

# Our Time Is Now

By Amy Smolik, Marketing & Communications Manager

Bringing in higher-wage jobs, expanding advocacy efforts and elevating Sioux Falls' presence at the national level are just some of the goals of the new Forward Sioux Falls 2011-2016 program.

Community leaders hope to raise \$11.2 million through the newest installment of the Forward Sioux Falls program and are well on their way to meeting that goal. A campaign announcement will take place at a kick-off breakfast Tuesday, March 8, where Campaign Co-chairs Dana Dykhouse, First PREMIER Bank/PREMIER Bankcard, and Mark Shlanta, SDN Communications, will also share details about the 2011-2016 program at this event.

Forward Sioux Falls is the proven and successful economic development partnership between the Sioux Falls Area Chamber of Commerce and Sioux Falls Development Foundation. Since its inception in 1987, FSF has proven to be an effective stimulus for increasing business investment and diversification of the entire Sioux Falls area. Forward Sioux Falls programs are managed by the staff members of the Sioux Falls Area Chamber of Commerce and Sioux Falls Development Foundation and led by a Joint Venture Management Committee made up of members serving on the Executive Committees of the Chamber and Development Foundation and at-large members.

In the past quarter-century, nearly \$24 million has been raised in five campaigns to enhance economic development efforts in the Sioux Falls area. This new campaign builds on the successes in past FSF programs and introduces new efforts to help grow and diversify the Sioux Falls area economy.

Six key components make up Forward Sioux Falls 2011-2016: Business Retention, Expansion & Attraction; Quality Growth & Advocacy; Research, Technology & Entrepreneurship; Workforce; National Marketing & Public Relations; and Management & Communication. Each of the program components has definitive goals and measurable economic impacts to give a return on investment to FSF investors.



National Community Development Services, Inc. (NCDS) worked with the Chamber and Development Foundation in proposing the new five-year program. Prior to developing the campaign, NCDS led a feasibility study to determine if investors felt another program was necessary. Those interviewed clearly felt Forward Sioux Falls was the catalyst needed to push Sioux Falls forward.

Most respondents were impressed with the comprehensiveness of the program and the increased emphasis on assisting existing business, fostering internal growth and fostering emerging industries for job growth for the next 20 years. A majority of respondents also liked how the individual program segments were closely intertwined as a total package. During the interview process, one community leader commented how "Forward Sioux Falls helped change this community. We need to use it to continue to change."

The softer economy was seen as a challenge by some survey respondents, but helped emphasize the need for a sense of urgency to continue job growth, including building the community's internal capacity for developing its workforce, research and organic job growth. As one interviewee said: "We need to push for an upturn before more deterioration occurs. I don't see anything other than a push by Forward Sioux Falls that will nudge us ahead."

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The planning process for the next Forward Sioux Falls program began after Forward Sioux Falls and several other community partners (City of Sioux Falls, Minnehaha and Lincoln counties, Sioux Empire United Way, Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation) underwent a strategic community planning process called Future Sioux Falls in 2010. The research and resulting plan that came out of the Future Sioux Falls process served as a blueprint for Forward Sioux Falls 2011-2016.

Sioux Falls is fortunate to have a deep pool of leaders to turn to in selling the benefits of investing in the Forward Sioux Falls 2011-2016 program; Dykhouse and Shlanta are joined by several business leaders serving on the Campaign Cabinet and dozens of additional volunteers.

Campaign leaders and NCDS have been contacting current and potential investors about participating in the new program, with more to be contacted in the coming weeks.

One survey respondent was impressed by FSF's past leadership: "I'm always amazed at the amount of time and attention our top business people give to Forward Sioux Falls. It's a major reason for this community's success over the years."

For more information, contact Forward Sioux Falls Director of Investor Relations Carolyn Winchell at (605) 373-2008 or [cwinchell@siouxfalls.com](mailto:cwinchell@siouxfalls.com), or go to the newly-revamped website at [www.ForwardSiouxFalls.com](http://www.ForwardSiouxFalls.com).

## Joint Venture Mgmt. Committee

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SDN Communications

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Midwest Provisions, Inc.

## Campaign Cabinet

Dana Dykhouse  
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SDN Communications

Bill Baker  
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Michael Bender  
Bender Commercial Real Estate Services

Cathy Clark  
Wells Fargo Bank

Tom Everist  
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# **Forward Sioux Falls Deserves Credit For Our Accomplishments**

By Michael Bender, 2010-11 Chair of the Board

In 1992, my family moved to South Dakota from Texas. We were fortunate in our decision — we had job opportunities, my wife's family was close by and the quality of life in Sioux Falls was the best option for our growing family. We have continued to stay for all of those reasons and because we've enjoyed watching Sioux Falls grow from a town into a city.

We give credit to Forward Sioux Falls for making our community an attractive place to call home. The Chamber's joint venture economic development partnership with the Sioux Falls Development Foundation is featured in this issue of Chamber News as we officially kick-off our 2011-2016 program. Our community kick-off tomorrow, March 8, will provide an update about the new campaign and its initiatives as well as the exciting progress we've made in reaching our fundraising goal. If you're not able to attend the event or if you want to know more information, I encourage you to visit [ForwardSiouxFalls.com](http://ForwardSiouxFalls.com) or contact the Chamber or Development Foundation for more information.

Nearly 25 years, five successful programs and \$24 million later, we continue to benefit from those visionaries and the businesses, organizations and individuals who saw the value in the programs. The results have been attraction and creation of quality jobs, increased investments in our quality of life, a favorable business climate — and Forward Sioux Falls has played a major part in these developments.

Dating back to the first Forward Sioux Falls program in 1987 and each subsequent program, our community leaders have successfully made the case to invest in the Sioux Falls area's future through the Forward Sioux Falls joint venture partnership and its strategic program initiatives.

A dynamic group of community leaders representing business are advocating and supporting the Forward Sioux Falls program. I'm excited to join with this group of leaders. We owe much to those who paved the way for our success and now it's our turn.

We need to extend our marketing efforts regionally and nationally, reaching out to South Dakota natives and other potential residents and businesses, ensuring that Sioux Falls has the quality of life amenities that they are seeking, and continuing to develop innovative opportunities for high-skill, high-wage jobs in a variety of targeted business and industry sectors.

It's an exciting time to be in Sioux Falls. This new Forward Sioux Falls program builds on the success we've had over the years helping build our economy. It also looks ahead to our future and the type of city we want to build. You can be proud that your Chamber of Commerce is again at the forefront of progress for the Sioux Falls area.

