



Meeting Agenda
City of Mora, Economic Development Authority
2 p.m. Tuesday, January 9, 2024
Mora City Hall

Mora City Hall
101 Lake Street S
Mora, MN 55051
Kanabec County,
Minnesota

The Economic Development Authority (EDA) is responsible for improving the community's economic condition through job creation, tax base growth, and other means.

1. Call to Order
2. Oath of Office: none
3. Roll Call: ☐ Jody Anderson ☐ David Youngquist ☐ Robert Jensen ☐ Dan Johnson
☐ Brett Baldwin ☐ Alison Holland ☐ Mike Segner ☐ Rose Krie
4. Adopt Agenda *(No item of business shall be considered unless it appears on the agenda for the meeting. Board members may add items to the agenda prior to adoption of the agenda.)*
5. Election of Officers for 2024
6. Minutes
 - a. Approve minutes from November 8, 2023
7. Claims *(all can be done as one motion)*
 - a. Approve claims from October-November 2023
 - b. Approve claims from November-December 2023
8. Open Forum
(Individuals may address the committee about any item not contained on the regular agenda. There is a maximum of fifteen (15) Minutes set aside for open forum. A maximum of three (3) minutes is allotted per person. The EDA will take no official action on items discussed at the forum, with the exception of referral to staff for future report.)
9. Special Business *(none)*
10. New Business
 - a. Bylaw Amendment
 - b. Small Cities Development Program Update
 - c. 2023 Annual Summary of Economic Development Activities
 - d. U of M Tourism Assessment
11. Old Business
 - a. Adopt 2024 Schedule – Resolution EDA2024-112
 - b. Updates regarding land purchase proposals from Vincent Fashemo and Northstar Pontoons
12. Reports
 - a. Summary of Construction Activity 2024
 - b. Kirsten Faurie Report of Recent Activity



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13. Communications

- a. Kanabec County EDA Minutes (November)
- b. GPS::45::93/East Central Development Partnership December Newsletter

14. Adjournment

The next meeting of the EDA is scheduled for **2 p.m. Tuesday, March 12, 2024**



MEMORANDUM

Date January 9, 2024
To EDA
From Kirsten Faurie, Community Development Director
RE Election of officers

SUMMARY

The EDA will elect its officers for 2024.

DETAILS

Below is a brief summary of the officers to be elected and their duties. For full detail of duties, please refer to the EDA bylaws.

PRESIDENT: (previously Dan Johnson)

- Presides at all meetings of the board
- Signs all contracts, deeds, etc. executed by the EDA
- Submits recommendations and information concerning the business, affairs, and policies of the EDA.

VICE PRESIDENT: (previously Mike Segner)

- Performs the duties of the President in the Presidents absence

SECRETARY: (previously Kirsten Faurie)

- Keeps minutes of the meetings and maintains records of the EDA
- May have additional duties and responsibilities as set by the EDA

TREASURER: (previously Bob Jensen)

- Has care and custody of all funds and makes deposits in the name of the EDA
- Signs all orders for payments, keeps book of accounts

RECOMMENDATIONS

Elect an EDA President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer for 2024.

City of Mora Economic Development Authority
Minutes
1:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 8, 2023
Mora City Hall, 101 Lake St. S, Mora, MN

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof Dan Johnson called to order the regular meeting of the EDA at 1 p.m., on Wednesday, November 8, 2023, in the Mora City Hall council chambers.

2. Roll Call: Present: David Youngquist, Dan Johnson, Alison Holland, Mike Segner, Robert Jensen, Brett Baldwin, Rose Krie

Absent: Jody Anderson

Staff Present: City Administrator Glenn Anderson, Administrative Services Director Natasha Segelstrom, Accountant Kelly Christianson

Guests: Derek Carlson – Northstar Pontoons
Jim Hartshorn – Kanabec County EDA Director
Vincent Fashemo

3. Adopt Agenda: MOTION made by Krie, seconded by Youngquist, and unanimously carried to adopt the agenda.

4. Minutes: MOTION made by Segner, seconded by J. Anderson and unanimously carried to approve the May 2, 2023 minutes as presented.

5. Claims: MOTION by Baldwin, seconded by Segner and unanimously carried to approve the July-August, August-September, and September-October 2023 claims.

6. Open Forum: No persons spoke during open forum.

7. Special Business: None

8. New Business:

8a. Land Purchase and Development Proposal by Vincent Fashemo: Vincent Fashemo introduced himself to the board and presented his proposal to purchase the Downtown Commercial Corner (former Feed Mill property) (PID 22-03435-00) at the intersection of Union Street and Forest Avenue. Mr. Fashemo explained that his professional background is in healthcare, and that he has been working as an independent contractor for Welia Health for two years. He observed many of his peers were looking for rentable housing space and were unable to find it, forcing them to commute far distances or rent in other communities. With this need in mind, Fashemo saw the lot for sale and called Kirsten Faurie to discuss potential development. Fashemo has some experience in real estate, but not in construction of a new facility. He is working with a consultant, with Faurie and with Kanabec County EDA director Jim Hartshorn.

Fashemo proposed constructing a 10-unit building on the lot. Two units will be rentable

City of Mora Economic Development Authority

Minutes

1:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Mora City Hall, 101 Lake St. S, Mora, MN

commercial units on the ground floor. The second and third floors would be apartments, with two two-bedroom units and two one-bedroom units on each floor. The plan also includes space for parking. Fashemo was present to answer questions and ask the EDA for their support of the project before proceeding with next steps in purchasing and developing the property.

