

# JCED BULLETIN

Jones County Economic Development Newsletter

January/February/March 2024

## INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF JONES COUNTY

“Invest for the long haul. Don’t get too greedy and don’t get too scared.” Shelby M.C. Davis

Jones County Economic Development (JCED) is a public-private partnership dedicated to strengthening the economic base in Jones County by assisting existing businesses, attracting new investment and jobs, and fostering a business climate favorable for economic growth. JCED does this by focusing in many different areas, including workforce development, quality of life amenities, housing, childcare, internet, and many more. In all of the work we do, we are always asking what value can we bring to Jones County and how can we make sure those local investments last well into the future.

The quote above from Shelby Davis illustrates the point that everyone, especially communities and businesses, should invest for the long haul. What investments can we make today that will help define the futures of our businesses and communities? Too often, this comes down to the financial realities of the moment for everyone. Businesses and communities like to see money spent that has an immediate return on that investment so the money does not feel wasted. While great in concept, many things that happen in life are incremental and happen over time, whether building a solid customer base for your business or developing affordable housing in your community. But how should businesses and communities invest? And what areas should they focus these investments on?

This is where Jones County Economic Development plays a vital role in the community and economic development of our region. Jones County Economic Development continues to find ways to improve community and quality of life amenities, like trails; we work to figure out the needs of employers and work to get workforce trained in those upcoming arenas; JCED has been active in the childcare sector and will continue working with affordable housing over the next few years; and we have been instrumental in the upcoming fiber internet project in Jones County. All of these initiatives and accomplishments are due to the investments made into JCED by local businesses and communities. Communities and businesses know these items are important, but they also know that they do not have the time or manpower to commit to realizing them. Therefore, they invest in Jones County Economic Development, allowing us to hire a full-time Executive Director that can help in many facets of community growth and development.

Over the last few years, these investments have paid dividends even though it took time. Anamosa has done some massive downtown storefront work and will do two more phases, with Phase 2 starting this month! Monticello saw the arrival of Dollar Fresh and the Monticello Main Street Program. Wyoming and Oxford Junction both saw upper story housing and Wyoming saw the emergence of a new restaurant. Onslow and Olin partnered on a consultant visit to help revitalize their downtowns, even as those communities shrink or stagnate.

Jones County Economic Development is a resource that all businesses and communities can utilize to help fulfill their goals and dreams. However, there are costs associated with utilizing other resources and that’s why JCED does a membership drive every year, asking businesses and communities that want to see improvement invest in the organization, to allow JCED to do the work that needs done in cooperation and collaboration with other entities in our region. Investing for the long haul is the best way to create current and future opportunities and we hope all of our businesses and communities will be investors for years to come.

(JCED Membership form is on Page 2).



YES, I WANT TO SUPPORT JONES COUNTY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Gold-\$3,000/year

- Recognition as a sponsor of one of our Legislative forums. Ability to put up a banner and hand out promotional materials.
- Logo placement on JCED marketing pieces.
- Annual Business Spotlight on the website.
- And, all benefits below.

Silver- \$1,500/year

- Recognition as a sponsor of our Annual Agriculture Appreciation Event. Ability to put up a banner and hand out promotional materials.
- Ability to provide JCED with information to disseminate through our email list.
- 1 conference registration provided for either the DEV 2023 conference or the Iowa Downtown Summit.
- And, all benefits below

Bronze- \$500/year

- Post jobs on the Careers feature of the Jones County Economic Development website.
- Business promoted locally and regionally to industries and companies
- Recognition as a sponsor of our Community Career tours with the area schools.
- And, benefits below

Associate- \$250/year

- Listing on the Jones County Economic Development website with a link to your website.
- 1 Young Professionals membership for one employee. (Must meet YP guidelines).

Individual-\$50/year

- Friend of JCED.

**Please send form to:**

JONES COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
107 S. FORD ST., ANAMOSA, IA 52205  
OR [director@jonescountydevelopment.com](mailto:director@jonescountydevelopment.com)

***"Organization dues may be deductible as professional or business expenses, to the extent allowable by law."***

## REGIONAL FOCUS TAKES SHAPE THROUGH ENVISION EAST CENTRAL IOWA

Over the last two years, Jones County Economic Development has been involved with helping create a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. This is required every five years for every Economic Development District and is necessary for application to federal grants, etc. Jones County is part of the ECICOG region and works with five other counties to help draft this strategy. The one recently finished was entitled: Envision East Central Iowa.

