

# ~*NEWS IN BRIEF*~

A Quarterly Report in brief by George Dunn, President/CEO, Middle Michigan Development Corporation

For many years MMDC has been a proponent for thinking and acting collaboratively, regionally, as opposed to individual communities. And it would seem that that time has now arrived and we are, at last, acting and functioning more truly as the **Central Michigan Region**. With the highly successful partnering of Isabella and Clare Counties several years ago . . . with the affiliation brought about by the onset of the Mt. Pleasant SmartZone and the Central Michigan Research Alliance . . . and most recently with the City of Mt. Pleasant, CMU and MMDC committing to the extension of the SmartZone to create a satellite relationship with the Mid Michigan Innovation Center in Midland, we are now recognized as the **Central Michigan Region**. In the next 2-3 years there will be even greater opportunities for collaboration, for partnering and for creating affiliations that will allow us to function as an economic engine with greater assets than ever before. This is, after all, what technology-driven business and industry are seeking - and we stand to be in a perfect position to reap the benefits. And this is to the credit of the forward, “out-of-the-box” thinking of the MMDC Board of Directors, its clients, and its Corporate Sponsors!

Other items of significant activity include:

**The Center for Applied Research and Technology.** A double ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to officially dedicate the naming of “Ellis Place”, in honor of former CMU President Art Ellis, one of the primary “movers” in the creation of both University Park and of MMDC and the Mt. Pleasant Industrial Development Corporation’s 6,000 square foot speculative “shell” building. Speakers included CMU President Mike Rao, Mt. Pleasant Mayor John Joslin, Mt. Pleasant IDC President Terry Stacy, and Chairman of Middle Michigan Development Corporation and the Local Development Finance Authority, Rick Barz. Assisting, also, were the Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors.

**Isabella Road Extension.** MMDC was notified by Representative Bill Caul that MDOT had approved the awarding of the grant application submitted by MMDC in behalf of the Isabella County Road Commission and that construction could commence yet this year. This grant award is a critical element of the total financing package needed to complete this major road improvement at the south end of Mt. Pleasant. Special recognition must also be given Kathy Methner, MMDC Director of Business Development and principal grant writer, who wrote the grant application.

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**Presentations/Contacts.** In an effort to better expose MMDC and the vital role it plays in the area's economic stability and growth, contacts have been made with Dr. Carol Churchill, President of Mid Michigan Community College, Superintendents Joe Pius (Mt. Pleasant Public Schools), Bill Chilman (Beal City Schools) and Terry Baker (Shepherd Schools). Presentations have been made to the LaBelle Entrepreneurial Institute at CMU, the Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce's "Business Over Breakfast" and their "Economic Forum", and the Mt. Pleasant City Commission. At this time, appointments are being scheduled with the school superintendents in Clare County, as well.

**MMDC's expanding website** continues to be a resource available to a wide market and has been viewed by an increasing number of contacts. Also, MMDC's *Industrial & Technology Directory*, updated several times a year as new information becomes available, remains an invaluable resource for fostering business collaboration, also available on the website ([www.mmdc.org](http://www.mmdc.org)).

**Retention Calls.** Assistance with tax abatement applications has been provided to three (3) companies, two new start-up companies have been identified, several companies are planning expansions and in general, the area's industrial/technological base businesses remain healthy!

As always, we encourage your comments and suggestions as to how we might better serve you and the Central Michigan Region. Thank you!

For more information on these or other projects, contact MMDC at (989) 772.2858 or [www.mmdc.org](http://www.mmdc.org).