



## Itasca Economic Development Corporation May June 2011 Newsletter

### Key Performance Indicators

	YTD	2011 Annual Target
<b>Total Clients Served at IEDC Facility</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>Business Recruitment Leads</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Total Project Investment – Completed (&gt; 10 MM)</b>	--	<b>\$75 M</b>
<b>Total Project Investment – Completed (&lt; 10 MM)</b>	<b>\$2M</b>	<b>\$5 M</b>
<b>IEDC Assisted Project Investment – Completed (&gt; 10 MM)</b>	--	<b>\$5 M</b>
<b>IEDC Assisted Project Investment – Completed (&lt; 10 MM)</b>	<b>\$540,000</b>	<b>\$5 M</b>
<b>Total Project Investment – In Progress (&gt; 10 MM)</b>	<b>\$625 M</b>	--
<b>Total Project Investment – In Progress (&lt; 10 MM)</b>	<b>\$9.3 M</b>	--
<b>IEDC Assisted Project Investment – In Progress (&gt; 10 MM)</b>	<b>\$45 M</b>	--
<b>IEDC Assisted Project Investment – In Progress (&lt; 10 MM)</b>	<b>\$9.3 M</b>	--
<b>Actual or Projected New Jobs – Completed Projects</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Actual or Projected New Jobs – Projects in Progress</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Jobs Retained</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>25</b>

### Itasca Eco Industrial Park

Preliminary negotiations continued throughout the month of June between IEDC and a potential anchor tenant for the Itasca Eco Industrial Park, with objectives aimed at establishing formal commitments between the two parties and identifying all project development work required over the next seven months and beyond. IEDC submitted a framework to the Company outlining potential terms of a lease or purchase option, and revisions are being discussed actively between the two parties. A new memo of understanding (MOU) reflecting these discussions is on track to be executed during the first half of August, 2011, pending legal review and board approval on behalf of both parties.

In response to this progress, business expansion and attraction activities at the Itasca Eco Industrial Park have been refocused on targeting small to mid-sized companies in support of the integrated development strategy put forth by IEDC. This vision, whereby complimentary operations are to be located at the Eco Park and in the surrounding area, is expected to reduce operating costs and leverage byproducts generated by the potential anchor tenant, to create an environment where businesses can be highly competitive on a global scale. Local businesses are being targeted for expansion, while attraction prospects are being cultivated through a series of conferences and networking activities.

Most recently, Jeff Borling attended the 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Wood & Biofiber Plastic Composites in Madison, Wisconsin in mid-May, and plans call for him to attend an additional conference in Grand Forks at the end of July, entitled, "Biomass '11: Renewable Power, Fuels & Chemicals." Direct-mail marketing campaigns and extensive industry-based networking activities are underway in conjunction with these tradeshow opportunities, targeting

manufacturers of new and traditional wood building products, and producers of wood-based chemicals, plastics and pharmaceuticals.

## 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Wood & Biofiber Plastic Composites

[The 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Wood & Biofiber Plastic Composites](#) was held in Madison, Wisconsin from May 16-17, 2011. The conference gathered experts from the scientific, technical, and commercial communities to encourage the exchange and dissemination of information on the latest advances and future opportunities for products made from wood and biofiber plastics composites.

The conference featured a two-track format of formal presentations which explored the nature, structure, performance, markets and issues concerning wood/natural fiber-plastic composite products. Although highly technical and academic/R&D-focused, the conference did reveal valuable information about the future of the wood products industry, including the role wood products markets will play in utilizing recycled materials and other various waste streams.

Companies around the world are bringing products to market which contain varying blends of wood fiber and plastic feedstocks, touted for their minimal maintenance requirements and resistance to insects, mold and water damage. Although pallets, crates, deck boards and other outdoor building materials are the most popular products today, companies at the conference discussed an array of products that can be manufactured out of composite materials, including concrete casting sheets, car parts, toys, pencils, cell phone cases, and so on.

