

NEWS

Growing the Local Economy

Bert Cook, Executive Director - GLEDC

Have you ever wondered what your community is doing to attract new jobs and investment? If so, you may be interested to learn more about the Greater La Porte Economic Development Corporation (GLEDC) and the Economic Development Corporation of Michigan City (EDCMC). Both organizations are not-for-profits established to assist their respective cities with new business attraction, retention and expansion services, and location marketing.

GLEDC and EDCMC are organizations that are governed by their respective Boards of Directors, which are made up of many local business people from throughout the county. It is of great benefit to each organization to have the local knowledge and expertise represented by all Board Members. These Boards work in tandem with one another to help make sure they are maximizing their efforts for development.

Both GLEDC and EDCMC are funded through a combination of tax dollars and private donation by the local business community. Each year the organizations receive a great deal of support, both professionally and financially, from the business community. Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO), IU Health La Porte Hospital, Horizon Bank, Franciscan St. Anthony Health, La Porte Savings Bank, NECA/IBEW, and Tonn & Blank Construction are just a few of the long-time supporters of both organizations.

New business attraction is a key function of both economic development groups. Leads on businesses that are interested in relocating come in from a variety of sources; the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, real estate brokers, site selectors and the companies themselves. In most cases the initial phase of this process involves providing data on the demographics of the community and the specifics of the particular site or building the client is interested in. Once all this information is provided, the company does an internal analysis of how well the site location corresponds to the company's needs. If this comparison is favorable the clients may then choose to conduct a site visit. These visits can last from a few hours to multiple days and can involve visits to: the site location, local schools, restaurants, golf courses, banks, residential areas and much more.



PROPERTY LISTINGS

NewPorte Landing



- *Pine Lake Avenue/Truesdell, La Porte, IN*
- *Commercial/Residential Development*
- *150 acres*
- *\$60,000 per acre*
- *Highly desirable area*

<http://www.gledc.com/comm-sites/newporte-landing.html>

Blank Building



- *600 E. 2nd St., Michigan City, IN 46360*
- *Commercial/Retail*
- *6.5 acres*
- *\$7,000,000*
- *560 ft. of harbor footage on Trail Creek*

At this point in the process the company has generally eliminated all sites but a select few for their project. Negotiations begin on the specific package that may be required to facilitate the relocation. Incentives at both the state and local level are part of these discussions, but they are not the only items discussed--zoning issues, financing and community support are also topics of discussion. In many cases the use of local incentives, such as tax abatement, benefits the company financially but the community's support for the project makes a far greater impact.

If the company chooses to locate within La Porte or Michigan City, economic development representatives will spend the next few months managing the local process through the local boards and commissions. The entire process outlined above can take between 6 months and 3 years and involves a great deal of time and effort. When you factor in that GLEDC is on pace to complete 168 site selections in 2013 you can begin to understand the complexities involved in this process!

The Benefits of Working Together

Andy Laurent, Director of Marketing & Sales - Chicago South Shore & South Bend Railroad

Let me tell you about how partnerships and cooperation in economic development have benefitted the Chicago South Shore & South Bend Railroad. The Chicago South Shore & South Bend Railroad is one of six freight railroads serving La Porte County, and the only one that has its headquarters here.

South Shore Freight is a short line company that hauls freight on the tracks owned by the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District between Chicago and South Bend, and on our own branch line between Michigan City and Kingsbury via La Porte. Unlike the long freight trains operated by the large railroads whose freight is often moving thousands of miles and just passing through northwest Indiana, each freight car you see on the South Shore is carrying product shipped directly to (or from) our online customers located in Michigan City, La Porte, New Carlisle, Stillwell, and Kingsbury.

We are a service provider, so we are dependent on the health and strength of our customers. As the local economy goes, so goes South Shore Freight.

We have spent millions of dollars over the past 13 years maintaining and upgrading those tracks to provide safe and efficient rail service to our customers on the line. South Shore Freight has acquired real estate along the railroad to provide development sites for future manufacturing industries.

We are partnering with real estate development companies that are investing in our county at the Thomas Rose Industrial Park in La Porte, and the Kingsbury Industrial Park at the south end of our branch line. South Shore Freight is committed to development in La Porte County, and we see our rail line as a key factor in the county's future.

As part of our commitment to La Porte County, we have established strong relationships with the organizations that work to maintain and build employment and industry in our area. The economic development entity in La Porte, the Greater La Porte Economic Development Corporation (GLEDC), has been working hard at keeping our local economy healthy by retaining our existing businesses and attracting new ones.

We have worked hand-in-hand with GLEDC on many economic development leads, both related to the property we own in La Porte, and property owned by others along our tracks. In fact, GLEDC has responded to 247 leads from the State of Indiana in the past three years with site data featuring the development sites along the South Shore on State Road 39 North. This is an incredible volume of work, and keeps our county in the minds of the economic development agencies in Indianapolis.

