**JDA Director’s Update**
**May 21 – June 6, 2025**

The JDA Director has been actively engaged in a range of initiatives focused on economic growth, quality of life improvements, and community support. Below is a summary of recent activities:

**Economic Development & Business Support**

* **Attended the EDND Conference in Fargo, ND**, networking with peers and gaining insight into economic development strategies relevant to rural communities.
* **Hosted Alan Gohary** from the North Dakota Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in Rugby and coordinated **monthly follow-up visits** to provide 1-on-1 consultations for local businesses and startups.
* **Refined JDA program applications** to be more business-friendly, reducing barriers for potential applicants.
* Collaborated with the **Souris Basin Planning Council** to improve the **loan review process** for small business financing programs.

**Community & Infrastructure Initiatives**

* **Advanced planning for a new commercial property build**, aimed at attracting new business and investment to Rugby.
* **Exploring the addition of a new recreational activity**, intended to enhance quality of life and offer more local amenities for residents.
* Began early discussions on a **tourism-focused development project** designed to boost visitor engagement and diversify the local economy.
* Engaged with stakeholders in a **regional natural gas pipeline project** to understand potential local impacts and opportunities.
* **Met with legislators** to advocate for **housing infrastructure funding** during the interim legislative session.

**Housing & Community Growth**

* Participated in interviews with **Strengthen ND** regarding a **grant application** for a potential housing project that would address local needs and support workforce retention.
* Compiled **cost of living data** to promote Rugby as an affordable and attractive place to live and work, supporting talent recruitment and business relocation efforts.