



## Economic Development Strategic Plan

A baseline **assessment** of the existing conditions that drive the economy in Cascade, intended to help the city in complementary **strategies** that directly contribute to its **economic development**.

2016 - 2020

# Cascade

Cascade Economic Development Corporation  
Strategic and Operational Plan  
2016 - 2020

The Cascade Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) Strategic and Operational Plan unites the goals of CEDC. This document reflects on the history of Cascade, identifies trends and establishes goals for the future: both short and long term, and connects the limitations and advantages to the goals and objectives, establishing a foundation and a working plan for the economic future of the city of Cascade. This document will be utilized to benchmark and evaluate CEDC's progress in meeting goals and objectives that are outlined in the following pages.

**History:**

Cascade Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) was formed in 1988 to further the economic development of the city of Cascade as well as the immediate surrounding area and to promote and assist the growth and development of business concerns, including small and medium sized business concerns in the area.

Historically, Cascade's economic status benefitted from a railroad and the location of the river. The cascading waterfall, for which the town is named played a significant role in drawing settlers to the area utilizing the water power from the falls to operate their mills. Though the falls and railroad have disappeared, other evidence of Cascade's past remains today. A stone jail, brewery and the Gothic structure of St. Martin's Catholic Church, built just before the turn of the century, are three of the many beautiful historic stone structures of which the citizens of Cascade are proud. The Tri-County Historical Society museum pays tribute to Red Faber, a hometown baseball hero and Hall of Famer.

The city of Cascade has experienced a steady increase in population over the last ten years. This upturn can be attributed to the city's impressive list of locally-owned businesses and their continued growth within the community; which has enhanced since the completion of the four-lane U.S. Highway 151. Some of Cascade's biggest employers include:

- Cascade Lumber
- Webber Metals
- Cascade Custom Pre-Cast
- Cascade Public/Parochial Schools
- American Iowa Manufacturing
- Shady Rest Care Center
- RiverBend Assisted Living

With opportunities bounding, there has been significant residential development in Cascade in recent years. In 2014 and 2015, the city issued building permits for 78 residences worth upwards of \$10 million. Cascade has a number of subdivisions and affordable lots for sale

(ranging from \$23,000 to \$40,000). If building a home is not an option, according to the Dubuque Board of Realtors, in 2015, the average home price in Cascade was \$154,544.

In addition to a high quality of life, low crime rate, ample educational opportunities; and diversity of recreational activities, Cascade compares favorably with other areas of the nation in the quality of labor force. Cascade schools have a graduation rate of 91.6% as well as Individuals having access to strong adult education programs. Cascade businesses have a labor shed of approximately 208,000 people. In addition, the work ethic of the labor force is high because of Midwestern values which produce dedicated and loyal workers.

County	Labor Force	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate %	Number Employed
Delaware	10,590	420	3.9	10,170
Dubuque	55,990	2,400	4.3	53,500
Jackson	11,040	580	5.3	10,460
Jones	10,900	600	5.1	10,300
Linn	120,300	5,500	4.6	114,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>208,820</b>	<b>9,500</b>	<b>Average 4.64%</b>	<b>199,230</b>

Dubuque County is home to five colleges. Clarke University is a Catholic, co-educational, liberal arts institution founded in 1843 and is the only BVM College in the United States. Loras College is a four-year, Catholic, coeducational, liberal arts college founded in 1839. The University of Dubuque (UD) is a small, private university affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA) founded in 1852 offering undergraduate, graduate, and theological seminary programs.

Cascade has access to two quality community colleges: Northeast Iowa Community College and Kirkwood Community College. Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC) provides accessible, affordable, quality education and training to meet the needs of our communities. Kirkwood Community College’s main campus is located in Cedar Rapids and serving the Jones county area. Jones Regional Education Center in Monticello is also affiliated with Kirkwood Community College. This center was established to provide high school students with the opportunity to take college-level courses. The center also has a greater focus on the skilled trades.

The Cascade region possesses some of the most productive farmland in the world. The area is positioned to be a leader in research and development of biotechnology. Infrastructure and transportation support the agricultural industry.

Rail freight service to the region operates at an adequate level. While rail freight service has declined in other areas of the country, the Cascade regions service has maintained accessible services. The region has direct access to barge traffic and related activity along the Mississippi

River. Our location either on or in close proximity of the Mississippi River provides us with barge access that is not available to many other regions. Connectivity to the region cities via major federal and state highways is an advantage for our area. Several four-lane highways have been constructed in the last five to ten years including Hwy 61 four-lane to, Hwy 151 four-lane to I-380 and into Wisconsin I 90-94, and Hwy 20 four-lane to I-35.

Local banks have substantial funds available to invest in projects. The availability of funds and the cooperation between the public and private sectors provide ample financing available to new and expanding businesses and industries. Cascade area businesses have the availability of financial resources to assist businesses. Innovative financing techniques that are available include SBA 504 Financing, Revolving Loan Funds, Tax Increment Financing and Tax Abatement.

There are many resources available to businesses in Cascade. These resources are available through Small Business Development Centers, SBA Certified Development Companies, Community Colleges, Cascade Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development organizations, Job Training Programs, Regional Planning Organizations, and Community Planning Departments to assist new and existing businesses. Cascade is well-positioned to offer business and industry financial and technical support and assistance to those looking to relocate or expand. There is an excess of \$250,000 available in our local revolving loan fund programs, in addition, Dubuque County also has a \$700,000 revolving loan program. Programs include, High Quality Jobs, PFSA, EDA, RISE, Tax Increment Financing and employment and training programs.

### Industrial Park

The industrial park was purchased in 2004; with the first stages of development beginning in 2005, with the leveling of ground and paving of the industrial park road. In addition, utilities were also brought to the site. The industrial site offers 57 acres and provides easy access to Highway 151.

