

NOTICE OF AGENDA

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (EDA) MEETING

[City of Forest Lake - Link to Meeting Livestream](#)

Forest Lake City Center – Council Chambers
Forest Lake, Minnesota

March 2, 2026 – 6:00 PM (*new time*)

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Approve the Agenda (Action)
5. Open Forum - Citizen Petitions, Requests and Concerns: Please sign in at the front table.
The Open Forum is available for residents to express personal opinions for any item of business. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.
6. Consent Agenda Considerations (Action Items)*
 - a. Approve Minutes from Regular Meeting of January 5, 2026
 - b. Approve Minutes from Regular Meeting of February 2, 2026

**EDA may remove any item from the consent agenda for specific consideration.*
7. Regular Agenda (Action Items)
 - a. Acceptance of Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce 2025 Annual Report
 - b. Headwaters 123 Concept Plat Update
 - c. 2026 Workplan
8. Discussion
9. Updates
 - a. City - Verbal
 - i. City Engineer Ryan Goodman
 - b. Washington County
 - i. Open to Business 2025 Summary Report
 - c. Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce
10. Adjourn

EDA MISSION STATEMENT

Assist and support the economic climate of the City of Forest Lake through programming and communication to achieve the greatest outcome for its citizens and businesses by:

- Marketing the City and its assets
- Supporting existing businesses
- Supporting new businesses
- Creating partnerships
- Providing a vision for the future of commercial areas



Forest Lake
AS GOOD AS IT SOUNDS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

1408 Lake Street South
Forest Lake, MN 55025
www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us

Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

Monday, January 5, 2026

7:32 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

[City of Forest Lake - Livestream and Recorded Meetings](#)

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Leif Erickson	EDA President	Present	
Eric Langness	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Jill Grindahl	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Blake Roberts	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Jennifer Lorge	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Chris Hoyt	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Johnathan Wright	EDA Commissioner	Present	

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Approve the Agenda

Motion: EDA Commissioner Langness made a Motion to Approve the Agenda with an amendment to change 8.b. 2024-2025 Workplan Update to the regular agenda item 7.b.
Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Roberts. Motion carried 7-0.

5. Open Forum – Citizen Petitions, Requests, and Concerns

The Open Forum is available for residents to express personal opinions for any item of business. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.

Comments: None.

6. Approve EDA Meeting Minutes from Regular Meeting of December 1, 2025

Motion: EDA Commissioner Lorge made a Motion to Approve the EDA minutes from the Regular Meeting of December 1, 2025, as submitted.
Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Grindahl. Motion carried 7-0.

7. Regular Agenda (Action Items)

- a) Resolution 01-05-26-01 Approving the Washington County CDA Predevelopment Finance Fund Application for Funding

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Community Development Director Wittman indicated the EDA received a request from Gaughan Companies, a potential purchaser of the Airport Business Park parcels, for a site survey and wetland delineation to be completed by Hakanson Anderson for \$5,200. She commented that if the project was under \$10,000, the Washington County Predevelopment Finance Fund would fund 80 percent of the total project cost.

Motion: EDA Commissioner Langness made a Motion to Adopt Resolution 01-05-26-01. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Grindahl. Motion carried 7-0.

8. Discussion

a) NewTrax, Inc. Transportation Service Agreement

Community Development Director Wittman indicated Washington County is seeking to supplement NewTrax services in Forest Lake. Community Development Director Wittman sought guidance from the EDA regarding an agreement amendment. The EDA determined this was a City matter and would continue to offer verbal support for the circulator system.

b) 2024-2025 Workplan Update

Community Development Director Wittman sought guidance on the EDA’s workplan for future update. The EDA provided direction to Community Development Director Wittman who indicated a draft update will be brought back for EDA formal consideration which will include analysis of the Downtown Plan projects.

9. Updates

a) City

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the Washington County Brownfield Grant and the EDA Vacancies.

b) Washington County

None.

c) Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce

None.

d) Other

None.

10. Adjourn

Motion: EDA President adjourned the Regularly Scheduled EDA Meeting at 8:27 p.m.



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Monday, February 2, 2026

6:01 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

[City of Forest Lake - Livestream and Recorded Meetings](#)

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Leif Erickson	EDA President	Present	
Eric Langness	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Jill Grindahl	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Blake Roberts	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Jennifer Lorge	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Chris Hoyt	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Johnathan Wright	EDA Commissioner	Present	

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Election of Officers

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the five positions available for the Economic Development Authority, including the president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and assistant treasurer.

Motion: EDA Commissioner Lorge made a Motion to Nominate Leif Erickson as EDA President. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Grindahl. Motion carried 6-1 (Erickson abstained).

Motion: EDA President Erickson made a Motion to Nominate Eric Langness as EDA Vice President. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Roberts. Motion carried 7-0.

Motion: EDA President Erickson made a Motion to Nominate Community Development Director Wittman as secretary. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Roberts. Motion carried 7-0.

Motion: EDA Commissioner Roberts made a Motion to Nominate Chris Hoyt as Treasurer. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Grindahl. Motion carried 6-1 (Erickson abstained).

Motion: EDA Commissioner Roberts made a Motion to Nominate Elle Larkin as Assistant Treasurer. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Langness. Motion carried 6-1 (Erickson abstained).

5. Approve the Agenda



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Motion: EDA Commissioner Langness made a Motion to Approve the Agenda as submitted. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Wright. Motion carried 7-0.

6. Open Forum – Citizen Petitions, Requests, and Concerns

The Open Forum is available for residents to express personal opinions on any item of business. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.

Comments:

None.

7. Consent Agenda Consideration (Action Items)*

None.

8. Regular Agenda (Action Items)

a) Southwest Area Study

- i. Acceptance of Headwaters Parkway Extension Report
- ii. Roadway Phasing Policy Recommendations

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the previous decision by the Economic Development Authority and City Council to set a preferred alternative for extension number two. She reviewed the findings of the study, including a preliminary cost estimate and street and utility layouts. She discussed the two recommendations to adopt the Premature Development Language in its subdivision regulations, and the right-sizing approach to allow for roadways less than needed for full build-out.

