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High-tech business incubator proposed in Kenosha County

By [Tom Daykin](#) of the Journal Sentinel

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The Kenosha County community of Pleasant Prairie, home to LakeView Corporate Park and other business parks, hopes to develop an incubator for technology-oriented business start-ups.

The 2009-'11 proposed state budget, which is pending in the Legislature, includes a \$700,000 grant for what has been dubbed the Pleasant Prairie Technology Incubator Center. The state Department of Commerce grant would be provided only if the center obtains matching funds of \$700,000 from other sources.

Those other funds could come from the private sector, a federal grant, or a tax incremental financing district, in which Pleasant Prairie would provide money to be repaid through the incubator's property taxes. That's according to Todd Battle, president of the Kenosha Area Business Alliance, which is leading the effort to develop the incubator.

An incubator focused on biomedical sciences and medical technology is consistent with a newly developed economic development [strategy](#) for the Kenosha area, Battle said.

Battle said the incubator would tap into Kenosha's proximity to such major Chicago-area firms as pharmaceutical maker Abbott Laboratories Inc.; area universities, including University of Wisconsin-Madison and UW-Parkside, and local medical device makers, such as Bradshaw Medical Inc.

Gov. Jim Doyle in 2006 announced that a \$12.5 million forgivable state loan would be used to help finance Abbott's plans to establish a corporate campus in Pleasant Prairie. But that [project](#), which could bring at least 2,400 jobs, has not yet moved forward.

Southeastern Wisconsin's largest tech-oriented business incubator is the Technology Innovation Center at the Milwaukee County Research Park, in Wauwatosa. The center provides relatively inexpensive space for tech start-ups, along with shared laboratory space. That allows new businesses to reduce their costs.

The goal of most business incubators is to provide space for companies until they grow large enough to relocate.



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