### Strengths and Weaknesses:

As part of the initial visioning and goal setting process, CEDC members answered an advanced questionnaire and identified during the strategic planning session.

Strengths/What is going well:	Weaknesses/Issues that need to be addressed:
Working Relationship with the City of Cascade, ECIA and GDDC	Website is outdated and needs a new look.
Marketable Property in Industrial Park	Stagnant Business Development; continue to struggle bringing businesses to the industrial park.

Recent Business Interest in Relocation to Cascade	Relationships with CEO's is weak.
Housing/Population Growth	Diversity needs to be embraced.
Quality of Life in Cascade	Gain a better understanding of the workforce needs of local businesses.
City Infrastructure improvements	
Good Economy	

## Economic Development Mission, Goals and Objectives:

### Mission

*The Cascade Economic Development Corporation's mission is to foster, encourage, promote and aid business retention, expansion and attraction to improve the quality of life in the Cascade community.*

### Goals and Strategies:

#### Short Term Goals (within six months):

- *Develop a new website*
  - Strategy:
    - Work with ECIA staff on developing an RFP to meet the CEDC's needs.
    - Select a web developer and determine timeline.
    - Work with ECIA staff to develop content for the web site.
    - Coordinate funding with Maquoketa Valley REC.
  
- Recruitment/Expansion of one new project
  - Strategy:
    - Continue to actively pursue leads.
    - Work with GDDC and ECIA to make business calls with existing industries and provide resources to businesses in regards to loan information.
    - Work more closely with the realtor who is marketing the CEDC's Industrial Park.
  
- Keep Lines of communication open with the city and other community groups
  - Strategy:
    - Provide CEDC's monthly minutes to city staff to distribute to elected officials.

- Continue to invite city staff to CEDC regular meetings.
  - Meet with the city in regards to project criteria, incentives and approach to projects.
  - Continue to invite the Cascade Chamber director to board meetings.
  - Identify other community groups that could align with the CEDC to ensure that there isn't a duplication of services and all committees can work together for the good of the community.
  - A member of CEDC will attend one city council meeting every quarter.
  - Hold special meetings as needed.
- Evaluate CEDC's membership bylaws
    - Strategy:
      - CEDC board president and vice president will meet to discuss and bring back their recommendations to the full CEDC board.
      - Work with ECIA on implementing the changes in the bylaws.

#### Long Term Goals (in the coming year)

- Promote more leadership training within the Cascade community
  - Strategy:
    - Work with the two local community colleges or educational providers to provide information and/or conduct training.
- Work with the Chamber of Commerce on embracing diversity and business development for the city of Cascade.
  - Strategy:
    - Co-hosting trainings in regards to workforce and diversity in the workforce.
    - Partner with the Chamber on grant opportunities.
- Strengthen the relationship between CEO's and the CEDC for the purpose of networking.
  - Strategy:
    - Continue working with GDDC and ECIA on making business calls to the local employers.
    - Host an annual event for CEO's to attend.

- Host lunch and learns throughout the year on topics that pertain to CEOs.
- Develop relationships with teachers, students and parents for purpose of workforce development.
  - Strategy:
    - Meet with the community colleges in the area and determine what is being done in regards to college classes being offered, and determine if these classes are benefiting the local workforce. (i.e. welding)
    - Determine if students are touring local workplaces and if not work with employers and the schools to arrange for this to happen.
    - Make sure the local schools are aware of the job opportunities within the Cascade community.
    - Assist with holding career related events.
    - Assist with the partnership between the schools and businesses to start an apprenticeship or intern type program for local high school students.

## CASCADE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

[Iowa Department of Economic Development - www.iowalifechanging.com](http://www.iowalifechanging.com)

200 E. Grand Ave., Des Moines, IA 50309; Phone: 515-242-4723

State department that provides financing and resources for business attraction, retention and expansion

[Greater Dubuque Development Corporation - www.greaterdubuque.org](http://www.greaterdubuque.org)

900 Jackson Street, Suite 109, Dubuque, IA 52001; Phone: 563-557-9049

Provides economic development assistance to Dubuque County through successful business and workforce retention and expansion practices.

[Jones County Economic Development - www.jonescountydevelopment.com](http://www.jonescountydevelopment.com)

118 E. Main Street, Anamosa, IA 52205; Phone: 319-480-7446

Provides economic development assistance to Jones County through successful business and workforce retention and expansion practices.

[Prosperity Eastern Iowa - www.prosperityeasterniowa.org](http://www.prosperityeasterniowa.org)

7600 Commerce Park, Dubuque, IA; Phone: 563-556-4166

Regional initiative to collaborate with county development groups for business retention and expansion and to support efforts including a business buy local program and job seeking resources.

[Iowa Area Development Group \(IADG\) - www.iadg.com](http://www.iadg.com)

2700 Westown Parkway, Suite 425, West Des Moines, IA 50266

Formed in 1985 by several Iowa electric cooperatives and a few municipal utilities, IADG is the economic development arm to many electric utilities in the State. Services include a variety of business development assistance including site selection, financial packaging and permitting assistance.

[East Central Intergovernmental Association \(ECIA\) - www.ecia.org](http://www.ecia.org)

7600 Commerce Park, Dubuque, IA 52002; Phone: 563-556-4166 or 800-942-4648

An affiliation of governments in Dubuque, Delaware, Jackson, Clinton & Cedar counties that provides services and resources to municipalities, individuals and businesses including transportation, housing, employment, education and much more.

[East Central Iowa Council of Governments \(ECICOG\) - www.ecicog.org](http://www.ecicog.org)

700 16th Street NE, Suite 301, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402; Phone: 319-365-9941

An affiliation of governments, including Jones County that promotes regional cooperation and provides professional planning services to local