**JCEA Update Report**

**July 2023**

\*\* - Red text = most current information. The black text = background information that has been included on previous reports \*\*

**Downtown Incentive Programs**  Maquoketa, Preston and Bellevue all have downtown incentive programs. There are a few differences in the maximum allowed per property owner but there are funds available for the following building improvements in the downtown area: acquisition assistance, signage, commercial interior grant, consultant assistance, façade grant, upper story renovation, conversion of 1st floor to commercial and low interest bank loan. Contact the cities for more information.

**Jackson County Emergency Operations Center FEMA grant–** was approved!!! HAPPY DANCE – see EOC on page 69 for more background information. Just completed the first quarterly report – which was easy as there wasn’t any progress. Did discuss with Lyn Medinger that we need to start getting bid docs together so we can get those bids awarded and equipment ordered. Need to coordinate with County on making sure the items that include current services in the jail have been procured as per their purchase policy – waiting for feedback from Homeland Security on specifics.

**Retain and Retrain grant program** – please read. This could benefit your business. <https://www.mississippivalleyworkforce.org/grants>

**Iowa Works – Worked Based Learning - Training dollars for new hires -** Jamie McLaughlin with Iowa Works presented some information about a grant they were awarded that will pay for at least a portion of the wages for training new employees. She presented this information at one of the Nibbles & Knowledge hosted by the Maquoketa Chamber. Precision Metal Works personnel were in attendance and saw the presentation. They were able to take advantage of this opportunity for two of the welders they were going to hire. The program works for both youth and adults although some of the qualifying conditions may be different. And, a person must qualify and be enrolled in the program BEFORE they are hired. This is different than the Retain and Retrain grant program that will pay for the training of existing employees. Contact Jamie for more information. So far, this has worked out very well for PMW. McLaughlin, Jamie [IWD] [Jamie.McLaughlin@iwd.iowa.gov](mailto:Jamie.McLaughlin@iwd.iowa.gov)

**Capital Campaign update** – We continue to meet with our partners and are down to just a few who we haven’t been able to set up a meeting with. . Understandably, not every partner can commit to the full five years and prefers a shorter time frame. We are flexible and appreciate any and all support. We can’t do this without you. As the uncertainty of the future of our economic climate weighs on us, it is even more vital that we diligently work together to both maintain and improve the economic viability of our county. Please consider taking the time to meet with us so we can learn more about you, and how we can better support and be a resource for you.

Very special thank you to our current partnerships who have been with us for the last five-year campaign.

Alliant Energy B&J Realty (Brad Deery) Bellevue Chamber of Commerce Bellevue BETA Bellevue Municipal Utilities Bellevue State Bank Black Hills Energy Blue-9 Pet Products City of Bellevue City of Maquoketa, City of Miles City of Preston City of Sabula Clinton National Bank DuTrac Community Credit Union, Eastern Iowa Community College Fidelity Bank & Trust GT Development Imagine the Possibilities, Innovate 120 Jackson County Jackson County Regional Health Center Kunau Implement Maquoketa Chamber of Commerce Maquoketa Municipal Electric Utility Maquoketa State Bank Maquoketa Valley REC, Offshore Resort Osterhaus Pharmacy Plastics Unlimited Precision Metal Works Roger & Jennie Stewart Sonac U.S. Bank Water Street Partners WHKS

Very Special Thank you to our partners who have committed to continuing to be our partners going forward.

This list is those who have committed, many more are pending board decisions or we are in the process of coordinating meetings with.

Bellevue Chamber Fidelity Bank & Trust Maquoketa REC

Bellevue BETA Innovate 120 Origin Design

Bellevue Municipal Utilities Jackson County Plastics Unlimited

Blue-9 Pet Products Jackson County Regional Health Center WHKS

City of Bellevue Kunau Implement City of Maquoketa Maquoketa Chamber City of Preston

Maquoketa Municipal Electric Utility Clinton National Bank Maquoketa State Bank

City of Miles City of Sabula Maquoketa Valley REC

US Bank Precision Metal Works Osterhaus Pharmacy

Alliant Energy Imagine The Possibilities Off Shore

Water Street Partners Sonac

We met with Black Hills but have not heard back. We are in discussions with DuTrac. We have not been able to meet with EICC yet. . Jackson County Foundation provides support through a grant application that we need to complete. Smiles on Main said they could no longer contribute because we aren’t renting from them. We did not receive contributions from Sedgewick, Roger Stewart, Deery Motors, Sycamore media and Water Street Partners in 2022 and most from 2021. They have also not been responsive to numerous attempts to contact them so I am not including them as potentials for the 2023-24 budget.

**OU EDI Certification** - OU Economic Development Institute (EDI) is the premier economic development program in the nation, with more than 50 years of experience providing professional economic developers with up-to-date knowledge and tools necessary to succeed in today’s constantly-changing environment.

Innovative economic development organizations want solid, well-grounded professionals. The OU EDI experience is designed to immediately impact a participant’s professional career by providing comprehensive courses that align with International Economic Development Council (IEDC) manuals, as well as the latest trends in economic development.

More top economic development professionals have been trained by OU EDI than any other organization.

Ben and I have enrolled in this program. I have plans to have it completed within this next fiscal year. Ben will have his completed shortly thereafter. The classes are $650 each but $500 is reimbursed from ECIA through their training grant. There are two “in-person” classes that must be attended but that consists of attending a 5 day training in which two classes are taught for two-days straight. The cost of those sessions nets about $4,500 each with the reimbursement from ECIA. We would like to have both Ben and I attend this year and take any additional funds needed to balance our budget from our existing balances. The training is valuable to our being more effective in our roles and support of the businesses and residents in Jackson County.

The first course that both Ben and I attended was the Business Retention and Expansion Course. We just completed that the first week in July. The course talks about how to establish an actual BR&E committee that would be active and also provide initiatives to support businesses that may be more vulnerable.

From a practical standpoint, that is what the Synchronist visits have been accomplishing to a certain extent. We need to be more diligent and use the data to better forecast successes and challenges as well as implement more support systems for existing businesses.

The basic summary is as follows:

To develop a BR&E program

1. Identify the BR&E team members
2. Conduct a SWOT analysis
   1. Labor force
   2. Access to markets
   3. Transportation
   4. Education infrastructure
   5. Site availability
   6. Business Climate
   7. Utility availability and costs
   8. Quality of Life
   9. Resources
3. Determine opportunities and threats
   1. Outlook
   2. Technology
   3. Legal and regulatory changes
   4. Large employers
   5. Economic trends
   6. Competitors
   7. Other factors
4. Action Plan
5. Objectives and Goals
   1. Leverage existing strengths to take advantage of best opportunities
   2. Address Major weaknesses that post a threat to the community’s employment base.
6. Taking Action
   1. Who are responsible for achieving the objectives
   2. What programs and initiatives will be used to achieve the objectives.
   3. What is the budget for achieving the objectives.
   4. What is the target date for achieving the objectives.
7. Monitoring and evaluation
   1. Ensure accountability and confidentiality.
   2. Inform decisions on the allocation of resources
   3. Provide information for additional program planning and/or revisions
   4. Compile date and information that can be used to market the program.
8. Follow-up
   1. Evaluate the impact on the business
   2. The effectiveness of assistance to the targeted businesses.
   3. Jobs created and retained.
   4. Effectiveness of leveraged resources
   5. Impact on the community

I am also in the process of taking the Strategic Planning Course which started the first of June and then the Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development class which started July 01. Ben and I are both taking Marketing starting Aug 1st. These are all two month courses so I am overlapping them and taking 2 at a time.

The additional classes I will be taking are Credit Analysis and Real Estate Dev and Reuse. They are both Core classes that are required for certification and are held in person. The EDI certification also educates us to be able to get prepared for the CeCD certification which is the Certified Economic Developer.

**Small business development –** JCEA has had a number of contacts from people who are interested in starting a new business. We had one who wanted to purchase one of the buildings that could qualify for a Catalyst grant but the timing of the grant award did not work for him. In addition, there are others who are looking for resources to help them get started. I have contacted a few of our neighboring economic development organizations to learn how they are supporting small business start-ups to determine what we may be missing as resources or support. It is exciting to have the interest, we just need to determine how to better support them.

**PROJECTS**

**City of Monmouth -**  Potential CDBG- Public facilities grant for a community center. No update

**GOALS AND GRANTS -**  Supporting the County, Cities, Businesses and Industries with applicable grant information is included in one of our goals for the next five years. The most recent inquiry from Congresswoman Miller-Meeks for public projects really brought to light the need to have shovel-ready projects in place. We miss a lot of funding opportunities because we are not prepared. When I met with the Jackson Co Mayors at their meeting last night, I mentioned to them that I had emailed all their city clerks and asked to be put on future council meetings so we could introduce ourselves and give a brief update but more importantly, we want to hear about them. We want to discuss what is going on in their city and how we can best support them. I told them about the missed funding opportunity and told them that we will support them in getting projects ready so they can take advantage of these funding opportunities. They seemed to be very receptive to that. We are looking forward to our meetings with them. Note – more Information on Page 51 under meeting with Rachael with Congresswoman Miller-Meeks office. – We have met with: Sabula, Spragueville, Monmouth, Preston, Bellevue, Miles, Baldwin, Springbrook and Andrew.

**Andrew Jail and old Fire Dept Building –** there have been several inquiries about what funding may be available for these two buildings in Andrew. At one time, Andrew was the county seat for Jackson County. The jail was also the County Courthouse. In fact, it is the oldest standing courthouse in the state of Iowa. It was originally built in 1871. The courthouse moved to Maquoketa in 1873 and then this building was primarily used as a jail until 1896. In 1978 this building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The condition of the building has greatly deteriorated over the last several years. In an effort to preserve this beautiful piece of history, there is a local initiative to raise funds and save the building. It would be eligible for an Emergency Catalyst grant of $100,000 if the total renovation project exceeds at least $200,000, there are multiple funding partners and the future use of the building would transition into something that would serve as a catalyst for economic development and would be privately owned and put back on the tax rolls. The possibilities are endless for anyone interested in working with the City to preserve this building. More to discussions to follow.

FYI – The Derelict Grant is not available because this building is on the National Historic Registry.

JCEA forwarded information for consideration from the Andrew City Council. We have not heard back on the next steps. We also reached out to a few potential private investors but so far, we haven’t received any interest. More to follow. This has such potential.



