



# Economic Development Consortium

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## *Economic Development Consortium Members*

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WE Energies

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This newsletter follows closely the first annual report presented to the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors. The report focused on "Actions and Outcomes." As a "new department" I felt it important to deliver the news not only about the planning and assessment already completed, but also, to cite the actions taken as well as outcomes. I have not included the full text of the annual report here as it is available both bound and on our web-site.

The Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium's Board of Directors has been instrumental in the department's successes. It has fashioned the core department process into a hybrid of an action/outcome model with a dose of appreciative inquiry theory to guide the programs and services undertaken by the department.

Below I have outlined some of the programs and then listed actions and outcomes associated thereto.

**Promoting a Quality and Stable Workforce**

JCEDC works closely with agencies and organizations to insure that Jefferson County employers have access to a quality and stable workforce. This includes our being an active member of the Workforce Development Center Steering Committee/OSO. As a member, we participate in planning on workforce development issues geared toward Jefferson County and its business community. In addition, we act as an advisor to the business service committee for the Workforce Development Center.

One component to having a qualified workforce is that of education. Our department partners with the University of Wisconsin-Extension and Madison Area Technical College in an effort to bring information and programs to residents and the workforce of Jefferson County. In an effort to

promote education and skills enhancement to the youth segment of the workforce, we work with businesses to review, assess and hopefully utilize the Jefferson County Youth Apprentice Program. Through our efforts Sussek Machine in Waterloo has incorporated the Youth Apprentice program into its organization.

We assisted the Jefferson County Literacy Council in receiving a \$1000.00 grant to purchase learning assessment material which will enhance literacy of Jefferson County residents and thereby improve the quality of the workforce.

The JCEDC utilizes the Home Consortium's resources to enhance the stability of the workforce as well as improving the quality of life for the citizens of Jefferson County. As a participating member on the Home Consortium board we look to programs which help achieve the goals of workforce stability and quality of life. Through partnering with and utilization of various sub-programs discussed below we are able to assist larger numbers of the workforce within Jefferson County. The sub-programs and activities include the following:

- As the Administrator of the Jefferson County Home Rehabilitation we provided assistance to households which homes are in need of rehabilitation. JCEDC, in its first months under this program, disbursed \$6301.00 for the 2004 calendar year with approximately \$10,000.00 pending for the 2005 calendar year.

- We have partnered with hbc Services, Inc. to provide homebuyer down-payment assistance to some 42 families of Jefferson County. In addition, this partnership, allowed us to sponsor the Homebuyer Counseling course in an effort to educate families about homeownership

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and help qualify them to purchase homes in Jefferson County.

### **Supporting Jefferson County Business Community**

One of the major goals of the JCEDC is to support the business community and maintain a positive business climate. This includes developing programs which promote the “entrepreneurial spirit”.

- JCEDC brought the Small Business Development Center’s First Step business program to Jefferson County. The First Step program counsels participants in the fundamentals of business as their “first step” toward starting their own business. The JCEDC saw ninety three participants attend the first year of this program. The success of the First Step program in 2004 was evidence of the pent up demand for the program and assured its continuation in 2005.

- The Entrepreneurial Training Series is a thirteen session business plan writing training series. The first eight modules of the entrepreneurial training series aim to develop management skills. Experts in law, accounting, banking, insurance, management, and marketing cover the fundamentals of small business management. The participants gained knowledge about growth stages and problems, marketing, promotion and advertising, legal issues and requirements, record-keeping, accounting and financial management, financing, and insurance and risk management. Attendees during the last five modules of the series learn the business planning process and start writing their plan. The program participants conclude by completing a business plan for their business. Success in small business depends on hard work, good fortune, and business knowledge. A written business plan helps control business rather than letting the business control the owner. The plan is then

used to obtain financing, expand the business market and even restructure the business. We saw eleven participants complete this course.

- The Entrepreneur’s & Inventor’s Connection has approximately 35 participants on a monthly basis. The focus of the organization is to provide an opportunity for participants to network, learn from experienced entrepreneurs/inventors and develop creative ideas and support for new endeavors. Whether starting a new business, improving an existing business, or developing and commercializing an invention, the resources shared at these meeting benefit a wide variety of innovators and entrepreneurs. If an individual has an idea, whether it is a product or a service and would like to turn it into a business opportunity, they benefit from attending these meetings. Participants have access to resources, networking, and most important moral support. The meeting is free and open to anyone interested in fostering their potential in creating economic opportunities for themselves and their communities through entrepreneurship or inventions. We have provided guest speakers which included such experts as legal, marketing, internet, business finance experts, and government contracting specialists.

