

Section 18

COLIN BAENZIGER  ASSOCIATES
EXECUTIVE RECRUITING

Section 18

Reginald “Reggie” M. Edwards

*Gainesville City Manager
Candidate Report*

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Cover Letter and Resume

Dr. Reginald M. Edwards

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Mankato, Minnesota 56001

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July 27, 2019

Mr. Colin Baenziger, Colin Baenziger & Associates
2055 South Atlantic Avenue, Suite 504
Daytona Beach Shores, FL 32118

RE: City of Gainesville, Florida - City Manager Position

Dear Mr. Baenziger:

I am submitting this cover letter and resume in response to the advertisement for the City Manager, City of Gainesville opening. I desire to help lead specifically the City of Gainesville for personal and professional reasons.

- **Personally** - I would like to return home to Florida to complete my career in city management and to be near my family. I am a native of Daytona Beach, Florida. I spent many of my formative years visiting the City of Gainesville. I have very personal connections to the City including my father being born in Gainesville, having both a brother and son play football for the University of Florida (UF), a childhood mentor Wes Chandler who is a UF Hall of Famer, as well as, being recruited by UF as a high school football player. I traveled to Gainesville often with both my grandfather and father who were war veterans and who spent much of their last years at UF Health Shands Hospital. I am very comfortable and at home in the City.
- **Professionally** - As an ethical, skilled, and experienced executive, I would bring a strategic, collaborative, and conscientious leadership style to the City of Gainesville, Florida. I desire to use the unique skills that I have accumulated and honed over my career to help the City of Gainesville continue to thrive, innovate and improve the quality of life for its residents. I am very experienced with working and leading in a dominant “college town” environment. I would offer the experience and skills to lead the City in further leveraging its strategic advantage as a knowledge based community to becoming a leading global city.

I desire to work and retire leading a community in Florida, where my family and I may enjoy the beauty and quality of life that Florida offers. I have weathered and survived the winters of the north. Beyond my passionate reasons for desiring to return to Florida and help lead, the City of Gainesville is my belief that I would be a great fit for the position.

I believe that I would be an asset in this position in this City specifically for three primary reasons including:

1. I am uniquely prepared to excel in the position
2. I have a clear sense of purpose for leading the City
3. I have a keen understanding of key strategic leadership approaches that I will seek to execute

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Uniquely Prepared to Excel - In the early years of my professional career, I had the privilege of interning as an assistant to the County Manager of Orange City, Florida. After completing my Masters in Public Administration, I moved with my family to St. Paul, Minnesota. During my years in Minnesota, I gained extensive executive leadership experience including serving as Deputy City Manager for the City of Brooklyn Center (current), Executive Director for Region Nine Development Commission, City Manager for the City of Chisago City, and Senior Policy Analyst for Ramsey County Government.

I believe my four years of teaching graduate school and conducting research in the Masters of Public Administration Graduate Program, Minnesota State University has given me a rare opportunity to examine, reflect and improve my leadership skills in leading government organizations such as the City of Gainesville in a strategic and innovative way.

Clear Sense of Purpose for the Position - I have a unique perspective in creating national and global competitive niches for communities. My experience in development and redevelopment and regional economic development has sharpened my insight in understanding systemic, complex and dynamic communities such as the City of Gainesville. Leveraging the knowledge-based economy including research, technology, innovation, and medical industries of the City would be great building blocks to a leading global city. The balance of growing such an economy in an equitable manner will not only be strategically prudent, but I believe necessary to harness the full human capacity of the City and region.

My working experience in urban environments and stretching community/organizational human productivity is my passion. This means working and leading in an intentional manner to position and prepare every individual resident to contribute toward the prosperity of the City of Gainesville.

Keen Understanding of Strategic Approaches - The City of Gainesville is one of the more reputable and cultural rich cities in Florida. If given this opportunity, I would commit to leading the City in three strategic ways including:

1. Leading an innovation-based City government
2. Leading a community-based City government
3. Leading an operational excellence-based City government

I believe leading the City of Gainesville via these three strategic approaches can help continue moving the City forward in building up its resiliency and resolve as a vibrant and global City.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss my expertise and desire to serve as the City Manager, City of Gainesville, Florida in more detail.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Reginald M. Edwards

Dr. Reginald M. Edwards

509 North 5th Street

Mankato, Minnesota 56001

Cell: 507-514-4412

E-Mail: sovsystems.reggie@gmail.com



Professional Objective

My objective is to help lead the City of Gainesville, Florida as its City Manager in an ethical, innovation-based, operational-excellence based, community-based, strategic, trustworthy, inclusive and equitable way that will result in the growth and prosperity of the city and its residents.

Professional Experience

Deputy City Manager - Brooklyn Center, Minnesota

May 2016 – Present

Key Accomplishments – Developed and led employee engagement program; developed and led rebranding of the city; developed and led city-wide inclusion and diversity program; co-developed city’s financial sustainability strategies; developed and led city beautification and public art projects; developed and led city-wide centralized employee evaluation system; developed and led city Sister Cities program, developed and led city-wide strategic plan; developed and led city-wide strategic goals performance measurement system; developed and led city-wide IT multi-departmental decision making model; developed and led in the creation of new Communication and Community Engagement Division, and developed and led leadership development strategies for department directors and City Council.

- **Organizational Leadership and Management** – Worked with the City Manager to plan and execute strategic plan. Developed and lead organization in first electronic and system-wide strategic plan performance measurement system. Developed and executed process for city communications, branding, and community engagement. Designed and executed development program for organizational leadership including delivery of innovation workshops, city studies, and organizational change models for leadership.
- **Program Management** – Lead and supervise the Department of Administration including the divisions of Human Resources, Office of the City Clerk, Information Technology, and Communication and Community Engagement. Coordinated and led in the creation of the Division of Communication and Community Engagement. Designed and led cross-departmental teams in performance measure, communication, community engagement, city rebranding

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- campaign, social media strategy plan, innovation, staff appreciation, and employee appraisal teams.
- **Finance and Budgeting** – Responsible for developing and managing of Department of Administration’s budget. Served on executive work team (i.e. city manager, deputy city manager, finance director, and deputy finance director) in the development of the City’s annual budget and project related matters. Participated in all city council and finance commission budget deliberations.
 - **Elected Officials** – Responsible for policy analysis, development and presentation to the City Council on a variety of city projects. Analyzed and developed policies in areas of public safety, employee appraisal, council electronic agenda process, tax increment financing, legislation, leadership development, equity hiring process, and business development. Participated in all City Council meetings and work sessions.

Professor of Government – Government (MPA Program) 2012 -2016
Minnesota State University, Mankato

Key Accomplishments – Developed and led new Organizational and Strategic Planning Program Service; Developed and led new Graduate Student Apprenticeship Program; Introduced Experiential Based Teaching to Public Administration Graduate Program.

Government – MPA Graduate Program – Responsible for developing and teaching graduate courses. Course subjects taught included:

- Human Resources and Personnel Management
 - Organizational Theory
 - Strategic Planning
 - Public Administration Theory and Practice
 - Local Government Budgeting and Finance
 - Community and Public Leadership
 - Public Administration Graduate School Orientation
- Initiated development of the first Public Administration Local Government Center. This included two new programs: 1) the Executive Public Administration Internship/Apprenticeship and, 2) Executive Public Administration Student Studio Project Program.

Executive Director - Region Nine Development Commission 2001 to 2011
Mankato, Minnesota

Key Accomplishments – Developed and led the creation of the Renewable Energy Valley Program and Coalition involving multiple states in renewable energy

development; developed and led in the first Southcentral Minnesota Economic Development Plan (building agreement among jurisdictions across Southern Minnesota); developed and led regional merging of Department of Aging throughout Southwest Minnesota (30 plus counties); brokered and moved Small Business Development Center and Minority Entrepreneurial Program with Minnesota State University; developed and led in Disaster Planning; brokered and moved to a new regional headquarters with regional hub City of Mankato; crafted and developed legislation for statewide gas tax formula; wrote federal legislation for the Northern Great Plains Regional Commission.

- Organizational Leadership and Management - Responsible for setting the future direction of the organization and for creating an environment that fostered progress toward a desired future. Accountable for the successful, effective and efficient delivery of regional programs as well as the management and supervision.
- Finance and Budgeting - Responsible for developing, presenting, authorizing, monitoring and analyzing the Region's budget of approximately seven million dollars.
- Board Relations - Responsible for working directly with a board of 43 members comprised of 36 elected officials and 7 appointees.
- Program Management - Responsible for developing policies on complex issues such as transportation, small business development center, grant and resource development, health and human services, economic development, aging, personnel, growth and business development.
- Multi-jurisdictional Leadership - Developed opportunities and capacity for multi-jurisdictional collaborations.
- Legislative Initiatives - Developed, proposed, advocated and tracked various federal programs at both the state and federal levels.

