



Progress remains steady for Gateway area

By Steve Ames

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— So much is happening in the Clinton region right now. Sometimes it has seemed slow, so it's difficult to understand the full impact of the projects happening now and in recent years. We have much to be proud of in the Greater Clinton Region and we can all project that pride to visitors seeing our region.

On August 6th, CRDC held a reception entitled "Showcasing our Successes" where we profiled a number of the success stories that are unfolding.

Things like: • 19th Avenue North extension • Lincolnway Railport • Liberty Square Redevelopment • Fulton Business Park • Camanche Water Improvement Project • Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant • Lyons Business and Technology Park • Downtown Clinton Improvements under the SSMID • Vision Iowa Projects • Iowa Great Places Projects • Windmill Cultural Center • Wild Rose Casino relocation/expansion • Ashford University campus expansion. Not to mention: • ADM expansion projects • County-wide high school welding classes • New housing developments • Neighborhood Block grants to improve residential housing • CCC Library expansion • New UP Mississippi River Bridge • Four-lane US Highway 30...and so much more.

CRDC has partnered with the Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce and local community leaders to visit legislators in Washington, DC, Des Moines and Springfield, Ill., in order to gain recognition of our area and the great potential we have here. These lobbying efforts have produced over \$60 million in state and federal assistance for our region, which has leveraged millions more. This investment means more people living and working in the region, more investment by local companies, and more people visiting the region to see what we have accomplished.

Obviously, CRDC can't take credit for executing many of the vast number of projects taking place. In many cases, we simply try to lay the groundwork to help make big things happen. As you can see, economic development isn't always flashy or glamorous. It's more about the old saying, "slow and steady wins the race."

And there is proof. According to numbers released by Iowa Workforce Development, Clinton saw the highest net increase in jobs (+590) of any community our size in 2008 and the highest percentage increase (2.1 percent) of any Iowa community they track; an exceptional feat in these economic times.

Most people would be amazed by the number of projects successfully completed and ongoing in the region. Just as amazing are the partnerships involved in making them all come together. Camanche, Clinton, Fulton, Ill., and the surrounding communities can be very proud of the progress that we have all made.

Steven Ames is the president and CEO of the Clinton Regional Development Corp.

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