



The Economic Development Perspective

Marshall County Economic Development Corporation

May 2015

Message from Jerry:

As the Marshall County EDC prepares the May edition of the newsletter, we notice that there is a theme of success through investments in many areas. Successes have a direct impact on creating capital investment and some have an influence on factors that will ensure that our county is well posed to attract businesses to the area.

So, my comments here are on the value of long term successes, and the accomplishments that drive economic development. We in Marshall County have a deep rooted history of attracting businesses locally from other areas. That's our legacy. Going forward, we can leverage this legacy and implement strategies or tactics towards accomplishing specific goals to grow the economy. You'll find these accomplishments in the success stories within our newsletter the "The Economic Development Perspective".

Business representatives evaluating local communities as a potential new home to conduct operations will notice that we are willing to invest in our economic development strategies through the construction of an "almost complete" building. We also want this audience to recognize that the future Commerce Building tenant will gain a business advantage by early entry into the market by operating in Marshall County.

Sometimes these investments show how we strive for excellence as in the case in the school systems in Marshall County.

1. Triton Jr. - Sr. High School was nominated by Newsweek Magazine as "One of the Best Schools in America".
2. Plymouth High School was recently ranked as the 15th top high school in Indiana.
3. Marshall County Schools implemented a Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) curriculum through a \$250,000 funding campaign. One example of this investment is the Project Lead The Way - Biomedical Science program, which is now available to students.

Another example of a community willing to invest in itself is the Town of Argos's approval of a tax abatement for the first Marshall County solar park developed by the Indiana Municipal Public Agency (IMPA). This investment is a long term strategy which sends a commitment signal to other businesses that Argos is business friendly.

Often these decisions aren't easy to make. Sometimes consensus is difficult to obtain. However, it does take vision and a determination to take charge and guide future outcomes through actions today. One truth resonates with me and that is without persistence and a desire to implement change... change won't occur.

Those that step into leadership roles by choice do so with the understanding that the rewards are for the greater good and not for the individual. On occasion, these choices can even garner criticism resulting in a reluctance to move forward. In these times, I find satisfaction in working through my responsibility to address the challenges and developing solutions that are aligned with our community's goals.

Over my years in the economic development profession, I have learned a common perspective... businesses expanding to new locations are seeking progressive communities with vision and the willingness to invest in themselves.

Together we'll invest in a vision. Together we will make a difference for Marshall County.

JJC



Marshall County Continues to Support Economic Development

A request from County Commissioner Kevin Overmyer to reinstate an additional \$20,000 for the Marshall County EDC was approved by the County Council last month.

The Council's approval demonstrates their continuing commitment to and understanding of the importance of business retention, business attraction, workforce development, and entrepreneurial development. These four areas serve as the pillars of the strategic plan designed to grow our economy.

When one looks at successful economic development programs across the country, they all share three common factors. 1. They are well planned having a clear vision. 2. They are supported at the local level by both the public and private sector. 3. And they are well funded with the resources in place to implement the economic development plan.

The EDC Board of Directors greatly appreciates the support of the Marshall County Commissioners and Council, as well as the many communities in the county. Increased funding is vital for the success of the economic development program.

"Invest in Marshall County" & Support Economic Development

To secure funds required for the successful implementation of the first countywide economic development strategic plan, the Marshall County EDC recently announced the launch of *"Invest in Marshall County"*.

The initial response to the four year campaign and support for implementing the new economic development direction have been favorable as 17 investors representing the business sector have made funding commitments.

