

# Rockford

I L L I N O I S  U S A

ROCKFORD AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

***Rockforward 20/20***  
RESULTS REPORT



**2020**

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Well, 2020 hasn't gone as planned so we adjusted the plan.

That is what the Rockford Area Economic Development Council does. We adjust.

The daily work of economic development hasn't stopped but over time it has changed. We continue hunting for elephants which means working to attract large companies, we also work to sustainably grow companies and business connections for those already located in our area.

Creating connections between companies inside our region and with companies outside our region that allow all companies to be more prosperous. Between educational facilities and companies to ensure a skilled workforce for employers. We also create connections that allow for diversity within the industries to help our region increase our economic well-being.

Earlier this year we helped connect smaller companies with hard to find personal protective equipment. This allowed those companies to continue to work and keep employees on staff instead of being laid off.

All of the work we typically do has continued. We are still responding to requests for information from brokers and site selectors. We hosted matchmaking sessions during MAC2020. We are still helping businesses find solutions to problems that will allow them to continue being successful and expand while remaining in the region.

To continue to add value to our community by starting ED Talks, webinars focused on leadership and business development each month. We also started Your EDC; Moving Our Region Forward to help our region understand what the RAEDC does and how it affects the community's quality of life, businesses, and the people in our community.

These strategies are made possible through the support of our investors.

Thank you for your time, talent, investment, and commitment to make our community Top 25 and ensure the economic well-being of our region.

*The Staff of the RAEDC*

## ECONOMIC IMPACT MEASUREMENTS

### Rockforward20/20

137.4%  
\$1,271,141,316

2020 Goal: \$925 million

Capital  
Investment

New or  
Retained  
Primary Jobs

New or  
Renovated  
Space

71%  
7,416

2020 Goal: 10,500

2020 Goal: 8 million

70%  
5,619,989 sq ft

#### Vision:

The RAEDC propels the region to top 25 status, as the model for impactful economic development in partnership with regional organizations.

#### Mission:

The RAEDC cultivates opportunities for primary job growth that increases the economic well-being of our region.



The Rockford Area Economic Development Council staff are experts in their field and have brought their specialties to the economic development profession. RAEDC staff create connections and cultivate opportunities for primary job and business growth that increase the economic well-being of our region.



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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman of the Board: Mike Paterson,  
Mid-West Family Broadcasting  
Vice Chair/Treasurer: Eric Cunningham, Collins  
Aerospace  
Immediate Past Chair: Michele Petrie, WinTrust  
Commercial Banking  
Director at Large: Kelly Lattimer, WQRF/WTVO  
Director at Large: Sunil Puri, First Midwest  
Group  
Director at Large: Dr. John Dorsey, Mercyhealth  
Director at Large: Paula Carynski, OSF Saint  
Anthony Medical Center  
Leadership Council Chair: Eric  
Cunningham, Collins Aerospace  
CARE Solutions Team Co-Chairs:  
Mick Gronewold, Fehr Graham &  
Jimmy Rozinsky, Spectrum Insurance  
Agency  
Education for Workforce Development Co-Chairs:  
Jeffrey Hultman, Illinois Bank & Trust &  
LoRayne Logan, Workplace  
Rockford Area Aerospace Network Co-Chairs:  
Reg Gustafson, Clindenbeard &  
David Forward, Woodward, Inc.  
Mayor Tom McNamara, City of Rockford  
Chairman Frank Haney, Winnebago County

### EX-OFFICIO VOTING

Dan Ross, Community Foundation of Northern  
Illinois  
Einar Forsman, Rockford Chamber of Commerce  
John Groh, Rockford Area Convention & Visitors  
Bureau  
Tim Hanson, Rock River Water Reclamation  
Mayor Steve Johnson, Village of Machesney Park  
Mayor Greg Jury, City of Loves Park  
Paul Logli, United Way of Rock River Valley  
Senator Dave Syverson

