

# Rising Star eNews

Development Opportunities in the  
Rockford, Illinois, USA Region



## Summer 2007

### Available Properties Fast Facts Feature

- Buildings/Land
- Wage & Union Data
- Development Opportunities in Downtown Rockford
- Lowe's: Rockford is 'Great!'
- Continuous Improvement Training

### Training Services



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Rockford's downtown is graced with landmark buildings, like the Coronado Theatre, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.  
*Nels Akerlund photo*

### **The Rockford Scoop**

Here's your Rising Star, the quarterly e-newsletter that contains the latest news about development opportunities in the growing Rockford area. For more information, visit [www.rockfordil.com](http://www.rockfordil.com).

To share this issue with your colleagues, just email them this URL:  
<http://www.rockfordil.com/enews/>.

## Available Buildings/Land in the Rockford Region

For more information on these properties, please contact the listing agent. For community and economic development information, visit [www.rockfordil.com](http://www.rockfordil.com), or contact the RAEDC at 815.987.8118 or [evoyles@rockfordil.com](mailto:evoyles@rockfordil.com).

### **INDUSTRIAL**

[7135 Clinton Road](#)  
[Loves Park II](#)

For more info:  
Tim Regnier  
Commercial Property Team

Total SF: 202,000  
Zoning: Light Industrial  
Year Built: 1997  
Ceiling Peak: 23 ft.  
Lease: \$3.25 gross



815.229.8975  
[tim@c-p-team.com](mailto:tim@c-p-team.com)

Will subdivide to 10,000 sf  
9 docks; 7 doors  
4000 amp; 480 3-phase electrical

## INDUSTRIAL



[1818 Elmwood Road](#)  
[Rockford IL](#)  
For more info:  
Bharat Puri  
First Rockford Group  
815.229.3000  
[bharat@firstockford.com](mailto:bharat@firstockford.com)

Total SF: 91,947  
Zoning: Light Industrial  
Year Built: 1969  
Ceiling Peak: 28 ft.  
Lease: \$3.50  
Part of a 331,000 SF building

## COMMERCIAL/ OFFICE



[303 North Main Street](#)  
[Rockford IL](#)  
For more info:  
Joe Sosnowski  
Buckley Real Estate  
Brokerage  
815.381.8805  
[joes@thebuckleycompanies.com](mailto:joes@thebuckleycompanies.com)

Total SF: 30,000  
Zoning: Commercial  
Year Built: 1957  
Ceiling Peak: 14 ft.  
Lease: \$12 + triple net  
Historic building; retail first floor; office two floors

## PROPERTY-COMMERCIAL/OFFICE



[Swanson Property](#)  
[3000 Block, S. Perryville](#)  
[Road](#)  
[Rockford IL](#)  
For more info:  
David Nord, Administrator  
Village of Cherry Valley  
815.332.3441  
[dnord@cherryvalley.org](mailto:dnord@cherryvalley.org)

Acreage: 163; will subdivide to 20 acres  
Zoning: Commercial  
Price: \$2.25-\$2.50  
Description: Immediately west of of I-39, I-90 and U.S. 20; immediately south of 1 million SF CherryVale Mall. Property is located on both sides of Perryville Road; south of Harrison Avenue.

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## Rockford Region Fast Facts

### Rockford Wages Lower Than Other Midwest Regions

	Rockford	Milwaukee	Chicago
All Occupations	\$17.64	\$19.24	\$20.88
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	\$19.57	\$20.35	\$21.53

Production	\$15.45	\$15.81	\$14.53
Transportation & Material Moving	\$13.66	\$14.30	\$15.93

Source: U.S. Dept. of Labor, Occupational Employment Statistics; Regional Development Institute, Northern Illinois University

Wages in the Rockford area are generally lower than other MSAs in the region. The relatively lower wages in the Transportation and Material Moving make the Rockford area particularly attractive to the Logistics/Distribution industry.

### Rockford's Union Workforce Lower Than Other Midwest Regions

	Rockford	Chicago	Illinois
% Unionized Private Employees	9.2%	11.2%	11.1%

Source: Bureau of National Affairs BNA Plus

The Rockford area has fewer unionized employees than other Midwest MSAs, even though about 25% of the workforce is manufacturing.