The retired Fire Dept building sits just adjacent to the old jail and is now empty after the fire dept constructed a new building. Tentative plans are to potentially convert this building into a Community Center. Again, funding is needed. Options may include a CDBG Public Facilities grant however there is a local match of at least 25% needed as well as other conditions that go along with the Federal Grant requirements. More discussions to follow.

There is a prospective client interested in the purchase of the building. He will present at the May 09, Andrew City Council meeting. Some background information to this, Ben had contacted ECIA about the jail and had received a potential person of interest. Ben contacted him and he is the one who presented at the Council. The Council has had further conversations and asked a committee to do some further research into reasonable asking prices, and a potential agreement. John Williams, an Andrew Council member, has been leading this charge and is doing his best for Andrew. He called for a meeting next Thursday to discuss this further and we will discuss the options to proceed and next steps.

**DAYCARE - RURAL CHILD CARE MARKET STUDY GRANT –**

The city of Bellevue and Bellevue Community Schools originally brought this to our attention as they had a desire to pursue this grant. They had been discussing options with a qualified vendor who could partner as the one who would conduct the study. The timeframe was very short for the submittal of the grant and there was very limited funding available so it would be a competitive grant. I sent the information out to all city management staff and Mayors; however, there was limited interest. I contacted the State about the possibility of another round of grants so we could come better prepared. Although nothing is definite until the next round of funds are approved, they anticipate another application window in the Summer. In follow discussions with other cities, there is more of an interest. The following data supports our concerns that affordable childcare is an essential piece in reversing the trend of population loss in Jackson County.

In an attempt to gather workforce housing information from some of our largest employers in Maquoketa, the feedback we received was that childcare was even more of a consistent obstacle to growth in the workforce than housing.

SUNSHINE DAY CARE in Maquoketa is partnering with the city of Maquoketa on a CDBG Public Facilities grant application. ECIA is writing the grant. If awarded, this would be a $720,000 project of which $600,000 would be from the CDBG award and $120,000 would be qualifying ARPA funds from the city of Maquoketa. 19 new badly needed positions would open up as a result of the construction.

**JCEA Accountability –**

As part of our agreement between JCEA and the city of Maquoketa, JCEA is required to account for the value expended in the Urban Renewal Area of Maquoketa. It was an interesting exercise and resulted in some other action steps as well. As I was going through and looking at the various required areas in the agreement: responding to inquiries, being a liaison between the City and prospects, Synchronist visits, establishing a confidential data base of businesses, being an advocate for the school system, finding and being involved in grant funding, Parks to People or Grant Wood Loop, assisting in the Urban Renewal program, having an office in Maquoketa and then I added general city support. As I was reviewing meetings, emails, estimating costs, etc., the thought occurred to me that I should try to do this for all our investors. But from a practical standpoint, I cannot. Our investors include several banks, businesses, industries, utilities, cities, the County and the chambers. Part of the reason we came up with new goals was to be able to show quantifiable results. Not all results can be shown in the form of data and statistics, but most can. That being said, it can be argued that everything we do for any one, any inquiry, and question answered, any partnership established, and email answered, etc serves to have a positive impact on all of us. The value to one becomes a value to another. And, that goes for the actions of all of our investors and all those we support who aren’t investors. Any positive action by any of us is an investment in Jackson County regardless of who it may directly benefit.

**Catalyst Grants:**

We are past the deadline for the 2023 grants and are looking to identify at least four projects in the County for the 2024 award. We can start to submit pre-apps in the Fall so now is the time to start putting the pieces together for the application.

We have been fortunate to receive six Catalyst Grants over the past few years. Three of these projects are complete or nearly complete (Bellevue Button Factory, 110 South Main, and Mitchell Maskery Mill) and three are in various stages of development (Preston Times Building, Sabula Island City Harbor restaurant, and former Ackerman Grocery Store). This program can provide a $100,000 grant to assist in these types of projects and at least 40% of the funding is required to assist communities under 1500 in population.

Update On Catalyst Grants**Ackerman Grocery Store renovation in Sabula Catalyst Grant**– expected to be complete by June 2023 and meet the deadline. The catalyst part of the project is complete and IEDA came here on July 13, 2023 for the final walk-through. I attended that meeting. The upstairs apartments are beautiful and he is planned for potentially two users in the downstairs space. Travis Kieffer and his wife has also purchased the building next door. JCEA is also in discussions with the next building for a possible Catalyst grant. As Travis said this is truly a CATALYST project that has been the motivation for further development.

**Historic Districts**: Those with good memories will recall that 5 years ago Maquoketa and Bellevue signed contracts with Heritage Works out of Dubuque to assist with the submittal of our application to create Historic Districts in their downtowns. We knew this process was time consuming, but never anticipated that it would take this long. On May 24, **Maquoketa Commercial Historic District**

**Main St. between Quarry and Maple Sts., including Platt and Pleasant Sts. one block east and west of Main St. Maquoketa, and Bellevue Commercial District located at Bellevue River Park** were listed on the National Registry of Historic Places.

**CDBG Façade**: In October of 2022 we also received word that Maquoketa was awarded a $500,000 CDBG grant to assist with facades on the East Side of Main. This will complement the work that has been done on the West side of Main Street with a previous CDBG award. There are still a couple of buildings on the west side that need to be completed (waiting on materials delayed by COVID).

The property owners on the East side have signed contracts for architectural services. 563 Design will now begin preparing the detailed specifications for bidding. We hope to have those complete by March so the bid letting can occur shortly thereafter allowing the contractors much of 2022 for construction. The environmental process for these buildings was extensive and SHPO had many details to work through before the environmental could be completed and the release of funds issued. Still in process. Hope to have this completed in the next month so construction can start as soon as possible. The good news on this project is that there isn’t a drop-dead date for completion, or the funds would be forfeited. On the other hand, there are many anxious business owners who would like to see this completed in an efficient and timely manner.

The environmental review on this project has gone through many phases. Initially when SHPO started asking questions and Andrew was working on 138 and 120 S Main, we asked him to concentrate on those plans because they have drop-dead completion dates. Since that time, responses have been submitted for the Maquoketa East Façade Project yet more follow-up questions have been issued. Once all the outstanding questions have been addressed, the environmental process for publication and public comment can be completed and the project can proceed to the bid letting process.

The State has completed the Section 106 Review! The release of the Construction Documents to contractors to provide Bids. Bid Documents will be available on 10/19/22 and Bids Due on 11/17/22. This will be advertised in the local paper, ECIA website, and MBI online with all the information the Contractors will need to know.    The cost breakdown per property/façade from the low bidder will be available by end of day on 11/22/22 and will be shared with property owners.

Continued negotiations with the property owners has resulted in a few owners who have decided to withdraw from the project. Those who are on the waiting list will then be given the opportunity to participate in the project. Those decisions will be made soon so the project can commence.

Josh Boldt updated that the participating property owners have signed their escrow agreements. The next step will be to determine how much funding is available and who the additional participants could be.

Finalizing contracts and considering funding options for adding new property owners to this project.

Construction is slated to start this fall.

**Perzactly’s:** Robert Abbott purchased this bar/restaurant. He is considering his options for its best use at this time and is currently on the list of possible property owners who could be interested in participating in this project.

**Rockdale enterprise**: In 2021 our office worked with Heather Moore, Chad Thompson and the City of Maquoketa on a 3-part project for Rockdale Enterprises. On November 27th there was an open house at 2 parts of this project including the Rockdale Locker and Moore Local. The creamery element of this project is still in the works. As Heather has indicated – progress is slow because the contractors are overloaded with work. No update.

**Housing**: Many moving parts on this arena. It is hopeful to see so many housing projects move forward. As I have shared with some of you previously, if we want to maintain or grow our population it will require a hosing growth. As we have heard from several reports, Jackson County needs multiple types of housing options. Here are some of the local efforts that will address these needs:

* Harvest Heights: This is the City of Preston’s subdivision. They held a ribbon cutting in early December. The infrastructure was just completed for this 26-lot subdivision. Lots will sell for $30,000. The City is of course subsidizing the actual cost.



* **Jackson Subdivision (Bellevue) The** infrastructure in this subdivision was completed in the summer of 2021. The 15 lots in the subdivision had all been presold prior to awarding the bid for the infrastructure. The city is in the process of financing the sales to local contractors/developers.
* **LaCasa** (Maquoketa) We have recently received word that this 4-unit upper story project received workforce housing tax credits. The city had committed a 10-year TIF rebate as the required local match. Dave and I met with the property owners and their construction manager to discuss next steps. We hope to see this project completed in 2022 or early 2023. This project is still pending. Although there is financing in place, the owners are still reviewing all their options.
* **Western Avenue (**Maquoketa) Our office and the City have been working with BSM2 Development on the purchase of city owner property for development of a 26-lot subdivision. Following a public hearing in December, the council approved the sale of this property. The sale of the property has not yet been completed. The developer has been currently clearing tees, grading and preparing the site for infrastructure.

**Regional Health center**: Since we have not been able to gain any interest in the former hospital site, the Hospital Board agreed to take sealed bids on the property. A national auctioneer handled this process. There were a couple of on-site inspections in November for interesting parties. The Hospital Board received one bid of $500,000 from an anonymous bidder. The legal representatives for the bidder have assured the Board this bidder has done similar types of development and that the intended use is for purposes previously identified through our public input process. The Board accepted the bid contingent upon knowing the name of the developer(s) prior to the closing.

This property transaction for the sale of the old hospital closed on March 02, 2022. The new buyers are a newly formed LLC named Grove Street Realty Holdings, LLC. Speaking on behalf of the owners, a representative informed the Board of Trustees that the new owners have interest in a community-based project that could involve housing, retail, office, and other type of use. Dave has reached out to the new owners to try to coordinate a meeting to let them know that JCEA is here to assist them and to help with the communication efforts to dispel any unintentional consequences that may come from the lack of detailed development information that is currently available. Numerous meetings have been held to try to determine the potential plans for this site. Just in the last few weeks, we have received two potential layouts. Both show using at least a majority of the original building for different levels of senior living. New owner has also inquired about potential incentives, grants, or other options. We are researching those at both the state and local levels.

The attorney for the developer has asked for input on other proposed layouts for the site. Options show both the use of the current building and some with the demolition of the building and new buildings being constructed. All show that the area will still be used for a retirement village uses including independent living, assisted living and memory care. We have a meeting scheduled next week with Dawn Danielsen with ECIA to discuss potential steps if the developer opted to demolish the building.

The owner is strongly considering the redevelopment of the entire area which means the demolition of the existing structure. The plan remains to establish a retirement village concept with one larger building and several smaller units positioned throughout the development. Nothing new in the last month or so.

