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TO: Mayor John Haila
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Tim Gartin
David Martin
Chris Nelson
Amber Corrieri
Bronwyn Beatty-Hansen
Allie Hoskins
Steve Schainker, City Manager

FROM: Dan Culhane, CEcD, CCE
President & CEO
Ames Economic Development Commission

DATE: June 15, 2018

RE: **Annual Report to the City of Ames**

The Ames Economic Development Commission (AEDC) is pleased to provide this annual summary of activities per our agreement with the City of Ames. We have enjoyed another exceptional year of activity in a number of categories. Our board of directors is grateful for the partnership and the mutual benefit of the relationship we have with the City of Ames and we look forward to another year of moving Ames forward economically.

The last twelve months have provided exceptional opportunities that the AEDC is proud to have played a role within. Following is a summary of our activities:

- Prairie View Industrial Center was formally announced and over 700 acres of the 1300+ acre area is under long-term option for tremendous project opportunities on East Lincoln Way
- This new industrial area is generating significant interest and we are working towards Site Certification on this area in partnership with the Iowa Economic Development Authority and Alliant Energy, Prairie View's utility provider for natural gas and electricity
- The Deere Innovation Center is moving forward in the ISU Research Park, a major project for John Deere, ranked #102 on the Fortune 500
- Sukup Manufacturing opened an office in the ISU Research Park
- Merck Animal Health continues its expansion in Ames working with the AEDC and ISU Research Park officials
- Kent Corporation recently announced the Kent Innovation Center to be located in the ISU Research Park
- QC Supply located in the former Universal Harvester facility on the corner of Dayton and Lincoln Way – a great reuse of a vacant facility in our community
- Find Bob, a Toronto-based technology company, is securing Ames Seed Capital assistance and locating in Ames
- AEDC connected a U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) program to the ISU Research Park for a potential \$1.5 million grant for road and utility improvements – this is currently under review by the EDA
- AEDC is currently working to support the further expansion of the ISU Research Park through the extension of Collaboration Place connecting it to South Riverside Drive
- AEDC won the State's highest Business Retention & Expansion Award for excellence in working with existing industry, specifically related to our Workforce Solutions program, presented by the Professional Developers of Iowa
- Workforce Solutions programming is doing exceptionally well and there are numerous metrics to validate that – web hits, intern attendance at events, job fairs hosted, etc.
- WorkInAmes.com was redeveloped and deployed in 2017 to help both job seekers and employers in Ames and Story County
- A new website for the Ames Economic Development Commission was launched

- AEDC recently entered into agreement to provide staffing of Start Up Ames, a peer group of local entrepreneurs
- The Ames Seed Capital, LLC announced Fund VII with a goal of raising \$3.5 million in private capital to invest in Ames area start up opportunities
- AEDC has provided significant leadership and vision to the ongoing efforts of the Cultivation Corridor
- Currently managing numerous local company expansions which could result in significant capital investment and job creation
- 23 Project Files have been opened in the last 12 months and are active

Ames Ranks Highly and the AEDC advocates and promotes the wide array of accolades the Ames Metropolitan Statistical Area garners from time to time. Here are a few from 2018 and 2017.

- #1 - "The Best Affordable College Towns for Recent Grads—and Everyone Else" (*SF Gate*, 2018)
- #1 - "Best Cities for Working Parents" (*SmartAsset*, 2018)
- Ames named an "Up-and-Coming Tech Hotspot" (*Livability*, 2018)
- "Top 5 Small Metro Areas for Retirees to Age Successfully" (*Investopedia*, 2018)
- "The Most Fitness Friendly Places of 2018" (*SmartAsset*, 2017)
- "Best Public High School in the State" (*24/7 Wall St.*, 2017)
- #1 - "2017 Best Places to Live in Iowa" (*Niche*, 2017)
- #1 - "The Top 10 Cities for Career Opportunities in 2017" (*SmartAsset*, 2017)
- Story County named #8 "Top 10 Mid-Sized Communities for 2017" (*Fourth Economy*, 2017)
- #1 - Silicon Prairie Rankings (*Silicon Prairie*, 2017)
- Top Midwest City For Affordability & Livability (*TurboTenant*, 2017)
- Best Cities for Successful Aging in the U.S. (*The Milken Institute*, 2017)
- Top 10 Easiest Places in Iowa to Sell a Home (*SmartAsset*, 2017)
- Ames named "Technology Community of the Year" (*Technology Association of Iowa*, 2017)
- Top 5 Small Metro Areas for Successful Aging (*NCOA*, 2017)
- "Top 3 Cities Where Job Growth is Happening" (*NationalSwell*, 2017)
- Home of the "Best School District in Iowa" (*Business Insider*, 2017)
- "Best School District in the State" (*Niche*, 2017)

- "The 25 Best Cities for Entrepreneurs" #8 (*Entrepreneur Magazine*, 2017)

The AEDC certainly does not take full credit for these distinctions, rather, we proudly advocate for them and celebrate and promote them when they come to fruition.

Our web presence and social media play a significant role in telling the story and getting the message in front of a variety of audiences. Below are recent statistics on our websites and social media platforms.

Website: www.AmesEDC.com	287,437 visits
AEDC Facebook	329 Likes
AEDC Twitter.....	853 Followers
WorkInAmes Facebook.....	1,159 Likes
See Yourself In Ames Facebook	220 Likes
WorkInAmes Twitter	349 Followers
See Yourself In Ames Twitter	158 Followers
Current Jobs on WorkInAmes.com	1,600 Available Jobs
WorkInAmes.com Job Searches (6/1/17-5/31/18)	119,869 Searches

We appreciate the partnership with the City of Ames and the AEDC leverages the financial commitment of the City very well. The City of Ames \$157,500 (\$90,000 Marketing, \$60,000 Business Development position, \$7,500 Buxton Retail Software) investment in the AEDC leverages another \$1.1 million in capital that is committed by other AEDC investors to underwrite the efforts of the organization. An additional \$120,000 in private investment has been added to the organizational budget in the last year.

What do these dollars underwrite?

- Business Retention & Expansion
- Business Recruitment and Prospect Development
- Retail recruitment
- External Marketing Program – domestic and international
- Advocacy for new business park sites and speculative building development

- Workforce Solutions – See Yourself In Ames internship program, workinames.com – jobs website, Home Base Iowa programming, SCALE program connecting students from K-12 with local employers, and our recently launched Concierge Program – assisting our employers with employee recruitment
- Working with the Start-Up community and supporting that in a number of ways, including the Ames Seed Capital Fund
- Meeting and mentoring various small business opportunities that are not always eligible for traditional financial incentives or seed capital assistance
- Working with the private development community on a wide range of projects across the community

The AEDC performs this work, and more, on behalf of the Ames community. We enjoy the work we do for Ames and look forward to continuing our long-standing partnership.

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