### DIRECTORS

David Anspaugh, Northern Illinois Building  
Contractors Association  
David Adkins, Blackhawk Bank  
Edward C. Berg, First Northern Credit Union  
Conor Brown, Rockford Area REALTORS  
Scot Dobbs, Wipfli LLP  
Rebecca Epperson, Chartwell Agency  
George Gaulrapp, ComEd  
Thomas Green, Barrick, Switzer, Long, Balsley  
& Van Evera  
Glen Kirschman, U.S. Bank  
Matthew Hevrin, Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP  
David Sobojski, Midland States Bank  
Ed Munguia, Stillman Bank  
Tim Myers, WIFR-TV  
Terry Voskuil, Woodward  
Joel Sjostrom, Sjostrom & Sons, Inc.  
Glen Turpoff, Northwestern Illinois Contractors  
Association  
Dr. Bill Gorski, Swedish American Hospital  
Christopher Anderson, Larson & Darby Group

### EX-OFFICIO NONVOTING

Dr. Lisa Bly, The Workforce Connection  
Karl Franzen, City of Rockford  
Senator Steve Stadelman  
Mike Dunn Jr., Region 1 Planning Council

### CITY OF ROCKFORD LIAISONS

Alderman Joseph Chiarelli  
Alderman Tim Durkee

### WINNEBAGO COUNTY LIAISON

To Be Determined

### **ROCKFORWARD! PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE**

The *Rockforward!* President's Circle discusses and takes action on economic development priorities and strategies. RAEDC Investors contributing \$25,000 or more per year become members of the President's Circle.

Chair: Mike Paterson, Mid-West Family Broadcasting

Staff Liaison: RAEDC President & CEO

### **AUDIT COMMITTEE**

This team consists of the Treasurer, at least three Board of Directors, and three Members at Large. The committee reviews and assesses financial principles and reporting, risks and controls, and the organization's independent auditors.

Chair: Daniel Ross, Community Foundation of Northern Illinois

Staff Liaison: RAEDC President & CEO

### **COMPANY ATTRACTION, RETENTION, & EXPANSION TEAM (CARE)**

This team markets the region's assets outside our region, increasing the awareness and participation in business development programs. They also work with businesses to expand or remain in our region.

Co-Chair: Mick Gronewold, Fehr Graham

Co-Chair: Jimmy Rozinsky, Spectrum Insurance Agency

Staff Liaison: Gerald Sagona

### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

An annual slate of candidates for the Board of Directors is prepared and recommended by the Nominating Committee, consisting of three Directors and three Investors at Large.

Chair: Penelope Lechtenberg, Lechtenberg & Associates LLC

Staff Liaison: Jarid Funderburg

### **ROCKFORWARD! LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

Leadership Council members seek out opportunities through the Emerging Opportunities Fund for forward-thinking initiatives that increase our region's economic well-being. RAEDC Investors contributing \$10,000 or more per year become members of the *Rockforward!* Leadership Council.

Chair: Eric Cunningham, Collins Aerospace

Staff Liaison: Jarid Funderburg

### **EDUCATION FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

These members work with regional partners to strengthen the workforce development pipeline connecting the gap between education organizations and regional businesses.

Co-Chair: Jeffrey Hultman, Illinois Bank & Trust

Co-Chair: LoRayne Logan, Workplace

Staff Liaison: RAEDC President & CEO

### **ROCKFORD AREA AEROSPACE NETWORK (RAAN)**

RAAN is a consortium of companies implementing a strategic plan to increase the competitiveness of the Rockford Region for aerospace expansion and attraction.

Co-Chair: Reg Gustafson, Clinkenbeard

Co-Chair: David Forward, Woodward, Inc.

Staff Liaison: Jarid Funderburg

If you or your company would like to become a member of one of the Solutions Teams or Committees reach out to Jarid Funderburg, VP of Business & Investor Relations at [JFunderburg@RockfordIL.com](mailto:JFunderburg@RockfordIL.com).



### PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE INVESTORS

(\$25,000+)

City of Loves Park  
City of Rockford  
Collins Aerospace  
Comcast Business  
ComEd  
Fehr Graham  
First Midwest Group, Inc.  
IBEW / NECA  
Larson & Darby Group  
Mercyhealth  
Mid-West Family Broadcasting  
Midlands States Bank  
Northwestern Illinois Contractors Association  
OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center  
Rockford Area REALTORS  
Rockford Public Schools  
Rockford Register Star  
SwedishAmerican Health System  
Townsquare Media  
Village of Machesney Park  
WIFR-TV  
Winnebago County  
Woodward, Inc.  
WQRF TV / WTVO TV  
WREX

### LEADERSHIP COUNCIL INVESTORS

(\$10,000+)

Accuride Wheel End Solutions  
BMO Harris Bank N.A.  
First Northern Credit Union  
GE Aviation  
Illinois Bank & Trust  
Northern Illinois Building Contractors Association  
OrthoIllinois  
PCI Pharma Services  
Rock River Water Reclamation District  
Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

### LEADERSHIP COUNCIL INVESTORS (CONT.)

Rockford Chamber of Commerce  
Sjostrom & Sons, Inc.  
Wintrust Commercial Bank  
Workplace

### ROCKFORWARD! PREMIER INVESTORS

(\$5,000+)

AAR Corp  
Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP  
Bergstrom Inc.  
Blackhawk Bank  
Chartwell Agency  
City of South Beloit  
Giovanni's Restaurant & Convention Center  
IMA Automation, USA Inc.  
JP Morgan Chase  
Nicor Gas  
PNC Bank  
Rock River Valley Blood Center  
Rockford Anesthesiologists Associated, LLC  
Rockford Career College  
Rockford Park District  
Rockford Toolcraft, Inc.  
Spectrum Insurance Agency, Inc.  
Spring Creek Development Group  
SPXFlow – Rockford  
Stillman Bank  
Venture One Real Estate/Rock 39 Industrial Park/ Loves Park Corporate Center  
Village of Rockton

### ROCKFORWARD! INVESTORS

(\$2,000+)

Alpha Controls & Services LLC  
American Precision Assemblers, Inc.  
American Standard Circuits, Inc.  
Arc Design Resources, Inc.  
Associated Bank  
Ballard Properties



## ROCKFORWARD! INVESTORS (CONT.)

Barrick, Switzer, Long, Balsley & Van Evera  
Bourn & Koch, Inc.  
C.H. Robinson Worldwide, Inc.  
Chastain & Associates LLC  
Chem Processing, Inc  
CherryVale Mall / CBL & Associates Properties  
CliftonLarsonAllen LLP  
Clinkenbeard  
Community Foundation of Northern Illinois  
Cord Construction Company  
Crawford, Murphy & Tilly, Inc.  
Crusader Community Health  
Excelsior, Inc.  
FBM Gypsum Supply  
Field  
First National Bank  
Forest City Corporate Center  
Forest City Gear Co., Inc.  
Fridh Corporation  
Gleason Cutting Tools Corporation  
Global Display Solutions, Inc.  
GrahamSpencer  
Hampton Properties  
Harlem Consolidated School District 122  
Header Die & Tool, Inc.  
Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP  
HolmstromKennedy PC  
Ingenium Aerospace  
Ingenium Technologies Corp.  
J & M Plating Inc.  
J.L. Clark  
Kaney Group LLC  
Key Realty, Commercial & Industrial  
LandMark Real Estate Group LLC  
Lechtenberg & Associates LLC  
Lowe's Companies, Inc.  
MembersAlliance Credit Union  
Meridian  
Merrill Lynch  
Midwest Community Bank  
Next Rockford

