



PLEDCO Strategic Plan 2016-17

Summarized Version

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Executive Summary

On December 3 and 4, 2016 the Primrose Lake Economic Development Corporation (PLEDCO) Board and ED held a two-day strategic planning session at Four Points Sheraton Hotel in Saskatoon, SK to conduct a situational analysis of PLEDCO and create goals and objectives for the next year. Vince Bruni-Bossio and Brooke Klassen co-facilitated the workshop and tracked information for report writing. Prior to the session, interviews were conducted with the attendees to determine 'Key Discussion Points' for the strategy session. This report highlights the findings and strategy from that session.

The PLEDCO Board reviewed the vision statement developed in 2014 and agreed to the wording change shown below to better reflect the aspirations of the organization.

PLEDCO Vision

PLEDCO will be a driving force ~~instrumental~~ in the growth of a thriving economy in the North West Region.

The PLEDCO Board reviewed their current mission and agreed that it continues to reflect the purpose of their organization.

PLEDCO Mission

To facilitate economic development through support of entrepreneurship, strategic partnerships and collaborations in the North West Region.

A review of the strategic plan from 2015 reveals PLEDCO has been effective in ensuring that community members have access to training through the introduction of a business incentive program. PLEDCO has continued to collaborate with economic development agencies and other partners to ensure that economic development goals in the four communities are factored into PLEDCO's mission. The organization faces the ongoing challenge of both deciding and justifying which projects to fund.

To ensure that the four communities feel consulted on major changes it was agreed that quarterly shareholder meetings would be held between the members and the Board. PLEDCO has become a role model for best practices in economic development and will continue to engage with other agencies in the broader region as opportunities present themselves.

There has been significant improvement in terms of the communication with communities and their satisfaction with PLEDCO. The Board indicated interest in having the Executive Director identify training needs in the communities along with available opportunities. The Board is also interested in measuring the effectiveness of PLEDCO's grant programs. PLEDCO's partnerships with other agencies to build capacity allows them to access increased knowledge and support for entrepreneurs. For example, PLEDCO refers entrepreneurs to Beaver River Community Futures as part of the Business Incentive Program. This program evolved from the primary producers' program for trappers, fishers and wild rice farmers.

Currently, the PLEDCO Board has allocated \$20,000 in their annual budget for scholarships. In the past year the committee awarded 10 at \$1,000 for individuals and 2 at \$2,000 for businesses. The committee will consider allocating the entire budgeted amount to fund additional scholarships or use the remaining funds for another special initiative such as a youth entrepreneurship scholarship fund.

The PLEDCO Board reviewed and agreed to amend the criteria/general guidelines used to evaluate applications for potential business ventures. Currently, there is no threshold for making the decision; an application does not have to align with a certain number of criteria. Going forward it is important that decision making is transparent and clearly communicated to the communities.

The PLEDCO Board discussed the criteria they could use to evaluate applications for infrastructure development. In principal, they agreed to a four-way split of the money available in the infrastructure fund which is not allocated to other projects (approximately 60% of the money in that fund). If a community does not access the funds, they will be held in trust until the community moves forward with a project.

Over the past few years, PLEDCO has made a significant investment in PRC, most recently to support the development of service station at Beauval junction. The Mayors and Board agreed that it is important to re-establish communication with PRC for a better understanding of how projects can move forward. At the session the Mayors of the four communities appointed Nick Daigneault, Mayor of Beauval, to act as the official liaison between PRC and PLEDCO.

The Board reviewed the financial statements for the 2015-16 fiscal year that ended March 31, 2016. The proceeds from the trust were down 21% but cash at the end of the year was up significantly. In addition, expenses exceeded revenue in 2016, reducing the overall fund balance by \$208,896. This could be due in part to the time lag from when grants are approved to when the funding is distributed. Overall, there is a positive fund balance at the end of the year of \$724,473.

The strategic 'Key Focus Areas' were amended by the PLEDCO Board as shown below and incorporated into a strategic work plan for the next year.