EDA Commissioner Roberts asked about the plat coming forward and if it contemplated what the study considered. Community Development Director Wittman answered that the plat was following preferred alignment two.

EDA Commissioner Roberts asked if the developer was in line. Community Development Director Wittman answered that the developer would like Headwaters Parkway to head straight south to 190th, but this roadway was designed as a major collector road. She said that having Headwaters Parkway go straight south would lead to another collector road. She stated that Headwaters Parkway was designed to be an east-west connector.

EDA President Erickson asked about why the developer wanted to go straight south. Community Development Director Wittman answered that when the roadway goes west, there would be a greater impact on developable land.

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EDA Commissioner Roberts asked if the developer was aware of the possibility of the roadway change so it would be less costly. Community Development Director Wittman answered that the Headwaters Parkway design was reduced from a four-lane split to a two-lane split, so it would be less of a benefit for them.

EDA Commissioner Langness asked about the premature development and if it would be a tool that the City would have, but not an entitlement for the developer. Community Development Director Wittman answered that if the City decided to use the tool, the developer could propose a reduced roadway design when they could show they would be able to build out the full roadway in the future. She clarified that Elmcrest was not included in this.

EDA Commissioner Langness expressed concerns because it could be disastrous long-term for the City to be stuck with the bill or have a roadway that would be halfway finished. He suggested building the road fully. He clarified that it was for the road and trail usage, not underground utilities. Community Development Director Wittman answered that underground utilities and full-capacity stormwater would have to be fully developed.

EDA Commissioner Langness asked if the developer could put a portion of its funding toward its future build. Community Development Director Wittman answered that she was unsure about this option because of recent case law. She discussed another project that utilized deferred assessment agreements.

EDA Commissioner Langness asked if they could have a developer pay for the portions adjacent to the developer, but if a nearby developer would be charged anything for increased capacity needed on a roadway. Community Development Director Wittman clarified that you could only consider the development impact.

EDA President Erickson voiced concerns about whether the watershed district would change its requirements in the future. Community Development Director Wittman answered that the developer might not be compelled to build to a bigger standard unless there was a proportional impact that they were creating.

EDA President Erickson asked if there were tools to take it into delineation, or if it would be subjective. Community Development Director Wittman answered that it came down to the total traffic generated by the development at the time. She discussed potential contemplated land use changes with the 2028 future land use update, which could impact the traffic modeling.



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EDA Commissioner Lorge asked which percentage was paid by the City and the developer for Headwaters Parkway. Community Development Director Wittman answered that unless there was an upsizing requirement, the developer would pay for the project.

EDA Commissioner Roberts voiced support for the project because feeder roads would keep traffic off other roads and benefit the community. EDA Commissioner Grindahl noted his agreement.

EDA Commissioner Hoyt asked if a developer installed a roadway that was supposed to be a four-way, but instead built a two-way, and they would put the additional money in an escrow account. Community Development Director Wittman answered that she would check with the legal counsel, but she did not think they could do this option.

EDA Commissioner Hoyt asked how they could get funds if the builder went out of business.

Motion: EDA Commissioner Langness made a Motion to Approve the Southwest Area Study. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Hoyt. Motion carried 7-0.

Motion: EDA Commissioner Langness made a Motion to Recommend the City Council approve the Premature Development and Interim Design regulations. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Grindahl. Motion carried 7-0.

9. Regular Agenda (Action Items)

a) Downtown Master Plan Review

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the downtown plan, divided into several directives. She asked for feedback on the ways the EDA could assist the City.

EDA Commissioner Langness answered that he would prioritize the wayfinding directive.

EDA President Erickson asked about policy and zoning adjustments in this space. Community Development Director Wittman answered that they were undergoing BOOST, which was intended to make the code more transparent. She said that the code updates would continue until the adoption of the comprehensive plan.

EDA Commissioner Roberts expressed interest in the Lake Street Corridor Directive, especially when considering the landscaping on the corridor.

EDA President Erickson asked about ensuring a spectrum of financial participation tools were in place to level development. Community Development Director Wittman answered that they had the business subsidy, tax increment, and tax abatement policies to update in 2026. Additionally, they would have Headwaters 123 Work and finalize the Southwest Area study.



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EDA Commissioner Grindahl said the redevelopment activity would be where they would get the most bang for their buck. She discussed making the streetscape walkable and accessible to retail.

EDA President Erickson said that the road was busy, and they would need to promote safety. He discussed the opportunities to do wayfinding and engage developers to create a walkable loop.

EDA Commissioner Lorge discussed Centennial Parkway and the benefit of providing access to park bikes and walk into town. EDA Commissioner Roberts said that the County was open to conversations about trail extensions.

EDA Commissioner Langness said that the Lake Street Corridor was critical, but the areas that needed the most attention were outside of downtown. Community Development Director Wittman said that there was a Highway 61 Aesthetics and Water Quality Study completed in 2012, which addressed the Highway 1 aesthetics. She said it might be beneficial to update the 2012 corridor assessment and extend it. EDA Commissioner Langness stated that the critical parts of the business corridors outside of downtown needed to be improved, and the roads needed to blend in.

EDA Commissioner Lorge asked about the updates to a park and if they coordinated with the DNR to expand the number of slips. Community Development Director Wittman said they identified a preferred site under private ownership, but they did not hear back.

EDA Commissioner Lorge asked if the hotel and event center would help alleviate the parking needs at Lakeside Park. Community Development Director Wittman answered that it would create additional parking, but there could still be a parking problem because there would be new usage.

EDA Commissioner Lorge asked about people not wanting to add slips because the lake is too busy. Community Development Director Wittman answered that the downtown plan added transient boat docking, but expanding the boat docking would require an environmental assessment worksheet, so they have not moved forward with that option yet.

EDA President Erickson asked about a deadline to decide on the boat docking downtown. Community Development Director Wittman responded that the agreement with the DNR to maintain the existing launch expired. They did not have land to move the launch from the current location. If they moved the launch, they would need to sign a new agreement with the DNR.