Northern Illinois Service Co.  
Northwest Bank  
Ogle County  
Powmet, Inc.  
Project First Rate  
Rasmussen College  
Ringland-Johnson, Inc.  
Rockford Bank & Trust  
Rockford Housing Authority  
Rockford University  
Savant Capital, LLC  
Scandroli Construction Co  
Schmeling Construction Co.  
Senator Dave Syverson  
Serola Biomechanics, Inc.  
SIDCOR, Marketplace of Rockford  
Skandia, Inc.  
Specialty Screw Corporation  
Spider Company, Inc.  
Superior Joining Technologies, Inc.  
TH Foods, Inc.  
The Morrissey Family Businesses  
The North Central Group  
Thermo Fisher Scientific  
Title Underwriters Agency  
TSI Plastics, Inc.  
U of I College of Medicine  
U.S. Bank  
United Way of Rock River Valley  
UPS  
Viking Chemical Company  
Village of Cherry Valley  
Village of Winnebago  
Williams-Manny Insurance Group  
WilliamsMcCarthy, LLP  
Wipfli LLP  
YMCA of Rock River Valley

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS & UPDATES

Like so many of you we keep moving forward, we do the ongoing work of economic development, we find ways to help the community and our investors, we cross stuff off our to-do lists that allow the metaphorical doors remain open, and we cultivate opportunities that will continue to build upon the economic well-being of our region.

Much of March, April, and May were consumed with finding solutions to problems the pandemic has created. The RAEDC was highly involved with the Winnebago County Emergency Operations Center and played a key role in helping businesses access resources required to continue to operate. Some of these tasks are ongoing but included:

- Created COVID-19 Small business, retail, and manufacturing checklists, resources pages, and mitigation protocols to assist with decision-making and establish best practices.
- Surveyed Manufacturing Community on impacts and needs and then addressing the issues communicated in the survey.
- Worked with architect on possible medical surge facility layout plans.
- Identified regional sources that have access to suppliers or capability of manufacturing. COVID-19 Medical Supplies
- Initiated banking discussions to develop a regional lending assistance program managed by the RLDC.
- Coordinated economic development regional meetings to maintain a network for idea and information sharing.
- Communicated with Trade Unions in support of possible labor needs and support.
- Communicated with Comcast regarding their expanded programs to serve the community during the crisis.
- Coordinated repair and certification of critical medical equipment (ventilators, BiPAP's, anesthesia machines) to be donated to the EOC for use during the pandemic.
- Sourced 45 beds to be utilized for patients housed in the potential overflow facility.
- Sourced rooms/sleeping accommodations for first responders and health care workers who were uncomfortable returning to their families after work for fear of bringing the virus home.
- Initiated community manufacturing group to produce face shields for first responders.
- Partnered with SupplyCore to source PPE for small businesses including facemasks, face shields, hand sanitizer, and cleaning products.

## SOLUTIONS TEAMS & COMMITTEES

### **Rockford Area Aerospace Network (RAAN)**

Co-chairs Spitty Tata, Woodward, Inc. and John Saunders, Larson & Darby Group both retired from their day jobs leaving the helm of the group vacant. Thank you for your hard work and commitment to the RAEDC and RAAN.

RAAN appointed two new co-chairs, Reg Gustafson with Clinkenbeard and David Forward with Woodward. We have been hard at work developing an agenda for 2021. We have leveraged relationships with industry experts by following the example of other industrial associations to continue to grow membership.

Recognizing the synergy between RAAN and the IDN (Illinois Defense Network) we created a 2021 agenda that has aligned with both groups. Our 2021 schedule will have the following events and initiatives: cybersecurity compliance, workforce capacity, innovation and advanced manufacturing, and MAC2021.

MAC2020 took place in May and the Midwest aerospace conference was converted into a virtual event welcoming 130 registered guests representing 93 companies. A matchmaking session was included in the virtual event as well as an aerospace industry update from Kevin Michaels from Aerodynamic Advisory. There were 28 supplier-to-prime (Woodward, GE Aviation, & Collins Aerospace) connections and 31 supplier-to-supplier connections.