Josh Boldt met with the owner’s representative earlier this month to let them know that Crest Ridge had gone through bankruptcy 0and the State of Iowa was assuming operations to care for the residents. Owner said they are still considering their options.

Owner’s representative has indicated that construction costs have decreased so they are more motivated to move froward. They are seriously considering a senior living continual care project. They are currently working on financing through a HUD program.

**Bellevue Stamp Property –** JCEA has attended several meetings with Bellevue City Council, City leaders, BETA and Bellevue Utility board to discuss potential opportunities for the development of the Stamp Property (located south of Bellevue). The Jackson Subdivision in Bellevue has been sold leaving only a few lots available. The Stamp Property consists of 53 acres which could be ideal for future development with the exception that the cost to extend utilities to this area is over $2.3 million. Other potential options for development were discussed with each presented its own unique set of challenges, many of which were cost prohibitive because of high land prices or would compromise surrounding landowners such as the requirement of the railroad to eliminate all field entrances in lieu of one frontage road. The city of Bellevue has agreed to initiate the annexation proceedings for this land and are currently looking at potential financing for the extension of the utilities. The Council was approached by a business who would like to purchase some land in this development for his business. JECA was also contacted by another developer who wanted to put in some specialized housing. That developer is currently working with Preston because of the lack of available locations in Bellevue. There have been several follow-up meetings and correspondence with the Dubuque Developer. He has a continued interest but many of the development details as well as the timing of the utilities need to be taken into consideration. It is somewhat difficult to navigate as the City doesn’t want to invest utilities without some assurance that there will be a return on their investment and the developer needs to know the timing of the utilities so he can plan accordingly. JCEA will continue to coordinate with the Dubuque Developer to bring all the parties to the table to consider the details. A meeting had been scheduled June 30th but the developer was unable to attend at the last minute. JCEA will continue to work with Bellevue, bonding counsel, this developer and other interested parties to support and facilitate the development of this property per the desires of Bellevue City Council and administration.

Bellevue has completed the certified PER that is needed for ECIA to pursue an USDA grant and financing for the extension of utilities to the Stamp property. The PER is a Preliminary Engineering Report that was completed by Origin Design. This report details out the proposed costs, water and wastewater loads, housing lots, impacts, etc. It is also noteworthy that the new engineer’s estimate for this is now $3.3M versus the $2.3 as indicated earlier.

Attending a meeting with a new prospect interested in some land in the Stamp property. The City and the developer are all exploring incentive opportunities and determining what is reasonable.

The City has recently annexed property along the route needed for the extension of utilities out to the Stamp property. In addition, work continues on the USDA grant application for financing for the utility extension.

**Maquoketa Industrial Development Park –** JCEA and Maquoketa City Manager Josh Boldt met to discuss the history behind this park and the potential development opportunities. Future meetings are planned to determine other marketing options for this land. It is on a major 4 lane highway, is only 25 minutes from access to Interstate 80 or the Dubuque transportation network, has available utilities and has development and cost advantages to similar ground available in other metro areas. Meeting with MVREC on Friday to look at other marketing opportunities. Attending meetings with MVREC as well as with the Iowa Area Development Group to garner their expertise and insight into how to better market this site.

Update – Had an RFI for a project called Spoonman. By the time it had been forwarded to us, we had less than a week to respond. Although JCEA took the lead in the response, we had tremendous and expeditious assistance from Josh Boldt, Chris Krogman with MMEU, Jeff Bodenhofer with Alliance, Jackson County Admin office and Jess Tracy with the Assessor’s Office, Allen Williams with IEDA, Mark Ernst with Black Hills, Kyle Manders with Bernard Telephone and Brian Kelley with EICC. Everyone gave me the information needed to provide a comprehensive and qualified application for this project.

In addition to project Spoonman, MIDAS (Maquoketa Industrial Development Assistance Service) met and determined that they want to continue as a group. They also directed that part of their existence balances would be used to go through the Site Certification Process for the Industrial Park as well as to be used as part of the city’s share in the Maquoketa East CDBG Façade project for the downtown area.

There is currently another serious prospect for this land who has been working with Maquoketa for the last few years. They are currently working on financing. In addition, a partner is considering the construction of a spec building in this same area.

**PROGRAMS**

**Manufacturing Month – October, 2022** This year’s manufacturing month saw a small but mighty group of students and manufacturing participants from Maquoketa, Bellevue, and Preston between October 11th and October 19th. This year we partnered with Collins Aerospace in Bellevue, Plastics Unlimited in Preston, and Husco International, Precision Metalworks, and the Maquoketa Company in Maquoketa. We received great positive feedback from our counselors and each of our manufacturers, as well as some constructive suggestions for how to make following years more accessible and promote greater participation. We will aim to better advertise the month as an opportunity for people of Jackson County to familiarize themselves with the many wonderful manufacturing employers our communities host, and we will better utilize the media resources we have to instigate participation in tours, for students as well as teaching staff and the general public.

Manufacturing Month – October 2023. As dates are set and companies agree to accommodate tours of students, we encourage companies to highlight what they do so that our youth (our future workforce) see all of the possibilities right here in Jackson County.

**Career/Hiring Fair 2023 –**  The date has been set; March 30th from 1:00 to 5:30. The costs are the same as last year: $50 for in-county and $100 for out-of-county. In addition, we are asking the schools to consider sending younger students as well as employers who may or may not have an immediate need of additional employees but want to market themselves and plant the seeds for the many reasons to stay in Jackson County.

2022- JCEA in partnership with the Maquoketa Chamber of Commerce, Eastern Iowa Community College and Iowa Workforce Development hosted a Fair on April 28, 2022, at Pearson Hall at the Jackson County Fairgrounds. The Fair ran from 1:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. 1:30 – 3:00 was designated for high school students and 3:00 - -6:00 was open to anyone interested in the employment opportunities in Jackson County. The cost was $50 for businesses in Jackson County and $100 for those who are outside Jackson County.

28 businesses initially signed up and 27 businesses were in attendance. 30 students attended from Bellevue, Easton, and Maquoketa schools. 35-40 other people were in attendance. 5 surveys were completed reflecting that they had interest and thought the fair was informative and worth their time.

2023 – Career Fair. 25 businesses signed up and 24 were in attendance. About 56 students attended from Bellevue, Marquette, Easton and Maquoketa Schools. 30 people attended the open public portion of the event. All in all the businesses commented that there was more student interest and participation. The feedback we received was very positive and that the event was a success.

Career/Hiring Fair 2024. Again, we will stress that companies attend even if they are not currently hiring for the exposure not only to the existing workforce but to our youth who are our future workforce. We also encourage schools to send younger students to start to plant those seeds for all the amazing opportunities in Jackson County.

**Wednesdays Are Possible –** Innovate 120 and JCEA are starting a new program called Wednesdays are possible. This is a networking series based on the premise of 1Million Cups. The group will meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 4-5:30. The first meeting will be at the Maquoketa Brewing. Do you have a side-hustle, a new idea, a lifelong dream? Join other like-minded individuals for support r and resources to start, what could be, your next big thing. Everyone is welcome. The first program was an interview between Robert Abbott and Mark Lyon. Mark and his wife are the owners of Maquoketa Brewing. The second was Robert Abbott and David Blake who is the founder and owner of Blue-9. The next session of Wednesdays are possible is being held on May 03, 2022 and will be an interview between Kelley Brown and the Kieffer’s, founders of Plastics Unlimited in Preston. Wednesdays are possible continues to grow. The interview in June was between Robert Abbott and Jacynda Smith; CEO of Tyme and was held in Bellevue. The July session was in Maquoketa and the motivator and inspirational story came from Bob Osterhaus. The August session is still in the planning process.

If you haven’t been able to attend one of these sessions, I encourage you to when you can. Here are the highlights from our previous guests.

**Mark Lyon** - Brewing Founder and Maquoketa native Mark Lyon shared his story and the four pillars from which he operates his business. From his days as an IT Executive, to coming back to Maquoketa, Mark had a casual conversation with Innovate 120’s Founder and Executive Director Robert Abbott about his business.

One important take-away when asked about why someone should try a new business in Jackson County, Mark shared, “People want you to succeed” and “people want to live in a town that is successful”. He pointed to his own success due to the many connections and people supporting his vision for the business.

**David Blake Maquoketa** Blue-9 Pet Products founder. Blake explained how he launched the company in 2014 out of his garage and worked there for three years before moving to commercial space. When asked about his biggest challenge, Blake responded, “shipping; did I say shipping!” He shared that many times his customers pay more for shipping the item than they did for the actual product. From the beginning, Blake wanted to set Blue-9 apart from any competitors by creating a professional presence in appearance, attitude and service delivery. “Hiring the right individuals as you grow” Blake shared, “is absolutely key to your success.”

**Nancy & Terry Kieffer, Travis Kieffer and Dakota Kieffer** founders and owners of Plastics Unlimited. Nancy Kieffer shared how the company started in a machine shed on their farm and the growth of the organization over its 30 years in business. She thanked the community of Preston, friends, family, key business partners, Jackson County and the State of Iowa for their unwavering support during their entrepreneurial journey. Dakota Kieffer shared that they were willing to try things that other companies shied away from. They have built their niche around production items too complex for competitors or too small for bigger organizations. Nancy added, “Don’t be afraid to try something”. They’re known for being a leading technology company, constantly listening to customers and adapting manufacturing processes and material combinations to meet the needs of customers. Terry Kieffer said “we just wanted to create good jobs for good people”. It’s obvious with employing over 140 people today that they’ve been able to do just that. The organization from the very beginning made an investment in training their staff. Travis Keiffer, co-owner of the organization today shared “failing is part of the training program. We learn from that, move forward and take on the next challenge.”

**Jacynda Smith -**  Founder and CEO of TYME. She really just wanted to help clients that struggled or spent an inordinate amount of time on preparing their hair including herself. This interest in improving that process led her to develop the first prototype, comically called Frakentyme, because of the many parts used from other tools to construct the prototype. The TYME iron was first introduced to the market just before Christmas in 2014. She encouraged the audience, especially women in attendance, to trust their instincts and believe in themselves. Smith joked about “girl power” but seriously addressed the issue of women growing up questioning their strengths and inner compass. She shared that one of her mentors always said that her business “instincts are within you!” She feels now, after ten years in the business, that she trusts and has the confidence in her inner direction. Products today for TYME are manufactured offshore, then shipped to Bellevue, where a team completes all of the fulfillment opportunities. Jacynda has a team of 19 working with her to manage the organization. One of the biggest threats to her business has been copycats. These organizations are extremely creative in using common misspellings or knock off names and products. Smith and her team aggressively fight fraud by stepping up their marketing efforts for their authentic products. Customer acquisition is a significant cost in her business model. In closing Smith encouraged all in attendance to make sure that you are “allowing yourself the space to thrive and grow.” Her story and those of previous speakers were inspirational and aspirational to the audience.

