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News

Project seeks input via online survey

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For the Daily Gate City

Synergy Southeast Iowa is asking all area residents to participate in an online survey to collect information about perceptions of the residents and businesses in Southeast Iowa. The online survey can be found at www.synergyseiowa.com.

Synergy Southeast Iowa is a project spearheaded by the Southeast Iowa Regional Economic Development Consortium (SIREDC) and consulting firm, Angelou Economics. Lee County Economic Development Group, Inc. is a founding partner in the consortium.

The survey asks questions pertaining to the region's quality of life, effectiveness of local government and services, the current business climate, suggestions for improvement, and more. The survey will be online until March 31. It is available in both English and Spanish.

Information from the survey will be used by Angelou Economics and SIREDC to craft a strategic plan that will map out the future direction for all Southeast Iowa. Input from all residents is needed. Regardless of occupation, age, home town, economic status, ethnicity, everyone can offer input into the process.

There are two surveys, one for residents and one for businesses. Both surveys may be completed, if applicable.

For the next five months Angelou Economics will assess the region's economy, identify target businesses the region should recruit, identify the region's strengths and weaknesses along with opportunities and threats it needs to recognize, recommend improvements to the region's business climate, its workforce, its quality of life, its sites and infrastructure, and the economic development and marketing efforts used to sell the region.

Southeast Iowa is an area composed of Des Moines, Henry, Lee and Louisa counties. The region is like many areas in the Midwest: losing population, losing jobs, increasing unemployment, an aging population, a loss of young professionals.

The region needs a plan to create a marketable identity and give the region the tools it needs to attract and retain businesses, young professionals and investment, while building a collaborative, regional approach to economic development.

The theme of this project and website, synergy, suggests one of the major goals of this effort: to bring together organizations interested in improving the economic landscape in Southeast Iowa in a collaborative effort to achieve a result greater than the sum of their individual capabilities. Working together as a region, Southeast Iowa will realize economic success.

Residents are encouraged to visit [HYPERLINK "http://www.synergysiowa.com"; # www.synergysiowa.com](http://www.synergysiowa.com) not only to take the survey but to follow the progress of Synergy Southeast Iowa, and read about the findings and subsequent recommendations for the region.

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