Scenario Planning Workshop

Heart of Wisconsin
FUTURE

Identifying Economic Development Strategic Actions to Create Our Desired Future

InnerWisconsin
Inspiring Innovation

Introduction

Scenario planning has been overtaking traditional strategic planning approaches in the corporate world, and more recently in regional development. Scenario planning is proving to provide the enhanced flexibility and holistic framework to 'future thinking' that is required to achieve a realistic outlook on the future. It draws on the idea that the future is not 'linear' and that adaptive and responsive planning is essential to an ever-changing and dynamic world.

The Heart of Wisconsin Business & Economic Alliance, in its efforts to provide leadership and strategic direction for community economic development efforts in the Heart of Wisconsin Area (South Wood and Northern Adams Counties), hosted a scenario planning workshop on January 31 and February 1, 2007.

This workshop was designed to:

- Explore and identify issues influencing the future of the Heart of Wisconsin area and its place and role in the Central Wisconsin Region.

- Define key drivers that are critical to shaping the future directions across the region and its communities and economy.

- Develop a series of plausible future scenarios, and their impact and consequences.

- Identify critical steps and actions to guide the region towards the identified preferred future.

The workshop participants (listed on Page 17) were selected to provide a cross-sector representation from the community. Formulation of the 'future drivers' and scenarios were determined by workshop participants in group work sessions. This workshop provided a chance for community participation to jump into an invigorating conversation about the future of our region and come to agreement on a preferred scenario for our region. It offers a guide to facilitate collaboration and partnership in our regional community economic development planning to ensure our arrows are all heading in the right direction to make the preferred scenario our reality.

Heart of Wisconsin
BUSINESS & ECONOMIC ALLIANCE
Inspiring Innovation

Scenario Planning Workshop designed and facilitated by David Beurle of Innovative Leadership Australia

INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP AUSTRALIA

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Aging population with declining economic growth, increased recreation.

Inspiring Innovation *The Preferred Scenario* *Page 7*

Characterized by thriving social, economic, and environmental forces.

Viva Las Rapids *Page 9*

Unplanned growth with no social fabric.

Scenario of Apathy *Page 11*

Decline in social, economic, and environmental forces.

Creating the Scenarios

Scenario Planning Processes

The process we followed...

- Explored global trends and forces.
- Identified key drivers potentially shaping the local region.
- Rated each driver on importance for the future and its uncertainty.
- Mapped drivers and identified two important clusters of drivers.
- Defined four plausible future directions for the region.
- Developed detailed narratives of the implications of each of the four possible directions.
- Identified preferred future.
- Identified key strategic actions needed to move toward the preferred scenario.

Forces Impacting the World

What are the emerging global drivers?

- Energy consumption and use is increasing.
- Wealth in the US being distributed to fewer people.
- Dramatic increase in wealth and workforce size in China and India – expected to continue to grow.
- Decline in US economic power in the world.
- Climate change emerging as major global issue.
- Media power shifting to internet and away from traditional media.

Key forces (drivers) shaping the future of the local region

- Entrepreneurial culture and environment
- Aging population and demographics
- Quality of life – youth, young professionals
- Culture of responsiveness, self reliance and risk taking
- Quality health care
- Resurgence of agriculture
- Model of education
- Cost and availability of energy
- New industries (alternate energy, technology)
- Global competitiveness
- Environmental quality issues
- Community leadership capacity
- Regional economic development focus
- Tourism
- Impact on policy
- Civic engagement, participation
- Community collaboration
- Perception of area
- Infrastructure
- Paper and forest products
- Climate change

Scenario Shaping Clusters of Drivers

The Scenario Shaping Drivers were ranked as to level of importance and degree of uncertainty, then charted. Four clusters of drivers emerged. The drivers carrying the strongest influence for causing change and positive impact in the direction of the future are those with a high degree of uncertainty and importance.
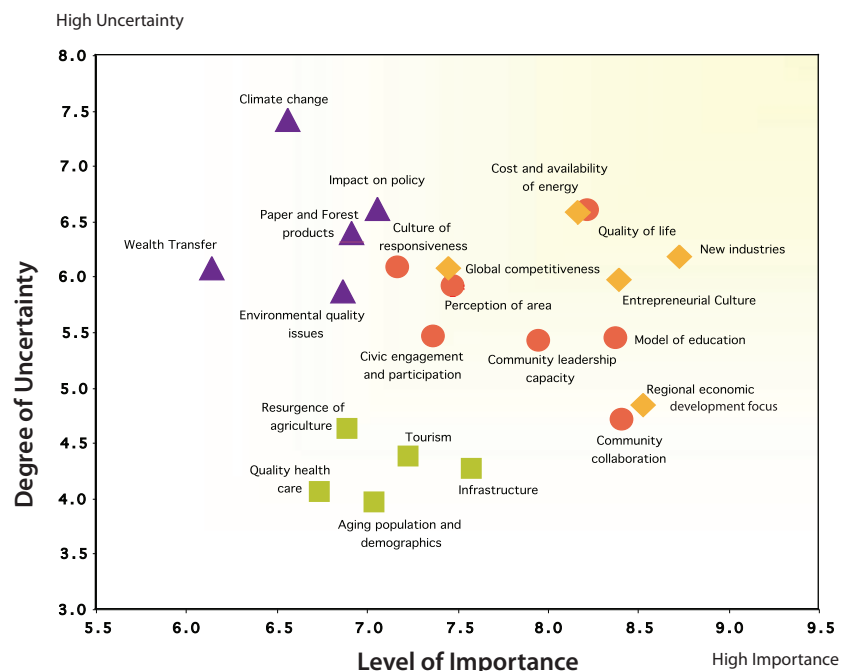
The two main scenario drivers identified for our area are:

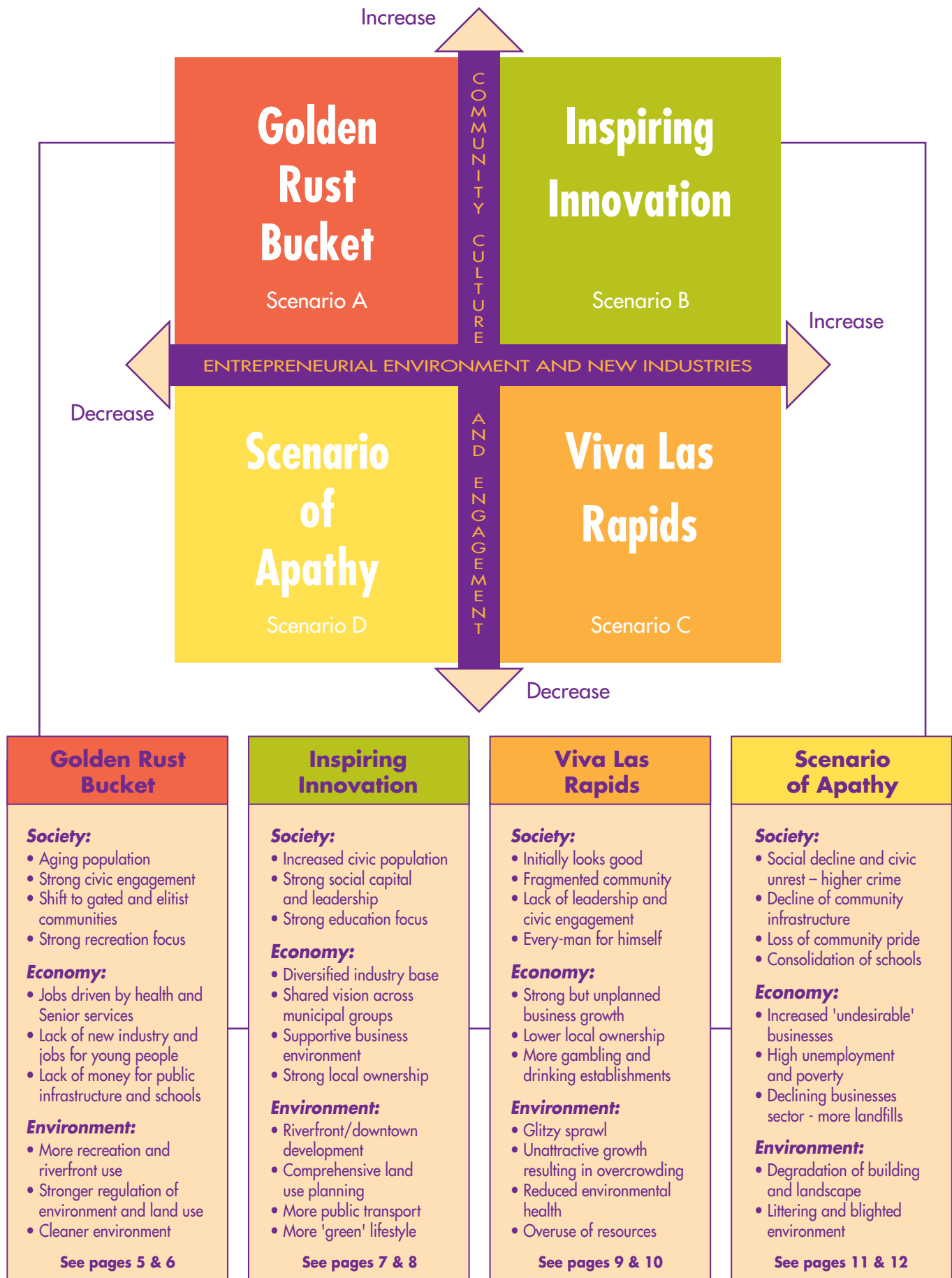◆ **Entrepreneurial environment & new industries**
- New industries (alternative energy, technology).
- Entrepreneurial culture and environment.
- Regional economic development focus.
- Cost and availability of energy.
- Global competitiveness.

● **Community culture and engagement**
- Quality of life – youth, young professionals.
- Community collaboration.
- Model of education.
- Community leadership capacity.
- Civic engagement, participation.
- Perception of area.
- Culture of responsiveness and self-reliance and risk-taking.

