

# GLEDDC

2016  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

GREATER LA PORTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



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## LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



During visits with other communities, other economic development practitioners, and the general public I am often asked, “What is La Porte doing that is leading to so many projects and successes?” It is a question that generates a great deal of pride for me and I hope our community shares in that sentiment. I believe these are the attributes that are central to our success.

First and foremost, the partnerships that exist in La Porte are second-to-none. In most, if not all of our successes, progress can be tied to many people and entities working together towards a common goal. This is evident in multiple projects but none more so than the NewPorte Landing Development. When I look back at the long road that has led to where we are today I have to acknowledge many different team members. While GLEDC and the City of La Porte are most visible, others have had enormous roles as well. The Community Development Partnership (CDP) stepped in when needed most to acquire a property crucial for a complete development. Local banks, NIPSCO and the La Porte Economic Advancement Foundation created the CDP to augment what the City was doing and assist when needed to make sure this development was a success. Likewise, the La Porte Urban Enterprise Association (UEA) played a major role by assisting the Redevelopment Commission in acquiring and remediating environmental issues on another property necessary for the growth of NewPorte Landing. These are just two examples of what partnership means in La Porte. The progress in NewPorte Landing last year was staggering. The infrastructure was constructed and our community was finally able to see this brownfield come to life as a new inviting place for retail, commercial and recreational developments to flourish. Now because of the great work by many this development is ready to take the next step in 2017—new businesses calling NewPorte Landing home.

Another strength of La Porte is problem solving. Look no further than Downtown to see this in action. The UEA Business Grants have long been available for Downtown businesses. Many have used the programs over the years but the UEA has never been quite able to capture the dramatic result it was looking for.

That transformation began in 2016. UEA Board Members in conjunction with the Downtown Coordinator and the La Porte City Planner came together to brainstorm on how to achieve the change we’ve been searching for. The group assessed past struggles, challenges, and needs with the end result being a new program called The Business Block Grant. The first 8 buildings applied and received funds to begin a massive facelift for the Downtown in 2016. The Downtown beautification started with paint and awnings and will continue next year with another 8 buildings receiving improvements. The change has garnered much optimism from the community and would never have been possible without the problem solving of the City Team.

The last quality I want to mention is a commitment to planning for a better future. La Porte’s determination to consider where we are going, not just where we are today is a tremendous asset to our economic development efforts. NewPorte Landing is a great example of this but the most notable would be the Thomas Rose Industrial Park. Again, all partners involved in the expansion were focused on our future. The plan enacted not only allowed for new infrastructure but more importantly access to new industrial sites for future employers. This has never been more important than it is today. With La Porte’s ever-shrinking vacancy rates, new sites are desperately needed to continue to attract new jobs and capital investments to our community.

Every community has strengths and weaknesses and La Porte is no different. However, when I answer the question, “What is driving us forward so quickly?” I firmly believe it is that our strengths are aligned with where we want to be in the future. Businesses notice those communities that have a commitment to excellence and the determination to achieve these goals. La Porte is driven and strategic. We have a vision of the future and use our community partnerships and problem solving abilities to make sure we are constantly on the path to reach our goals! That is why others notice all that we are accomplishing.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bert Cook'.

Bert Cook, Executive Director

# GLEDC

## STAFF & BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Bert Cook  
Executive  
Director



Sylvia  
Espinosa  
Administrative  
Assistant



Thadeus  
Cutler  
Downtown  
Director



Mayor Blair Milo  
Chairman  
Mayor, City of La Porte  
City Hall



Mr. Dan Kaminski  
Chairman Elect/L.E.A.F.  
Representative  
General Insurance Services



Mr. Terry Larson  
Vice Chairperson  
Business Nomination  
Larson Danielson Construction  
Company Inc.



Mr. Mark Krentz  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Redevelopment Commission  
Appointment



Mr. Jeff Johnson  
Business Nomination  
Kingsbury Utility  
Corporation



Mr. Don Babcock  
Mayoral  
At Large Appointment  
NIPSCO



Mr. Dan Carroll  
Business Nomination  
Horizon Bank



Mr. Mark Dilley  
Business Nomination  
Jaeger-Unitek Sealing  
Solutions



Ms. Laura Francesconi  
Business Nomination  
Meridian Title



Mr. Mark Francesconi  
Superintendent of  
La Porte Schools  
La Porte Community  
School Corp.