Fashemo noted that he is crunching the numbers on the cost to construct the building, which has become higher considering the costs of inflation and higher interest rates. With these high costs in mind, Fashemo asked the city to consider selling the lot for \$1, and consider offering a 5-year tax abatement or other financial incentives. His lender is looking to see the buy-in/support of the city and county before fully backing his proposal. Fashemo said this project would benefit the city by boosting the economy, bring in new residents, provide housing, and support local businesses.

Jensen asked about parking. While a site plan hasn't been completed yet, there is room for resident parking on the site. The Planning Commission may need to make a determination on whether or not the parking is adequate for the use.

Youngquist asked about rental rates. Fashemo estimated the one-bedroom units would be rented for \$1,050; \$1,250 for the two-bedroom units; \$2,500-\$3,000 for the commercial units. Fashemo noted that the affordability of the rents and will be affected by the financial support of the city and county.

Jensen asked for a brief history of the site. Faurie explained that the site was acquired by the city in 2008 as a potential site for a new public library or police department. The City had the then existing feed mill razed, but did not follow through with construction of a facility on the lot. The city subsequently put the lot for sale and requested proposals for development. The city has spent approximately \$173,000 in the acquisition and demolition of the property.

Hartshorn, who has also been working with Faurie and Fashemo, noted that this project is still in its beginning stages, and without doing a full financial analysis, doesn't know what kind of gap-funding it might needed for it to come to fruition. Today's discussion is to see if the EDA likes the project concept, and if it does, they can take next steps. Harthorn noted that by increasing the tax value of the site and adding to the tax rolls, that the city would be able to recoup its expenses relatively quickly. Exactly to what extent won't be known until there is more information about the total value of the project.

Segner, Johnson and Krie voiced support for the project concept.

City of Mora Economic Development Authority

Minutes

1:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Mora City Hall, 101 Lake St. S, Mora, MN

8b. Land Purchase and Development Proposal by Derek Carlson: Derek Carlson of Northstar Pontoons presented his proposal to purchase seven city-owned lots in the Mora Industrial Park and expand his business. Carlson is working with a new investor/business partner, Robert Davidson. He proposes building four new buildings. One 30,000 square foot building and two 100,000 square foot buildings for more pontoon and boat manufacturing. The fourth building would be an event center for hosting dealer shows, weddings, etc. He compared this proposed event center to Hangar 97 in Forest Lake. Carlson proposes installing a private taxilane from the Industrial Park property to the airport.

Total acreage of the seven lots is 35.35 acres. Carlson is offering \$1,000 per acre, for a total of \$35,350. Total Kanabec County Assessor's office estimated land value is \$288,900. Carlson is considering applying for MIF, tax abatement, job creation fund, etc.

Carlson proposed this project would occur in four phases, each phase creating 15-20 jobs for a total of 60 jobs over the course of the next 5-10 years. He also plans to implement utilize automation in his manufacturing.

Carlson also proposed that the city's unimproved right-of-way through the properties be vacated. This would save the city the investment of constructing the road and utilities to reach the unimproved lots on the east side of the Industrial Park.

Jensen noted that if these seven lots were sold for this project, only one 4.84 acre lot would remain in the park. Faurie noted that if that was the case, the EDA would consider if there is a need to expand the city's industrial space for more businesses. There are not currently plans to do so.

Holland asked about operating an event center in the Industrial Park, and that it may conflict with allowed uses. Faurie noted that J. Anderson, absent today, had questions about this use as well.

Segner said this project would be an exciting expansion for the city.

Jensen inquired about the wages for the jobs being offered. Carlson said his goal was a minimum of \$18/hour for their starting employees.

Faurie noted that Northstar Aluminum made an agreement with the city when they first built in the Industrial Park, in which the city wrote down the cost of the land with the understanding that there would be a certain number of jobs created. Those job requirements have not been met and Faurie advised thinking carefully about what would be a realistic job creation goal for this proposed project.

City of Mora Economic Development Authority
Minutes
1:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 8, 2023
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Johnson asked Carlson about what barriers were hindering job creation at the existing business. Carlson responded that the funding from his current investor has been insufficient to meet their goals.

Segner said the numbers Carlson has presented so far are projections, which contain risk. Assessing the potential of the project and how realistic the plan is would take closer examination of more detailed financial plans at a future date.

8c. 2023 Tax Abatement Report – JCF Properties: The EDA reviewed the tax abatement report from JCF Properties and determined it met its goal of creating residential dwelling units for annual abatement payment. MOTION by Jensen, seconded by Baldwin, and unanimously carried to accept the 2023 report and recommend that the annual abatement payment be made in December per the terms of the Business Subsidy Agreement.

8d. 2023 Tax Abatement Report – Northland Process Piping: The EDA reviewed the Tax abatement report from NPP, which showed they have exceeded their job creation goals. NPP will automatically receive its annual tax Abatement payment in December per the terms of the Business Subsidy Agreement. This report is informational and no action is needed.

8e. Survey for Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS): The EDA discussed economic development projects and prioritized them in order to respond to the East Central Regional Development Commission’s CEDS survey. The goal is to show planning and boost regional coordination in seeking grant funding. Faurie clarified that listing a project on the CEDS survey does not mean the EDA is committing any funds to completing the project, or that unlisted projects can’t be pursued.