Scatter chart: Degree of Uncertainty (y-axis, 3.0 to 8.0, High Uncertainty) vs Level of Importance (x-axis, 5.5 to 9.5, High Importance). Plotted drivers: Climate change, Impact on policy, Cost and availability of energy, Paper and Forest products, Culture of responsiveness, Quality of life, New industries, Wealth Transfer, Global competitiveness, Entrepreneurial Culture, Perception of area, Environmental quality issues, Civic engagement and participation, Community leadership capacity, Model of education, Resurgence of agriculture, Tourism, Community collaboration, Regional economic development focus, Quality health care, Infrastructure, Aging population and demographics.

SCENARIO SNAPSHOTS

Increase

COMMUNITY CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT

Golden Rust Bucket
Scenario A

Inspiring Innovation
Scenario B

ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT AND NEW INDUSTRIES

Decrease

Increase

Scenario of Apathy
Scenario D

Viva Las Rapids
Scenario C

Decrease

Golden Rust Bucket

Society:
- Aging population
- Strong civic engagement
- Shift to gated and elitist communities
- Strong recreation focus

Economy:
- Jobs driven by health and Senior services
- Lack of new industry and jobs for young people
- Lack of money for public infrastructure and schools

Environment:
- More recreation and riverfront use
- Stronger regulation of environment and land use
- Cleaner environment

See pages 5 & 6

Inspiring Innovation

Society:
- Increased civic population
- Strong social capital and leadership
- Strong education focus

Economy:
- Diversified industry base
- Shared vision across municipal groups
- Supportive business environment
- Strong local ownership

Environment:
- Riverfront/downtown development
- Comprehensive land use planning
- More public transport
- More 'green' lifestyle

See pages 7 & 8

Viva Las Rapids

Society:
- Initially looks good
- Fragmented community
- Lack of leadership and civic engagement
- Every-man for himself

Economy:
- Strong but unplanned business growth
- Lower local ownership
- More gambling and drinking establishments

Environment:
- Glitzy sprawl
- Unattractive growth resulting in overcrowding
- Reduced environmental health
- Overuse of resources

See pages 9 & 10

Scenario of Apathy

Society:
- Social decline and civic unrest – higher crime
- Decline of community infrastructure
- Loss of community pride
- Consolidation of schools

Economy:
- Increased 'undesirable' businesses
- High unemployment and poverty
- Declining businesses sector - more landfills

Environment:
- Degradation of building and landscape
- Littering and blighted environment

See pages 11 & 12

Golden Rust Bucket
Scenario A

Social and Cultural Characteristics

- Senior population.
- Bus service to support retired population.
- More condos vs. single-family detached.
- More community-based retirement funds.
- Gated communities (in response to increased crime).
- New housing will be in or close to the cities for access to services.
- Wealth will be put into community and cultured facilities.
- More involvement in community activities, inward vs. global focus.
- Elderhostel center.
- Retirement condos on Wisconsin River.

Economic Characteristics

- Less support for public schools – change to a retirement community.
- More service-oriented jobs for the aging population.
- Construction of elderhostel centers.
- New assisted living jobs.
- Higher costs for crime prevention.
- Local governments sharing services and facilities.
- More reliance on non-profit funding but fewer dollars available – private wealth will have to play a bigger role.
- Labor shortage in smaller workforce age demographic.
- More pressure on social services.

Environmental Characteristics

- More use of the Wisconsin River and lake fronts.
- More eco-tourism.
- Development of conservation subdivisions for condo development.
- High levels of civic involvement on land use issues.
- More support for comprehensive planning.
- Decreased negative industrial impacts.
- Increased use of forest lands for aesthetic purposes.

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE POSSIBILITIES

Social	Economic	Environmental
2010 • Improved performing arts sector. • Discussions on meeting social issues (United Way). • Regional ADEC, family care. **2020** • Specialty shops in downtown area. • World class health care becomes known. • Active senior recreational clubs. • Harbor front activities. • Expanded airport facilities. • Additional golf courses on the lake. **2030** • Riverfront development with shops. • Senior PGA golf tournament. • Regional sports cooperation and events.	**2010** • Increase in subdivisions on riverfront. • Cranberry, potato industry. • Some vacant storefronts. • Tech College increases health training. **2020** • More two-income families. • Paper mills decline in jobs and upkeep, capital investment - part-time work. • Roads crumble. • Service/health jobs increase. • Restaurants boom. • Condo construction. **2030** • Fewer stores (internet). • More in-home retail. • Seasonal downturn in paper – 1 mill shuts down. • Waterfront building ends. • Philanthropy decreases. • Cranberries no longer turn red due to warming.	**2010** • Continued mild winters. • Snowmobiles decline. **2020** • Downturn of potable water. • Multiple green energy sources/solar. • Increase in smaller Buicks around town. • River is cleaner and used by more people. **2030** • Unpredictable weather patterns. • Lower emissions from big industry. • Congestion on the river intensifies. • Multiple pontoon lanes and homes on the Wisconsin River. • Warmer climate.