1. COMMUNITIES

- a. Training
- b. Entrepreneurship
- c. Scholarships
- d. Supporting Municipalities

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

- a. Community Economic Development Agencies
- b. PRC
- c. Other Partners

3. BROADER REGION

- a. Relationships

4. ORGANIZATION and BOARD

- a. Internal Infrastructure
- b. Governance
- c. Communications



PLEDCO Goals, Objectives and Action Items

In the session, PLEDCO developed a one-year strategic work plan to align directly with the 'Key Focus Areas' listed above. The work plan below includes the goals, objectives, actions items, rough timelines and key resources for all objectives. Having this detail included in the strategy will ensure that PLEDCO can complete and track all action items.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

The Board agreed that the work plan presented below should be reviewed quarterly with the ED to ensure clarity on the strategy and to understand any challenges that may impact on the achievement of various objectives. This discussion will also ensure that the Board can advise the ED on how to meet challenges.

Short Term Strategy (1 year)

Circle Focus: Communities

Key Focus Area: Training

1. Goal: To ensure community members have access to training for their entrepreneurship and employment aspirations.

Objective #1	To facilitate business training for community members.
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Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Connect with regional educational providers to determine available programming.	ED	March 2017	List developed and provided in ED Report	

Objective #2	To develop and implement a plan for training in communities.
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Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Identify training gaps and opportunities.	ED	June 2017	Report created	e.g. training for young entrepreneurs (high school)
2. Develop a plan to pilot training.	ED	September 2017	Plan created	Training can be held at the training facility in Jans Bay or any of the

				communities, depending on needs and availability.
3. Implement pilot program, if possible.	ED, PRC, Other partners	December 2017 (or early 2018)	Program delivered	

Key Focus Area: Entrepreneurship

1. Goal: To facilitate the creation of new businesses.

Objective #1	To follow up with businesses that have received funding.
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Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Develop survey tool.	ED	January 2017	Draft of survey submitted to Board	Survey funding recipients who previously received funding (regardless of whether business is ongoing)
2. Implement survey (by telephone).	ED	March 2017	Summary of findings created	
3. Report summary of survey results to the Board.	ED	April 2017	Report distributed to Board	
4. Update letter of offer to include condition to complete survey.	ED	January 2017	Letter of offer updated	

Objective #2	To track and support unsuccessful funding applicants.
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Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Formalize and execute a process to track and follow up with unsuccessful applicants.	ED	Ongoing	Process document created	Process to include reporting to the Board re: unsuccessful applicants (location, background on request, etc.) Check with other lenders/agencies regarding their tracking processes

Key Focus Area: Scholarships

1. Goal: To promote access to education.

Objective #1 To offer funding to students pursuing post-secondary education.

Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Develop a poster campaign to highlight past successful scholarship recipients.	ED	September 2017	Posters created and posted in appropriate places in the communities	Highlight previous recipients who have been successful in business (role model campaign)

Objective #2 To determine how to distribute the remaining funds in the scholarship budget.

Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Identify additional options for funding and distribute funds accordingly.	Scholarship Committee, Board	September 2017 (annual basis)	Additional funds distributed	Consider identified gaps in the training key focus area when determining how to distribute funds

Key Focus Area: Supporting Municipalities

1. Goal: To support sustainability of community development.

Objective #1 To develop and implement a policy for infrastructure development.

Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Develop criteria for the policy and a 5-year implementation plan.	ED, Board	March 2017	Draft policy and plan completed	
2. Communicate with the communities regarding how the policy will be implemented.	ED	May 2017	Included in the quarterly meetings with the mayors	

Circle Focus: Economic Development Agencies

Key Focus Area: Community Economic Development Agencies

1. Goal: To build effective relationships with agencies to facilitate development.

Objective #1	To help coordinate investment in the four communities.
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Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Re-establish communication via quarterly meetings.	ED, PRC, CDC's	Ongoing	Review progress at quarterly board meetings	Meetings are intended to ensure coordination, efficiencies, alliances, etc.