City Administrator - City of Chisago City, Chisago City, Minnesota 1998 to 2000

Key Accomplishments - Brokered and led financial bonding recovery plan; developed and led first strategic plan; developed and led the first performance measurement system; brokered and led in the creation of multi-jurisdictional industrial park and a library system; developed and led city's first Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) structured budget and crafted and developed legislation for the first multi-jurisdictional tax sharing district.

- Organizational Leadership and Management - Responsible for planning the future direction of the city. Responsible for facilitating discussions with citizens regarding the future direction of the city. Accountable for the successful, effective and efficient delivery of all city services and oversaw the management and supervision. Accountable for the daily operations of the city.

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- Program Management - Responsible for developing policies on complex issues such as future growth, police and public safety, fire department, public works, parks and recreation, planning and zoning, motor vehicle registration, elections, libraries, economic development, capital improvement, finance recovery and planning. Accountable for the direction and actions of the city.
- Finance and Budgeting - Responsible for developing, presenting, authorizing, monitoring and analyzing the city's budget of approximately five million dollars.
- Elected Officials – Responsible for working directly with elected officials in various capacities such as policy development, public communication and legislative representation.

Senior Policy Analyst (County Manager's Office), 1993 to 1997
Ramsey County Government, Saint Paul, Minnesota

Key Accomplishments – Co-developed and led countywide strategic plan (engaging 10,000 residents); co-developed and led first countywide performance measurement system, developed and led the first 5-year budget performance measurement system; developed and led Community of Colors Engagement Initiative and co-developed and crafted legislation for Minnesota's first light rail transit system.

- Policy Development and Implementation – Developed and analyzed policies for the County Board on issues including department restructuring and projects, special projects, planning efforts, legislative initiatives, financial matters and governance.
- Finance and Budgeting – Responsible for developing and reviewing the county's budget totaling approximately \$403 million dollars. Solely responsible for the development and negotiations of the County Manager's Office budget. Responsible for analyzing the county's long-term budget outlook during times of federal cutbacks.
- Elected Officials – Responsible for working directly with the Board of Commissioners on policy issues including: critical incidents planning, taxes, health merger, transit and crime prevention.
- Strategic Planning and Program Development – Played a key role in developing, implementing and evaluating the county's first strategic plan and performance measurement system.
- Special Project Leadership – Responsible for leading project development, facilitation and review of countywide critical incident plan, member of leadership team on developing alternatives to incarceration project, multi-departmental approach to prevention, defining the role of county government (represented Ramsey on a seven county committee), addressing the concentration of poverty and increasing the participation of communities of color in county government.

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Management Analyst - State of Minnesota 1992 to 1993

Department of Transportation, Saint Paul, Minnesota

- Conducted statewide strategic planning with the Right-of-Way Department
- Developed methods for state funding options
- Developed designs for electronic highway welcome kiosks

Intern in the Office of the County Manager 1991 to 1992

Orange County, Florida

- Worked on first light rail transit and public bus transit systems
- Worked on development of County strategic plan and budget
- Worked on strategies for recruiting professional sports and incentive packages

Education

- Ed.D. - Doctorate of Educational Administration and Leadership, (2017) – St. Cloud State University, Minnesota (Dissertation – *The Role of Innovation in Minnesota's Local Government*)
- M.P.A. - Master of Public Administration, (1992) – University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida
- B.A. - Bachelor of Arts Degree, Journalism/Marketing, (1989) - University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida, Full Athletic Scholarship

Certifications/Training

- IDEO U (Innovation) Certificate – Current Candidate, 2019
- ICMA Credential – Certified, 2018
- Labor Negotiations and Collective Bargaining – Michigan State University, 2018
- Collective Leadership for Profound Innovation and Change, – The Society for Organizational Learning Inc. (Outgrowth of former MIT Center for Organizational Learning), Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2007
- Mediation Certification, – Center for Dispute Resolution (CDR) – Boulder, Colorado, 1999
- Critical Incident Emergency Management, – Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington D.C., 1997

Key Leadership Skills

- Critical Thinking
- System Thinking
- Visionary Leadership
- Motivational Leadership
- Public Communication
- Technical Competence
- Strategic Planning
- Innovation & Organizational Development
- Training & Development
- Public Policy Analysis and Development
- Budget and Finance Management
- Urban and Rural Development Experience
- Public, Private and Non-Profit Sector Leadership

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Professional Honors

- Minnesota State University Pre-Doctoral Fellowship (2012), Mankato, Minnesota
- TedX Talk Presenter (Gustavus TedX - “An Audacious Journey” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9eoW1lyHKkI&feature=youtu.be>)
- German (American) Marshall Fellowship (2000), Washington, D.C.
- Hubert H. Humphrey Policy Fellowship (1998), Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Northern Great Plains Meadowlark Project (selected as 1 of 25 Midwest Regional Leaders)
- MN Governor appointment to the Minnesota Council of Black Minnesotans Board
- Minnesota’s Representative to the Federal Northern Great Plains Regional Authority – Five State Initiative (selected member)
- Minnesota City Manager Mentor of the Year (Nominated)
- Leadership St. Paul Program (Selected Member)
- Leadership Orlando Program (Selected Member)
- National Marketing Awards (i.e. Dances with Wolves, Jetson’s the Movie) and Regional Marketing Award (Walt Disney World’s Four Season Salute)

Civic and Professional Involvement

Civic and Board Participation: International City and County Management Association (ICMA) • National Innovation Alliance • Sister Cities International • Northeast Suburban Community Economic Assistance Program (Board Member) • Brooklyn Center Community School – Community Education Advisory Board (Board Member) • National Forum for Black Public Administrators (State Chapter Treasure) • 2016 League of Minnesota Cities Annual Conference Planning Committee • National Forum for Black Public Administrators and Minneapolis Metropolitan Area Local Chapter • Salvation Army • Mankato/North Mankato Youth Football • Minnesota Sustainable Development Board (University of Minnesota) • Minnesota Children Defense Fund • Crossview Covenant Church (finance committee) • Women’s Care Organization, Somalia, Africa (volunteer consultant) • MN Government Training Services (former chair) • Minnesota Regional Development Organization Association (former vice chair) • Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity (former regional strategic planning coordinator) • National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Mankato (former vice chair) • Minnesota Governor’s Task Force on Tax Reform • Catholic Charities (former steering committee) • League of Minnesota Cities (selected to board) • St. Paul Rondo Housing Land Trust (former vice chair)

Candidate Introduction

Reginald Edwards

EDUCATION

- Ed.D. - Doctorate of Educational Administration and Leadership, (2017) – St. Cloud State University, Minnesota (Dissertation – *The Role of Innovation in Minnesota’s Local Government*)
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- Mediation Certification, – Center for Dispute Resolution (CDR) – Boulder, Colorado, 1999
- Critical Incident Emergency Management, – Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington D.C., 1997

EXPERIENCE

- Deputy City Manager - Brooklyn Center, Minnesota May 2016 – Present
- **Professor of Government – Government (MPA Program)** 2012 to 2016
Minnesota State University, Mankato
- **Executive Director - Region Nine Development Commission** 2001 to 2011
Mankato, Minnesota
- **City Administrator – City of Chisago City, Chisago City, Minnesota** 1998 to 2000
- **Senior Policy Analyst (County Manager’s Office),** 1993 to 1997
Ramsey County Government, Saint Paul, Minnesota
- **Management Analyst - State of Minnesota** 1992 to 1993
Department of Transportation, Saint Paul, Minnesota
- **Intern in the Office of the County Manager** 1991 to 1992
Orange County, Florida

BACKGROUND

- 1. What is the population of current/most recent city/town/county in which candidate was employed?**

City of Brooklyn Center has a population of 31,000. The City of Brooklyn Center borders the City of Minneapolis population of 427,000 and both cities are within Hennepin County population of 1.2 million.

- 2. How many employees in the city/county government?**

The City of Brooklyn Center employs 230 employees.

- 3. How many employees did the candidate directly supervise?**

11 direct reports

- 4. What are the general fund budget and also the total budget?**

\$22 million (General) / \$144 million (General, Enterprise and Capital Funds)

- 5. What are the three (3) most important issues facing your current/most recent city/town/county (i.e. development, poor infrastructure, the need for parks and recreation, etc.). Please explain them very briefly.**

- *Redevelopment* – The City of Brooklyn Center is a fully developed City, which was built out in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s. The City is experiencing a rebirth in its life cycle that is placing stress on the need greater housing diversification from starter homes to retirement. The need for family oriented community development design is influencing the way the City thinks about the environment, walkability, types of businesses and amenities made available. The City is challenged with leveraging its strength in “centered proximity” and “affordability” within a vibrant metro-region.
- *Market Growth and Low Income* – The City of Brooklyn Center’s market recovery from the recession has been slower than other regional cities. However, the market recovery of other regional cities has plateaued, while Brooklyn Center is now outpacing all other surrounding regional cities. The rapidly growing market recovery has created both redevelopment opportunities and challenges for a moderate-income community. Managing the unintended consequences of a rapidly growing community with resident’s moderate incomes that are not increasing at the same rate is threatening one of the City’s strength of affordability. This is a phenomena happening not just in Brooklyn Center, but also in metropolitan areas throughout the nation.

