

AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWS

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Strategic Planning Sessions... Three sessions and three successes. Thanks to everyone who was able to participate. A revised mission statement



is being prepared and will be presented to the Board of Directors at the September meeting. A

special thank you goes to those who "stuck" with us during the extremely hot first session.

Consultants Survey... Area Development magazine has printed the results of its annual consultant's survey. Highway accessibility for the second year in a row was rated the #1 **site selection factor**. The availability of skilled labor was second, labor costs third and available land was fourth.

The responding consultants also ranked ratings of public schools first among the **quality-of-life factors**—with a 78.5 percent rating and tied with low crime rate. Continuing this focus on education, they placed colleges and universities in area in fourth position with a rating of 65.8 percent.

Two factors showing the largest increases in importance ratings on a year-over-year basis are proximity to technical university (+16.8 percent) and training programs (+9.4 percent).

Additionally, the internet proved to be the most used source of site selection (80%) and economic development websites were identified as the most useful followed by property databases (e.g. locationone.com).

The consultants responding to the survey have worked on projects in a broad range of industries. About a quarter have worked with fabricated metal producers and about 50 percent have worked on site projects in the warehouse and distribution sector.

Western Grain Marketing... Site preparation is going full steam as the grain shuttle moves

forward. We're still waiting for EZ certification but the project is moving forward. WGM anticipates a completion date no later than fall 2009.



Alternative Energy locates in Western Illinois Business & Technology Center... BP

Alternative Energy specializes in the prospecting and development of wind farms. This office will be responsible for conception, design and securing construction permits.

Jimmy John's Sandwich Shop

Returning to Macomb... The gourmet sandwich shop is gearing up to open at 821 West Jackson Street. Anticipated opening date is September 01.

Unwanted Meds Collection... Dispose of your medicine correctly. The McDonough County Health Department is now accepting unwanted medicines during regular business hours (8AM-4PM thru the week).

City Industrial Park... Construction slated to begin soon. Watch for new construction in the industrial park—City Council has approved AmerenCIPS request to purchase 8 acres for their new operations center.

Macomb/McDonough County

Enterprise Zone... Project investments reported. The cities of Bushnell, Colchester and Macomb cumulatively reported \$2.1 million for their 2007 project investments. First quarter 2008 project investments exceeded \$125,000.

1st Farm Credit Services... Construction has started on their new building. The 12,000 square foot building sits on three acres and is slated to be finished by the end of this year. They anticipate moving-in by April 2009.



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