**Bob Osterhaus -** longtime Maquoketa businessman, retired pharmacist and past state legislator. Osterhaus shared with the audience his six decades of experience in the pharmacy business and community activism. Osterhaus and his wife Ann, moved to Maquoketa in 1965 when they took over the Hinckley Drug Store on October 10th. He shared that all of his ten children started working in the store at age 10 and contributed in many ways. Osterhaus shared that they “started with sweeping the sidewalks, restocking shelves and other duties and depending on skills and interests, moved on from there.” Father Mark Osterhaus, who was in attendance confirmed that statement and shared, “I never moved on from sweeping and restocking, although my sister Jane found herself in charge of all of the account receivables at the same age.” That comment brought chuckles from the audience.

Osterhaus shared that he and his wife had one, three and five year goals to keep themselves and the business on track. The first goal was to grow the pharmacy business at Hinckley’s to a point where they could afford a second pharmacist on duty. In 1964 the pharmacy did about $ 1000 worth of business per week, they built their business from there. Their goal at Osterhaus Pharmacy was always to add value to the transaction and service they were providing. Bob and Ann knew at the time that price isn’t always everything when people are buying services and added value does make a difference. He shared the difference providing education to patients today vs. when he started. Pharmacist were ethically prohibited from providing detailed information about the prescription and referred all questions to the prescribing doctor. Today, education, side effects, interactions with other drugs are an important part of the value add.

Among stories of buying the town of Hurstville in 1977, serving 4 ½ years in the Iowa House and presiding over the American Pharmacy Association, Osterhaus sprinkled in sage advice for our community today. Everyone has to be willing to invest and reinvest in our communities. He encouraged those in attendance to be happy for those who experience good luck and follow the golden rule of treating others as you want to be treated.

Osterhaus credited so many good friends over the years, his wife Ann of 70 years and the excellent job his son Matt and daughter in law, Marilyn, had done with the pharmacy. Our store, because of their efforts, is a model throughout the country of good prescription health delivery.

**Home Base Iowa and Iowa Veteran’s Coalition –** We were contacted by Home Base Iowa to determine better ways to market the program and partner with existing Veteran’s organizations to find ways to connect local Veterans to some of the Jackson County businesses and industries. JCEA is currently coordinating and effort to bring the Director of Iowa Workforce Development, along with Home Base Iowa representatives and the new Director of Veteran Affairs in Jackson County to start those discussions and further develop the synergy that can be used with all our resources working together. Had one meeting with PMW representatives as well as the Jackson Co Veteran’s Director and Jathan Chicoine who is the Home Base Iowa Program Manager. This will be a work in progress as we continue to look for other options for both Veterans and employers to be educated on both the talent and the employment opportunities that exist with the goal being to best match the two.

This is the process for Home Base Iowa

As Jathan stated in his discussion about Home Base Iowa, there are several steps in the process.   Most are relatively inexpensive including the resolution of support, placing and installing signs and having a presentation event of some kind.   The most meaningful part of the designation is that which has the most impact and benefit for each Veteran and his/her family.  Of course, being a welcoming county where Veterans feel supported is essential.  Along with that, we need some sort of financial incentives or benefits.  Here are numerous examples of what other cities and/or counties are doing.   I completely understand that the County’s budget has already been approved for fiscal 2024 so it may not be realistic to be able to have anything in place until fiscal 2025.   All that being said, Home Base Iowa is not only supporting our Veterans, but also investing and increasing our workforce which is vital for the economic viability of our county.

**Incentive Package requirement for becoming an HBI Community.**

The community must provide an incentive package that would ideally include 2 or 3 meaningful incentives that will help attract and retain Veterans and their families in your community.  HBI can provide guidance on what incentives are most impactful, but ultimately it is up to the community to decide.

**Examples of meaningful incentives:**

**Relocation Support:**  A number of HBI Communities provide financial assistance for relocation (e.g. $1000 - $2500).   See several examples below:

* Story County offers a $2500.00 relocation grant.
* Greene County offers $1000.00 relocation grant and local businesses have agreed to match the $1000.00 for a $2000.00 relocation benefit to Veterans.
* Worth / Winnebago Counties offer a $1000.00 relocation benefit.
* Appanoose County provides $1500 for home purchase or renovating a home.
* Boone County offers a $1000 relocation grant.
* Cedar County offers a work and live incentive, but created a tier system to differentiate those living and working within the county.  For instance, new residents to Cedar County receive $1000.00 and any additional $1500 if working in Cedar County too.

**Home Purchasing Grant:** A number of HBI Communities provide a home purchasing grant.  This tends to be a very meaningful incentive in that it can be bundled with the State of Iowa’s Military Home Ownership Grant of $5000.00.

* Clinton County offers a $1500.00 home purchasing grant.  The county has done a great job to tract the return on investment in terms of increased tax revenue and total value in home purchases.
* Scott County offers a $1500.00 home purchasing grant and the City of Davenport offers and additional $1500.00 for $3000.00 total.
* Pottawattamie County offers a $2500.00 Home Closing Cost Reimbursement
* Marshall County offers a $10,000 new home building grant.
* Boone County offers a $2000 home purchasing grant.

**Entrepreneurship Grants**- as many Veterans and their spouses go into entrepreneurship (including agriculture / farming), an increasing number of communities are offering an entrepreneurship grant.

* City of Norwalk offers a $5000.00 grant for a Veterans and/or spouse that starts or continues a business.
* Shelby offers a $1000.00 grant and has a business incubator program.
* Marshall County offers a $2500.00 grant for individuals starting a retail business.

**Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities (IISC):** IISC has agreed to accept the Maquoketa Green Space Project. They will engineer the development of the site. Ben has worked on some potential concepts along with Danny who was the original designer of the space and constructed the Gables (the wooden sculpture) on the site. – Students presented a few options along with cost estimates at an open house at Maquoketa Brewing. The next step for the Green Space Project is to start fund raising and researching other funding options. Here is a link to their presentation <https://iisc.uiowa.edu/projects/maquoketa-open-space-redevelopment>

Goal to target another set of county projects to partner with IISC for the 24-25 school year.

**Hometown Pride**:

With the offer from ECIA to write a grant valued at $2000 each year along with offering coaching services, Maquoketa City Council has approved the extension of KIB for another 5 years.

In Jackson County KIB we have Miles, LaMotte, Preston, Sabula, Maquoketa and Baldwin.  All will be in for another five years.

Amanda DuPont will be the coach for Miles, Preston, Sabula, Baldwin, and LaMotte.  Tricia Wagner will be the coach for Maquoketa.   Marla, Jennifer, Dan and Dylan will be coaching too but will be in other communities but will be there as a resource for Amanda and Tricia.

They meet regularly and keep everyone updated. A lot of the members are focused on the green space development.

Nothing new.

**IWIN**:

In December JCEA and CIRAS met with PMW to discuss workforce challenges and potential ways to partner with the resources available at CIRAS. In addition, CIRAS and JCEA met with Plastics Unlimited to review their procedures and make recommendations.

CIRAS sponsors monthly lunch and learn programs on Human Resource and Workforce. For a full list of their upcoming on-line seminars: [CIRAS ⋮ Blackthorn ⋮ Events](https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/?search=&sortBy=date&category=&date=TODAY&keywords=) For their past seminars please visit:

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**Human Resource Webinar Series: Where are Our Workers?**

*Past Webinar Recordings & Future Webinar Registration Links*

**2022 Webinar Recordings**

January: [Thriving as a Human Resource Professional](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/6069645454437627916)

February: [Workforce Skirmishes](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/5413580060902513167) (Data)

May: [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Journey](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/362030019748690184) (A Conversation)

July: [Compensation and Benefits Strategies](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/6889040006387902216) (Current Trends)

August: [Removing Barriers to Childcare](https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/2230584062469121552) (Resources)

September: [Generational Differences](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/2174015289505811458) (A Conversation)

October: [Employer of Choice & Job Quality Tool](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/1627245749818168078) (Resources) November: [Learning and Development as a Retention Strategy](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/6312332966112863747) (Tools)

**2023 Webinar Topics: Human Resource Strategies**

**May 17**

* Topic: **HR Mental Health & Mindfulness.** *Manage what matters, so we can support our*

*employees and organizations effectively. Learn proven techniques to cope.*

* *Register:* [*https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/4a4w6gxqKU/overview*](https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/4a4w6gxqKU/overview)

**July 19**

* Topic: **Prove HR’s Worth!** *Show the value when you ask for resources. Learn tactics*

*and terms to speak the ROI language of business.*

* *Register:* [*https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/4a4w6gxqKV/overview*](https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/4a4w6gxqKV/overview)

**September 20**

* Topic: **New School HR Marketing**. *Build your employer brand. Learn strategies to*

*expand company visibility to candidates.*

* *Register:* [*https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/4a4w6gxqKW/overview*](https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/4a4w6gxqKW/overview)

**November 15**

* Topic: **HR’s Bad Reputation.** *Set expectations for HR that enables organizational*

*success. Learn to focus on what matters using the right approach.*

* *Register:* [*https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/4a4w6gxqKX/overview*](https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/4a4w6gxqKX/overview)

*CIRAS Workforce Strategy: Brenda Martin, Workforce Programs Director, 515.570.5282,* [*bkmartin@iastate.edu*](mailto:bkmartin@iastate.edu)

**CIRAS 2023 technology events, registration link embedded in titles:**

[May 11 Digital Lab Tour, Ames](https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/ciras-digital-manufacturing-lab-tour-4a4w6gxoyF/overview)

[June 15 Digital Lab Tour, Ames](https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/ciras-digital-manufacturing-lab-tour-4a4w6gxoyG/overview)

[July 13 Digital Lab Tour, Ames](https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/ciras-digital-manufacturing-lab-tour-4a4w6gxoyH/overview)

[August 10 Digital Lab Tour, Ames](https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/ciras-digital-manufacturing-lab-tour-4a4w6gxoyI/overview)

[September 14 Digital Lab Tour, Ames](https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/ciras-digital-manufacturing-lab-tour-4a4w6gxoyJ/overview)

[October 12 Digital Lab Tour, Ames](https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/ciras-digital-manufacturing-lab-tour-4a4w6gxoyK/overview)

[November 9 Digital Lab Tour, Ames](https://events.blackthorn.io/en/6g82hT47/ciras-digital-manufacturing-lab-tour-4a4w6gxoyL/overview)

*This 4-hour event will be an in-person lab tour of the CIRAS Digital Manufacturing Lab powered by Alliant Energy, a facility created to help manufacturers explore potential technologies, their applications, and how you can implement them into your processes. Please attend any of these visits at the CIRAS lab in Ames to explore technologies to improve your processes and support your workforce.*

*CIRAS Workforce Strategy:*

* *Brenda Martin, Workforce Programs Director, 515.570.5282,* [*bkmartin@iastate.edu*](mailto:bkmartin@iastate.edu)

One of the workforce initiatives we have been working with CIRAS (Center for Industrial Research and Service) since earlier 2021 is called IWIN (Iowa Workforce Innovation Network). We are only the second county in Iowa to participate in this program that is funded with a federal grant. This project started with a survey of Jackson County businesses and industries. Following that survey, we had a zoom meeting with business and industries, and CIRAS representatives to narrow and prioritize some of the opportunities for expanding our local workforce. Unfortunately, due to summer schedules and staffing changes at CIRAS, this initiative was at a standstill for several months. In the Fall of 2021, we restarted this process. In early November we sent another short survey to local businesses to prioritize the 12 root causes that have been identified in the initial information gathering.