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- *Diversification* – The City of Brooklyn Center historically has been an older developed homogenous suburban City that borders the City of Minneapolis, population 427,000. However, today the City had become completely urbanized and the population profile is made up of 57.4% people of color and a higher percentage of the total population among children of color. The City struggles with a lack of a clear sense of identity, ability to change and capacity to leverage the assets of its multicultural makeup.

GENERAL, MANAGEMENT STYLE AND EXPERIENCE

- 1. Tell me why are you interested in Gainesville and how does it fit into your career path.**

I believe that I would be an asset in this position in this City specifically for three primary reasons including:

4. I am uniquely prepared to excel in the position
5. I have a clear sense of purpose for leading the City
6. I have a keen understanding of key strategic leadership approaches that I will seek to execute

Uniquely Prepared to Excel - In the early years of my professional career, I had the privilege of interning as an assistant to the County Manager of Orange City, Florida. After completing my Masters in Public Administration, I moved with my family to St. Paul, Minnesota. During my years in Minnesota, I gained extensive executive leadership experience including serving as Deputy City Manager for the City of Brooklyn Center (current), Executive Director for Region Nine Development Commission, City Manager for the City of Chisago City, and Senior Policy Analyst for Ramsey County Government.

I believe my four years of teaching graduate school and conducting research in the Masters of Public Administration Graduate Program, Minnesota State University has given me a rare opportunity to examine, reflect and improve my leadership skills in leading government organizations such as the City of Gainesville in a strategic and innovative way.

Clear Sense of Purpose for the Position - I have a unique perspective in creating national and global competitive niches for communities. My experience in development and redevelopment and regional economic development has sharpened my insight in understanding systemic, complex and dynamic communities such as the City of Gainesville. Leveraging the knowledge-based economy including research, technology, innovation, and medical industries of the City would be great building blocks to a leading global city. The balance of growing such an economy in an equitable manner will not only be strategically prudent, but I believe necessary to harness the full human capacity of the City and region.

Reginald Edwards

My working experience in urban environments and stretching community/organizational human productivity is my passion. This means working and leading in an intentional manner to position and prepare every individual resident to contribute toward the prosperity of the City of Gainesville.

Keen Understanding of Strategic Approaches - The City of Gainesville is one of the more reputable and cultural rich cities in Florida. If given this opportunity, I would commit to leading the City in three strategic ways including:

4. Leading an innovation-based City government
5. Leading a community-based (or Citizen Centered) City government
6. Leading an operational excellence-based City government

I believe leading the City of Gainesville via these three strategic approaches can help continue moving the City forward in building up its resiliency and resolve as a vibrant and global City.

2. What would your staff say about you as a manager?

There are three consistent characteristics that I believe staff would use to describe me including:

- Happy and optimistic
- Integrity
- Smart

I believe all three personal characteristics translate well into tactical leadership skills. I value the personal characteristics, because they are the foundation of who and how I lead.

I take great pride in working hard and doing my best, which are characteristics I learned as a child. By working hard and doing my best at work, I have established a self-sense of happiness and optimism about work and life. I believe I have always had a choice in mindset; thereby, I could choose to live a life of happiness and optimism or a life of worrying. I have chosen the first and it has served me well throughout my professional career.

In addition, throughout my life I have taken great pride in living with integrity, which has also transferred into by professional life. Who I am and how I live in my personal life influences I am as a leader in my professional life.

I have historically been described by elected officials, peers and staff as the “smart one”, primarily because of two of my strengths including strategic thinking and possessing a thirst for learning. I am lifelong learner and a problem solving geek. I become energized by solving the unsolvable.

I am confident that if my bosses, peers, and subordinates were asked to characterize me that would use words such as happy, integrity and smart to describe me.

3. What would your elected officials say about you?

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This question is very timely, because recently the City of Brooklyn Center held a Council retreat (September). During the retreat as a check-in activity, the Councilmembers were asked to identify great attributes or characteristics of each other. The City Manager, the City Attorney and myself attended and participated in the retreat. I also designed and coordinated the retreat. Nevertheless, when it was time for a Councilmembers shared what they thought were my great attributes, which they shared almost verbatim the following with me:

- Councilmember - “What I appreciate about Reggie is that he is passionate about his work whether it be a small or large complex project”.
- Mayor - “Reggie is the one among all of us who works without an agenda and his has great conviction.”
- Councilmember - “Reggie knows his stuff and is smart”
- Councilmember - “I really appreciate Reggie’s dedication. I called Reggie on my cell phone during our City celebration (his number was the only could find at the time), because I needed direction. Reggie told me he was at his grandmother-in-law’s funeral, but he would figure out how to help me. I told him no, attend to your family’s service. Reggie stopped what he was doing, called another staff member to come help me out. I really appreciate his dedication and willingness to do whatever it takes”.

4. What do you think your strengths are?

My Strength Finders profile would indicate that my top five strengths are:

- Strategic
- Learner
- Achiever
- Activator
- Ideation

I happen to agree with the assessment. I believe the organizations that I have work with throughout my career have been served well by my strength in “strategic thinking”. I take great pride in helping others see a broader picture of an issue and how all of the steps may be organized to achieve success. I have found that a sense of clarity in direction tends to help settle others, although the task be very complex or an unfamiliar path. It also, provides groups with a starting point for adjusting and modifying. Providing strategic direction as a framework for others to adjust and change can build a sense of ownership in work by those participating.

5. What do you think your weaknesses are?

There is a saying that “sometimes our greatest strength can also be our greatest challenge”. I indicated in the previous question that one strength identified in my Strength Finder profile is “strategic”. I view all issues in the context of its beginning, middle and end along with multiple options about how to address the issues. I recognize that I also conduct such mental analysis and

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mapping in a short period of time. However, this is not how all people process data and problem solve.

Because, I may visualize the interplay between steps four and seven in a given 10-step process, does not mean others see the same. I have come to realize and practice communicating in a way to shows all 10 steps with a focus on first completing step one. For this reason, I try to utilize some type personality, learning or leadership assessment tool with teams that I have either led or served a participant.

6. What metrics [performance measures] do you use to measure performance and determine if you and your staff are meeting your organization's goals.

I have designed and development and implemented system-wide strategic plan performance measurement systems. I have also designed and developed system-wide employee performance measures that align with organizational strategic goals and values. I have developed and implemented system-wide electronic tools for this purpose. The measures have been both quantitative and qualitative.

7. What has been your biggest achievement (success)? Tell us about it.

There are several activities and projects, which I am extremely proud of including:

- Designing and executing a multi-state Renewable Energy Valley Initiative
- Developing fiscal stability policies that resulted in a higher bond rating for a city
- Developing process for a city to address highly charged social issues such as gentrification and community police relations
- Developing partnerships between a university and a city regarding innovation and career pipeline for students

However, while not as glamorous of a project, I believe one my biggest achievement has been creating a culture within the City of Brooklyn Center that aligns its strategic plan with performance measures, employee performance evaluations, employee development plans and transformation of that culture into community. To experience a shift in the culture and operations of an organization and community or the people because they get it and choose to align has been one of my greatest achievements.

8. What has been your biggest failure (or mistake) of your career? What did you learn from it?

I have experienced failure in an effort to implement a big idea without adequately bringing others along necessary for execution or sustaining the effort. I have learned to seek to understand and listen twice before acting. I have come to understand that the best of my strengths of visionary and strategic thinking cannot be effective without the understanding and buy-in of others or the development of a culture to sustain that effort.

9. Have you fired people? How did you handle it? How did you feel about it?

Yes, I have fired individuals during my professional career. It has stunk every time, even when firing a poor performing and person who was detrimental to the health of the organization. As a leader, I have a responsibility to place the organization above that of individuals, because we serve at the will of residents. I am very comfortable in exercising my duties as an executive in terminating someone; however, in my experience it never feels good. However, I am grounded in such times knowing I have done the right or best thing on behalf of the organization and residents. I hope that in the times when I have terminated individuals that they have gone on to do better by finding a place more suitable for their skills and desires.

