

# ***LaGrow Consulting***

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## Marketing

MEDC hosted another marketing blitz. Our partner American Electric Power paid for my entrance for the event of \$2,000. I had the opportunity to meet 18 site consultants to highlight Cass County and the many achievements that we have had over the last year.

## Annual Meeting for MEDA

I attended the annual Economic Developer's Association Meeting. The meeting helps to keep developers abreast of new programs and business assistance the state of Michigan can offer.

## Proposals for Projects

This year we have worked with 20 proposals for site consultant requests. Each request is specific to their client needs including site or building specifications, suppliers nearby, logistics, community, education system and involvement by a college for training purposes. Each proposals comes with a timeline for submittal that can sometimes be as fast as a one day turn around.

## Existing Business Expansions

We currently have two existing businesses that would like to expand further at their current locations. I have been working with them to assist with state and local incentives.

## Grants Obtained for Business

Over the last year, the County EDC has been instrumental in applying and getting awarded four grants:

- |                    |                                   |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Postle Aluminum | \$400,000 – Village of Cassopolis |
| 2. Postle Aluminum | \$550,000 – Village of Cassopolis |
| 3. Tri-Pac         | \$20,000 – Penn Township          |
| 4. Schwintek       | \$121,000 – Village of Cassopolis |

## Strategic Plan

I developed a strategic plan to expand the efforts of the County EDC. While focusing on existing business is the first area of concentration, expanding those businesses and attraction of business is an important component of development of the county.

## Railroad Expansion

The opportunity exists to have a new rail spur constructed in the Dowagiac Industrial Park. The industrial supplier of Norfolk Southern Railroad is a great partner to work with and has been trying to assist Deerpath Recyclers to build the spur. However, Cass County is a location where Amtrak would like to

operate their high-speed rail (110 mph trains). I believe they see the expansion of any industrial traffic as a burden on their system. Amtrak did not tell us no, they just have made it nearly impossible to fund. Therefore, MDOT stepped in a partner and has tried to help facilitate the improvements by offering to fund some of the costs of the expansion.

Business Expansions

- O'Reilly Auto Parts \$1.9M 20 employees
- McLoughlin Dance Studio \$300K 3 employees
- Creative Foam \$775K 12 employees
- New Grocery Store Edwardsburg Projected 13 employees
- Postle Aluminum \$13M 40 employees
- Ameriwood Furniture \$1.6M 15 employees
- Premier Tool and Die Cast \$1.7M 25 employees
- Premier Tool and Die Cast \$750K 20 employees
- Schwintek \$1M 10 employees