The root causes prioritized through his survey were as follows:

* Wages and Benefits
* Expertise/Learning/training
* Job Opportunities
* Child Care
* Work Schedule/Location
* Culture

We received a second draft of this 80-page report and have met with CIRAS to start coordinating the efforts and finding resolutions to the challenges in workforce development. The new strategy is to contact companies and provide individual evaluations and insight into the processes that are currently in place to attract and maintain personnel. We met with one company a month ago. They are interested in making informed changes but the time it takes to go through the evaluation process is difficult to manage. We will follow up with them in a few months. In the meantime, CIRAS is contacting another company to determine their interest. More to follow was JCEA continues to partner with CIRAS on the action steps required to address the results in the master report.

JCEA has had two meetings with CIRAS on workforce initiatives and potential resources. CIRAS offers a multitude of resources. If any of you have business needs, please contact our office and we will determine if CIRAS can help you. In addition we will research other options to determine if there are resources that can address your needs.

Our last meeting with CIRAS focused on a number of things. First of all, they will help us develop an updated data base as we inventory both the larger and the smaller businesses and industries in Jackson County.

Business and Industry peer groups to meet quarterly to discuss workforce challenges, successes and opportunities. – Hold events on workforce strategies and best practices.

Soft skills - inventory businesses on what soft skills seem to be needed the most. The challenge may be that this may differ enough depending on the business that developing one program may be either too detailed and not applicable to all or may not be detailed enough. CIRAS offers services to go into individual workplaces and perform interviews and gain knowledge on the unique challenges employers are facing. They also can then develop programs to address those challenges. Iowa Workforce Development also offers programs to address some of the common challenges as well.

I ran into Brenda Martin with CIRAS at the PDI conference. We are planning to meet and talk about additional resources CIRAS can give us for workforce development.

EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES \*\* - expanding on the discussion with CIRAS, it is very evident that right now all employers are doing for the qualified traditional employee is incenting them to leave their current position. The number of those employees in the potential employment pool is not increasing. It is the same number. They just shift from one employer to another. For those who are unemployed and don’t fit the qualified “traditional” employee role, it is going to take some creativity and flexibility of the employer to help those non-traditional employees fit into the workplace. Employers who are willing to let people go hoping to find the few traditional employees will find that those traditional employees will just move on to the next best opportunity because they do have that choice. The non-traditional employee doesn’t have those options, and they may not be focused on even trying to find their best fit. They may be motivated by their next meal, making enough for the next payment, maybe getting assistance, etc. To get them to work, the work environment and expectations will need to change to adjust to these needs and special circumstances. We had one employer who talked about how everyone seemed to want to work part-time yet that wouldn’t work for them. Well, as Ben asked, is part time better than no time? Is getting 20 additional hours of work better than – hours? If a person is willing to come to work 4 out of 5 days, is that better than – days? Ben and I discussed this extensively with me arguing that the loyal, hardworking, reliable employee could be less motivated to continue to be that person if they see that others are getting away with less…. That may be so but then if I really thought about it, would it be better to have some help versus no help? The idea that firing people with the hope of finding the golden goose is a great idea, just doesn’t work anymore. The golden geese are all employed, or they are looking for better employment with higher pay and the work environment that they want and enjoy. Immigrants or people with different cultures and expectations fall into the non-traditional category for different reasons. They may have a killer work-ethic but have other needs that mean that the employer would need to be flexible. Regardless of what the needs of the employee are, the success of the company is going to be dependent on the employer being willing to be flexible. If we can’t get the goods or services to the consumer, the company is not going to succeed or grow.

A longer solution to the workforce crisis is what Ben and I are calling Individual Excellence. It is a cultural mindset change and will be a process. But with all processes, it must start somewhere so we are doing to start a pilot program/study here in Jackson Co if we have the needed support.

**RESOURCES**

**GRANTS**

**Derelict Building Grant Program**

THE DERELICT BUILDING GRANT PROGRAM works with small communities and rural counties to help improve the attractiveness and appearance of their towns by providing financial assistance to address derelict commercial and public buildings. Each project must have a landfill diversion component through the recycling and reuse of materials. The program is funded by the DNR’s Solid Waste Alternatives Program. GETTING STARTED A community’s building is eligible for the program if it falls into the following criteria: • Any county or municipal government with a population of less than 5,000. • Any commercial or public building that a local government has ownership of or intent to own. • An applicant may partner with a local non-profit organization on a project. TYPES OF ASSISTANCE & FUNDING OPTIONS It is important to remember that costs incurred prior to an executed agreement are not eligible for funding and awarded amounts may not equal funding requests

ASSISTANCE TYPE REIMBURSEMENT MAX. COST CERTIFIED ACM INSPECTION: Certified asbestos inspectors will investigate derelict structures to determine the presence, prevalence and condition of asbestos. 100 percent —

REMOVAL AND DISPOSAL OF ACM: Certified asbestos removal contractors will properly remove, manage and dispose of ACM. A 50 percent cost share is required for costs exceeding $10,000. 100 percent $10,000 max

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING ANALYSIS: Licensed structural engineers will inspect derelict structures to assess the overall structural condition of the building. 100 percent $1,500 max

PHASE I ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT: Review of known environmental records and land use information about the site and vicinity. Applicant is responsible for all costs exceeding $3,000. 100 percent $3,000 max

PHASE II ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT: Actual soil, groundwater, and structural materials’ sampling to confirm or deny if contamination is present. The need for this assessment is driven by the results of the Phase I Assessment. Applicant is responsible for costs exceeding $5,000. 50 percent $2,500 max

BUILDING DECONSTRUCTION: Dismantling of structures with the purpose of maximizing recycling and reuse of materials to minimize landfill disposal. All deconstruction projects must achieve a minimum landfill diversion rate of 30 percent of the structure by weight. 50 percent $50,000 max

BUILDING RENOVATION: Restoration or removal of materials for reuse, either at the site or off site, or for recycling; Roof repair or replacement; Building stabilization; Tuck-pointing of exterior walls. 50 percent $50,000 max

Note 2023 deadline is past. Cities should plan and be ready for the 2024 deadlines - -typically in February.

**CATALYST GRANT PROGRAM**

PROGRAM DEFINITION Through the Community Catalyst Building Remediation Program, the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) will provide grants to communities for the redevelopment, rehabilitation or deconstruction of buildings to stimulate economic growth or reinvestment in the community. Strong applications will show the potential of catalytic economic growth in the community; improve appearances and safety; make use of underutilized property, exhibit appropriate design standards; and be well-funded. Economic growth may include the creation of additional jobs, growth of new or existing businesses, development of new housing units, increase property values or potential population growth. PROGRAM DETAILS · Funding based on annual availability · Maximum grant: $100,000 · 40% of funds will be awarded to cities with populations under 1,500 · A mandatory pre-application process will precede the official grant application · Applications are by invitation only, after approved pre-application · City must be the applicant and provide financial and/or in-kind resources · Funds available for the rehabilitation of one commercial building per community or two buildings with same ownership that are adjacent · Deconstruction is allowed in dire situations or for safety reasons

Note max award is $100,000 and total project should exceed $200,000. City participation is required although it does not have to be the full $100,000.

Applications are no longer accepted for the 2023 grant rounds; however, cities are encouraged to identify projects and have them ready for the 2024 pre-app process which starts in the late fall.

**CDBG – Community Facilities & Services**

**Meeting the Needs of Growing Communities**

This annual competitive program assists projects such as day care facilities, senior centers, vocational workshops and other community services such as storm water projects.  
The program is funded through the federal [**Community Development Block Grant**](https://www.iowaeda.com/cdbg/) (CDBG). The goal of this program is to provide economic opportunities for people, especially those of low- and moderate income.  
Maximum funding requests are based on community population:

* Less than 300 and unincorporated areas may request up to $1,000 per capita
* Less than 1,000 may request up to $300,000
* Between 1,000 and 2,500 may request up to $500,000
* Between 2,500 and 15,000 may request up to $600,000
* Greater than 15,000 may request up to $800,000

**Who Qualifies?**

* Projects must primarily benefit low- and moderate income persons (per the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development definition)
* Projects must incorporate and support Iowa’s state [sustainable principles](https://www.iowaeda.com/green-streets/)
* Applications are accepted as long as funding is available cations are accepted on an ongoing basis as funds are available

y [Community Facilities & Services Application Review Criteri](https://www.iowaeda.com/userdocs/programs/resources/cfs-review-criteria.pdf)a

**CDBG – Downtown Revitalization Fund**

**Assisting Projects that Revitalize Downtown Areas**

Community leaders can use this program to rehabilitate blighted downtown buildings.  
  
The program is funded through the federal Community Development Block Grant program. The goal of this program is to provide economic opportunities for people, especially those of low- and moderate income.

**Who Qualifies?**

The project must meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Slum and Blight National Objective

* To meet this objective, the application must document the extent or seriousness of deterioration in the area to be assisted, showing a clear adverse effect on the well-being of the area or community and illustrating that the proposed activity will alleviate or eliminate the conditions causing the deterioration.
* A comprehensive building survey as well as a city resolution is necessary to meet this national objective
* Applications are accepted annually, typically in the spring. Visit iowagrants.gov for application instructions and how to apply for funds.