Mr. Damon Gasaway II  
Business Nomination  
Winn Machine



Mr. John Kaylor  
Chamber Immediate  
Past Chair  
Schmitt & Kaylor, CPA



Mr. Steve Kring  
Economic Development  
Commission Appointment  
Horizon Bank



Tom Larson  
Chamber Chair  
ReMax Commercial  
Property Solutions



Mr. Nicholas Otis  
Business Nomination  
Newby, Lewis Kaminski &  
Jones



Mr. Rich Schmitt  
Business Nomination  
Schmitt & Kaylor, CPA



Mr. Mike Schultz  
La Porte County Assessor  
La Porte County Government



Mr. Michael Seitz  
President, Chamber/  
L.E.A.F.  
Greater La Porte  
Chamber of Commerce



Mr. Thor Thordarson  
Business Nomination  
IU Health - La Porte Hospital

**42 Site Selections –  
Project Success Rate—12%**

IEDC – 19 site selections  
Forum – 9 site selections  
GLEDC Relationships –  
14 site selections

Average square  
footage: 112,000 sq ft  
  
Average land size:  
48 acres

**NEW BUSINESS  
ATTRACTION**

La Porte County

Industrial 29  
Commercial 13

Projects looking  
for land: 13 (31%)  
  
Projects looking for  
buildings: 29 (69%)

**NEW BUSINESS  
ATTRACTION**

The Greater La Porte Economic Development Corporation (GLEDC) provides new business attraction services for the Greater La Porte Area. Lead generation occurs from a number of different sources including: the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), the Northwest Indiana Forum, and relationships with brokers, site selectors and company personnel.

**RESULTS**

Projects	Year	Type	New Jobs	Retained Jobs	Capital Investment
Plastic Packaging	2016	Expansion	10	19	\$1,000,000
Winn Machine	2016	Attraction	15	0	\$2,000,000
J&L Dimensional Services	2016	Expansion	1	0	\$60,000
RQAW, Inc.	2016	Expansion	12	0	\$887,000
Kroger Marketplace	2016	Expansion	250	100	\$22,000,000
<b>Totals</b>			<b>288</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>\$25,947,000</b>



# Hire A Slicer

La Porte, IN ◆◆◆◆◆ LaPorte High School ◆◆◆◆◆ 46350

## La Porte Business and Education Come Together to Create 'Hire A Slicer' Program

WRITTEN BY: Andrew Rowe

The Business and Education Partnership Menu is a partnership between the Greater La Porte Economic Development Corporation, the Greater La Porte Chamber of Commerce, the City of La Porte and La Porte Community School Corporation. This partnership seeks to open lines of communication and connect La Porte businesses with the school corporation.

The Business and Education Partnership Menu consists of a series of choices and ways in which local companies can dialogue with the school, who is preparing the future workforce which will someday be employed by those local businesses.

One of the menu items is the Workforce Teacher of the Year and in 2015 the inaugural recipient of that award was La Porte High School teacher, Matt Presley.

"The award is what it sounds like it is," said GLEDC Executive Director, Bert Cook. "We're honoring the teacher who is best preparing their students for the workforce, whether that means right now in the immediate future or if those students are going on to further their education, whatever it may be."

As part of the award, GLEDC presents the winner with two \$500 checks for their program and \$500 for them personally. After receiving the award, Presley, an English and Senior Technical Writing teacher at LPHS, took the entire \$1000 and created a program and website called, Hire A Slicer at [hireaslicer.com](http://hireaslicer.com).

"I won the award and that was fantastic," Presley said. "The challenge was, 'how do I take that money and do something that has a lasting impact'? I sat down with Principal Ben Tonagel and we talked over some ideas and I think he actually said that he had seen something like this at a college at some point."

After some more investigating, Presley decided that the [hireaslicer.com](http://hireaslicer.com) was something that could have a lasting benefit to the school, the students and the community. Presley then pitched the idea to Cook who immediately saw the positive impact that the website could have in La Porte.

“There are quite a few things that can come out of the website but the goal is to provide, from my angle, students at La Porte High School with opportunities for employment,” said Presley. “This is a tool that they can use to do that. It also helps me, as a teacher, engage my students because in the past my classes are largely career technical-based. Students in my class have to get mentorships in the community, do soft-skills training, we write resumes, we do job interviews and we’re constantly doing those types of things.”

The challenge that every community faces is having a solid workforce that is able to occupy the jobs that need to be filled to be successful.

“The things we’re excited about in La Porte are these real-world applications,” added Cook. “We’re not just talking about doing something, we’re actually doing things. Students who are participating through this website will find that there is an active and exciting job market out there, and I think that businesses will pick up on that and will be looking to use this resource to find people.”

Employers will be able to access the website with a password which will protect the students from just anyone getting online and browsing through the information.

The site is taking its first steps as the school year opens up and Presley is hopeful of having a few hundred resumes on the site as students work to build their resume and become connected to the website. Students won’t be required to post their resume to hireaslicer.com, but through Presley’s classes and the schools



**“There are quite a few things that can come out of the website but the goal is to provide, from my angle, students at La Porte High School with opportunities for employment.”**

**- Matt Presley, La Porte High School Teacher  
(pictured with Bert Cook, GLEDC Executive Director)**

Digital Learning Day, the number of students and staff active and using the tools that the site provides will grow quickly.