In my time working closely with GLEDC on development opportunities, and being appointed to its Board of Directors in 2012, I have learned that GLEDC sets a very high standard for a local economic development organization. The number one focus of any such organization is business retention and expansion (BR&E). As much as 80% of economic growth in industry occurs because of investment by existing companies in the form of new product lines, new buildings, and expanded production. GLEDC capitalizes on that trend by making BR&E a top priority.

The BR&E program that GLEDC has in place in partnership with the La Porte Chamber of Commerce and the Northwest Indiana Forum is a model of best practice that other communities are trying to duplicate.



The employment and investment figures for the county speak to the success of the work that both GLEDC and the Economic Development Corporation of Michigan City have accomplished: 1,308 new jobs, 1,268 retained, and \$171,089,000 invested in our economy since 2010. These organizations have done tremendous work to increase the economic vitality of our county during the worst economic recession in eighty years.

In closing, I have seen economic development work, and I have seen it fail. Before my career at South Shore Freight, I worked as an economic development professional in a nearby city for six years. Our two organizations, GLEDC and MCEDC, provide a level of service and success to our county commensurate with a much larger community. At South Shore, we greatly value the contributions of GLEDC and EDCMC, and we are counting on their continued success to keep our company growing into the future.

Kieft resigns from EDCMC, board looking to fill vacancy

Economic Development Corporation Michigan City, Indiana (EDCMC) announced the resignation of Kevin Kieft from the position of Executive Director. Kieft's resignation goes into effect immediately as he resigned to accept an opportunity at the Indiana Economic Development Corporation.

He served the organization for nearly seven years, originally named the Business Development Manager in 2006 before being promoted to Executive Director in 2012.

Board Chairman Chuck Compton said, "It's our desire to find a qualified replacement for the Executive Director position as soon as possible."

Recently, EDCMC embarked upon a collaborative process to develop a comprehensive and long-term action initiative. The initiative will highlight economic development opportunities locally and construct a step-by-step plan of action towards creating a sustainable business environment.

This initiative will not be interrupted during this interim period for EDCMC. In addition, contact should continue to be made directly with the EDCMC office for ongoing project support.

"On behalf of the EDCMC Board of Directors, I want to thank Kevin for his many years of service and dedication to EDCMC, and we wish him every success in his new position," Compton said. Compton serves as the Chief Administrative Officer for Chicago South Shore & South Bend Freight Railroad.

Life is a Revolution: Made in America

Chris Mahlmann - LaPortecounty.com

Here I am again at Industrial Revolution Eatery and Grille. I do my best thinking over food, and a tasty burger and fries from Industrial Revolution gives me a chance to catch up on some of the great stories that I come across.

Recently, I had a chance to spend some time inside one of our local businesses that is turning overseas manufacturing on its head. Thomas Dermody is a State Representative and runs a growing business in La Porte named TCB Manufacturing that is driving that revolution. Tom and his wife Jackie took over TCB Manufacturing about three years ago and they make multiple products. But what they are known for the most are their insulated food and beverage delivery bags.

A growing manufacturing business? Right here in Northwest Indiana? Aren't businesses like Dermody's supposed to fail in the globalization movement? Normally you would flip the products that Dermody's company makes over and you'd see a shiny little "Made in China" sticker on the bottom. Made in America is a thing of the past, right?

Wrong.

Instead of failing, TCB Manufacturing is succeeding. In the past three years, the number of employees has quadrupled. The workers range from college kids to older adults that have been in the working world for a long time. They are local people – made in America.



“I realized that I could constantly complain or I could get involved. There are families here that want to work,” Dermody said. “I want to give them the opportunity to do so.”

So why is Dermody a trail blazer? Think about it. If you keep doing what you’ve always done, you’re going to keep getting what you’ve always got. And that didn’t sit well with him. So he made the change; made the choice. And I applaud him for it.

You can find TCB Manufacturing’s products all over the country. They work with major name brands and groups like the NFL and Nike and Nestle. Business is booming, and not once has a job been sent to another country to make that happen.

Dermody’s factory has to be bustling to make all of these products and when you think of factories and manufacturing places, you would think that they are supposed to be hot, dank and dirty with sub-par working conditions. And aren’t the workers supposed to be...unhappy? Well, upon entering the his facility, I found that it was bright, clean, cool and there were colorful people there who genuinely enjoyed their work. They were and are proud to be part of such a great and growing team in La Porte.

Dermody himself is quite an interesting guy. He’s a business owner, a republican, a past president and vice president of the school board in La Porte and a born and bred Slicer. He loves his community and there’s nothing that makes him happier than just giving back to it. And with TCB Manufacturing, Dermody is able to do just that by bringing in jobs and money to La Porte and keeping them there.

