

# Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium

## Annual Report for 2006

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|                                  |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| City of Fort Atkinson.....       | John Wilmet    |
| City of Jefferson.....           | Tim Freitag    |
| Village of Johnson Creek.....    | Paul Moderacki |
| City of Lake Mills.....          | Steve Wilke    |
| City of Waterloo.....            | Mo Hanson      |
| City of Watertown.....           | Ron Krueger    |
| City of Whitewater.....          | Mary Nimm      |
| Jefferson County Supervisor..... | Greg David     |
| Jefferson County Supervisor..... | Randy Mitchell |
| Jefferson County Supervisor..... | Gail MacAskill |

### Department Staff

|                    |                          |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Dennis Heling..... | Executive Director       |
| RoxAnne Witte..... | Administrative Assistant |

# **JEFFERSON COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS AND**

## **WORKFORCE PROFILE SUMMARY\*\***

On January 1, 2006 the Wisconsin Department of Administration forecasted the population of Jefferson County at 80,092. Of this population it is estimated, by the State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, that the March 2006 workforce participation was 42,790\* persons. This means on average, assuming a 5.4% unemployment rate, 40,462 people were working with 2328 individuals unemployed at this point in 2006. The 2006 average unemployment rate showed about a one-half of one percent higher rate than that of 2005. Commuting patterns, almost identical to 2005, reflected that about 15,500 Jefferson County residents work outside of Jefferson County while some 11,300 workers commute into Jefferson County. It is estimated that approximately 1/3 of those who commute out of Jefferson County travel to work in Waukesha County. Additionally, it is estimated that almost 1/4 of those who commute out travel to Dane County. Over 1/3 of all employees that commute into Jefferson County originate from Dodge County.

There are approximately 3000 business organizations and establishments operating in Jefferson County. Approximately 1560 of these businesses reported employing 19 or fewer employees. The top ten employers in Jefferson County are listed in chart A below with Trek Bicycle Corporation being ranked as the largest employer in Jefferson County at year start and Fort Healthcare Inc. finished the year as the largest employer. The top ten employers account for about 20 percent of the jobs within Jefferson County.

The United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service 2002 compilation expressed that there were 2181 farm operators in Jefferson County with 1421 farms, down 5% from 1493 in 1997. Out of the 1421 farms 286 reported hiring a total of 1738 farm laborers. In a conversation with USDA statistics service staff, even though the next compilation is not until fall of 2007 with summer 2008 release, they suggested the loss trends appear to have slowed some, and in certain areas in Wisconsin actually may have seen a slight reversal.

***Jefferson County Top Ten Employers  
3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2006  
Chart A***

| <b>Rank</b> | <b>Employer</b>                   |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1           | Fort Healthcare Inc.              |
| 2           | Trek Bicycle Corporation          |
| 3           | County of Jefferson               |
| 4           | Briggs & Stratton Power Products  |
| 5           | Bethesda Lutheran Home & Services |
| 6           | Generac Power Systems, Inc.       |
| 7           | Terra Staffing Services, Inc.     |
| 8           | Nasco Div.                        |
| 9           | Watertown Unified School District |
| 10          | Wal-Mart Associates, Inc.         |

*\*This number doesn't include those who reside in Jefferson County, but are in the military, institutionalized or not working and not currently looking for employment.*

*\*\* Source: Unless otherwise noted the data source is the State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development*

## **MISSION, GOALS AND STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT**

The Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium's (JCEDC) mission is to foster and encourage responsible economic development activities that result in job creation, retention, increased tax base and an improved quality of life for the citizens of Jefferson County. This mission is to be achieved through goals adopted by the Board of Directors, as amended from time to time.

The JCEDC formed in June 2003 and was the combined effort of Jefferson County, the Cities of Fort Atkinson, Jefferson, Lake Mills, Watertown and Whitewater and the Village of Johnson Creek. The City of Waterloo joined the JCEDC as a full voting member effective January 2005. The Board of Directors is comprised of 10 voting members, 7 members represent each participating city or village, and three County Board Supervisors represent Jefferson County. Dennis Heling is the department's Executive Director. Currently the department has a part-time Administrative Assistant, RoxAnne Witte. JCEDC's 2006 budget was \$127,765.