Faurie mentioned a project EDA may want to consider pursuing is a “Community Tourism Assessment” by the U of M to guide tourism efforts. Cost is approximately \$8,000 or more.

Faurie also mentioned a potential paved bike trail along the railbed connecting Mora to the Munger Trail in Hinckley. The EDA members had not ranked this a very high priority compared to other projects, but other communities, like Quamba, may be more actively pursuing the project. That may be a reason to consider adding it to the CEDS survey.

After discussion, the EDA recommended the following projects be included in the CEDS survey response:

1. Business Retention and Expansion, which can include increasing childcare capacity
2. Tourism
3. Housing
4. Workforce development
5. Infrastructure that improves local quality of life

City of Mora Economic Development Authority
Minutes
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8f. 2024 EDA Meeting Calendar: Faurie presented the proposed 2024 EDA meeting calendar. The meetings are currently occurring quarterly. The board discussed if this was sufficient. There was consensus to tentatively change the meetings to occur at 2 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every odd month. In order to do that, the EDA would need to update its bylaws. A bylaw update and finalization of the calendar will be added to the Jan. 9, 2024 agenda.

9. Old Business:

9a. 2024 EDA Budget & Fee Schedule: City Accountant Kelly Christianson presented the 2024 Budget and Fee Schedule for finalization. Christianson noted that not much had changed from the preliminary to the final budget. The biggest change from the EDA's 2023 budget to the 2024 budget was an increase in Professional Services and Attorneys Fees. The other increase was in property taxes for city-owned properties in the Industrial Park. Revenues have stayed the same. The only change to the fee schedule was the hourly charge of the EDA director.

MOTION by Youngquist, seconded by Segner, and unanimously carried to approve the 2024 Budget and Fee Schedule.

10. Reports

a. Quarterly Financial Report: Christianson presented the EDA Quarterly Financial Report. She reported that fund balances are where they should be for this time of the year. Most of the movement of funds have been due to the Small Cities Development Program (SCDP), which seems to be well-utilized, organized, and overall is flowing smoothly.

b. Activity Update: Faurie provided an update on her recent EDA-related activities. She noted she and Hartshorn been working with Mora Public Schools administration and the school board to discuss potential development of the former Mora High School site. Faurie's overall goal being to develop the site in a planned, cohesive way that can build the tax base and increase housing.

Faurie noted she has been communicating with various business owners and making sure they are connected with the appropriate resources. This has included some potential child care providers.

11. Communications: The board reviewed communications from

- a. Kanabec County EDA Minutes** Holland shared how the city and county have been collaboration on housing, childcare, and business support. Holland shared that East Central Energy is making strong progress in expanding broadband in the rural portions of the county.
- b. Initiative Foundation**

City of Mora Economic Development Authority

Minutes

1:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 8, 2023

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- c. **Top 10 Employers**
- d. **Childcare Supply Demand Gap Analysis:** Faurie noted this analysis was provided by First Children's Finance and shows a shortage of 109 childcare slots within the Mora zip code.

12. Adjournment: MOTION by Baldwin, seconded by Krie and unanimously carried to adjourn the EDA meeting at 2:55 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the EDA is **2 p.m. Tuesday, January 9, 2023.**

President

City of Mora Staff

CITY OF MORA
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11/16/23 12:48 PM

Page 1

CHECK #	Search Name	Fund Descr	Dept Descr	Last Dim Descr	Comments	Amount
061007	MN DEPT OF EMP & ECON DEV					
061007	MN DEPT OF EMP	RED LOAN		Due to Minnesota De	NPP/GRANT #CDAP-14-0022-H	\$3,854.58
061007	MN DEPT OF EMP & ECON DEV					\$3,854.58
061043	MORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS					
061043	MORA PUBLIC SCH	ECONOMIC	ECONOMIC DEVEL	Meetings, Training, &	LEADERSHIP TRAINING-KIRST	\$25.00
061043	MORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS					\$25.00
061064	FAURIE, KIRSTEN					
061064	FAURIE, KIRSTEN	ECONOMIC	ECONOMIC DEVEL	Meetings, Training, &	MILEAGE TO MNCAR CONFERE	\$89.37
061064	FAURIE, KIRSTEN					\$89.37
061100	MN DEPT OF EMP & ECON DEV					
061100	MN DEPT OF EMP	RED LOAN		Due to Minnesota De	NPP/GRANT #CDAP-14-0022-H	\$3,854.58
061100	MN DEPT OF EMP & ECON DEV					\$3,854.58
061110	ELAN FINANCIAL SERVICES					
061110	ELAN FINANCIAL S	ECONOMIC	ECONOMIC DEVEL	Meetings, Training, &	FAURIE - MNCAR EXPO - MN C	\$75.00
061110	ELAN FINANCIAL SERVICES					\$75.00
061119	VERIZON WIRELESS					
061119	VERIZON WIRELES	ECONOMIC	ECONOMIC DEVEL	Telephone	CELL	\$8.25
061119	VERIZON WIRELESS					\$8.25
						\$7,906.78

THE OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2023 CLAIMS HAVE BEEN APPROVED FOR PAYMENT BY:

President

Kirsten Faurie, Secretary

Treasurer

CITY OF MORA
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12/14/23 10:10 AM