Being a politician and owning a business has given him insight to the difficulties that businesses face when slapped with so many government rules, regulations and restrictions, which he takes with him to Indianapolis to help make the state as business-friendly as possible. He knows that you’ve just got to have faith in your abilities and your employees abilities, the willingness to roll up your sleeves and get dirty, and the drive to keep going when things get tough. And this is America. We’re made of some tough stuff.

Dermody works closely with local leaders like Dr. Glade Montgomery (La Porte Schools Superintendent), and politicians from all over Indiana, and could care less about the Republican vs. Democrat debate. As long as you’re there for the right reasons and you’re working toward the betterment of things, then he’s all for you. Heck, his father-in-law is Jim Arnold –another Indiana Senator and Democrat.

“I’m excited about our youth. These young people will be our future leaders,” Dermody said. “And I’m a better person because of being a business owner, state representative and member of my community.”

Dermody thinks that politics aside, we can all make a difference. And we don’t have to leave the country to do it. That’s revolutionary thinking.

Dwyer Instruments, Inc. expansion plans to create up to 50 new jobs by 2016

Dwyer Instruments, Inc., a manufacturer specializing in the production of instrumentation products, announced plans July 22, to expand its operations in Michigan City and will create up to 50 new jobs by 2016.

The Michigan City, Ind.-headquartered company will invest \$769,000 to lease and equip an 11,000 square-foot facility located in the Kingsburg Industrial Park. The new facility, which is expected to be fully operational by September, will allow the company to start manufacturing sensor products for the fire pump, industrial and chemical industries. In addition, Dwyer will also invest in its research and development functions in Michigan City.

“Indiana is a state that works for manufacturing, with a carefully crafted business environment that stands out in the Midwest and across the country,” said Eric Doden, president of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation. “Companies like Dwyer recognize that our low-tax, pro-growth policies, including the recent enactment of the largest tax cut in state history, make Indiana ripe for business achievement.”

Dwyer currently has 740 associates globally, which includes approximately 530 employees in Indiana, and will begin hiring assembly, instrument builders and technicians in October. Interested applicants can learn more at www.dwyer-inst.com/career_index.cfm.



“Indiana continues to lower taxes, while other states we were considering for this expansion are raising taxes,” said Jim Goldschmidt, director of manufacturing of Dwyer. “With its low taxes, Indiana showed that it was committed to creating the business environment we need to grow our business and hire more people. Purdue North Central has been a great resource in supplying engineering and technical personnel to support the manufacturing needs.”

“We have in the past and will continue to do so in the future, aggressively work with companies like Dwyer to promote investment and create job opportunities for La Porte County residents,” said Mark Yagelski, president of the La Porte County Council.

Founded in 1931, Dwyer manufactures a diverse line of control and instrumentation products for the HVAC, chemical, food, oil and gas and pollution control industries. More than half of all goods produced by the company are specialty items designed and manufactured specifically to client specifications. Dwyer has Indiana locations in Kingsburg, Wakarusa, Wolcott and Michigan City, along with additional operations in Anaheim, Calif., Grandview, Mo., Fergus Falls, Minn., Hong Kong, the United Kingdom and Australia.

CIRCLE OF INVESTORS SPOTLIGHT



Winn Machine - La Porte, Indiana

From custom parts to on-hand inventory, Winn Machine has spent over 30 years providing expert manufacturing for a wide range of industries. Winn Machine began operating in Michigan City in 1979 and in 2012 purchased a 16,000 square foot building in La Porte in an effort to accommodate their growing needs. Winn Machine currently employs 20 people and has plans to add 5 jobs within the next 18 to 24 months.

Specializing in CNC turning and milling, Winn Machine has the capability to fabricate plastic, cold and hot rolled steel, brass and stainless steel parts from 1 prototype to 5,000 pieces in sizes up to 13 inches in diameter. This allows them to expertly serve a breadth of industries including food, construction, alternative energy and heavy equipment.

More than just a machining facility, Winn Machine also has capabilities in custom, structural steel and aluminum fabrication as well as weldment to provide customers with a diverse set of solutions to fit their needs.

Not only focused on parts, Winn Machine is a customer-centric organization. Dedicated to on-time delivery,



maintaining inventory to accommodate urgent needs and offering line stocking at the customer facility to ease the purchasing department's work load, we ensure our customers can

continue to provide top-notch service to their customers.

Ecologically conscious, Winn Machine also recognizes their responsibility to conduct business in a way that protects and improves the state of the environment for future generations. They understand that the long-term well-being of society, the well-being of their employees, the strength of the global economy and the continuing success of their business depend on their commitment to reducing waste, encouraging and promoting healthy behaviors and working every day with the mindset of continuous improvement.

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