Conference follow-up activities are underway and at least one company has agreed to visit the region in the Fall of 2011 to discuss potential expansion opportunities. For more information on the conference or wood/plastic composite products, please contact Jeff Borling at: (218) 326-9411, or [jboring@apexgetsbusiness.com](mailto:jboring@apexgetsbusiness.com).

## Strategic Partner Meeting

Approximately sixty Strategic Partners were present at the TimberLake Lodge on June 14<sup>th</sup> for IEDC's Strategic Partner meeting. IEDC hosted a panel of three presenters including Kevin Kangas, Essar Steel; Chuck Scherer, Nelson Wood Shims; and Rob West, APEX. IEDC's president, Joe Broking, provided an update on IEDC, its partnerships (APEX, NEF and the SBDC), along with a business strategy overview and a deal sheet outlining clients utilizing IEDC's services.

Chairman Rick Lemonds kicked off the 2011 Investment Partner Campaign and explained the new "Pay to Play" model that will be implemented in 2012. IEDC receives funding from Itasca County, Grand Rapids and Cohasset EDA's and other private partners. All funding is matched by the Blandin Foundation. Chairman Lemonds also unveiled a new endowment fund held at the Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation which was developed by past presidents of IEDC with seed money donated by Diane Weber. More information on the name and purpose of the fund will be revealed at a later date.

## IEDC Welcomes New Board Member

The IEDC Board of Director's welcomes its newest member, Diane Weber. Diane has a long history with IEDC, serving as past president as well as Interim President from 2009-2010. The Itasca Eco Industrial Park was formed under Diane's tenure as Interim President. Diane replaces outgoing board member Sue Estee. Sue served on the IEDC Board from 2008-2011. Thank you, Sue, for your dedicated and willing service; welcome back Diane!

## Entrepreneur Fund

The Entrepreneur Fund believes that skilled, passionate entrepreneurs build strong businesses that are the foundation of healthy communities. In partnership with the Itasca Economic Development Corporation, the Entrepreneur Fund

focuses on providing assistance to motivated start-up businesses and providing business financing for local entrepreneurs.

While activity regarding new inquiries into starting a business remains steady, we are actively working with 31 local, high-skilled clients that are assistance in starting their With an active pipeline of are optimistic that outcome the year are on pace to

<b>Itasca County Outcomes</b>	
As of June 30, 2011	
	<b><u>YTD</u></b>
Business Starts	<b>3</b>
Business Stabilizations	<b>2</b>
Business Expansions	<b><u>0</u></b>
<i>Total</i>	<b>5</b>
Number of Loans	<b>4</b>
Loan Volume	<b>\$207,060</b>

seeking business financing or business in Itasca County. clients and loan requests, we results for the second half of exceed the first half.

Know someone looking to start a business? Make a referral to the Entrepreneur Fund - where the support, expertise, and access to financing make the difference in today's business environment. Contact Teri Heikkila at (218) 326-9411 for more information.

### Industrial Space and Technology Space/Services Available

Seven thousand square feet of flexible use space is available in the IEDC industrial building located on Airport Road in Grand Rapids. The space includes an office, lunch room, overhead truck access and a large open area that can be configured for a range of uses including manufacturing and assembly. IEDC has contracted with Rennix Corporation to manage the Airport Road Building and they can be reached at 326-3730.



Space is also available for business start-up or expansion at the Itasca Technology Exchange (ITE) located in Central Square Mall in downtown Grand Rapids. The 1,200 available square feet can be made available in various configurations to suit. Data Center services with secure multiple collocation cabinets are available with redundant network connectivity and power supply. You don't need to be an ITE tenant to utilize Data Center services. Please call Rennix Corporation at 326-3730 for more information.

***IEDC has two great sources of information about doing business in Itasca County. Check these out. Better yet, send links to a business decision maker you know and encourage them to consider the Itasca area for their next venture!***

[www.itascadv.org](http://www.itascadv.org)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjQsb1T6smc>