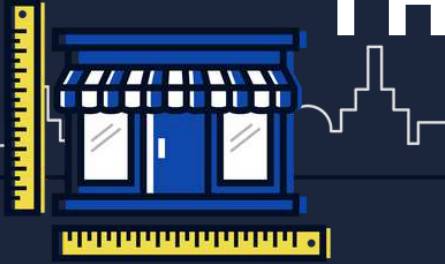


THE BUSINESS LEAD



FALL 2024

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP WITH EDA

It is always a good idea to keep in contact with the city economic development authority directors because they have so much information. Once you have built relationships with them, they are able to keep you updated on what is happening in the community.

Overall, the economic development authority director is a wealth of information about the community and a helpful resource to someone looking to develop or expand in the city.

If you plan to connect with an EDA director about your next project, be prepared to know what to ask. Find out what questions to have in mind to help you develop smarter on page 2.

BY MICHELLE ELLINGSON
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To subscribe to the Business Lead Newsletter, contact City Hall at cityhall@caledoniamn.gov or call 507-725-3450

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HELPFUL QUESTIONS TO ASK EDA

Aside from being a knowledgeable liaison between you and other city officials you'll need to communicate with, directors of economic development authority can answer these questions:

Does the city have any available properties or buildings for sale?

Some cities may provide an updated list on their website, and some directors will provide a map showing available properties and listing agents' or owners' contact information.

What are the latest retail developments in the city? Learn who is developing and if there are other opportunities to acquire adjacent property next door. Once new development begins others follow. For example, if a small town was able to get a Starbucks, it shows other retailers that something there was worth considering for a new franchise location.

What are the top 10 retailers you want in the city? Whether informal or official, it seems every economic development department receives a wish list from their community on who they want, from big box stores to eateries to grocers.

Does the city offer any incentives to developers or retailers? Each city is competing with their neighbors to bring new development to their communities and states, so many offer competitive incentives.

source: forbes.com

Old Buildings Renewed

The main building of Elsie's Bar and Restaurant located at 226 E. Main Street was built by Anton Hosch in 1905 from lumber that had been used in the first Catholic Church in Caledonia. It housed Max Schellsmidt's Motion Picture Theatre and featured silent movies every night of the week. There were vocalists and a pianist who accompanied the movie as it was projected on the screen. For a free pass, boys sat on a bench in the front to do sound effects for Westerns. Their props included coconut shells for the sound of horse's hooves running and a paddle hit against a piece of wood for gun shots.

After the theatre closed, the building was used by the Roerkohl family, first as a Ford Garage and then as an appliance store. Eventually, it was bought by George Bissen who turned it into a restaurant for young people. He built a cement block addition in the back for dancing. Restaurant/cafe type businesses carried on through several owners including Don Link, Jack and Diane Hauser (Jack & Diane's Café), Elmer and Beverly Rud (Sony & Bev's Café), and then to Elsie and Lee Babler as Elsie's. The parking lot area to the east originally was a building for the McCarthy Egg and Produce business.

Information from the Caledonia Pride Journals 1995-2004
Top picture far left c.a. 1970 . Bottom picture Elsie's 2024.

EDA directors can help direct you in many areas such as:

Advise you on members of City Hall that you will need to collaborate with from public works, to utilities, to zoning.

Knowing what suitable properties for your project may be workable by having relationships with property owners and being aware of what properties are currently on or coming to the market.

Providing valuable information on commercial real estate growth by being the first to know when a new company is coming to their city or an existing business is expanding.

Being able to inform you of city economic development incentives, such as paying for or helping with costs related to infrastructure (like the relocation of storm sewer or expansion of utilities), road expansion or signal lights, demolition or environmental issues.
source: forbes.com



HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR BEVERAGE BUSINESS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Coffee shops, wine bars, microbreweries, and energy drink bars are just a few examples of specialty drink businesses. The holiday season is a great opportunity to promote your drink business and gain more customers. Below are a few ideas to get you started:

Offer Half-Priced Refills: A half-price refill promotion is a great way to reward your customers. The promotion could be offered for a limited period of time or on a certain day only such as Black Friday or Shop Small Saturday.

Offer Buy-One-Get-One-Free Deals: This promotion can be customized. Some ideas could include a free small sample cheese tray with the purchase of a bottle of wine or buying a coffee and getting one of equal or lesser value for free for a friend.

Offer Bounce Back Receipt Treats: Bounce back receipt promotions get customers to visit your shop a second time in the same day. The concept is quite simple. During the morning rush, customers receive a coupon on their receipt that is only valid later that afternoon. The offer could be for a BOGO deal, or half off a beverage. Customers who want to take advantage of this, must return that day.

Use Loyalty Cards: This offer is as easy as having cards printed out that you can stamp or place initials on for the number of drinks being purchased to receive a free drink. To make this a bit more attractive to customers, you could offer different incentives such as receiving two stamps for bringing in a friend.

Promote Seasonal Drink Specials: Seasonal flavor combinations can be offered for any type of drink business including coffee combinations and specialty beer flavors. Get creative and give drinks catchy names.

Offer Holiday Discounts: Create a special offer or discount to celebrate the holidays such as scratch off discount cards offering a percentage off their purchase or promote a new beverage by offering free samples.

Make it a Combo: Combo deals work very well in getting customers to spend more money per visit. Pair food items with beverage selections such as a cup of coffee and muffin for a certain price or a selection of nutrition bars paired with an energy drink.