10. What do you think will be the challenges facing the person who takes this job?

- Alignment and the simplification of the intersect between the Commission's Strategic Plan, Strategic Initiatives and the six principles of the Blue Ribbon Task Force Report
- Building a team approach that aligns all with the will and direction of the Commission and the execution of that direction by staff leadership throughout the organization

11. What would you do the first six months in Gainesville?

In the first six months, I would work in an internal to external approach. This does not mean I would not engagement and communicate with partners of the City. However, my priority would be on the strategic alignment between the Commission and staff. I would focus on:

- Greater understanding of the direction of the Commission
- Greater understanding of staff leadership
- Greater understanding the of the culture of the organization
- Greater understanding of organizational operations and financial distribution

I would act on the following (these are not listing in ranking order):

- Reach out and gain greater understanding of staff and the culture of the organization
- Seek alignment and simplification of the intersect between the Commission's Strategic Plan, Strategic Initiatives and the six principles of the Blue Ribbon Task Force Report
- Understand and initiate measurement system for the City's Strategic Plan and Initiatives
- Assess the culture of the organization as it relates to Citizen Centered and initiate focus on execution and measurement of cultivating Citizen Centeredness into the culture of the organization.
- Conduct a development session with department leadership and map out both a short-term and mid-range team plan of leadership direction
- Go out and meet with institutional and community partners

12. How do you work with the media? Is there anything in your background that would embarrass our client if it became public knowledge?

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I designed and developed the Communications and Community Engagement Division for the City of Brooklyn Center. I currently worked extensively directly and through the Communication and Community Engagement Division with a broad spectrum of media including print, television, and radio. I have written and provided press releases, held press conferences and performed interviews. There is nothing in my background that would embarrass the City of Gainesville.

13. How would you use social media to communicate with residents in Gainesville? How have you effectively used social media in the past?

I designed and developed the Communications and Community Engagement Division for the City of Brooklyn Center. I utilized an array of social media platforms on behalf of the City via the Communications and Community Engagement Division, which I also supervised.

I have used social media for various communication purposes including:

- Announcements of events
- Emergencies
- Breaking City related news
- Surveying and community polling
- Complimenting and supplementing other communication media outlets

14. When it becomes known in your community that you are a finalist in Gainesville, are there any community activists that are likely to contact our client with "the dirt" on you?

No, I do not believe there would be a community activist that would have anything negative to say about my work or me.

15. What do you do in your leisure time?

I enjoy spending time with family, playing outdoor sports, watching movies and traveling.

SIX ADJECTIVES OR PHRASES YOU WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF

- Dedicated
- Visionary
- Strategic
- Inspirational
- Doer
- Innovative

Reginald Edwards

REASON FOR WANTING TO LEAVE CURRENT JOB

Gainesville presents me with an opportunity to fulfill my passion to help people and communities back in my home state prosper. I love my current work and believe I contribute in a significant way. I believe there is more for me to give in the City of Gainesville as its City Manager.

CURRENT/MOST RECENT OR RELEVANT SALARY

What is your current/most recent/most relevant salary? \$113,000

CB&A Background Checks

**Background Check Summary for
REGINALD “REGGIE” M. EDWARDS**

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	Results Pending
County	
Hennepin County, MN	No Records Found
Blue Earth County, MN	Results Pending
State	
Minnesota	Results Pending

Civil Records Checks:

County	
Hennepin County, MN	No Records Found
Blue Earth County, MN	Results Pending
Federal	
Minnesota	No Records Found

Motor Vehicle	
Minnesota	Results Pending

Credit	Results Pending
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Bankruptcy	No Records Found
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Education	Confirmed
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Employment	Confirmed except for: Brooklyn Center (2016 – Present)
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Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C. 1681-1681Y, credit and bankruptcy information are very sensitive and should not be used in the consideration of hiring. The information is included for each candidate because we do not want you to be surprised if third parties raise what they consider to be a concern.

**Background Check Summary for
REGINALD "REGGIE" M. EDWARDS
Personal Disclosure**

Personal Disclosure Questionnaire

Name of Applicant: REGINALD M. EDWARDS

The following questions are designed so that we will be able to make full disclosure to our client concerning your background. Please answer them honestly. Cutting corners or misrepresenting your past will result in you being eliminated from all further searches conducted by this firm. We understand that frivolous charges are sometimes made and that charges do not mean you were guilty. We also understand that you may have been wronged and needed to seek compensation. The bottom line is that we want to be certain that our client is fully informed. If you have any questions, please contact us for clarification.

Please explain any yes answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Have you ever been charged or convicted of a felony?
Yes No
2. Have you ever been accused of or have been involved in a domestic violence or abuse incident?
Yes No
3. Have you ever declared bankruptcy or been an owner in a business that did so?
Yes No
4. Have you ever been the subject of a civil rights violation complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
5. Have you ever been the subject of a sexual harassment complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
6. Have you ever been convicted of driving while intoxicated?
Yes No
7. Have you ever sued a current or former employer?
Yes No
8. Do you have a personal My Space, Face Book or other type of Web Page?
Yes No
9. Do you have a personal Twitter Account?
Yes No
10. Is there anything else in your background that, if made public, would cause you, our client or our firm embarrassment if it came to light through the press or any other mechanism?
Yes No
11. Please provide a list of any lawsuits in which you are or have been a party either as plaintiff or defendant.

Attested to: 
Signature of Applicant

Please email this form via PDF DOCUMENT to Lynelle@cb-asso.com or via fax to (888) 539-6531 no later than 5:00 PM PST 09/09/19.
(Note: Please be sure to sign the form with your actual signature if you are sending Fax or PDF Document)

CB&A Reference Notes

Reference Notes
Reginald “Reggie” M. Edwards

**Angel Smith – Communication and Community Engagement Coordinator, City of
Brooklyn Center, MN 407-617-7271**

Ms. Smith has worked for Mr. Edwards since 2016. Mr. Edwards has exceeded expectations in every regard.

Because Mr. Edwards is very strategic, he is great at hiring personnel. He listens well and analyzes where they might fit in the organization. He wants to make sure that whoever he places in the position also grow from the experience. His decisions in general are good.

Mr. Edwards has the ability to change the direction depending on the situation. He challenges the staff to stretch their minds and analyze the opinions they bring to the table. He does not want to do what has always been done, he wants to find a better way.

When Ms. Smith cannot attend a community meeting, Mr. Edwards fills in for her. They conduct neighborhood meetings and he has helped canvas neighborhoods to make sure that people are informed and comfortable with what the city is doing. At events, whether it is a soft community gathering or a larger festival, if he is asked to attend, he is always there.

Mr. Edwards is very highly regarded and residents know they can come and speak to him when they have questions or concerns. He makes himself accessible. He has built strong relationships with the schools, met with pastors at local churches, and works well with a diverse community. He understands that residents do not always have the same needs and fosters a good relationship with everyone.

Mr. Edwards is responsible for administration, human resources, information technologies, clerk’s office, and communications. The directors of these departments have frequent one on one meetings with him as well as group meetings to communicate as a team. He makes sure no one is left out of the loop. The process of communication they have is new and challenging but he is doing a great job. He understands the importance of constant, clear communication.

The residents communicate through social media and the city wanted to make sure it was posting relatively relevant information in a timely manner. They met as a group to establish two teams. One for social media and one for innovation. Because the communication division was relatively new, they did not have the necessary staff for these teams. They identified key individuals in other departments who were interested and had conversations with their supervisors about utilizing a percentage of their time on one of these teams. The concept stretched the organization in multiple ways and has helped the city expand its reach. It has been working.

Mr. Edwards has worked with his departments on budgeting and communications. He has met with directors to discuss where they are individually with their finances and goals. He exercises to maintain a balance in stressful times and will ask staff for input as needed to resolve issues.

Reference Notes
Reginald “Reggie” M. Edwards

Ms. Smith is not aware of anything controversial about Mr. Edwards. She does not know of anyone who has a negative opinion of him.

Ms. Smith would hire Mr. Edwards, he would be an excellent municipal manager. He is a great person overall and has been a godsend as a supervisor. Having someone to bounce ideas off of that has been in the business for a long time is an asset. He is very genuine and loves what he does, while always wanting to improve the organization. He is respected both in the organization and the community. He would be a great choice for any community but she hates the idea of him leaving Brooklyn Center.

Words or phrases used to describe Reggie Edwards:

- Strategic,
- Positive,
- Achiever,
- Connector,
- Inclusive, and
- Communicator.

Strengths: Very strategic, connects the dots quickly during issues and can put together a map for the organization to follow, achiever, constantly gave his best to move the organization forward.

Weaknesses: He has a great love for public service and when someone does not work in this field, it can seem a little odd.

Lu Vanderwerf – Finance Director, Region Nine Development Commission, MN
507-276-7918

Ms. Vanderwerf reported to Mr. Edwards from 2004 to 2011. Mr. Edwards is excellent because he is very much interested in the people side of things. He walks into the office and says hi to everyone. Even when his schedule is extremely busy, he always makes time to answer questions or offer help. He is an extremely good, outside the box thinker. He is someone you want in the room when doing a brainstorming session. He can juggle quite a bit of work, his energy never ends. Working for him was thoroughly enjoyable.

While Mr. Edwards made recommendations, Region Nine hired by committee. However, he is experienced enough, and enough of a people person, that he is a good judge of talent. He looks at their obvious skillset but also their background skillset. Some people have hobbies that give them abilities that are beneficial in the work place.

