

Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.

Strategic Intention

March 1, 2017 – June 30, 2021

Developed

January 2017



Your Future is Our Business

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Background

Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc. (RMCEP) is a private, non-profit corporation funded by federal, state and county governments. Functioning under the leadership of a broadly representative Board of Directors, and through the programming guidance of the Workforce Development Board, the Agency's purpose is to provide workforce development services to individuals and businesses in 19 counties in northwestern Minnesota. Services are operated from seven WorkForce Center locations: Alexandria, Brainerd, Detroit Lakes, Fergus Falls, Little Falls, Moorhead and Wadena. Additionally, mobile services are provided throughout the Economic Development Region 2 in Minnesota with a hub located in Bemidji.

RMCEP's expertise in the delivery of workforce development services spans several decades. The agency was founded in 1968 to operate various programs initiated by the Economic Opportunity Act and the Manpower Development Training Act. Since then, workforce development services have evolved through several federal legislative changes and now operate under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Making employment dreams a reality has been our goal for almost 50 years. We exist to assist people, employers and communities achieve success in meeting their economic goals. Our experienced staff provides multiple services to job seekers and employers, whether it's a high school youth learning to navigate the job-seeking system for the first time or a person dislocated from a long-time job needing to refresh skills in order to re-enter employment. We provide career counseling and direction to people in determining appropriate career paths and the actions needed to achieve their goals.

We have developed valuable relationships with the employers in our communities to assist us in developing the work skills of our clients. We are able to focus on the needs of job seekers and employers and grow our workforce skills that in turn strengthen our communities.

RMCEP has adapted and evolved with the changing economic landscape. We have seen many changes in the programs that fund our services over our 50 years of existence but have consistently provided a high level of quality services. We set our goals high and look to the future with anticipation in developing additional services to meet the ever-changing needs of our workforce.

Change is on the horizon! Innovation will keep RMCEP responsive to the needs of our customers. We are working on bringing mobile career services to our more remote communities. We continue to implement changes brought about by WIOA. Services to individuals with disabilities will be expanded through our HireAble Program. We will develop strategies to address the unique workforce needs of our diverse populations. Through adapting, growing and changing, we will continue to meet the needs of our ever-changing workforce.

We touch a lot of lives! Over 33,000 individuals visited our WorkForce Centers in the last year. We know that "work is the key to a successful life" and diligently point our efforts to assisting our customers on their path to reaching their successful life.



Vision Statement of Strategic Intent

RMCEP inspires positive change leading to successful and prosperous individuals and communities through the power of work.

Mission

RMCEP provides exemplary workforce development services to our communities and exceeds the expectations of our stakeholders.

Values

Our values will guide our decisions and demonstrate our intentions with all of our stakeholders.

Integrity: *RMCEP is committed to providing competent, quality customer service with honesty, fairness, professionalism and accountability.*

Growth: *RMCEP is committed to growth with creativity, willing to take risks while maintaining accountability.*

Diversity: *RMCEP values uniqueness, perspective and cultural heritage in all people and is committed to assisting individuals reach their full career potential.*

Quality and Achievement: *RMCEP holds itself to high standards and consistently strives to be an “exceeding” organization.*

Partnerships and Collaboration: *We value the strength of our relationships with entities sharing a similar mission in assisting others to achieve employment.*

Teamwork: *We value the respect, responsiveness and resiliency to be found in a team approach.*

As recognized by the Board of Directors:

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Integrity | Teamwork | Partnership |
| Inspiring | Respect | Quality |
| Customer Service | Trustworthy | Diversity |
| Creativity | Growth | Achievement |
| Accountability | Empowerment | Community |
| Commitment to Success | Ethical | Professionalism |
| Fairness | Responsibility | Consistency |
| Honesty | Risk-taking | Efficiency |
| Loyalty | Optimism | Reliable |
| Attitude | Individuality | Competence |



Priorities for Calendar Year 2017

- Implement Round Seven of the Disability Employment Initiative to support individuals with disabilities and initiate the process of becoming an Employment Network.
- Establish the Mobile WorkForce Center concept in Economic Development Region 2 to provide access to services to individuals in remote areas and become fully operational.
- Expand the availability of RMCEP career awareness activities with secondary education.



Risks and Opportunities

For this Strategic Plan period, RMCEP conducted a Risk Assessment rather than a SWOT Analysis with the purpose of providing guidance to our strategic intentions through 2021. The Risk Assessment assists RMCEP with recognizing risks as a result of potential internal and external forces and changes and allows us the opportunity to develop our strategic direction in minimizing those risks.