#### **Company Attraction, Retention, & Expansion (CARE)**

The RAEDC has been diligently working to be the next destination for the SIOR Regional Meeting. This will attract hundreds of Midwest commercial real estate brokers into the region and provide the opportunity for them to experience the region throughout the event. This effort will continue into 2021 and 2022 as in-person events begin again.

The CARE team has been working to help businesses solve the problems that have arisen due to the pandemic and will use 2021 to reengage with the goals established for this year.

The CARE team has also offered businesses legal and business-related webinars including

- Manufacturing Community Update with Dr. Sandra Martell, Public Health Administrator for Winnebago County
- COVID-19 Legislation and Its Impact on Employers with Hinshaw & Culbertson
- Current analysis and suggestions for local and small businesses navigating the COVID-19 pandemic with Hinshaw & Culbertson
- Lunch Break: A Manufacturing Conversation with IMA
- Practical Solutions for Complex COVID Questions with HolmstromKennedy
- Understanding the Main Street Lending Program with Hinshaw & Culbertson
- Database Mining your Fast Track Business Development with IMEC
- Video Conferencing Best Practices with IMEC
- Virtual Services Available to Help You Export with U.S. Commercial Services
- Economic Development Bootcamp with ComEd
- How the Economy of The Future Is Impacting Us Now and Creating Opportunities with the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago



### **I-39 Logistics Corridor Association**

The group, hosted by the RAEDC is a partnership of area communities, economic development organizations, developers, brokers, and contractors marketing the strengths of the corridor and proximity vital for logistics, manufacturing, company headquarters, raw resources and materials, and industry clusters.

## **INITIATIVES**

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Connecting to expand our region's industry sectors to include Food Manufacturing, Data Centers, and Agribusiness, and other growth sectors in addition to our current industry clusters.

### **ED Talks**

These are monthly webinars focusing on leadership and entrepreneurship in partnership with Rockford University. These quick sessions focus Crises Leadership, Reengineering Your Workplace, Strategic Alignment & Performance, Employee Engagement, Brand Management, and Change Management. There is an average of 40-50 participants for these webinars.

### **Your EDC: Moving Our Region Forward**

These monthly webinars are in partnership with RAEDC investors to educate the community on the importance of economic development and how it directly affects them. These began in November and will continue into 2021.

### **The Polish Investment and Trade Agency Matchmaking**

The RAEDC co-sponsored "In the Driver's Seat: An Introduction to the Polish Automotive Industry" webinar. Presenters from the Polish Automotive Group, the Polish Chamber of Automotive Industry, Polish Automotive Industry Association, and Association of Automotive Parts, Distributors, and Producers shared their current state and opportunities on a global scale for foreign direct investment and export opportunities for companies in our region.

### **Illinois Chamber of Commerce**

Pre-COVID, RAEDC Staff were awarded board seats on the Infrastructure Council and the International Business Council. The IL Chamber supplied us with data and intelligence around the Data Center legislation passed in 2019 that we used to advance our sector focus in this area.

### **South Africa Automotive & Energy Matchmaking**

The City of Tshwane, South Africa is one co-organized event that we have worked on in conjunction with South Africa's export council of aviation, maritime and defense association. A webinar focusing on Tshwane's automotive and energy industry may bring about B2B opportunities for our region. Organizing this initiative will continue into 2021.

### **International Trade Association of Greater Chicago**

We continue to stay in touch with this organization and a few leads have passed along as a result of this relationship. Much of the activity has waned during COVID-19.

### **Technology and Manufacturing Association (TMA)**

The RAEDC was able to speak at one of TMA's monthly meetings early in the year sharing the benefits of RAEDC and our connections to the community.

Throughout 2020 we have made connections during meetings and made presentations during luncheons with the International Trade Association of Greater Chicago and Technology and Manufacturing Association (TMA) which has resulted in economic development leads for our region.

### **CREW (Chicago Chapter)**

During 2020 we received market intelligence during the onset of COVID. That assisted the RAEDC when making recommendations to the Winnebago County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) around personal protective equipment (PPE), commercial real estate, landlord & tenant issues, building and lease issues, and insurance information.

