



## Press Release

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### **Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation receives \$437,899 grant to help grow regional economy**

Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation (FCEDC) and Center for Enterprise Development (CED) have received a \$437,899 grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA). The grant will be utilized to fund the implementation and three years of services that will expand and enhance FCEDC's current existing business development services in the form of an economic gardening program called "Impact!". The nearly half-million dollar grant is the first to be awarded by EDA in Wisconsin and in the Chicago district region.

Impact! aligns with the practices and strategies of the FCEDC to be responsive to ever-changing situations and climates, including today's struggling economy, or for example, a response to the June 2008 flooding that affected much of the County. The aim of the Impact! program, based on a proven model, is to create jobs and improve the local economy through existing business expansion by leveraging technologically advanced decision support tools.

"We want to thank the EDA for providing funding for this tremendous opportunity. This is a powerful program that will have real-life impact on our businesses and our community," said Brenda Hicks-Sorensen, president of FCEDC, who also commented that more information would be forthcoming. "The FCEDC team will now be quickly gearing up to roll out the Impact! program. The implementation process for this program is significant and could not be started until we knew definitively that we received the grant. We have received word that, in a few weeks, EDA officials will be here to officially award the grant. The plan is then to hold a kick-off of the program this fall. The kick-off event will provide detailed information to the very businesses that would benefit from the program."

Hicks-Sorensen noted that many entities assisted FCEDC in various parts of the application process for this substantial grant including Senators Kohl and Feingold, Congressman Petri, Fond du Lac County, East Central Regional Planning Commission, the board of directors of FCEDC and CED, and local business partners.

The mission of Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation is to improve the economic well being of the businesses, communities, and residents of the county via business attraction activities, existing business development, entrepreneurial services, community preparedness and consultation and workforce development.