EDA Commissioner Roberts asked about the boat relocation study. Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the three options for the boat launch and the preferred alignment.

EDA Commissioner Lorge asked if they could find an alternative location for the canoe launch.

Community Development Director Wittman gave a summary of the Highway 61 study.



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b) 2026 Workplan

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the priorities established by the City Council that the EDA could support. She summarized the 2024 work plan.

EDA Commissioner Roberts asked about City Engineer Goodman attending EDA meetings.

EDA President Erickson asked about bringing back to Public Works the desire to get canoes and kayaks downtown.

10. Updates

a) City

i. Citywide Transportation Updates

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the Transit Link On-Demand Pilot Service. She said that the City's contributions to transportation were minimal currently. The City did not want to explore reshaping the taxing districts' systems for transportation.

EDA Commissioner Langness asked if anyone could use Transit Link On-Demand Services. Community Development Director Wittman confirmed this information and detailed the communication strategy.

b) Washington County

EDA Commissioner Lorge asked about the program for remodels and upgrades for rentals. Community Development Director Wittman answered that there were housing programs the County was administering on the City's behalf.

EDA Commissioner Roberts requested feedback on the proposed hotel development project. EDA Commissioner Langness stated that most of his concerns could be addressed in the design process.

EDA President Erickson suggested putting programming details in the City's utility billing.

c) Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce

None.

d) Other

None.

11. Adjourn

Motion: EDA Commissioner Langness made a Motion to Adjourn the Regularly Scheduled EDA Meeting at 7:38 p.m.

Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Wright. Motion carried 7-0.

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE: March 3, 2026
TO: President Lefi Erickson and EDA Members
STAFF ORIGINATOR: Abbi Jo Wittman, Community Development Director
AGENDA ITEM: Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce 2025 Service Report

INTRODUCTION:

As the Economic Development Authority (EDA) is aware, the City contracts with the Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) for certain economic development services in Forest Lake. A copy of the EDA/Chamber 2025-2027 BR&E Cooperative Agreement is enclosed for EDA review.

As part of our Agreement with the Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber must provide the City with an annual report. Enclosed is the Chamber's 2025 Annual Report. After presentation from the Chamber President and CEO, Nannette LaNasa, the EDA will be asked to discuss the 2025 Annual Report, provided direction (if any) to Chamber President LaNasa, and accept the 2025 Annual Report.

ANALYSIS:

As noted in the Chamber's year-end report, the Chamber continues to fulfill business outreach efforts in a variety of ways. The only area the EDA may want to discuss with the Chamber is *Section c – Support the business retention and expansion efforts of the Forest Lake EDA*. This is because staff have been in discussions with the Chamber, Washington County EDA, as well as Open to Business, to conducted targeted business outreach efforts. As noted in the Annual Report, significant outreach is occurring throughout the year. However, are there certain business metrics or indicators the EDA would like the Chamber to obtain through this program?

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the EDA discuss the BR&E Report and, if favorable to its contents, ***motion to accept the Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce 2025 Annual Report.***

ATTACHMENTS:

2025-2027 Cooperative Agreement
2025 Annual Report

COOPERATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT made this 13th day of January, 2025 between the City of Forest Lake Economic Development Authority, 1408 Lake Street South, Forest Lake, MN 55025 ("EDA") and the Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce, 20 Lake Street N #204, Forest Lake, MN 55025 ("Chamber").

RECITALS

WHEREAS, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 469, the EDA has been granted economic development powers; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Minnesota Statute § 469.101, subd. 5 and subd. 16, the EDA may contract with an official, industrial, commercial, or trade organization to carry out public relations activities to promote the City of Forest Lake ("City") and its economic development; and

WHEREAS, the EDA recognizes that the Chamber has the ability and resources to promote economic development opportunities within the City and to assemble and furnish information concerning such opportunities to interested persons and entities; and

WHEREAS, the EDA desires to contract with the Chamber to aid the EDA in promoting economic development opportunities.

NOW THEREFORE, In consideration of the payments, covenants and agreements established in this Agreement, the parties agree as follows:

1. Term. The term of this Agreement shall be from January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2027.
2. Payment. The EDA shall pay to the Chamber the sum of \$10,000 per year for the services described in Paragraph 3 below which shall be payable in semi-annual installments of \$5,000.00, due on or before April 30, of each year, and October 31, of each year.
3. Services. In consideration of the payments made by the EDA to the Chamber, the Chamber shall perform the following services:
 - a. Establish and maintain a comprehensive list of businesses in the service area;
 - b. Communicate and connect to the appropriate entites, current and potential businesses, and residents requesting various types of information, including but not limited to demographics, location possibilities, relocation information, and business startup

information;

- c. Support the business retention and expansion efforts (“BR&E Programs”) of the Forest Lake EDA;
 - d. Field calls and questions from the public;
 - e. Advocate for small, local businesses on a county and state level;
 - f. Promote the Forest Lake business community in general, community events, and programs including City of Forest Lake programming through referrals, social media, and Chamber electronic and print communication channels;
 - g. Engage with member and nonmember local businesses each month;
 - h. Perform local business ribbon cuttings;
 - i. Provide opportunities for business networking;
 - j. Partner with the City for a minimum of one City sponsored community event or program annually.
 - k. Stay informed on the needs of local businesses through ongoing conversations and periodic surveying;
 - l. Participate in the City’s downtown area revitalization efforts;
 - m. Attend the EDA meetings and provide verbal updates as requested;
4. Additional Financial Responsibilities. The Chamber shall be responsible for out-of-pocket expenses including postage and telephone expenses incurred by it in providing services as stated in Paragraph 3. For BR&E Programs, the EDA agrees to reimburse the Chamber for these expenses, provided these expenses are reviewed and approved by the EDA prior to the funds being spent. Reimbursable expenses shall not exceed \$1,500 during the calendar year.
 5. Information Sharing. At the Chamber’s request, the EDA may provide such reasonable public information from its records to facilitate the Chamber’s services in Paragraph 3. The sharing of any costs incurred shall be agreed upon in advance of acquiring such information.
 6. Annual Report. By October 15 of each year, the Chamber shall present a written report to the EDA and the City annually, describing the services and outcomes from the year. The Chamber agrees to comply with all requirements of Minnesota Statutes § 16C.05, Subd. 5, to maintain books, records, documents and other evidence and accounting procedures and practices which sufficiently and properly reflect the services rendered for a minimum of 6 years. Such records shall be subject at all reasonable times to inspection by the EDA, the City, and the state auditor.