Using a series of Risk Assessment steps, we concentrated our Risk Assessment on the following six risk elements:

- **Strategic**—Looking at external risks which may affect RMCEP, such as environmental changes, which will allow us to set organizational objectives and ensure we are setting the right ones.
- **Operational**—Looking at risks that arise from the services we deliver or the activities we conduct.
- **Financial**—Looking at financial risks associated with the employment of staff, operating a non-profit, fiscal liabilities and assets.
- **Human Resources**—Looking at reviewing risks associated with the employment of people, recruitment and maintaining a high quality workforce.
- **Regulatory**—Looking at the legislative framework within which we operate.
- **Governance**—Looking at reviewing the risks associated with Management, the Board of Directors and the Workforce Development Board.

These six elements are the focus areas for our strategic intentions through 2021.

Through a series of sessions with the Board of Directors, Workforce Development Board and the Management Team, the following chart outlines the identified risks with the highest potential for the likelihood the risk may occur and the impact on the organization:



RMCEP RISK ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

| Regulatory Risks Identified | Likelihood High/Medium/Low | Impact High/Medium/Low |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Workforce availability (age, rules, programs) | High | High |
| Change in (diverse) workforce | High | High |
| Administrative overburden | High | High |
| Collaboration | High | High |
| MWCA – reduced lobbyists | High | High |
| Change in DEED/DHS leadership | High | High |
| Changes in law, regulations | High | High |
| Election – change in legislature | High | High |
| CEP’s lack of urgency | High | High |
| CEP’s ability to keep up with policies | High | High |
| Contractual changes | High | High |
| County politics | High | High |
| Changes in funding | High | High |
| Misinformation to decision-makers | High | High |
| More Human Resources issues taking more staff time | High | High |
| Adapt to different generational differences | High | High |
| Nature of working within funding constraints | High | High |
| Retention of staff | High | High |
| Training limits | High | High |
| Recruitment issues | High | High |
| Consistency | High | High |
| Aging staff | High | High |
| Untrained staff | High | High |
| Large footprint | High | High |
| Employee morale | High | High |
| Field Evaluations | High | High |
| Staff Evaluation | High | High |
| No succession plan for management | High | High |
| New investments | High | High |
| Low unemployment/loss of revenue | High | High |
| Competition (e.g. Counties) for funding | High | High |
| Grant-funded career counselors | High | High |
| Innovation versus expertise | High | High |
| Uncertain funding levels | High | High |
| Funding streams | High | High |
| Absence of strategic partnerships | High | High |
| Political landscape | High | High |
| Loss of institutional knowledge | High | High |
| Demographics | High | High |
| Competition for employees | High | High |

Management Plan

This plan will be reviewed and updated by the Board of Directors and the Management Team once each quarter. Decisions about priorities and changes to the plan will be made jointly with the Board of Directors and the Management Team. Input will be gathered by field staff through the bi-monthly Internal Communications/Management Team meetings.

The Action Plan

Human Resources

Strategic Intent: To become the employer of choice in our service areas.

Champion: Vicki Leaderbrand

| Action to take: Reduce employee turnover | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|---|-----------------|------------|----------|
| Identify current turnover rate | Human Resources | 04/2017 | 06/2018 |
| Set a percent ratio by which the rate will be reduced | Management Team | 07/2017 | 07/2017 |
| Identify potential attrition rate | Management Team | 01/2018 | 05/2018 |
| Compile reasons employees leave | Human Resources | 05/2017 | 07/2017 |

| Action to take: Increase employee retention | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|---|--------------------------------|------------|----------|
| Develop employee satisfaction survey | Human Resources | 03/2017 | 10/2017 |
| Conduct annual employee satisfaction survey and compile results | Human Resources | 03/2017 | 11/2017 |
| Develop survey for similar agencies in terms of compensation and benefits | Human Resources Comptroller | 04/2018 | 06/2018 |
| Develop mentorship program and monitor progress | Management Team | 03/2018 | 06/2020 |

| Action to take: Develop on-boarding process | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|--|--------------------------------|------------|----------|
| Establish on-boarding workgroup | Human Resources | 06/2017 | 06/2017 |
| Compile job aids | Team | 03/2017 | Ongoing |
| Develop MFIP How-To Manual | Team | 03/2017 | 01/2018 |
| Develop training modules | Operations Specialist Team | 03/2017 | Ongoing |
| Update employee orientation – field level | Human Resources Comptroller | 03/2017 | 02/2018 |

| Action to take: Emergency succession plan for administrative positions | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|---|-------------------------------|------------|----------|
| Identify the positions for which a plan should be developed | Management Team | 03/2017 | 05/2017 |
| Identify essential duties that need to occur during absence or loss | Human Resources Individual | 03/2017 | 10/2017 |
| Determine temporary successor for each position | Management Team | 03/2017 | 11/2017 |

Communications/Relationships

Strategic Intent: To improve communications and relationships in our local communities.

