LeClaire, Iowa's town motto "It's all there... In LeClaire" appears to hold true. With increasing growth in retail, attractions and housing, LeClaire has gained national attention and become a model community for many other small towns throughout the Midwest. With an increase in visitors to LeClaire, hotel/motel tax collections increased approximately 18% from 2011 to 2012. With growth and diversity of many new retail stores, attractions and restaurants, retail sales tax increased approximately 25% during the same time frame. As a small town with no large industrial base for tax support, LeClaire has managed to be successful with tourism as their cornerstone of growth in a down economy.

City Administrator, Ed Choate, attributes this success to “creating a business friendly atmosphere that encourages entrepreneurship and risk taking.”

A new business that was launched during the down economy in 2010, Mississippi River Distilling Co., owned by brothers Ryan and Garrett Burchett is thriving and already expanding. Ryan says their growth has been spurred by “a genuine entrepreneurial spirit that is encouraged and supported by the community and its leaders.”

Former LeClaire Chamber President and revitalization expert, Dr. Rick Reed, attributes LeClaire's success to its spirit of community and strength in volunteers. “LeClaire’s rich history and recent downtown revitalization in 2007 helped lay the foundation for future growth and expansion. In many small communities, the downtown is the location for important human interaction, business development, culture, and history. The identity of a small community is closely tied to the sustained development of commercial area revitalization. This always stimulates the local economy through planned economic development and growth. In LeClaire, the success of the historic downtown area is a vital link to its future”.

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