7. Data Practices Act. The Chamber shall comply with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § 13.05, Subd. 11.
8. Indemnification. The Chamber does hereby agree that it will at all times, hold harmless the EDA and the City against any and all liability, loss, damages, costs or expenses which the Chamber may hereafter sustain, incur or be required to pay by reason of any person suffering any personal injury, death, property loss or damage arising out of the services to be furnished by the Chamber.
9. No Partnership. Nothing contained in this agreement is intended or should be construed as creating a partnership or joint venture between the parties.
10. Termination.
 - a. For Cause. If the EDA finds that the Chamber has failed to comply with the provisions of this Agreement, the EDA may terminate this Agreement at any time following fourteen (14) days written notice to the Chamber and upon failure of the Chamber to cure the default within a fourteen (14) day period. The EDA may require the Chamber to repay the funds in full or in an amount determined by the EDA to be appropriate.
 - b. No Cause. This Agreement may be canceled by either party upon thirty (30) days written notice to the other party. Notices shall be mailed to the parties at the addresses hereinabove stated.
11. No Other Agreements. It is hereby understood and agreed that the entire agreement between the parties is contained herein and that this Agreement supersedes all oral agreements and negotiations between the parties relating to the subject matter. Any changes in the provisions of this agreement shall be valid only when reduced to writing as an amendment and signed by the parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties have executed this Agreement as dated above.

CITY OF FOREST LAKE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

BY:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mara Bain", is written over a horizontal line.

Mara Bain

Its: President

FOREST LAKE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

By: *Danette A. Liles*

Its: *President & CEO*



TO: Forest Lake Economic Authority
 FROM: Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce, Nannette M LaNasa
 RE: 2025 Year End Business Retention & Expansion Report

Greetings to President Erickson, EDA members and Forest Lake City Staff. Thank you for the opportunity to share an overview of the business retention and expansion service work efforts performed by the Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce in 2025. See the details below in accordance with the agreement, section 3 "Services".

- a. The FLACC continued to add local businesses to our data base and communicated with those businesses periodically throughout the year via emails and visits.
- b/d. The FLACC continued to provide both businesses and residents with a resource information on local events, location & relocation resources, referrals, business start-up guidance and job openings throughout the year. Our office fields calls on a daily basis.
- c. This past year we completed the joint brochure, featuring the City of Forest Lake, The Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce and the Open to Business Program.

The Washington County Chamber Coalition, which includes the FLACC, Washington County CDA, Washington County Workforce and Stillwater, Cottage Grove, Woodbury and White Bear Lake chambers) presented multiple business education with networking events to our overall business community. These events provide in-depth conversations, facilitated by DEED, Open to Business, and assorted industry professionals.

Newly opening/opened businesses were referred to the City of Forest Lake's Abbi Wittman.

The FLACC partnered with the Forest Lake Area School's Career Launch program to bridge the gap between potential student employment/career exploration and business. Our Forest Lake Area Schools Career Launch Summit collaboration brought teachers and business professionals together to discuss the career pathways program in depth. The chamber President & CEO N LaNasa also participated in the newly created Washington County wide Career Partnership meetings and tours to bridge the gap between our WA County schools and businesses through the expansion of "Career Launch or Pathway" programs across the county.

- e. The FLACC continued to advocate for local business by educating our MN House of Representatives and MN Senate representatives on local needs and concerns.

The FLACC also brought state and local legislators together to educate our businesses on recent policy changes and updates. In 2025, we launched our Forest Lake Area Local Leaders events, which included updates from our local mayors, including Mayor Blake Roberts and our Washington County Commissioner, Fran Miron and available state senators.

f. FLACC continued to publicly promote Forest Lake businesses, community events and the City of Forest Lake programs in the member e-News, within the chamber's online and print media, social media postings, and in the Forest Lake Times. The LowDown featured new or relocating businesses on the "What's New" map and business spotlights. (Public promotions included pertinent City of Forest Lake announcements as well including but not limited to Arts in the Park and Hometown Holiday.)

The FLACC and member businesses manned a FLACC booth in the welcome area of the weekly Arts in the Park program throughout the summer of 2025, fully supporting the City of Forest Lake Parks efforts.

The FLACC website provides a community events page which was utilized and promoted Easter by the Lake, Arts in the Park, the Lake Fest Street Dance, Local Like YOU (holiday give, shop local, visit Santa campaign) and Hometown Holiday as well as other submitted community events.

g/h. The FLACC executed monthly business visits to engage and perform ribbon cuttings. Each month the ambassador team visited 2-4 businesses (85% located in Forest Lake). The average attendance of business professionals supporting these visits continued to be high. Staff engaged in additional conversations and visits outside of these programmed visits and began Business Retention & Expansion visits specifically in late 2025. (see attached.)

i. FLACC provided business to business networking opportunities to both our members and non-members alike, 3-5 times per month as well as larger events such as the fore mentioned WCCC Business Educational events and the Career Launch Summit. Our average attendance at our Forest Lake Coffee & Connections increased from an average of 20 business attendees to 30+ on a monthly basis. In October, we launched a Trades specific opportunity in Forest Lake that averaged 15 business attendees monthly by years end.

j. The FLACC continued to work collaboratively with City of Forest Lake staff on the Easter By the Lake (egg hunt); Vet Memorial - Memorial Day program; The Forest Lake Vet Memorial project, ground breaking and fundraising; the Beltz Park Grand Opening celebration; and the Hometown Holiday event held in early December at Lakeside Memorial Park. Hometown Holiday continued to provide a festive family-oriented event which again drew large numbers to the park.

k. The FLACC continued to learn of business needs through ongoing conversations, particularly during the Forest Lake Area Local Leaders panelist discussions, monthly mixers, Ambassador visits and BR&E specific conversations in 2025.

