

## **2010-2013 CONAC Strategic Plan**

***Vision: "Building our Future through Community Partnerships."***

***Mission: "The Center of North America Coalition (CONAC) Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) exists to create our future through community partnerships, building regional organizational capacity, and fostering cooperative assistance to facilitate community development."***

### **Goal 1 : Identify and encourage leadership in our communities.**

- A. Supporting opportunities that foster leadership
  - 1. Endorsement of Rural Leadership ND project efforts
  - 2. Encouraging intergenerational leadership programs for youth
  - 3. Identifying new leadership (youth, elderly, low income, unemployed)
  - 4. Fostering community leadership
  - 5. Continuation of leadership training when opportunities present themselves

### **Goal 2 : Create networks with partnering organizations.**

- A. Coordinating and make more accessible the resources available inside and outside the CONAC Region.

### **Goal 3: Assist CONAC communities in efforts to enhance their quality of life.**

- A. Supporting community efforts to address housing needs
  - 1. Endorsement of projects that construct "spec" homes in small communities
  - 2. Endorsement of projects that create housing for mid-income populations
  - 3. Endorsement of green and energy efficient projects
- B. Identifying and implementing young people retention & attraction strategies.
  - 1. Support for internship programs
  - 2. Matching young entrepreneurs with business
- C. Exploring healthcare collaboration possibilities inside and outside the CONAC region
  - 1. Keeping services in existence (rural ambulance, EMS, fire dept)
  - 2. Recruiting and retaining doctors & nurses
  - 3. Support for adequate medical facilities
  - 4. Providing affordable health care
- D. Assisting communities in the development of water systems, public services and other infrastructure needs to improve the quality of life and attract new residents and businesses
  - 1. Support of efforts to secure an inter-modal shipping site in or near the zone
  - 2. Endorsement of infrastructure projects within the Zone
- E. Encouraging workforce and lifelong learning opportunities within the CONAC region
  - 1. Endorsement of opportunities for work-force training
  - 2. Expansion of on-the-job training and apprentice programs

**Goal 4: Increase the diversity and quality of economic opportunities in our region.**

- A. Increasing employment opportunities available in CONAC communities
  - 1. Create a strategy to attract government out-sourced jobs
  - 2. Encouragement of expansion and attraction of businesses in the Region that offers high quality jobs
- B. Recognizing tourism as the second leading industry in North Dakota
  - 1. Networking of tourism entities - public and private
  - 2. Encouragement of tourism business start-ups
  - 3. Support for tourism infrastructure
- C. Encouraging the retention, expansion and start-up of entrepreneurial businesses
  - 1. Maximizing the utilization of the Capital Fund for the CONAC region
  - 2. Encourage use of renaissance zone incentives
  - 3. Identifying emerging industries/businesses
  - 4. Promote, development and research of emerging technologies that can be further commercialized within the CONAC Zone
  - 5. Support of Foreign Trade Zones
  - 6. Providing matching grants and technical assistance for business plans, product development incentives, market expansion opportunities
  - 7. Encourage young entrepreneurs
- D. Attracting international investment to local businesses within the Zone
- E. Supporting Value Added Agriculture
  - 1. Support for Farmers Markets in each of the counties and reservations in the CONAC REAP Zone
    - a. Provide materials from the North Dakota Farmers Market Association and the ND Department of Agriculture to each CONAC board member to share with their local organizations.
    - b. Organize one or two region-wide Farmers Markets to highlight the produce produced in the CONAC REAP Zone.
    - c. Funding of matching grants of up to \$500 to each county and reservation to support new and existing Farmers Markets in the Zone.
    - d. Organize Farmers Market forums to discuss topics of interest such as marketing, distribution, varieties, and production methods.
    - e. Add educational field experiences or seminars if the forums grow and stimulate producer interest.
  - 2. Support private development of small producers and community gardens
  - 3. Support Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) gardens
  - 4. Support for Dakota College's Center of Excellence in Horticulture.
    - a. Continue to endorse the project to assist in securing funding
    - b. Support ECH's efforts in distributing marketing and promotion of the vegetable production market
  - 5. Provide opportunities for Ag producers and community members to learn more about value-added opportunities in the region.