

**PARTNERS IN  
ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT:**

**Cities of:**

- Appleton
- Kaukauna
- Menasha
- Neenah
- New London

**Towns of:**

- Buchanan
- Clayton
- Grand Chute
- Greenville
- Harrison
- Menasha

**Villages of:**

- Combined Locks
- Hortonville
- Kimberly
- Little Chute
- Wrihtstown

**Counties of:**

- Calumet
- Outagamie
- Winnebago

East Central Wisconsin  
Regional Planning  
Commission

Fox Cities Chamber of  
Commerce & Industry,  
Inc.

Fox Cities Convention &  
Visitors Bureau

Fox Valley Technical  
College

Fox Valley Workforce  
Development Board, Inc.

Heart of the Valley  
Chamber of Commerce

Kaukauna Utilities

Wisconsin Public Power,  
Inc.

UW-Extension  
Outagamie County

UW-Extension  
Winnebago County

# Focus Fox Cities

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## President's Report



Bob Jakel, FCEDP President

Municipalities and utility providers expend a substantial portion of their budgets on maintaining, replacing, and servicing infrastructure. This includes sewer and water lines and their treatment facilities,

storm water systems, transportation facilities such as roads, airports, bridges, waterways, and solid waste facilities. Road right-of-ways are typically used for private utilities including gas, electric, telecommunications and cable. Unless you're on a wilderness campsite up north, you use public infrastructure on a day to day basis. In fact, if you're reading this on a personal computer, you're using infrastructure right now.

Infrastructure is therefore an investment, and like all investments, providers must seek the highest possible return. Industrial and commercial facilities are huge consumers of public infrastructure and require considerable expenditures to meet capacity needs. In the Fox Cities, industry developed in association with the Fox River - the paper industry is heavily rooted along, around, and even in the river. Therefore, substantial infrastructure has been placed to serve these industries. This infrastructure represents a significant capital investment.

Where feasible, incentives should be provided to encourage the continued operation or upgrade of existing manufacturing firms in older regions. An example of this would be the recent award of \$334,000 in tax credits to Thilmay LLC to upgrade their manufacturing processes located along the Fox River in DePere and Kaukauna. Other long standing companies in similar situations have taken advantage of this and other programs.

These older manufacturing sites provide significant employment and create synergy that feed other sectors of the economy. To allow these facilities to be demolished, abandoned or converted for uses well beyond their original design when feasible

alternatives may exist, would be an ill use of infrastructure and would dampen its overall impact on our economy. The Village of Kimberly and Outagamie County have taken a positive step forward by conducting a study to research and encourage the restructuring of the former New Page mill. To have a site like this sit vacant, or be demolished, would sacrifice considerable employment opportunities and tax base. This is particularly critical considering the overall public and private investment in utilities, building, and equipment.

This is not to say that all industrial sites must be saved. Public access to waterfronts, rails-to-trails, river view apartments, and other amenities are all viable options. However, given the cost of replacing infrastructure, providing affordable manufacturing options, employment opportunities, and the secondary benefits of these business ventures, all reasonable efforts and incentives should be brought forward on older industrial sites.

Members of the Partnership have expertise in economic development and restructuring and can assist businesses in such areas as tax credits, workforce development, infrastructure improvements, environmental remediation, and business retention. If you are interested in restructuring and utilizing older buildings and would like an idea of what is available, please contact the Fox Cities Economic Development Partnership through the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce.





## Eagle Flats

On December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010 the Appleton City Council approved an amendment to the City's Tax Incremental District No. 8 to add additional land to accommodate the Eagle Flats project. The original district was created to assist the redevelopment of the river corridor in an area that lies just north and south of the College Avenue Bridge and west of Telulah Park. This area is primarily characterized by the large, vacant, and blighted industrial properties formerly

known as Foremost Dairy and M&I Drilling Fluids (RiverHeath).

The land being added by the amendment includes the former Riverside Paper property located along the south side of the Fox River stretching from Lawe Street to Olde Oneida Street.

The demolition of the building that housed the old Riverside Paper Corporation is scheduled to begin in January of 2011. Construction will start in spring on two residential apartment

buildings including a 70 unit elderly housing project and 54 unit work force housing project. The apartments were awarded more than \$16 million in WHEDA tax credits in June of 2010.

Future development in Phase I will include another residential complex, along with two commercial projects that will provide 16,000 square feet of office and retail space. Additional buildings and riverfront amenities are being planned for Phase II of the Eagle Flats development.



## 2011 Northeast Wisconsin Business Plan Competition

Prizes totaling \$25,000 will be awarded as part of the 2011 Northeast Wisconsin Business Plan competition, and the Fox Cities Economic Development Partnership wants to help get the word out to potential entrepreneurs that it is time to enter this competition.

Business plans are a critical tool in the proper planning and launching of new ventures and are the preferred mode of communication between entrepreneurs, innovators and potential investors. The goal of the competition is to encourage the preparation of business plans for start-up businesses, to support significant changes to existing businesses, or to support the development of new products in northeast Wisconsin.