### **The Illinois Defense Network (IDN)**

Aside from our continued work on the original grant received through the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA), we collaborated with fellow IDN members and Chicago based MxD and applied for the Defense Manufacturing Communities Support Program (DMCSP) grant. The application was unsuccessful, but we were able to use this application to apply for funds through the OEA to support our regional defense-based manufacturing. No decision has been made in regard to our latest grant application.

IDN focuses on defense manufacturing, these efforts align with the work of the RAAN. During the first quarter of 2020 as part of the IDN work we completed 13 CORE conversations which helps connect the RAEDC with local businesses that can provide assistance

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

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### **The Stateline Advanced Manufacturing Network**

Formerly known as Quick Response Manufacturing, provides assistance to Stateline manufacturers to gain knowledge, build relationships, and access or engage resources to encourage sustainable growth. This newly formed network is a collaboration between IMEC, Blackhawk Bank, Hennig, Bourn & Koch, & the RAEDC. Podcasts, networking sessions, and scaffolded webinar content will lead a company through a comprehensive approach to continuous improvement. We're excited about the momentum that has been gained by this small network and look forward to the growth and opportunities in 2021.

### **Transform Rockford**

The RAEDC is on multiple subcommittees and is involved in Transform Rockford's Regional Economic Recovery Program and the Remote Worker Incentive Program.

### **Alignment Rockford**

This partnership started a collaboration on the Workplace videos to create a virtual experience for students throughout Winnebago County to learn about different career options as part of Manufacturing Month.

### **FTZ 176**

Following the FTZ 176 presentation the RAEDC, Growth Dimensions of Belvidere/Boone County, and Rochelle EDC presented to Bob Hess, Founding member of the Site Selectors Guild regarding the current markets in Winnebago County, Boone County, and DeKalb County.

### **Manufacturing Week**

Manufacturing Week and Manufacturing Month continue the partnership with CEANCI and UNITE to promote manufacturing as a career path for high school students.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORK**

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As mentioned in other sections the work of economic development hasn't stopped. Our region has seen companies like UPS, Amazon/Prime, and Senator International expand their logistics operations and investment at the Chicago Rockford International Airport. We have had several wins from our local companies that included expansions such as Projects Screwdriver, England, and Draulic.

2021 looks promising as well, with a pipeline filled with 35 attractions, 16 expansions, and 2 retentions projects.

Our organization is continuing to respond to requests for information (RFI), work with brokers and real estate professionals to find solutions for companies considering our region for relocation, and helping businesses expand or remain in our region. Some of that work includes

- Working with the Winnebago Housing Authority to draft a redevelopment plan for the Fairgrounds redevelopment project.
- Planning a cybersecurity webinar series to prepare area manufacturers for future industry compliance.
- Releasing the 2020 Quick Reference Guide
- Expand our social network strategy to include Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and now Instagram.
- Continue to connect with Site Selectors, Brokers, and Real Estate Professionals through EDGE Forward and Growth & Attraction newsletters.



**IndustryWeek**

#4

**IndustryWeek**  
Best Places  
to Work in  
Manufacturing in  
the Nation

**smartasset**

#4

**SmartAsset**  
Healthcare  
access & home  
affordability  
(3<sup>rd</sup> straight year)



#5

**Milken Institute**  
Best-Performing  
Cities for Job  
Growth

**Forbes**

#6

**Forbes**  
Easiest Places to  
Make Your Mark

**USATODAY**

#6

**USA Today**  
Fastest Growing  
Housing Market

**Reader's  
digest**

Top 15

**Reader's Digest**  
Best Places to  
Move to in the  
Nation

**smartasset**

#9

**SmartAsset**  
Best Places to Work  
in Manufacturing in  
the Nation



#1

**Airports Council  
International**  
Fastest Growing  
Cargo Airport in the  
World



Top 150

**US News & World  
Report**  
Best Places to Live  
in the Nation