Inspiring Innovation
Scenario B

Social and Cultural Characteristics

- Center of lifelong learning with strong civic involvement/engagement.
- Community development - programs and projects.
- Community shares a vision - could be intimidating for those not ready for change.
- Social entrepreneurship - culture of inclusiveness/ethnic diversity-increases, embraced/age diversity - work is done to retain young people.
- More interesting community/attractive for city people as home-based/telecommuting businesses.
- Sound schools nurture entrepreneurship in schools, skill development (including leadership soft skills) vs. teaching to the test/additional advanced degree offerings (MSTC and Lakeland College).
- Some competition/conflict between age groups over resources, amenities, school funding desired.
- Vibrant community activity/service clubs …Sponsor youth projects/social events…full use of natural resources.
- Streamline/more user friendly, corporate incentives, greater range of involvement may result in quality richer debate.
- Mutual respect and civil discourse present with strong collaborative leadership and a wide sense of personal responsibility.
- Activities/opportunities for citizens of all ages and a society which embraces diversity (could become elitist).

Economic Characteristics

- Increased competition from outside big box ownership as area represents a strong retail market.
- Eco/agri/arts tourism emerging, but some loss of identity with downturn in paper industry.
- Some labor shortages starting to show up, due to strong growth and employment base.
- Center for logistics and ag and food processing – cranberries, corn, potatoes, dairy resurgence.
- Cooperative business thinking collaborative partnership between employees and employers.
- Cost of living increases due to prosperous community, greater community infrastructure in place.
- Land use issues and concerns as residential growth threatens recreational land; results in stronger land-use planning and zoning.
- New industries started such as: biofuels/alternative energy, nanotech-paper, medical research, wood composites industry.
- Increased regional governmental services to cater for increased demand for social services, more public/private partnerships.

Environmental Characteristics

- Vibrant downtown with riverfront development and more specialty shops.
- Technology business park developed; but more sewer/water infrastructure investment needed.
- Increased cost of real estate/taxes.
- Recognized as the "Go to Place" for sustainable environmental education.
- Paper companies need to be either in or out; if in - environmentally friendly.

"The strategic planning workshop was one of the best workshops I have ever attended. I think it really revealed to us what will happen if we choose to do nothing. It provided direction on how we should move forward to create our desired future. We now have the chance to use this information to inspire innovation."

Terri Anderson, *Town of Rome Clerk*

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE POSSIBILITIES

| Social	Economic	Environmental
2010 • Education responds to business-hands-on orientation. • Increased number of quality candidates for offices. • Youth entrepreneurial programs. • Recognition of value/greater understanding of value of social capital. • Expanded teen leadership program. • Framework for community development to stimulate growth among young professionals.	**2010** • Research. • Greater understanding of advocacy and policy impact. • Open ethanol plant. • Support local business and industry in an increasingly competitive environment of responsiveness. • Single source for economic development and point of entry. Regional economic development agency emerges. • Collaborative leadership among municipalities and cities with shared vision.	**2010** • Celebrate world class urban forestry center-MSTC. • Recycling improves. • Broader understanding of municipal role in sustainable resources. • Integrated comprehensive plans/city urban plan. • Incentive for green companies. • Water quality awareness/initiatives. • Expanded use of public lands/rivers.
2020 • Nurture social capital via Community Progress Initiative (CPI). • Strong competition for elected bodies with qualified candidates. • Education reflects business needs with hands-on training.	**2020** • Active voice in shaping policy to stimulate/maintain growth. • Agri/eco tourism destination. • Diversification of economic base. • Technology business park.	**2020** • Riverfront/Downtown development (i.e. water based activities and businesses). • Wastewater and centralized water managed sewer & water in surrounding municipal. • Airport development grows. • Continue land use planning.
2030 • Model/mentor social capital grown out of CPI in early 2000's. • Education is model for lifelong learning. • Entire community engaged in economic development.	**2030** • Retail center. • 100% businesses supporting economic development entity. • (Dedicated) funds to aid economic and community development.	**2030** • Land use planning expanded. • Mass Transit (developed 2020). • Creative center think tank-arts, natural beauty.

Viva Las Rapids
Scenario C

Social and Cultural Characteristics

- Increased crime.
- More fragmentation and fighting between communities.
- Less community oriented and community building events.
- Decline in some local philanthropy efforts.
- Increased tension and conflict fighting over land.
- Decline in school involvement and civic engagement.
- More alcohol/gambling problems as part of a transient and disengaged community culture.
- Transformation from small town to big city.
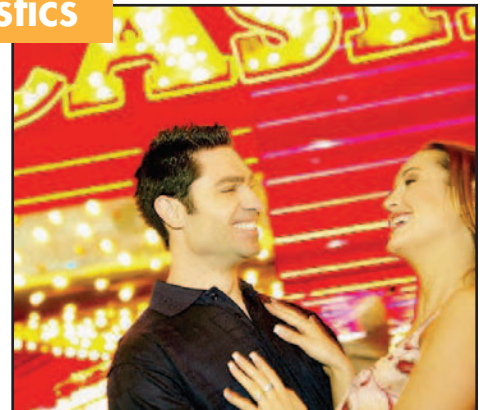
Economic Characteristics

- Expanded casino hotel on the riverfront.
- More housing need and construction.
- Increased inflation and more uncertainty around job security.
- Increasingly disparate incomes and more poverty and low income groups.
- Higher energy use and uncontrolled urban sprawl.
- More commercial property and more quick cash/pawn shops.
- Riverfront activity/look becomes sharp and glitzy, with less regard for aesthetic appeal.