- l. The FLACC continued to promote the Commercial Incentive Improvement Program (CIIP) and connected businesses looking to relocate with city staff and local realtors.
- m. President & CEO, N. LaNasa attended the EDA meetings and provided verbal updates.

On a personal note, I am delighted to see that progress that was made this past year within our city and local community as we were collaborative and intentional in our efforts. It was also wonderful to recognize the work of the City of Forest Lake as a chamber Annual Award winner in November!

On behalf of the Forest Lake Chamber Board of Directors and myself, thank you for your partnership.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nannette M. LaNasa
President & CEO
Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce

2025 Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce Business Visits			
Date	City	Business Type	Nature of Conversation
1/9/25	Forest Lake	Health & Wellness	Learn about business offering, Promote
1/9/25	Forest Lake	Recycling	Organizational Offering, Promote
1/9/25	Hugo	Banking	
2/6/25	Forest Lake	Hair	New Business Opening
2/6/25	Forest Lake	Grocer	Permitting, promotion
2/6/25	Forest Lake	Golf	
3/6/25	Forest Lake	Trades	Promote new opening
3/6/25	Forest Lake	Glass	
3/6/25	Forest Lake	Financial	Newly opening
4/3/25	Forest Lake	Health & Wellness	
4/3/25	Forest Lake	Trades	
4/3/25	Forest Lake	School	Career Launch!
Apr-25	Various	Wide Variety	Interacting with 75 businesses at EXPO
4/16/25	Columbus	Entertainment	
5/8/25	Forest Lake	THC	
	Forest Lake	Financial	
6/5/25	Forest Lake	Senior Care	
	Forest Lake	Trades	
	Forest Lake	Food Services	
	unsure	Auction	
	Regional	Business Services	
	Forest Lake		
6/10/25	Forest Lake	Employment	Celebrated 10 Years in Forest Lake
Jul-25	Forest Lake	various	14 pop in visits in July
8/7/25	Forest Lake	Auto	Long time FL business
	Forest Lake	Recovery	Newly opened celebrationin FL
	Forest Lake	Marketing	
9/4/25	Forest Lake	Financial	National Chain comes to FL
9/11/25	Forest Lake	Auto	New Ownership
	Forest Lake	Health & Wellness	New Business
	Forest Lake	Engineering	New Business/Connect with City Staff

	Columbus	Truckin	Ground breaking
10/2/25	Columbus	Animal Care	
	Columbus	Animal Care	
	Forest Lake	Non Profit	New
	Wyoming	Trades	
Nov-25	Forest Lake	Engineering	How can we help, good partner intros
Nov-25	Forest Lake	Housing	Learn about nature of industry
12/4/25	Columbus	Youth Sports	
	Forest Lake	Mental Health	WOW, great services available
	Forest Lake	Youth Sports	
	Forest Lake	Health & Wellness	
	Forest Lake	Health & Wellness	Expanded services
	Forest Lake	Health & Wellness	
	Forest Lake	Gas/Retail	Struggling due to road construction
	unsure	Bookkeeping	New
	unsure	Asphalt	Support conversation
12/22/25	Forest Lake	Financial	How can we help, promote



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: March 2, 2026
TO: President Leif Erickson and EDA Members
STAFF ORIGINATOR: Abbi Jo Wittman, Community Development Director
AGENDA ITEM: Headwaters 123 Concept Plat Update

INTRODUCTION:

As the Economic Development Authority (EDA) is aware, the EDA and City have been marketing Headwaters 123 for a single user for several years. In a series of workshops, the EDA (in partnership with the City Council) has determined this may not be the best development scenario for this property. As a result, it has been determined the City should take a different approach to the property's future development. While not exclusively due to this, a large reason for the change is that the property will generate significantly more tax revenue if master planned and developed for multiple uses.

To transition the City to this new approach, the EDA directed staff to:

1. Update the enclosed *Jobs Center* Concept Plat. Changes would include: some retail/service along the parkway (predominantly adjacent to Headwaters Village, across the parkway; allowance for some residential in the SW corner and possibly Fenway Avenue; and to reserve a large portion of the site for smaller acreage sites to provide for increases in employment and tax base.
2. Seek out those in the development community who have an interest in partnering with the City on the future development of the site.

Staff has recently updated the EDA on the progress of the latter, above. Staff continues to work on a Scope of Work for services related to this work and is hopeful the EDA will have something to review at its regular meeting in April.

Regarding the former, enclosed is a proposal from Bruce Chamberlain of TLAL-LI Collaborative to update the concept plat. The EDA is being asked to approve the proposal.

ANALYSIS:

The update of the Concept Plat will better describe how the City desires the ultimate build out of the property. With this visual image, the City can better market the site and/or a portion of it to developers and end users. This will be necessary for the EDA as it continues engagement with the development community.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the EDA discuss the enclosed proposal and, if comfortable, ***motion to approve the TLAL-LI Collaborative Concept Plat update work proposal.***

ATTACHMENTS:

Concept Plat 2 – Jobs Center
TLAL-LI Collaborative Proposal



Concept 2 – Jobs Center

- Up to 7 commercial/ industrial lots
- Any lots could be combined for larger footprints
- East-West roadway creates efficient site circulation
- Stormwater handled on a site-wide basis
- Natural amenities & perimeter screening managed on outlots



Concept 2 – Jobs Center

February 13, 2026

Abbi Wittman, Community Development Director
City of Forest Lake
Abbi.Wittman@ci.forest-lake.mn.us

Re: Proposal – Headwaters plat concept modification.

