MISSION
We grow the economy with services designed to retain, expand and attract businesses in Clare and Isabella Counties.

VISION
We are the primary economic development driver for businesses, communities and industrial partners in Middle Michigan.

STRATEGIC PLAN
2016-2018

BUSINESS RETENTION & GROWTH
• Conduct regular retention calls on area businesses with municipalities and other partners.
• Represent companies seeking state incentives to the MEDC and other departments.
• Connect businesses with suppliers and customers through Pure Michigan Business Connect.
• Facilitate workforce training and export growth for businesses in Middle Michigan.

BUSINESS ATTRACTION
• Target businesses for attraction and respond quickly to new leads and site selector inquiries.
• Assist incoming businesses with state incentives and municipal approval processes.
• Update site selectors and area businesses through MMDC website and social media.
• Coordinate with economic development partners for a regional attraction strategy.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
• Publish available properties on the MMDC and Great Lakes Bay Region websites.
• Work with developers, land owners and real estate brokers to promote redevelopment.
• Assist developers with real estate tax credits and other incentives.
• Assist municipalities with brownfield redevelopment and other development stages.

Clare Office
402 North First Street
Harrison, Michigan 48625
Phone: (989) 539-2173
Fax: (989) 539-6053

Mt. Pleasant Office
200 East Broadway
Mt. Pleasant, Michigan 48858
Phone: (989) 772-2858
Fax: (989) 773-2115
A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

I have just completed my first full year as the new President and CEO of the Middle Michigan Development Corporation and I am very pleased to present our 2016 Annual Report. Just like last year, we have included our updated Mission and Vision statements and new Strategic Plan on the inside front cover. The inside back cover lists our current Executive Committee and updated Board of Directors. The back cover includes several screen shots from our new website which you can check out at www.mmdc.org.

Inside, we have included a four-page article on MMDC from the October 2016 edition of Business in Focus magazine along with highlights of some of the success stories from the past year. Business in Focus magazine has a worldwide circulation of over 360,000 printed copies along with their online edition designed to reach influential site selectors and business leaders. You can check out their magazine by clicking on www.businessinfocusmagazine.com (go to Past Issues and click on the October 2016 edition; our article begins on page 76). I want to thank American Mitsuba, Central Michigan University, the Gratiot Isabella ISD and Jay’s Sporting Goods for supporting this article with their advertising.

This year’s key economic development metrics are in the box below. We continued this year to focus on various aspects of economic development with our highly successful speaker series for our quarterly meetings. Our speakers included:

- David Lorenz
  Vice President of MEDC/Travel Michigan
- Kirk Steudle
  Director of the Michigan Department of Transportation
- Colonel Kriste Etue
  Director of the Michigan State Police
- Chuck Hadden
  President & CEO of the Michigan Manufacturers Association

Talent continues to be the most critical issue facing businesses in Middle Michigan and we will continue to work closely with our job training partners to help our companies find and train the workers they need. I am especially pleased that we were able to work with the Central Michigan Manufacturing Association, Mid Michigan Community College and Michigan Works! resulting in seven companies in Clare and Isabella counties receiving Skilled Trades Training Fund (STTF) grants totaling $355,512. In fact, our two counties collectively did better than two of the state’s ten whole regions in STTF grant funding.

I want to remind our readers that MMDC by itself doesn’t create jobs, but we do provide essential services to area businesses who do create jobs. We would not be successful in anything we do without the strong support of our great board members and area business leaders. In September, we celebrated MMDC’s 35th Anniversary. Here’s to 35 more years for MMDC and another successful economic development year in 2017!

Sincerely,

James MCBryde
President and Chief Executive Officer
MMDC

---

2016 MMDC METRICS

- $28,250,550 INVESTED
- $658,422 IN GRANTS RECEIVED
- 702 NEW JOBS
- 84 COMPANY VISITS
Michigan’s Clare and Isabella Counties attract—and retain—businesses because people enjoy living and doing business in the friendly, rural community. “The businesses that are here love it here,” says James McBryde, President and CEO of the Middle Michigan Development Corporation (MMDC). “The quality of life is very high in terms of housing and cost of living. The dollar goes a long way in this area. You can get a very nice house for much less money than that same house would cost in an urban area in Michigan—let alone other parts of the country.” In fact, Money Magazine and U.S. News & World Report have rated the community as one of the most affordable in the nation.