A committee of representatives from all the cities and towns in Marshall County will be championing the campaign. The committee includes:

Town of Argos

- Mark VanDerWeele - Town Council
- Todd VanDerWeele - Business Owner
- Julia Campbell - Business Owner
- Ginger Calhoun - Redevelopment Commission
- Mark Umbaugh – MCEDC Board

Town of Bourbon

- Bill Keyser - MCEDC Board
- Brian Kitch - Bates Corporation
- Donna Burroughs - Triton Public Schools Superintendent
- Les McFarland - Town Council

Town of Bremen

- Bill Davis - MCEDC Board
- Dave Bailey - Community Hospital of Bremen

Town of Culver

- Kevin Berger - MCEDC Board
- Ginny Munroe - Town Council

City of Plymouth

- Jim Condon - MCEDC Board
- Francis Ellert - Coca-Cola
- Dan Tyree - Plymouth School Corporation Superintendent
- Dale Cramer - Lake City Bank
- Connie Lemler - 1st Source Bank
- Sam Goebel - Re/Max Oak Crest Realty
- Loretta Schmidt - St. Joseph Regional Medical Center
- John DeSalle - Hoosier Racing Tire
- Joe Martin Jr. - Country Auto Center
- Roger Umbaugh - MCEDC Board
- Jeff Houin - Easterday & Ummel
- Chris Collins - Collins & Company Realtors

Town of LaPaz

- Don Balka - MCEDC Board

"Local governments across Marshall County have been very supportive of MCEDC's economic development program over the past seven years," stated Bill Davis, Chairman of the MCEDC Board of Directors. It is imperative that we build upon this foundation by securing private sector funds to transition to a true public/private partnership and by leveraging the successes in economic development from the past years moving forward. Only through such a partnership can the vision outlined in the strategic plan become a reality.

For more information on the capital campaign, please contact the Marshall County EDC Board members, at (574) 935-8499.

Regional Cities Initiative: **County Leaders Identify Projects to Grow Population**

Considerable interest by government, business, education, workforce development, and non-profit leadership from across Marshall County was demonstrated last month in a series of planning sessions for the Regional Cities of Northern Indiana.

Over the course of three sessions, nearly 90 participants identified 26 opportunities for transforming Marshall County's quality of place. These were prioritized, and 18 projects were submitted to a steering committee for consideration in a grant application for the Northern Indiana region. The committee will determine which Marshall County submissions to include in the final application to be submitted to the state in early July.

The strategies and projects that were submitted for consideration fit into one of the below categories:

- Entrepreneurship & Small Business Development
- Redevelopment & Infrastructure
- Education & Workforce Development
- Quality of Place & Cultural Amenities

The Indiana General Assembly funded the Regional Cities Initiative at \$84 million to address population stagnation and a decline in the working age population, which have been identified as major hurdles for future economic growth.

More to come..... so stay tuned!

For more information, please visit [Regional Cities of Northern Indiana](#).

Town of Culver: Task Force Plans for More Housing

An Affordable Housing Task Force is beginning to address the feasibility and options for providing additional housing in the Town of Culver.

The need for affordable housing due to local market conditions has been identified by town leadership. Current and future employees at the Culver Academies and Elkay Manufacturing also present an opportunity for additional entry-level housing.

The Task Force met for the second time in late April to discuss the following:

- The identification and prioritization of potential sites available for residential development.
- Potential funding sources for the preparation of a residential market study.
- The feasibility and options for providing market based housing versus income based housing.
- The potential for submitting a tax credit application to support housing development.

Culver is not alone in this discussion as communities across Marshall County have identified a need for entry-level housing due to a rebounding economy and rise in employment.

The Task Force will continue to meet to discuss the potential options and solutions.

Culver Plans for Future Town Infrastructure

One of the functions of the Town of Culver's newly adopted comprehensive plan is to serve as a short and long range guide for determining where to invest in public infrastructure.

To complement the growth and development vision as set out in the plan, Culver is in the process of preparing a 1 to 5 year capital improvements plan. Town officials have identified a list of capital needs from the various departments which includes new town facilities, law enforcement and fire protection equipment, and water system improvements.

This list is currently being prioritized and reviewed to determine its financial feasibility and potential funding sources.

More to come through this process as the Town continues to plan for its future!

Town of Bourbon: Shows Appreciation to Local Business

It is often said that small business is the backbone that drives the economy as it provides a majority of the employment opportunities, products, and services to local citizens.