Dear Abbi:

I understand the Forest Lake EDA would like to update Concept 2 – Jobs Center of the Headwaters plat prepared a few years ago by TLÂL-LI. You mentioned in your email that the EDA would like the concept to illustrate commercial service uses along Headwaters Parkway (like current frontage across the parkway) and illustrate residential use along Fenway Avenue. These changes should continue to reserve the bulk of the property for job-heavy tax base.

These are straightforward changes that TLÂL-LI can prepare for you within a couple of weeks given other project deadlines. Key steps include:

- Meeting with you to confirm proposed changes.
- Creating a modified Jobs Center alternative for your review and confirmation.
- Translating changes into a concept layout graphic and bird's eye illustration that match the character of existing concept graphics.
- Send to you for review and make any final changes.
- Send you updated graphic and presentation materials.

TLÂL-LI proposes to conduct this work at an hourly rate for a fee not to exceed \$2,400 including reimbursable expenses. If you would like any in-person meetings or presentations, they would be an additional service at a rate of \$800/visit.

We look forward to collaborating with you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,
TLÂL-LI Collaborative



Bruce Chamberlain, FASLA
President / Practice Lead

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE: March 2, 2026
TO: President Leif Erickson and EDA Members
STAFF ORIGINATOR: Abbi Wittman, Community Development Director
AGENDA ITEM: EDA 2026 Workplan Table Adoption

INTRODUCTION:

Over the last couple months, the Economic Development Authority (EDA) has been reviewing its 2024-2025 Workplan (enclosed) to develop a one-year Workplan for 2026. The intent of the one year Workplan was to continue important work of the EDA while the City Council developed its strategic plan. From recent discussions, the enclosed 2026 Workplan Table has been drafted for EDA adoption.

ANALYSIS:

The items outlined on the enclosed 2026 Workplan reflect recent EDA discussions. Except for the Southwest Area Study (removed as it has been completed), staff has:

- removed monument wayfinding planning (as it was not discussed to be included in the Workplan update); and
- added the HWY 61 corridor study (as it was determined to be a priority of the EDA).

The enclosed Workplan is intended to guide the EDA's work throughout the remainder of the year.

RECOMMENDATION:

The EDA should review the enclosed documents, discuss, and (if prepared) move to approve the 2026 Workplan Table as presented.

ATTACHMENTS:

2024-2025 Workplan

2026 Workplan Table

2024-2025
City of Forest Lake Economic Development Authority
Economic Development Work Plan



Forest Lake EDA Mission Statement

To assist and support the economic climate of the City of Forest Lake through programming and communication to achieve the greatest outcome for its citizens and businesses by

- Marketing the City and its assets
- Supporting existing businesses
- Supporting new businesses
- Creating partnerships
- Providing a vision for the future of commercial areas

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges

In order to achieve the goals previously identified, several opportunities and challenges were identified by EDA members in order to inform future action steps. This was done at the EDA's October 9, 2023 workshop in which Washington County Economic Development Director led EDA members and Forest Lake Area Chamber Director, Nannette LaNasa in a brainstorming session.

Strengths

- Growing but room to expand/availability of land for residential and business growth
- Good/State of the Art Schools that serve many communities
- Small, lakeside community
- Vibrant array of large and small businesses (both franchise and locally-owned) that serves as a regional hub/destination
- Far enough away from metro but close enough within 30 minutes
- Active business leadership (in schools)
- Reasonable tax rate
- Room to preserve local history
- Room to improve transportation options
- Build stronger relationship/partnerships with business and community leaders
- Highlight successes of business, schools and community and increase leadership opportunities

Weaknesses

- Citizen education (how the city works, how taxes work) and public communication of local news
- The 'what is next' for vibrant downtown redevelopment
- Lack of City control for downtown redevelopment
- HWY 61 and Broadway corridors are not controlled by the City
- Infrastructure improvements (including repair and replacement) to make development easier and/or more appealing
- Self-identity (entrance monuments)
- Better planning for parks and trails
- City Codes and Ordinance development/update
- Community design/cohesion (especially in downtown area) guidelines and ordinances
- Enforcement (theatre)
- Transportation (especially when crossing county lines) and safety concerns related
- Parking downtown
- Business/Resident retention efforts
- Mixed use land use/zoning district which is widely affected by market factors and much is being developed as multiple-family residential

Opportunities

- Communication with residents (newsletter?) that is easy to get to/retrieve as well as steer the ship as we develop out
- Downtown redevelopment (with parking)
- Infrastructure (road, trails, park – dog park) development/redevelopment
- Push harder on the Headwaters 123 parcel
- Create opportunities for businesses and good jobs
- Seek out and fix the stumbling blocks (process, zoning, code, etc.)
- Business retention (willingness to help)
- Financial room from historical under-investment
- Creation of a ‘better downtown’ and continued evolvment of the area
- “Historic Downtown” (Lakeside Memorial Park) and Parking
- Planning as large player but has been small-town feel. We need to plan for big community.
- Work on community branding (all signage the same) – trail signage, monument signage
- More promotion (trade fairs attendance)
- Working with planning/zoning staff to input
- Consult with younger generation to see what they would like to see in their community, visit and stay
- Youth leadership
- Identify ‘look and feel’ of downtown area (what do we want, how do we want to look)
- Work with neighbors on regional infrastructure development and seek alternative funding sources

Threats

- Roadway ownership and improvement scheduling
- Natural resources preservation/protection and impact on local development
- Economy
- Watershed District
- Met Council (housing density requirements)
- Cost of housing
- Balance of the Single and Multi-family
- Growth rate and responsibility
- Older homes are being bought and being turned into rentals
- Home ownership trends
- Neighbor community development/Wisconsin non-residential tax rate

Goal 1 – Review public financial assistance policies and procedures and make recommendations to the City Council

- A. **Action Step:** The Forest Lake EDA will review and make recommendations to the City Council on Business Subsidy, TIF, Tax Abatement, and Incentive Forgivable Loan.