The awards for the contest are as follows: \$10,000 for first place; \$6,000 for second; \$4,000

for third; \$3,000 for fourth and \$2,000 for fifth. Upon entering the competition, contestants sign an agreement assuring that contest award funds will be invested in the business within a year. Past finalists of the contest overwhelmingly agree that the contest was valuable for their business. Over 93 percent indicated that they would recommend other start-ups to enter the competition.

A well-written business plan that provides an objective, unemotional and critical review of the business opportunity is a living document that can be used into the future to help manage the business. It shows where a company is going, how it will get there and what it will look like when it arrives; and it helps identify problems, risks, and weaknesses at an early stage so that they can be addressed and corrected.

Entry deadline is January 10, 2011 at noon. Business plans and executive summaries must be received by the deadline. Two rounds of judging will take place. The first round will bring the number of contestants to 20 semi-finalists. The second round will determine the five finalists. Winners will be announced on March 21, 2011 after the five finalists do a 10-15 minute presentation about their business.

The contest is organized by the Northeast Wisconsin Regional Economic Partnership (NEWREP). Information and entry forms are available at [www.thenewnorth.com](http://www.thenewnorth.com) by selecting "newrep" and "business plan contest" from the links listed on the left side of the page. You will need both a business plan AND an executive summary to enter. More information about business plan assistance or the contest is available by contacting Cathy Huybers at (920) 720-5600, ext. 306.



## LIFE Study: “Regional Fact Sheet”

The purpose of the Leading Indicators For Excellence (LIFE) Study is to develop a clear understanding of the overall quality of life in the Fox River Region (Brown County, Fox Cities, and Southern Winnebago County). The study will provide an in-depth look into ten key areas:

- LIFE in the community
- LIFE at work
- LIFE at home
- LIFE of self-sufficiency
- LIFE of learning
- A safe LIFE
- A healthy LIFE
- LIFE in the natural environment
- LIFE of arts and culture
- LIFE of recreation and leisure

**Description of Data:** The project begins with an internet survey of hundreds of community leaders regarding their perceptions of quality of life. Focus groups with key demographic segments will be held, along with a survey of a random sample of 1500 citizens in each metro area. We will compile key data

from existing sources such as the Census, State of Wisconsin, and other current reports. Finally, individuals within each of the ten sectors will provide expert information and informed opinions about issues in each sector.

**Regional LIFE Study:** The LIFE Study will be conducted separately in each of the NE Wisconsin communities in the Fox River Region by the Center for Public Affairs at UW-Green Bay and the Survey Center at St. Norbert College. The communities will use parallel timelines and assessment methods that include community and leader surveys, community and expert/provider focus groups, interviews, and a comprehensive secondary data review. While the communities will utilize common methods, each will build on pre-existing data collection efforts and will utilize existing local reports and data. Common indicators will form the regional-level report.

The process will result in the following reports:

**Metro-Area LIFE Study Report and Executive Summary.** For each community, this integrated data includes relevant information on each topic brought together from all data sources. Data in the report will be accessible to community stakeholders for grant-writing, economic development, development of targeted initiatives, and more.

**Fox River Regional Summary.** This is a summary of information from multiple data sources about all three communities in the Fox River Region. The report will include charts that show a) all three areas together and b) regional level survey results combined from all areas. This report will be available as a stand-alone document.

The FCEDP is a sponsor of the LIFE Study. The results will be released in September of 2011.



## Fox Cities Tourism Industry - By the Numbers

<p><b>Properties:</b> 36 hotels 5 Bed &amp; Breakfasts</p>
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<p><b>Rooms:</b> 3,109 sleeping rooms 58% in Grand Chute 22% in Appleton 9% in Neenah</p>
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<p><b>Hotel occupancy:</b> 2009 - up 7% compared to 2008 2010 YTD + 13%</p> <p><b>Total visitor spending:</b> \$359.29 million (2009)</p>
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## Rapid Growth at SMT

Located at 5660 Technology Circle in the Southwest Industrial Park in Grand Chute, Surface Mount Technology Corporation (SMT) began operation in a 6,000 square foot leased structure on Nordale Avenue.

The company was founded in 1997 by President Chris Sumnicht to provide contract electronic manufacturing service to companies of all sizes, not just large corporations.

As the result of 35 percent growth in revenue in 2010, the company embarked on a 6,000 square foot renovation of their engineering space and a 26,000

square foot addition to their manufacturing facility. These additions resulted in a total structure size of 60,000 square feet. Employment has also grown significantly from an original workforce of 4 in 1997 to more than 135 today.

The services now offered by SMT span the design cycle from product development to manufacturing. Customers include the military, medical offices, the automotive industry and a diverse group of OEM manufacturers.

In manufacturing, SMT offers contract services such as rapid prototype, PCB assembly, testing and HLA services. In

addition to manufacturing, SMT offers turn-key product development solutions encompassing product specification, electronic hardware design, firmware/software design, PCB layout, mechanical design prototype electronic assemblies and test fixtures.

