure**: The most recently available data for a given indicator
- **Implementation start**: Projected values for individual metrics at the estimated start date for implementation efforts (2013), based on current trends
- **Implementation completion**: Goals for individual metrics at the estimated completion date for the vision plan’s implementation cycle (2020)

Market Street arrives at such projections by examining historical trends using a variety of basic techniques, and then estimating the incremental improvement that could occur if these trends continue and if implementation is effective. Publicly-available and proprietary sources of demographic and economic projections are leveraged when relevant and reliable. Given continued economic uncertainty, Market Street errs on the side of being too conservative. As the Great Recession and subsequent sluggish recovery has illustrated, today’s economy is very volatile and we continue to face a great deal of uncertainty.

Accordingly, just as the Vision Plan is a “living document” that should be revisited and modified as new opportunities emerge and as community priorities change, performance metrics should also be reviewed and revised as progress is made or as unexpected circumstances occur.

The two aforementioned tables are preceded on the following page by a brief overview of some of the key performance metrics and desired outcomes.
Reverse Watertown’s out-migration trend: Attract 200 net new residents each year by 2020.

Jump start job growth: Create more than 2,000 new jobs in diverse sectors by 2020 by supporting small business development, existing business expansions, and new firm recruitments.

Support workforce sustainability: Lower the median age of new residents moving to Watertown from out of state from 39.5 years old to 35 years old.

Elevate educational attainment: Reduce the percentage of adults with no high school diploma from 9.0% in 2010 to 6.0% in 2020, while increasing the percentage of adults with a bachelor’s degree or higher from 25.0% to 29.0%.

Enhance standards of living: Raise the average annual wage by 26% between 2013 and 2020, outpacing inflation as well as state and national wage growth.

Create opportunities: Provide every interested resident with the opportunity to earn a Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED) at no cost.

Increase access to higher education: Double the number of four-year degree programs available in Watertown from 10 to 20.

Invest in aesthetics: Complete five new public art installations each year beginning in 2015.


Continue to support the next generation: Implement new leadership, parenting, dropout prevention, and middle college programs while achieving a 100% on-time graduation rate in the Watertown School District.

Have fun! Launch at least two new community events, an outdoor movie series – “Screen on the Green” – at Redlin Art Center and “Brew at the Zoo” at Bramble Park Zoo.

Beautify Watertown’s neighborhoods and business districts: Recruit hundreds of volunteers and businesses to support a variety community beautification projects.

Beautify Watertown’s neighborhoods and business districts: Recruit hundreds of volunteers and businesses to support a variety community beautification projects.
## Performance Metrics: Community Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>Latest Year</th>
<th>Imp. Start</th>
<th>Implementation Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Performance Metrics</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual net migration</td>
<td>-91</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty rate</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita income</td>
<td>$37,521</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>$38,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment (jobs by place of establishment)</td>
<td>15,557</td>
<td>03/12</td>
<td>15,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>09/12</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average annual wage, all sectors</td>
<td>$34,437</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>$36,180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### “…commitment to public education…”

- Graduation rate, Watertown School District*: 88.6% 2011 88.6% Establish with WSD guidance
- Percentage of population aged 25 and older with less than a high school diploma (or equivalent): 9.0% 2010 8.5% 6.0% -2.5 perc. pts.
- Percentage of population aged 25 and older with a bachelor’s degree or higher: 24.0% 2010 25.0% 29.0% +4.0 perc. pts.

### “…diversity of employment opportunities…”

- Location quotients, all major sectors: Vary by sector; establish with WDC guidance
- Average annual wage, manufacturing: $42,012 Q3 2011 $43,000 $52,200 $9,200 21.4%
- Retail establishments per 1,000 residents: 6.5 Q1 2012 6.5 7.5 1.0 per 1,000 pop.
- Number of monthly enplanements (departures only) at Watertown Regional Airport: 7,373 08/12 7,400 9,800 2,400 32.4%

### “…safe and attractive neighborhoods and business districts…”

- Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: 26.4 2010 Establish with Police Dept. guidance
- Property crimes per 1,000 residents: 233.2 2010 Establish with Police Dept. guidance

