

2000 Annual Report Executive Summary

City of East Prairie Enterprise Community

Overview of the Impact of the 1994 East Prairie Enterprise Community on the Economy and Well-Being of Residents.

The economic and physical well being for the 4,312 residents of East Prairie living in the East Prairie Enterprise Community for the year 2000 was both positively and negatively impacted. Residents now enjoy a 26 acre family recreation facility (Benchmark 5) complete which began with the implementation of the EZ/EC Initiative. Youth now have a year round after school and weekend program due to the Twenty First Century After School Program and the Positive Patterns for Kids, a community based weekend and summer latch key program (Benchmark 4). Over 100 community youth participate in these activities.

The economic downturn in the economy has negatively impacted the entire area. This is compounded by lower agricultural prices and the trend of moving factories out of the country. (Benchmark 14) In 2000 residents of the City faced two economic setbacks. Jakel, Inc., a local manufacturer, closed in November. This closure resulted in the loss of 150 jobs. But community leaders have taken this negative and put a positive spin on it by taking advantage of training benefits available to these dislocated workers. Because the jobs lost from Jakel went out of the country, displaced workers qualified for TRA (Trade Readjustment Act) which extends worker benefits an additional 52 weeks. TRA workers qualify for schooling including GED, nurse's school, dental/medical technology, etc. The lead entity's SPIRALS program has assisted these dislocated workers with their TRA educational training and assisted workers in locating new jobs. Another negative economic impact occurred when residents faced the additional loss of jobs with the Gates Rubber Company of Charleston laying off 200 workers. The SPIRALS job training is also working with these workers to help them find new jobs.

There were several positive economic development activities in 2000. The East Prairie Enterprise Community has formed a partnership with Cornell University to create an Entrepreneurship Center for disadvantaged adults and youth in the Enterprise Community, Mississippi County, the Missouri Bootheel, and the Lower Mississippi Delta Region. Cornell will provide support by offering courses and curriculum designed to develop business management skills in youth and adults. Cornell will also assist in the long-term sustainability through possible linkages with private businesses, educational institutions (Lincoln University of Missouri Extension), private foundations. Revolving loan funds have provided gap funding for three businesses, one startup business and two business retentions. Two more applications have been submitted and are awaiting the review and approval process. The City of East Prairie Enterprise Community in partnership with Susanna Wesley Family Learning Center, Inc., lead entity for the enterprise community applied for and has received a notice of funding from the Missouri Department of Economic Development Community Block Development Program for a Building Skills program in which Building Skills program participants will construct three house during the next 18 months. These houses will be purchased by a low income applicants. The building skills program targets Welfare To Work clients in Mississippi and Scott counties with special emphasis on non custodial parents.

The major marketing effort for economic development in the East Prairie Enterprise Community in 2000 was to become an approved Ameren UE InSite community. The goal of this program is to create a marketing tool for Ameren Services Communities that will raise economic development competitiveness by identifying ready-to-build sites. Completion of the program also offers qualifying communities

professionally engineered building plans specification, drawings, and approximated cost etc. for a 60,000-sq.ft building expandable to 200,000 sq ft. This will assist in the promotion of the East Prairie Enterprise Community and attract new business development to the 54 acre Industrial Park that is owned by the city. It will promote the existing 60,000 sq. ft. building that is currently available, due to the closing of Jakel, Inc. (Benchmarks 12 and 14).

The progress of the St. John's Bayou New Madrid Floodway project (Benchmark 15) this year was a disappointment to the community. The planned construction date for construction of flood protection for the St Johns New Madrid Floodway project was spring 2001. Residents watched as federal agencies loosely stepped outside of their own guidelines to achieve previously determined goals not necessarily good for the community of East Prairie. The project is now undergoing yet another SEIS with a hearing date scheduled for Spring 2001.

Job training and job development activities (Benchmark 9) continue to open opportunities for residents of the East Prairie Enterprise Community. In October 2000, in response to the deficit of affordable single family housing, coupled with a scarcity of building service professionals, the Missouri Department of Workforce Development, in partnership with Susanna Wesley Family Learning Center, Inc. implemented a construction (carpenter) skills program. (Benchmark 2,9). The program, comprised of both academic and hands on activities, serves to train carpenters in groups of five. The Twenty First Century After School Program has expanded its program to offer computer training. This past year over 30 residents enrolled in the East Prairie R#2 Computer training program. Thirty youth ages 14-17 have experienced over 100 hours on site work experience at local businesses.

The East Prairie Tourism Council (Benchmark 13) continues to work to complete the goals of the Enterprise Community to effectively influence economic development through tourism. During the past year, the council has written and submitted information on local attractions that have been published in regional, state and national tourism publications. In 2000, Mississippi County, and its birdwatching potential, was advertised in a nationally known ornithology magazine. Sites such as Big Oak Tree State Park and Ten Mile Pond have seen an increase in birdwatchers and birdwatching. The increase in out-of-state birders visiting these sites are directly related to publicity and advertisement.

Success in Leveraging and Obtaining Funds for Project As a result of the Enterprise designation and with the support of partners, the community has acquired, since 1994, \$13,067,051 in additional funding to implement benchmark activities. Funds for the calendar year 2000 include: Missouri Department of Economic Development Neighborhood Assistance Grant to Susanna Wesley, Inc. for Welfare to Work Program and Incentives \$470,000 years 2000-2001 (\$200,000 for year 2000); USDA Rural Development in the Housing 504 program provided for grants and loans for housing rehabilitation, \$93,177 and \$118,000 in 502 funds were used to construct four new homes for a total of \$211,817.00; USDA Rural Development RBEG in the amount of \$43,000 for an Enterprise Facilitation Project; USDA Rural Development Water/Waste grant in the amount of \$2,040,000 and loan in the amount of \$1,711,000 for water and wastewater improvements; Missouri Department for Tourism, \$1,030 to share in the cost of promoting the tourism bird watching program; Missouri Division of Job Training through Service Delivery Area 13 Workforce Investment Board funded employment support, job training, and job connections, \$1,865,358.00 to Susanna Wesley to fund the East Prairie Enterprise Community and other areas in the southern southeastern region.

Missouri Division of Social Services for Cultural Productivity grant, \$205,467; direct services to domestic violence, \$75,779; Missouri Department of Education Special Literacy Grants, \$44,020; and AmeriCorps Vista Member (LIFT MO) \$24,000; Missouri Department of Public Safety, youth programming and domestic violence support \$201,544. Private donors included: Ameren UE Smartlight to East Prairie Recreation Corporation for recreational facility lighting, \$10,000 and \$61,000 from

private donors to support youth and adult programming.

Additional Activities and Accomplishments not specifically mentioned in the Strategic Plan:

The Artists and Communities Initiative: (Benchmark 6) The artists in community initiative planned by the Education Arts as a Basic committee implemented a story telling project where students in school and community residents learned from an in residence artist who lived in our community for four months. This project was funded through the Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation. All facets of the community participated in this event. Most interesting was that residents who usually abstain from community interaction were among the most enthusiastic. They learned to tell stories in a comfortable and entertaining way. He worked with adults from their teen years into their eighties through story telling circles. The artist also interacted with pre school through junior and senior high youth. Culturally it was important because it gave residents a time to think about how they fit into our culture and the role their families have played in developing a culture. The East Prairie Enterprise Community was the sole Missouri site selected for the Artist is Residency-Arts for the Millennium project.