In our early planning process JCEDC developed five major areas of focus utilizing various developmental steps for activities which would assist JCEDC in achieving its goals and give short term organizational direction. Although these five major areas have been identified for current focus it is intended that a long term strategic planning process will help refine this focus. This formal long term strategic planning process was initiated in late 2006 and included as its focus not only a strategic planning for the JCEDC but, will incorporate a ten year update to the Jefferson County Land Use Plan (Smart Growth Plan). Further discussion of that process is included in Section I. Communications.

These initial five major areas of focus will again be used in this annual report to provide a context to the department's activities and is intended to show the relation between and among the activities and accomplishments gained while working toward achieving the goals and overall mission of the department. The five major areas of focus include:

1. Communication
2. Marketing of Jefferson County
3. Workforce Development, Training and Education
4. Supporting a Positive Business Climate
5. Facilitation and Coordination

Many of the activities outlined below may impact more than just that major area of focus where listed, however for the sake of clarity and brevity the activities have been identified only once. The activities cited are not intended to reflect all activities of the department, but are identified to give a representative sample of the activities of the department.

### **I. COMMUNICATION**

**The JCEDC must continue its efforts to inform the public and private sectors on its role and function. This includes clarifying perceptions and communicating information on issues, regulations, policies and other issues that impact the business community in Jefferson County. The JCEDC wants to be recognized as a problem and information clearinghouse on economic development issues. The JCEDC will assist in maintaining and promoting open and free lines of communication between local government officials, area businesses, and local and state agencies.**

## DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

A substantial amount of time and energy was devoted in 2006 toward designing and drafting a process for our request for qualifications to facilitate the County Comprehensive Plan Update with Emphasis on the Economic Development Element. A considerable amount of economic development-related planning has been done in Jefferson County. A work group was created which acted as the lead and organizing committee for compiling information and then drafting an outline which was the bases for the formation of a formal request for qualifications. This work group recognized that a “generic” economic development planning approach is not needed in Jefferson County. Instead, a customized approach of research, community education and communication, visioning and key strategy development is needed at this time for the Jefferson County Economic Development Plan. In addition, an opportunity to update the County Comprehensive Element (Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan) was recognized, and a preliminary approach for integrating these initiatives has been included. This draft scope document can be viewed as an initial or preliminary attempt to articulate the important components of an update of the comprehensive plan along with the economic development planning process. The formal RFQ process is slated for late winter and early spring of 2007 with the actual process beginning in the summer of 2007 and completion in eighteen to twenty four months.

On June 28<sup>th</sup> 2006 we held a webinar presentation which was designed to train local government personnel on ways in which they can better communicate with their constituents and how to develop strategies which improve the quality of such communications. The program was developed, created, and formally presented by the International City/County Management Association. The course and material have been used and made available to the various municipalities in Jefferson County.

An important communication activity includes our active participation with the Economic Development professionals learning series. This group is comprised of the eight counties of Sauk, Columbia, Dane, Rock, Dodge, Lafayette, Green and Iowa which worked closely with the regional efforts of the Collaboration Council. In the learning series we provide information to over sixty individuals from the eight participating counties. This information provided at the learning series featured Jefferson County’s infrastructures, assets, community contacts and their staff. The training included detailed information about the composition of the county and our municipal makeup (i.e. number of city, villages and towns), and provided specific data about our transportation structure, business/industries parks, hospitals and school districts/ higher education and the natural resources that support our quality life.

In May of 2006 the University of Wisconsin –Extension and the JCEDC completed an examination of the Retail and Service sectors within Jefferson County. This study is a result of Jefferson County experiencing significant changes over the past several years. Growth pressure from both Dane County as well as Waukesha County, the success of Johnson Creek Premium Outlet Mall, and the introduction of “big-box” retailers to name but a few, are reflective of the dynamics of the County’s

economy. The primary source of data for the study is the County Sales Tax Reports compiled by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. In addition, historical data compiled by the US Department of Commerce and known as the BEA-REIS, or the Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System was used extensively throughout the study. On July 26, 2006 a major presentation was made to business, civic, and community leaders. The results continue to be delivered to businesses, communities and others seeking information regarding the retail and service

sectors within Jefferson County. An example of a benefit of the report is that it has been utilized by the business community for decision making including site selection and to assist in obtaining funding for a feasibility study for a proposed hotel/motel facility in downtown Fort Atkinson.

