

Thank you to the members of the Marion County Development Commission, community leaders and area businesses for participating in stakeholder meeting to develop this strategic economic plan for Marion County. Your progressive ideas and passion have driven this effort.

WE ARE PROGRESS DRIVEN



MARION
COUNTY DEVELOPMENT

PROGRESS DRIVEN

Marion County Development
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A STRATEGIC PLAN TO
FUEL ECONOMIC GROWTH

MARION
COUNTY DEVELOPMENT

BUSSEY · HAMILTON · HARVEY · KNOXVILLE · MARYSVILLE
MELCHER-DALLAS · PELLA · PLEASANTVILLE IOWA

MISSION:

MARION COUNTY DEVELOPMENT STRIVES TO ACCELERATE ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGHOUT MARION COUNTY, IOWA.

CONNECT

businesses and communities to economic development resources

COMMUNICATE

Marion County's story

COLLABORATE

to grow the economy

PROGRESS DRIVEN PRIORITIES



"It's important that we remind others and ourselves how far Marion County has come and how much we can accomplish when we work together. We can focus on our shared goals, remember that a rising tide lifts all boats and continue to let all the positive momentum propel us forward."

— MEGAN WEILER GREEN, MCD Chair



MARION COUNTY EMPLOYMENT IS ESTIMATED TO **GROW BY 24%** BETWEEN 2020 TO 2030

MARION COUNTY DEMAND CALLS FOR **2,914 NEW HOUSING UNITS** BY 2035

TRAVELERS SPEND **OVER \$55 MILLION PER YEAR** IN MARION COUNTY

MARION COUNTY RANKS **IN THE TOP 1%** OF US COUNTIES FOR PERCENTAGE OF JOBS IN MANUFACTURING



PRIORITY: BUSINESS



PRIORITY: PLACE

RESOURCES

- Diversify the county's economy by emphasizing entrepreneurship
- Encourage & empower growth in existing business
- Sustain area businesses through proactive exit planning

MARKETING

- Attract new business sectors
- Promote Marion County's business climate
- Tell the stories of existing industry

RESEARCH

- Present the Annual State of Business report
- Conduct economic impact analysis for expansions
- Provide data for business decision making



"The leadership provided by MCD is so important to the county because it provides a unified voice for all the communities in the county. That voice advances the initiatives in tourism, business retention and expansion, and business attraction efforts. This allows us to fight above our weight class in those efforts."

– ALEX LYNCH, Greater Des Moines Partnership
Economic Development Project Director

PLACEMAKING

- Strengthen the vibe of small towns to attract tourists and residents
- Enhance connections with small towns in Marion County

MARKETING

- Market the Red Rock Area as a premier Midwest destination for tourism
- Tell the stories of existing Best of Red Rock businesses and attractions

TOURISM

- Strengthen the collaboration within tourism partners
- Research concepts for a major new tourism attraction
- Facilitate trail development planning and partnerships



"We do vital work for our businesses and residents that no one else does. The work MCD does to identify county-wide needs such as tourism, housing, and childcare studies is not being done at the city level."

– KAREN EISCHEN, MCD Commissioner



PRIORITY: TRANSFORMATION

INDUSTRIAL SITE COORDINATION

- Identify areas for future industrial and commercial sites
- Increase the number and size of available sites
- Enhance response capacity for business attraction

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

- Facilitate connections to address workforce housing options
- Serve as a catalyst between prime employers and community leaders to address business needs
- Support community driven infrastructure initiatives



"It is important to capitalize on growth while we can. To diversify Marion County and the communities will help carry Marion County and the communities' citizens through future hard economic times."

– MISSY POFFENBARGER,
Marion County Zoning Director



PRIORITY: TALENT

CONNECTIONS

- Elevate collaboration for talent upskilling
- Connect talent with area employers and communities
- Collaborate with stakeholders working to attract talent

MARKETING

- Increase the resident workforce in Marion County
- Conduct research to develop talent attraction strategies
- Tell the stories of new residents and young professionals



"For places to thrive in today's competitive environment, leaders must capture opportunities and solve issues. At the same time, we need to up our game on telling our stories to the world to attract talent, tourists and commerce. Together, we can accomplish great things."

– CARLA EYSINK, MCD Director