

Kikkoman plans \$560 million soy sauce plant in Jefferson

Nestlé Purina PetCare announces \$195 million expansion in Jefferson, creating 100 jobs

Nestlé expanding in Jefferson where it's been since 1910

Kikkoman will be anchor tenant in forthcoming Jefferson County food and beverage innovation campus

Getting Saucy In The Great Lakes

The world's top soy sauce producer makes an \$800 million bet on Wisconsin.

by RON STARNER
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Future home of
KIKKOMAN FOODS, INC.

Timeline: Jefferson in 2026

kikkoman

Aztalan Bio seeking to restart production Johnson Creek

Kikkoman expected to anchor Jefferson County food and beverage innovation campus

JEFFERSON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONSORTIUM & THRIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

A Transformative Year for Greater Jefferson County

As we reflect on 2024, we are proud to share the progress, partnerships and successes that have defined this remarkable year. From innovative housing initiatives to significant business expansions, this year has exemplified our commitment to fostering economic growth and improving quality of life in our communities.

Highlights of 2024

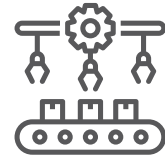
Business retention, expansion & attraction

Kikkoman Groundbreaking: In June, Kikkoman marked the beginning of its production facility expansion in Jefferson County. This project, recognized with the Project of the Year Award by the MidAmerica Economic Development Council, underscores our region's ability to attract and support major investments.

Aztalan Bio Open House: The opening of Aztalan Bio in June added to the list of thriving businesses contributing to the county's economic vitality.

Onego Bio's Intent to Purchase: In December, Onego Bio announced plans to purchase a site in the FAB Innovation Campus, setting the stage for further economic development.

strategic priorities



**Business retention,
expansion & attraction**



Placemaking



Workforce participation



**Strategic support,
awareness &
advancement**



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Placemaking

Live Local Development Fund

The LLDF is strategic gap financing designed to enhance Greater Jefferson County's competitiveness and drive housing development. The program is a pivotal step toward addressing the need for additional housing stock by incentivizing the creation of multi-family housing developments. The fund offers up to \$25,000 per unit for a negotiated term at or below market rates and is open to public, private and not-for-profit real estate developers.

Since August of 2023, the LLDF has grown from \$3 million to \$9.5 million.

LLDF investors



Jefferson County was certified at the beginning of 2024 by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a Home Counseling Agency. This certification has allowed us to launch Jefferson County At Home, a program administered by ThriveED that provides residents with expert guidance and resources to make informed housing decisions. By supporting homeowners, renters and prospective buyers, we're not only helping individuals but also strengthening the fabric of our community.



Workforce participation

In August of 2024, ThriveED partnered with the Jefferson County Human Resources Management Association and other organizations to host the Employers "How to Hire" International Workers Conference, an all-day conference at UW-Whitewater to help businesses grow more confident in hiring immigrant workers and supporting them as employers. The event was a way to learn the best practices when it comes to hiring immigrants, including the cultural nuances and benefits of a diverse workplace as well as ways to encourage success and retention within an existing workforce by considering transportation, housing and language support. The conference was attended by more than 80 attendees.



Attendees listen to the keynote address at the Employers "How to Hire" International Workers Conference



Kikkoman Foods is investing \$560 million to construct a new production facility in the Food and Beverage Innovation Campus in Jefferson. The company hosted a groundbreaking ceremony on June 12, 2024. In giving the opening remarks and welcome, Yuzaburo Mogi, Honorary CEO and Chairman of the Board of Kikkoman Corporation, spoke very highly of Wisconsin and Jefferson, referring to the state as his second home.

Special guests were Tony Evers, Governor of Wisconsin; Ben Wehmeier, Jefferson County Administrator; Dale Opperman, Mayor of the City of Jefferson; and Tommy Thompson, former Governor of Wisconsin.



Lisa Johnson, CEO of BioForward Wisconsin; Jason Robertson, Vice President of CRB Group; and Becky Kikkert, Director of Development of the Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin participating in a panel discussion at an education sessions hosted by ThriveED



Conversations with ThriveED at the Innovation Center in Whitewater



Representative Barbara Dittrich attended the 2024 State of the County presentation



Conversations with ThriveED at the Drafty Cellar in Watertown



Dreambuilders Gala hosted by Habitat for Humanity of Waukesha and Jefferson Counties

The past year has seen the strengthening of existing partnerships and relationships and the creation of new ones.



Strategic support, awareness & advancement

Presentations, Speaking Engagements & Panel Discussions

- WDBSCW presentation
- Fort HealthCare presentation
- Wisconsin Power Partners presentation
- Cities and Energy Roundtable
- Winning with Wisconsin's Workforce panel
- Watertown RDA presentation
- Cambridge EDC presentation
- Watertown Common Council presentation
- Fort Atkinson Council presentation
- Edgerton Chamber of Commerce presentation
- Fort Rotary presentation
- UW-Madison Housing Conference
- WEDA Best Practices Conference presentation
- Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative presentation

Hosted/Co-Hosted Events

- Employers "How to Hire" International Workers Conference
- Education Sessions
 - Using Public-Private Partnerships to Maximize Results
 - State of the County
 - WI's Biotech Designation and Jefferson County
- Three Conversations with ThriveED networking events
- ThriveED Annual Meeting and Presentation

Tours

- Site selection tours
- Developer tours

Awareness

- New ThriveED website
- Project of the Year Award from Mid-American EDC
- Fort HealthCare podcast - interview
- Wisbusiness.com podcast - interview
- Site Selection magazine article – interview
- Milwaukee Journal Sentinel article - interview
- BizTimes media article - interview

Jefferson County retained Michael Best Strategies to help advance the county's economic development priorities at the state and federal level, including advocacy around energy infrastructure readiness in We Energies communities.

