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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**INTRODUCING THE EXPANDED MANHEIM SOLUTION TEAM**

Elgin, IL – Manheim Solutions, Inc. is expanding its economic development services to now include Environmental Strategy and Planning. This service helps communities plan for a more sustainable, resilient and healthier future by supporting your region’s agricultural sector.  By identifying opportunities to develop the community’s foodshed, we can help ‘tailor fit’ strategies to adapt to the 21st Century’s shifting macroeconomic conditions— and minimize or even capitalize on today’s rising commodity prices, growing population and other environmental stresses creating the conditions for strong growth in local food systems.

Back last summer, Manheim Solutions, Inc. was awarded a contract by the Latah County (Idaho) Economic Development Council and the Clearwater Economic Development Association. The Feasibility Study for the Latah County Food Innovation and Resource Center (FIRC) was completed in February.

In order to complete this federally funded study, Manheim Solutions, Inc. put together a diverse team of experts from both Idaho-based Agriculture researchers and Chicago site selection experts. The result is the development of an agricultural “Economic Gardening Strategy” that Manheim Solutions, Inc. is taking nationally to both rural and urban community.

The Manheim Solutions Team now includes:

**Daniel French, JD, LLM, Director of Environmental Strategy and Planning,** Dan@ManheimSolutions.com.

Dan is an environmental transactions expert that leads strategic planning and research initiatives for Manheim Solutions, Inc.  Mr. French is responsible for the formulation of project-level strategy, analysis and oversees project operations in the areas of environment, redevelopment, adaptive reuse, feasibility analysis, and regional analysis.  Sustainable land use planning is a particular focus of his practice, in which he blends traditional analysis with principals of economic geography, place making, green infrastructure, ecosystem services, and network analysis to lend a balanced, creative and impactful perspective.  After receiving a B.A. at the University of Illinois, Dan completed his law degree from St. Louis University with concentrations in business transactions and tax law, before finally completing a Masters of Law (LL.M.) from Erasmus University in the Netherlands.  Following his studies, Dan briefly interned at the law firm Nautadutilh in Rotterdam before joining British Petroleum in Chicago in 2007 where he supported retail and midstream asset divestment in both portfolio and single-site sales— transacting over a billion dollars in total value and liability in more than a dozen states in just 5 years.

Mr. French’s most recent major projects include leading the redevelopment analysis and strategy development for a 400 acre brownfield in a mountainous region of the rural South East and a 440 acre brownfield in industrial corridor of northwest Indiana.

**MICHELE VACHON, MS, Associate,** Michele@ManheimSolutions.com.

Michele Vachon, CHMM, MS links communities with developers to enhance community culture, resource base, their built environment and economic vitality. She has over fifteen years of environmental assessment, CERCLA emergency response, ISO 14001, and remediation consulting experience.  Her expertise is rooted in industrial resource management combined with targeted regional economic development modeling and green workforce development.  She is often the liaison between community needs, government and the business community; performing extensive public outreach and engagement activities.  She is nationally recognized EPA brownfield assessment grant writer focusing on helping communities develop state, federal and private foundation funding portfolios for redevelopment projects.  She specializes in identifying both short and long-range value-added property funding opportunities for private and public organizations.

**Philip Watson, PhD, Affiliate, Watson Regional Economics Network,** [**www.mydearwatson.net**](http://www.mydearwatson.net)

Dr. Watson is the lead economist for Watson Regional Economics Network (www.mydearwatson.net). In addition to his business, Dr. Watson also has academic year responsibilities as an Assistant Professor of Agricultural & Regional Economics in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the University of Idaho. Phil has received funding to support his research from the USDA Rural Community Development Initiative program and he is currently working in Priest River, Idaho on a targeted community economic analysis tool to help guide strategic decision-making in rural communities. Phil also serves as lead on several National Oceanic & Atmospheric Association (NOAA) and industry association economic impact studies (i.e. Cattleman, Dairy, etc.) and is well versed in regional and community economic practices in the Intermountain West. He has over ten years experience in conducting research and teaching about regional economic theory and practice, recreation and tourism management, fisheries planning, natural resource valuation, and public involvement. He has conducted workshops and training in regional economics for the Northwest Community Development Institute and several other, federal, and state agencies. Phil is a Pullman, WA resident.

For more information about the Manheim Solutions Team and Foodshed Strategies, visit our website at www. ManheimSolutions.com, or contact Chris Manheim at chris@manheimsolutions.com.

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