Good schools and supportive neighbors add to the positive business climate. “We have great communities, with people who are willing to pitch in and help each other out.” And, even though Clare and Isabella Counties are off the beaten track, they are not too far from Michigan’s heavily populated areas, so businesses can still operate efficiently. “We are close enough to the assembly factories that are to our south that we can do just in time delivery.”

Located near major expressways, rail and an International Trade Zone, the community is just a couple hours away from Detroit, Grand Rapids, Port Huron and Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. Clare and Isabella counties also boast plenty of entertainment opportunities. “We have a college town and a major university, which brings in all kinds of additional perks to the community with sports and the arts and entertainment,” Mr. McBryde points out. The Soaring Sage Casino and Resort offers gaming, shows, a spa, restaurants, golf, and a luxury resort. Perhaps most notably, the region is renowned for its outdoor fun. “There are multiple inland lakes, rivers, trail heads, ski resorts, golf courses—you name it,” says Clare County Director Katherine Methner. “It is a great place to visit. It is a great place to live.”

Agriculture is a major industry in Clare and Isabella Counties. In addition, the region—and the town of Mt. Pleasant in particular—is active in the oil industry. “Mt. Pleasant has a lot of oil industry related businesses that have been around for years and years,” Ms. Methner reports. “It is really noted as a capital for the oil industry in Michigan.” Manufacturing is also critical to the region. “We have a lot of opportunity here for manufacturing,” says Mr. McBryde. “This is a rural area, but we have a surprising amount of manufacturing that goes on in these two counties.”

Advanced Battery Concepts produces an innovative bipolar, lead-acid battery, while Steelhead Industries builds manufacturing racks for Ford stamping plants. Defleed is one of the nation’s largest manufacturers of custom stainless steel refrigeration equipment. The industry leader also produces food service equipment, food holding tools, etc.
In addition, MMDC, the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, and Mid Michigan Community College worked together to secure a USDA grant for a feasibility study for hops processing in either Clare or Isabella Counties. “We think we already know what the study is going to tell us but we need to get the banks on board,” Mr. McBryde explains.

MMDC has found that new and expanding businesses need support in site location and workforce training; this is in stark contrast to what businesses needed as they struggled to overcome the Global Financial Crisis a few years ago. “We are in the discussion primarily focused on tax credits or tax incentives for relocating businesses,” Mr. McBryde recalls. “The companies have here, especially with the skilled trades,” MMDC is actively involved in several workforce training programs to remedy this problem. “We have melded workforce training programs to remed[154]y this problem. We have melded workforce development and economic development,” says Ms. Methner. The first unified workforce development system in the United States, Michigan Works! Association is a key economic development partner throughout the state, including in Clare and Isabella Counties. The Skilled Trades Training Fund (STTF), another statewide workforce development program, provides funds to companies for short-term, in-demand training. The program upgrades the skills of current employees in a wide variety of occupations, from CNC operations, CNC programming, and welding, to robotics, IT training, and electronic health records.

“Probably the state program that we are using the most is the Skilled Trades Training Program because that gives us the ability to help companies apply for state funds that don’t have the federal regulations attached to them,” Mr. McBryde shares. “STTF is very user-friendly for business and pays up to $1,500 per person. We are really helping connect the companies with the program.”

Clare and Isabella Counties are ready to support business expansion while also providing the recreational opportunities, schools, and low cost of living that employers want. MMDC is eager to connect any incoming or expanding business will all real estate and incentives—in order to help these businesses meet their full potential.

In addition, MMDC, the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, and Mid Michigan Community College worked together to secure a USDA grant for a feasibility study for hops processing in either Clare or Isabella Counties. “We think we already know what the study is going to tell us but we need to get the banks on board and get the financing that is going to be needed, so we really need the study,” Mr. McBryde explains.