Reference Notes

Reginald “Reggie” M. Edwards

Ms. Vanderwerf believes that the only time Mr. Edwards made the wrong decision was in putting work over his personal life. He spent long hours at work. When he is struggling with a decision, he brings the management team in for input, but he also has them explain their position.

Most of Mr. Edwards’ job was community engagement and he worked very well with the public. At times when he was traveling, there was a lapse in communication, but for the most part he kept everyone informed. They had the standard weekly meeting that the directors were required to attend and they scheduled everything else around it.

At one meeting, one of the Mayors mentioned an issue in the community that was not being addressed by the groups they belonged to. Mr. Edwards organized a large event to bring everyone together to discuss the issues and find solutions. He brought people from the state to the meeting. The undertaking was significant and took many, many meetings to plan. He saw a need and felt that he owed it to the residents to address it.

Mr. Edwards created a concept called the renewable energy valley and made many phenomenal connections to bring solar and wind power to the area. He met quite a bit of resistance but he kept pushing. While it did not come to fruition during his tenure, it was picked up later which attests to the validity of his work.

Mr. Edwards worked in Chisago County and was responsible for their budget, which was ten times as complicated as the budget for Region Nine. He asked questions when he did not understand something, but his questions were grant specific and not about general budgeting.

For the most part Mr. Edwards completed tasks in a timely manner. A few times something was put on the back burner and the staff had to remind him to bring it forward, which happens because he does not always know when to say no and his plate is always very full. He is very deadline conscious.

The only time Mr. Edwards appeared stressed was over a personal issue related to his mother in another state. He remained very pragmatic even during the state shut down. He asked for documents and determined a course of action. Work does not stress him out.

Region Nine is non partisan so Mr. Edwards was not involved in any controversy. He can be trusted with anything. A disgruntled employee falsely accused him and for the betterment of the organization, he decided to resign. He could have easily fought the false charges but he did not want the organization to be drug through the newspaper or have their reputation sullied, which attests to his character.

Ms. Vanderwerf would hire Mr. Edwards and misses working with him every single day even though it has been many years since they worked together. They might go for a long time without speaking, but he never forgets the important days and texts her on her birthday and holidays. He is extremely good at municipal management. Employees who work for him feel like they matter, he takes the time to make sure they are ok. People are very important to him.

Reference Notes
Reginald “Reggie” M. Edwards

Words or phrases used to describe Reggie Edwards:

- Extremely fair,
- Very upbeat,
- Extremely loyal,
- Selfless,
- Non conventional, and
- Tireless.

Strengths: Extremely good outside the box thinker, open-mindedness.

Weaknesses: He has boundless energy and thinks he can do everything, which is not possible for anyone. He needs help determining when he has too much on his plate.

Troy Gilchrist – external City Attorney, Brooklyn Center, MN 612-337-9214 507-764-5907

Mr. Gilchrist has worked with Mr. Edwards since 2016. Mr. Edwards has done an excellent job for Brooklyn Center.

When Mr. Edwards was tasked with working on a tobacco ordinance, he reached out to vendors that sell tobacco products so they could understand what the city was thinking. He heard them out. He was under pressure by the elected officials to do more in regulating tobacco and e-cigarettes. He included law enforcement and the community development director in the discussions, and worked with the county who was also pushing the initiative. The local businesses felt like the city was interfering with their profits and business practices, and did not want the ordinance to pass. He worked with the elected body on many options, giving them the pros and cons. In the end they have an ordinance that is working well.

When Mr. Gilchrist attends meetings with Mr. Edwards, he never suggests an idea that is cringeworthy. He is also very good about checking with the attorney’s office before moving forward to avoid any issues. He asks questions and keeps everyone in the loop.

Mr. Edwards is a change agent but Mr. Gilchrist is not sure whether that is his personality or whether he was asked to effect change when he was hired. Public outreach and inclusiveness are important in Brooklyn Center, they have many challenges with a divergent group of constituents.

While Mr. Gilchrist has no direct involvement in the budget, he has not heard any negatives about Mr. Edward’ financial abilities. He seems to be very calm in stressful situations and has never become upset in any situation. He handles things well.

At a retreat councilmembers were very positive about Mr. Edwards. They appreciate that he has no personal agenda, and he is high energy, thorough, and reliable.

Reference Notes
Reginald “Reggie” M. Edwards

The tobacco initiative was very controversial and they saw significant pushback from merchants. Mr. Edwards is taking a lead role in an officer involved shooting. He has worked on diversity issues and community healing. He is leading and putting together a communications piece to address some of the issues. Mr. Gilchrist has never seen Mr. Edwards act in a way that was concerning. He works late and is committed. The staff seems happy with his management.

Mr. Gilchrist would not hesitate to hire Mr. Edwards for a municipal organization. He does a really nice job in Brooklyn Center. He is well educated and thoughtful in his approach. He cuts to the chase and is very efficient. He makes sure that people are informed and included. He is pleasant, competent, and fun to work with. He brings in a tremendous amount of energy and is uplifting to those around him.

Words or phrases used to describe Reggie Edwards:

- Dependable,
- Thorough,
- Enthusiastic and energetic,
- Bright,
- Makes sure all groups are included in the process, and
- Good team member.

Strengths: Very thorough, good to work with, upbeat, brings high energy to a project, thinks through the impacts of a decision, public outreach.

Weaknesses: He is so thorough that it may slow the process just a little, but that goes back to him being inclusive and building group consensus before moving forward.

Bob Roesler – former Region Nine Commissioner and Mayor of Sherburn, MN
507-848-7781

Mr. Roesler met Mr. Edwards in 2001. Mr. Roesler was a commissioner for the Region Nine Development Commission while Mr. Edwards was the executive director. They have had occasional contact during Mr. Edwards’ tenure in Brooklyn Center.

Mr. Edwards can take development to a new level and has a novel way of looking at things. He was far ahead of the curve in his ideas. He has an ability to see over the horizon and the challenges that the area will face. Most of what he proposed are ideas that the region is now picking up interest in. He did an excellent job. Staff viewed him as a caring supervisor and treated him with respect. He does not get behind employees to prod them, he leads them.

They did not have much turnover during Mr. Edwards’ tenure which is a testament of his hiring ability. They did lose employees to attrition and retirement. He was judicious in the way he hired

Reference Notes
Reginald “Reggie” M. Edwards

and mentored employees. The only employee he hired that did not last a long time was someone who was hired early in their career and they then decided to switch careers. Mr. Edwards sought as much training and he could receive, which helped foster his imagination and initiative. He is responsive, even on the weekends and when he was at a retreat.

Mr. Edwards made every attempt to work with the public and did not hesitate to go on radio or television. He had a good relationship with the county and attended at least one of their commission meetings annually, as well as the city council meetings within the region. He presented at their meetings and at a work session that they had. He explained the mission well.

The Board of Directors was always kept well informed by Mr. Edwards. They had a 15 to 20% turnover every year due to elections. The members came to the table wearing their local hats and had to realize that they needed to make decisions wearing their regional hat. Mr. Edwards brought people on board to help bridge that gap. They talked about implications and explained why solar farms were being placed in communities with private industry to the communities that could not support these industries as well but wanted them in their municipality.

The city of Mankato was the largest regional hub in the area and much of the business development occurred there because they had the labor force and amenities necessary. Mr. Edwards did an excellent job making sure that people in outlying counties were well informed and on board with the development.

Mr. Edwards has good financial skills. Generally his responses were timely but on occasion he had more on his plate than he was able to deliver. However, it has been some time since they worked together and he may have improved in this area over time. He handles stress quite well. He knows when he needs to leave the office for a break and he is very athletic. He works after hours as needed.

Mr. Edwards decided to run for an elected position while serving as their executive director and it became controversial. He has never personally been involved in controversy.

Mr. Roesler would consider Mr. Edwards for a municipal management position. He is a dedicated individual and would be an inspiration.

Words or phrases used to describe Reggie Edwards:

- Dedicated,
- Self starter,
- Equitable,
- Excellent command of the English language,
- Succinct in the way he captures the essence of a problem, and
- Flexible – can change when the outside elements change.

Reference Notes
Reginald “Reggie” M. Edwards

Strengths: Imagination and being able to look forward.

Weaknesses: He is very imaginative and forward thinking. Sometimes he was ready to go before thinking through all the implications. The organization was very large and they had many turfdoms to consider and treat fairly. Also, the hiring committee wanted someone who was forward thinking, but the rest of the commission was not ready for the changes that occurred, and some felt a little out of the loop.

Bukata Hayes – Executive Director, Greater Mankato Diversity Council, MN
507-469-0947

Mr. Hayes considers Mr. Edwards to be a good family friend. They have known each other since the late 1990s. They have partnered on a number of consulting initiatives as well.

Mr. Edwards is top notch and does two things very well. He completes the task while understanding the why and the how, and how decisions impact the organization moving forward. His articulation and consideration of the implications are critical in leadership. He works night and day to complete his responsibilities in a fashion that is a representation of who he is.