### “…vibrant cultural and recreational amenities…”

- Annual number of visitors to area attractions: Establish with guidance from area attractions and CVB
- Attendance at various community events: Establish with guidance from event coordinators

### “…welcoming, family-friendly, and appealing to all ages…”

- Percentage of population aged 25-44: 24.4% 2011 24.5% 28.0% +3.5 perc. pts.
- Percentage of population aged 65+: 14.8% 2011 15.0% 17.0% +2.0 perc. pts.
- Percentage of population that is non-white (% minority): 5.4% 2011 5.6% 7.0% +1.4 perc. pts.
- Median age of in-migrants moving from different state: 39.5 ‘09-‘11 39.5 35.0 -4.5 perc. pts.

*The district’s required reporting for 2011 No Child Left Behind/Adequate Yearly Progress uses a new methodology adopted by state and federal entities that is not consistent with previous years’ calculations of graduation rates.
### Performance Metrics: Implementation Progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>Latest Value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Imp. Start</th>
<th>Implementation Completion</th>
<th>Raw Chg.</th>
<th>% Chg.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of elementary schools implementing the Leader in Me program</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>All schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of residents participating in DEAR Watertown initiative</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>250 residents (50 per year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents enrolled in Parent University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Establish with guidance from WSD and BISCO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in the Middle College program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Establish with guidance from WSD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-year degree programs available in Watertown</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### “…commitment to public education…”

- Number of elementary schools implementing the Leader in Me program
- Number of residents participating in DEAR Watertown initiative
- Parents enrolled in Parent University
- Students enrolled in the Middle College program
- Four-year degree programs available in Watertown

### “…diversity of employment opportunities…”

- Number of Certified Ready Sites and number of sites detailed in WDC’s database of properties
- Development of a Target Business Sector Strategy
- Annual number of site visits to existing businesses as a component of WDC’s BRE program
- Annual number of small businesses (less than 20 emp.) assisted by WDC’s BRE program
- Number of employers participating in supply chain mapping exercise
- Number of employers participating in int’l trade development/export assistance seminars
- Number of businesses participating in Watertown Weekends campaign
- Number of entrepreneurs receiving local angel investment from newly-created angel fund

### “…safe and attractive neighborhoods and business districts…”

- Establishment of Keep Watertown Beautiful Chapter
- Amount of community beautification matching grant funds awarded annually
- Number of employers participating in corporate-sponsored beautification competition
- Annual number of public art installations completed as a component of "Art for Adoption"

### “…vibrant cultural and recreational amenities…”

- Development of Multi-Purpose Recreational Center completed
- Number of new athletic fields developed for youth and adult sports
- Development of new lake-front amenities completed

### “…welcoming, family-friendly, and appealing to all ages…”

- Number of internships offered as a part of "Intern in Watertown" campaign
- Annual homecoming event hosted
- Number of residents attending outdoor movie series and "Brew at the Zoo" events
- Installation of new signage to improve visitation of area attractions and orient visitors
CONCLUSION

Throughout the summer of 2012, thousands of Watertown’s residents shared their opinions on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges facing the community and helped define a vision for its future in 2020. Although there was some divergence in the details of the vision, there was an overwhelming consensus among residents regarding the aspects of the community that they value and the types of investments they’d like to see in the future. This consensus is reflected in the vision statement that follows:

“Watertown is a progressive community with collaborative leadership, characterized by our commitment to public education, diversity of employment opportunities, safe and attractive neighborhoods and business districts, and vibrant cultural and recreational amenities. Our dedication to developing and maintaining these attributes will ensure that our community is welcoming, family-friendly, and appealing to all ages for many generations to come.”

While this Vision Plan has set forth a set of potential strategic actions to help the Watertown achieve this vision, effective community development is not a single event and it cannot be guided by a static plan. Successful communities revisit their strategic plans on a regular basis, revise their course of action based on unforeseen events, and ensure that their visions are more than simply words on paper. Effective implementation will required dedicated leadership but also engaged citizenry; better communities are built by their residents and their businesses, as well as their elected and appointed leadership. In 2020, the residents of Watertown should look back upon this visioning process and have pride in the community’s progress, supported by the commitment of the entire community – its leaders, institutions, businesses, and residents – to fulfill their collective vision.
APPENDIX: BEST PRACTICES

This Appendix provides brief descriptions of the best practice programs, policies, projects, and organizations referenced throughout the Vision Plan.