Deliverable: By End of Q4, 2024 – Completion of all policies in 1-3 month segments each

Program Costs: Staff Time

- B. **Action Step:** The Forest Lake EDA will assist the City Council in identifying uses for and distribution of new state Local Affordable Housing Aide (LAHA).

Deliverable: Q2 2024 – Identify potential LAHA Uses
Q2 2025 – Establish LAHA Program Use Policies

Program Costs: Up to \$300,000 per year funded by State of MN sales tax dollars/ Staff Time

Goal 2 – Study and support opportunities for growth, development, and redevelopment

- A. **Action Step:** Develop the SW Area Infrastructure Phasing Study by applying for EPA and/or Predevelopment Finance Fund grant funding through the Washington County CDA.

Deliverable: Q2, 2024 – Apply for Grant
Q4, 2024 – Completion of Phasing Study

Program Costs: Up to a 50:50 match
Staff and Consultant Time

- B. **Action Step:** Refine, promote, and implement the downtown plan by engaging with diverse stakeholders to encourage downtown development and redevelopment opportunities.

Deliverable: Q2, 2024 – Finalize Shoreline Stabilization and Boat Launch Relocation Study
Q4, 2024 – Determine 2025 downtown priorities
Ongoing – Meet with local businesses and landowners to discuss downtown needs

Program Costs: Staff Time

- C. **Action Step:** The Forest Lake EDA will continue to promote the business incentive programs upon reviewing the policy and after EDA/Council approval.

Deliverable: Annually - Determine the number of potential forgivable loans
Ongoing – Continue to update the City's *Invest in Forest Lake* website with incentive program materials

Program Costs: Staff Time
\$5,000/Abatement

Goal 3 - Support marketing efforts for the sale and development of Headwater 123

- A. **Action Step:** Define and build consensus on what success looks like and educate all team members on the benefits of the defined desired outcomes.

Deliverable: Q1-2, 2025 - Consensus building workshops will be held by the EDA and City Council.

Program Costs: Staff Time

- B. **Action Step:** The EDA will conduct an RFP for developers/partners to purchase and develop the Headwaters 123-acre property.

Deliverable: Q3-Q4 2025. An RFP will be developed and sent out to the development community, brokers and interested parties to partner with the city on the future development of the Headwaters 123 acre site.

Program Cost: Staff Time

- C. **Action Step:** Continue to support the efforts of the MN Technology Corridor by actively marketing the Headwaters 123 acres as a premier property for technology-based businesses within the corridor.

Deliverable: Ongoing – Continue to update City's *Invest in Forest Lake* website with current materials for the Headwaters 123 parcel and business park listings

Program Costs: Staff Time

- D. **Action Step:** Partner with Washington County CDA and attend Real Estate and Development Trade Shows and the annual MNCAR event to promote and market the Headwaters 123 site.

Deliverable: Annually – Attend Annual MNCAR Expo
Ongoing – Attend MN Real Estate Journal Development Summits.
Ongoing - Circulate marketing brochures, banners and web-based promotional materials in conjunction with the listing broker.

Program Costs: \$500 for tradeshow booth displays and marketing collateral
Staff Time
Commissioner Time

Appendix A

Definitions

What is Economic Development? No single definition incorporates all of the different strands of economic development. Typically, economic development can be described in terms of objectives. These are most commonly described as the creation of jobs and wealth, and the improvement of the quality of life. Economic development can also be described as a process that influences growth and restructuring of an economy to enhance the economic well-being of a community.

The main goal of economic development is to improve the economic well-being of a community through efforts that entail quality job creation, job retention, tax base enhancements and quality of life. It is therefore worthwhile to define economic base, a good job, and quality of life as it will relate to the recommendations of this document. As there is no single definition for economic development, there is no single strategy, policy or program for achieving successful economic development in Forest Lake. Thus, the plan laid out in this document is developed from a comprehensive and broad-based perspective.

What is an Economic Base? The basic component of an economic base is the production of goods and/or services that are exported, bringing outside wealth into the area. The economic base theory argues that economic development occurs when there is an expansion of the economic base, producing direct, indirect and induced benefits.

Economic development organizations (including the Forest Lake EDA) strive to expand the economic base, producing direct economic benefits. As the export base grows, bringing more wealth into a community, a portion of these receipts is spent on local consumption creating a multiplying effect. The rounds of spending create indirect and induced economic benefits, thereby creating an expansion of jobs, income, value-added – in short, economic development.

What is a Good Job?

A good job is one that is stable and safe, with sufficient work hours, a predictable schedule and has wages and benefits that can support households, families and communities.

Appendix B

Demographic Characteristics

Insert data from the CDA's economic development website:

<https://www.eastmetromsp.org/communities/forest-lake/p/v/data/item/782/forest-lake#population>



Economic Development Authority
2026 Workplan Table

	2026 Q1	2026 Q2	2026 Q3	2026 Q4
EDA Policy Review				
Business Subsidy				
Tax Increment				
Tax Abatement				
<i>Predevelopment Finance</i>				
Headwaters 123				
Update Site Plan				
Website Updates				
Developer Roundtable				
Site Incentives				
Significant Private Properties				
Vacant Land Analysis				
All Public Properties				
Community Visioning				
Comprehensive Plan Consultant				
Community Visioning				
HWY 61 Corridor Planning				
Plan Scoping				
Request for Proposals				



Open to Business Washington County Report 4Q25

Tyler Hilsabeck
Business Advisor
Washington County
612-789-8838
thilsabeck@mccdmn.org

Clients Served YTD	
Client Inquiry	2
Existing - Challenged	11
Existing -Opportunity	27
Pre-start planning	39
Start-up	30
Total	109

Business Owner Demographics YTD	
Low-Income Owned	53
BIPOC or Immigrant Owned	52
Woman Owned	65

"Your heart and passion for what you do is obvious. I will definitely be passing on your information to other entrepreneurs in Washington County." - Washington County business owner

Industry	Clients
Construction / Real Estate	2
Food	19
Health / Fitness	12
Manufacturing	5
Other	17
Professional / Consulting	10
Retail	14
Service	27
Technology	2
Wholesale / Distribution	1
Grand Total	109

