A new team of local residents is focused on developing a growth strategy for the Clyde-area based on entrepreneurship. This project is based on a new $25,000 Federal Home Loan Bank grant sponsored by Peoples Exchange Bank.

Project consultant Leon Atwell of Advancing Rural Prosperity, Inc. led the session. The group’s first decision was to launch a community survey to gather input for the project.

The advisory team has ties to Main Street businesses and Internet businesses, agriculture and banking, churches and government, and many of our organizations. Some of its members have lived here all their life. Others are new to the community.

Mayor Terry Koch represents the city, and Kasey Eickman was chosen to represent Peoples Exchange Bank. The other four positions were selected by Mari Detrixhe, Clyde’s development director, with assistance from Atwell. They are Darrin Kidd, Deb Ohlde, Arlin Resco, and Pastor Russ Sizemore. Deb Ohlde is a community member who also represents the North Central Regional Planning Commission.

Two additional financial sponsors for the project will be announced next week.

The public is invited to participate in the “Community Capacity Survey”. A copy of the survey can be picked up at City Hall or Peoples Exchange Bank or found on the Clyde website at www.ClydeKansas.org. Your responses will identify Clyde’s strengths and areas that need attention and inform the choice of strategies used to promote growth.

All Clyde area residents (66938) are invited to fill out the survey. Our former residents and alumni are also invited to respond via the website.

What can the public expect from this project? First of all, Clyde will have a carefully thought-out growth plan based on entrepreneurship that helps place limited time, talent, and dollars where they will be most effective. In addition, all advisors will be trained to understand and identify opportunities for supporting entrepreneurs.

The contract with Advancing Rural Prosperity, Inc. is on the agenda at the City Council meeting. If the contract is approved, Atwell will also train a business coach.

The goal is to help Clyde grow and become more resilient through times of change. For example, many of our residents travel elsewhere to work. If gas prices rise, this could hurt us. By growing economic activity here, Clyde will be a stronger, more stable community.