Environmental Characteristics

- Increased traffic congestion.
- Less emphasis on land use planning.
- Higher pollution and less trees and wildlife/reserve areas.
- Increased apartment housing (expensive).
- Less vacant land.
- Corridor between Plover and Rapids becomes fully developed.
- Decline in water quality/supply and air quality.
- Increased noise and light pollution.

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE POSSIBILITIES

Social	Economic	Environmental
2010 • Initially seen as "good." • New money. • Social aspect ignored due to interest in expansion. • More excitement locally. **2020** • Overcrowded schools. • Crime. • Social ills – gambling, etc. • Recreational overcrowding. • New incentives recognized to building new parks. **2030** • Slums. • Awareness of growing social problem.	**2010** • Expanded casino complex. • Clubs/parking ramp. • Housing boom. • Airport business park filled. • 8th Street sprawl increases. • New jobs/restaurants. • Enlarged sales tax base. • Influx of workers. **2020** • Taxes multiply to support new schools and municipal complex. • Property values hamper growth of starter homes. • Health care escalates. • New healthcare facilities expanded. • Expanded sewage treatment center. • Road improvements. **2030** • Commercial development capped out. • Healthcare shortages for some. • Airport expansion. • "Boomtown" done! • Time to reinvent the town! - properties lose value/need to be refreshed.	**2010** • Quality hasn't gone down - use expands. • Trails/parks used for development projects or displaced. • Wildlife displaced. **2020** • Traffic intensifies. • No vacant land. • Urban sprawl. • Artificial recreational environment. • Decline in aesthetic/natural quality. **2030** • "Sea of rooftops." • Wetlands disappear – filled in for development.

Scenario of Apathy
Scenario D

Social and Cultural Characteristics

- Increase in adult entertainment business.
- Reduction in schools and services.
- More poor and impoverished population with greater crime – leading to civil unrest.
- Increased and significant brain drain.
- Loss of community pride and leadership; and loss in non-profit organizations, churches, foundations, etc.
- Emerging family and social problems (decline in family unit) with a greater transient population.
- Reduced municipal services and reduced school opportunities.

Economic Characteristics

- Incomes reduced and lower average household incomes.
- Real estate values diminish resulting in lower tax base.
- Expansion of social services and the costs of these services.
- More outside ownership of business and new businesses are casinos, law firms and pawn shops.
- Fuel costs increase with negative effects on lifestyle.
- Possibility of becoming a suburb of Plover/Stevens Point.
- Lower cost of living but a social negative attitude.
- Dramatic exodus of area of wealth.
- Reduction of tourism.
- Some resurgence of agriculture, but opportunity is not optimized.
- Possible growth in recreational industry.
- Closed store fronts and decaying aesthetics; some closed factories.

Environmental Characteristics

- Less resources for tourism amenities.
- Decaying man made structures with negative effects on septic/sewers, etc.
- Less waste and better overall environment condition.
- Loss of environmental amenities.
- Lack of capital for sanitary infrastructure.
- Expansion of landfill industry.

Thoughts on the scenario...

"The Scenario of Apathy truly captures what will happen if we do nothing; no sector of our community will be unaffected. Everyone will, in some way, feel the effects of the scenario of apathy – schools will close, community pride and involvement will be non-existent, the environment will degrade, and people will abandon the community. Our area as we know it will no longer exist."

