



An organization that moves local communities forward by connecting people, partners, and resources

Our region is at a crossroads. Businesses are growing, workforce challenges are real, and the decisions being made right now about talent, healthcare, housing, and economic development will shape what this county looks and feels like ten years from now.

That's why Envision Greater Fond du Lac exists — to connect the people, partners, and resources that move this community forward.

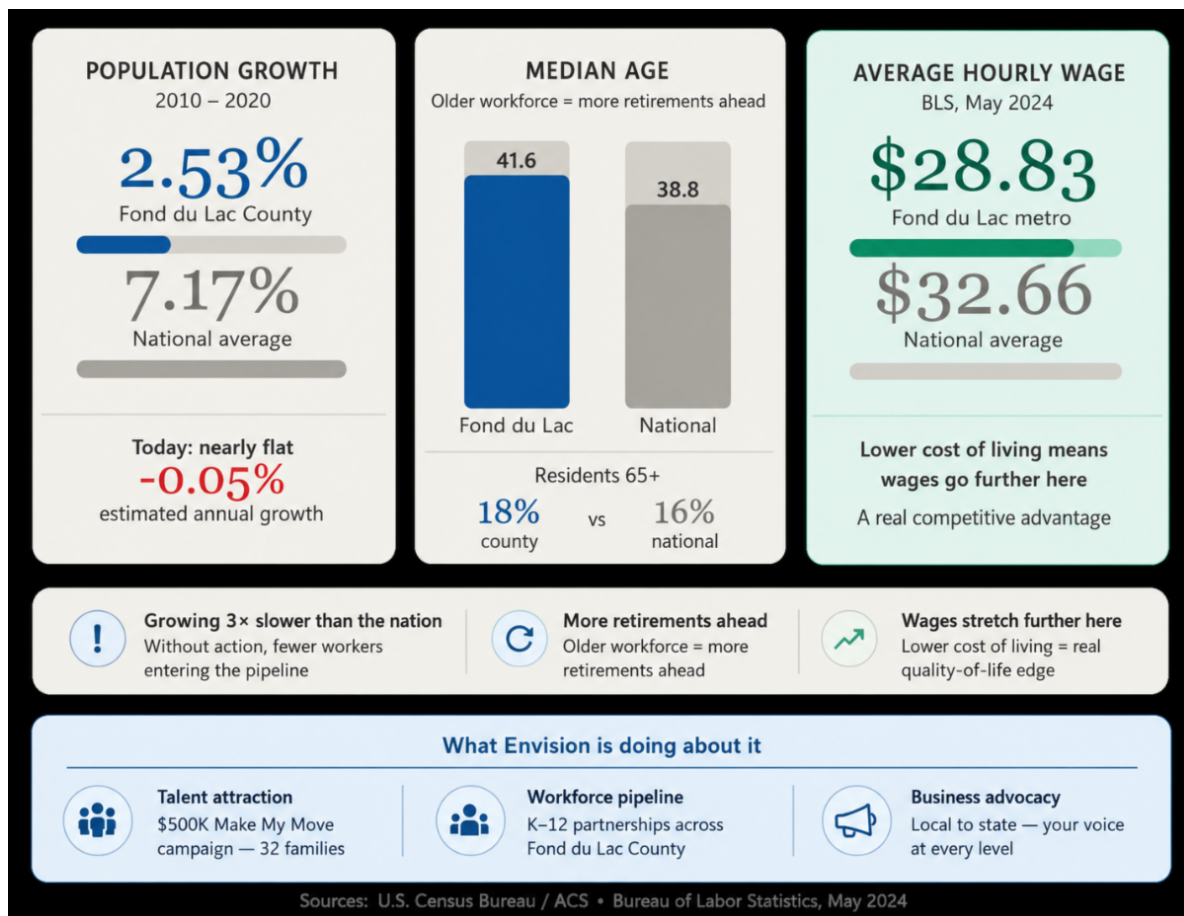
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- Is our region falling behind?
What the data says — and what we're doing about it.
- Who is Envision?
Meet the organization working behind the scenes for you.
- Economic Development in Action: *The Story of SparkOps*
- Make My Move
A half-million-dollar campaign bringing people straight to Fond du Lac County's doorstep.



The numbers are worth knowing.

Fond du Lac County's population growth has slowed significantly. Our median age is older than the national median, and more than 18% of residents are over the age of 65. That means more retirements, fewer workers entering the pipeline, and growing pressure on the businesses that keep this county running.