Key Focus Area: PRC

1. Goal: To collaborate with PRC on major economic development initiatives.

Objective #1	To ensure a sustainable working relationship with PRC.
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Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Work with liaison to understand PRC strategy.	Board, Liaison (Nick Daigneault)	Ongoing – January 2017	Review business plan, project progress reports, etc.	
2. Determine which PRC projects to continue funding.	Board, ED	February 2017	Decisions made, funding approvals	PRC Board will need to determine whether to continue with current projects from a feasibility perspective

Key Focus Area: Other Partners

1. Goal: To collaborate with other partners (service providers, funding agencies, etc.).

Objective #1 To better understand partnership with Beaver River Community Futures.

Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Meet with Beaver River to understand the mutual benefits of business incentive pilot program.	ED, Board, Beaver River Manager	January 2017	Meeting	PLEDCO Board wants to determine whether to continue with the Beaver River partnership

Objective #2 To build and strengthen effective relationships with other partners to facilitate development.

Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Identify potential new partners and develop and maintain relationships with current and future partners.	ED	Ongoing	Review progress at quarterly board meetings	Existing partners include CCDF, SMEDCO, SIEF

2. Goal: To identify strategic benefits of partnering to provide programs and services versus in-house delivery.

Objective #1 To complete a cost-benefit analysis of partnering versus in-house delivery.

Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Develop a list of potential partners, services and programs, costs, etc.	ED	April 2017	List created	
2. Determine feasibility of offering programs and services in-house.	ED	August 2017	Report created	

3. Report findings to Board.	ED, Board	September 2017	Board meeting	
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Circle Focus: Broader Region

Key Focus Area: Relationships

1. Goal: To develop collaborations that assist with economic development.

Objective #1	To ensure that PLEDCO has a presence in the broader business sector.
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Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Participate in regional economic development forums.	ED	Ongoing	Review progress at quarterly board meetings	
2. Continue communication with NWC to partner and ensure programs are coordinated.	ED, NWC	Ongoing	Review progress at quarterly board meetings	

Circle Focus: Organization and Board

Key Focus Area: Internal Infrastructure

1. Goal: To ensure that information about economic development funding is clear.

Objective #1	To revise and implement the process to review Economic Development projects and allocate funding.
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Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Review and update criteria and application for Economic Development funding.	ED, Board	March 2017	Criteria document updated	Criteria will be grouped and may also be condensed to ensure ease of understanding for applicants and Board

2. Report updates to Board for final approval.	ED, Board	April 2017	Decision made by Board	
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Key Focus Area: Governance

1. Goal: To ensure governance competency at the board level.

Objective #1	To provide orientation, training and access to information for board members.
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Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Hold an orientation/review session with board members and mayors.	ED, Board Members, Mayors	April 2017	Session held	Will include board governance training, review of agreements, etc.

Objective #2	To clarify and mitigate conflicts of interest within the Board.
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Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators / Deliverables	Notes
1. Review bylaws for potential conflicts of interest and develop list of recommendations for bylaw revisions.	ED, Board	April 2017	List of recommendations created	e.g. conflicts for board members of PLEDCO and PRC

Key Focus Area: Communications

1. Goal: To ensure effective communication with communities and partners about PLEDCO's mission and activities.

Objective #1		To develop and implement a communications plan.		
Action	Resources	Timelines / Completed	Indicators	Notes
1. Develop and distribute promotional materials (including brochures, newsletter).	ED	Newsletter, immediate Others, June 2017 - ongoing	Materials created and distributed	
2. Ensure website is updated.	ED	June 2017 - ongoing	Website information is up-to-date	May include board profiles and mayor profiles
3. Develop social media channels and maintain social media posts.	ED	Ongoing	Social media engagement (likes, posts, tweets, etc.)	
4. Execute outdoor advertising (signs in communities).	ED	June 2017 - ongoing	Signs created and installed	May include "PLEDCO has provided \$XX,XXX in funding to Y community over the past Z years"

Conclusion

The PLEDCO Board is well positioned to have a strong impact on the communities and stakeholders it serves and to meet the goals set out in this strategic plan. The goals and objectives of this plan will help the organization continue to facilitate economic development through support of entrepreneurship, strategic partnerships and collaborations in the North West Region. PLEDCO will continue to build capacity for development at the community, economic development and regional level. PLEDCO is also becoming known as a leader in the region in the area of program and process development.