

2019 Highlights

Business Development

Total New Job Commitments – 114
Total Jobs Retained – 80
Total New Annual Payroll - \$8,737,912
Total New Investment - \$56,307,568
EDIT Grants Awarded - \$577,575

Companies who invested in Wayne County

Elevator Equipment Company

Jobs Committed - 20
New Investment - \$953,320
EDIT Grant Awarded - \$15,875

Purina Animal Nutrition

Jobs Committed – 5
Jobs Retained – 80
New Investment - \$9.96 million
EDIT Grant Awarded - \$280,000

TBK America

Jobs Committed – 5
New Investment - \$2.4 million
EDIT Grant Awarded - \$25,000

SmithFoods Richmond, Inc.

Jobs Committed – 34
New Investment - \$1.55 million
EDIT Grant Awarded - \$93,000

DAK Americas

Jobs Committed – 30
New Investment - \$32 million
EDIT Grant Awarded - \$140,000

Holland Colours

Jobs Committed – 20
New Investment - \$1.6 million
EDIT Grant Awarded - \$23,700

Blue Buffalo Ribbon Cutting

Blue Buffalo cut the ribbon on their \$200 million state-of-the-art pet food manufacturing facility in the Midwest Industrial Park. We are thrilled to be able to welcome Blue Buffalo into our already stellar pet food manufacturing community.

Business Retention and Expansion

- The EDC made 43 visits to existing businesses including facility tours.
- The EDC, along with the Excel Center, hosted 3 round tables for the manufacturing, health care, and call center/customer service sectors.
- Joined the celebration of the 40th Anniversary of Ahaus Tool & Engineering's apprenticeship program.
- Reviewed and updated the EDIT grant guidelines and application

Workforce Development

Manufacturing Day

- EDC, along with Ivy Tech Community College and the Wayne County Area Chamber of Commerce worked with local companies to host Manufacturing Day held nation-wide on the first Friday in October with the purpose of raising awareness about the contributions of manufacturing to local and national economies and promote career opportunities through facility tours and information sessions.
- Companies who participated in included: Contract Industrial Tooling, Blue Buffalo, Ahaus Tool and Engineering, SugarCreek Brandworthy Food Solutions, Osborn International, Hills Pet Nutrition, Primex Plastics Corporation, Berry Global, and Belden Wire and Cable.
- Over 200 high school students from Richmond, Lincoln, Northeastern and Centerville participated in the day's activities.

Find a Job Fridays

- Local manufacturers visit high school cafeterias during lunch on scheduled Fridays to talk to students about the career opportunities available in their companies, skills needed, company culture and benefits provided as well as answer questions student may have.
- During the event, employers get a chance to meet with potential employees and students get a chance to learn more about their career paths.
- Companies who participated included Contract Industrial Tooling, Reid Health, Dot Foods, Primex Plastics Corporation, Hill's Pet Nutrition, Berry Global, Quanex, and Blue Buffalo.

Hoosier Opportunity

- Continued our marketing efforts to promote the website to companies and job seekers including traditional advertising as well as a robust social media program.
- Attended multiple job fairs to promote the website including a job fair for the IMPACT program at the Boys and Girls Club, Opportunity Fair sponsored by Gateway to Work, Reid Health and NAACP Chapter #3066.
- Participated in the Wayne County Area Chamber of Commerce's job fairs for 700 Wayne County seniors.

Industrial Park Development

Midwest Industrial Park – New Acreage Optioned

- EDC entered into an option to purchase on 326 acres of land adjacent to the Midwest Industrial Park.
- Site investigations, including environmental and geotechnical studies and soil borings were completed with no significant findings.
- Discussions with representatives from utility companies were held to ensure the site could be served for industrial customers.
- The EDC has begun marketing the site and submitting it where applicable in requests for information from site selectors and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation.

Wetland Mitigation

- Remediation work was required to enhance the remaining land use in Phase I of the Midwest Industrial Park.
- Due to several wetlands that exist in this area of the park, the EDC engaged a wetland delineation consultant and local surveyor to determine if it was feasible to apply to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management to repair field tile to mitigate 4 wetlands on the site. In addition, site planning was done to address other drainage issues identified.
- Once wetland mitigation is complete and drainage issues are addressed the EDC will have larger, more viable sites to market for development.

Downtown Development

Opportunity Zone Activities

- The Federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 established a new economic development tool called Opportunity Zones. These zones are designated throughout the country to incentivize investments in identified Census tracts to better address the needs such as business growth, housing, and infrastructure projects.

- Two Opportunity Zones were designed in Wayne County, Census tracks 2 and 9 in Richmond.
- The EDC worked closely with partners at the City of Richmond and Wayne County Area Chamber of Commerce to engage Thomas P. Miller and Associates to develop a prospectus featuring 5 development opportunities geared toward creating additional housing or mixed use housing projects in the downtown area.
- The 5 projects include: redevelopment of the former Elder Beerman building in the 600 block of East Main Street; Knollenberg's and Hittle buildings in the 700 block of East Main; Kessler's building on the corner of East Main and 10th Street; and the Starr Neighborhood District.
- Efforts are currently underway to market these opportunities to suitable developers.

EDC Ownership of Former Elder Beerman Building

- When community officials became aware that Elder Beerman's parent company filed for bankruptcy they feared the building would become vacant and fall into disrepair. They knew the fate of the property would have a large impact on downtown Richmond's future. Having just demolished the former hospital building officials were not looking for a repeat of that situation.
- A taskforce created by Wayne County Commissioner, Ken Paust worked to gain control of the building. That goal was accomplished when the EDC became the new owner of the building early in 2019.
- Since that time the EDC has worked with local leaders in planning efforts for redevelopment of the building.
- Engineering and architecture firm RQAW was engaged to develop plans and associated costs for redevelopment options. The property is also featured in Richmond's Opportunity Zone Prospectus being actively marketed to developers and brokers.

Marketing and Communication

Home in Wayne

- The EDC partnered with the Wayne County Area Chamber of Commerce and the Wayne County Convention and Tourism Bureau to hold an Instagram photo contest about why people loved living in Wayne County using the hashtag #homeinwayne.
- Better Homes and Gardens Realty provided cash prizes for first, second, third and People's Choice Awards, as well as provided space in the Grand Hall at the train depot to hold the awards ceremony and reception.
- Prize winners will have their photographs used in a view book currently under development to provide a tool for companies and other organizations to help with people looking to locate in Wayne County. The view book is part of the overall Home in Wayne initiative to assist employers with their talent recruitment efforts.

Brand Consolidation

- The EDC has developed a number of new initiatives in the last several years, including Hoosier Opportunity, Home in Wayne, and Brightside.
- In the development of new initiatives, it became apparent the EDC brand was being lost and the community was having difficulty identifying the efforts of the EDC.
- Ashley Sieb of Ashley Sieb Marketing was contracted to develop a plan to consolidate brands and raise the level of the EDC's participation in the new initiatives.
- Implementation of the consolidation plan however was interrupted with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Plans are to continue with the brand consolidation plan as soon as it is feasible to do so.