When Mr. Edwards was in Mankato he made decisions that were best for the organization, would return the best dividends, and would represent the community and the peers in the most positive way. He kept the group informed while completing the tasks he was assigned or volunteered for, which is important.

Mr. Edwards is an innovator. He looks for new ways to work that will achieve better results and maintain their excellence or improve it. He also provides the necessary resources, time, and commitment to those he is leading, which is important in moving forward.

Mr. Edwards is always active in the community, he is out building connections and conduit points for the organization. He works really well with the public to accomplish a particular goal. He has never been obstinate or unwilling to engage. He has the difficult conversations and is transparent with the community.

The organization was going through a restructuring during Mr. Edwards’ tenure. He had to make tough decisions that impacted some employees’ full time employment. He was required to make the changes per the charter but was able to facilitate a soft landing for those who were impacted. He found other ways they could contribute to the organization or worked with outside partners to find positions for them.

Mr. Edwards understands the dollars and how they are supposed to be used. He is accountable. He responds to stress by ramping up the energy and working hard. He utilizes his energy to find solutions and he processes stress in the proper way. He learns from it and moves forward.

Reference Notes
Reginald “Reggie” M. Edwards

Mr. Edwards understands what others need and helps them succeed in the organization. He is willing to lead and gets results through his leadership methodology.

A two year community diversity initiative was controversial because their community is smaller and predominantly Caucasian. Mr. Edwards is invested in the community and is willing to have necessary conversations that communities have to have to be better. His conduct would never cause embarrassment or concern for an employer. Everyone that Mr. Hayes has spoken with has a positive opinion of Mr. Edwards.

Mr. Hayes would hire Mr. Edwards in an instance. He brings many great things to an organization. He creates a collective ‘all of us together’ environment that is critical in a public, transparent organization. He encourages employees to work hard and always seeks to improve the organization. He will bring great results and effective partnerships through transparency and accountability to any organization.

Words or phrases used to describe Reggie Edwards:

- Hard worker,
- Innovative,
- Big idea ideation,
- Compassionate,
- Equitable,
- Leader.

Strengths: Really big picture understanding, creative, always asks if there is a better or more effective way, hardest worker that Mr. Hayes knows.

Weaknesses: Because he is such a big picture thinker, sometimes the smaller details may be missed but it is not a weakness or detrimental to his performance.

Drew Campbell – former Commissioner, Blue Earth County, MN 507-382-1374

Mr. Campbell has known Mr. Edwards since around 2005. They had interactions while Mr. Edwards was the executive director for Region Nine and during his time in Brooklyn Center.

Mr. Edwards has a good understanding of community development and issues that are related to the health of a region, and can flesh out ideas that are good for the growth of the community. He makes good decisions. The Region Nine had a tax structure like a small government, they received a portion of taxes of those in their area. He oversaw a multi million dollar budget.

In general Mr. Edwards was not afraid to try new things to see if it was a good direction. He wanted to make their area an energy valley with renewable energy and then worked hard to get it started.

Reference Notes
Reginald “Reggie” M. Edwards

He brought people in from the field, local government representatives, and community members. He had a good vision and knew the region had a tremendous opportunity. He was a bit ahead of the time and it did not take off until after he left, but they now have solar gardens going up all over the valley and he paved the way for that.

With the public Mr. Edwards listens well because he knows that listening is important. He works well with them. He kept others informed either by contacting them personally or asking his staff to respond.

Mr. Campbell cannot remember anything controversial that relates to Mr. Edwards but it has been some time since they worked together.

Mr. Campbell has not seen Mr. Edwards in a municipal management role, but he has a good grasp in many areas. He hires quality staff and the job can be done with good staff.

Words or phrases used to describe Reggie Edwards:

- Physically fit,
- Maintains a sense of health,
- Strong multi-faceted experience,
- Can articulate himself on many topics, and
- Good father and husband.

Strengths: Frames issues well and does outreach, good grasp of development and growth.

Weaknesses: He has a tremendous amount of confidence, which can be difficult for those who need realism, but his confidence is an asset.

Matt Fulton – former City Manager, New Brighton and South St. Paul, MN 651-242-2422

Mr. Fulton has known Mr. Edwards since the late 1990s. They have been professional colleagues throughout Mr. Fulton’s career. Mr. Fulton currently works for Polco and he is the vice president for national engagement.

Mr. Edwards did an excellent job on the projects that they interacted on. He took a leadership role in a strategic planning process in Ramsey County and did an impressive job. He served on various committees in the League of Minnesota cities and he handles himself extremely well. He was the lead person in bringing Polco to Brooklyn Center. He involved his staff in the process. He is easy to work with, and is a smart and articulate person. He is able to accomplish what he is tasked with.

Because Mr. Edwards has a good head on his shoulders, he makes good decisions. He has a good sense from a manager’s perspective on decision making. He is more of an innovator but he has a

Reference Notes
Reginald “Reggie” M. Edwards

high bar for himself and the staff, and is interested in trying to improve operations. He has always been readily available and consistently trying to connect with Mr. Fulton when needed.

Mr. Fulton does not know of anything embarrassing or controversial that involves Mr. Edwards. He does not know anyone who would disagree with the statements in this reference.

Mr. Fulton would hire Mr. Edwards. Having been a manager, he believes that Mr. Edwards would do well as a manager and wishes him nothing but the best.

Words or phrases used to describe Reggie Edwards:

- Intelligent,
- Articulate,
- Pleasant,
- Responsive,
- Innovative, and
- open.

Strengths: Articulate, smart, easy to be around, well respected, good reputation.

Weaknesses: He is always willing to participate but he is not an extrovert. At times he could have stepped forward a little more.

Prepared by: Lynelle Klein
Colin Baenziger & Associates

CB&A Internet Research

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches**Reginald Edwards***(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

Sun Post
May 29, 2019

Brooklyn Park hosts regional convening of Cities United

Author: Kevin Miller

Brooklyn Park hosted a regional convening of Cities United, a national initiative that aims to reduce violence among young and black males by addressing underlying causes May 23 at the Edinburgh USA Clubhouse. Broadly, the initiative aims to work collaboratively to increase access to educational opportunities, create pathways to employment opportunities, improve physical and mental health access, and ultimately reduce violence, which disproportionately impacts black men age 13-30. Violent crime is a complex issue with many socioeconomic factors at play, Police Chief Craig Enevoldsen said. The Cities United plan is unique in that it connects the city's police department, the parks and recreation department and economic and community development departments to attempt to address the issue, he said. "This discussion about violence is not just a police issue," and police departments can't arrest their way out of the problem, Enevoldsen said.

The police department has begun tracking data related to race, crime and traffic stops and has found racial and likely economic disparities, according to Enevoldsen. "As I show this to city staff and community members, [these were] very troubling numbers," Enevoldsen said. "The automatic question that they ask us is what are you doing about it." The Cities United comprehensive safety plan represents part of the city's efforts to change those trends, he said. The police department plans to make its data related to race publicly available, Enevoldsen said. "I really love the comment about, 'So what are you going to do about it,'" said Antonio Smith youth services liaison and Cities United lead for Brooklyn Park. "We believe that this comprehensive public safety plan addresses what we're going to do about it. We've got the community involved in this plan, we've got young people involved in this plan and internally ... we have three departments laser-focused on this work," he said.

Kim Berggren, community development director, said that the city is working to align with its partners to address these issues. One example she noted was the city's joint Brooklynk program with Brooklyn Center. The workforce development program provides youth with job training, internships and ultimately career pathways. Curt Boganey, Brooklyn Center's city manager; **Reggie Edwards**, Brooklyn Center's deputy city manager; Brooklyn Center's Police Chief Tim Gannon and Brooklyn Center Councilmember April Graves were all in attendance at the regional convening.

Community development can also play a role related to job opportunities through transit and public transportation, Berggren said. The city is still hopeful that the Bottineau Blue Line Extension project will connect the northwest suburbs with downtown Minneapolis and is working with the Metropolitan Council to try to improve busing as well, she said. "I'm really optimistic about what's happening," Berggren added. Enevoldsen agreed, saying he has seen dramatic improvements in the community since he started with the city in 1991.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Reginald Edwards
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

StarTribune
July 11, 2017

Brooklyn Center leaders detail new branding, infrastructure plans

Author: Sarah Jarvis

The new logo for Brooklyn Center has the tagline "At the Center," which is intended to emphasize the city's central location and accessibility in the Twin Cities metro area. Brooklyn Center unveiled a new logo and plans for infrastructure and redevelopment projects Tuesday as part of a rebranding effort to improve the city's image.

After a year of planning and research, the city identified six priorities to focus on over the next two years: economic stability, redevelopment, community image, citizen communication, creating a safe, secure and stable community, and infrastructure improvements. Brooklyn Center is one of the most racially diverse cities in Minnesota — roughly half its population of about 31,000 are people of color — and the median household income of its residents is about \$45,000.

