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For Immediate Release

Power of Connection Grant Awarded to Benefit Clayton County *Development Project Gains \$5,000 Support from Rural Initiative*

ELKADER, IA – A local effort to attract more professionals and families to Clayton County has received \$5,000 through a Power of Connection grant administered jointly by ITC Midwest and the Iowa Rural Development Council (IRDC).

Clayton County is known for its scenic beauty, cultural history, many recreational amenities and affordability. Recent upgrades to the broadband network in Clayton County expanded the ability to host telework occupations, creating the opportunity for more professionals to relocate to the area. To facilitate additional growth and economic development, Clayton County Conservation is launching “Attracting Success: Northeast Iowa Professionals Thrive in Rural Landscape” to engage young adults and young families, and encourage them to live, work and play in the county. The Attracting Success effort will encourage professionals to visit Clayton County and connect with employment opportunities.

The initiative includes a marketing campaign and a fall 2021 Summit for Northeast Iowa Professionals. These efforts are all geared toward updating the way Clayton County recruits and retains the next generation of workers and community leaders in Northeast Iowa. This will be achieved by highlighting the favored lifestyle professionals in the area enjoy.

The grant program, launched late last year by ITC Midwest and IRDC, is intended to help fund feasibility studies, strategic planning and non-construction/equipment elements of a rural project.

“Northeast Iowa is known for its natural scenic beauty. Few people know the vibrancy of our young and diverse workforce. The Power of Connection grant will help Clayton County highlight the growing trend of young professionals and their families choosing to live in rural areas,” said Jenna Pollock, Executive Director of Clayton County Conservation Board. “Clayton County is rich in natural scenic beauty, outdoor recreation, student-centered education, and broadband connection that supports teleworking, along with diverse, locally sourced dining and cultural experiences. All of this is accompanied by the quaint charm of rural Clayton County communities.”

“Many professionals now have the ability to telework from anywhere, which makes relocation to rural communities an attractive option for those seeking a better quality of life. With a scenic landscape, myriad recreational activities and more, Clayton County has a great deal to offer for professionals and families,” noted ITC Midwest President Dusky Terry. “Through the Power of Connection program in collaboration with the Iowa Rural Development Council, ITC Midwest is pleased to support the development initiative being planned in Clayton County to spur growth in the area.”

Communities eligible for the Power of Connection program must have populations of under 10,000 and be outside of a metropolitan area. Power of Connection grant dollars cannot be used for construction, real estate or equipment.

For more information about program details, contact IRDC Executive Director Bill Menner at director@iowardc.org or call 641-990-4757.

About ITC Midwest

ITC Midwest LLC is a subsidiary of [ITC Holdings Corp.](http://www.itc-holdings.com), the largest independent electricity transmission company in the U.S. ITC Midwest operates nearly 6,700 circuit miles of transmission lines in Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois and Missouri, and holds utility status in Wisconsin. ITC Midwest is headquartered in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and maintains regional operating facilities in Dubuque, Iowa City and Perry, Iowa; and Albert Lea and Lakefield, Minnesota. For further information visit www.itc-holdings.com. ITC is a subsidiary of Fortis Inc., a leader in the North American regulated electric and gas utility industry. For further information visit www.fortisinc.com.

About the Iowa Rural Development Council

The [Iowa Rural Development Council](http://www.iowardc.org) is a non-profit public-private partnership featuring members ranging from federal agencies to utilities, universities and community colleges and for-profit entities. The Council is a federal Farm Bill-authorized organization that seeks to empower rural communities and bring together partners to advance the interests of rural Iowa.

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