MMDC has found that new and expanding businesses need support in site location and workforce training; this is in stark contrast to what businesses needed as they struggled to overcome the Global Financial Crisis a few years ago. “We are in the discussion primarily focused on tax credits or tax incentives for relocating businesses,” Mr. McBryde recalls. “The companies that we have here are struggling to fill a number of the jobs we have here, especially with the skilled trades,”

MMDC is actively involved in several workforce training programs to remed[y this problem. “We have melded workforce development and economic development,” says Ms. Methner. The first unified workforce development system in the United States, Michigan Works! Association is a key economic development partner throughout the state, including in Clare and Isabella Counties. The Skilled Trades Training Fund (STTF), another statewide workforce development program, provides funds to companies for short-term, in-demand training. The program upgrades the skills of current employees in a wide variety of occupations, from CNC operations, CNC programming, and welding, to robotics, IT training, and electronic health records.

“Probably the state program that we are using the most is the Skilled Trades Training Program because that gives us the ability to help companies apply for state funds that don’t have the federal regulations attached to them,” Mr. McBryde shares. “STTF is very user-friendly for business and pays up to $1,500 per person. We are really helping connect the companies with the program.”

Clare and Isabella Counties are ready to support business expansion while also providing the recreational opportunities, schools, and low cost of living that employers want. MMDC is eager to connect any incoming or expanding business will all real estate and incentives—in order to help these businesses meet their full potential.
THE YEAR IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2016 was an incredible year for economic growth in our area! The following are highlights of some key economic development successes:

Q-SAGE IS EXPORT STRONG!
Q-Sage Inc., an innovative company here in Middle Michigan that specializes in custom agricultural equipment, has successfully used the federal STEP program to increase their exports in 2016. The video link below features a custom 5.5 X 88 Seed Cleaner unit that was recently shipped to Canada.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFEQSUzBCBA

Q-SAGE INSTRUMENTAL IN GROWTH OF I’M ALL EARS” POPCORN!
The “I’m All Ears” Premium Theatre Popcorn brand has become the leading popcorn for hundreds of movie theatres in the United States. This year, they produced 4 million pounds of popcorn and they’re projected to produce 8 million pounds in 2017. Q-Sage, a manufacturer of custom agricultural equipment, has been instrumental to the success of “I’m All Ears” by building custom seed processors for Michigan popcorn growers.

MMDC AND MEDC VISIT UNIFIED BRANDS HEADQUARTERS!
In September, Jim McBryde visited the headquarters for Unified Brands in Atlanta with representatives for the Michigan Economic Development Corporation: Jennifer Nelson, Executive Vice President, and Tino Breithaupt, Senior Vice President of Business Development. Unified Brands manufactures commercial kitchen equipment for Randell and Avtec brands.

UNIFIED BRANDS EXPANDS INTO FARWELL ENTERPRISE PARK!
Unified Brands is in the process of bringing 75 new jobs to the area to support continued growth of their Randell product line of commercial kitchen equipment. Their current manufacturing facility in Weidman, MI employs 430 manufacturing and office personnel and supports production for both Randell and Avtec products. The new location in Farwell will significantly expand the company’s Michigan manufacturing operation to support increased customer demand.
COPS & DOUGHNUTS HAS EXPANDED TO NEW LOCATIONS!

Cops & Doughnuts had an incredible year in 2016! They were featured on a segment of NBC Nightly News hosted by Kevin Tibbles. They have recently expanded to new locations in Bay City, Ludington and South Bend, Indiana. Working with MMDC, they received a grant to improve their façades outside the Clare location. Now with about 200 employees, Cops & Doughnuts continues to impact the community with their story of success.

GRAND OPENING OF THE HARRISON CITY MARKET!

In October, we participated in the grand opening of the Harrison City Market which has a Retail Incubator and Indoor Farmer’s Market with a full-service commercial kitchen all of which can be used for events. This project was funded by various grants including a $250,000 USDA Business Development Grant and $736,764 Community Development Block Grant. MMDC’s Kathy Methner was instrumental in helping the City of Harrison to obtain these grants.