The new logo — which was printed onto several large signs set up in the City Council chambers Tuesday — will appear on the city's social media pages and the water tower soon, and on signs and public vehicles over the next few years. "We believe our previous logo and tagline have served us well, but it was time for us to convey more about our city," said Mayor Tim Willson.

Mike Marsh, acting public works director, detailed two infrastructure projects that he said will work with the rebranding. One is reconstruction and modernization of the Brooklyn Boulevard corridor, which includes adding trails and landscaping, improving transit stops and sidewalks, modifying turn lanes, and moving utilities underground. Marsh said that project will take place in two phases: the first, from 49th Avenue North to Bass Lake Road, begins next year, and the second, from Bass Lake Road to Interstate 94, is scheduled to start in 2021.

The second project he described is scheduled for 2021 along Highway 252. The stoplights at 66th Avenue will be replaced by an interchange, and 70th Avenue will close and be replaced with a pedestrian overpass. Gary Eitel, the city's development director, cited three projects, including housing updates at a site near Shingle Creek Parkway and Bass Lake Road, the redevelopment of retail and residential units at 57th and Logan avenues by 2020, and the redevelopment of a former Jerry's Foods store.

Reggie Edwards, deputy city manager, talked about improving residents' economic stability. He said the city is evaluating whether it pays a living wage to its staff, and that it hired 19 interns to give young residents a chance to get some work experience. "This has been a detailed planning process in which we sought the feedback of the public on their beliefs, needs and interests," City Manager Curt Boganey said in a statement. "We're thrilled to finally take the next step toward our city's future."

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Reginald Edwards**

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Free Press, The (Mankato, MN)
March 19, 2015

Summit leaders call for increased equality

Author: Nate Gotlieb

MANKATO — Investing in diversity as an asset and closing racial gaps is good for all Minnesotans, not just communities of color. That was the message at an equity summit Thursday in Mankato, where community members discussed local equity efforts and ways to align resources. The event was sponsored by local and state organizations, including the Greater Mankato Diversity Council.

The state is becoming more diverse, Monica Bryand of the Headwaters Foundation for Justice told the group, and will face a skills gap unless education levels increase. Leaders need to grow good jobs, prepare youth and people of color for future jobs, dismantle racial barriers and increase access to opportunities, she said. "We have everything to gain from reducing these inequities and everything to lose from doing nothing," she said.

Bryand presented the findings of a 2014 PolicyLink report on equity in Minnesota. The report said racial gaps in income, poverty, employment, education, wealth and health are unusually high and persistent, even as people of color grow as a share of the workforce and population. It also noted that middle-class job growth has been anemic while the low-wage sector has increased. "In the face of this rising diversity and growing inequality, Minnesota needs to implement a new growth model," the report said.

In 1980 only 4 percent of Minnesotans were people of color, according to the report. Today that figure is 17 percent, and it is projected to increase to 29 percent by 2040. In addition to population changes, income inequality is also on the rise in Minnesota, according to the report. High-wage jobs pay 44 percent more now than in 1990, but low-wage jobs pay only 16 percent more. College-educated workers of color earn 9 percent less than their white counterparts, and Native Americans, blacks and Latinos are significantly more likely to be unemployed than whites. "I think the hard part is that this isn't easy and it's going to take a long time," Bryand said, "but we need to address race and class."

Event facilitator **Reggie Edwards** said the diversity in Mankato presents an opportunity, but the challenge is getting it so that everyone is included. "We can't accept the fact that it's hard. We have to find a way," he said. "We have the compassion. We can do it, but it's going to require all of us."

Marvin Batres, a MNsure navigator at CLUES in St. Paul, said he has faced discrimination as a person of color since arriving in the U.S. at 13. Batres attended Thursday's summit and said society needs to start thinking more about issues facing Hispanic people before they become more serious problems. "Communicating and hearing people out is the best solution," he said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Reginald Edwards
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Free Press, The (Mankato, MN)
October 12, 2011

Edwards resigns at Region Nine head

Author: Dan Nienaber

MANKATO — After a closed meeting that lasted about 40 minutes, the Region Nine Development Commission’s Board of Directors voted unanimously Wednesday to accept the resignation of Executive Director **Reggie Edwards**.

Edwards had been on a paid leave since the board had a special meeting two weeks ago to discuss **Edwards**’ recent performance evaluation. After that meeting, which included a closed session that lasted more than two hours, Board Chairman Jim Swanson said the leave was not an act of discipline.

The board also approved a 6-month severance package that will pay **Edwards**’ salary and benefits through March. **Edwards**, who was earning more than \$90,000 annually for his pay and benefits, will not receive a car allowance or cell phone allowance during that time.

Swanson would not comment after Wednesday’s meeting about what led to **Edwards**’ resignation. “We’d like to thank you for your 11 years of service to Region Nine and wish you the best of luck in further endeavors,” he told **Edwards** after the board accepted the resignation.

Edwards said he didn’t have another job offer, but he has been pursuing other options. He said he plans to stay in the Mankato area. “It was an opportunity to move forward,” he said. “I’ve been looking for a new opportunity.” The severance package was part of a contract, **Edwards** said. He also said the reason for two closed meetings was to negotiate the termination of that contract.

Region Nine had a budget of about \$1.8 million in 2010 and **Edwards** had proposed a budget of about \$1.5 million for next year. In 2010, the commission received about \$700,000 in federal funding, \$267,000 in state funding and \$475,000 in funding from the nine counties in the region. There are currently 16 employees working for the commission.

The Board of Directors will have another special meeting next week to discuss goals for the commission and define the search process for a new director. The resignation will have to be approved when the full commission meets Nov. 9.

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Reginald Edwards**

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Free Press, The (Mankato, MN)
October 23, 2010

Edwards, Stuehrenberg hold different views of County Board duties

MANKATO — Vance Stuehrenberg and **Reggie Edwards** are competing for what might be the most invisible contest to be decided by Mankato voters — a Blue Earth County Board seat in an urban district. Stuehrenberg said 95 percent of the people he visits while doorknocking don't have county-related questions. **Edwards** said the most common question he gets is, "What does the county do?"

Most Mankatoans don't know much about the county because unless they're in its system — in a court case, perhaps, or receiving human services benefits — they have little occasion to know it's the county running an election or maintaining a road. So how do nonpartisan candidates appeal to voters who have little knowledge of what the winner will be doing? These candidates answer in different ways.

Stuehrenberg, a Mankato councilman retired from a career as a police officer, says a good commissioner listens, doesn't have an agenda and is non-partisan. "One thing about me is I'm an open book," he said. "People understand my background. They can talk to me about anything." **Edwards**, who has held several jobs with cities and counties, asks voters to compare the candidates' experience and listen to their debate (available on his website, reggieedwards.com, in the campaign news section).

The pair advanced from a four-person primary in August. Stuehrenberg received 569 votes, or 48 percent of the total, while **Edwards** took 240 votes, or 20 percent. Stuehrenberg makes a point of saying that he's going to be a full-time county commissioner. "It can't be a supplement to another full-time government job," said Stuehrenberg, who said he's been told county commissioners work between 25 and 30 hours a week. His opponent is the executive director of the Region Nine Development Commission, a nine-county government body, and intends to stay in that role if elected.

This isn't the first time **Edwards** has heard the suggestion he can't do both jobs, and he has a few responses. He disputes the contention that public office should be discussed like employment. "I'm not looking to be an elected official as a job," he said. He noted the Founding Fathers had other professions when they were called to public service. "Time is not the issue, it's how effective you are with your time and what you bring to the table," **Edwards** said.

The candidates also take a different view of the duty of a commissioner. "My feeling, like on the City Council, is not to tell people what changes are going to be made," Stuehrenberg said. "It's not what I want, it's about what other people want." **Edwards** said relying on direction from constituents is "poor leadership." "When we're elected, we're expected to have some ideas," he said.

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Reginald Edwards**

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Edwards has talked about three “pillars” during his campaign: innovation, broadening of democracy through citizen participation in government and collaboration. When asked for an example of his ideas in action on the Region Nine Development Commission, **Edwards** spoke about the effort to brand this region as “Renewable Energy Valley.”

In a related move, Region Nine encouraged cities and counties to replace worn-out vehicles with models that could run on ethanol. While Stuehrenberg said the county is “very well run,” he said he’s not opposed to speaking his mind when he disagrees. That was the case on the Mankato City Council earlier this year with a series of alley renovations that forced people to pave their gravel driveways. He opposed the added financial burden the rule placed on households. “We’re still sitting in a recession, I don’t care what they say,” he said recently.

Likewise, **Edwards** doesn’t have any burning criticism of the County Board, but would bring a different sort of change to the institution nonetheless. As far as he can tell, there haven’t been any black commissioners in the county’s history. He said he was counseled not to include a picture of himself in campaign materials because of his race, but hopes his election would inspire at least a few of the next generation. According to recent campaign filings, **Edwards** has spent \$948.42 through Sept. 13. Stuehrenberg spent \$1,072.08 through July 27.