**CDBG – Housing Rehabilitation – Upper Story Housing –**

**Who Qualifies?**

* Projects must primarily benefit low- and moderate income persons (per the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development definition)
* Non-entitlement cities and counties are eligible applicants.
* Upper story housing applications are due in November. Visit iowagrants.gov for application instructions and how to apply for funds.

**CDBG – Water and Sewer fund**

**Improving Water and Wastewater Services**

Funds awarded through this annual competitive program assist cities and counties with projects such as sanitary sewer system improvements, water system improvements, water and wastewater treatment facility projects, storm sewer projects related to sanitary sewer system improvements and rural water connections.  
The program is funded through the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The goal of this program is to provide economic opportunities for people, especially those of low- and moderate income.  
Maximum funding requests are based on community population:

* Less than 300 and unincorporated areas request up to $1,000 per capita
* Less than 1,000 request up to $300,000
* Between 1,000 and 2,500 request up to $500,000
* Between 2,500 and 15,000 request up to $600,000
* Greater than 15,000 request up to $800,000
* Applications are accepted and reviewed quarterly. Deadlines are Jan 01, April 01, July 01 and October 01. Visit iowagrants.gov for application instructions and how to apply for funds.

**Workforce Housing Tax Credit.**

**Assisting Construction or Rehabilitation of Housing in Communities with Workforce Housing Needs**

This program provides tax benefits to developers to provide housing in Iowa communities, focusing especially on those projects using abandoned, empty or dilapidated properties.  
A Small Cities set aside for this program is available to eligible projects within the 88-least populous counties in Iowa.

* Total program benefits limited to $1 million per project
* Tax incentives include a refund of sales, service or use taxes paid during construction
* Developers may receive a state investment tax credit of up to 10% of the investment directly related to the construction or rehabilitation of the housing. Developers qualifying under the Small Cities set aside may receive an investment tax credit of up to 20% of the investment directly related to the construction or rehabilitation of the housing. The state investment tax credit is fully transferable.
  + Federal, state or local grants, tax credits, forgivable loans or other assistance not requiring repayment cannot be included for the purposes of calculating new investment
* Tax credit is based on the new investment used for the first $150,000 of value for each home or unit
* Tax credit is earned when the home or unit is certified for occupancy and can be carried forward for up to five additional years or until depleted, whichever occurs first

**Who Qualifies?**

Projects must meet one of four criteria:

* + Housing development located on a grayfield or brownfield site
  + Repair or rehabilitation of dilapidated housing stock
  + Upper story housing development
  + New construction in a greenfield (only communities or a project qualifying under the Small Cities set aside)
* Developer must build or rehabilitate at least four single-family homes or at least one multi-family building containing three or more units or at least two upper story units
* This program has a per unit cost cap to ensure units created under the program are workforce housing  
  For FY 2024, project costs may not exceed the following per unit cost caps:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| single family unit in an urban area | $298,021 |
| single family unit in a small city | $298,021 |
| multi-family unit in an urban area | $241,643 |
| multi-family unit in a small city | $241,643 |

* Historic preservation projects may not exceed 125% of the maximum per unit cost established based on project type and location
* The housing project must be completed within three years from the date of award
* Deadline if June 09, 2023. Future years have similar deadlines.

**Federal and State Recreational Trails – SRT ProgramPurpose**-The state recreational trails program (SRT) provides funds to establish recreational trails throughout Iowa for the use, enjoyment and participation of the public. The program is restricted to the acquisition, construction or improvement of recreational trails open for public use or trails which will be dedicated public use upon completion.**Who can apply?** A state or local government agency, a municipal corporation, a county or a nonprofit organization is eligible to apply for and receive funds from the recreational trails program.  A private business or developer is not eligible to apply directly for funds from the recreational trails program

, hours and earnings, and jobless benefits by county.

**Manufacturing 4.0**: The State has developed an initiative for manufacturers to evaluate and find ways to increase productivity by leveraging technology. CIRAS is the gatekeeper for this program too. Manufacturers with 75 or fewer employees are eligible. They can receive up to $75,000 per company to assist with projects that increase productivity. We have reached out to all of our local manufacturers to make them aware of this project and encourage their participation. The State has also announced a program for companies with more than 75 but less than 250 employees. They are eligible for up to $500,000 of funding and these applicants do not go through CIRAS. Our office has worked with at least one local company that hopes to capitalize on this initiative. To date, three companies have been awarded funds for the Manufacturing 4.0 grant: Plastics Unlimited requested and was awarded $475,000. PMW requested and was awarded $75,000 and Dynamic Tube was awarded $50,000. JCEA worked with Plastics Unlimited on their application. The cities under 75 employees coordinated their applications **through CIRAS. FUNDING IS STILL AVAILABLE – IF INTERESTED WE CAN COORDINATE CONTACTS WITH CIRAS. Here is a link to the ISU CIRAS website to start your application.** [**https://www.ciras.iastate.edu/manufacturing-4-0-assessment/**](https://www.ciras.iastate.edu/manufacturing-4-0-assessment/) **More info on the grant can be found here. iowamfg.com**

**Brownfields -** Ben and I are also directing our focus on the economic opportunities that the conversion of Brownfield properties can provide to the County. We met with Dawn Danielsen with ECIA. Dawn is the Development Coordinator and Brownfields Project Manager. She has an avid interest and expertise in the redevelopment of Brownfield areas. Kelley has mentioned in the meeting with the Mayors that this is something she would like all of the towns to be aware of and to be able to take advantage of some programs that can assist with Brownfield areas. Kelley and Ben also attended a Brownfields training this last summer in Coralville. We have agreed to be one of the coalition members/partners in the new assessment grant that ECIA is applying for. Just to give you a little more information about Brownfields, this was taken from ECIA’s website. What are Brownfields?

**A brownfield is**: a property of which the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Brownfields are generally abandoned, idle or underused properties, or vacant land where a facility once stood. Often times these properties are considered “blight”.  Examples include:

* Former gas stations
* Former dry cleaners
* Factories
* Warehouses
* Salvage yards
* Mills
* Abandoned railroads
* Bulk oil plants
* Automotive repair shops

Residential land can also be considered brownfields if they meet the definition of above. This is generally the case with vacant properties where redevelopment is planned and there is the perception that the former occupant used or stored hazardous or petroleum products. “Methfields”, properties contaminated by controlled substances such as in the case of meth labs, is also considered a residential example of a brownfield.

Cleanup and reinvestment in these properties has multiple positive effects including reducing blight, returning land to productive use, increasing tax base, protecting human health, protecting the environment, taking development pressures off green and agricultural space, and revitalizing distressed neighborhoods.

For more information – click this link: <https://www.ecia.org/brownfields/index.php>

ECIA – contacted us looking for one additional project to use some of their existing funding on. We are currently working with a potential project in Preston.

**TRAINING**

**260E Training Agreement**: We are currently working with the community college on two agreements with local industries to support expansions. –

INDUSTRIAL NEW JOBS TRAINING (260E) The Industrial New Jobs Training Program provides businesses expanding its Iowa workforce with new employee training funds. Administered by Iowa’s 15 community colleges, the program is financed through bonds sold by the colleges. Depending on wages paid, the business then diverts 1.5 or 3% of the Iowa state withholding taxes generated by the new positions to the community college to retire the bonds. Because of this structure, the training is available at essentially no cost, since the bonds are retired with dollars otherwise paid to the state as withholding taxes. In addition to increasing worker productivity and company profitability, businesses participating in the Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training Program may also be eligible for reimbursement up to 50% of the award amount for on-the-job training, as well as a corporate tax credit if Iowa employment is increased by at least 10%. Business Eligibility • Must be located in, or relocating to Iowa. • Must be engaged in interstate or intrastate commerce for the purpose of manufacturing, processing, assembling products, warehousing, wholesaling, or conducting research and development. • Service-providing businesses must have customers outside of Iowa. • Cannot have closed or substantially reduced its employment base at any of its other business sites in Iowa in order to relocate substantially the same operation to another area of the state. EMPLOYEE TRAINING PROGRAMS Employee Eligibility To qualify for training services, employees: • Must be in newly created positions. • Must pay Iowa withholding tax. • Must occupy positions that did not exist during the six months prior to the date the business and community college agreed to pursue a training project. New Jobs Tax Credit The Iowa New Jobs Tax Credit is an Iowa corporate income tax credit available to a company that entered into a New Jobs Training Agreement (260E) and expands its Iowa employment base by 10% or more. The amount of this one-time tax credit depends upon the wages a company pays and the year in which the tax credit is first claimed. The maximum tax credit in 2020 is $1,896 per new employee. Unused tax credits may be carried forward up to 10 years. The tax credit may be claimed on Form IA 133 found on the Iowa Department of Revenue website: tax.iowa.gov/forms JG 03042020 For more information on job training opportunities, contact the Iowa Economic Development Authority +1.515.348.6200 | opportunities@iowaeda.com | iowaeda.com

JOBS TRAINING PROGRAM (260F) The Iowa Jobs Training Program provides job training services to current employees of eligible businesses located in Iowa. Eligible businesses work with the local Iowa community college to assess training needs, determine funds available and to provide training. For participating businesses, the advantages include valuable employee training at a reduced - or no - cost. Business Eligibility • Must be located in Iowa. • Must be engaged in interstate or intrastate commerce for the purpose of manufacturing, processing, assembling products, warehousing, wholesaling, or conducting research and development. • Service-providing businesses must have customers outside of Iowa. • Within the 36-month period prior to the date of applying for program services, a business cannot have closed or reduced its employment base by more than 20% at any of its other business sites in Iowa in order to relocate substantially the same operation to another area of the state. Employee Eligibility • Must be currently employed by the business. • Must pay Iowa withholding tax. CONTACT US Please contact opportunities@iowaeda.com or visit iowaeda.com to find the latest information on Iowa’s business climate, assistance programs, development news, available buildings and sites and much more.

**Legislative Monitoring –** JCEA staff participates in Professional Developers of Iowa Legislative calls every other Monday while the House and Senate are in session. We also monitor the bill tracking and participate in calls to action.

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**OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST.**

This is random – but I liked it. When we are in the heat of the debate and trying to make a difference, we should always remember, "Advocates who burn bridges lose the opportunity to stay in the game. So take a deep breath, focus on what’s next, and we can still make a difference."