### Feature

## Development Opportunities in Downtown Rockford

A 200-plus percent increase last year in new-business starts in downtown Rockford points to renewed vitality for the bustling riverfront area. Here are just a few examples:

- \$142 million new Criminal Justice Center
- \$26 million addition to the Rockford Register Star to house its new \$15.9 million press
- \$23 million renovation to 10,000-seat MetroCentre arena
- \$12.5 million expansion to shared campus of Burpee Museum of Natural History and Discovery Center Museum
- \$10 million to renovate historic 8-story office building, 303 N. Main. Tenants thus far include SupplyCore, supply and procurement company specializing in MRO materials for government organizations; Watt Publishing, an international business-to-business information company; and Mid-Northern Group, a leader in older adult and family living environments.



Rockford's MetroCentre arena is undergoing \$23 million renovation.

What's causing all the action? A commitment to downtown, where the unique personality of the Rockford riverfront area shines. "Also, entities are eager to work with developers, and we're working together better. We recognize that there needs to be incentives, that we need to educate people, and the numbers show that it's working!" said Kim Wheeler, [River District Association](#) executive director.

### Unique Downtown

For more information on development opportunities in downtown Rockford, contact [Reid Montgomery](#), City of Rockford director of community and economic development at 815.987.5861 or contact [Eric Voyles](#), RAEDC vice president national business development at 815.987.8118.

Joseph James Partners are seeking more tenants to lease 5,000 to 40,000 sq. ft. Contact Matt Provenzano at 815.218.2527 or [matt.provenzano@josephjamespartners.com](mailto:matt.provenzano@josephjamespartners.com). See also [available properties](#) above, 303 North Main.

- numerous new restaurants and other retail establishments

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## Feature

### LOWE'S: ROCKFORD AREA 'GREAT'

Lowe's, the world's second-largest home improvement retailer, chose Rockford for its 12th regional distribution center ... and opened the center in January 2007, just 16 months after its September 2005 groundbreaking.

And, instead of the planned 500 new jobs, the distribution center has more than 650 employees because they're servicing more stores, according to Neil Buck, the Rockford general manager. "The City of Rockford and Winnebago County and other agencies have worked together closely to make this facility a reality. They've been great" said Buck.

#### Fast-Track Partners

The 1.4 million sq. ft. automated distribution facility was a \$100 million investment for Lowe's. To assure the completion date, many partners collaborated on the fast-track schedule.

- City of Rockford purchased 180 acres from an overseas seller and sold 162 acres to Lowe's.
- Winnebago County realigned and upgraded a road to 4 lanes; also provided critical funding.
- State of Illinois expanded an enterprise zone to include the parcel, allowing 7 years of tax abatement.
- City of Rockford awarded a construction contract within 3 months of awarding the design contract.



Lowe's Distribution Center's board-cutting.

#### Logistics Growing in Rockford

The Rockford area continues to attract more logistics companies. Below are some of the reasons:

- UPS's second-largest air hub facility at the Chicago/Rockford International Airport (RFD)
- RFD also hosts BAX Global, DHL, and a Customs Port of Entry with Foreign Trade Zone #176
- Customs Port of Entry
- Public Warehousing
- 3PL
- Easy access to 3 interstate, 2 federal and 9 state highways
- I-39 Logistics Corridor
- Union Pacific's largest intermodal hub

For information, contact Eric Voyles, RAEDC vice president of national business development at [evoyles@rockfordil.com](mailto:evoyles@rockfordil.com) or 815-987-8118.

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## Rockford Workforce Gains Skills for Global Competition

"We exceeded our customer's expectations on delivery and improved our productivity more than five times by taking the Continuous Improvement Series" said Teresa Beach-Shelow, owner of Superior Joining Technologies in the Rockford area.



Teresa Beach-Shelow, owner of Superior Joining, Rockford area.

The company is one of more than 80 that has taken the eight-week course. The nationally recognized training by the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center is available to area manufacturers at a discounted price through a grant from the Illinois Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to the Rockford Area Economic Development Council.

For more information on Rockford's workforce or the Continuous Improvement Series, contact Mark Podemski, RAEDC vice president for development, [mpodemski@rockfordil.com](mailto:mpodemski@rockfordil.com) or 815.987.8118.

Leaders of the Rockford area's manufacturing workforce have taken advantage of training opportunities such as the Continuous Improvement Series in order to be globally competitive. They know that if you're not improving, you're falling behind in today's global economy. "The Rockford-area workforce is full of examples of successful global competition," remarked Beach-Shelow.