

Word from the EDC Chair

2008 has been a big year for progress at the Champaign County EDC. The organization hired a new interim President and CEO and completed a Strategic Plan of action to carry it through 2011. Successful planning is paramount for any organization to achieve its mission. The objectives, tactics and goals laid out on the following pages are currently being used by the EDC as a roadmap to drive effective and efficient work.

Growing an economy is a continual process requiring collaboration among stakeholders and a laser like focus on the end goal in order to succeed. Outlined in the Strategic Plan are 6 key goals the EDC will strive to achieve by 2011. The Champaign County EDC Board of Directors determined these goals through knowledge and experience gained from a history of collaboration with local governments, the Champaign County Chamber of Commerce, and the Champaign County Convention and Visitors Bureau. Together these public entities are working in sync to better the Champaign County economy. The mission of the EDC is to retain jobs and create jobs through business attraction and retention. Although you will see many objectives in the strategic plan, they all lead to success in creating jobs and positively impacting business. Consequently, an audacious and overarching goal has been set for EDC Staff to create 300 jobs in our county before July 2009.

This year Staff took steps in fostering strategic relationships by adopting the use of new tools for measuring project economic impact and for tracking and measuring retention visits. The Regional Planning Commission has licensed economic impact software for use by the EDC. It gives us the ability to measure how great of an impact a project or project year has on the local economy in both private consumer terms and public fiscal terms. More importantly it quantifies the impact of investor's dollars through the EDC. In addition, AmerenIP has extended a license to share a nationally recognized retention visit tracking tool called e-Synchronist for the EDC's use.

When looking through the plan please keep in mind that the objectives were selected out of a lengthy list of issues identified by business and community leaders on the EDC board. These objectives were chosen as the current priorities for the near 3 year term. Down the line as progress is made and problems abate there will be different and potentially burning issues to take their place. The activities of the EDC will continue to evolve around its mission.

Thank You,



*Lynne Barnes, EDC FY 2009
Board Chair*



STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

I. Job Retention

Pages 1-2

Job retention is a primary objective of the EDC in reaching its goals, and as such Staff has adopted the use of e-Synchronist to help track and measure the results of retention visits. The software will greatly enhance our ability to identify key community issues, track industry trends, and focus resources on key business issues.

II. Business Attraction

Pages 3-4

Business attraction is another primary objective of the EDC. Successful business attraction creates new job opportunities in the county. EDC Staff is geared to expand marketing initiatives to site consultants, build relationships with businesses outside the county, and work with companies considering a Midwest location.

III. Relationship Building with Stakeholders Page 5

Relationship building with stakeholders is a fundamental objective of the EDC in creating comprehensive partnerships with economic stakeholders in the county. The EDC represents the bottom line interests of business. Successful economic development means more opportunity and growth for the existing business community.

IV. Marketing of Champaign County

Page 6

This underlying objective of the EDC impacts all other objectives. Staff has identified key mediums through which appropriate target audiences can be reached to communicate various advantages of locating a business in Champaign County.



V. Willard Airport Development Page 7

Airport development is a supporting objective of the EDC in addressing the concerns of local business. Immediate airport access is critical for many local businesses and for many businesses that would consider moving here. At the request of the University of Illinois, the airport's owner and operator, the EDC will convene a broad based community coalition to examine all available options that may improve the airport's service to the region.

VI. Educational Opportunity Page 8

The EDC will increase collaboration with local public and private schools to highlight local educational strengths, accomplishments, and developments to the region. Champaign County's quality educational system is a strong competitive advantage the EDC often uses when communicating with site consultants or companies looking to expand or relocate in Champaign County.

VII. Utility/Public Service Engagement Page 9

Engaging the utilities as partners in development is critical for knowledge sharing when planning or proposing projects. Staff is also engaging public services like the MTD after retention work that includes concerns about public transportation.

VIII. Key Performance Indicators Page 10

Indicators for measuring staff performance and organization effectiveness.

IX. Contributors to the Strategic Plan Page 11-12



JOB RETENTION

Goals:

Retain and expand local existing and start-up companies by offering relocation assistance, marketing assistance, and connections to appropriate educational and business resources.

Expand tax base.

Action Statement: Visit existing local companies to help strengthen the county's cooperative business environment; and identify, report, and address issues that may prohibit economic growth. In order to record, track, and measure data gleaned from retention visits the EDC will adopt the use of a nationally recognized retention tracking tool called e-Synchronist. E-Synchronist will allow better tracking and follow up on issues identified during each visit. The reporting capabilities offered by the software will enable staff to report reoccurring issues to the board and quantify the significance of such issues. The program was provided by AmerenIP and licensed from Blane Canada, Inc. at no cost to the EDC.

OBJECTIVES (2008):

Complete 40 priority business visits to top employers

Complete 80 visits to businesses in the community with an emphasis on technology firms

Convene three business roundtables

Visit headquarters of three largest local companies

Assist five local companies in acquiring capital investment

Coordinate four technology networking mixers

Retain or create 300 jobs

Manage meetings of the Tech Advisory Committee

TACTICS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

Coordinate and prioritize retention visits with local officials and developers

Conduct Economic Impact Analysis as appropriate

Utilize e-Synchronist to follow through on concerns identified during retention visits

Engage companies with appropriate local resources/contacts to fulfill needs

Respond to calls for market and demographic information

Create industry roundtables created around location and sector as necessary

Measure business dependence on local resources (i.e. Willard Airport)

Revisit strategies for expansion to ensure viability in appropriate sectors

Report retention visit outcomes, issues and growth to EDC board

Serve on the CSBG loan Committee

Publish monthly Tech Newsletter

JOB RETENTION



BUSINESS ATTRACTION

Goals:

Develop strategies that effectively react to leads.

Attract new companies to the county.

Expand the tax base.

Action Statement:

Reorganize staff roles to more effectively track leads and for follow up on those leads. Tracking the site consultants that bring us leads will grow our level of marketing contact with these consultants and prospective businesses. Tracking analysis in project post mortem will also allow us to address the challenges that force Champaign County out of the running for business expansion.

OBJECTIVES (2008):

Seek lead opportunities (research or referral)

Contact fifty site consultants

Meet in person with 10 site consultants

Evaluate and develop a strong relationship with two outside companies that can be strategically invited to locate in Champaign County

Prepare 25 proposals for business leads

Arrange 10 site consultant visits to Champaign County

Assist in the creation of 300 jobs annually

Research state and federal grant resources/tax abatements

TACTICS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

Harness state and local resources to follow through with attraction and growth opportunities

Target marketing to specific businesses in manufacturing and distribution, biomedical and healthcare, computer technology and programming, and agribusiness and alternative fuel technologies



BUSINESS ATTRACTION

Prepare publications for site consultants that include: Top Employer and Tech Directories, Community Profiles, the Pathfinders Underemployment study and the Labor Shed Report

Track prospect post mortem advice/deficiencies

Engage the University of Illinois office of Corporate Relations for information and attraction support; visit appropriate Deans as well.

Identify and train site visit teams to host visiting site consultants and companies

Attend strategic corporate networking opportunities

Participate in the Illinois Development Council



RELATIONSHIP BUILDING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Goals:

Engage the entire community around economic initiatives and success

Ensure financial stability of the EDC

Identify grant opportunities

Action Statement:

Initiate an aggressive program for increasing private investments in the EDC. Marketing materials have been created to effectively communicate the organization's goals and objectives. Exclusive value added services will be offered to our investors to open up lines of communication reflecting the EDC's progress. An expanded list of potential stakeholders will be partnered with on-site visits to gain support for the EDC mission.

OBJECTIVES (2009-11):

Increase Business Awareness of EDC goals

Retain and visit 100% of current investors

Increase private sector revenue by \$20,000

Increase public revenue by \$15,000

Ensure an investing board by requiring investment greater than \$999 for voting member consideration

TACTICS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

Speak to public and private membership organizations

Execute stakeholder marketing plan

Distribute EDC promotional materials

Explain funding level structure

Communicate the value-added components to our investors

Visit 30 new stakeholders annually

Publish Investor Newsletter quarterly

Maintain investor section on EDC web site



MARKETING OF CHAMPAIGN COUNTY

Goal:

Strengthen marketing of Champaign County to area stakeholders, outside businesses, industries and site consultant firms

Action Statement:

Identify measures to market the specific aspects of the county with the appropriate focus for the parties identified above. This includes a mixture of newsletters, marketing flyers, profile publications, web site and email media. Distribution will be focused locally, statewide, nationally and internationally as opportunities are identified.

OBJECTIVES (2008):

Become visible and well known in Champaign County as the community's lead economic development organization

Develop Relationships among site consultants in Chicago and nationwide that Champaign County is "open for business" and the EDC is the focal point for information

Put Champaign County in the minds of corporate leadership when they are considering a move or expansion in the Midwest

TACTICS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

Specific tactics with individual accountability (work plan)

Author an "elevator message" about the EDC and Champaign County

Package all EDC materials for a unified appearance; select key information about Champaign County's economic and business environment that should be represented

Execute county, state and national marketing plan (Promotion/advertising)

Develop local PR plan ("know your community") to enhance pride and understanding of what Champaign County has to offer

Network with area businesses to develop new business contacts

Explore "best practices" for developing and presenting economic profile information

Develop streamlined intake process via telephone and web site



WILLARD AIRPORT

Goal:

Improve commercial service and evaluate airport governance that will benefit local business travelers

Action Statement:

At the request of the University of Illinois, the airport's owner and operator, the EDC will lead a collaborative effort to determine the optimal governing structure of the airport. In order to fulfill this goal the EDC has been designated as the primary information exchange agent through which travel needs and interests of local private business are accurately communicated to airport leadership. Inversely, the EDC will serve to educate private business about the University's plans for the airport.

OBJECTIVES (2008):

Forge a University/community partnership dedicated to charting the strategic growth and development of Willard Airport

Lead efforts to bring all airport stakeholders together (business and municipal)

Seek airport professionals to evaluate and help reengineer airport governance

Increase service to and from Willard Airport

TACTICS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

Maintain regular contact with University Staff

Hold forums to maintain stakeholder interest and knowledge

Survey local businesses that use air travel regularly; measure volume and destinations

Approach air service providers with the market numbers

Contribute resources to educating the public on the positive impact of airport growth

Build public support for community based investments critical to Willard Airport's continued commercial air service



Goal:

Embrace excellence at the primary, high school and college levels to display the high quality of area education and the potential for positive impact on the economy

Action Statement:

Identify good news from schools county wide that has a positive impact on the local business climate. Quality schools are a recognized factor in business attraction; therefore, the EDC will highlight programmatic strengths to site consultants and act as a reference to educational programs county wide.

OBJECTIVES (2008):

Increase awareness of future employment needs of local industry to educators

Emphasize education as an asset to economic development in the community through public media

Bring public attention to successes in the local K-12 schools

Raise community awareness of current educational programs and pre-professional programs offered by Parkland, the University of Illinois and others

Ensure technical trends in local industry are reflected in K-12 educational planning

TACTICS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

Link EDC Web site to district sites

Highlight various programs on EDC web site on a regular basis

Identify strengths of our Champaign County schools as they relate to economic development

Communicate future employer skill requirements to County Superintendents

Inform the EDC stakeholders of policies that may impact public and private school funding

Educate the community about the connection between strong education systems, economic attractiveness and growth



UTILITY/PUBLIC SERVICE ENGAGEMENT

Goal:

To engage the utilities and public services as partners for development

Action Statement:

Engage private utilities and public services in ways that will smooth the information sharing process and identify sites easily served. This includes the sharing of software tools that will make use of best-practice resources and processes.

OBJECTIVES (2008):

Maintain open lines of contact with the utilities as projects evolve and include them in the proposal process

Help identify sites with the best utility capacity in the county for business development proposals

Collaborate with public services when opportunities arise out of retention visits

Support environmental and energy sustainability

TACTICS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

Address utilities and public services at all retention visits

Develop and maintain relationships with local providers and users, specifically large industrial users

Identify future energy generation opportunities and implications

Identify funding opportunities for distributed generation

Seek projects that embody sustainable attributes



Category	Goal
OUTCOME BASED STRATEGIC GOALS	
Return On Investment (ROI)**	
Private	20000%
Public	381%
Economic Impact (private sector)	
Direct	\$16,250,000
Indirect	\$4,500,000
Induced	\$4,250,000
Total	\$25,000,000
Fiscal Impact (public sector)	\$1,000,000
[Includes construction and operations]	
Public Revenue increase	\$20,000
Private Revenue increase/new investors	\$12,500
Jobs created***	300
or retained	

Category	Goal
OPERATIONAL PROCESS ORIENTED GOALS	
Priority business retention visits	40
Incubator and RP Retention visits	80
Proposals for business leads	25
Site visits by consultants	10
External HQ visits of largest local companies	3
FY 2008 Investors Retained	41
In-person meetings with site consultants	10
Contacts with site consultants	50
Businesses attracted, 1st party contact	2
Assistance procuring investment for businesses	5
Tech networking mixers	4
Business roundtables started	3
Investor Newsletters	4
Monthly Tech Newsletters	9

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

REPRESENTED IN CHART FORM

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be assigned to each objective in order to effectively measure progress in areas such as job retention and attraction, investor dollars retained, and investor dollars generated.



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STRATEGIC
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Board Officers FY2008

Craig Rost, Chair, City of Champaign
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Board Officers FY2009

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Carl Meyer/Seamus Riley, Treasurer, Parkland Foundation
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***The EDC would like to recognize the following FY2008
board members who are no longer serving:***

Charles Zukoski, University of Illinois
Mike Estes, Fisher National Bank
Jeff James, Christie Clinic

Board Members FY2009

Kenneth Bilger, Christie Clinic and Community Partners
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