Outreach & Engagement

- Multi-chamber meetings
- Kikkoman groundbreaking
- Aztalan Bio celebration
- Habitat for Humanity Women Build
- Habitat for Humanity Dreambuilders Gala
- Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors
- Talent Attraction Ambassador for the WEDC
- Every Child Thrives initiative by Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation
- WI Rural Partners Board of Directors
- Bread Basket Board of Directors
- FaBWI membership
- BioForward membership
- Jefferson County Manufacturing Roundtable
- Midwest Food Products Association meeting
- Rock River Ridge Groundbreaking and Celebration
- MadREP CEDS Open House
- WEDA Governors Conference
- CarW Commercial Real Estate and Economic Outlook
- Watertown Chamber Annual Event
- Whitewater Police Chief meeting
- Madison College Listening Session
- WI Latino Chamber of Commerce meeting
- BioForward Annual Meeting
- Jefferson High School tour
- GWCHF Values workshop
- Waterloo Utilities
- Virtus Listening Session
- Jefferson Utilities meeting
- Watertown Downtown River Corridor Open House
- Walworth County Housing Committee meeting
- Mid-American EDC Conference

History

The Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium (JCEDC) was created in 2003 when the county and several municipalities approved an intergovernmental agreement creating the entity to further local economic development efforts. Currently, the JCEDC members include Jefferson County and the cities of Fort Atkinson, Jefferson, Lake Mills, Waterloo, Watertown, Whitewater and the Villages of Palmyra, Johnson Creek and Cambridge.

Thrive Economic Development (ThriveED), a 501c3 nonprofit, was created in 2016 to give the private sector a seat at the table.

The JCEDC and ThriveED each have a Board of Directors. The boards have joint meetings six times a year.

Strategic Priorities

While our strategic priorities have always centered around core economic development activities, they have shifted over time to reflect feedback from our Board of Directors and the evolving needs of businesses and municipalities.

In 2022, JCEDC/ThriveED launched a strategic refocus that incorporated **housing** initiatives and **trust and partnerships** into our work. In December of 2024, the JCEDC and ThriveED Boards of Directors convened for a half-day session to review our progress and further refine our priorities. Recognizing that we had successfully built trust and partnerships since 2022, with the approval and direction of our Boards, we eliminated the trust and partnerships pillar and replaced it with strategic support, awareness & advancement. Housing has been renamed and refined as placemaking to better reflect the scope of our current efforts.

By staying adaptable and responsive, we can seize emerging opportunities, address pressing challenges and tailor our strategies to meet current needs.

Jefferson County Strategic Plan Alignment

JCEDC/ThriveED has played a significant role in implementing the Jefferson County Strategic Plan, participating in the workgroups established by county leadership.

Intentional Economic Growth group

Deb Reinbold, Chair

Julie Olver, Member

Quality of Life group

Julie Olver, Member

Housing group:

Deb Reinbold, Member

Emily Clavette, Member

JCEDC Board of Directors

Mason Becker, Manager of Economic Dev & Strategic Initiatives
Watertown (Board Vice Chairperson)

Drake Daily, City Manager
Lake Mills

Bruce Degner, Supervisor
Jefferson County

Kyle Ellefson, Village Administrator
Johnson Creek

Tim Freitag, City Administrator
Jefferson

Rebecca Houseman, City Manager
Fort Atkinson (Board Chairperson)

Emily McFarland, Interim Economic Development Director
Whitewater

Lisa Moen, Village Administrator
Cambridge

Jeanne Ritter, Clerk/Deputy Treasurer
Waterloo

Amanda Truax, Supervisor
Jefferson County

Karl Zarling, Supervisor
Jefferson County



Thrive Economic Development is a non-profit 501(c)3 public-private organization created to promote the economic competitiveness of Greater Jefferson County by providing businesses with services to locate, expand or develop here. We help businesses and developers navigate local, regional, state and federal resources, as well as act as a liaison with local municipal leaders and regulatory authorities. ThriveED also assists in strategic initiatives across Greater Jefferson County.

ThriveED Board of Directors

Everett Butzine, Interim President & CEO
MadREP

Tom Dehnert, Executive Vice President
Badger Bank

Rebecca Houseman, City Manager
Fort Atkinson (JCEDC rep)

Kelli Karpinski, Econ & Workforce Dev Rep
Moraine Park Technical College

Kevin Kaufman
W.D. Hoard and Sons designee

Matt Krogman, Development Manager
JCW Development, WDS Construction designee

Ryan Lessner, Exec Director of Human Resources
Watertown Regional Medical Center

Michael Luckey, County Administrator
Jefferson County

Scott Lausten, Project Manager/Co-Owner
Keller, Inc.

Don Lunak, Sr., Director of Plant Management
Whisker

Casey Malesevich, J.D., President
Sure-Fire, Inc.

Shawna Marquardt, Regional Dean
Madison College

Matt Mauthe, CEO
Illuminus

Kyle Neitzel, Accounting Manager
Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese

James Nelson, CFO/SVP
Fort HealthCare

Andy Nelson, President
National Resource Innovations, Horicon Bank designee

Kevin Paynter, Chief Lending Officer
Fort Community Credit Union

Nate Salas, Chief Development Officer
Maas Brothers Construction

David Schroeder, President
Thermo-Tech Mechanical Insulation, Inc.

Elizabeth Thelen, Executive Director
UW-Whitewater CEC and Technology Park

Stewart Wangard, Chairman of the Board
Wangard Partners

Ben Wehmeier, President/CEO
Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation

CONTACT US

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thriveED.org