

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Tina Hoffman 515-242-4805 or cell 515-240-5357**IDED funds collaborative marketing efforts for north central Iowa**

MASON CITY – Today, funding for the sixth collaborative marketing proposal was announced for the North Central Iowa Growth Partnership, a group representing Cerro Gordo, Floyd, Franklin, Hancock, Mitchell, Winnebago and Worth counties. Mike Blouin, director of the Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED), joined representatives from the group at the Clear Lake City Park Band Shell to announce a \$175,000 grant to assist in their economic development marketing efforts.

“A collaborative approach to economic development marketing will benefit everyone. Companies looking for locations to grow their businesses want to know that an area has the critical mass to attract and sustain their employees. By representing communities in the state as groupings, we show that the amenities are available,” said Blouin. “The grant will match contributions from local governments and private sector groups involved in the continuing effort to create a stronger Iowa economy,” he explained.

The North Central Iowa Growth Partnership’s plan calls for creation of promotional materials, an increased presence on Sell Iowa trips, attendance at trade shows with an improved booth, and the development of a regional prospect database. With state and local participation, the Partnership’s three year program will invest \$325,000 in the seven-county area.

“The counties in the North Central Iowa Growth Partnership realize that working together as a region will increase economic growth,” said Blouin. “Iowans have to work together to promote our state so I am excited to see this kind of cooperation.”

"We are pleased with the vote of confidence IDED has placed in the North Central Iowa Growth Partnership by awarding us this grant. We think this expanded marketing partnership will increase the visibility of the North Iowa area and result in increased cooperation and collaboration for economic development projects in our area.," said Dan Culhane, executive director of the Mason City Economic Development Corporation.

In addition to the state dollars flowing into this initiative, part of the approximately \$200,000 federal appropriation for the purpose of Iowa’s collaborative marketing efforts will go to the North Central Iowa Growth Partnership. United States Senator Tom Harkin and Representative Tom Latham were instrumental in securing these dollars from their positions on the Appropriations Committee.

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“A strong partnership between all levels of government and private business is essential to continued economic growth and vitality in Iowa,” said Harkin. “By working together we can ensure that Iowa not only survives but thrives economically. I look forward to continued cooperation and joint vision for a prosperous Iowa.”

"These funds represent a strong federal commitment to economic development and growth in the State of Iowa," said Iowa Congressman Tom Latham. "I will continue to work hard at the federal level to foster the development of innovative approaches such as this that will benefit all Iowans."

Business and community leaders from around the state have been involved in creating the program to fund these regional economic development efforts. The Professional Developers of Iowa (PDI), an association of economic developers from around the state, was instrumental in designing the Request for Proposal (RFP) that was issued last December. Recipients of awards will receive funding for the next two years with money for the third year dependent on legislative action.

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