Here's the flip side: workers in the Fond du Lac metro area earn a higher hourly wage than our neighbors. That's a real asset. Wages here are competitive for the cost of living — which is part of what makes this region worth fighting for.

But wages alone won't solve a shrinking labor pool. Wisconsin communities that are winning the workforce competition right now are doing it with strategy around intentional talent attraction, strong employer networks, and a clear story about why this is a great place to build a life.

That's exactly what Envision Greater Fond du Lac is built to do. Our 2025–2030 strategic plan is focused on uniting public and private partners, fueling entrepreneurship, and attracting and retaining the workforce this region needs to thrive.

The challenge is real. So is the opportunity — if we act now.

Join Us at an Upcoming Event

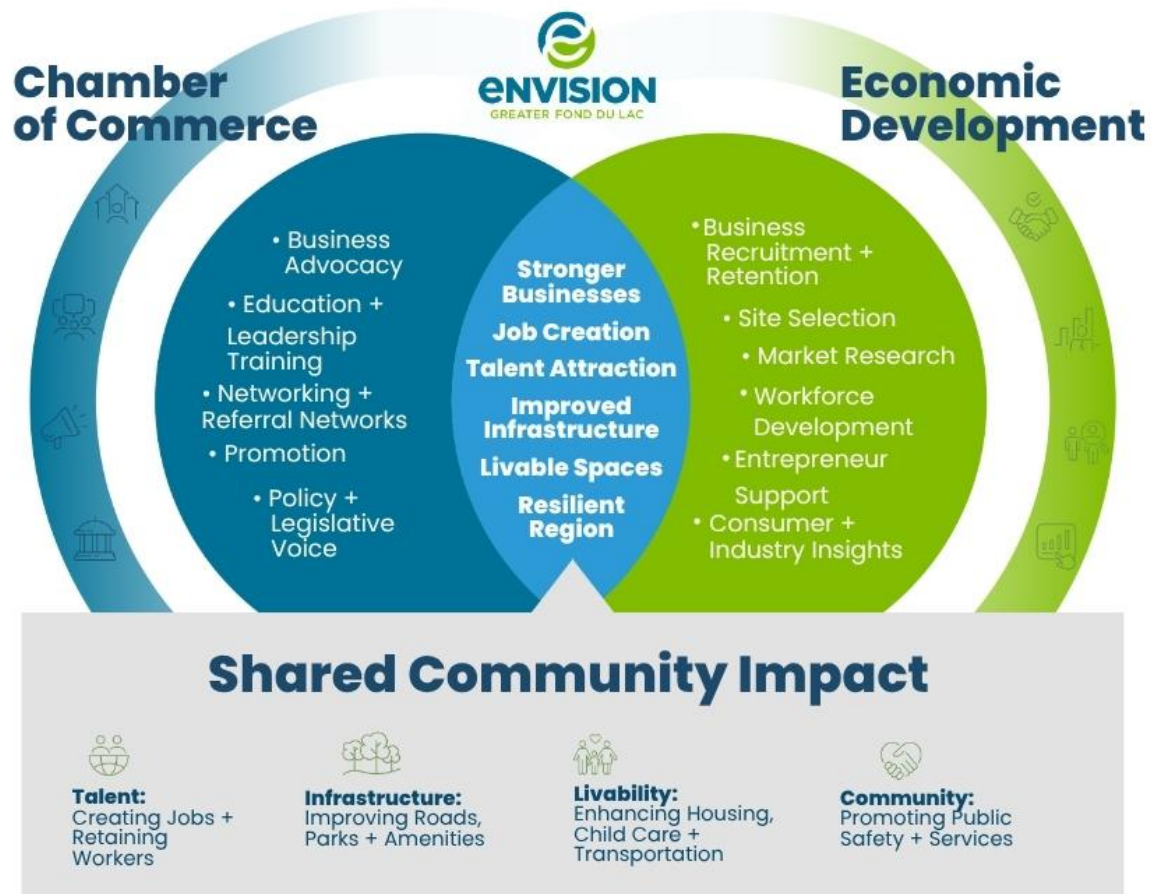


You may have heard the name.

But do you know what Envision Greater Fond du Lac actually does?

We're the chamber of commerce and economic development organization serving Fond du Lac County. We work at the intersection of business growth, community development, and regional strategy — and we're here for every corner of this county, from the City of Fond du Lac to Ripon, Waupun, Ashford, Osceola, and everywhere in between.