Steve Knorr, *President of Wisconsin Valley Concrete*

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE POSSIBILITIES

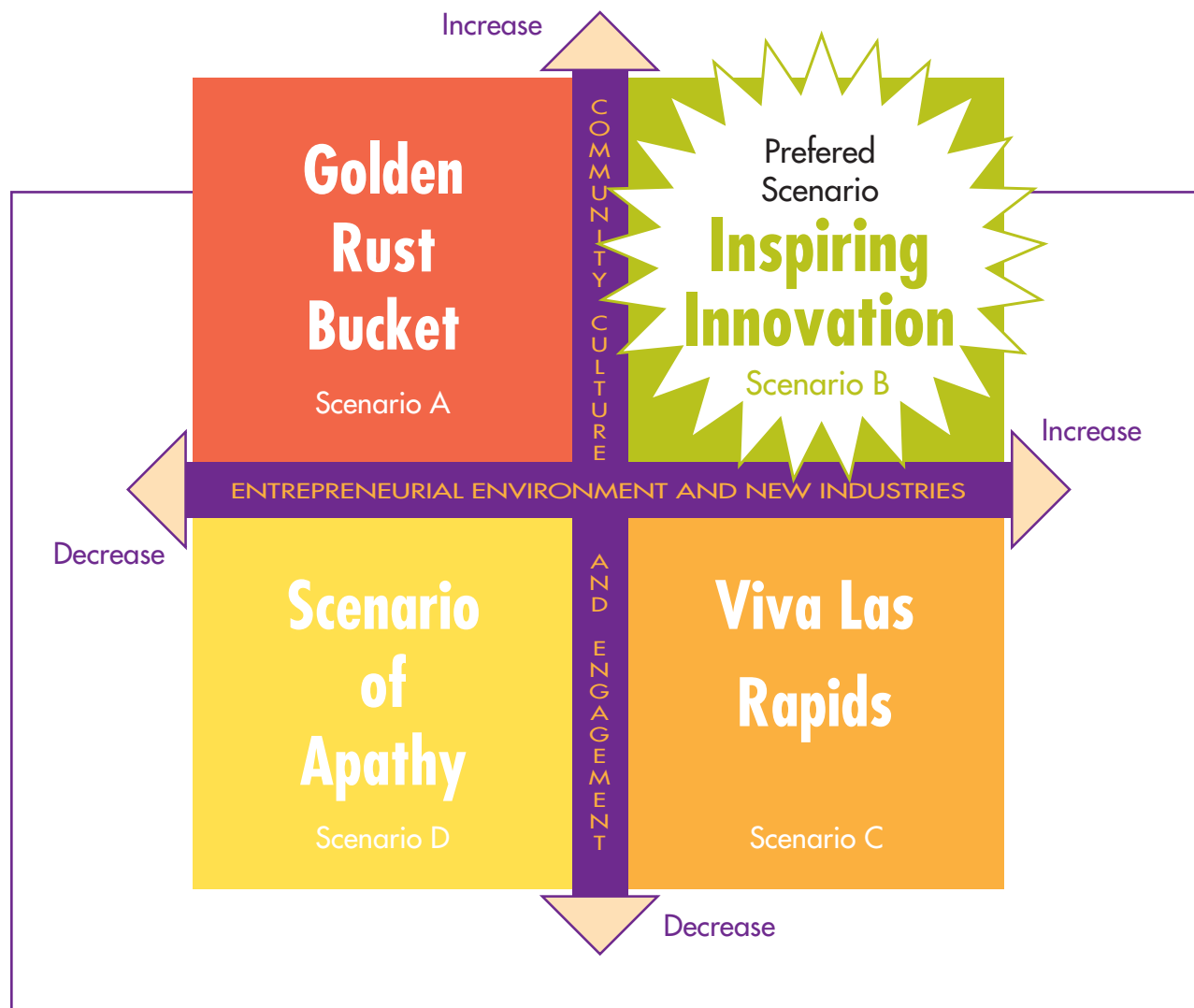| Social	Economic	Environmental
2010 • Decayed family structure. • School enrollment diminishes. • Teaching opportunities shrink. • Decline in community pride. • Lessening of non-profit organizations. **2020** • Replacement of family structure with gang activity. • Consolidation of schools. • Complete loss of community pride. • Loss of community identity and use of wealth and human capital. **2030** • Cyclical culture of poverty. • Community in despair. • Lack of social fiber. • Only limited number of non-profit organizations exist.	**2010** • Lower average income. • Lower Property values. • New home construction is nil. **2020** • Lower standard of living. • Minimal local ownership of businesses. • Less municipal services available. • Lack of tax base. • Increase in landfill capacity. **2030** • Primarily poverty ridden. • Consolidation of municipal services and infrastructure. • Unskilled workforce. • Dramatic upswing in landfill usage.	**2010** • No significant environmental change. **2020** • Increase in environmental capital to invest. • Strengthening in environmental regulation. • Littered and blighted environment intensifies. **2030** • Areas of condemnation. • Degradation of building and structures. • Degradation of aesthetics.

The Preferred Scenario...
Inspiring Innovation

Increase

Decrease

Increase

Decrease

COMMUNITY CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT

ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT AND NEW INDUSTRIES

Golden Rust Bucket

Scenario A

Prefered Scenario

Inspiring Innovation

Scenario B

Scenario of Apathy

Scenario D

Viva Las Rapids

Scenario C

Workshop participants came to the consensus that "Inspiring Innovation" is the preferred scenario to base our future on. The following strategic actions were identified:

- **Regional Collaboration**
- **Business Innovation**
- **Community Leadership and Civic Engagement**
- **A New Model for Education**

On the next three pages, each Broad Focus Area is explained and detailed outcomes and strategic actions are provided. Workshop participants determined these are the key ingredients required to "Make it Happen!"

The Next Steps...

How can we "make it happen?"