Page 1

CHECK #	Search Name	Fund Descr	Dept Descr	Last Dim Descr	Comments	Amount
061197	MN DEPT OF EMP & ECON DEV					
061197	MN DEPT OF EMP	RED LOAN		Due to Minnesota De	DEC 2023 - NPP/GRANT#CDAP	\$3,854.58
061197	MN DEPT OF EMP & ECON DEV					\$3,854.58
061260	ELAN FINANCIAL SERVICES					
061260	ELAN FINANCIAL S	ECONOMIC	ECONOMIC DEVEL	Meetings, Training, &	GROW ECONOMY COURSE-FA	\$575.00
061260	ELAN FINANCIAL SERVICES					\$575.00
061270	VERIZON WIRELESS					
061270	VERIZON WIRELES	ECONOMIC	ECONOMIC DEVEL	Telephone	CELL	\$8.25
061270	VERIZON WIRELESS					\$8.25
061283	CAMPBELL KNUTSON, P.A.					
061283	CAMPBELL KNUTSO	ECONOMIC	ECONOMIC DEVEL	Legal Services	MISC LEGAL SERVICES-BUSIN	\$185.00
061283	CAMPBELL KNUTSON, P.A.					\$185.00
						\$4,622.83

THE NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2023 CLAIMS HAVE BEEN APPROVED FOR PAYMENT BY:

President

Kirsten Faurie, Secretary

Treasurer



MEMORANDUM

Date January 9, 2024
To EDA
From Kirsten Faurie, Community Development Director
RE Bylaw Amendment

SUMMARY

The EDA will consider amending their bylaws to change the frequency of regular meetings.

DETAILS

At their Nov. 8, 2023 meeting, the EDA board came to the consensus to change their regular meeting schedule from quarterly to bimonthly. The EDA's current bylaws stipulate quarterly meetings, therefore changing the regular meeting frequency requires changing the bylaws. The EDA directed staff to bring a proposed bylaw amendment and approval of the 2024 meeting schedule to the next meeting.

Staff recommends amending the EDA bylaws as follows, which includes language taken from the EDAM's Economic Development Authority Handbook model bylaws:

ARTICLE III - MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular Meetings. ~~The Board shall hold quarterly meetings in the City Hall.~~ The regular meetings of the Board shall occur according to a meeting schedule, if any, adopted or revised from time to time by resolution of the Board.

Staff has prepared a resolution to ratify the change.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Offer a motion to adopt Resolution EDA2024-111 amending the Bylaws of the Mora Economic Development Authority changing the regular meeting frequency.

Attachments

Resolution EDA2024-111

RESOLUTION NO. EDA2024-111

**A RESOLUTION OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
OF THE CITY OF MORA, MINNESOTA AMENDING ITS BYLAWS**

WHEREAS, the Economic Development Authority of the City of Mora (EDA) adopted bylaws on March 3, 1992; and

WHEREAS, the bylaws grant the EDA the authority to amend its bylaws as necessary if adopted by resolution by a majority of the members of the board; and

WHEREAS, the EDA bylaws ARTICLE III-MEETINGS Section 1 currently reads as follows:

Section 1. Regular Meetings. The Board shall hold quarterly meetings in the City Hall.

WHEREAS, the EDA board decided to update the bylaws, most recently amended on August 4, 2020, in order to change the frequency of the EDA's regular meetings; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Economic Development Authority of the City of Mora, Minnesota, hereby amends its bylaws by changing ARTICLE III-MEETINGS Section 1 to read as follows:

Section 1. Regular Meetings. The regular meetings of the Board shall occur according to a meeting schedule, if any, adopted or revised from time to time by resolution of the Board.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this amendment shall become effective immediately upon passage.

The foregoing resolution was introduced and moved for adoption by Board Member _____ and seconded by Board Member _____.

Voting for the resolution:

Voting against the resolution:.....

Abstained from voting:

Absent:

Motion carried and resolution adopted this 9th day of January, 2024.

President

ATTEST: _____
Kirsten Faurie, Secretary



MEMORANDUM

Date January 9, 2024
To EDA
From Kirsten Faurie, Community Development Director
RE Summary of 2023 Economic Development Activities

SUMMARY

The Economic Development Authority of the City of Mora bylaws establish that the EDA shall prepare and submit an annual report to the City Council by March 1 of each year. The EDA will review the 2023 Summary (attached) and suggest changes before approving the report to go to the City Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Review the 2023 Summary of Economic Development Activities.

MOTION to approve the report to be shared with the City Council (as presented or amended.)

Attachments

2023 Summary Of Economic Development Activities

2023 SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Business Support

Business Retention and Expansion Visits: Part of the general services off the Community Development Department is connecting business owners with available resources for funding, business support, planning, education or finding locations that suit their needs. Part of this is accomplished by having regular meetings with area business owners. This work is continuous.

Tax Abatement

The City of Mora continues to give tax abatement payments for the two organizations that have tax abatement agreements with the city.

- One, Northland Process Piping, agreed to create 15 FTE jobs over 12 years with a total possible abatement of \$37,500. To date NPP has received \$34,077.26 in abatement.
- Two, JCF Properties, agreed to renovate the former motel into a minimum of 20 residential units and receive abatement of \$100/unit/year over 10 years with a maximum total abatement of \$20,000. To date JCF has received \$12,433.98 in abatement.

Infrastructure

MNDOT Highway 65/23 Corridor Study: The Minnesota Department of Transportation is studying the Hwy 65/23 corridor in Mora in order to understand the needs of the area, identify future improvements and develop and ultimate vision for the corridor. MnDOT and city staff have been working together to consider areas of future residential and commercial development and how that may affect plans for future construction. Conversations have included focus groups with area residents and businesses.