Welcome U – Dyersville Campus is similar to the Distinctly Dubuque Program . Maquoketa Chamber Executive Director Kristi Carr contact me and wanted my thoughts on this. This is the premise:

Dyersville Economic Development Corporation and the Dyersville Area Chamber of Commerce are

teaming up to create Welcome U – Dyersville Campus.

This program will immerse new employees and residents in Dyersville information. They will learn

everything from how to play one of the area’s new favorite activities – pickleball – to where to take yard

clippings for compost. Our goal is that the newcomers will learn about the area, make connections and

feel at home for years to come.

To begin, we are looking for employers that would select their new employees (or employees that have

moved to the area recently) and offer them a Scholarship to send them through the program. We feel

that a $100 investment in this employee will keep them active in the community and in your workforce

for years to come!

After I reviewed the information, I was very excited about the opportunity to incorporate this (or at least have one session) that expands the information to include all of Jackson County and potentially include topics like soft skills in the workplace as well.

**CONSTANT CONTACT -**  We are in the process of setting up Constant Contact for our communications. This will give people a chance to share our information and add more to our contact base or unsubscribe if they don’t want to receive our information. The way the current system works, we have large email lists that aren’t updated. We get rejected as spam because of the mass mailings. It is clearly inefficient. Constant Contact will be a more user-friendly and efficient system – still in process.

**CITY, OTHER BOARD MEETINGS, CONFERENCES AND TRAININGS**

Kelley or Ben continue to attend the Bellevue and Maquoketa City Council meetings by Zoom or occasionally in person. Although the Preston City Council meetings cannot be attended by Zoom, their recordings are available on You Tube: <https://www.prestoniowa.com/CouncilMeetingVideos.aspx>. Sabula minutes are available here: <https://sabulaia.com/minutes> Additionally we have asked LaMotte, and are contacting all of our Jackson County cities to be put on their agenda and minutes list to keep better informed. We want to be able to offer assistance when available and not wait for cities to contact us if they have a need.

**Workforce Development -**Kelley is on the Mississippi Valley Workforce Development Finance Committee as well as the Mississippi Valley Business Services Committee.

**GREAT RIVER ROAD –** last winter I attended a Zoom meeting regarding the Mississippi Great River Road. I attended more out of curiosity than anything else. While I was on the meeting, one of the representatives for our area, Paula Meyer, had FB messaged me for more information. It’s a long story but there is some information they would like to receive from a museum in Bellevue. I was contacted just this week and asked to determine if there are possibilities for obtaining some of this information for the group. They are specifically interested in Pike’s Exhibition on the Mississippi. For the history buffs, it is said that Pike should be a revered as Louis and Clark for his explorations on the Mississippi River.

**Jackson County Municipal Association, Crime Stoppers & Joint Emergency Commission –** Kelley has been attended these meetings and representing JCEA. She has been informing those in attendance of what JCEA can offer including aiding city clerks and/or finance directors who may have questions or need additional assistance. In addition, County Board meetings, City Council meetings and other development meetings are being monitored so JCEA can be kept abreast of the successes and challenges in the County. Kelley still attends these meetings every other month. In general, at most 3-4 mayors attend but it is a great opportunity to get to know them better and for them to get to know Kelley better.

**Grant Wood Loop -** JCEA and Dave Heiar had been one of the main facilitators of this major project. Because most of the funding options had been exhausted, the group met to determine the future.

The current plan is for three committees to take over the basic principal functions of support. That being said, there are not a lot of current volunteers for the committees so the future may be pending another initiative that would require the group to come together.

JCEA – also facilitates the Maquoketa and Bellevue Leadership Meetings.

In addition, Ben attends most MEA Coffees and Maquoketa Rotary Meetings.

Ben is also on the Maquoketa Hometown Pride Board and Kelley attends those meetings as well.

Maquoketa Green Space Committee - Ben is active on this committee and Kelley attends as well.

May 11 – Mississippi Valley Workforce Business Committee – Kelley

May 11 – Grant Wood Scenic Byway in Anamosa – Kelley

May 15 - Maquoketa Dept Head meeting – Ben

May 15 – Maquoketa City Council – Kelley

May 16 – Maquoketa Betterment and HTP – Ben & Kelley

May 16 – Jackson Co BOS Hometown Pride presentation – Kelley

May 17-18 – Dev 2023 Conference in DM – Ben & Kelley

May 19 – Legislative Event at MAE – Ben & Kelley

May 22 – Maquoketa Dept head meeting – Ben

May 22 – Energy District – Ben

May 22 – Bellevue School work-based presentations – Kelley

May 23 – ECIA Van Pool Program presentation – Kelley & Ben

May 24 – Sonac CC meeting – Kelley & Ben

May 24 – Mississippi Valley Workforce Finance Meeting – Kelley

May 24 – Jackson Co Energy District - Ben

May 24 – Plastics Unlimited – Senator Grassley visit – Kelley & Ben

May 25 – RPA meeting – Kelley

May 25 – Black Hills Capital Campaign visit – Kelley & Ben

May 25 – Miles meeting with City Clerk – Kelley

May 26 – Maquoketa Leadership meeting – Kelley

May 29 – Maquoketa Dept Heads Meeting – Ben

May 30-31 – Moving Day to Innovate 120

Jun 01 – Rusell Construction meeting – Kelley & Ben

Jun 01 – Jackson County Tag meeting - Ben

Jun 01 – Tom Devine – Jackson Co Tourism – Kelley & Ben

Jun 02 – Kevin Koelkner construction – Kelley & Ben

Jun 05 – Maquoketa Dept Heads Meeting – ben

Jun 05 – Maquoketa City Council – Kelley

Jun 05 – Bellevue City Council - Kelley

Jun 06 – Brownfields Conference – Kelley

Jun 07 – Wednesdays are possible – Kelley & Ben

Jun 08 – MVWF Business Meeting – Kelley

Jun 08 – Summer Art in the Park – Ben

Jun 09 – Bellevue Chamber Vendor Fair – Ben

Jun 12 – Maquoketa Dept Head meeting – Ben

Jun 13 – Workfore Dev review – Imagine the Possibilities – Kelley & Ben

Jun 13 – KMAQ - Ben

Jun 14 – Prospective Business update – Kelley & Ben

Jun 14 – Hubbell/Mike Macri meeting – Kelley & Ben

Jun 14 – RTA app rural transportation project scoring – Kelley

Jun 14 – Green Space Redevelopment – Ben

Jun 15 – Innovate 120 presentation with Debi Durham – Kelley & Ben

Jun 15 – Innovate 120 Open house – Kelley & Ben

Jun 16 – Bellevue Leadership – Kelley & Ben

Jun 16 – Maquoketa Brewfest – Ben

Jun 19 – Maquoketa Dept Heads meeting – Ben

Jun 19 – Maquoketa City Council meeting – Kelley

Jun 20 – Maquoketa Betterment and Hometown Pride – Kelley & Ben

Jun 21 – Workforce business interviews - Ben

Jun 21 – Alliant CC meeting – Kelley & Ben

Jun 21 – Osterhaus CC meeting – Kelley & Ben

Jun 22 – RPA meeting – Kelley

Jun 22 – Google Mapping – Ben

Jun 22 – Bellevue Leadership – Kelley & Ben

Jun 22 – WAP meeting -Kelley & Ben

Jun 26 – Maquoketa Dept Head meeting – Ben

Jun 27 – Sabula CC meeting – Kelley

Jun 28 – Jackson Co Hospital workforce meeting – Kelley

Jun 28 – MVWF Finance Committee – Kelley

Jun 28 – Jackson Co Energy District presentation in Bellevue – Kelley & Ben

Jun 29 – Sunshine CDBG grant meeting – Kelley & Ben

Jun 29 – ECIA Senator Grassley – Kelley

Jun 29 – Energy District Board meeting – Ben

Jun 30 – Maquoketa Brewfest – Ben

Jul 03 – Maquoketa Dept Head Meeting – Ben

Jul 05 – Wednesdays are possible – Ben

Jul 06 – Chamber – new potential business meeting – Ben

Jul 06 – Energy District meeting – Ben

Jul 10 – WAP meeting – Kelley

Jul 11 – Iowa Workforce meeting – Kelley

Jul 12 – Preston IEDA downtown review meeting – Kelley

Jul 13 – Sabula Catalyst closeout meeting with IEDA – Kelley

Jul 13 – MVWF Business Committee meeting – Kelley

**JCEA 2023-2027 GOALS**

**GOAL 1:**

**RETAINING, EXPANDING AND RECRUITING LARGE BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES. JCEA will further develop a large business and industry retention, expansion, and recruitment program for the Jackson County area to evaluate the local business climate, offer assistance to employers through meetings or actions pertaining to economic development guidelines and incentives, hiring, training and other appropriate activity relating to expansion, relocation, recruitment, and attraction of large business and industries to increase the local tax base, sales tax collection and to create or retain jobs.**

**Large business is defined as 50 or more employees**

**Industry is defined as the manufacturer of goods or services**

**Action Steps:**

1. **JCEA will Identify and develop a data base of the large businesses and industrial employers in Jackson County. Data base will include multiple points of contact in case of turnover including local manager, human resources director and finance director if applicable. In process. Have a data base with over 350 properties in Jackson County. Working with Chambers to match properties with businesses and their contact information. Will use Constant Contact to set up email lists.**
2. **JCEA will actively promote Jackson County as a pro-business/industry community. Ongoing**
3. **JCEA will continue to utilize Synchronist software to identify needs of existing large business and industries – Synchronist is no longer available but we are using the same format to gather data. Will set up our own data base for tracking this information until something more professional becomes available.**
4. **JCEA will meet with every large business and industry (who is willing to meet) at least every two years – continuing to set up visits.**
5. **JCEA will be a resource for business and industry growth/development.** 
   * **Develop a comprehensive website with a current listing of applicable data and site opportunities. Have not started this yet. Still working on business data-base** 
     + **Workforce data**
     + **Business contacts**
     + **Community profile**
6. **Keep LOIS updated – ongoing**
7. **Organize at least two “Lunch & learn” type events where managers and HR directors can share their successes, opportunities, and challenges - plamning**

**GOAL 2:**

**RETAINING, EXPANDING AND RECRUTING SMALL BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENSTS. JCEA will further develop a small business and commercial retention, expansion, and recruitment program for the Jackson County area to evaluate the local business climate, offer assistance to employers through meetings or actions pertaining to economic development guidelines and incentives, hiring, training and other appropriate activity relating to expansion, relocation, recruitment, and attraction of small business and commercial to increase the local tax base, sales tax collection and to create or retain jobs.**

