



Rothsay Economic Development Authority; New Direction in 2023

For Immediate Release

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The Rothsay Economic Development Authority (EDA) is shaping up to have a new focus and direction starting in 2023.

Historically the EDA has simply been an extension of the Rothsay City Council. The EDA was the primary funding source in partnership with the Rothsay Schools during their trades program when they were building houses. The EDA has been involved with supporting the housing improvement grant programs and supporting business development opportunities. Most recently the EDA and City in partnership with the Southern Valley EDA (SVEDA) and Red River diversion funding grants have led the remodeling and improvements to the Rothsay Event Center.

The EDA has been a great catalyst for improvements within the community throughout the years, but to extend EDA opportunities to the Rothsay Community beyond the borders of city limits, the City Council identified the best path forward is to separate the EDA from the City Council. The Rothsay Areawide EDA (RAEDA) was formally approved to start development at the September 2022 Council meeting and Chris Buckingham agreed to volunteer, and was appointed, as RAEDA Interim Director.



Chris previously served as a City Council Member (2009-2012) and Mayor (2013-2017); while also serving on the EDA as Vice President (2009-2012) and Board Member (2013-2017). He also participated on the board of Rothsay Prairie Days from 2011-2018 and Coached Rothsay Youth Basketball from 2013-2016.

In addition to his public and community service, Chris was the founder and CEO of MinnDak Computer Services in 2009, providing IT Services to businesses through the region. He successfully built the business and made it attractive for acquisition, which was executed to Loffler Companies in March of 2020. Chris still works with Loffler today as a Strategic Business Analyst.

Having a unique view as a previous council member, mayor, and business owner with a passion to create strategic and sustainable outcomes is one of the key factors in his appointment to lead the change.

The right change does not happen quickly and the RAEDA framework has been developing and will continue to develop over the course of 2023.

For the RAEDA to be successful it must start with a solid foundation. The first step was to draft a charter and authority which was adopted by the City Council at the November 2022 meeting. The next step was to create Mission Statement, Vision Statement and create a values lens for decision making.

The Mission Statement is:

Our mission is to support and guide to the community of Rothsay with sustainable growth that is generational.

The Vision Statement is:

Our vision is to embrace our bedroom community and small-town values to develop opportunities that benefit and enhance housing, business, and overall community wellbeing.

The Core Values identified are Transparency, Realistic, Outcome Driven, Open Minded, Positive Attitude, Respect, and Reliable. The definition of these can be found under the RAEDA section of the city website. www.rothsay.org.

The intent is to build a leadership team and sub-committees with members that align with 4 key focus areas

- Housing and Consumer Services
- Workforce and Business Development
- Fundraising and Community Events
- Marketing and Social Media



It is important that we have committee members that are beyond the borders of city limits and engaged in supporting the areawide community that is Rothsay. It is also important that we look to partner with other organizations like SVEDA and Greater Fergus Falls. For fundraising events we want to support and work with local community groups like the Lions Club, Prairie Chix, TC's and more.

The success of this new EDA requires it to be led by the community at large, not the city. We need to have a solid balance of visionaries and executors when it comes to initiatives.

We have Leadership team roles we need to fill as we kickoff on January 1. Chris has agreed to stay on as the President; and if you are interested in Leadership team; or one of the key sub-committees focus areas; please contact Chris via email to RAEDA@rothsay.org.

More information can also be found online at www.rothsay.org