This plan creates regional strategies to help reinvent and propel our six-county region to even greater prominence in Iowa and the Midwest. While all six counties (Benton, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, and Washington) are working on their own initiatives to remain relevant and work towards a brighter future, this combined focus is helping the region collaborate in a greater fashion, especially with the auspices of ECICOG. Aside from the individual aspects of the Envision East Central Iowa plan, ECICOG is spear-heading two major initiatives over the next few months:

First, ECICOG is preparing a regional Priority Climate Action Plan. A Priority Climate Action Plan includes priority projects for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the region. Projects must be identified in the plan for cities, counties, and other public bodies (28E organizations, special districts, etc.) to apply for a Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program (CPRG) Implementation Grant. Applications are due April 1, 2024, and projects will be awarded in October 2024. These grants will allow regional climate opportunities a chance to compete for grant money between \$2 million and \$500 million. Since the plan is an eligibility requirement for the CPRG Implementation Grant, the final Priority Climate Action Plan will only include shovel-ready projects that cities, counties, and/or other public bodies are willing to apply for funds to implement as soon as October 2024. Long-term projects may be included in a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan that will be developed starting in summer 2024. More information will be coming as the plan develops.

A second initiative focuses on mobility, especially relating to recreational activities around walking and biking. The Active Transportation Plan is being created to see how many people walk and bike in our region and what is keeping more people from doing so. Some of the immediate highlights of the developing plan:

- When people DO walk or bike, they do it for recreational or health-related purposes. Over 70 people noted that they bike or walk for the health-related benefits.
- People enjoy walking and biking on paved trails in the region. Where there are no paved trails, sidewalks can work at times.
- Many of the communities in Jones County have a need to update their sidewalk infrastructure. Some communities have major gaps in sidewalks, making walkers and bikers have to use the street and increase their risk of being in an auto-related accident.
- Users would like to see more money go towards paving trails that connect places within Jones County and the region to each other. In fact, 42% of responders noted that they would use a paved trail network for biking if there was one in the region. 86% of responders say that they wanted more paved trail and connected trails in the region.

ECICOG will continue working to refine the plan after input from the six-county region and in cooperation with Pillar 5 of the Envision East Central Iowa plan that is geared towards tourism. The goal is to find ways to encourage more biking and walking to meet the needs and demands of the region's denizens, but also to find ways to connect our major tourist assets and attractions as we build a regional space where people want to come to spend time and money.

(Jones County ATP Results are listed on Page 6 of this newsletter)

### Workplace Learning Connections Offers Opportunities to High School Students

Starting in January 2024, Workplace Learning Connections has job shadow and internship opportunities available for high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors through Kirkwood Community College.

Job shadow opportunities can be applied to through the Winter/Spring job shadow portal at: [Job Shadowing | Kirkwood Community College | Cedar Rapids, Iowa](#)

The portal will be open from January 8, 2024 through January 26, 2024 at 3pm.

Summer 2024 internships are available for current sophomores and juniors. These can be applied for through the Summer 2024 Internship Application Portal at: [Internships | Kirkwood Community College | Cedar Rapids, Iowa](#)

The internship portal is open from December 18, 2023 through February 9, 2024 at 3pm.

Encourage the students in your life to apply today and explore their future career. There are a wide array of opportunities and participation is free!



**Kirkwood**  
WORKPLACE LEARNING  
CONNECTION



## FENCE ART RETURNS TO DOWNTOWN ANAMOSA

Much like air is a necessity for the physical endurance of the body, so too is art a necessity for the soul. And Jones County has always been exceedingly lucky to have been home to many artists, not the least of which was Grant Wood. Following in his footsteps, Jones County has been able to boast many a local artist and we continue to cultivate them in many way. Recently, Jones County Economic Development, Arts Court, Maquoketa Valley REC, and Metal Design Systems all teamed up to help recreate the REC pole yard fence into a downtown art display.

Years prior, the fence had held art made by local artists and the banners had hung for all to see. However, after the 2020 derecho, most was destroyed and had to come down. REC asked if there was a way to get new art installed and hopefully have it last longer, so they asked local artist and business owner, KC Wortman. Wortman stated that if a quality material and paint could be secured, then it would be relatively simple to get local artists to do the work.

Jones County Economic Development assisted with the Paint Iowa Beautiful grant for the project. As noted on the Paint Iowa Beautiful website, "Keeping up the appearance of our buildings, facilities and parks is an important component of viable communities. Well-maintained and painted buildings reflect pride in our communities. Thousands of gallons of paint have been donated to community groups through the Paint Iowa Beautiful program. The program provides free paint to a wide variety of public service projects throughout Iowa."