## **II. MARKETING JEFFERSON COUNTY**

**The JCEDC must develop and promote the County and its communities. Promotion includes working with existing business, networking with regional and state representatives, recruiting new business, and marketing Jefferson County and supporting a high quality environment.**

### **DEPARTMENT MARKETING ACTIVITIES**

#### **Business Sites**

The JCEDC worked with Clasen Quality Coatings in their selecting Jefferson County for their expansion project. The project consists of creating 45 jobs and building a factory at a cost of almost 18.6 million dollars. This translates into some 5.2 million for the plant and land with approximately 13.4 million in machinery, equipment and miscellaneous support equipment. In addition we took the lead to assist the City of Watertown in receiving a grant from the Department of Commerce, under the public facilities economic development program, for the sum of \$ 231,000.00. This grant will be used for infrastructure on the West Industrial Park. In addition the business received a tax credit \$150,000.00 from the Department of Commerce under the 2006 Enterprise Development Zone Program.

We have expanded our electronic listing of business sites, industrial parks, and buildings available in Jefferson County. Routinely we provide prospects with this information. The JCEDC saw a slight decrease in the formal submissions it did on behalf of Jefferson County and its communities in 2006. In part this reduction is probably a result of the economic climate in 2006 and may suggest the value in the fact that JCEDC has more information that can be accessed, via self help, electronically. An example includes our website for marketing business, industrial and building sites and the fact that in 2006 we were inputting information into the Location One Information System. This internet accessed marketing tool is intended to put Wisconsin and participating communities on a level playing field with the most sophisticated economic development organizations in the United States. This partnership consists of Forward Wisconsin, the Department of Commerce, the state's electric utilities, WEDA and the county economic development organizations such as the JCEDC. It provides community data as well as a listing of available sites for business which may be looking to locate or expand their business into Jefferson County.

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

In the spring of 2006 JCEDC continued to work with the State of Wisconsin and Jefferson County Area Tourism organizations to market Jefferson County as a place to visit. The JCEDC was the applicant organization/recipient and administrator for a Wisconsin Department Joint Effort Marketing grant in the amount of \$27,811.00 for 2005/2006 program. This program was designed to promote Jefferson County as a destination for where the "Hunt is On-Jefferson County Art, Antique and Gallery Tour 2006" which showcased the antique shops, galleries, performing art, visual art and culinary art venues throughout the county. The marketing plan sought to encourage overnight visitors. Each marketing tool we created had a consistent look and message that highlighted the abundance of art opportunities in Jefferson County. The booklet, which was the backbone of this campaign, included information on 90 artists, galleries, and performing arts

venues, shops, lodging establishments, restaurants and communities in Jefferson County. It was estimated from the surveys and information requested that this promotion had an economic impact of approximately \$171,900.00 for Jefferson County businesses. There were 1,200 campaign inquiries this year, which included 608 from Midwest Living, 259 postcard returns and 254 inquiries from the e-mail newsletter. We are responding to additional request for brochures after the campaign period. We distributed 25,000 brochures. In addition, during the 3-month campaign period, the campaign website saw 4,529 unique visitors to the JCTC website. This is a very dramatic increase from the 676 website visitors from last year.

Our department assisted in such marketing activities as distributing the 2005-2006 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.

### **MARKETING THE BENEFITS AND ADVANTAGES OF JEFFERSON COUNTY**

The JCEDC continues its effort to market the many benefits and advantages of Jefferson County to businesses interested in expanding, to entrepreneurs anticipating a startup of a new business, and to those companies considering whether to locate, expand or relocate to Jefferson County.

