



PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

| July 2016 |

My Perspective – Letter to the Rockford Region

Voice of the Customer & the Talent Pipeline

by Stacy Bernardi, VP for Development

For the past eight years, the Rockford Area Economic Development Council has been conducting the "Voice of the Customer", an outreach program with regional companies to learn about their business, their views of the current business climate, and community issues to business growth and expansion, their obstacles or opportunities.

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Redeveloped RockfordIL.com Launched

The website is a critical tool being used to promote Your Opportunity Region to potential investors, site selectors and brokers. RockfordIL.com places the focus on information target audiences need when making decisions.

[Visit RockfordIL.com](http://VisitRockfordIL.com)

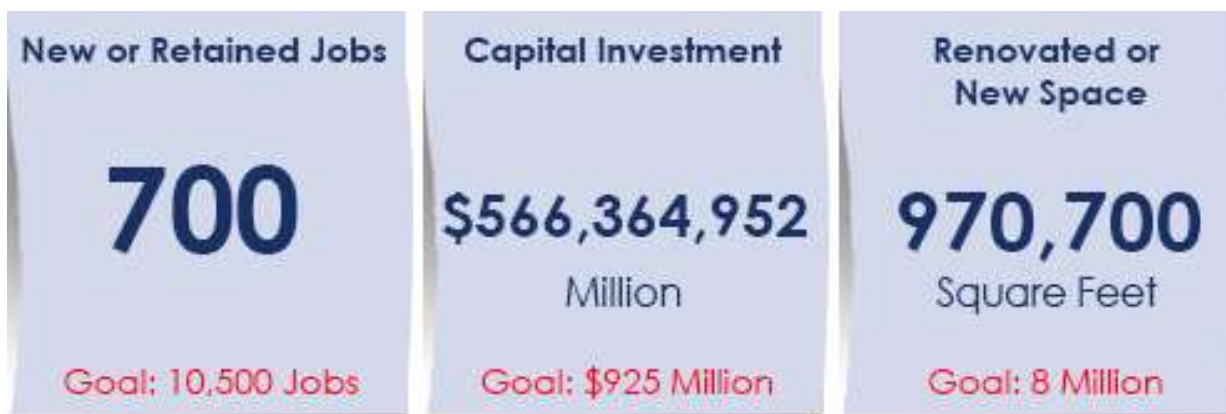
The RAEDC and the Rockford Region

The RAEDC, as the Economic Development Agency for the region is also the data collection agency on all new capital investment in the area, retained and created jobs, and new or renovated space. As we enter into our *Rockforward20/20* strategic plan, we will be informing all of you on project wins for our region as well as projects that we are working on with our various regional partners.

Measurements

These figures represent the collective successes during the new *Rockforward20/20* campaign. The campaign began in January 2016 and will continue through December 2020.

The results shown below are for the first 7 months of the 60 month *Rockforward20/20* strategic plan.



One project closed in July, a large manufacturer transferred two additional products to its Rockford facility, resulting in 40 new local positions.

RAEDC Updates

Rockford Region in Illinois: The State of Innovation Magazine

The Rockford Region is highlighted in The State of Innovation Magazine. The publication was used in the promotion of the region during Hannover Messe in April and SelectUSA held in June 2016.

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RAEDC Attends Development Day 2016

The Rockford Area Economic Development Council's Business Attraction team of Dennis McCarthy, Director of National Business Development and Kaela Gardner, Business Attraction Coordinator extended the awareness of the Rockford Region during the Chicago Industrial Property's Development Day 2016 which produced multiple leads for the area.

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Next Rockford, Ignite and the Rockford Area REALTORS Young Professional Group partner with the RAEDC

The members of the RAEDC's President's Circle are working to establish strong lines of reciprocal communication with young business professionals to have a more encompassing approach regarding economic development in our region.

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The Workforce for the Region's Future

In the world of business as well as economic development the discussion of education and workforce development is endless. Over the last three and half years, we have seen a shift from tax and monetary incentives to available workforce and the education of that workforce when it comes to business attraction and retention.

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Regional Wins

FCA US Makes Major Announcement

IT IS OFFICIAL! The Jeep Cherokee will be assembled in Belvidere, IL. The company will invest nearly \$350 million in upgrades and create approximately 300 new jobs.

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Rockford Art Deli Recognized as an Official Illinois Made Maker

The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is pleased to announce that the Illinois Department of Commerce's Office of Tourism launched Illinois Made, a new program featuring makers, creators, and artisans from across the state. Rockford's own Rockford Art Deli is among a select group of Illinois makers to be chosen for this unique designation.

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Rockford to Redevelop Barber-Colman Complex

Officials from the City of Rockford, Rock Valley College, and the Rockford Local Development Corporation have announced plans to redevelop the Barber-Colman Complex in the city's southwest.

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Regional Good News

MRO is one step closer to opening

The Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) facility conducted a fire suppression test and is now one step closer to opening its doors as the newest MRO operated by AAR Corp.

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FCA US Belvidere Assembly Joins the Ranks of Bronze Plants in World Class Manufacturing

The FCA US Belvidere Assembly Plant (IL) announces that it has been awarded bronze status for its efforts to improve in World Class Manufacturing (WCM).

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RAEDC Events

Annual Meeting & Dinner: Wednesday, November 16th

Rockforward! the sky is the limit

The Annual Meeting and Dinner has been confirmed for Wednesday, November 16th at Giovanni's Restaurant & Conference Center. The RAEDC Board of Directors and Staff are proud to welcome Mr. David Storch, Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer of AAR, as the keynote speaker.

AAR is a leading provider of diverse products and value-added services to the worldwide aviation/aerospace and government/defense industries.

Table and ticket sales will begin on Thursday, September 15th.



For more information contact Jimsi Kuborn, Vice President of Investor Relations at 815-969-4259 or JKuborn@RockfordIL.com.

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Rockforward20/20

Rockforward20/20 represents a bold vision for our future, this aggressive plan will cultivate opportunities to create and retain over 10,000 jobs and significantly increase capital investment in the region.

Learn more at RockfordIL.com/Rockforward2020. If you have not set up a brief meeting to explore how you can get involved, contact Jimsi Kuborn at 815-969-4259 or jkuborn@rockfordil.com.



The RAEDC

The RAEDC often works behind the scenes due to the confidential nature of business projects. Plus, big deals take time: The average time from start to completion on the 24 project wins in 2015 was 329 days.

We are committed to persistence and continuity in our work: We market the Rockford Region to the world, influencing companies to locate or expand here. We support and promote growth within targeted industries through regional public-private collaboration. We assist prospective and existing companies by connecting them to resources for workforce development, available buildings, supply chain partners, incentives and more.

Together, we will continue the momentum into 2016 for an even stronger, more sustainable economy. **Together, we will Trailblaze, Inspire Action, Align, Seed and Serve!**

Mike

Michael Nicholas, President
MNicholas@RockfordIL.com

ABOUT THE RAEDC

The primary role of the Rockford Area Economic Development Council (RAEDC) is to collaboratively improve the economic strength of the Rockford Region by helping employers retain and create quality jobs. The RAEDC works closely with many partners to learn what existing and new employers need to grow, and to serve as a one-stop resource for clients. The RAEDC seeks to improve the competitiveness of the region by taking what it learns from the region's employers, and engaging the community in the daily work of economic development.

Rockford Area Economic Development Council

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