



Case for Support

Lee County Economic Development Group

“Lee County 2018”

A Five-Year Strategic Initiative to Spur Economic Growth in Lee County

Our Mission

As the first contact and central economic development organization for our county, Lee County Economic Development Group, Inc. (“LCEDG”) is dedicated to providing the leadership for job retention, job creation and capital investment within the county and the immediate Tri-State region. Through active marketing, prospect and talent recruitment, site development, workforce training, and building collaborative partnerships, LCEDG is constantly engaged and motivated to use its full resources to attract and retain jobs throughout the Tri-State region.

LCEDG’s primary purpose is to strengthen and maximize the resources of Lee County to compete effectively in global markets.

Our History

In January 2002 the Lee County Board of Supervisors undertook a new initiative – the support of a countywide organization that would strengthen its commitment towards economic development for ALL of Lee County. This initiative led to the founding of LCEDG as a nonprofit organization with an IRS 501(c) 3 designation. From its beginnings, Lee County EDG has focused on doing everything possible to promote, encourage and support the revitalization of Lee County for immediate and long-term growth, the growth and expansion of both new and existing businesses and the jobs that accompany such growth and bring an improved quality of life.

2012 was a historic year as the LCEDG secured the largest capital expenditure project in the history of Iowa, the \$1.8 billion dollar Iowa Fertilizer Company. This project will bring 2,500 construction jobs to Lee County as well as more than 200+



production jobs-- paying an average of \$54,000 per year. This large plant is now attracting interest from secondary manufacturing companies to locate close by.

A number of other businesses and industries contributed to a very positive 2012:

- Siemens is now exporting more than 51% of its products
- Siemens Energy received the world's largest onshore wind turbine order from MidAmerican Energy
- KL-Megla, a German manufacturer of quality bath and custom hardware, is building its North American Headquarters in Montrose.
- MM Composites, a company from Denmark recently established their new production facility at the Siemens facility

New Mega-Site. This 2,575-acre site is now in the third phase of the pre-certification process. This industrial site is positioned to attract a wide range of different types of industries—and is more than eight times the size of the Iowa Fertilizer Company site.

Startup manufacturers, IO-Mega, AMJET, and No Mos have progressed well in 2013. More than two million dollars has been spent so far on research and development of these projects.

Our Challenges

Despite our successes Lee County still faces challenges that need to be met with a bold action plan to further develop our economic base and create a vibrant future for Lee County. These include:

- The need to develop and attract skilled workers
- The need to recapture population lost over the last 20 years.
- The need to meet the changing needs of our existing industries
- The need to effectively promote Lee County to prospective business and industrial firms

To meet these challenges LCEDG has put together a bold plan, *Lee County 2018*, to capitalize on our current momentum, a plan that will lead to an economic



renaissance in Lee County. In order to make *Lee County 2018* a reality the following areas will be targeted and sufficient funds and staff must be allocated to ensure success:

- Business expansion and retention
- Worker attraction and workforce development
- Economic development marketing
- New business attraction

Our Plan

The following five-year draft plan will serve as a roadmap that will result in increased job creation, retention and capital investment in Lee County.

Numerous communities in Iowa are investing in their futures through capital campaigns, with aggressive multi-year initiatives to take their economic development efforts to the next level.

LCEDG must accelerate all its efforts in order to win in what has become a more fierce competition for attracting new business and industry.

Community	Area Population	Amount Raised	Years Covered
Cedar Rapids	255,000	\$5 million	2010-2015
Iowa City	70,133	\$5 million	2012-2017
Dubuque	93,500	\$8.5 million	2012-2017
Spencer	11,233	\$2.7 million	2013-2016
Burlington	40,325	\$2.0 million	2013-2016

Below is the Lee County 2018 five-year plan. It is currently comprised of four strategic initiatives to aggressively grow Lee County's economy.

- Supporting existing industry expansion and retention
- Developing effective efforts to attract skilled workers and expand training for existing workforce
- Significantly expand outreach marketing of Lee County
- Significantly expand outreach to new types of industries/technologies



Over the next five years *Lee County 2018*, LCEDG will target four goals:

- 1) Develop an effective industry expansion and retention program with contacts weekly
- 2) Work with our regional partners and educational institutions to facilitate an advanced technical training program accessible to every student and resident of Lee County
- 3) Realize \$500 Million in capital investment
- 4) Add 600 new jobs at an average wage of \$19.00/hour

Our Strategies

A) Business expansion and retention

1. Strengthen our relationships with existing businesses and industries by continuous personal visits to address the different needs of each local industry
2. Bring together networks of leaders on common issues involving logistics, safety, human resources, and marketing
3. Recognize Lee County industries through annual events, networking opportunities, and media stories highlighting the importance of existing businesses and their impact on Lee County
4. Work with existing Lee County businesses to align infrastructure with future needs.
5. Pursue recruiting suppliers to existing local companies in order to lower their supply costs and delivery times for increased efficiencies and profitability.
6. Visit the home offices of key businesses and industries and listen to their needs and concerns to promote continued growth in Lee County
7. Act in an advocacy role in the interests of industry to local, state, and federal officials

Five –Year Budget \$400,000



B) Worker Attraction and Workforce Development

1. Actively recruit skilled workers who would be willing to move here on a permanent basis
2. Serve as a liaison between the business and education communities by creating a regional task force including plant managers and education leaders to address workforce needs
3. Develop an action plan and implement strategies to deal with workforce issues in Lee County
4. Conduct a labor shed analysis every two years to identify needed current and future skill sets
5. Work with existing business and industry to identify needed training opportunities to fill employment gaps
6. Create a system that will expose all the students of Lee County to the career paths available in Southeast Iowa through interactive and hands on events
7. Work with our school systems to facilitate enactment of modern vocational training relevant to the current and future needs of existing and prospective industries

Five –Year Budget \$400,000

C) Economic Development Marketing

1. Create new branding and marketing materials for Lee County Economic Development
2. Develop and continuously update a new web site that promotes all of Lee County
3. In conjunction with other economic development groups in Lee County develop a comprehensive marketing strategy
4. Aggressively market Lee County to national site selectors and business relocation specialist
5. Develop specific, targeted marketing plans for key industries and market directly to those companies through trade shows, site visits, and targeted advertising
6. Establish an E-newsletter that will tell the story of Lee County and create a master calendar and prospect list
7. Expand the identification, invitation and hosting of a diverse range of industrial prospects

Five –Year Budget \$100,000