Surface Mount Technology Corporation was the recipient of a Special Recognition Governor’s Award in 2002 and the Fox Cities’ Manufacturer of the Year Award in 2005. SMT was also recognized by Inc. Magazine as one of the “Fastest Growing Private Companies in America” in 2007.

# FVTC Venture Center Marks Five Years of Economic Leadership

join the entrepreneurship While political candidates, elected leaders, and business experts have been discussing ways to get Wisconsin back to work, the Fox Valley Technical College's Venture Center has been creating an economic revolution through programs targeting entrepreneurs and small businesses. In late September, the program celebrated the five-year anniversary of E-Seed, the highly successful program for training entrepreneurs and launching new businesses.

The Fox Cities Economic Development Partnership (FCEDP) recognizes the role that business start-ups play in economic development and has funded E-Seed sponsorships over the last five years as part of their annual Program of Work. During 2009, the FCEDP provided partial tuition payments to six Fox Cities' individuals who went on to successfully complete the entrepreneurship-training program. At the end of 2010, the FCEDP will have again provided funding for six E-Seed participants.

In the last five years, the recession has forced many out of work as companies closed and existing businesses were challenged to do more with less. The resulting exodus from traditional jobs caused hundreds of area residents to explore entrepreneurial opportunities. The Venture Center has provided programs including training, one-on-one

coaching, and networking designed to make business launches more successful.

"A decade ago, few business leaders talked about the power entrepreneurs could have within our economy," said Amy Pietsch, director of the Venture Center. "Today, small business and entrepreneurs have been acknowledged as saviors for our economy."

Pietsch credits support from FVTC and partnerships with regional businesses for creating strong programs, resources and infrastructure for entrepreneurs. Today, hundreds of regional professionals serve as adjunct faculty and guest speakers in Venture Center instructional programs. Programs such as E-Seed and Pro-Seed teach entrepreneurs how to plan and open a business, then how to take their business to a higher level of productivity.

Dave Lindenstruth is a graduate of the E-Seed and Pro-Seed programs and is currently the president of Hu Hot restaurants. He credits the Venture Center with his success. "E-Seed helped us evolve our business plan and gave us the confidence we needed," Lindenstruth said. "The Pro-Seed revolution gave us the planning assistance we needed to become strategic and take our business to the next level."

For Lori Thiel, starting a Harley Davidson dealership in Fond du Lac was a calculated risk the Venture Center helped her tackle. "Amy Pietsch always

talks about the courage and fortitude it requires to take a business risk," Thiel said. "But through the Venture Center, I knew we had the plan needed and I could lean on quality people."

"These professionals have willingly invested their time and talents to create our entrepreneurial ecosystem," Pietsch said. "People from fields as diverse as advertising, accounting, IT and manufacturing have contributed thousands of dollars of their time over the last five years to help entrepreneurs maintain successful businesses."

In the last 5 years, here's how the Venture Center has helped the area's economy evolve:

- More than 200 business start-ups created 500+ jobs.
- More than 1,000 entrepreneurs reached at monthly networking events.
- 2,600 hours of instruction, one on one coaching, and technical assistance for entrepreneurs and small businesses.
- 13,600 residents served through entrepreneur programs in the Fox Cities, Waupaca and Oshkosh program sites.

More than 300 people attended the five year celebration held at FVTC's Appleton campus. For more information on the Venture Center programs, visit [www.venturecenterwi.biz](http://www.venturecenterwi.biz).

## Upcoming Economic Development Events:

**January 11, 2011**  
In-Development: Connecting Commercial Developers in the New North  
KI Convention Center, Green Bay  
Visit [www.insightonbusiness.com/indevelopment.aspx](http://www.insightonbusiness.com/indevelopment.aspx) for more details.

**January 25, 2011**  
Maintaining a Secure Computer For Business Usage Seminar  
Business Assistance Center, Green Bay  
Call (920) 486-9010 to register.

**February 9-11, 2011**  
WEDA - Governor's Conference on Economic Development

Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center, Madison, WI  
Visit [www.weda.org](http://www.weda.org) for conference details and to register.

**February 14, 2011**  
Small Business Development Center's Entrepreneurial Training Program  
NWTC - Sturgeon Bay Campus  
Visit [www.wisconsinsbdc.org/events/](http://www.wisconsinsbdc.org/events/) for more information.

**February 24, 2011**  
Small Business Development Center's Entrepreneurial Training Program  
NWTC Business Assistance Center, Green Bay, WI

Visit [www.wisconsinsbdc.org/events/](http://www.wisconsinsbdc.org/events/) for more information.

**March 2-4, 2011**  
Better Buildings: Better Business Conference  
Kalahari Resort and Convention Center, Wisconsin Dells  
For the latest information, visit [www.ecw.org/betterbuildings](http://www.ecw.org/betterbuildings).

**May 4-6, 2011**  
Mid-America Economic Development Council's Best Practices Conference  
Des Moines, Iowa  
Save This Date - watch [www.maedc.net](http://www.maedc.net) for details.