**Small business is defined as less than 50 employees**

**Commercial business is defined as an activity conducted by companies to provide goods or services for sale. Commercial business includes the activity done outside of manufacturing or producing the products. Commercial business can also include the use of land or business for business activity, such as retail stores.**

1. **Identify and develop a data base of the small businesses and commercial employers in Jackson County. Data base will include multiple points of contact in case of turnover including local manager, human resources director and finance director if applicable. - In process. Have a data base with over 350 properties in Jackson County. Working with Chambers to match properties with businesses and their contact information. Will use Constant Contact to set up email lists.**
2. **JCEA will actively promote Jackson County as a pro-business/commercial community. ongoing**
3. **JCEA will develop a comprehensive questionnaire based on the premise of the Synchronist software to identify needs of existing small and commercial businesses.** 
   * **JCEA will initially meet with 25 small and commercial businesses each year for the first two years. Still working on larger businesses but will start scheduling these in after the capital campaign visits have concluded.**
   * **JCEA will meet with 10 small and commercial businesses each year for the remaining three years.**
4. **JCEA will be a resource for small business and commercial growth/development.** 
   * **Develop a comprehensive website with a current listing of applicable data and site opportunities. – still working on database**
     + **Workforce data**
     + **Business contacts**
     + **Community profile**
5. **Organize at least two “Lunch & learn” type events where managers and HR directors can share their successes, opportunities, and challenges planning**
6. **Identify gaps in the good and services in Jackson County and determine if there are current business opportunities for existing businesses to expand into these areas and/or specifically recruit those types of businesses or services. Have a business survey that will be submitted to obtain this information as soon as Constant Contact is set up.**

**GOAL 3:**

**COLLABORATION WITH JACKSON COUNTY, CITIES, SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS, NON-PROFITS, AND SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS.**

*Minimal discussion on this goal other than adding hospitals as part of the main goal.*

1. **JCEA will develop a comprehensive questionnaire based on the premise of the Synchronist software to identify the needs, activities, and goals of these organizations. – have completed some of these interviews.**
2. **JCEA will meet with County staff and officials on at least a quarterly basis.**
   * + **Develop a set of goals and initiatives to better understand the County’s challenges, assets, and opportunities. Need to schedule meeting**
3. **JCEA will meet with City staff and officials on at least a quarterly basis.**
   * + **Develop a set of goals and initiatives to better understand each city’s challenges, assets, and opportunities. – Have meetings scheduled with Bellevue, Sabula, Baldwin, Spragueville and Monmouth so far.**
4. **JCEA will meet with each school district every year.**
   * + **Develop a joint program between the JCEA and each school district to promote community development and economic growth. - Have bet with BSD, Marquette and Maquoketa so far but will set up additional meeting to talk more about community development and ways we can partner to better support the Schools.**
5. **JCEA will meet with each chamber and development group every year. Met in 2022 – will set up new meetings.**
6. **JCEA will meet with the hospital every year. Met in 2022 = will set up new meetings.**
7. **JCEA will meet with at least 5 service organizations and/or non-profits every year. Planning**

**GOAL 4:**

**DEVELOPMENT. JCEA will promote and facilitate quality development and redevelopment of residential and business inventory and public infrastructure.**

1. **JCEA will assist cities in finding funding opportunities to provide quality housing options**
   * **Monitoring grants**
   * **Keeping current on financial incentive opportunities**
   * **Identify grants and funding for potential rehab or improvement programs.**
   * **Assist cities in renovating and reestablishing abandoned and derelict properties. Note Catalyst grants above but will also target and identify properties for the 2023-2024 grant application season.**
2. **JCEA will continue to participate in regional efforts and organizations that enhance, promote, and connect cultural, natural and park assets. ongoing**
   * **Grant Wood Mississippi River Region**
   * **Hometown Pride**
   * **Green Space Redevelopment Committee**
   * **Other groups of interest**
3. **JCEA and partners will serve as a resource to local governments by searching for funding options to assist with projects identified as community priorities but not limited to downtown development. Ongoing** 
   * **Monitoring grants**
   * **Keeping current on financial incentive opportunities**
   * **Assisting in grant writing whenever it is feasible to do so.**

**GOAL 5:**

**COMMUNITY CULTURE. JCEA will support the communities in Jackson Co to develop a culture of Individual Excellence. Assign a Committee to work on this goal and establish action steps. Talking with Chamber on their April Nibbles and Knowledge. Target to get this Committee meeting as soon as Capital Campaign is concluded.**

\*\*\*Individual Excellence\*\*\*

**A cultural mindset**

Excellence is defined as being the best you can be with the individual talents and skills you are born with and/or are passionate about.

**Promotes a mindset of Cultural Excellence based on Individual Excellence.**

* **Success is not defined by a job title, level of education or by the amount of money a person makes**
* **Success IS defined by an individual’s ability to successfully use their talents and skills to consistently perform a task at a level that equals their ultimate ability to perform that task.**
* **Society does not define success**
* **An individual is not judged by what they do. Instead, they are judged by how well they do what they do.**

**Changes the stigma of non-professional jobs**

* **Reduce the stress and anxiety of performing to another person’s expectations**
  + **Reduces violence**
  + **Brain health costs**
  + **Strain on Brain health system**
* **A process whereby kids are taught at a young age that excellence means being the best you can be with the individual talents and skills they were born with or have an interest in.**

**Encourages individuals to look for opportunities in their hometowns and rural areas**

**Individuals don’t have to go to larger cities for society’s definition of successful professions**

* **Gives manufacturing and industries an opportunity to promote success in a job well done versus a job title**
* **School systems and rural towns promote the opportunities in their areas.**
* **Change the culture in the educational and social systems**
* **Individuals are recognized for successes within their desired skill sets and not job titles**

**Workforce Challenges are addressed by eliminating the stigma; therefore, individuals are not constantly looking for the job that will give them society’s recognition of success. Instead, they are proud to go to work and be able to utilize their skills and talents to the best of their abilities.**

WHAT DOES THIS DO FOR JACKSON COUNTY?

* **POPULATION. Stops the decrease in population.**
  + **From an early age, kids are encouraged to bring out the best in themselves.**
  + **Find their excellence.**
  + **Jackson County is promoted for all the opportunities here.**
  + **People don’t have to leave to be defined as successful.**
* **HOUSING. Encourages an increase in new housing and the revitalization of existing housing.**
  + **Individuals and families stay or return to Jackson County, have pride in their homes and invest in their future.**
  + **When it makes sense for families to support one another in the same housing unit, additions may be added.**
  + **Younger population may have the physical ability to maintain and improve older housing units.**
* **ECONOMY. Improves the economy.**
  + **Growth in population increases the investment**
    - **Housing increases**
    - **Housing Maintenance improves**
    - **Local support in the business community increases**
    - **Tourism increases**
    - **Workforce increases**
* **TAXES. Increases the tax base** 
  + **An increase in tax base can result in more funds for infrastructure improvements and services or a decrease in property taxes**
* **DEVELOPMENT - Increase in Commercial and/or Industrial development.**
  + **Businesses are attracted to growing communities with a strong workforce**
  + **Increase in Commercial and Industrial tax base can result in lower tax rate and/or an increase in services and infrastructure improvements.**
* **WORKFORCE – increases the quantity and quality of the workforce as employees match their skills and abilities with opportunities in Jackson County.**
* **BRAIN HEALTH – decrease in stress increases brain health**
  + **Increase in an individual’s self-worth reduces stress.**
* **SAFETY - decrease in crime** 
  + **Less Stress**
  + **Maintain stable jobs**
  + **Positive environment.**
* **SCHOOLS – expand and thrive as population increases and they find new and better ways to promote Individual Excellence.** 
  + - **Increase in student enrollment increases funding in the schools which gives more opportunities for the student**
* **QUALITY OF LIFE – increases because of all the above.**

**HOW?**

1. **SCHOOLS and COLLEGES**
   1. **Partner with schools and colleges.**
   2. **Survey kids to track the effectiveness of our program.**
   3. **Constant reinforcement through programming, social media and emails.**
   4. **Contact software to track students in high school to match their skills and abilities with available jobs.**
      1. **Employers will keep data base updated with job availabilities.**
      2. **Target businesses that meet the interests, skills and abilities of student and adult workforce.**
2. **CITIES**
   1. **Partner with Cities to constantly highlight and reinforce the amenities each city and rural area has to offer.**
   2. **Track interests and target additional amenities to keep current population and attract additional residents.**
      1. **Develop a survey to determine why residents stay, why they would leave and/or what is needed to encourage them to stay.**
      2. **Partner with cities to develop a plan to address the additional amenities wanted or needed.**
      3. **Partner with cities to find funding options to add the amenities needed or wanted.**
3. **BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIES**
   1. **Partner with existing business and industries to understand and market the skills and abilities needed to do their jobs well.**
   2. **Survey a sample of business and industrial workforce to understand why they stay in the area and/or why they would leave.**
   3. **As it relates to the workforce culture – work with businesses and industries to develop programs to meet the needs of the existing workforce and incent new workers.**
   4. **As it relates to the overall county culture, work with cities as this ties into #2 above.**
4. **JACKSON COUNTY RESIDENTS**
   1. **Understand the culture of our residents as it ties back to the survey in #2.**
   2. **Through media, programs, social events, clubs, community service opportunities, etc. Constantly promote INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE in JACKSON COUNTY.**

**Opportunities with Individual Excellence result in needs to address housing, day care, increased services, school enrollment increased, maintaining and improving infrastructure, and attracting new businesses and industries to maintain employment for the increasing population.**

**Individual Excellence is not only an investment in the future of each and every person, it is an investment in the future of rural Iowa and Jackson County.**

**Individual acceptance is the key to change. Individual excellence is the key to success. Don’t we all want to feel accepted, valued and that we are the very best versions of ourselves? I challenge you to find your individual excellence and encourage it in others. Let’s bring about the best in ourselves, and the best in each other. What does JCEA do? We bring about the best in ourselves, the best in each other and the best in Jackson County.**

**GENERAL ASSISTANCE -** Ben and I continue to stress that we are here to help. We don’t have any limitations or boundaries to how we will assist other than there may be certain areas that we just aren’t qualified for. We will do our best to either help or find more qualified people who are able to assist. We are here to support you however we can to the very best of our abilities. Thank you for putting your trust in us.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED PARTNERSHIPS**

**We sincerely appreciate your time, passion, and energy!**

**MAY THE BEAUTY OF JACKSON COUNTY WELCOME YOU HOME.**

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