Champion: Craig Nathan

| <u>Action to take:</u> Increase communications for staff | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|---|---|------------|----------|
| Develop on-line video for new staff (Welcome, Who is RMCEP, History, Scope) Part of on-boarding | Program Manager East Human Resources | 06/2017 | 02/2018 |
| Develop training on media communications | Management Team | 08/2017 | 12/2017 |

| <u>Action to take:</u> Increase communications to public | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|---|----------------------------------|------------|----------|
| Develop common message | Management Team | 08/2017 | 11/2017 |
| Encourage field staff to get involved in local communities | Program Managers Team Leaders | 05/2017 | on-going |
| Use electronic and local media to publicize our services | Management Team Team Leaders | 03/2017 | on-going |
| Develop methods to obtain feedback from stakeholders | Management Team | 07/2017 | 07/2018 |

Service Delivery

Strategic Intent: To identify and improve methods of delivering services to assure customer satisfaction.

Champions: Arlyce Cucich and Sue Hilgart

| <u>Action to take:</u> Implement mobile workforce center | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|--|--|------------|----------|
| Pilot mobile career services | Program Manager East Director of Operations Director of Field Operations Team Leaders | 03/2017 | 09/2017 |
| Determine need for WIOA services and redesign service delivery | Program Manager East Director of Operations Director of Field Operations Team Leader | 03/2017 | 12/2017 |
| Involve WFC partners in delivering mobile services | Executive Director Team | 03/2017 | 06/2018 |
| Fully implement mobile workforce center | Partners, Team | 03/2017 | 06/2018 |

| <u>Action to take:</u> Improve outreach and recruitment for programs | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|---|--------------------|------------|----------|
| Conduct study of current methods | Management Team | 05/2017 | 12/2017 |
| Utilize study results to develop/improve outreach | IC/Management Team | 01/2018 | 03/2018 |
| Explore capacities to provide apprenticeships | IC/Management Team | 07/2017 | 06/2018 |
| Explore how to provide training services to incumbent workers | IC/Management Team | 03/2017 | 07/2017 |

| <u>Action to take:</u> Decrease process errors | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|--|---|------------|----------|
| Determine target percentage reduction | Operations Technician Supervisor Director of Operations Program Managers Operations Specialist | 05/2017 | 02/2018 |
| Determine baseline QC reasons | Operations Specialist Operations Services Supervisor | 05/2017 | 02/2018 |
| Develop training modules intended to address top three QC categories | Operations Specialist Operations Services Supervisor | 03/2018 | 6/2018 |
| Provide staff training | Operations Specialist Operations Services Supervisor | 05/2018 | on-going |

| <u>Action to take:</u> Refine our services to meet the current needs of clients | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|--|---|------------|----------|
| Identify current client population demographics | IT Manager | 05/2017 | 06/2017 |
| Identify issues of concern for these populations | IC/Management Team | 07/2017 | 10/2017 |
| Select issues to develop strategies to address | IC/Management Team | 11/2017 | 02/2018 |
| Refine our service delivery to meet these issues | IC/Management Team | 03/2018 | on-going |
| Develop communications to follow-up with potential clients who do not enroll in program services during REA sessions | Select Team Leaders Director of Operations | 05/2017 | 08/2017 |

Regional Planning/Legislative Collaboration

Strategic Intent: To develop strong relationships and communications with our stakeholders and funders.

Champion: Dan Wenner

| <u>Action to take:</u> Convene partners and groups | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|--|--|------------|----------|
| Take lead position in convening partners and groups as outlined in Regional Planning | Director of Field Operations Executive Director | 03/2017 | 06/2018 |
| Communicate outcomes | Director of Field Operations | 03/2017 | 06/2018 |

| <u>Action to take:</u> Strengthen legislative relationships | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|---|--------------------|------------|----------|
| Testify as needed before legislative committees | Executive Director | 03/2017 | 06/2018 |
| Ensure open communications with legislative representatives | Executive Director | 03/2017 | 06/2018 |
| Develop respectful and ongoing relationships with key legislators | Executive Director | 03/2017 | 06/2018 |

Financial

Strategic Intent: To ensure strong fiscal integrity and grow our financial capacities.

Champion: Nancy Bisek

| <u>Action to take:</u> Achieve an unmodified opinion in financial audits | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|--|-------------|------------|----------|
| Ensure proper accounting procedures are followed throughout the year through periodic monitoring | Comptroller | 03/2017 | 06/2018 |
| Follow OMB guidelines and instruct others in processes and protocols | Comptroller | 03/2017 | 06/2018 |
| Update internal accounting manual | Comptroller | 03/2017 | 12/2017 |

| <u>Action to take:</u> Conduct a technology review | Responsible | Start Date | End Date |
|---|-------------|------------|----------|
| Schedule consultant to perform technology review | Comptroller | 03/2017 | 04/2017 |
| Review Technology Report and identify areas of improvement or needs | Comptroller | 03/2017 | 04/2017 |
| Develop IT Department strategic plan with annual goals | Comptroller | 03/2017 | 04/2018 |