Businesses are eyeing potential opportunities from an MSU scientific research center

By Steve Carmody • Nov 28, 2015

Leaders in Lansing are hoping a new cutting-edge scientific research facility at Michigan State University might lead to an economic boom.

The Facility for Rare Isotope Beams (seen here as a model) will eventually serve as a center for cutting edge nuclear research.
Credit Steve Carmody / Michigan Radio

The Facility for Rare Isotope Beams, or FRIB, will provide researchers a place to do cutting edge experiments in nuclear science. The building is already under construction on the MSU campus in East Lansing.

Construction is not expected to be complete until 2022.

The project is expected to cost $730 million.
But local economic development officials are already trying to sell businesses on taking advantage of its potential for major scientific advances.

“I think the only thing that limits us in this industry for its growth potential is our imagination….and the effort we put behind it,” says Steve Willobee, with the Lansing Economic Area Partnership, or LEAP.

Willobee says LEAP has already started reaching out to 180 companies, in a wide range of industries, which may turn the advanced research at FRIB into commercial applications.

However, he says this is not about attracting business investment tomorrow.

“We’re looking 10 to 20 years out,” says Willobee.

Eventually, Willobee predicts the businesses connected to FRIB research could rival the economic impact on the Lansing region of General Motors and state government.