



In The Corridor



Serving Mason City, Clear Lake and Cerro Gordo County

November 2011

A quarterly publication of the North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corp.

Recent projects feature new & existing business

Clear Lake women's clinic breaks ground

Dr. Dan Gabrielson and staff (pictured at right with Clear Lake Mayor Nelson Crabb and City Administrator Scott Flory) broke ground September 28 on a nearly \$700,000 clinic project which will see the creation of at least four new jobs and much-desired professional project development in the Clear Lake Business Park. The clinic, which is slated to open in May, will offer OB/GYN services.



The Corridor, Clear Lake Economic Development Corporation and City of Clear Lake partnered fruitfully to secure this project. With Corridor in logistics lead, the CLEDC negotiated the sale of the parcel and the City of Clear Lake authorized a storm sewer extension project necessary to make the project go. The project is a tremendous example of the public and private sectors working closely to create jobs in North Iowa.

Harley Davidson Mason City to redevelop facilities

In August, the Mason City City Council approved a package of tax, infrastructure and forgivable loan incentives designed to leverage the redevelopment of Harley Davidson Mason City at its present location on South Federal Avenue. The \$2.5 million project will result in the refurbishment and

renovation of each building in the Harley complex, retention of at least 20 jobs and the creation of at least six new jobs.

The Corridor applauds the council, which authorized the package unanimously, for its support of this unique redevelopment project which is poised to recondition and recast more

continued on page 8

DID YOU KNOW...

...Election Day is Tuesday, November 8.

Don't forget to vote!!

In this report:

- Rodamaker named to state board..... page 2
- North Iowa Connect page 3
- From the Director..... page 4
- In Other News..... page 6
- Corridor board appointments..... page 7
- Top Workplaces page 7
- Lead Tracking page 8

Rodamaker appointed to IPEP Board



North Iowa Corridor board officer Marti Rodamaker, President of First Citizens National Bank, was one of 11 Iowa business leaders named to the newly-created Iowa Partnership for Economic Progress (IPEP) board, Governor Terry Branstad announced on October 31.

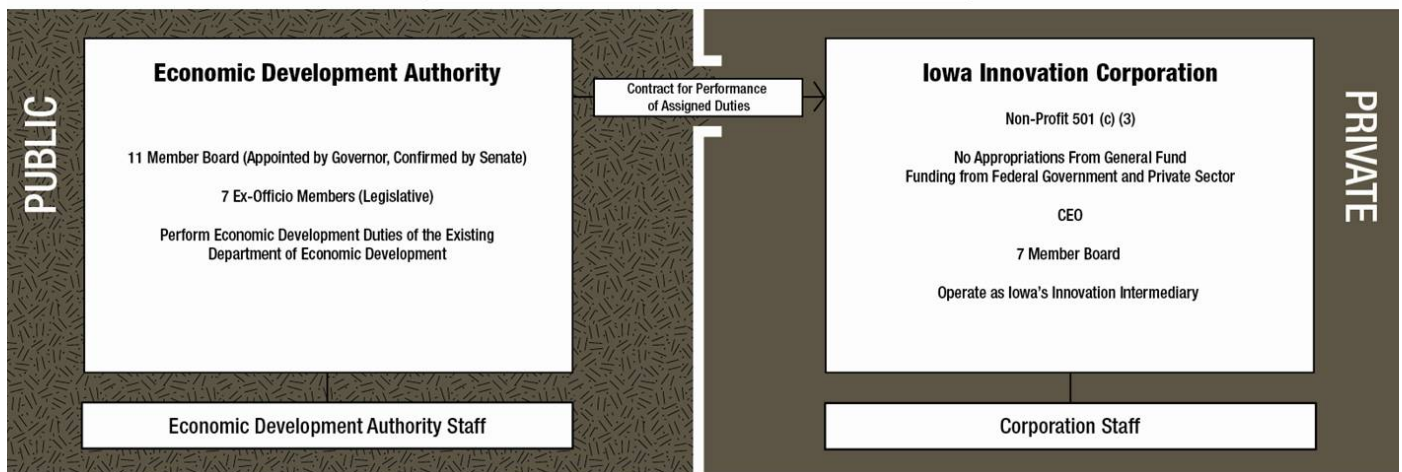
“I am pleased that some of the most admired business leaders in our state have agreed to serve Iowa in this capacity,” said Governor Branstad.

The IPEP board will serve as the umbrella organization for the public-private partnership *(see graphic below)* that was developed by the Governor and legislature last session to enhance Iowa’s approach to job and wealth creation. The board is tasked with developing a comprehensive economic development strategy that will be carried out jointly by the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) and the Iowa Innovation Corporation.

Other members of the IPEP board include: Bill Fehrmann (President and CEO, MidAmerican Energy Company), Paul Schickler III (President,

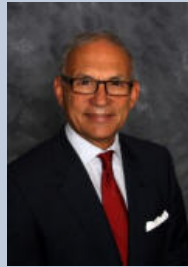
Pioneer Hi-Bred, a DuPont business), Larry Zimpleman (CEO, Principal Financial Group), John Smith (Chairman of the Board, CRST International Inc.), Toby Shine (President, Shine Brothers Corporation), Mary Andringa (President and CEO, Vermeer Corporation), Ken Lockard (Chairman, Lockard Companies), Tom Aller (President, Interstate Power and Light, Alliant Energy), Roger Underwood (Co-founder, Becker-Underwood), and Clay Jones (Chairman, President and CEO, Rockwell Collins).

The IPEP board will be co-chaired by the Governor and Lt. Governor and will also include the director of the Iowa Economic Development Authority, the chair of the IEDA board and the chair of the Iowa Innovation Corporation.



Zanios named to IPEP's Innovation Corporation Board

Jamie Zanios, Vice President of North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC) and head of the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center (JPEC) at NIACC has been named to the board of the Iowa Innovation Corporation, the non-profit corporation that was established by the IEDA (as required by House File 590), that will serve as Iowa's innovation intermediary. The Corporation will operate independently with funding from the private sector and Federal grants.



The members of the Iowa Innovation Corporation board include Robert Riley, Jr. (President and CEO, Feed Energy Co.), Peter Hempken (retired, DuPont), Scott Norvell (President and CEO, Master Builders of Iowa), Cara Heiden (retired, Wells Fargo Home Mortgage), Sarah Haskin (Vice President and Corporate Secretary, AY McDonald Manufacturing Company), Chris Nelson (President and CEO, Kemin Industries Inc.).

Corridor welcomes new staff member

The Corridor is pleased to announce that Teresa Mathers has joined the Corridor staff as Administrative Assistant.

Teresa brings seven years of administrative experience to our team—most recently in human resources for Larson Manufacturing— and was chosen from a vast inventory of applicants for the position.

We are excited to have Teresa on board; she can be reached at tmathers@northiowacorridor.com.

Want to get connected...

In October 2011, North Iowa Connect celebrated its first anniversary. Created to help people aged 21 and over get better plugged into the regional community, North Iowa Connect offers activities in the areas of professional development/networking, civic education and social networking.

Some of North Iowa Connect's events include:

Dinner Connect: A monthly informal dinner at a pre-arranged restaurant in Mason City or Clear Lake. (Each attendee is responsible for his/her expenses.)

BLT (Bigwig Lunch Talks): A monthly brown bag lunch during which a local business leader addresses the group.

Business After Hours:

A partnership with the Chambers of Commerce in Mason City and Clear Lake. Connect members come to the Chambers' Business After Hours events, and North Iowa Connect leaders help them meet people and become more comfortable in a business networking setting.

City Council Pre-Meetings: On a quarterly basis, Connect leaders conduct a meeting immediately prior to a City Council meeting, during which copies of that night's agenda will be available and Connect leaders will brief attendees about meeting procedures.

Event Connect: A different social outing once a month, like



miniature golfing, bowling, etc. (Each attendee is responsible for his/her own expenses.)

For more information, please visit NorthIowaConnect.com, find the group on Facebook, or email info@NorthIowaConnect.com. Membership is free.

*Congratulations to
NIConnect Chairwoman
Andrea Goedderz
for being named to the
2011 Globe Gazette
20 Under 40 list!*

From the Director...

By Brent Willett, NICEDC Executive Director

How do we approach economic development?

Portions excerpted from Willett's address to the North Iowa Corridor's annual meeting in July.

Defining *economic development*, whether we are referencing that of our global, national, state or regional economy is, it seems so often, the functional equivalent nailing the proverbial Jell-O to a wall. Ambiguous and broad-based, you can ask ten people for their definition of the term and you would likely receive ten disparate answers. It's business attraction. It's business retention. It's business expansion. It's workforce development. It's site development. It's infrastructure. It's policy-making. It's advocacy. It's small business consultation. It's government. It's business. The list stretches into perpetuity, it seems, depending upon who is doing the defining.

So how does a regional economic development organization like the North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corporation effectively seek, define and deliver upon a mission which corresponds with the needs of the communities for which it pursues development opportunities? In a word, we appreciate and embrace the successes of the past, learn from our mistakes, and chart a course forward which boldly reorients a region's approach to improving its economic station in life.

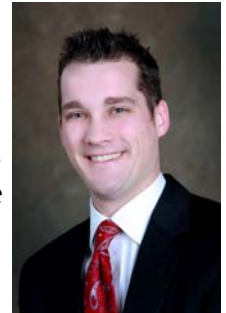
For better or for worse, we do not have a lot of historic

precedence to direct our approach relative to other industries and endeavors. As Ed Morrison of Purdue University's Center for Regional Development points out in his article "What do we know about 'how to create a job?'," [2011; edmorrison.com] the economic development industry is young and has undergone uneven at best change since its birth.

The first school of economic development, which took root in the south in the 1930s, included industrial developers who recruited firms. The second school of focused in the 1960s upon the brokerage of federal programs and the funneling of funding to urban districts and blighted neighborhoods. The third school emerged in the 1970s and caught the moniker "technology-based economic development" (whatever that means), which was supported and depended upon regent and subsequently community college talent and resources.

I apologize for the history lesson, but I have a point. The three schools of economic development just outlined—industrial recruitment, the leveraging of public funding for private projects and the asking of our higher education institutions to generate jobs out of thin air—are old and now mostly irrelevant. The latest one petered out thirty years ago and we haven't, as an industry, fully coalesced around a new model.

As a result many leaders, board members, voters, even economic developers in the field, clutch these old line practices to our chest at night and promise to never let them go.



We have to let them go, especially here and especially now.

The game of recruitment when fueled primarily or exclusively by incentives— that definition so many cling to like grim death when discussing economic development— is increasingly outmoded, largely unproductive and expensive. This is not to say we at the Corridor should ignore business attraction pursuits; quite the contrary. It is to say we must conduct such pursuits with wisdom and a plan which corresponds with a comprehensive regional strategy which targets sector-specific opportunities.

But we have had the luxury of slow, stagnant innovation in the definition and pursuit of economic development in many respects because so many of us have rightful license to opine on how best to administer it. Economic development means nothing and everything to everyone at once. Each of you possesses at least some morsel of

continued on page 5

From the Director— continued from page 4

unique perspective on how jobs ought to best be created in North Iowa that is different than anyone else's. Your perspectives are the product of individual life, work and volunteer experiences, external stimuli like media and scholarship, and your personal value system.

On its face, your definition of economic development and how to do it seems as impersonal a pursuit as can be, but upon further analysis as we recognize that we are talking about ensuring community progress through individual growth and investment, it is as highly a personal endeavor as political self-identity in a bi-cameral system. And as an at once public and private endeavor, you have just license to question, inspire and seek to improve the administration of economic development in North Iowa.

Correspondingly, I don't have a glimmer of a notion on how best to administer automated e-commerce solutions for the

financial sector, another professional endeavor underway in North Iowa; and those folks wouldn't- and shouldn't- listen to them if I had them. But, in the business of the North Iowa Corridor- to our success or our peril- it is incumbent upon us to listen, distill and organize the barrage of thoughts and ideas that come to us about how to create jobs here into a comprehensive regional strategy.

You see, economic developers like me have had both the burden of an endless avalanche of opinion on how best to do the job and the luxury of cherry-picking ideas from thousands of community members and groups and floating like a feather in the wind from one idea or initiative to another, too often influenced by funding, political and look-busy-to-the-board priorities.

So what do we do? We have got to commit. Our approach must combine- to borrow another term from Ed Morrison- publicly-led, privately supported

investments with privately-led; publicly supported investments in innovation; marketing; and community, business and workforce development. And to do it we have got to foster a climate of unremitting collaboration between public and private entities that, candidly, only exist in pockets now.

We cannot keep doing what we have always done here, there or anywhere and expect different results. No one in this room is satisfied with North Iowa's economy today. That is why you are here. So we must, together, begin the complexity-laden transformation of our regional economy.

We have got to promote 21st century skills development *here*. Support innovation and entrepreneurship and the transfer of ideas into wealth *here*. Leverage investments in technology and infrastructure *here*. Strengthen our leadership

continued on page 7

Willett elevated on professional association board

Corridor Executive Director Brent Willett was recently elected Vice President of the Professional Developers of Iowa (PDI). Willett will serve a one-year term beginning December 1st.

Founded in 1973, with current membership of over 310, PDI is an organization dedicated to advancing the professionalism of its members through a wide range of programs and services and offers an instant network of seasoned experts for local professionals to seek advice and support.

According to Lynn Harkin, PDI Executive Director, "As an organization, PDI fosters cooperation

among its members to produce the best results for Iowa. As individuals, every PDI member makes his or her community a better place to live and work. Our board is committed to taking the organization to the next level."

Prior to his role at the Corridor, Willett was Executive Director of the Fairfield Area Chamber of Commerce and Fairfield Economic Development Association. He also serves as PDI Legislative Committee Co-Chairman as well as on the Iowa Association of Business and Industry Economic Growth Committee.

In Other News...

Business Retention & Expansion program update

The Corridor's annual Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) program is heading into its final phases as the year draws to a close.

Executive Director Brent Willett and Project Manager Erica Genise continue to engage in meetings with top-level executives of major employers in Mason City and Clear Lake.

In addition, the "Team Visit" program is well under way, seeing Corridor staff team up with representatives from the City, Chamber and NIACC for conversations with targeted businesses. Eleven Team Visits should be completed by the end of the year.

The Corridor appreciates the partnership with the City of Mason City, City of Clear Lake, NIACC, the Clear Lake Chamber of Commerce, Mason City Chamber of Commerce, and especially the participating companies on this initiative.

North Iowans participate in education retreat

Corridor Director Brent Willett was part of a team of eight North Iowa businesses and education leaders who recently

attended an Institute for a Competitive Workforce workforce/education retreat in Seattle. The retreat included facilitated time discussing workforce and education issues and ways in which communities can improve content, delivery and results with respect to raw education as well as workforce preparedness.

One primary outcome to the retreat was the organization of a retreat of similar but regional scope to be held November 29 at NIACC.

Workforce preparedness is a key element in attracting and retaining jobs and projects in North Iowa.

Other participants included Mason City & Clear Lake Superintendent Anita Micich, NIACC President Deb Derr, State Representative Josh Byrnes, State Representative Sharon Steckman, Robin Anderson (Mason City Chamber), Kent Brcka (Henkel Construction), Robin Edgar (Edgar Financial Services), Jackie Luecht (Mercy Medical Center-North Iowa), and Troy Swanson (Cargill).

Thank you

to Lyons Toyota for loaning cars periodically to the Corridor for site visits by prospective companies.



It's nice to host these visitors in clean, new vehicles, and it speaks volumes about the partnerships between businesses here in the Corridor.

Online RESOURCES

- ▶ [Cerro Gordo County – Co.Cerro-Gordo.ia.us](http://Co.Cerro-Gordo.ia.us)
- ▶ [City of Clear Lake – CityOfClearLake.com](http://CityOfClearLake.com)
- ▶ [City of Mason City – MasonCity.net](http://MasonCity.net)
- ▶ [North Iowa Area Community College – Niacc.edu](http://Niacc.edu)
- ▶ [John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center – Niacc.edu/pappajohn](http://Niacc.edu/pappajohn)
- ▶ [Iowa Works – IowaWorkforce.org](http://IowaWorkforce.org)
- ▶ [Visit Mason City – VsitMasonCityIowa.com](http://VsitMasonCityIowa.com)
- ▶ [Mason City Municipal Airport – FlyMCW.com](http://FlyMCW.com)
- ▶ [Clear Lake Chamber of Commerce – ClearLakelowa.com](http://ClearLakelowa.com)
- ▶ [Mason City Chamber of Commerce – MasonCityIa.com](http://MasonCityIa.com)
- ▶ [Greater Mason City Board of Realtors – MasonCityMLS.com](http://MasonCityMLS.com)
- ▶ [Iowa Dept. of Economic Development – IowaLifeChanging.com](http://IowaLifeChanging.com)

From the Director —continued from Page 5

programming and regional governance *here*. Take risks *here*.

And we have got to create a new narrative about ourselves for the

rest of the world. I know it gets cold in the winter and the cement plant closed, but if we don't believe in ourselves and restructure the way we discuss our challenges and opportunities, transform ourselves

and recast our economy, no one else is going to do it, or worse, someone else will.

I'm looking forward to working with each of you.

Corridor finalizes board appointments

Completing its slate of seven new board appointments, the North Iowa Corridor EDC welcomes new board members Travis Hickey and Gary Lindgren.

Hickey, Operations Manager at FedEx Freight in Mason City and a Mason City Councilman, recently completed a term on the Visit Mason City Board of Directors. He is also on the board of the Rock Falls-based Shellrock Ducks Unlimited Chapter and is a 2009 Iowa state walleye angling champion.

Hickey and his wife, Monica, have two sons, Trev and Zach. They live in Mason City.

Lindgren, Market President at Community National Bank in Mason City, brings a volume of business experience to the Corridor board. A former department store executive,



Lindgren also spent thirteen years with Piper Jaffrey as a broker and five years as Business Development Director with RSM McGladrey in Mason City.

Lindgren has served in numerous volunteer capacities in the region, including with the United Way of North Central Iowa, Mason City Chamber of Commerce and Trinity Lutheran Church. He and his wife, Sharon, live in Mason City.

Other new appointments this year, as reported in the July 2011 issue of In The Corridor, are Tim Esbeck (MBT Bank), Dennis Reidel (Mason City Overhead Door/Midwest Roofing), Gary Schmit (Henkel Construction), John Severtson (Opportunity Village), and David Vikturek (Mason City Foundation).

Corridor investor businesses named Top Workplaces

Congratulations to five North Iowa Corridor EDC investor businesses in Mason City/Clear Lake for being named to Iowa's Top Workplaces 2011.

TeamQuest, McGladrey, Hy-Vee, First Citizens National Bank, Clear Lake Bank & Trust were included on the 2011 list, released in September. Sixty-seven Iowa companies received this honor in 2011.

Top Workplaces is a national program run in conjunction with



the major newspaper in each region; the Des Moines Register is the media partner in Iowa.

Companies are selected following a survey of their employees, and the companies that employees have rated as the best companies to work for are featured.

To nominate a business or to find out more about Iowa's Top Workplaces, visit www.topworkplaces.com.

Recent Projects—continued from Page 1

than a city block along the Federal Avenue corridor.

As City Administrator Brent Trout stated in his memo to the council, “[T]he significance of this action is to secure the continued presence in Mason City of one of the best Harley Davidson dealerships in the nation. Customers come from long distances to shop at Mason City Harley Davidson. Their store is a destination location for many people that shop and ride motorcycles.”

Titan Pro SCI expands

The Clear Lake City Council in July agreed to draft a Development Agreement to help support a \$2 million, 50,000 square foot expansion by Titan Pro SCI in the Clear Lake Industrial Park.

This would be an amendment to the company’s 2010 Clear Lake development agreement to enable comparable property tax rebate schedules on the proposed expansion.

The company expects the addition to allow them to expand their services and add eight to nine full-time employees to their staff.

Waste-to-energy jobs project looking at Mason City

Larkspur, Colorado-based Creative Energy Systems, Inc. has announced plans to construct a \$35 million waste-to-energy gasification facility in Mason City on a 15-acre site immediately east of Golden Grain Energy in Mason City.

The company would accept up to 250 tons of municipal solid waste currently being buried at the


North Iowa Corridor Project Lead Tracking

Project Leads 3rd Quarter 2011	Capital Investment Represented	Potential Jobs Retained or Created
Attraction	\$355.7M	308
Existing	\$7M	131
TOTALS:	\$362.7M	439
<p><u>KEY:</u> Attraction = Recruiting new businesses Existing = Retention or expansion of existing businesses</p>		

Landfill of North Iowa, gasify it in a closed-loop, oxygen-starved chamber to create a synthetic gas and combust the gas to fire turbines to create 10 megawatts of power sold to Alliant Energy.

The Corridor, which assisted in attracting the interest of the company to North Iowa via a lead from the Iowa Economic Development Authority, is currently serving as a non-participant facilitator between the company and a myriad of regulatory and participant entities. Should the company receive local, state and federal permits and reach agreements with Alliant Energy and the Landfill of North Iowa, up to 58 new jobs would be created as a result.

The Mason City City Council during its October 4 meeting approved a development agreement for the project which would provide a 10-year property tax agreement and certain infrastructure improvements to the site should the project proceed.

<p>Brent Willett Executive Director bwillett@northiowacorridor.com</p>	<p>Erica Genise Project Manager egenise@northiowacorridor.com</p>	<p>641-423-0315 NorthIowaCorridor.com</p> 
<p>Ken Bales Development Specialist kbales@northiowacorridor.com</p>	<p>Teresa Mathers Administrative Assistant tmathers@northiowacorridor.com</p>	