

2012 MARKETING PLAN FOR THE CITY OF RAMSEY

Priority: Develop strategies to more aggressively and proactively market the City of Ramsey to encourage and attract new business opportunities to the area. The vision would be to enhance and grow a more diverse economy through innovation, partnerships, and relationships, to capitalize on our existing strengths while seeking new opportunities. The City should, in cooperation with other appropriate partners, develop a specific and focused marketing program.

Components to the 2012 Marketing Plan for the Ramsey EDA:

- Downtown Development. The COR is a key asset to market for new investment. With significant City resources put into infrastructure and land, this area becomes a target for new private sector investment. A significant portion of the community's business attraction strategy will include retail development (e.g. West 50). In addition to continued enhancements to the City's website, the EDA could develop a bi-fold piece, folded to 8 ½" x 11", a *Marketing Piece that targets restaurants and references the City's new Restaurant Assistance Policy*. Another opportunity would be to build upon the medical facilities that now exist in The COR. The EDA could participate in a marketing piece targeting medical companies. The EDA would work to identify medical-related company prospects that could be approached by the DM Team and area developers.
- Business Retention & Expansion. A successful BR&E program can fuel a successful marketing program. The needs of existing businesses can shape marketing. At least a portion of the BRE activity could help facilitate the implementation of a *Customer Relationship Management (CRM) program*. The goal is to manage the City's interactions with citizens and businesses involving technology to organize and enhance the City's responses. CRM is a computerized method of tracking requests while offering several management features. There are at least 17 possible CRM providers that have been identified by the City. The best four—GovQA, FastTrakGov, GovPartner, and CitizenServe—will provide product demonstrations in February. From there, a final selection will be made.
- Community Partners. A high level of coordination is required for this component to work. Partners could include: Ramsey businesses, Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce, Twin Cities Gateway CVB, and local business networking groups. The City of Ramsey could explore joining the *Twin Cities Gateway Convention & Visitors Bureau*. Twin Cities Gateway, with an office in Blaine, includes nine cities in the North Metro. This would entail the City Council adopting a 3% lodging tax. Comfort Suites appears supportive of the City joining the local CVB.

- Workforce Development. Skilled labor is a critical need for new and existing businesses. Business attraction efforts will not be successful if new businesses cannot find the quality labor they require. The continued growth of existing businesses will be hampered if quality employees are not available. At a minimum the City of Ramsey should re-engage involvement in a *General Advisory Committee connected with Anoka Technical College*. Other steps could entail collaboration with the college by having Ramsey marketing materials available at ATC, workforce meetings between City, businesses and ATC, encouraging Ramsey businesses to sponsor students that could be hired fulltime after completion of coursework.
- Pro-Business Environment. To attract new investment, the City must be prepared to partner with developers, investors and existing businesses. Joint activities could include moving ahead with the *DEED Shovel-Ready Program application*. This would lead to greater promotion of The COR on DEED's website to national and regional site selectors. Marketing pieces could be developed that promote the development of all City-owned property, including The COR, industrial parcels, and other scattered municipal properties with free and clear title and no immediate public use.
- Tourism. With an existing focus on commercial and industrial development, there is a need to promote visitors and tourists coming to community. Consider developing a marketing campaign called: *Ramsey. You are Welcome to Explore it*. The campaign would involve working with the Parks & Recreation staff and potentially Anoka County. Also, expanding the partnership with Game Fair to include website links and perhaps an EDA ad in Game Fair website. Building upon the work of City staff, develop community events promoting the Mississippi River Trail Corridor and other trails in the community.

2012 WORK PLAN FOR THE RAMSEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The 2012 Work Plan for the Ramsey EDA outlines existing guidelines for economic development policies, and priority focus areas delineating the highest and the next highest priorities for the current year.

Guidelines for the 2012 Work Plan for the Ramsey EDA:

- Work to sustain moderate growth or recovery of industrial, commercial, retail, and housing activities in the City.
- Target family-wage to high salary employment opportunities in a variety of industries.
- Continue to target businesses in specific industries, including medical, precision manufacturing, aerospace, and other high tech fields.
- Encourage the retention and growth of existing local firms.
- Endeavor to seek a positive business environment, quality growth and land use.
- Consider and make recommendations to the City Council regarding the streamlining of City regulations that impact development.
- Continue to respond to specific requests for assistance from local companies.
- Use infrastructure investment to attract new firms and for development of designated areas.
- Maximize private, local, state, and federal funding for projects.

Priority Focus Areas for 2012:

Highest Priorities

- Communicate with existing Ramsey businesses through the Ramsey Resident newsletter, Business Network meeting, Business Appreciation Day, and Business Expo.
- Expand, retain and create new employment in the City's existing industrial parks.
- Research and encourage the City to join the Twin Cities Gateway Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) in order to promote the Comfort Suites Hotel and the community's events (e.g. Happy Days and Game Fair) and venues (e.g. Fountains of Ramsey).
- Support the work of the Development Management (DM) Team to bring potential developers, retailers and office users to sites in the Center of Ramsey (COR); and provide regular updates about the COR to the EDA.
- Review the financial obligations and resources of the City's TIF districts and submit modifications as necessary.
- Consider joining the Minnesota Commercial Association of Realtors (MNCAR) Exchange. This would provide access to the Exchange's commercial property database and the ability to list Ramsey properties on the Exchange.

Moderately High Priorities

- Continue to promote multiple modes of transportation, including supporting the efforts to obtain funding for the Armstrong Interchange.
- Continue to follow-up on the results of the Retail Site Assessment of Ramsey's Customer Profile undertaken by Buxton in 2008.
- Consider and make recommendations to the City Council regarding the redevelopment of 167th Ave//Hwy 47 commercial node, including potential land acquisition of available property, the design of infrastructure, the potential creation of a TIF District, and the encouragement of residential development to support retail and other commercial ventures.
- Pursue a separate Zip Code with the U.S. Postal Service for the City of Ramsey.
- Develop long-term marketing strategy to improve area businesses and to attract new businesses.
- Actively contact and work with prospects concerning the possibility of a second grocery store for Ramsey.
- Consider the feasibility of a Medical-related or Biotech Business incubator in the City of Ramsey. This could include working with Genesis Business Centers, UEL or other entities.

Medium Priorities

- Develop a plan to recapitalize the Ramsey Revolving Loan Fund.
- Move forward with new Village Profile map of the City of Ramsey.
- Continue to work with Al Pearson regarding the sale of his property north of Hwy 10 and to the west of Puma Street and Legacy Christian Academy.
- Work with other City Departments to submit an application to DEED to seek the designation of the area near the transit station as a Transit Improvement Area (TIA).
- Support efforts by EDAM and other statewide organizations to seek funding for Brownfields Redevelopment and for TIA Loan Programs.
- Consider the establishment of new industrial/business park in the City of Ramsey. This could include doing a site evaluation of the industrial area south of LCA or south of Highway 10.