

# INNOVATION - ENTREPRENEURSHIP - WORKFORCE

Facilitated Work Session

10.19.21



The group brainstormed what innovative, substantial actions, programs, or efforts the community can do, create, or take on that will move Itasca County forward.

1 Child Care	2 Community Identity Opportunity	3 Small Business Development	4 Skill Building	5 Data-Driven	6 Career Readiness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child care coop</li> <li>Underwrite child care labor costs</li> <li>Grandparents for child care</li> <li>Remove unnecessary legislative red tape for child care, in homes and facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing and Thrive Up North</li> <li>Single-level living solutions for seniors</li> <li>Comprehensive planning</li> <li>Relocation incentive</li> <li>Common fiber community values</li> <li>Brand and package the lifestyle</li> <li>Market rate, workforce, and mixed use walkable housing</li> <li>Homecoming marketing campaign, bring youth back...later</li> <li>Pit Mine Zipline, destination travel experiences</li> <li>Regional &amp; County music strategy (e.g. Riverfest)</li> <li>Thrive Up North, strengthen this, expand scope &amp; reach</li> <li>Live-Work artisan &amp; creative neighborhood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build hospitality business</li> <li>Community Investment Fund for start-ups</li> <li>New business challenge</li> <li>Local champion that wakes up every day thinking about innovation</li> <li>Community networking opportunities to share and develop community ideas</li> <li>Innovation networking for start-ups, telecommuting, technology industry</li> <li>Innovation Expo</li> <li>Idea exchange for entrepreneurs</li> <li>Regular meetups to gather entrepreneurs &amp; innovators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mentor speed dating</li> <li>Teach children code, computer coding, not zip codes</li> <li>School and business buy-in for career pathways</li> <li>Mentorship program for trades</li> <li>Apprenticeships and bridge training</li> <li>Student experience in real innovative projects (e.g. autonomous shuttle project)</li> <li>Higher academic &amp; STEM interest for teens and young adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovation / Industry environmental scan, ecosystem thinking</li> <li>CORI model for growth</li> <li>Jobseeker data collection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Career readiness prerequisite for graduation</li> <li>4-year college to keep people and incentive entrepreneurship</li> <li>Sweat-equity boot camp for college gap year</li> </ul>

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**Considering the Rational & Experiential Aims and the same question from Day 1, "What innovative, substantial actions, programs, or efforts can our community do, create, or take on that will move Itasca County forward?" the group moved forward four arena's of potential work and further defined them.**

## RATIONAL AIM

Enable our group to create clearly focused, yet innovative and empowering strategy ideas, that set the course for the community.

## EXPERIENTIAL AIM

Generate excitement about collaboration within our group and new commitment to practical possibilities.

<p><b>IN THE ARENA OF: #1 Child Care</b></p> <p><b>WE HAVE LEARNED: Accessibility and affordability are key.</b></p> <p><b>AS ILLUSTRATED BY:</b></p>	<p><b>IN THE ARENA OF: #2 Community Identity Opportunity</b></p> <p><b>WE HAVE LEARNED: Effective change is needed for a sustainable future.</b></p> <p><b>AS ILLUSTRATED BY:</b></p>	<p><b>IN THE ARENA OF: #3 Small Business Development</b></p> <p><b>WE HAVE LEARNED: There are many barriers to entry. Entrepreneurs are isolated. They need an ecosystem.</b></p> <p><b>AS ILLUSTRATED BY:</b></p>	<p><b>IN THE ARENA OF: #4 Skill Building</b></p> <p><b>WE HAVE LEARNED: The schools are failing our children. We need to set them up better for life.</b></p> <p><b>AS ILLUSTRATED BY:</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organized regional advocacy</li> <li>Day Care Co-op sharing costs, training, vacation, etc. (Home providers)</li> <li>Increased respect of teachers and providers and access to education and training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with local government for less restrictive zoning for housing</li> <li>Waive property taxes for relocation incentive</li> <li>Identify and expand community branding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Host entrepreneur meet-ups and networking events</li> <li>Create idea exchanges for entrepreneurs (start-ups and existing)</li> <li>Create a Community Investment Fund for start-ups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools need to buy into Career Pathways as a graduation requirement</li> <li>Implement coding classes in middle school</li> <li>Critical thinking skill building</li> </ul>

**IEDC SUMMIT: Inspiring Innovation  
Innovation - Entrepreneurship - Workforce  
Charting the Course**

Arena	Activity Name	Action Partners	First Step	The group then dug further into the "Illustrated By" actions to define who should be at the table, what success would look like, the first step to move toward action, potential other action steps, and potential funding partners.						Success Indicator	Funding Partners
				1	2	3	4	5	6		
Child Care	Organized Regional Advocacy	Blandin, IRRR, IEDC, Major Employers, home providers, centers, government officials	Convene Stakeholders	Identify issues and needs	Determine which issues can be influenced	Identify possibly solutions	Select solutions to advocate for	Identify lead stakeholder	Implement advocacy plan	Increased access & affordability	IRRR, Blandin, Northland Foundation, City, County, State, and Employers
	Child Care Coop	Current and past home providers	Reach out to providers and gauge interest	Peer learning with other child care coops	Identify local coop options	Build local coop model	Next steps depends on chosen model	If building need location, design, and funding, if not, need coop agreement	Start coop	A local coop that lasts at least 1 year	USDA, Blandin, Northland Foundation, IRRR, State, City, County, Employers
Community Identity Opportunity	Waive property taxes for relocation incentive	County Commissioners, marketing organization, county attorney	Determine the duration of the incentive	Determine the marketing plan						Measureable change in new residents	Marketing dollars from the county
	Less restrictive zoning for housing	Work with the City, city administration, zoning commission, building trades, and the public	Gather information with City Administration	Generate a proposal	Negotiate the details	Determine marketing strategy for the local and external market				Greater housing availability	Savings realized as a result of more reasonable interpretation of city code
	Market existing community branding	IEDC, Thrive Up North, Innovate 218, North by Choice, NORTHFORCE, Community Members								Locals and outsiders know and use community brand	Community fund, IRRR, City, County
Small Business Development	Create an entrepreneur network	Aspiring, existing, and retired business owners, IEDC, SBDC, Entrepreneur Fund, Chambers, EDAs, Bankers, Lawyers, Accountants	Identify existing resources, systems, and groups in similar realm	Hire someone to facilitate the network, have meetings to identify needs and pairs resources	Facilitator makes sure the right people are in the room and pulls them together, develop a plan for each meet-up, create an actual agenda	Identify individuals needs and abilities	Find additional resources as needed	Set up mentor / mentees and create accountability, figure out a way to incentivize mentors	Make timelines with goals for each entrepreneur, could be a start-up, in growth or sustainability mode, or succession plan	Entrepreneurs have a support group, new business owners / LLCs registered, still going strong after a year in, properly capitalized start-ups, directory of local resources	Park State Bank and the usual suspects
Skill Building	Career pathways as a graduation requirement	Matthew Chaussee	Conversation with the schools	CareerView XR						Realize these are the careers I do or don't want to do. Students discover their passion.	Private sector, IRRR, Blandin, Northland Foundation, Chambers, local banks, Department of Education
	Computer coding classes in middle school		Conversation with the schools							Grow technical workforce base	
	Critical thinking	Students, guest speakers	Conversation with the schools	Find buy-in, define the benefits, more self-reliant students, more accountable schools and parents	Virtual Mentorships					Strengthened future of the community and the lives of students in their adult lives	