REACH OUT TO DROPOUTS, HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT (HOUSTON, TEXAS)

The Houston Independent School District first implemented a program in 2004 that sought to re-engage students who had recently dropped out of high school. This program – Reach Out to Dropouts – has been tremendously successful in its short history and has been adopted by other surrounding communities in Texas as well as other school districts nationwide. The program is supported by volunteers from throughout the community (concerned citizens, teachers, administrators, business leaders, and the United Way) who walk door-to-door in teams to visit the families of students that have not re-enrolled in school within the first few weeks of a new school year or failed to graduate the previous year for a variety of reasons. During the 2008 walk in Houston, nearly 1,200 volunteers made contact with more than 680 students or parents, and 60 students began the re-enrollment process on the day of the walk. Many more re-enrolled in the following days with subsequent follow-ups by volunteers. The Fort Bend Independent School District replicated Houston's program in 2009. With only one participating high school, 68 volunteers visited 106 homes, contacted 72 students or parents, and re-enrolled 20 students. The Lamar Consolidated Independent School District, also located in Fort Bend County, visited 65 homes, spoke with 37 students or parents, and re-enrolled 26 students.

Source: Houston ISD; Fort Bend ISD; Lamar Consolidated ISD

PARENT UNIVERSITY, MESA PUBLIC SCHOOLS (MESA, AZ)

With the philosophy that parenting is a continuous learning process and that the foundation for a child’s education is laid at home, the Mesa Public School system launched a Parent University program in 1985. The diverse offering of sessions and workshops, held in junior high school auditoriums and other local school sites, now boasts attendance rates of 4,000 parents annually. The program is publicized through radio announcements, target fliers, brochures sent home with every student, and announcements in the monthly district newsletter. Topics for sessions are relevant, often specifically requested by parents, and led by local and national speakers and experts. The most popular areas of instruction are discipline and communication. Participant feedback concludes each workshop, where parents are asked to identify what they liked about the session, what they learned and what actions they will take, what improvements are needed, and what they would like to learn more about. Parent University is funded through a small registration fee for participants, grants, partnerships with local nonprofit agencies like Mesa United Way. Scholarships are available for those parents with financial need.

Source: Mesa Public Schools
THE LEADER IN ME PROGRAM, A.B. COMBS ELEMENTARY (RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA) AND NATIONWIDE PROGRAMS

In 1989, Steven Covey released the best-selling book The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. In 1999, A.B. Combs Elementary in Raleigh, North Carolina was struggling with low academic performance and lack of engagement among faculty and parents. Administrators and teachers began searching for a solution, including learning principle-based leadership skills and The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. The lessons learned by teachers were taken back to the classroom, integrated into curriculums, and passed on to students.

The K–5 magnet school formalized its leadership initiative to blend leadership training and character education into every facet of a school’s curriculum and culture. Students are taught that “leadership is a choice, not a position” and are equipped with the self-confidence and skills that complement their academics to become 21st century leaders. Students are taught how to set goals and track those goals throughout the year. In addition, students learn public speaking skills and social etiquette, in an effort to prepare them to face the world head on. A.B. Combs integrated the following principles into the school’s culture: Be Proactive; Begin with the End in Mind; Put First Things First; Think Win-Win; Seek First to Understand, then to Be Understood; Synergize; and Sharpen the Saw.

In a short amount of time, end-of-grade tests improved dramatically. In just over one year, average end-of-year passing grades for students jumped from 84 to 94 percent. Discipline problems dropped significantly. Parents began reporting incredible shifts in their children’s attitudes and behaviors. Students began problem solving and engaging in more positive ways with each other. The school saw significant and sustained increases in students’ self-confidence and impressive increases in teacher and administrator pride and job satisfaction.

In 2008, Covey released a new book, The Leader in Me: How Schools and Parents Around the World are Inspiring Greatness, One Child At a Time, which details the successes at A.B. Combs Elementary. Other schools around the country are beginning to adopt similar approaches:

✓ In Decatur, Alabama, a local businessman and chamber of commerce president adopted Chestnut Grove Elementary and sponsored it as a leadership school. Today, Decatur City Schools implements the Leader in Me program in every elementary school.