Transportation Alternatives Grant: The City of Mora applied for and was awarded \$396,600 in federal funds in order to extend a paved pedestrian trail along Wood Street from approximately 7th Street to Maple Ave.

Development

Developer Tours: The city is working closely with the County EDA to bring housing developers on tours of sites that could be prime locations for future housing and commercial development. Conversations with potential developers are ongoing.

Downtown Commercial Corner: The EDA heard a proposal from Vincent Fashemo to purchase the Downtown Commercial Corner lot and construct a mixed-use structure including commercial space on the main level, and two levels of apartments above. This details of this proposal are still developing.

Northstar Pontoons Proposal: The EDA heard a proposal from Derek Carlson of Northstar Pontoons to purchase a number of lots in the Mora Industrial Park and construct several buildings for boat manufacturing and related activities. This details of this proposal are still developing.

Senior Housing: Staff from the Mora HRA, Kanabec County EDA and Mora EDA have been working with DW Jones in an attempt to secure funding to construct a 24-unit senior housing apartment adjacent the HRA's Mysa House. The Initiative Foundation provided grant funding for a feasibility study and DW Jones coordinated applications to MN Housing Finance and the Federal Home Loan Bank. The project was not selected; staff continues to review ways to tweak the project for reapplication next year or find other funds to leverage.

Former Mora High School site on Maple Ave: The site of the former Mora High School has excellent housing development potential. Kirsten and Jim Hartshorn met with Mora Schools Superintendent Dan Voce and the Mora School Board to discuss potential housing/mixed-use development on the school's Maple Ave East properties. The High School is currently being demolished; Kirsten has recommended the school put out a Request For Proposals (RFP) for development of the site. The RFP would be sent to housing developers who might be interested. The school board is considering this option but has not made a decision at the time of this report.

East Central Development Partnership (Formerly GPS 45::93)

The City of Mora continued its membership of the East Central Development Partnership which promotes the East Central region as a great place to live, work and recreate. The group works to provide education and networking opportunities for members, promote enhancement of the regional workforce and infrastructure, attract new business and support existing business.

Small Cities Development Program (SCDP)

The Mora EDA is participating in a 2-year residential rehabilitation program that provides 0% interest, forgivable loans to eligible homeowners and rental owners to repair residences. Eligible projects include repairs to improve health and safety (plumbing, heating, electric, and lead hazards); installation or repair of handicap accessible ramps, doors, and bathroom fixtures; or repairs to building structure (foundation, windows, doors, siding, roofing). The grant program would have expired September 30, 2023 but was extended due to ongoing projects.

Childcare

Capacity Builders: City Staff continues to participate with Kanabec Childcare Capacity Builders group. This group is in the process of building its membership and re-developing its goals and action plan.

Support: Staff continues to have conversations with providers, businesses and state agencies to explore options and action plans to support area childcare.

Miscellaneous Activities

Education & Networking: EDA members and city staff participated in multiple professional development events and training opportunities including:

- Minnesota Commercial Association of Real Estate Expo
- Community Venture Network Events
- GPS 45::93 Annual Meeting and other events

Top 10 Employers: The City of Mora continues its annual survey of the businesses providing the most jobs in the community and compiling them in an annual Top 10 Employers report

Kanabec County EDA: City of Mora Community Development Director Kirsten Faurie continues to serve on the Kanabec County EDA board representing the city.



MEMORANDUM

Date January 9, 2024
To EDA
From Kirsten Faurie, Community Development Director
RE U of M Tourism Assessment Program

SUMMARY

The EDA will discuss the U of M Tourism Assessment Program and direct staff.

DETAILS

The University of Minnesota Extension operates a Tourism Assessment program. The program helps communities evaluate their current tourism strengths and weaknesses, and helps create a plan to develop the community's tourism assets.

Staff is asking the EDA to review the program details, ask questions, and direct staff to take next steps if the EDA is interested in participating.

Attachments

U of M Tourism Assessment Program Overview

Tourism assessment program



Get a 360-degree view of your tourism assets

Our tourism assessment program mobilizes communities interested in assessing and developing their community assets for tourism. The program brings together community knowledge and University resources.

With education, research and facilitation support from our educators and tourism specialists, your community will:

- Create an inventory of local tourism assets
- Assess tourism assets from local, visitor and expert perspectives
- Discover opportunities for tourism development
- Identify action steps for sustainable tourism development

This robust tourism assessment delivers a 360° look at your community's current tourism assets and potential for tourism development.

Our process

The tourism assessment process includes the following:

Inventory of tourism assets

Community members identify local assets. These include:

- Natural and built attractions
- Services
- Facilities
- Human resources
- Events

Other documents and reports (e.g., comprehensive plans, past studies) are also gathered from the community.

This creates a baseline of information for the leadership committee and expert team. It also helps ensure your tourism development efforts align with the community's values, goals and plans.

Visitor experiences

Mystery visitors provide the perspective of someone visiting your community for the first time. We select visitors that match your community's tourism goals. They visit the community and provide feedback about the community's tourism assets and their experience as a visitor.

Tourism expertise

A team of community tourism experts visits your community to assess local assets. The Tourism Center builds a team with expertise specific to your community's assets and interests.

During the visit, these experts facilitate discussions with community members that identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for tourism in the community.

