

Crosslake Economic Development Authority

Annual Report 2012

The Crosslake Economic Development Authority made significant progress in 2012. In past years, EDA functioned primarily as a Bank and served an important role helping finance projects, such as Emergency Service Center, Joint Public Works Facility, Crosslake Clinic and others. The EDA worked closely with BLAEDC (Brainerd Lakes Area Economic Development Commission) on some of these projects, and BLAEDC will continue to play an important role as we move forward.

Crosslake started out as a logging community. Since then it has seen many changes – going from logging which ended in the 20's to a resort economy that no longer exists. Crosslake, like many other communities, suffered through the economic downturn.

Today, we have a population of approximately 2200 permanent residents and approximately 10,000 tourists or summer residents. So Crosslake has a dynamic that is unique and separate from many of the smaller communities in Minnesota. So the question is, looking back, and looking to the future, how do we attract new businesses, how do we keep and retain our current businesses that help keep our low tax rate, how do we help preserve our lakes and forests, how do we provide an environment that is beautiful and provides green space and walking and bike trails? These are all questions that need to be answered.

Here is a brief description of Crosslake EDA 2012 priorities:

- **Economic Development:**

The first quarter of 2012 was spent reviewing the historical aspects of Crosslake's economy, determining where our future economic opportunities are and formalizing a plan that would begin to restore the economic vitality to Crosslake. Today, Crosslake has 4 economies on which to build, Retail, Tourism, Industrial and Hi-tech. Each one needs to be studied individually and how they fit into the future of Crosslake.

- **Create a mission statement that is a compass on who we are and where we need to go:**

"To Develop and Promote the Economic Growth and Welfare of Crosslake while Protect the Environment". This mission statement keeps us on track and reminds of where we need to go.

- **Crosslake Community School:**

The EDA became involved when director, Tami Martin began searching for additional space and financing to build a new school. The EDA hired Widseth, Smith and Nolting to prepare an analysis on 15 different sites within the city. Five were chosen as "most suitable". One of those sites included the Community Center site which is owned by the city. In December of 2012, the Crosslake council passed a resolution that allowed the Community Center site to be included in a proposal that Ms. Martin submitted to her authorizer for expansion approval.

Schools play a big contribution in a city's successful economic development.

The Crosslake Charter School will be a priority extending into 2013 and beyond.

- **Business Retention Expansion and Education Project:**

EDA needs to be in touch with our Business Community and how we can support them in their efforts. We began working on a packet that included a questionnaire and other informational and educational material. EDA members along with Council members will visit our businesses to learn more about their needs and goals. Visits to the Business Community will begin early 2013.

- **Marketing Crosslake:**

Discussion continued through the year on how we market BLAEDC/Crosslake EDA and also how we market Crosslake. Currently, we have monthly articles in Crosslake Communiqué and in the Northland Press.

A Crosslake brochure focusing on business development is in design and will be available as an insert in our Business Packet. The Brochure will be made available through our Banks, Real Estate Offices and other businesses. BLAEDC and the Greater Brainerd Chamber will also have brochures for distribution.

Crosslake Planning and Zoning donated a new Kiosk that will be used for displaying business development opportunities in our city.

Another one of our marketing efforts included the grand opening of Cross-Tech, a manufacturing operation in Cross Lake. Cross-Tech had worked with extensively with BLAEDC and the city to expand their facilities. This expansion to a different site allowed Cross-Tech to benefit from the JOBZ program and the expansion also created additional employment opportunities and helped increase the tax base in the city of Crosslake.

Further marketing options will continued to be explored and initiated as we build our economic efforts.

The Crosslake Economic Development Authority ended 2012 with a much stronger role in the community. We will continue to build on that momentum. And we will partner with our city leaders so that together, we can build a strong vibrant economy that will sustain our community for generations.