✓ In Adams County, Illinois, documented improvements in academic success at Dewey Elementary captured the eye of the United Way, which is now working to ensure that all 10,000 students in the county receive the same opportunity.

✓ In Alberta, Canada, Joseph Welsh Elementary is reporting that parent satisfaction with what children are being taught has increased from 67 to 98 percent.

In 2009, A.B. Combs added town meetings, a new component to the Leader in Me model. Every other week, students in every grade level attend and participate in 45-minute assemblies focused on leadership styles and skills, bringing in community and state leaders to discuss democratic and civic leadership with
the students. This program has been an excellent way of getting community and business leaders actively involved in and supportive of cultivating home-grown talent. After just eight years of implementation, A.B. Combs became recognized as a National Title I Distinguished School. Today, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People has become completely integrated into the curriculum at A.B. Combs, and the school is widely recognized for its focus on leadership development.

Sources: FranklinCovey; A.B. Combs Elementary

KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AND KEEP INDIANAPOLIS BEAUTIFUL

There are more than 600 cities, towns, counties and states — even international communities — that are implementing the Keep America Beautiful System (KAB) as certified affiliates of KAB and more than 400 additional chapters pursuing certification. In its over 50-year existence, KAB has provided a proven framework for community education and hands-on stewardship that reduces litter and waste, promotes grassroots volunteerism, and makes sustainable improvement possible for communities of all sizes.

At the local level, KAB affiliates have built upon this framework to create innovative, locally-focused programs that address the specific needs of their diverse communities and populations. For example, Keep Indianapolis Beautiful (KIB), one of the national organization’s top affiliates, has a 30-year history of partnering with neighborhoods, the public sector, local philanthropists and corporate Indianapolis. Each year, KIB supports an average of 500 community improvement projects with 30,000 volunteers. Since 1995, KIB has helped plant more than 12,000 trees; it also coordinates city-wide Great Indy Cleanup days every weekend from April 4th through October 31st.

Sources: Keep America Beautiful; Keep Indianapolis Beautiful

TULSA BEAUTIFICATION FOUNDATION MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM (TULSA, OKLAHOMA)

Begun in 2009, the Tulsa Beautification Foundation Matching Grant Program aids neighborhood and homeowners’ associations with funding beautification programs. The program provides a dollar-for-dollar match to locally-raised funds. The program is intended to incentivize local groups to raise money, engage in partnerships with businesses, and encourage a culture of local volunteerism.

In order to be eligible a project must 1) improve or beautify a neighborhood or public space; 2) involve neighborhood and community residents; 3) have long-standing and sustainable benefits; 4) have a plan before work begins; and 5) provide a maintenance plan for upkeep of the project. Further, in addition to locally-raised money, the program allows for 35 percent of the match to be volunteer hours, which are valued at $16.19 per hour. The program requires projects to be completed within a 90 day timeline.

One of the grants in 2010 was made to the Shadow Ridge Homeowners Association (SHRA). The SHRA received $2,800 to beautify the entrance to their neighborhood, which included new tree, lighting, and a Memorial Tree to honor neighborhood residents who had passed away.
CITIZENS CONNECT (BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS)

In October 2009, the City of Boston unveiled a mobile app called Citizens Connect. The app is a web-based extension of the City’s 311 service. The free app encourages residents to report problems such as potholes, graffiti, broken lights, damaged street signs, and missed trash pick-ups. Available on both Android and iPhones, the app has been downloaded thousands of times and has been updated multiple times.

In order to report a problem, the app takes a user through a three-step process: 1) user takes a picture of the problem; 2) user adds a caption; 3) user submits the problem. The GPS in the phone automatically includes the coordinates of the problem and transmits the complaint (with a map) directly to the appropriate city department. Once submitted, the user receives a case number through which he or she can track progress. The user receives case updates until the problem is resolved. Updates about existing projects and newly submitted projects are publicly provided in real time via Twitter and a streaming website.