Broad Focus Area #1

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Building new levels of collaboration and cooperation across the region

INTENDED OUTCOMES	STRATEGIC ACTIONS
Created a shared vision about the future of the region among all the key civic, community and business leaders- building engagement and alignment toward the preferred future scenario **'Inspiring Innovation'**.	**Create a shared vision and common goals between all regional leaders by:** • Scenario/Strategic Planning Workshop participants 'spreading the word' and engaging their spheres of influence (Industry Clusters, Progress Teams, key area leaders and organizations, etc.) to develop an understanding of the implications and potential outcomes from the various scenario options, and the preferred vision created by the **'Inspiring Innovation'** scenario.
A focused and coordinated area approach to Regional Economic Development exists.	**Develop a focused and coordinated area approach to Regional Economic Development by:** • Defining the economic region and area of influence. • Developing agreement and support of shared vision for economic development and the steps necessary to achieve that goal (particularly among all municipal leaders). • Developing a process of forming an agreed and recognized regional economic development mechanism (potentially identifying a regional development agency - that all municipalities officially support and grant authority to). • Strengthening collaboration between municipalities/Convention & Visitors Bureau/Heart of Wisconsin. • Continuing Heart of Wisconsin regional role – especially with Centergy. • Establishing Heart of Wisconsin presence in surrounding communities. • Develop a one-stop shop, regional approach to business development.
Municipal entities share a common vision for regional planning in the area, and coordinate efforts and services.	**Encourage cooperation between local municipalities with the intent of:** • Strengthening regional land use planning, with a dedicated 'city planner' to co-ordinate issues across the regional area. • Exploring consolidation and sharing of services.
A strong and positive regional perception and brand recognition for the area.	**Build a strong regional image by:** • Increasing profile and accessibility of Convention & Visitors Bureau by moving to a downtown location. • Expanding the current visual branding work to build a strong and vibrant perception for the region. • Continuing the work to consolidate local web sites (municipal, Heart of Wisconsin, Convention & Visitors Bureau etc.) into a single regional entry point. • Inventory of local natural resources and tourism opportunities both locally and regionally (out of area). • Explore an 8th Street Makeover – to create a modern, inviting commercial area. • Expand on Wisconsin Rapids home art studio tour and sale.

The Next Steps...

How can we "make it happen?"

Broad Focus Area #2
BUSINESS INNOVATION

Create a business environment which is entrepreneurial, and stimulates innovation and excellence.

INTENDED OUTCOMES	STRATEGIC ACTIONS
Entrepreneurial environment which fosters new and emerging entrepreneurs and stimulates new and creative thinking.	**Create a local entrepreneurial environment by:** • Becoming a wireless community. • Developing a plan of action to create and develop an entrepreneurial culture among area youth. • Increasing Revolving Loan Funds and accessibility. • Promoting (encouraging newspaper articles on) non-consumer businesses.

Strong local business retention and expansion that underpins the small and medium business base.	**Create local business retention and expansion through business 'education', inter-business networking and shared services, including:**
	• Developing a shared benefit package (health insurance) for small business.
	• Inventorying "capital" resources (physical and human).
	• Tool for businesses to match needs and assets (i.e. trucking needs – pooling loads).
	• Education of businesses to:
	  - Use the internet.
	  - Buy local and use local resources.
	• Developing a Business Retention Advocacy network for big businesses.
	• Building a structure to combine industries (Industry Clusters) – How to tie together (tourism, agriculture, education & industry/connections and networks to combine assets).
	• Representing and brokering the area's strong resources (existing industries and infrastructure) promoting resource synergy and also focus on intelligently growing on expanding and current industries.
	• Creating a workforce collaborative to re-skill/retain workforce.

Attract and grow industries and businesses that are on the cutting edge of new emerging economic opportunities.	**Attract and grow new industries through:** • Developing economic incentives to draw industries capable of competing on a global scale. • Identify preferred industries, needs and assets (i.e. Bio-tech). • Promote benefits of green environment, and opportunities in alternate/renewable energy production. • Comprehensive plan that communicates resources available for current and future industries. • Identify meeting places – centers for access to technology.

Broad Focus Area #3

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT

*Develop strong and inclusive local leadership with
broad based community participation and engagement*

INTENDED OUTCOMES	STRATEGIC ACTIONS
Expansion in the quantity and quality of community leaders, with the capacity to build a sense of collaboration and common purpose in the community.	**Focus on leadership development by:** • Developing more community leaders – from across the community; building on the existing leadership development pathways. • Designing and running a specialized 'Boot Camp' for public officials – to focus on community engagement and building collaboration. • Identifying young leaders and mentor their future development.
Increased civic engagement with more people from all sections of the community taking an active role in shaping the future.	**Build stronger and broader civic engagement by:** • Creating a better public understanding and acceptance of win-win in communities and groups collaborating together. Highlight how progress in one community helps neighboring communities. • Holding neighborhood meetings to engage people in diverse community segments - "Having a conversation with the Community" in groups such as Churches, Unions, Schools, Developing groups, ethnic groups, senior citizens (possibly using a 'Community Progress Initiative board game'). • Rescheduling municipal meeting and events to optimize public participation (e.g. hold County Board meetings at night).