In 2006 we made changes to our website. Our philosophy includes utilizing our website to help “make connections and give direction “for those seeking information. We will continue to upgrade the website and our marketing strategies. The site address is [www.jcedc.net](http://www.jcedc.net).

JCEDC produces flyers and handouts which provides information regarding the advantages and benefits and quality of life within Jefferson County. The flyers and handouts also include various economic development activities and programs within Jefferson County. These are distributed in many communities and at other events throughout the year.

We routinely provide press information for the local news media. This has included information on programs as well as various workshops and activates that we have hosted, participated in and/or sponsored. Additionally, we utilize the print media in advertising such activities as our Home Consortium rehabilitation program.

### **III. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

**JCEDC will promote workforce development through education, training, and strategies which will foster a quality labor pool. Education and training will focus on basic skills including English as a Second Language (ESL), leadership training, problem solving, and skills upgrades.**

#### **DEPARTMENT WORKFORCE, TRAINING AND RELATED ACTIVITIES:**

Promoting a Quality and Stable Workforce

Under this major area of focus JCEDC developed and hosted, in conjunction with WHEDA, a program which targeted the business community on strategies to Retain Good Employees &

Generate Tax Benefits. This program saw three businesses which adopted various components of the program with one reporting that they believed that it helped retain employees.

JCEDC continues to work closely with agencies and organizations to insure that Jefferson County employers have access to a quality and stable workforce. We are an active member of the Workforce Development Center Steering Committee/OSO. As a member, we participate in the planning process focusing on the issues which impact economic development and workforce development. We relay information from the business community regarding workforce development and economic development topics and areas of concern. Further we act as an advisor to the business service committee for the Workforce Development Center. The broad area that the business services committee is charged with is to focus on expansion, relocation and reorganization efforts for businesses and their workforce development activities.

JCEDC has developed an extensive working relationship with the Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin (WDBSCW). WDBSCW has given JCEDC access to and dissemination authority for the Strategic Advantage software economic profiling. The economic profiling and modeling software allows us to compile very specific modeling and profiling information for Jefferson County and the WDBSCW region. We frequently utilize this resource for research, site review and potential projects. This software allows us to do modeling on job creation activities for the various businesses that we are assisting in their retention and expansion activities. JCEDC's use of this software helps us provide an economic impact model designed to provide a quantifiable and economically sound method for determining relative impacts of proposed or impending changes to our regional economy. As such, the software is not only an essential tool for guiding economic development, but is also invaluable in justifying the decisions made in respect to a specific project and thereby assisting JCEDC in meeting our goal of workforce stabilization through effective actions. In September, Dennis was one of three panel members that did a presentation to the WDBSC Board regarding the features and operation of the Strategic Advantage software.

One component to having a qualified workforce is that of education. Our department partners with the University of Wisconsin-Extension, University of Wisconsin Whitewater and Madison Area Technical College in an effort to bring information and programs to residents and the workforce of Jefferson County. We continued our partnership with MATC for the BASIC education program. This program is designed for the participant to obtain their GED or workplace skills development requirement. Twenty four individuals attended the 2006 BASIC program.

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. Home ownership is a proven strategy toward a long term stable workforce. 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 more citizens of Jefferson County. The sub-programs and activities include the following:

As the Administrator of the Jefferson County Home Rehabilitation we provided assistance to households with homes that are in need of rehabilitation. In the fiscal year 2006 we assisted four families with a total of \$37,300.00 for home rehabilitation. Since the program beginning, late 2004, JCEDC has disbursed \$62,526.00 for home repairs to seven separate families in Jefferson County. In addition we continue our partnership with hbc Services, Inc. to provide homebuyer down-payment assistance to some 67 families of Jefferson County during calendar year 2006. This

partnership, allowed us to sponsor the Homebuyer Counseling course in an effort to educate families about homeownership and help qualify them to purchase homes in Jefferson County. All of this activity contributes to workforce stabilization.

