

On Monday, July 12 the Board of Directors of the Iowa County Area Economic Development Corporation held a meeting to discuss plans for the upcoming year.

The following issues were identified:

- Business Retention – Support in tough economic times – Grow jobs
- Tourism
- Fund raising and private sector involvement and buy-in
- Crisp strategy development and education about the EDC

The board split in to four groups for further discussion. The following tables highlight those small group insights.

<b><i>Tourism</i></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of the agencies that have some sort of competing interests – Hidden Valleys, Uplands, SW Wisconsin Visitors Bureau, Tri-Sate Tourism, Chambers</li> </ul>	
Areas to concentrate effort	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create self guided driving tours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scenic pic ways map</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need a new county map</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iowa County Tourism.com - needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family tours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web site links</li> </ul>

<b><i>Fund Raising Private Sector</i></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Banks and financial establishments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MG&amp;E</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite to Innovative Kitchen for meetings</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic ways to ask for sponsorship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List sponsors on web site, publications</li> </ul>

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<b><i>Business Support – Retention – Grow Jobs</i></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support team to assess needs on an individual basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritizing businesses – define our priorities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set a time line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicly announce services that (developmental not financial) are available - i.e. newspaper, radio, chamber members, service groups</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension office put together a training program to train development guides</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention and jobs – Look at why people are losing their jobs. Is it more than the economy. Skill level etc. Is it more convenient not to work?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share information on educational opportunities in the area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at the Ernesto Sirolli model</li> </ul>

<b><i>Education Strategy</i></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow our own entrepreneur</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need a real strategic plan that is realistic, focused with limitations, identify needs and sectors</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review assets and opportunities of Thrive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create educational opportunities to promote Innovation Kitchen</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report regularly to County Board and other units of government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual report</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better web site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place educational materials on the web site</li> </ul>