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Jay Garner Honored with the 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Economic Development Council

*IEDC recognizes Jay Garner for exemplary leadership and impactful
contributions to economic development*

Washington, D.C. – The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is pleased to announce that Jay Garner, CEcD, CSSC, has been named the recipient of the 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award in Economic Development in recognition of Jay’s exceptional leadership and dedication to economic development. Jay has been a driving force behind initiatives that foster business expansion, attract investment, and create opportunities for long-term prosperity and quality of life for 46 years. Through his vision and dedication, communities have not only grown but are at the cutting edge of the field and better positioned for the future.

“Strong economies are built by leaders like Jay Garner who understand that lasting progress requires vision, trust, and a deep commitment to the places and people they serve,” said Nathan Ohle, IEDC president and CEO. “We are thrilled to recognize Jay with the Lifetime Achievement Award. This honor highlights the impact of Jay’s four decades of transformative work for communities and provides an example for economic developers everywhere.”

As part of IEDC’s annual Industry Leaders program, the Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes individuals who push the boundaries of economic development and champion transformative solutions that create lasting prosperity. Honorees deliver forward-thinking strategies that not only address present economic challenges but also lay the groundwork for sustained success. Jay’s leadership serves as a model for professionals across the industry, demonstrating the power of innovation and strategic vision in shaping stronger, more vibrant communities.

Jay Garner shared, "I’m deeply honored to receive this award from IEDC. Economic development has always been about making a real difference in people’s lives. Having served as both an economic development practitioner for 23 years serving communities directly, and then the last 23 years leading Garner Economics, it has been tremendously



rewarding to see how our work has helped communities create a better place, and people have better lives."

IEDC will formally celebrate Jay at the 2026 Leadership Summit, March 1-3 in Washington, D.C.

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About Jay Garner:

Jay Garner is the president and founder of Garner Economics, LLC, an economic development and site location consulting practice headquartered in Fayetteville, GA. Jay is a leader and innovator in the economic development profession, having served for more than 45 years as both an award-winning economic development, Chamber of Commerce CEO, and site location professional. His firm assists clients throughout the world on a wide variety of projects, offering innovative, yet real-world solutions to achieve success. Jay often lectures and provides counsel on creating and implementing proactive global business development strategies and tactics. His firm is also a leader in providing assistance to corporate clients in their site selection process, such as Anchor Glass, Academy Sports, Hatfield Quality Meats, Hill's Pet Foods, Marel Food Systems, EGR Automotive, Future Pipe Industries, Lowe's, L. S. Starrett, and others.

He is a founding member and past chair of the board for the Site Selectors Guild, Inc., a prestigious group of the top site location consultants, globally. Jay is also a past chairman for the International Economic Development Council, the largest economic development professional trade organization in the world. He is a co-author of the Amazon bestseller *Economic Development Is Not For Amateurs!*, now in its 2nd edition; a must-read book for community leaders on how to achieve economic development success. For more information, please visit garnereconomics.com.

About the International Economic Development Council (IEDC):

IEDC is the world's largest association for economic developers. Originating a century ago, IEDC is a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization that represents the entire economic development profession. Members are employed in various settings, including local, state, provincial, and federal governments, public-private partnerships, chambers of commerce, universities, and a variety of other institutions.



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