

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.