Where Local Business Success and Regional Strength Meet



Here's what that looks like in practice:

- **We bring people together.** Networking events, business mixers, and community gatherings — because face-to-face relationships and word-of-mouth referrals still matter. **Some of the best business connections in this county happen in a room, not on a screen.**

"The Ambassadors connect me to the local business community and allow me to be an advocate. I can connect them with the resources and people at Envision. I can do more than just listen, I can help."

~Deb Winterhack, Director of Development, Greater Fond du Lac Agnesian HealthCare Foundation.

- **We invest in the future workforce.** That means programming with local employers and working directly with K–12 school districts so students across the county know what career opportunities exist right here at home — before they ever think about leaving.
- **We advocate for business.** From City Council and the County Board to the State Legislature, Envision makes sure the voice of the business community is heard. That means showing up on issues big and small — whether it's beautifying the I-41 interchange at Johnson Street or fighting for research and development tax credits that help our manufacturers compete.
- **We drive economic development.** Attracting new employers, supporting entrepreneurs, and building the regional partnerships that create long-term growth. Read about our SparkOps project involvement below!

Envision membership unlocks deeper access to all of it. But our work benefits the whole county — members and community alike.

Ready to get more connected?

Join Envision Greater Fond du Lac



"[Spark Ops] faced a decision that could have taken them — and dozens of jobs — to another county."

The Spark Ops Story

When Fond du Lac-based Spark Ops Metalworks started outgrowing its five separate facilities in late 2024, the company faced a decision that could have taken them — and dozens of jobs — to another county.

It didn't happen that way.

Spark Ops, founded in 2022 by CEO Maria Perl and her husband Bryan, had quickly become one of the most remarkable manufacturing success stories in the region. The company builds high-quality temporary modular structures for the world's biggest sports



and entertainment events — NFL, FIFA, Road America, Formula 1, X-Games — and has expanded into work with Boeing and FEMA.

Spark Ops joined Envision Greater Fond du Lac as a member in February 2024 and didn't waste any time getting involved. That spring, they opened their doors to participants in FDL R.O.C.K., giving local students a firsthand look at what advanced manufacturing careers can look like right here at home.

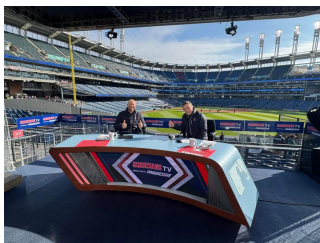
By late summer, it became clear the company needed to consolidate under one roof. Sheboygan County came calling with a significant land offer at essentially no cost. That's when Envision's economic development team got to work.

Lisa McArthur, Vice President of Economic Development, had already been quietly repositioning the Fond du Lac Aeronautical Industrial Park — rethinking its zoning and broadening its perception beyond aviation-only users. County Executive Sam Kaufman had long said the right user would get the right deal. When Spark Ops' needs became clear, Lisa went to Sam with a simple message: *I think I found the right user.*

What followed was months of negotiations, FAA compliance work, DNR approvals, and a developer's agreement — all to keep Spark Ops in Fond du Lac County. In early 2025 with support from the County Executive and County Board of Supervisors, Spark Ops purchased most of the the park's acreage and in March 2026, broke ground on a new 156,000-square-foot headquarters facility.

This spring, Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce (WMC) awarded them the Manufacturer of the Year: Excellence in Product & Process Innovation and the U.S. Small Business Administration named them the Wisconsin Small Business Manufacturer of the Year during National Small Business Week.

This is what economic development looks like.



View More Success Stories!



Envision Greater Fond du Lac was awarded a state grant to fund Make My Move, a \$500,000 talent attraction campaign with a clear goal: bring 32 families from outside Wisconsin to put down roots right here in Fond du Lac County.

Make My Move is a national program that connects people who are ready to make a change with communities that have a real story to tell. We have that story.

For local employers, this is directly relevant. New families mean new workers, new customers, and new energy in our communities. Every family that chooses Fond du Lac County is a win for the whole region.

This campaign is one of the most significant workforce attraction investments this county has seen. We're proud to be leading it and we'll keep you posted on the families who say yes.

Want to help welcome new residents or connect your openings to incoming talent?

Partner with Envision



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Expect the next issue in October.

CONTACT US

Have a question, a topic idea, or something you'd like to see featured?

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Share it with a colleague, friend, or neighbor. The more people who know what's happening in this county, the better.

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