Additionally, Jones County Economic Development worked with Metal Design Systems in Anamosa to find a resilient base for the paint. Ultimately six metal panels were donated to the project that would hold paint well and stand up to most severe weather. Wortman, Katie Kilburg, and two classes of art students at Thou Art Gallery combined to design and paint the six panels. Over the Christmas holiday, Maquoketa Valley REC finished hanging them up.

"Art is one of those visuals that people see that can really help sell a community, both for residents and tourists," noted Derek Lumsden, Executive Director of Jones County Economic Development. "This program helps take some of the cost of materials out of the equation, making it more likely that communities will find ways to keep their downtowns vibrant and aesthetically pleasing. And don't forget to thank the artists that put the time and effort into these pieces.

They are a great addition to downtown Anamosa and we will hopefully see more work from them in the future." You can see the

finished art projects on the alley side behind Main Street on the west side of Huber Street across the Maquoketa Valley REC offices.



## NEW VISITOR DATA DASHBOARD TO HELP SPUR TOURISM FOCUS

Businesses are always wanting to know more about their customers, especially those from out of town. Where are they from? Why are they here? What brought them into their business? How did they find out about it? While some of those questions are easily asked in the store, sometimes it's nice to have data to back up what you are hearing.

Jones County Economic Development is partnering with the Iowa Tourism Office to use their Arrivalist Data Dashboard in 2024. Communities throughout Iowa are already using this data to inspire new campaigns and initiative aimed at attracting more tourism to their downtown businesses and destinations. The data allows for a number of different metrics, but some of the most exciting will be:

- Being able to see the specific time of year when visitors are coming to Jones County and being able to use that information to help determine what cities or areas of the country are best for future ad placement to spur return trips
- Comparing numbers to other communities in the region and those of similar sizes to see if there is a trend that can be built upon, including quality of life amenities. This data can help show local officials and grant organizations that there is a quantifiable need for creation and improvement.
- Sharing information with local hotel/motel marketing committees to help them understand traveler trends as well as to develop goals and marketing strategies for increasing overnight stays.

Arrivalist tracks data for domestic adults (18+) who are traveling at least 50 miles from their home location, spend at least two hours in Iowa, and take up to a 14-day roundtrip. Every day commuters are excluded. Data is pulled from devices with regular GPS pings and smart phones. Jones County Economic Development is excited to use this data to help businesses learn more about their non-local customer base and as a way to drive more tourism to the region.



**Arrivalist**®

### *LEGISLATIVE FORUMS*

**Friday, January 19th at 12pm**

Monticello City Council Chambers

**Friday, February 23rd at 12pm**

Anamosa Library and Learning Center

**Friday, March 22nd at 12pm**

Monticello City Council Chambers

### Contact Us

Jones County Economic Development has two convenient offices:

107 S. Ford Street in  
Anamosa inside City Hall

200 E. 1st Street in  
Monticello inside City Hall

Our Executive Director, Derek Lumsden, can also be reached by Phone at 319-480-7446 or by email at:

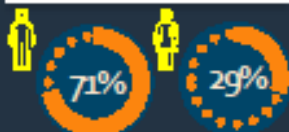


## GOAL

- To ascertain residents' biking and walking behavior
- To explore destination options
- To ascertain the viability of a regional trail connection

