

Press Release Harvard/Woodstock/County of McHenry - August 18, 2015

Strong intergovernmental collaboration between the Cities of Harvard and Woodstock and the County of McHenry and other regional partners has resulted in the first ever Enterprise Zone in McHenry County.

Over the 2014 calendar year, Harvard, Woodstock and McHenry County worked closely with regional partners – McHenry County College, McHenry County Economic Development Corporation, Harvard EDC, McHenry County Worknet, NIU, as well as various departments and staff from the municipalities and the county, to develop a comprehensive application that was submitted to the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity at the close of 2014. A total of 67 applications were received with only 49 open zones to be awarded and yesterday Governor Rauner's office announced the Harvard – Woodstock zone was awarded.

McHenry County Board Chairman Joe Gottemoller commented "I'm very pleased that our intergovernmental efforts have been rewarded with an enterprise zone. The creation of primary jobs is critical in McHenry County and this enterprise zone designation will be another tool for economic development in the County." We are grateful for the support of Senator Althoff and for the successful efforts of the many partners in this collaboration."

The Illinois Enterprise Zone Program is designed to stimulate economic growth and neighborhood revitalization through state and local tax incentives, regulatory relief, and improved governmental services. The new zone will be effective January 1, subject to state certification, which will occur after the state budget is in place and is focused on industrial and commercial development. It will be a catalyst to economic vitality through occupancy of vacant facilities, growth of existing industries, employment of residents and overall economic growth.

State Senator Pamela Althoff, a strong proponent of the new zone and Senate co-sponsor of the enabling legislation which was a bipartisan effort to open the competitive process for awarding enterprise zones, stated "it speaks to the positive results which can be achieved through collaboration and partnerships at both the state and local levels. It is a definite win for McHenry County and is quite an achievement."

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