Action steps

We provide a written report with findings and suggestions to help your community identify local goals for tourism development that align with community values. In a facilitated conversation, local leaders will select short and longer-term actions to build and enhance tourism in your community.

Community success stories

Read sample reports from communities that have completed a tourism assessment:

- [Clinton, Graceville, Beardsley](#)
- [Faribault](#)
- [Hastings](#)
- [Lindstrom](#)

How to get started

Contact the [Tourism Center](#) to learn more about the program.

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Please scan the above QR code to visit the live webpage for links.

<https://extension.umn.edu/research-communities/tourism-assessment-program>

RESOLUTION NO. EDA2024-112

**A RESOLUTION OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
OF THE CITY OF MORA, MINNESOTA ADOPTING THE 2024 MEETING SCHEDULE**

WHEREAS, the bylaws of the EDA authorize the Board to establish a schedule of regular meetings by resolution; and

WHEREAS, on January 9, 2024 the EDA came to the consensus to change its regular meetings from quarterly to bimonthly; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Economic Development Authority of the City of Mora, Minnesota, will hold its 2024 regular meetings at 2 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every odd month (unless otherwise specified) as follows:

- January 9, 2024
- March 12, 2024
- May 14, 2024
- July 9, 2024
- September 10, 2024
- November 12, 2024

The foregoing resolution was introduced and moved for adoption by Board Member _____ and seconded by Board Member _____.

Voting for the resolution:
Voting against the resolution:.....
Abstained from voting:
Absent:

Motion carried and resolution adopted this 9th day of January, 2024.

President

ATTEST: _____
Kirsten Faurie, Secretary



CITY OF MORA, MN
SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY 2023

	2023	2022
TOTAL NUMBER OF BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED	209	162
TOTAL VALUATION OF PERMITS	\$5,340,757	\$6,540,224

Total Commercial Permits	20	17
Total Commercial Valuation	\$1,145,435	\$2,917,906

Total Residential Permits	189	117
Total Residential Valuation	\$4,195,322	\$3,622,318

New Single Family Homes

1. Stephen Johnson	160 White Pine Ct
2. Fedder Homes	830 Nelson Ave
3. Seth Stahlke	1260 Stahlke Rd
4. Nancy Foss	18497 McCarty Ct
5. Mora Acquisition LLC	98 Malmgren Ln
6. Regency of Minnesota Inc	762 Kenwood Ln
7. Regency of Minnesota Inc	775 Portage Ave
8. Regency of Minnesota Inc	906 Frankie Ln

New Commercial Buildings

1. Federated Co-op	1640 Maple Ave E
2. American Legion Goldsmith Post 201	203 Barker St

Miscellaneous

1. Maintenance Permits.....	115
2. Plumbing Permits	23
3. Mechanical Permits	24
4. Fence Permits	2
5. Sign Permits	4
6. Demolition Permits	4



MEMORANDUM

Date January 9, 2024
To Economic Development Authority
From Kirsten Faurie, Community Development Director
RE Activity Update

SUMMARY

HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT

Downtown Commercial Corner Development: Kirsten and Jim Hartshorn have been keeping in contact with Vincent Fashemo regarding his proposal to purchase the Downtown Commercial Corner and construct a mixed-use building with commercial space on the first floor, and two floors of apartments above. Kirsten took calls from two other individuals who had questions about purchasing the lot.

Follow ups with Derek Carlson regarding Northstar Pontoons expansion proposal: On Friday, Dec. 15, the following people met to discuss Northstar Pontoons: Kirsten Faurie (Mora EDA), Brad Brzezinski (MN DEED) Jordan Zeller (ECRDC), Bob Voss (ECRDC) and Jim Hartshorn (Kanabec County EDA). This group met to discuss Derek's proposal to separate the Northstar Pontoons business from his current partner, purchase a new lot in the industrial park, and re-build an entirely new pontoon manufacturing building and get some new equipment. The group discussed if the project would be a good candidate for DEED's MIF funding, as well as Derek's next steps.

Potential Industrial Park Sale: Multiple conversations with a prospective manufacturer regarding a site in the Mora Industrial Park. Next steps are to explore funding options, have conversations with DEED, etc. Had conversations with the area Hydrologist regarding impervious surface coverage requirements in the area.

Housing Developer Follow-Up: Kirsten and Jim Hartshorn met with a housing developer with a history of successful projects in the area to discuss their future goals, challenges, and ways the EDA can offer support.

Property Developer Tour: Kirsten and Jim Hartshorn provided a tour of the city to a potential developer who has not visited the city previously.

BUSINESS SUPPORT/EXPANSION

Potential New Downtown Business: Marie Keintop has purchased the building at 125 Railroad Ave. Formerly the home of Midwest Environmental Consulting, the new owner expressed her intent to renovate the building and open a bar/pizza business.

Potential New Small Business: Kirsten had conversations and emails with a potential entrepreneur, providing her with multiple small business resources & contacts, information about the city's RED/MIC loan program, building permits, licensing, and zoning.

Memorandum

Follow ups with Recovering Hope: Recovering Hope Treatment Center is among the city's top 10 employers and recently constructed two homes at their campus to serve clients. The RHTC is strongly affected by addiction treatment funding changes made at the legislature. Kirsten has been in touch regarding the challenges and recent additions.