ISABELLA AND CLARE COUNTIES SCORE BIG WITH SKILLED TRades TRAINING FUND GRANTS!

In November, Michigan Works! announced that seven area companies would be receiving a combined total of $355,512 in Skilled Trades Training Fund (STTF) grants. MMDC worked closely with Central Michigan Manufacturers Association and Mid Michigan Community College to assist these companies in applying for these employer-based grants. As a result, our area performed better than many other regions of the state.

MDOT APPROVES GRANT FOR WALTON ROAD RECONSTRUCTION!

In April, with MMDC’s assistance, MDOT approved a $302,910 grant to pave Walton Road. With this improvement, Bandit will be able to work year round on Walton Road without the worry of winter frost. Bandit Industries Inc. is one of the world’s largest manufacturers of wood and waste processing equipment and their facility in Fremont Township produces the line of whole tree chippers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alro Steel</td>
<td>$5,400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bandit Industries, Inc.</td>
<td>$44,600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayco Products LLC</td>
<td>$240,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JD Metal Works</td>
<td>$2,900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Ranck Electric, Inc.</td>
<td>$36,962.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lear Corporation</td>
<td>$18,650.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melling Products North</td>
<td>$7,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total STTF Grants</strong></td>
<td><strong>$355,512</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Grant Summary*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Description (pg)</th>
<th>Grant</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Match</th>
<th>Grant</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Isabella County Road</td>
<td>Walton Road</td>
<td>$502,010.00</td>
<td>$173,740.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**: $575,750.00

Bandit Industries Inc. is among the world’s largest manufacturers of wood and waste processing equipment, including band saws and thin and whole tree wood chippers, planing millers, horizontal grinders, and associated field equipment. All Bandit products are built at their two facilities in Isabella County and are shipped to more than 45 countries around the world. To meet increased demand, the company will invest $752,236 in new machinery and equipment which will result in 10 new full-time positions over the next two years.

Bandit facility on Walton Road in Fremont. Fremont produces the company’s line of whole tree chippers. Walton Road has a great surface and is not designated as an access road. The full length of Walton Road would be paved, eliminating some of the maintenance problems. The company has received the grant from the Michigan Business Development fund to expand their facilities and to construct a new wash rack. By doing so, Bandit will be able to utilize new technology and provide a high-quality road surface. The Michigan Business Development fund will provide a $302,910 grant to pave Walton Road from Isabella County Road.

The total cost of the project is $376,750, including $502,010 in MBD funds and $752,236 in matching funds from the Isabella County Road Commission.
MMDC HOLDS 35th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!

In September, we celebrated Middle Michigan Development Corporation’s 35th anniversary at our headquarters in Mt. Pleasant. Former MMDC President George Dunn joined us for this milestone event and reflected on the tremendous economic impact our organization has had over the years. In honor of this event, we created a “must see” tribute video which can be viewed at this link:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8Eol0jEjyM

BANDIT RECEIVES PRESIDENTIAL EXPORT AWARD!

In May, Bandit Industries received national recognition from the United States Secretary of Commerce. The President’s “E” Award is the highest recognition a business can receive for “making a significant contribution to the expansion of U.S. exports.” Bandit Industries President, Jerry Morey, and Sales Manager, Felipe Tamayo, accepted the award on behalf of the company.

JIM SHOEMAKER IS THE "MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR"!

In May, Morbark President James W. Shoemaker received the “John G. Thodis Michigan Manufacturer of the Year Award” by the Michigan Manufacturers Association. This is what they had to say about Jim: “He is a founder of one of Michigan’s most respected regional industry associations, an advocate for promoting a positive image of manufacturing careers and a voice on top economic issues impacting businesses across the state.”

MTW INDUSTRIES HONORED WITH “BEST SMALL BUSINESS” AWARD!

In May, MTW Industries was awarded one of 12 Best Small Business awards by the Michigan Small Business Development Center. MTW was selected from over 5,000 Michigan small businesses based on their success in creating jobs, increasing sales and improving their business strategy. MTW specializes in oil, gas, mining and forestry, and continues to grow right here in Middle Michigan!