



The Economic Development Perspective

Marshall County Economic Development Corporation

April 2015

Message from Jerry:

Easter Season is a time of change and transition from winter to spring. We can see some of mother nature's transition as you look at your lawn, and how it's turning green. For the Marshall County EDC, we continue with transition as well. This spring you will see us begin to implement new programs through workforce development and entrepreneurship committees. These are the other two legs of our economic development platform besides our BEAR (Business Expansion and Retention) and Business Attraction programs.

At a high level, the workforce development committee will be charged with the short term goal of finding workers that are in immediate demand by our employers. Long term, the committee will develop tactics and collaborate with our employers and other organizations on systems to advance our workforce by helping individuals enter the workforce, graduate them from a training program and place them into jobs. Much has been accomplished in this arena over the course of many years, and I suggest that much more can be done.

Marshall County has a very unique opportunity created by the advent of the construction of the Metronet funded through a public-private partnership. The concept of developing an Entrepreneur Center leverages unlimited bandwidth; new technologies in the marketplace; major research universities at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana University, Purdue University, and the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology; and a community desire to create a business opportunity for entrepreneurship. MCEDC will begin to organize the effort with a charge of developing and implementing strategies to produce a successful center, and thus grow another segment of the Marshall County economy.

These are exciting times, and MCEDC welcomes your interest to help. Please contact the office at (574) 935-8499 to learn more.

JJC

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized initials and a surname.

Regional Cities Initiative: Region Continues Planning Effort on Talent Attraction

A significant interest in the county and regional economy was revealed early last month when over 40 participants attended a Regional Cities Initiative workshop at Swan Lake Resort.

The ***discussion will continue on April 16th*** at 9:00 am at Swan Lake Resort. The third workshop will provide an update on the planning process and share information collected from across the region.

The purpose of the initiative is to develop forward thinking plans and projects in an effort to attract top talent to our region. Attracting new residents will become increasingly vital as population stagnation has been identified as one of the greatest threats to future economic growth in Indiana.

Thank you to all those that participated in the first workshop..... ***we are looking forward to see you on April 16th.***

Marshall County Schools Achieve High Graduation Rates

Congratulations to all of the school corporations and high schools serving Marshall County students as they produced some of the highest 2014 graduation rates in the state.

School leadership attributed the success to the implementation of several policies and programs including an accountability program established by the Indiana Department of Education, and the availability of credit recovery, dual credit, and vocational courses. All schools in Marshall County offer credit recovery courses, which are online courses that students can complete to gain the necessary credits to graduate. Many schools offer dual credit courses enabling students to earn both high school and college credit in partnership with several regional and statewide colleges and universities. Some school districts also work with cooperatives to offer a variety of vocational courses providing skills that can be applied immediately after graduating.

Graduation rates for the public school corporations varied between 86.2% to 96.5% as most corporations experienced an increase in the rate from 2013. Higher graduation rates translate to a benefit for the Marshall County business community. Businesses will have greater access to a more educated workforce possessing the necessary skills for future success. Additionally, higher levels of educational attainment lead to greater job opportunities, higher wages, and a higher quality of life.

City of Plymouth: TIF Funding Approved

The Plymouth Redevelopment Commission recently approved resolutions for modifying two of the city's TIF districts adding infrastructure projects to support future residential and industrial growth. These projects include improvements to the Ledyard water plant and improvements for Pioneer Drive north of U.S. 30.

With the approval of these resolutions, the Redevelopment Commission also extended the lifespan of the districts as they were set to expire in 2025. The extension frees up additional funding generated through the TIF for future investment .

Tax Increment Finance, or TIF, districts are an important economic development tool that have been established by many communities across Marshall County. Funds generated through these districts are utilized on a regular basis to spur additional development within the district.

Town of Bremen: Proposed Water Improvements

MCEDC commends the Town of Bremen as it begins to take the necessary steps to ensure adequate public utilities are available for current and future residents and businesses.

The Town Council recently considered a proposed increase in the water rate to finance a \$4.1 million improvement to the water plant. With the improvement, the capacity of the 50 year old plant will increase to 1,000 gallons per minute.

The project will not only support the recent business expansions of Southwire and Universal Bearings, but will provide additional capacity for future growth. Adequate public utilities allow existing businesses to maximize growth potential, and enable the community to attract new businesses.

The Town plans to begin construction this spring with the goal of being operational by this fall.

Workforce Development: Helping Businesses & Students

Plymouth High School (PHS) and the Weidner School of Inquiry (WSOI) are partnering with local businesses to offer an innovative internship program addressing the needs of both local students and future employers.

Students will have the opportunity to discover what career they may be interested in pursuing after graduation allowing a clearer vision for future education. Local businesses will have the opportunity to hire interns and train potential new employees while creating a pipeline to a future workforce.

The program is yet another example of how PHS leadership is focusing on workforce development building upon past successes of the WSOI. The internship program will launch in the fall of 2015, and will be open to all PHS seniors.

Town of Argos: Encourages Electric Service Enhancement

The Town of Argos recently passed a resolution to create an economic revitalization area for the purpose of a tax abatement supporting plans by the Indiana Municipal Power Agency (IMPA) to develop a solar park.

The \$1.3 million solar energy investment, which will have a capacity to generate 750 kilowatts of electricity, will be located on 6.6 acre parcel adjacent to the town's waste water treatment facility. IMPA will purchase the land from the town for \$50,000.