- The JCEDC has assisted numerous businesses in obtaining financing information from banks, Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Wisconsin Business Development, Women Business Initiative Corporation, and other financing sources.

- In 2004 we reviewed five possible projects utilizing Department of Commerce Programs, excluding Department of Commerce tax credit programs. Currently a CDBG-ED loan application has been preliminarily accepted by Commerce and received Jefferson County Board

approval. It is anticipated 25 new jobs will be created.

- JCEDC is an active member on the board of the Wisconsin Technology Zone Tax Credit Program for the Capital Ideas Zone. The Capital Ideas Zone region is comprised of Jefferson, Dane and Rock counties. Of the four Jefferson County businesses seeking tax credit assistance, one qualified and received a tax credit in the amount of \$150,000. Wisconsin InvestCast of Watertown utilized this award for facilities and upgrades at the Watertown plant. This project retained 50 jobs at an average wage of \$15.11 per hour. Also, in our region we have been involved in the approval of a total of \$1,903,100 for the Technology Zone Tax Credits to eleven businesses which resulted in over 300 jobs created and 88 jobs retained.

- JCEDC acts as an information clearinghouse for economic development concerns and provide information to the business community. On a routine basis we respond to inquires, this includes telephone, faxes, e-mail and in person exchanges, related to issues of business, including permits, financing, educational programs, census and demographic information, and training assistance.

- The JCEDC has drafted, submitted and adopted a revolving loan program manual and the policy and procedures for the Community Development Block Grant-Revolving Loan Program created under the Milk Volume Production program. Specifically arising from the lending to the Kutz Dairy located in Jefferson County.

- In an effort to promote expansion of business in Jefferson County we developed and held four separate, “Doing business with the Federal Government”, workshops. These workshops included over sixty business and individuals obtaining information on how to tap into the

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federal procurement market. The program included essential elements of contracting with the Federal Government and for participants to gain the knowledge to effectively meet one-on-one with Federal & State Contracting Agencies. Also each participant obtained lists of federal agencies and departments with contact information and strategies on utilizing data bases to assist in government contracting. In addition, the participants learned steps required for registering on the Central Contractor Registration System which is a prerequisite to doing business with the federal government. These workshops had been designed to provide local business with additional business opportunities that have not traditionally been available to Jefferson County businesses.

- The Green Building workshop, with 30 attendees was held to introduce many to what a high performance green building is and how the national Green Building Rating System-LEED™ – Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design works. The program reviewed the context of green building with other planning and community design initiatives and how this relates to smart growth. The program assessed true costs of green buildings over their life and the economics of building green. This workshop also, looked to educate municipalities about integrating green building practice into public and private initiatives.

- The Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium sponsored a seminar known as the “Basics of Ozone”. This program was designed to inform the citizens and businesses on air quality issues and what an attainment and non-attainment classification means for Jefferson County. This included the implications of what will happen if Jefferson County becomes a non-attainment county as it relates to business and our quality of life. The workshop included a discussion of

the strategies on how Jefferson County can preserve our attainment status and strategies to prevent our becoming a non-attainment county. This seminar saw over 20 attend with the additional benefit of dialogue on creating the air quality task force. The resulting recommendation of the task force have brought air quality issues into standing with the result of incorporating air quality into the Solid Waste Department now known as the Jefferson County Solid Waste/Air Quality.

- JCEDC held a workshop for communities where perceived or actual environmental contamination is affecting property value and use. According to one estimate, Wisconsin has about 10,000 Brownfield properties. Towns, villages, and cities frequently have potentially contaminated properties within their jurisdictions. Re-using already developed land offers cost savings to communities; helps preserve green space, rural character, and the agricultural economy. It can boost downtown revitalization, and can improve public health by removing environmental contamination. Our seminar focused on the economic and environmental advantages of incorporating Brownfield site redevelopment into a community’s land use plans. Resources and tools were presented to help locate potentially contaminated sites and assure liability protection to local governments. The workshop looked at tools that may be used to assist communities in financing the redevelopment of these Brownfield properties.

#### **Assisting in Promotion of Jefferson County Tourism**

JCEDC works with the State of Wisconsin and Jefferson County Area Tourism organizations to market Jefferson County as a place to visit. The JCEDC is the applicant organization/recipient for a Wisconsin Department Joint Effort Marketing grant in the amount of \$31,609.00.

This program is designed to promote Jefferson County as a destination for where the “ Hunt is On-Jefferson County Art, Antique and Gallery Tour” which will showcase the antique shops, galleries, performing art, visual art and culinary art venues throughout the county. The marketing plan seeks to encouraging overnight visitors which will generate more revenue specifically for lodging but, in addition to other businesses within the county.

