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## PRESS RELEASE

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## VERMILLION NOW! 3 CAMPAIGN KICKS-OFF WITH OVER \$1M PLEDGED

May 14<sup>th</sup> - The Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Company announced this afternoon they are nearly 60% to their \$1.725M goal for the Vermillion NOW! 3 capital campaign. At a kick-off event hosted at RED Steakhouse on Main Street, in Vermillion, Campaign Leadership Committee Co-Chair, Farron Pratt of First Dakota National Bank announced to the crowd that the campaign has officially kicked off and is already at a current total of \$1,043,065.

"I'd like to point out a few highlights from our 'silent phase'," explained Pratt. "Along with a couple of our largest current contributors, including the City of Vermillion, Sanford Health and a number of others; we have 100% participation from those who are closest to the campaign – including the Campaign Leadership Committee, the VCDC Board of Directors and the Staff of the VCDC".

The Vermillion NOW! 3 capital campaign will kick-off on the heels of the past ten successful years of Vermillion NOW! campaigns. These campaigns were designed to address large-scale economic development, housing needs, business growth, and workforce development priorities for Vermillion. "In 2009 the first Vermillion NOW! campaign was successfully launched with strong support from the public and private sectors," shares Farron Pratt, Vermillion First Dakota National Bank President and Co-Chair of the Campaign. "The resounding successes of those initial efforts led to the launch of the Vermillion NOW! 2 five-year campaign." Among the results of those initial efforts were the creation of the Vermillion Technology Center, the purchase and development of 75 acres of light to heavy industrial zoned land for ready use, the Bliss Pointe housing development (now 65% sold); physical expansions of many businesses and locations like MASABA, Inc., McVicker Plaza, Polaris Industries, Sanford Vermillion, and more; support for many façade improvements across the community; and support of strategic partnerships in workforce development.

Other highlights noted at the kick-off was that Clay County's *Median Household Income* growth rate at 7.7% was above the South Dakota *Median Household Income* growth rate that was 7%. *Total Property Value in Vermillion have increased by nearly 40% in ten years, while total property value in the entire Clay County have increased by 61%*. Leaders noted that well over 100 businesses have started in Vermillion over the past ten years and the Chamber of Commerce has seen record growth over that same timeframe.

"The momentum and support from the community coupled with strong strategic partners, like the University of South Dakota, has provided an amazing opportunity for Vermillion to continue to capitalize on the growth we have seen ever since the first investors of Vermillion NOW! had stepped up", says Nate Welch, President and CEO of the Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Company. "This community is in sync when it comes to a shared vision of working together and making Vermillion better than ever. It's exciting to be part of this."



The focus of the Vermillion NOW! 3 Campaign will be on three primary focus areas of Amenities & Infrastructure, Job Creation, and Strategic, Collaborative Leadership, and include goals such as increasing the number of young professionals residing in the area, shifting the commuter-to-resident ratio from 41% to 35%, and increasing the total population of the Vermillion area by 4%. "I'm honored to help lead another Vermillion NOW! campaign to success and to help Vermillion grow with continued investments in housing, in expansion and recruitment of new businesses, and in working with the community to train and educate workers for the future." Shares Jim Peterson, President of MASABA Inc.

"I choose to be a part of this campaign because I know the value of a strong community and know this requires people and funds to come together strategically for a common goal," shares Bekki Engquist-Schroeder, owner of Wynie Mae's AVEDA Salon & Spa and campaign committee member. "I know to be successful in my personal and professional life, giving to my community is important. What a great opportunity to do so with the Vermillion Now! 3 Campaign."

This event is free and open to the public. For further information about the event or the upcoming campaign contact VCDC Executive Assistant, Megan Davidson, at 624-5571 or via email at [Megan@VermillionChamber.com](mailto:Megan@VermillionChamber.com).