



Item #20a

*Smart Choice*

TO: Mayor John Haila  
Gloria Betcher  
Tim Gartin  
David Martin  
Chris Nelson  
Amber Corrieri  
Bronwyn Beatty-Hansen  
Devyn Leeson  
Steve Schainker, City Manager

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

DATE: June 6, 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. The AEDC board of directors appreciates your steadfast support and recognizes the prominent partner the City of Ames is to the economic development process here in our community.

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**, with over 1,300 acres and 700 of those acres under option, continues to generate major interest while we wait for the deployment of sanitary sewer and water utilities.
- 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, will be complete once the City infrastructure is completed.
- The AEDC assisted 3M in their September 2018 announcement of a \$27.8 million expansion that will create another 27 jobs at their Dayton Avenue facility.
- The **John Deere Innovation Center** is nearly completed and their groundbreaking is slated for July 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- The AEDC connected U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) program for the \$1.7 million grant for road and utility improvements awaits extension of the roadway along with other infrastructure. This is a huge asset and benefit to Ames and the Iowa State University Research Park.
- **Collins Aerospace** opened an R&D facility in the ISU Research Park in the fall of 2018.
- ISU Research Park based Vertex, a local start-up, pledged in February to create 300 new jobs with an average wage of over \$80,000 annually. The company will break ground this year on a new 64,000 square foot facility and invest over \$30 million in the Ames community.
- The AEDC, once again, won the State's highest **Business Retention & Expansion Award** in May for excellence in working with existing industry, specifically for the Burke Corporation expansion in Nevada, presented by the Professional Developers of Iowa. This is relevant as the City of Ames played a major role in its willingness to provide services to the company for temporary acceptance of waste in the event the company needs it until the City of Nevada water treatment plant is completed.
- **Performance Livestock Analytics** recently expanded into the CPMI building in the ISU Research Park pledging to increase their employment levels from 27 people currently to 53 in the next three years.
- With the nation's lowest unemployment, currently at 1.3%, our 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. This statement is supported by the fact that over 20 local companies, including the City of Ames, are providing financial support to augment the program.

- The AEDC continues to support Start Up Ames, a peer group of local entrepreneurs, by facilitating their events, including **One Million Cups** that occurs every Wednesday morning at 7:30 AM and rotates between the ISU campus and downtown Ames.
- The Ames Seed Capital, LLC raised a record **\$4.25 million** for investment in early stage companies and has invested nearly \$1 million in local start-up opportunities.
- At the May board meeting of the AEDC board of directors we reported 23 active projects are in our system.
- The AEDC conducted two roundtables with local housing developers to discuss ways to increase housing opportunities and that feedback will be reported in the coming weeks.

**Ames Ranks Highly** and the AEDC advocates and promotes the wide array of accolades the Ames Metropolitan Statistical Area continues to accumulate. Here are a few from 2018 and 2019.

- #7 - "Top 10 Cities for Career Opportunities in 2019" (SmartAsset, 2019)
- #4 - "Best Places for Millennials to Move" (Reviews.org, 2019)
- #39 - "Best Small Cities for Business" (Chamber of Commerce, 2019)
- #1 - "10 Best States in America for Jobs" (Zippia, 2019)
- #33 - "Top 100 Places to Live in 2019" (Livability, 2019)
- **Home of the Best "US Metro Job Market" (CNBC, 2018)**
- One of the "9 Great Off-the-Beaten-Path Towns Where You Should Live" (House Method, 2018)
- **#1 - "Best College Towns in America" (24/7 Wall St., 2018)**
- "Top 10 Best College Towns" (Livability, 2018)
- #1 - "The Top 10 Cities for Career Opportunities in 2018" (SmartAsset, 2018)
- #1 - "The Best Affordable College Towns for Recent Grads—and Everyone Else" (Realtor.com, 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)

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: <a href="http://www.AmesEDC.com">www.AmesEDC.com</a> .....	13,561 visits
AEDC Facebook.....	567 Likes
AEDC Twitter .....	1,179 Followers
WorkInAmes Facebook .....	1,266 Likes
See Yourself In Ames Facebook.....	239 Likes
WorkInAmes Twitter .....	418 Followers
See Yourself In Ames Twitter.....	178 Followers
Current Jobs on WorkInAmes.com.....	1,451 Available Jobs
WorkInAmes.com Job Searches (6/1/18-5/31/19) .....	<b><u>91,307 Searches</u></b>

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 \$165,000 (\$90,000 Marketing, \$60,000 Business Development position, \$15,000 Workforce Solutions) investment in the AEDC leverages another \$1.2 million in capital that is committed by other AEDC investors to underwrite the efforts of the organization. An additional \$100,000 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](http://workinames.com) - jobs website, Home Base Iowa programming, SCALE

- program connecting students from K-12 with local employers. We had over 150 local interns at our first event of 2019, two weeks ago.
- AEDC is currently a sponsor of the Technology Association of Iowa's (TAI) Iowan Project – this is our effort to support current as well as future growth in the technology sector in Ames marketing job opportunities to 3500 Iowa expats that are participating in meet-up events held in Twin Cities and Denver. Ames as well as our technology companies are featured in the TAI bi-monthly newsletters.
  - Currently sponsoring Career Services program through the ISU Alumni Association – this allows us to support and sponsor focused marketing on ISU alumni that are seeking job hunting resources from the Alumni Association on a monthly basis.
  - The AEDC is actively participating in and out of State in virtual career fairs. Since January 1, 2019 we have collected more than 2200 names/leads through these efforts. We continue to market our job opportunities and quality of life to these leads on behalf of our local employers seeking employees.
  - 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, as prescribed by our contractual obligation to the City of Ames 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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