To show gratitude to the business community, the Town of Bourbon hosted local businesses at the 2nd Annual Business Appreciation Luncheon held at the Matchette Square Senior Center on May 6th. The luncheon was well attended by 20 to 25 business and community leaders. State Senator Ryan Mishler, State Representative Tim Harman and Marshall County Commissioner Kevin Overmyer were among those in attendance.

Town officials also took this opportunity to provide updates on community and economic development issues; such as the annexation of additional land, the creation of a tax increment finance district, the update of the comprehensive plan and the extension of utilities. Businesses took the opportunity to provide input regarding the town's future. Such input is vital as the Town is in the initial stages of updating its comprehensive plan.

Bourbon Officials Seek Grant for Plan Preparation

The Town of Bourbon will soon conduct an income survey as a first step in applying for a grant to fund a new comprehensive plan. The grant being sought will provide 90% of

the funding to retain a consultant to assist with the plan's development, while the town will provide a 10% match.

The Planning Assistance grant program is administered by the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) and provides Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. CDBG funds are income dependent meaning that they must be used for projects and programs that benefit a minimum of 51% of low to moderate income (LMI) households.

The survey process and results also serve as a tool for applying for other grant opportunities that the town may want to pursue in the future.

The survey process is expected to begin on May 23rd.

Town of Argos: Solar Park Soon to be Developed

The Town of Argos takes the necessary steps to bring Marshall County's first solar electric generation park to reality with the approval of a 10 year property tax abatement. The \$1.3 million project is an Indiana Municipal Power Agency (IMPA) strategy to serve its residential and business customers in town and throughout their network.

The solar park, which will be located adjacent to the water treatment facility on Linden Road, will have the capacity to generate 750 kilowatts of electricity. IMPA and Argos officials anticipate that electric rates will remain relatively low for Argos residents as result of this capital investment.

The Town's recently passed tax abatement policy providing predictability invites capital investment such as the solar park and encourages other future business expansion opportunities. Construction on the solar park is expected to begin this summer.

City of Plymouth: FAA Supports Long Range Plan

Persistence by the City of Plymouth in applying for a federal grant results in a \$2.5 million improvement project at the municipal airport. Local leadership continued to pursue the grant over several years based upon plans to make improvements. The city's airport experiences tremendous local use by businesses and travelers to Culver Academies, and plays an important role in the local economy.

The Federal Aviation Administration will provide \$2.2 million for the project. Together with matching funds from the Indiana Department of Aviation and the city,

reconstruction and widening of the existing runway and taxiways, as well as improvements to the lighting systems, are underway. Construction is expected to be complete by the end of July.

For more information on the project, please click [here](#).

Marshall County Emergency Management Agency: Is Your Business Prepared?

Emergencies and disaster can occur at any time with little or no warning. Locally, we have had blizzard events in both 2014 and 2015. On July 1, 2014, three tornadoes struck our area causing significant damage throughout the county.

Businesses located in Marshall County are not immune to the economic impacts that these events can cause. Disasters can affect your ability to obtain materials or make deliveries. Operations may be disrupted due to building damage, long term power outages, or employees not being able to make it in to work. Many disasters can overwhelm the resources of even the largest public agencies.

All businesses should have an emergency plan, including small businesses! Unfortunately, an April 18, 2014 Ad Council survey reported that nearly two-thirds (62%) of respondents said they do not have an emergency plan in place for their business. A successful business emergency plan includes emergency contact information, essential business functions, crisis communication, an alternate location and probable delegations of authority in the event of a disaster.

Have questions or want more information regarding the development of an emergency preparedness plan? Contact Clyde Avery, at the Marshall County Emergency Management Agency at (574) 936-3740.

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 June 2nd*** 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.

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:

- ***Lean Practitioner I Certification Training - May 29th, June 5th, 12th, 19th & 26th***

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.

The *Lean Practitioner* course will be held at the Purdue College of Technology - South Bend campus, while the *Effective Motivation* course will be held at the Memories Banquet Hall in Plymouth.

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

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