Late Night Happy Hour: Who says happy hour needs to be offered during afternoon hours? Cater to those late night shoppers who just want to relax with a glass of wine, specialty cocktail, or beer after a busy evening of shopping or dinner out by offering a happy hour from 8:00-10:00pm.

Show Gratitude: Lastly, don't forget to thank customers for their patronage by offering a small gift such as a free holiday cookie with their purchase. They'll remember the gesture and be sure to return.

source: hothotsleeve.com



BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Owned and operated by Jeremiah and Amanda Ninneman, The Wired Rooster Coffee Shop located at 131 E. Main has been serving the Caledonia community since 2015.

Not only does the establishment provide a variety of espresso, coffee drinks and teas but customers can enjoy breakfast items including bagels and muffins.

For lunch, the menu includes fresh salads, soups, and a variety of panini sandwiches including The Caledonian served on multi-grain and topped with pesto, mozzarella, tomatoes, and black pepper.

For unwinding after work, a selection of craft beers and wines are available.



UNIQUE BUSINESS CONCEPT IDEAS

If you are planning to expand your business and wish to introduce an additional concept to compliment what your existing business already offers, below is a list of creative ideas to spark your imagination.

Coffee Shop:

Art Gallery-Displaying art and featuring the work of local artists invites customers to linger and visit the art exhibits while sipping their favorite coffee or tea drink. Consider choosing new local artists every quarter and hold a gallery opening party for each new artist. This brings each artist's friends and followers into your businesses.



Bookstore-Offering a section of new and used books to purchase and thumb through in a welcoming seating area while enjoying an espresso or latte invites customers to relax, read, sip, and sip some more.

Record Store-Nothing can be better than enjoying a cup of freshly brewed coffee while listening to piped in music from various artists and browsing the shelves of records for their latest work to buy. Consider including local musicians and hosting an event where they can perform.

Pet Grooming Business/Pet Shop:

Photography Studio-Who doesn't cherish a professional photo of their furry family member, especially after a bath and a trim? Providing a photography business on-site at a grooming facility can mean extra profit in the pocket using a creative way to promote your business.

Pet Treat Bakery-When shoppers stop into a pet shop to pick up basic supplies, a trip over the bakery counter to purchase freshly baked gourmet goodies and healthy treats is a must. Include whimsical dog treat products at your grooming facility such as colorfully decorated cheese, molasses, and peanut butter flavored biscuits.



Floral Shop:

Gourmet Chocolate/Specialty Candy Shop-Flowers and chocolates go hand-in-hand so a selection of quality, high-end chocolates can be a profitable complementary business. Individually wrapped or beautifully displayed in decorative boxes, chocolates and old fashioned candies such as anise candy or cinnamon sticks are a nice gift idea to pair with flowers. Who can resist buying a sweet treat?



Event Planning Service-Social events such as weddings, reunions, and graduations all require a lot of planning. By offering the service of event planning, you can give these special occasions the attention they deserve while promoting your floral business.

Beauty Salon:

Cosmetic Store/Make-Up Artist-Your clients are already looking and feeling beautiful after a cut and color so why not compliment the look with a new lipstick color or shimmering cheek blush? Providing an array of cosmetics for purchase and offering the service of professional make-up application for weddings, or any special occasion is an attractive way to promote your salon business.

Massage/Day Spa Service-Including a tranquil space for body massage, foot massages, facials, and manicures and pedicures can complete a beauty visit and leave your clients feeling fantastic.

source: medium.com



Upcoming Events

Bluff Country Collaborative CTE Exploration Day: Thursday, September 19, 2024 9:00am-2:00pm (set up by 8:45am) All businesses invited to participate. Registration for businesses: online or by email to MaryAnne at BCCNavigators@gmail.com or by phone at 507-251-4388.

Caledonia Chamber Lunch & Learn: Thursday, October 3. 12:00-1:00pm at The Well 214 E. Main (blue building) Free to chamber members, \$5 fee for non-chamber members. All businesses invited!

**Houston County Chambers Collaboration Cars & Coffee Tour: Sip and Showcase! Saturday, October 12, 2024 (Beginning at 8:00am)
Classic Car enthusiasts will tour Houston County in their classic cars and enjoy a great cup of coffee at several coffee shop locations while exploring what our Houston County communities have to offer.**

City of Caledonia Chamber of Commerce Business Trick or Treat : Thursday, October 31, 2024 3:30-5:00pm Downtown Caledonia. Sign up to be listed as a participant and be prepared for all the kiddos! Invitation to sign up will be emailed soon!

After Hours Social Event: The City of Caledonia will be hosting After Hour Social Events beginning October 17, 2024 from 5:00-7:00pm at the Caledonia Hauler's location 327 Hwy 44. Learn more about our business community and what initiatives the City of Caledonia is implementing to promote entrepreneurship.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



Caledonia Forward is an initiative to execute economic development strategies to build a locally driven economy. Our goal is to advance entrepreneurship and community prosperity by conducting research to understand the assets and challenges faced by businesses and entrepreneurs, connect entrepreneurs with valuable resources and opportunities, and to drive progress and innovation to propel Caledonia Forward!

Caledonia Forward Core Team Members:

Melissa Wray (Chair)

Jake Dickson (Documenter)

Shelley Ellingson (Coordinator)

Julie Kiehne (Community Coach)

Paul Fisch

Jim Hoscheit

Harley Meiners

Amanda Ninneman

Matt Schuldt

Caledonia Forward is supported by the Rural Entrepreneurial Venture (REV) program through the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) For more information about Caledonia Forward, please contact the City Office at 507-725-3450.



SOUTHERN MINNESOTA
INITIATIVE FOUNDATION