Business Retention & Expansion: *(These visits are intended to keep in touch with business owners/organizations to understand their needs and provide assistance with issues, and overall supporting business growth and success.)*

- Love the Journey: Simple check in, discussed off-street parking

CHILDCARE

Childcare Capacity Builders: This group continues to meet and is in the process of inviting new members and re-establishing goals and a strategic work plan. This group most recently met on Dec. 4; the next meeting is Tuesday, Jan. 23.

OTHER

Hwy 23/65: City Staff continues to participate in conversations with MnDOT regarding reconstruction of the Hwy 23/65 Corridor. MnDOT and the City of Mora recently co-hosted an open house and focus group conversation on Dec. 7 to discuss options and impacts.

Property Feature: Kirsten worked with the GPS::45::93/East Central Development Partnership in order to feature the Mora Industrial Park in their December newsletter. (See In Communications)

MEETING MINUTES

Kanabec County Economic Development Authority (EDA)

November 8, 2023 - 3:30pm

Kanabec County Courthouse, Meeting Room #5

317 Maple Ave E, Mora, MN 55051

and Online/Teleconference via Webex

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Members Present: Kathi Ellis, Alison Holland, Jerry Tvedt, Lisa Holcomb, Wayne Davis, Peter Ripka, Kirsten Faurie

Members Absent: Ivan Black, Lonnie Ness

Staff Present: Jim Hartshorn, Kelsey Schiferli

Others Present: Special Guest, Vincent Fashemo, President of Triple Tee, LLC

Vice Chairperson Lisa Holcomb called the meeting to order at 3:33pm.

Action #1 – It was moved by Alison Holland, seconded by Kathi Ellis and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

Action #2 – It was moved by Jerry Tvedt, seconded by Alison Holland and carried unanimously to approve the September 13, 2023 minutes as presented.

3:34pm – Kirsten Faurie arrived.

The group reviewed the account activity report, fund balance report, and revenue/expenditure report ending October 31, 2023.

Action #3 – It was moved by Jerry Tvedt, seconded by Kathi Ellis and carried unanimously to approve the financial reports ending October 31, 2023.

Vincent Fashemo, President of Triple Tee, LLC met with the EDA to present a proposed commercial/apartment complex in downtown Mora. The need for rentable housing in Mora was discussed, especially within walking distance of Welia. The EDA expressed support in favor of the proposed project. Information only, no action was taken.

EDA Director Jim Hartshorn presented the revised proposed 2024 EDA Budget. Information only, no action was taken.

EDA Director Jim Hartshorn gave an overview of the revised Kanabec County EDA Proposed Strategic Plan 2024-2026.

Action #4 – It was moved by Kathi Ellis, seconded by Kirsten Faurie and carried unanimously to approve the Kanabec County EDA Proposed Strategic Plan 2024-2026 as presented.

EDA Director Jim Hartshorn led a discussion regarding a request for a letter of support for East Central Energy's Border-to-Border Round 9 grant.

Action #5 – It was moved by Alison Holland, seconded by Wayne Davis and carried unanimously to authorize Chairperson Lonnie Ness to send the letter of support for East Central Energy's Broadband Project for the MN Border-to-Border Round 9 grant program, on behalf of the Kanabec County EDA.

Other discussion: Kirsten Faurie gave an update regarding a business owner in the Mora Industrial Park that is proposing to purchase seven of the eight remaining lots in the park to expand his business. Jim Hartshorn plans to meet with the County Board to give updates regarding the EDA every other month next year. Alison Holland gave an update regarding the Highway 65/23 Coalition. Information only.

Action #6 – It was moved by Jerry Tvedt, seconded by Wayne Davis and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 4:53pm and to meet again on Wednesday, January 10, 2023 at 3:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelsey Schiferli - Kanabec County Coordinator's Assistant

Kirsten Faurie

From: East Central Development Partnership <gps4593info+gmail.com@ccsend.com>
Sent: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:32 PM
To: Kirsten Faurie
Subject: Development News from East Central MN



GPS:45:93
YOUR POINT OF OPPORTUNITY.

Economic Development News - December 2023

Special Announcement!

GPS 45:93 is now the East Central Development Partnership.

We're rebranding! Earlier this spring our membership selected East Central Development Partnership as our official name, going forward. Watch for a new logo and website in the coming months!

Annual Meeting

Featured Deb Brown of SaveYour.Town

The East Central Development Partnership met September 22 for one of our most engaging annual meetings to date! We enjoyed a tasty lunch of grilled chicken and lemon sauce on wild rice with French cut green beans at the Braham Event Center. President Stephanie Hillesheim gave a recap of the past year in a welcome overview before introducing guest presenter Deb Brown, co-founder of [SaveYour.Town](#).

"We picked the name SaveYour.Town because that is what you are going to do, save your town. No one is coming to do it for you. No factory or big business is going to save you. No outside expert has the right answer. It's you," states Deb's website, which adds: "We believe small towns can be saved by their own people using their own resources."

Deb's presentation began by covering common rural challenges (lack of housing and child care top the list along with population loss) as well as trends which are new or have accelerated since the start of the pandemic, such as inactive downtowns. One eye-opening statistic, for instance, is that an estimated 42% of the U.S. labor force is now working from home full-time.

Deb poked holes in the notion that "rural is dead," arguing instead that interest in rural areas is on the rise. According to recent survey results published on [SaveYour.Town](#), small and rural towns have high levels of optimism about the future.