Our department assisted in the distribution of the 2004-2005 the Jefferson County Area Visitors Guide. In addition, we respond to requests for tourism information about Jefferson County which may include referring to various organizations for further assistance, such as local municipality and county parks and recreation departments.

#### **Promote Agribusiness of Jefferson County**

JCEDC works to promote agribusiness and the farming community. We are the administrator of a CDBG-MVP for the Kutz dairy project (Jefferson County Resolution No. 2003-08). This CDBG-MVP project saw an expansion of the Kutz dairy farm from 600 to 900 animals along with the creation of 3 new jobs and the retention of 10 jobs. This loan is in repayment and is current.

The JCEDC assisted the Watertown Area Outstanding Young Farmers and Jefferson County Animal Agriculture Alliance to obtain \$1000.00 in grants for education of young farm families

and non-farm audiences about agricultural practices and the industry importance to local economics.

#### **Interactions with Governmental Bodies**

The JCEDC assists and works with local government in their economic development endeavors. This includes working with communities to provide

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educational programs such as the Taxpayers Bill of Rights (TABOR) educational program which had some fifty four participants who received information about the impacts of TABOR and the goals associated with TABOR.

The JCEDC has provided assistance to municipalities on issues impacting its business community. An example would be doing a survey, for the City of Watertown, on the Class A licensing requirements in various communities throughout the State of Wisconsin.

We sponsored a Federal grants workshop which we had over 75 attendees. The program was entitled "Roadmap to Navigating the Federal Grants Process." Federal agencies attended and presented information which will assist Jefferson County citizens, organizations, businesses, and local governments in finding and applying for millions of dollars in federal grants. Invited guests included: Housing and Urban Development; USDA Rural Development; the Economic Development Administration; Department of Education, Health and Human Services; and Wisconsin Department of Commerce. This workshop provided the participants with contact information, procedures and techniques to apply for grants with the federal agency listed above.

We are an active participant in the Ten Counties Group. This organization reviews, networks, educates, analyzes and develops strategies for regional economic growth. As part of the JCEDC mission it is important that the department act as a regional representative and relay Jefferson County's vision into this planning process.

In addition, the JCEDC represents Jefferson County on the Rural Economic Development-South Central Region (REDS) which includes our being an active member

on the REDS advisory commission. This organization focus on economic development issues affecting rural counties in south-central Wisconsin. Topics, to list a few, include how to promote sustainable economic development, education concerns in rural areas, unique challenges in rural entrepreneurship and strategies for marketing rural businesses.

JCEDC participated in numerous meetings on the Highway 26 Economic Impact Corridor study which is a joint effort of the communities along the corridor, including the partnership with Rock and Dodge counties, to evaluate the economic impact of the Highway 26 construction. JCEDC's participation also allows the county to plan the development rather than reacting to it.

### **Marketing the Benefits and Advantages of Jefferson County**

The Consortium has been promoting the many benefits and advantages of Jefferson County to business interested in expanding, to entrepreneurs anticipating a startup of a new business, and to those companies considering whether to locate or relocate to Jefferson County. At least once a month we participate in local radio (WTTN Watertown) to promote Jefferson County. In 2004 we developed our Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium website to market Jefferson County. We will continue to refine this website and our marketing strategies. The site address is [jcedc.net](http://jcedc.net).

JCEDC publishes its newsletter which provides information regarding the advantages and benefits and quality of life within Jefferson County. The newsletter provides information on various economic development activities and programs within Jefferson County

### **Business Sites**

We have been maintaining a list of business sites, industrial parks, and buildings available in Jefferson County. Routinely we provide prospects with this information. The JCEDC has assisted several communities in submission of site proposals to Wisconsin Department of Commerce for prospects which were looking to relocate to Wisconsin and possibly to Jefferson County.

In addition to our website for marketing business, industrial and building sites we have begun inputting information into the Location One Information System (LOIS). LOIS is an Internet accessed marketing tool that is intended to put Wisconsin-and participating communities-on a level playing field with the most sophisticated economic development organizations in the country. It is a joint effort of Forward Wisconsin, the Department of Commerce, the state's electric utilities and WEDA. It will provide community data as well as a complete listing of available sites for business which are looking to locate in Jefferson County.

### **Conclusions**

In our first year and one-half we have seen many challenges and opportunities. We are excited to participate in the future of Jefferson County and feel that the Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium makes a difference in job creation, job retention and quality of life issues. We look forward to working with you and if you have any question please feel to contact us.

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