114

RESPONDENTS



53%

Walk All Year



2-6miles

Parks or recreation areas 79%

Work 78%

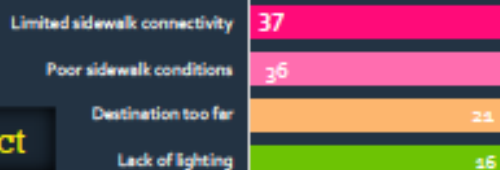
Trail head/segment 37%



## WHY WE DON'T WALK OFTEN



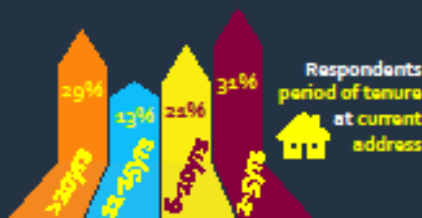
## WHY WE DON'T BIKE OFTEN



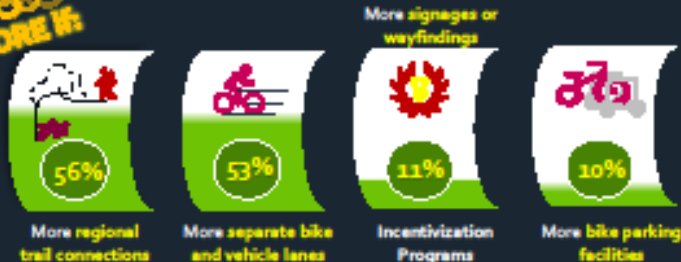
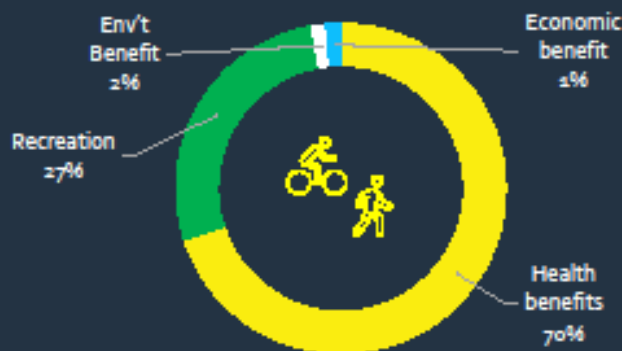
## Interesting Fact

42%

Would use paved recreational trail network for bicycle tourism if available in the region



## REASONS



## PERSONAL



2-10miles

58% Parks or recreation areas

32% Trail head/segment

8% Library

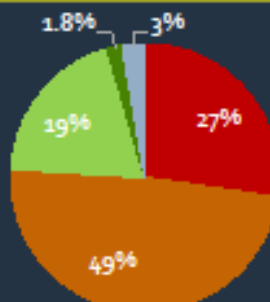
53%

Bike Seasonally

Other key destinations for bikers are:



## GENERAL SIDEWALK CONDITIONS



Legend: Poor (red), Fair (orange), Good (green), Excellent (light green), None available (blue)

## Connectivity

>50%

of respondents with 2-5yrs and >20yrs of homeownership consider more local trails and connection to regional trails as key to the way forward!!!

To see more results, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/j5cwm4gwe>

Mary Rump : Transportation Director (ECICOG) [mary.rump@ecicog.org](mailto:mary.rump@ecicog.org)



## JCYP PLANS FOR NEW AND EXCITING YEAR!

The Jones County Young Professionals ended another great year in 2023. From having a kick-off social in January to the annual Friendsgiving and Christmas events in November and December respectively, JCYP showcased a great year of giving back to the community and forging strong bonds.

JCYP is built on the premise that people need to be actively engaged in different ways in their social lives. The Jones County Young Professionals are an organization that thrive on learning more about themselves, the world they live in, and the communities where they work and reside. The organization focuses on three different areas of need to develop the next generation of leaders: Volunteerism, Professional Development, and Networking. Our goal is to offer a wide range of opportunities in each pillar for our members to help meet them where they need.

At our annual meeting, it was decided to review some of the operations of the organization and see what members needed to make our organization even stronger in 2024. Below are some of the suggestions that came from the JCYP membership:

- Do quarterly events rather than monthly. This allows people to feel less pressure about missing a monthly meeting and allows them more free time for other pursuits.
- In addition to the above, quarterly meetings allow for larger events. If people are donating their time and talents to the organization, they want it to have a larger impact on the overall community.
- Do JCYP socials and other events as time and talent allows. For example, JCYP staffed a shift at the Jones County Fair beer tent. This was done on a Sunday morning and allowed those who might not have been able to attend a monthly meeting to do something else instead. The overwhelming consensus was to still send out these events as opportunities rather than as pre-planned activities.

Some of the ideas on the docket for 2024 include: A mixology class for young professionals; a recreational event like a pickleball or bowling tournament; a large volunteer activity in the county, potentially associated with the National Day of Caring; and an end of the year networking event. More information will be coming, so stay in touch with our Facebook page.

You talked and we listened! We can't wait to see how 2024 develops and we hope you and your business are involved with us as we seek to serve and develop tomorrow's young professionals in and for Jones County!

## Meet the Member!

My name is Chong Shao. My wife, Katie, and I are owners of Jones County Family Dentistry. We are excited to announce that in early 2024 we will be changing the name of our practice to Shao Family Dental and this summer we will be moving into a brand new building which is currently being constructed at the new roundabout next to the middle school in Anamosa.

Becoming owners of our practice at 31 years old, right before the COVID outbreak, required a lot of patience, on the fly thinking and quick learning. Now 4 years, 2 kids and a lot more grey hairs later I am lucky to work alongside the best group of people anyone can ask for. We have the privilege of caring for many wonderful families and we are proud to be able to provide many advanced procedures other dental offices do not offer.

JCYP has allowed me to meet other young professionals at different points in their careers and share our experiences. It is important for my own personal development to surround myself with people that I can bounce ideas off of, receive critiques and learn from. It has always been fascinating chatting with successful young professionals and learning the path they took to get to where they are currently.

Not every community has a group like this and I know this program will continue to grow and benefit many other young professionals like myself.



We will see you at the next event!