Source: City of Boston

MURALS, PUBLIC ART, AND DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION (DOTHAN, ALABAMA)

Known as the “official mural city of Alabama,” Dothan features 19 colorful murals painted on downtown buildings depicting the history of southeast Alabama, southwest Georgia, and the panhandle of Florida. Visitors can pick up a brochure and take a self-guided tour or secure a free guide for larger groups.

Some examples of the murals include a salute to the peanut industry, a history of nearby military installation Fort Rucker and women in the Wiregrass region. Other murals depict the African-American Airman group that flew during World War II and a salute to Johnny McBrow, who was a major cowboy film star from Dothan.

Every year in May, Dothan hosts the Wiregrass Festival of Murals art and music event. The festival features free concerts, children’s events, a five-acre flea market, tours of Dothan’s historic murals, and numerous food and crafts booths.

Source: The Downtown Group – Dothan, Alabama
RIVERPARK CAMPUS, COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY (COLUMBUS, GEORGIA)

Columbus State University in Columbus, Georgia is home to nearly 7,000 undergraduate students. The University’s main campus is located roughly six miles from Downtown Columbus, but the University has undoubtedly been the greatest catalyst for downtown redevelopment in Columbus in recent decades. Columbus State intended to develop new facilities to support its performing arts program, and realized that Downtown Columbus - outside of its main campus - could be a potential location for new facilities. After much planning, the University developed its RiverPark campus in Downtown Columbus and relocated the University’s Art, Music, Theatre, Communications and History Departments. The University acquired vacant space in Downtown Columbus and redeveloped much of the area – often preserving existing facades – to include student apartments for up to 360 students. Investments also included a collaborative effort to develop the city’s RiverCenter for the Performing Arts, which is home to the University’s Music Department. Downtown business has thrived with many new coffee shops, bookstores, restaurants, and nightlife opening and flourishing, in part due to the influx of college students. The University operates a shuttle between the main campus and its RiverPark campus.

Source: Columbus State University

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DAY, CENTRAL ATLANTA PROGRESS (ATLANTA, GEORGIA)

Central Atlanta Progress (CAP) is a non-profit organization that helps to guide the strategic redevelopment of Downtown Atlanta through a variety of programs and services. CAP hosts an annual “Downtown Development Day” to inform business owners and developers of new initiatives in Downtown Atlanta, promote underutilized parcels that are primed for redevelopment, and provide educational opportunities to interested parties regarding downtown revitalization. The “Day” is partially supported by a sponsorship from the Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW) of Atlanta and tickets are sold to individuals interested in the full program. The program varies each year but generally includes an optional tour of underutilized parcels, a keynote speaker, and breakout sessions.

Source: Central Atlanta Progress

SIOUX FALLS MULTICULTURAL CENTER (SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA)

While the Sioux Falls region has had a difficult time competing with Omaha, Des Moines, and the Twin Cities for some young professionals, the region has been successful in attracting immigrants to supplement regional workforce needs. Minority residents account for ten percent of the total population, and have fueled 22 percent of Greater Sioux Falls’ total growth since 2000. Many community stakeholders have credited the influx in diversity of the region’s low cost of living, its entry-level jobs with employers who promote a cultural sensitivity and openness, and the involvement of Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota, which sponsors refugees.
The Multi-Cultural Center of Sioux Falls estimates that the region’s immigrant populations represent more than 95 countries, including many in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, and Eastern Europe. Over 57 languages are spoken in Sioux Falls schools. In fact, the Center for Immigration Studies, a non-partisan research organization devoted to analyzing the economic and social impacts of immigration on the United States, has identified Sioux Falls’ Minnehaha County as a “New Ellis Island” based on its number of and proportion of foreign born immigrants. To help address the needs of new residents and changing community dynamics, the Chamber and City of Sioux Falls supported the establishment of a community and business leadership-led task force to explore potential solutions. The Multi-Cultural Center was founded in 1996 as a result of this process.

The Center raises awareness about multiculturalism by sponsoring events in Sioux Falls public schools, hosting discussion groups, providing diversity training for employers and employees, providing interpreters and translators, and offering assimilation assistance in the areas like language, driving, housing, food and nutrition, and computing. The Center offers more than 25 programs; many have been identified externally as best practices.

Source: Sioux Falls Multi-Cultural Center