Hire A Slicer is also geared towards students who might not be joining the workforce immediately.

“I am thrilled to see the “Hire A Slicer website” up and running. Matt Presley has created a very practical learning experience for La Porte High School students, while simultaneously increasing communication between our schools and business community. During my administration workforce development has always been a priority and Matt’s work is another positive step in preparing our students to enter the workforce,” said Mayor Blair Milo.

## Agreement between the Kroger Co. and City of La Porte Redevelopment Commission

INDIANAPOLIS, IN – October 26th - The Kroger Company is pleased to announce its intention to expand its current level of service to customers in and around La Porte County. The signing of a Purchase Agreement tonight by the commission represents the first step in a process that all hope will lead to a new store for the residents of La Porte County.

The purchase would enable Kroger to create a new Marketplace on the property. This \$22 million investment would provide a 123,000 square foot store, larger than two football fields. Kroger shoppers will find an even greater variety of products than are available in our very successful current store. For example, Kroger Marketplace stores traditionally offer a wider array of cheeses, wine, and even apparel. The expansion will also provide many additional jobs for the area.

Many details need to be addressed between now and the beginning of construction. Kroger anticipates the work could begin in 2018.

On that timeline, the store would open in 2019. Kroger is grateful for the innovative spirit of the commission, seeing what this investment offers to the area. We are eager to work together to create a store that provides additional Kroger value, convenience and hospitality for the people of La Porte County.

The Kroger Co. has been serving local communities for 133 years. The Kroger Central Division has 136 food stores, 115 pharmacies and 95 fuel centers operating under three banners; Kroger,



Owen's and Pay Less, with locations primarily in Indiana and Illinois, in addition to three stores in Missouri, one in Michigan and one in Ohio. Kroger Central Division is dedicated to supporting every local community it serves, contributing more than



\$15.1 million in 2015 to local organizations, primarily focusing on hunger relief, K-12 education, health causes and diversity. The Kroger Co. was once again named the most generous company in America in a Chronicle of Philanthropy listing detailed in Forbes Magazine. At Kroger we value: honesty, respect, inclusion, diversity, safety and integrity.

### The Kroger Co. - Central Division

5960 Castleway West Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46250

Contact: Eric Halvorson, Kroger spokesperson

Phone: 317-579-8222

FAX: 317-579-8093

E-Mail: [eric.halvorson@kroger.com](mailto:eric.halvorson@kroger.com)

# PREFERRED VENDORS

## PLATINUM LEVEL - \$10,000+/YEAR



## DIAMOND LEVEL - \$5,000+/YEAR



## GOLD LEVEL - \$2,500+/YEAR

- 1st Source Bank
- Crowe Horwath, LLP
- First Merchant Bank
- KeyDevelopment Partners MC, LLC
- Michigan City Area Chamber of Commerce
- NECA/IBEW
- Regional Development Company
- Walsh & Kelly, Inc.

## SILVER LEVEL - \$1,000+/YEAR

- American Structurepoint, Inc.
- Donald & Cynthia Berchem
- BMO Harris Bank, NA
- Bradley Company
- Centier Bank
- Compress Air
- Dekker Vacuum Technologies
- Fas-Pak
- First Trust Credit Union
- Frontier Communications
- G.M. Fedorchak & Associates
- General Insurance Services
- Greater La Porte Chamber of Commerce
- Indiana Michigan Power
- Jaeger-Unitek Sealing Solutions
- Kabelin Ace Hardware
- Kingsbury Utilities
- Larson Danielson Construction
- Meridian Title
- Michigan City Paper Box Company
- MonoSol
- Newby Lewis Kaminski & Jones
- Rieth Riley - Indiana, Michigan
- Rowley Bushue
- Sager Metal Strip Company
- Sullivan Pallatek
- The Greater Indiana Title Company
- The News-Dispatch
- The Troyer Group
- Unity Foundation
- Winn Machine Power

## COPPER LEVEL

- Barry F. McDonnell
- Cadence Environmental
- Cender & Company
- Community Dynamics
- Craighhead, Lange & Hough
- Edward Jones-Jon Salisbury
- Environmental, Inc.
- Haas & Associates, LLC
- J & L Dimensional Services, Inc.
- Jay Pouzar/CBRE
- KTR
- Oehmstead Company
- Packaging Logic
- Parkison Hinton
- Rich & Beverly Mrozinski
- Ron Meer
- Schmitt & Kaylor
- TCB Manufacturing
- Vanair

**When considering the City of La Porte's economy, what word or set of words first comes to your mind?**





LAPORTE RQAW OFFICE  
ELEVATIONS

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Development Corporation

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