Business Source	Clients
Bank Referral	10
Friends or Family	14
Internet	35
MCCD Community Partner	11
MCCD Staff Member	6
Municipality	8
Other	17
Other Entrepreneur Referral	3
Web	5
Grand Total	109

City	City Impacted - Business	City Impacted - Resident
Bayport	0	1
Cottage Grove	14	20
Forest Lake	9	6
Hastings	1	0
Hugo	5	8
Lake Elmo	12	8
Mahtomedi	1	2
Newport	6	4
Oak Park Heights	1	0
Oakdale	6	9
Other – Washington County	1	0
Other – Outside of Washington County	16	11
Scandia	1	1
St. Paul Park	2	2
Stillwater	12	10
Willernie	1	1
Woodbury	19	25
Grand Total	109	109

*"I sing MCCD praises all over the place! I'm so thankful I crossed your path!!
Lake Elmo business owner*

Technical Assistance Hours

	TA
1 st QTR	133.75
2 nd QTR	183.50
3 rd QTR	195.0
4 th QTR YTD	150.0
Total	662.25

TA: Client Meetings, Providing Resources, Client Calls, Client Deliverables, Loan Packaging – Does not include outreach, meetings, events and other non-client activities.

Direct Financing & Access to Capital

In addition to the loans below, there are 4 loans in the pipeline that total \$250,000 and will leverage additional financing of \$300,000. These loans are expected to be approved in 2025 and close in early 2026.

Business Type: Retail Boutique
Business City: White Bear Lake
Residence City: Lake Elmo
Referred by: Municipality
MCCD Financing: \$50,000
Owner Equity: \$20,000

Overview: The financing is the second loan to this MCCD client for the expansion of her boutique to a second location. The second boutique will result in one full-time and two part-time jobs. Her long-term plan is to franchise and open locations throughout the Twin Cities in the next three years.

Business Type: Food business – Sauces and popcorn

Business City: Mahtomedi

Residence City: Mahtomedi

Referred by: MCCD Community Partner

MCCD Financing: \$10,000

Owner Equity: \$5,000

Overview: The loan was for a startup food business. The client is the producer of various sauces, seasonings and popcorn that can be sold online, in stores and at farmers markets.

Business Type: Childcare

Residence City: Cottage Grove

Referred by: County Website

MCCD Financing: \$25,000

Owner Equity: \$10,000

Other Financing: \$50,000

Overview: The financing is for the opening of a day care center. The project is expected to add 7 full-time jobs and have a classroom roster of 45 children ranging from infants to kindergarten.

Credit Builder Loans

In collaboration with nonprofit partners who provide credit building & financial awareness counseling, MCCD provides \$240 Credit Builder Loans (CBLs) to qualified applicants seeking to improve their personal credit. Credit Builder applicants complete financial training through MCCD's partners and are then referred to MCCD for a CBL. MCCD generates and services the CBLs in-house.

Credit Builder Loans YTD	
Resident City	Loan Amount
Hugo	\$240
TOTAL	\$240

Highlights, Networking, & Outreach

Programming, Partnerships, & Trainings

- July 30 – MCCD hosted a webinar titled *Understanding Immigration Policy and Impacts on Small Businesses* with panelists including Kwame Osafo-Addo, Attorney and Owner at TruLegalBiz; Brenda Pfahnl, Attorney and Owner at Colibri Legal PLLC; and Lisa Zamora and Diana Salas from the MN Department of Labor and Industry. The discussion included current updates and practical information for businesses regarding Immigration Policy changes.
- September 19 & 20 – MCCD Senior Business Advisor & Loan Officer Luis Mendoza spoke with small business owners and entrepreneurs at LatinoLead's annual leadership conference, [LiderCon](#). Luis' session on Financial Foundations for Business Success was one of the many educational workshops offered at the event attended by hundreds of Latine leaders and allies.

- November 5 – In partnership with UMN Law School M CCD will host a virtual Q&A session on small business law. This free virtual event is held twice annually and is designed for business owners at any stage. Law student panelists work with their supervising attorney to answer questions and provide legal resources and guidance to help navigate law questions and concerns. Stay tuned for more RSVP information.
- November 6 – Mark your calendar for M CCD’s Annual Celebration. This year the event will be held at the B Suite in Minneapolis. All partners are welcome. RSVP details to come soon.

Advertising & Outreach

- July 11 & October 3 – Field Trip Friday is back! In July we visited businesses in Ramsey County and in October we visited businesses in Anoka County. Field trips are a fun way to engage local partners, highlight our clients, promote small businesses throughout our service area. More field trips to come in 2026 once the weather warms back up.
- August 26 – M CCD engaged our lending partners and networks through a new [E blast](#) update on our loan program, loan products, and lending team. The E blast focused specifically on M CCD’s commercial real estate lending capabilities.
- Submit content to M CCD’s Business Resource Newsletter! M CCD community partners are invited to submit their own events, training opportunities, and more to be included in M CCD’s Business Resource Newsletter. Information should be relevant/tailored to local small business owners and entrepreneurs. Email your content to Mara Brooks, M CCD’s Communications & Data Coordinator, at mbrooks@mccdmn.org
- The advertising library is up to date with the most recent ads and flyers for OTB. Access the library [here](#).
- In the last quarter, banker and lender outreach occurred specifically with Sunrise Banks, Choice Bank, Drake Bank, First Resource Bank, Amplio, MBFC (SBA 504 lender), TCM (SBA 504), Lake Elmo Bank, CorTrust Bank.

“I am truly grateful for your support and the support of others alike. I am looking forward to continuing with a great start”. – Cottage Grove Business Owner

“As an entrepreneur, one of the biggest challenges in getting started is not knowing all of the things that I want to know. When I started talking to Tyler he really became the trusted business advisor that I needed to help guide me forward through the unknown. Because of his great advice, and continued support, I continue to be successful in reaching and retaining clients for my business. I cannot recommend Tyler enough” – Woodbury Business Owner