#### **IV. SUPPORT A POSITIVE BUSINESS CLIMATE**

**JCEDC will promote modernization of business (agricultural, commercial, industrial, and tourism) and attract supporting businesses to Jefferson County. Promote positive government and business environment and maintain high quality public infrastructures. Explore strategies and partnerships to bring more financial resources for business expansions and start-ups.**

##### **DEPARTMENT SUPPORTING POSITIVE BUSINESS CLIMATE ACTIVITIES:**

###### Business Community

- In 2006 we reviewed and assisted in developing 4 possible projects utilizing Department of Commerce Programs. This includes Department of Commerce tax credit projects and a CDBG-ED loan to Bryant Products Inc. of Ixonia, which was preliminarily accepted by Commerce in 2006 with Jefferson County Board approval coming on January 9, 2007. It is anticipated that 16 new jobs will be created for the Bryant Products, Inc. project.

One of 2006 projects, reviewed and assisted in 2005 and 2006, is the Johnson Creek Company of Master Mold LLC, which received a \$105,000 grant for customized labor training. It installed a state-of-the-art paint line at a cost of \$7.1 million and used the grant to train 56 new and 24 current employees on new equipment.

JCEDC represents Jefferson County on the Capital Ideas Zone- Wisconsin Technology Zone Tax Credit Program. This tax credit program, created by the State of Wisconsin, designated the counties of Jefferson, Dane, and Rock, and the City of Whitewater as the Capital Ideas Technology Zone. Under this designation, the Zone was allocated \$5 million in tax credits to be used for new and expanding high technology businesses in the region. The credit is taken against the businesses' Wisconsin income tax liability. Technology related businesses are defined as those companies "primarily engaged in the activities of research, development or manufacture of advanced products or materials used in factory automation, biotechnology, chemicals, computer hardware/software, defense, energy, environmental, manufacturing equipment, medical, pharmaceuticals, photonics, subassemblies and components, test/measurement, telecommunications and transportation;" or "... a knowledge-based business that utilizes advanced technology production processes, systems, or equipment". The Wisconsin Department of Commerce will certify businesses for tax credits based on a company's ability to create jobs, investment, and attract related businesses.

Criteria include:

- The business must be a new or expanding high-technology firm.
- The technology zone must recommend certification to the Department of Commerce.
- The certification is for three years, with an option to extend for two additional years.

In our region the Capital Ideas Tech Zone has certified, from its inception through 11/08/06, a total of \$3,348,100 for Technology Zone Tax Credits to fifteen different businesses which resulted in

543 jobs created and 1,494 jobs retained. One of the projects developed for Jefferson County is that of Standard Process of Palmyra. Standard Process provides health care professionals with high-quality; nutritional whole food supplements to which they continually develop new, synergistic whole food nutritional products. Standard Process was certified on June 22, 2006. This certification provides Standard Process with a \$250,000.00 tax credit. Thirty nine new jobs were created. Additionally, Standard Process has invested approximately 13.4 million dollars in facility and equipment improvements.

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 in 2004. The First Step program, utilizing University of Wisconsin Whitewater staff, counsels participants in the fundamentals of business as their “first step” toward starting their own business. The program has assisted over 225 people with information and counseling about business and business startups. The success of the First Step program has been a great resource for beginning entrepreneurs and will continue in 2007.
- The Entrepreneur’s & Inventor’s Connection (E&IC) generally meets 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 meetings 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. 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.
- JCEDC acts as an information clearinghouse for economic development concerns and provides information to the business community. On a routine basis we respond to inquiries, which 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. This includes working with specific businesses to identify issues and make local units of government aware of the proposed project. An example of this activity is that of JCEDC assisting Clasen Quality Coatings in their efforts to locate a site in Jefferson County for their food production business.
- In 2006 we continued our efforts to promote expansion of business in Jefferson County through government contracting. This is a continuation of our 2004 and 2005 efforts when we held three separate, “Doing business with the Federal Government”, workshops which were designed to educate businesses about the opportunities in government contracting. 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. These workshops had been designed to provide local business with additional business opportunities that had not been accessed. We anticipate that in 2007 we will start to see measurable results.