Broad Focus Area #4

NEW MODEL FOR EDUCATION

*Develop a new model of lifelong education that fosters
entrepreneurial spirit while maintaining stewardship*

INTENDED OUTCOMES	STRATEGIC ACTIONS
An overhaul of the education system to create a world class example of a community and business-wide cooperative model of entrepreneurial education.	**Reshape the education system in the region, beginning with:** • Teaching Entrepreneurship in K-12 through to Technical College. • Involve employers in education system/moving to a skills based, leadership development environment focusing on soft skills and technical capacity. • Develop education curriculum to skill entrepreneurship and new industries. • Undertake community based long range planning for schools including options such as Charter schools. • Position the region to become Industry and Education Leaders in Environmental Science. • Create a workforce collaborative to re-skill/retain workforce. • Provide financial education and increase financial literacy.

The **Heart of Wisconsin Business and Economic Alliance** utilizes the vision of the preferred scenario – "Inspiring Innovation" – created by the community participants, to guide the organization in determining priorities and developing its community economic development plan to move towards making this vision a reality.

The participants of the **Scenario Planning Workshop,** with the Heart of Wisconsin Business & Economic Alliance as the coordinating organization, are communicating the vision to groups throughout the area in an effort to build collaboration and partnerships around the common vision for the future.

This key step guides all of our community groups, which represent arrows of progress, to head in the same direction toward the preferred scenario. It creates a synergy to accomplish the desired outcomes and ensure a future that we all want for our community and our next generations.

A clear message, which surfaced in the two-day community planning session, was a demand for regional leadership, collaboration and partnerships to carry forward the common vision of "Inspiring Innovation"

fostering a spirit of entrepreneurship and business vitality resulting in a vibrant community with a prosperous local economy.

As a member of the community, you can be a part of "making it happen!" Use the "Inspiring Innovation" scenario and the identified strategic actions to guide your community group, organization, municipality, or individual community involvement to make our community the best it can be!

For more information on how to be involved in the efforts, contact:

Heart of Wisconsin
BUSINESS & ECONOMIC ALLIANCE
Inspiring Innovation

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Creating our Future

Creating a Business-Friendly Culture
Making it Happen!

Community Economic Development programming, now happening in the community, in which you are invited to be involved.

make it happen!
Community Progress
INITIATIVE

www.progressinitiative.com

The Community Progress Initiative

is a bold three-year program in South Wood County and the Town of Rome to create vibrant communities with prosperous local economies.

This project aims to:

- Create a business friendly environment and empower entrepreneurs.
- Shape a shared vision for people throughout the region.
- Stimulate new enterprises, resulting in additional job opportunities.
- Build the area's endowed charitable assets to support sustainable community development.
- Motivate emerging young leaders to drive positive change.
- Inspire community spirit and pride.

The Community Progress Initiative programming falls into two focus areas – Building a Strong and Positive Community and Creating a Business Friendly Culture.

Building a Strong and Positive Community

- **Community Progress Rallies** – Held in each community throughout the region to promote new ideas and stimulate action.
- **Leadership Programs** – An enhanced series of courses, from introduction to leadership to advanced leadership, created to develop skilled and inspired leaders throughout the region.
  - o Teen Leadership
  - o Discover Your Leadership Potential
  - o Heart of Wisconsin Community Leadership Program
  - o Advanced Leadership Institute
- **"New Ideas!" Speaker Series** – A rotation of the brightest minds will inspire "New Ideas!" with topics such as "Social Capital and Community Involvement – We're all Responsible," "Generation X's Outside the Box Thinking" and more.
- **Researching Best Practices & Global Opportunities** – Exposure to new ideas can often produce powerful local results. By visiting areas that have applied innovative thinking and leaders, the best ideas and successes can be brought back and applied in our own community.
- **Community Endowment Building** – With a concentration on

building permanent endowed assets, this component will build resources for future sustainability of community development efforts, thereby bettering the quality of life in South Wood County and the Town of Rome.

Creating a Business Friendly Culture

- **Industry Cluster Networks** – Clusters will be responsible for examining industry segments in search of local opportunities, business impediments and key issues in major and emerging industry segments.
- **Business Innovation Seminars** – Seminars and workshops, such as the Breakfast Club, to better understand the multiple facets of creating progress.
- **Entrepreneur Assistance Programs** – An arsenal of tools available to assist entrepreneurs in start-up and existing businesses to be more successful.
  - o **Boot Camps** – Intense, four-day "camps" featuring case studies of successful enterprises. Participants are given action oriented training in business start-ups and operations, and how to think innovatively to generate success.
  - o **Technical Support** – One on one counseling and business development assistance linking available resources for start-up and expanding businesses.
  - o **"E" Teams Mentoring Groups** – A network of business leaders committed to mentoring and offering peer-to-peer advice for technical support and other important issues of start-up and expanding business owners.
  - o **Access to Capital** – Angel Investor Network provides a potential source of equity financing for new business ventures from local investors seeking new investment opportunities. Revolving Loan Funds offer low interest gap financing.

For more information on this bold three-year program brought to you by the Community Foundation of South Wood County and the Heart of Wisconsin Business & Economic Alliance, please call 715-423-1830 or visit the Community Progress Initiative website at:

www.progressinitiative.com

Get Involved! There's something for everyone!

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