

# Kasson Economic Development Authority 2023 Annual Report



## Meeting Attendance:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Egglar (Pres)</b>	✓	n/a	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	✓
<b>Peterson (VP)</b>	✓	n/a	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a		n/a	✓	✓
<b>McKern</b>	✓	n/a	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a		✓
<b>Monson</b>	✓	n/a		✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	✓
<b>Borgstom-Durst</b>		n/a	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	✓
<b>O'Malley</b>		n/a	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	
<b>Ehmke</b>	✓	n/a	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	✓

## 2023 Highlights:

### Strategic Planning

- The following were identified as priorities for the EDA to focus on in 2023:
  - 1. Support businesses through the Hwy 57 project
  - 2. Expand multifamily housing options and promote greater housing diversity
  - 3. Create a plan for downtown + EDA lots

### Vail Property Development

- Hamilton Real Estate Group completed the construction of its 52-unit market rate apartment, The Park Apartments, over the first half of 2023. In June, its first renters moved in, and the EDA toured the building and held its monthly meeting onsite. The City is providing financial assistance to the project through tax abatement and infrastructure improvements, in addition to the tax abatement provided by Dodge County and the School District. Hamilton retains the right of first refusal for a second lot in the Vail Property, which may be the site of another apartment building in the future.
- Sand Companies was selected to receive state tax credits and is moving forward with their proposed 48-unit affordable workforce housing project on another lot in the Vail Property. The City previously pledged financial assistance to the project in the form of TIF and is moving towards approval of a TIF plan in early 2024. Construction of the building is due to start in spring/summer of 2024 and will take about a year to complete.
- The City completed platting of the Vail Property as the Vail Second Subdivision. It includes three lots – one is the option lot for Hamilton, one is the option lot for Sand Companies, and another is a smaller residual lot that could accommodate an additional housing project.

### Business Façade Improvement Program

- Caribou Enterprises, LLC applied for BFIP funding to help cover the costs of updated siding at the Domino's / Preferred Heating and Cooling building. The total cost of the improvements was \$41,350, and the EDA provided \$2,000 in assistance.
- Petals2Metals applied for BFIP funding for new signage at its store on Main Street. The cost of the signage was \$3,350, and the EDA provided \$1,675 in assistance.
- Three Oh One also applied for BFIP funding for new signage at its store on Main Street. The final cost of the signage was \$748.43, and the EDA provided \$374.22.

### RFP for Cemetery Land

- An RFP for the development of the 44-acre parcel in SW Kasson was reviewed by the EDA and City Council and issued to potential developers in the spring of 2023.
- City staff and consultants have worked with interested parties throughout the second half of 2023 to refine the proposal and move closer towards developing the property.

### Parking Study

- A parking study was conducted by staff following the completion of the Hwy 57 project – this came about as a recommendation in the Rethos Downtown Assessment and was identified as a part of the EDA's goals for 2023.
- The parking study was conducted in two phases, with the first phase taking place in August and the second phase taking place in September. Data samples were collected at 8:00am, 12:00pm, and 5:00pm each day Thursday-Saturday.
- The results from the parking study showed that almost all parking areas included in the study in downtown Kasson were underutilized according to industry standards. However, there were a couple of instances where available parking was utilized at a higher rate. Going forward, the results from the study could be utilized as a plan for downtown improvements is developed further.

### Kasson Parks Survey

- Staff conducted a parks survey with the purpose of gathering input from Kasson residents on their experiences and desires for future city parks. The survey was available in electronic and paper formats, and 273 total responses were collected.
- The top three amenities that respondents indicated as priorities in the survey include playgrounds, restrooms, and more options for seating.

### Rural Entrepreneurship Ventures (REV)

- Throughout much of the second half of 2023, the EDA completed the multi-step application process for participating in REV. The 3-year program is designed to assist small cities within SMIF's territory with entrepreneurial ecosystem development.
- Kasson was fortunately selected as one of four communities to join the REV cohort starting in 2024 along with Caledonia, Plainview, and collectively the cities of Fairfax, Winthrop, and Gibbon.

### RAEDI Investor Communities

- RAEDI (Rochester Area Economic Development Inc) reached out to the EDA about the prospect of Kasson joining as an Investor Community. John Wade, President, and Kirk

Bustrom, Director of Economic Development, presented to the EDA at the November meeting, after which the EDA asked staff to reach out to current member communities.

- The EDA will further consider investing in RAEDI starting in the first half of 2024.

#### Business Spotlight Program

- The Spotlight program continued in 2023 as a means to feature Kasson businesses. Each recipient was invited to present at an EDA meeting and each recipient received a certificate of appreciation.
- Home Federal Savings Bank (January) and Rolling Hills Transit (April) were featured.

#### Other Noteworthy Items

- The EDA collaborated with the Chamber of Commerce on many ribbon-cutting and groundbreaking events for new and expanding businesses throughout the year.
- The EDA also collaborated with the Chamber on the purchase of new banners for Main Street – the EDA provided 50% of the funding in the amount of \$2,287.50.
- The EDA made an annual contribution of \$400 to SMIF.
- In December, Michael Peterson completed his second term of service as an EDA Board member. His vacant seat will be available starting in 2024.

The Kasson EDA has continued with its mission of supporting the business community throughout the year. It was very exciting to see many new businesses decide to join Kasson's growing entrepreneurial ecosystem, in addition to the many established businesses that decided to take new leaps with expansion projects. While previous years brought various issues that were especially tough for many businesses, it seemed that 2023 showed an improvement. Not only did the EDA support this growth through its revolving loan fund, façade grant program, and tax incentives, but it also made strides towards successful long-term growth. Between the RFP process for the cemetery land, parking study, parks survey, and successful application to become a REV community, 2023 established a foundation for continued success in the coming year.