## Promote Agribusiness of Jefferson County

We are the administrator of a CDBG-MVP for the Kutz dairy project (Jefferson County Resolution No. 2003-08). This 2003 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. We created, submitted and adopted the RLF policies and procedures for this CDBG and anticipate lending from this pool will be practical beginning in the fall of 2006. The fund balance as of December 31, 2006 was \$35,136.00.

One of the activities that the JCEDC continues is to assist in distribution of the Farm Fresh Atlas of Southeast Wisconsin. Not only does this activity support and promote Jefferson County farming community, but also fosters the entrepreneurial spirit and sustainable practices as promoted by Jefferson County. The atlas identifies Jefferson County Farmers' Markets and provides information about times, dates and location of the various market activities.

## V. FACILITATION AND COORDINATION

**JCEDC will act as the voice for Jefferson County both at the regional and state level. In its role as facilitator and coordinator, JCEDC will provide assistance with financial, startup, and regulation information.**

### **DEPARTMENT FACILITATION AND COORDINATION ACTIVITIES:**

In November the JCEDC hosted a program called the "Developer-Funded Tax Incremental Financing: Promoting Development without Breaking the Bank". The program was aimed at developer funded tax incremental financing which reduces the municipality's risk that the tax incremental district will fail and at the same time offers developers a means of increasing project costs paid by the municipality.

JCEDC works with various communities in Jefferson County on Tax Incremental Financing. Briefly, Tax Incremental Finance (TIF) is a financing tool available to encourage economic development that would not occur without some public assistance. A municipality may form a tax incremental financing district, subject to statutory limits and requirements, if the area meets certain requirements. These requirements mandates a determination whether the area is suitable for industrial or mixed-use development, needs conservation, rehabilitation, or possible environmental remediation and/or whether the area is blighted. A joint review board made up of representatives from the overlying taxing jurisdictions, along with a public member, must meet and then approve the creation of the TIF district and its project plan. When a TIF district is created, the current value in the district is set as the base tax value. As improvements and development occur after the district's creation the increases in the district's value over the base tax value becomes known as the "increment value". The property taxes levied by all taxing authorities, such as the municipality, county, school district, and technical college on the increment value are then used to pay for the project costs associated with the development. In structuring financing of the costs in this manner spreads the cost of creating the district among all taxing jurisdictions which eventually benefit from the increased value of the district. During the life of the tax incremental district the tax on the base tax value continues to be paid to the taxing jurisdictions that levy the tax. After a tax incremental district terminates, the taxes paid by property owners increased value from the improvements are then shared by all taxing jurisdictions. JCEDC's role, along with all other Joint Review Board members, includes, but is not limited to, determining: 1) Whether the expected TIF development

would occur without the use of TIF 2) Whether the economic benefits of the TIF in terms of increased employment, Business and personal income and property value justify the TIF public costs; and 3) Whether the benefits of the proposal outweigh the anticipated tax increments. JCEDC, during calendar year 2006, was designated by Jefferson County to sit on three separate Joint Review Boards and assisted in creating Tax Incremental Districts in the Cities of Lake Mills and Watertown and the Village of Palmyra.

We continued in 2006 our active participation in the Ten Counties Group. This organization reviews, networks, educates, analyzes and develops strategies for regional economic growth for Jefferson County and the counties south and east of it. As part of the JCEDC mission it is important that the department act as a regional representative and relay the 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 focuses 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. This initiative was designed to enhance the agribusiness sector of Jefferson County and the region.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS:

The intent behind this annual report is to present examples of the department's activities/projects and outline the role of JCEDC in Jefferson County's economic development community. Some of the activities/projects are difficult to measure results in the short term. The impacts are long term and are part of the education and base building process. Other activities/projects have more immediate measurements such as investment and job creation. My goal is to give a cross section of a variety of activities. All of which are important components to Jefferson County's economic development.

In our role as Jefferson County's lead agency for economic development the JCEDC welcomes your participation and values your input. We strive to make Jefferson County's growth and future sustainable and meaningful for all the citizens of Jefferson County. Don't hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully submitted this 12th day of June, 2007.

*Dennis L. Heling*

Dennis L. Heling  
Executive Director  
Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium