

**Clarinda Economic
Development Corporation**

Annual Report 2005

Prepared by:

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Executive Director

Background

2005 provided some significant changes to the Clarinda Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) with the hiring of a new Executive Director in the spring of 2005. Chad Wellhausen filled the position as Executive Director, returning to Clarinda from Omaha, NE.

Getting Started

As a newly hired director, I believed that my first goal was to spend time understanding Clarinda's businesses. To fully understand how CEDC can assist the City of Clarinda, I felt it important to gain an understanding of the people, businesses and officials that make up Clarinda. Visiting businesses, utility providers and discussing issues with the Chamber of Commerce, City Council, County Supervisors and various organizations and groups was of first priority. I hope to build on these relationships, continue to better understand industry in Clarinda and work with the community to continue success for Clarinda.

Currently serving as Executive Director for less than one year, I have had the opportunity to be involved in many projects and events. Here are a few:

Conferences

2005 provided me the opportunity to attend numerous conferences. Conferences range from Value Added Agriculture to Venture Capital. Other conferences included topics of Rural Electric Cooperatives, Iowa Bankers Association and the role of the BioEconomy in rural development. A highlight of attending conferences was when I attended with local individuals. Attending conferences with fellow community members provides the opportunity to gain new ideas and build relationships.

Speaking Engagements

Speaking engagements are one of the most rewarding opportunities as director for the CEDC. Meeting with organizations, groups or businesses provide me the opportunity to not only explain the goal of the CEDC, but more importantly gain insight and ideas. Such opportunities to learn are important drivers in the direction of the CEDC. A few examples of speaking engagements included Farm Bureau, Early Childhood Development Conference and various service organizations.

Regional Economic Development

The CEDC's goal is to nurture, build and secure a viable economy for the City of Clarinda. However, a portion of that includes involvement in regional economic development efforts. Involvement with organizations such as Southwest Iowa Coalition has allowed the CEDC to team up with other economic development organizations to work on projects and legislation that affect Southwest Iowa.

Legislative Efforts

Legislative issues and changes are an important part of our community's economic viability. From both a local, state and national level, the CEDC is involved and abreast on political issues, candidates and changes.

Local

- Coordinated, with the Chamber of Commerce, the 2005 City of Clarinda Legislative Forum
- Continually work with Clarinda City Council, Mayor and Page County Supervisors

State

- Communicate with local legislators on issues such as taxation, eminent domain and environmental regulations
- Visited Rep. Anderson and Sen. Houser at state capital for Legislative Tourism Day
- Hosted the Legislative Briefings at the Clarinda Lied Library

Nationally

- Hosted visit from Congressman Steve King to Clarinda Academy, E-Z Way and Lisle Corporation. Discussions included international trade, telecommunications in rural areas and business development strategies.

Project Highlights

A few additional projects the CEDC participated in over the past year:

NSK Expansion Project

The CEDC is excited that the expansion is going well and additional employees are locating in the Clarinda area.

Naturally Iowa

Naturally Iowa is a very unique business that represents entrepreneurship and value added agriculture in Southwest Iowa.

Lied Library Planning Committee

The CEDC had the opportunity to serve on the Library Planning Committee to assist with development of the goals for the library.

Grow Iowa Foundation

With assistance from local institutions, the CEDC coordinated the continuation of the Grow Iowa Foundation Revolving Loan Fund for startup businesses.

Hwy 71 Project

Coordinating with Page County Supervisors, City Council and regional economic development individuals, the CEDC lobbied to the Iowa DOT Commission for improvements to highway 71.

Casey's Project

The CEDC facilitated a transaction that allowed the vacated Casey's property to be sold to Shore Motor Company.

Youth Entrepreneurship

The CEDC incorporated a youth program that teaches children about the process of starting your own business.

Key Projects Going Forward

Many projects continue to be of importance to the CEDC and the city of Clarinda. These projects represent only few:

Continued Success of Existing Businesses

CEDC values the retention and growth of our existing industry. We want to assist in any needs our existing businesses may have.

Expansion of Allen Davison Business Park

The CEDC plans to continue to recruit and assist with business expansion into the business park.

Theatre

With the unfortunate passing of the owner of the Caprice Theatre, the City of Clarinda is posed with a challenge and opportunity as to the future potential for a theatre in Clarinda.

Value Added Agriculture

Increased opportunities for value added agriculture are occurring in Southwest Iowa. The CEDC continues to be involved in the recruitment efforts of opportunities that may involve livestock, wind or alternative fuels.

Rural Development Conference

CEDC is coordinating a conference with other economic development offices and Alliant Energy to educate communities on opportunities that exist in economic development. The conference will be held April 12 in Creston. Contact the CEDC for details.

Conclusion

Economic development is a continual learning process with flexibility and cooperation of utmost importance. The CEDC is excited about the future of Clarinda, but realizes that it takes hard work and input from everyone to succeed.

The CEDC is here to answer questions, provide resources and most importantly receive input from the community as to the needs and potential opportunities for growth. I look forward to working with each of you in the upcoming year and learning about your business, ideas and thoughts for our community. I encourage you to visit the CEDC office. The door is always open.

Sincerely,

Chad Wellhausen
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