With the Argos solar park and plans to develop additional parks across the state, IMPA is implementing an investment strategy to comply with requirements for diversifying its energy portfolio. Argos is expected to approve a confirming resolution for the tax abatement on May 6th.

Both IMPA and Argos officials anticipate that electric rates will remain low acting as an incentive for future business growth.

Focus on Downtown Redevelopment: City of Plymouth to Discuss Revitalization Options

The topic of downtown redevelopment in the City of Plymouth was embraced last week when a packed house assembled to hear a panel of speakers at the Wild Rose Moon. Those present included members of the City's Downtown Revitalization Committee, various City Boards and Commissions, and interested citizens.

The panel, which was composed of speakers from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, and the City of Fort Wayne, shared their experiences in downtown redevelopment and how other communities have organized their efforts. Several state and federal programs that provide funding for downtown redevelopment were discussed. Some of these programs support the development of a Business Improvement District and provide funding for downtown housing.

The issue of downtown redevelopment and its importance has also been raised countywide by participants attending the quarterly "County Development for the Future" meetings, and is also a component of the new Plymouth comprehensive plan.

Town of Bremen: Acquisitions of Local Businesses

Two Bremen-based businesses are poised for future growth as a result of being acquired by a regional RV components manufacturer.

Better Way Products, an industry leader in the manufacturing of fiberglass components for the RV, marine, and transit vehicle industries, was recently acquired by Patrick Industries. This acquisition follows their purchase of Charleston Corporation, a similar manufacturer of fiberglass and plastic components.

As the RV industry continues to expand, these acquisitions are expected to increase their market share leading to future growth in production and employment.

Both businesses will continue to operate on a stand-alone basis under their existing brand names.

Marshall County Economic Indicators on the Upswing

The Marshall County EDC tracks several local economic indicators revealing data on the health and vitality of the economy. This data is often used by site selectors and businesses as they consider where to open a new facility.

The latest indicators are as follows:

Marshall County Building Construction Permits - Total Valuation

- 2014 - \$69,924,144
- 2013 - \$37,087,246
- 2012 - \$30,591,990

Marshall County Major Business Expansions

	Number of Expansions	Capital Investment	Expected Jobs Created	Estimated Payroll
2014	7	\$50.5 MM	585	\$20 MM
2013	5	\$36 MM	360	\$12.3 MM

Other Economic Indicators

- Average Annual Wage per Job (2013) - \$34,263
- Cost of Living - Marshall County (June 2014) - 82.0%
- Unemployment Rate (Sept. 2014) - 4.8%
- Marshall County Labor Force (Nov. 2014) - 22,672
- Labor Force within 60 min. commute (2014) - 458,693

The indicators will be revised on a quarterly basis and will be published on the MCEDC website.

Free Business Consulting: Available in Marshall County

Small business development and the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in Marshall County!

In an effort to support this spirit, ***free business consulting services are being offered on May 5th*** at the Marshall County EDC offices in Plymouth.

Alan Steele, a Regional Director and Business Advisor with the Indiana Small Business Development Center, will assist participants in assessing current and future needs for existing or prospective businesses.

Highlights of the business consulting services provided in 2014 include:

- Services were provided to 14 individual clients.
- Of the 14, 9 are attempting to start a new business, and 5 are existing businesses.
- Hours of counseling totaled over 59.

Please call Alan at (574) 360-9691, or send an e-mail to astele@isbdc.org, to preregister.

Manufacturing Extension Partnership: Purdue MEP to Offer Upcoming Training Courses

The Marshall County EDC continues to partner with the Purdue Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) to bring relevant low-cost training opportunities to our businesses and industries.

Upcoming courses include:

- ***Delegation: Using Time and Resources Effectively - May 13th***

Delegation is one of the most important leadership skills as it saves time and assists others in developing skills and knowledge. This course helps you recognize the need for delegation as a means to accomplish more.

- ***Effective Motivation: A Key Component for Effective Leadership - July 8th***

This workshop will help you assess individual attitudes and understand motivation. Learn attitude adjustment techniques for creating productive work environments, and how to achieve organizational goals by understanding employee needs.

Both of these courses will be held at the Memories Banquet Hall in Plymouth.

For more information on these courses and how to register, please contact Dietra Rosenkoetter, Senior Account Manager, at (317) 275-6812 or dietra@purdue.edu.

PIDCO Elects Officers for 2015

The Plymouth Industrial Development Corporation (PIDCO) recently announced the following officers for 2015 at their annual meeting: James Faulstich, President; Mike Miley, Vice President; Marc Morrison, Treasurer; and Fred Webster, Secretary.

Two new board members elected for a three year term include: Mark Gidley, Branch Manager, Centier Bank; and Shawn Grobe, Product Line Director, Aerospace Adhesives Cytec Industries, Inc. Current board members include: Kevin Berger, Nick Chaney, David Fortin, Brent Martin, Sarah Smith, Vickie Talcott, and Brian VanDuyne.

The PIDCO Board extends a heartfelt "thank you" to Greg Compton and Ren VanGilder, the out going board members, for their years of leadership and volunteering to serve PIDCO, both serving two terms of three years.

Contact Information

phone: (574) 935-8499

e-mail: mail@marshallcountyledc.org

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