The core of Deb's presentation focused on practical solutions you can put into action right away in your community to improve quality of life for residents while attracting tourists and newcomers. Examples include:

- Cheap downtown placemaking ideas (such as replacing blight with murals)
- Creative ways to fill empty buildings
- Support for innovative rural business models
- Marketing and promotion tactics that work for small towns
- A shift from passive hiring practices to active hiring (going out in the community and connecting with people)

The day before the meeting, we had the chance to tour around the region with Deb and meet local community and economic development staff. We visited Isanti, Princeton, Milaca, Ogilvie, Mora, Sandstone, Hinckley, Pine City, North Branch, and Cambridge, and spent the night at the historic [Grant House](#) in Rush City before heading to Braham for the annual meeting.

We want to thank the Initiative Foundation for its grant support in helping us make Deb's visit a success. You can view the slides from [Deb's presentation](#) and also check out [her press kit](#) to learn more.



Featured Location: Kanabec County

Kanabec County is located 70 miles north of the Twin Cities with a population of approximately 16,032 according to the 2020 census. The county seat is Mora (population 3,470), which sits at the crossroads of Minnesota State Highways 65 and 23.

Kanabec County is home to two Shovel Ready Certified industrial parks with several vacant lots for sale: [Mora Industrial Park](#) and [Braham Industrial Park](#). I-35 is located 17 miles east of Mora Industrial Park and 13 miles east of Braham Industrial Park.

The largest private employer in Kanabec County is Commercial Plastics, a custom injection plastics molder specializing in thermoplastics manufacturing. Major local employers also include Lakes & Pines Community Action Council, St. Clare Living Community of Mora, RJ Mechanical, OlymPak Printing & Packaging, and Welia Health.

Kanabec County is known for hosting the [Vasaloppet](#) each February, which is the largest cross-country ski race in Minnesota. Kanabec County is also home to [Ogilvie Raceway](#).

Contact the Kanabec County Economic Development Authority to learn more about this thriving business community and how you can become a part of it.

Learn more: [Kanabec County EDA](#)

Featured Business: Sunrise Nutrition

Sunrise Nutrition is a local, family-owned business that brings healthy “fast food” to North Branch with multiple options for meal replacement shakes, energizing tea, protein balls, iced coffee, and more.

Owner Carri Anderson has devoted her life to a better health journey. The Sunrise Nutrition mission is to create a lively environment while encouraging lifelong friendships.

“We strive to improve your quality of life, achieve your wellness goals, and support your best possible life,” shares the Sunrise Nutrition website. “When you choose us, you join a community. We work not just with you but with other members of our community to build a network of people working together for a healthier world.”

With years of experience, the Sunrise Nutrition team can share knowledge about the most effective ways to take care of your body. They can also help you create a custom nutrition plan that’s right for you, and connect with more local resources.

Visit Sunrise Nutrition at 38865 7th Avenue in North Branch or online at <https://sunrisenutritionnb.com/>.



GET FAMILIAR WITH OUR PRODUCTS

SHAKE FAVORITES	TEA FAVORITES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apple Crisp• 7 Layer Bar• S'mores• Turtle Cheesecake• Cookies and Cream	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beach Please• Jolly Rancher• Mango Tango• Strawberry Lemonade• Captain America

Featured Property: Mora Industrial Park

The 80-acre Mora Industrial Park is easily accessible from Highways 23 and 65 and served by the adjacent Mora Municipal Airport. The first addition is filled with light industrial companies representing a broad cross-section of industries. The second addition includes five certified Minnesota Shovel Ready lots ranging in size from 2.37 acres to 9.16 acres. Lots can be combined or divided to suit individual land needs. All lots are plotted on level terrain.

Pricing and Incentives

Land prices in the Mora Industrial Park are ultra competitive at only \$12,500 per acre which includes all existing infrastructure (paved streets, street lighting, storm drainage, and water and sanitary sewer). No special assessments due. Final prices are negotiable based on project size and the anticipated economic development benefits to the community. While the final decision rests with the City EDA and Council, businesses have purchased Mora Industrial Park lots for \$0 if the project met job creation goals!

The City of Mora also offers a Mora Industrial Commercial revolving loan fund which is among the few public financing programs that fund operating capital as well as machinery, equipment, and construction.

Utilities and Rates

- Electricity: 12,470 volts, 3 phase power, KW transformer capacity up to 30,000 KVA; industrial rate of \$.0781 per kWh plus demand rate of \$11.50 per kW
- Water: 12-inch main @ 50 PSUG; \$5.53 per 1,000 gallons
- Sewer: 8-inch gravity sewer main; \$8.63 per 1,000 gallons of wastewater
- Natural Gas: 2-inch line @ 15#
- Internet Access: Wireless and DSL



Mora: A City for All Seasons

Mora, the county seat of Kanabec County, is approximately 65 miles north of Minneapolis-St. Paul and 55 miles east of St. Cloud at the intersection of Highway 65 and 23. Mora is primarily a residential community with an approximate population of 3,665. It's every outdoor enthusiast's dream as it is surrounded by area lakes and rivers. There are numerous wildlife areas, including state, county, and city parks, miles of multi-purpose paved trails, and groomed ski and snowmobile trails.

For more information, contact City of Mora Community Development Director Kirsten Faurie at k.faurie@cityofmora.com or (320) 225-4807.

Learn more: [Mora Industrial Park](#)

GPS 45:93 | www.gps4593.com



East Central Development Partnership | 315 Main Street South, Ste 101, Pine City, MN 55063

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