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Reginald Edwards**

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Free Press, The (Mankato, MN)
August 3, 2010

BEC Board primary: Edwards an advocate of innovation

Author: Dan Linehan

MANKATO — **Reggie Edwards** says Minnesota’s work ethic used to be enough to pull it through economic crises. No longer. “That won’t be sufficient. There won’t be enough workers,” the Blue Earth County Board 2nd District candidate said. The 2nd District is comprised of Mankato north of Main Street, though there are some hilltop areas just south of that road in the district.

Edwards said demographic data show more than two employees will leave for every one who enters during the next 10 to 15 years. “We will be challenged more than any other time in history.” **Edwards** is a big-picture thinker and says tweaking the system won’t work. The three pillars of his campaign, he says, will. The first way forward is innovation, he said. “It’s not simply about subsidizing” but more about how to expand the tax base while reducing the demand for services like corrections and welfare programs.

If more cuts and efficiency gains aren’t enough, then so-called “added value” is the future, he said. By that he means squeezing more worth from existing activities. It might mean putting solar panels on county buildings or harvesting roadway grass for biofuel. The need for innovation brings **Edwards** to his campaign’s second pillar, which seeks to broaden citizen engagement. Some of the creative solutions government will need will come from citizens.

Finally, **Edwards** said government collaboration will be necessary — and not the model where counties and cities are dependent on the state to keep their budgets in the black. He acknowledged fears of the loss of identity in those mergers. As far as the county budget, **Edwards** said there’s not enough cutting or enough taxes that can make the long-term problems go away. “We have to have new ideas. That’s why I focus on innovation.”

Edwards has extensive experience in government (see accompanying box) and said he’s a “public servant at heart.” “I also view the work as a responsibility and an obligation,” he said. His mom worked three jobs with a seventh-grade education, he said, to help prepare him for opportunities like this. **Edwards** said he will remain as executive director of the Region Nine Development Commission if elected. If elected officials had to be retired, then very few people could serve, he said. “I can do both jobs well.” The primary will be held Aug. 10.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Reginald Edwards

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Faribault Daily News (MN)
March 25, 2009

Equality focus of presentation

Author: Staff Writer

FARIBAULT - Barack Obama's presidential win ignited a spark of hope in the black community for a brighter future, **Reggie Edwards** told his audience Wednesday. Speaking on the campus of South Central College, **Edwards** used a timeline and stories from his own family to exhibit how racial relations in the United States have changed for the better. While it took a lot of struggle by many to get the country where it is today and racial biases still exist, having a black president gives hope that the United States is headed toward a colorblind society, **Edwards** said. "Our society does not yet appreciate the value of diversity we have in this country," he said. "If it did, we would have a stronger America."

Edwards is the executive director of the Region IX Development Commission and lives in Mankato. He is the first in his family to graduate from college. He earned his master's degree from the University of Central Florida and teaches community development as an adjunct professor at Minnesota State University Mankato.

During his presentation, **Edwards** spoke of growing up poor in a family where his parents did not stay together. He overcame adversity through education and a work ethic his mother instilled in him. Education and hard work, **Edwards** said, are the two ingredients for everyone to succeed. For many years, however, blacks faced the roadblock of discrimination. His grandfather fought in the Navy during World War II which was then segregated. His father served in the military as well, but found it hard after returning home to find a job in the south because of segregation policies.

The Civil Rights movement of the late 1950s and 1960s, which **Edwards** witnessed as a youngster, won legal battles to end segregation policies, but work to strengthen black families and help black men and women succeed in life are still needed today, he said. **Edwards** said he is the only one of his 13 male first cousins who is not dead or in prison. That fact points out that the black community needs to find more ways to point young black men in the right direction, he said.

Having President Obama as a role model as a "family man" for black men to see may also help, **Edwards** said. Jean Guerber, a teacher at South Central College, described **Edwards'** presentation as "moving." She had known a lot of the history of blacks in this country, but **Edwards'** use of his own family's history made it much more personal and interesting, she said.

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Reginald Edwards**

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Faribault Daily News (MN)
January 4, 2006

Two sites added to Waseca County plan

Author: Ruth Ann Hager

WASECA -- The struggle between industry and agriculture in Waseca County continued Tuesday when the subject was the future of the Highway 14 corridor. A 60-day comment period had just ended on the draft Waseca County Comprehensive Land Use plan when the Board of County Commissioners voted to change it. The plan was amended to add two industrial sites in what was designated for agricultural use.

The vote was 3-1, with commissioners Richard Androli, Al Ruhland and Wendell Armstrong voting in the affirmative and commissioner Rick Morris voting "no." Commissioner Jim Peterson was not present. Dan Zander, who asked the county to rezone 22.65 acres along Highway 14 as industrial, and Bob Burns, who wishes to expand his business on 9.7 acres along the highway, are the site owners.

Zander said the bottom line is industrial development. He also has a dilemma, he said, because the Minnesota Department of Transportation took his land for the new four-lane highway and he cannot find other suitable land where he can display the stainless steel equipment he sells. He said he understands the desire to keep a rural look but, "where else will you have industry develop?"

Burns, a Janesville businessman, said he has purchased Boss Supply, Inc. of Waseca and will move the company to Janesville in January. He would like to display equipment on land he owns along the highway and County Road 17. "Highway 14 is huge to me," Burns said. He argued that hog barns would not be as good a fit as machinery along Highway 14. "Something's going to be built at each access," he said.

Region Nine Director **Reggie Edwards**, who had worked with a task force to write the land use plan, encouraged the commissioners to establish a process and set standards for changes to the document. He said changing the plan was meant to be laborious and reasons for changing it should be "compelling." "Stand on the comp plan first and then deter from it," **Edwards** suggested. "Don't take away the integrity of the plan."

Commissioner Richard Androli said the common thread for economic development is the highway and access is the biggest issue. He said the county should work out a road system along the entire highway. The issue Planning and Zoning Director Angie Knish wanted to make clear to the commissioners is that they may change the zoning for Dan Zander or Bob Burns but any future owner of the property could put anything industrial on the property without a public hearing. "What's intended today may not be there tomorrow," she said.

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Reginald Edwards**

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Commissioner Morris asked if, after four years of comp plan discussions, the planning and zoning commission "got it wrong?" "What we talked about is not a reflection of what was written and delivered back to us," Burns responded. Morris said the road isn't even built yet. He wanted to stick with the comp plan -- "I think they got it right" -- and deal with access issues "down the road." Zander suggested that the county would make the necessary exceptions to the comp plan if Target wanted to build a large facility along Highway 14. He said he and Burns should not be discriminated against because they are small business owners.

Commissioner Armstrong said the county should "bend over backwards" to help the two businesses and keep them in the county. He made the motion to zone the two sites industrial. Any new businesses, he said, should go to the designated areas according to the comp plan. Androli seconded the motion.

Morris said the move was "a knee jerk reaction" from two business owners who "wanted to get in on the ground floor." "If we say yes' to everyone who comes before this board, we don't need a comp plan," he said. He wanted to send the plan back to the planning and zoning commission to look at the Highway 14 corridor.

Knish said that would "back everything up six to nine months." If the choice is delay and integrity, **Edwards** said, he would take integrity. Spot zoning in the comp plan erodes its integrity, he said. The comp plan will now be the subject of another public hearing before the commissioners vote on its final adoption.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Reginald Edwards
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

St. Paul Pioneer Press (MN)
November 27, 1997

EDWARDS TO TAKE ON DAWKINS IN HOUSE

Author: MARIA DOUGLAS REEVE

Reggie Edwards, a Ramsey County policy analyst, announced Wednesday he will challenge state Rep. Andy Dawkins, DFL-St. Paul, in 1998. If he wins endorsement in the spring, **Edwards** said, he wants to represent District 65A, which includes the Frogtown, Summit-University, and Lexington-Hamline neighborhoods.

Speaking at the entrance to the Capitol's House chambers, **Edwards** said Dawkins cannot represent a district in which he does not live. "He lives a couple of days in and a couple of days out," **Edwards** said. "The community has a sense he's not here and not accessible on a daily basis."

Dawkins lives on Charles Avenue and is the caretaker of the building in which he lives. His wife, Sen. Ellen Anderson, who represents Senate District 66, lives on Lakeview Avenue. In response, Dawkins said that it's too bad that **Edwards** wants to make his residency the issue as opposed to the issues that need debating.

Edwards said he brings a more inclusive leadership style and believes that diverse representation in one of the most diverse districts in the state should be an issue. Other issues he said he will focus on are taxes, housing poverty, and economic development. **Edwards** said that as a person of color, he represents a sense of hope for young people in the community.

Edwards has been as a member of the DFL Central Committee for Senate District 65 and a member of the St. Paul DFL Executive Committee. A native of Florida, he has a bachelor's degree from Central Florida University and a master's degree in public administration. He lives on Holly Avenue.

Research Compiled by: Cara Slade
 Colin Baenziger & Associates