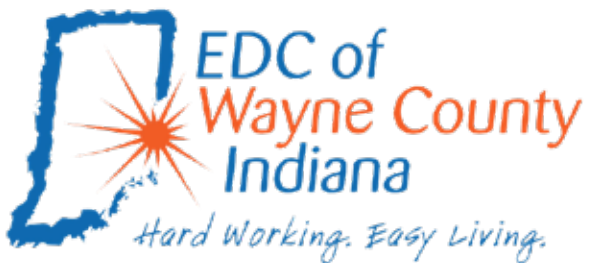


2023 Annual Report



whywaynecounty.com



2023 Officers

Chair, Sherrilyn Johnson
Wayne County Commissioners

Vice Chair, Peter Zaleski
Wayne County Council

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Mayor, City of Richmond

Secretary, Kyle Turner
Centerville Town Council

Past Chair, Jim King
Cambridge City Town Council

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Ann Fennimore
Richmond Common Council

Brad Robinson
Hagerstown Town Council

Chad Bolser
Wayne County Area
Chamber of Commerce

Marty Van Der Burgt
Wayne County Area
Chamber of Commerce

Tony Foster II
Wayne County Area
Chamber of Commerce

Overview

2023 was another busy year for the Wayne County EDC. Working with the board and the staff of the EDC has allowed me a front-row seat to appreciate the resulting expansion of investment and jobs in Wayne County.

With a constant stream of activities in 2023, the EDC staff helped recruit new businesses, support existing businesses, and pave the way for future growth across Wayne County. Liberation Labs broke ground on a precision fermentation biomanufacturing facility that will produce bio-based proteins. Anchor Ingredients also broke ground on a facility to expand rail infrastructure within the industrial park and provide bulk storage, warehouse space and onsite ingredient processing to support the growing network of pet food manufacturers in the region. Blue Buffalo began an expansion project that will increase their current building's footprint by more than 40 percent. Menasha and Supply Source also expanded this year adding investment and jobs to the county. Projects in both the Midwest and Gateway Industrial Parks will provide opportunities for 2024 and beyond.

Guided by the strategic plan created in 2020 the EDC staff and board have continued to work beyond traditional expansion projects. The strategic plan recognizes that investors want to build in a place that supports more than just the initial building of their infrastructure but continues to support the employees they bring to the region. The EDC supports recruitment and launched the Wayne County Job Finder this year to connect employers and potential employees. Leaning in to build the longer-term talent pipeline, the EDC staff continues to support Manufacturing Day, internships and other High School initiatives across the county to help our local students picture a future in Wayne County. Launched in 2022, the Make My Move initiative brought 10 new families to town this year.

Employers face a challenge when trying to find childcare solutions so that they can better build and retain their workforce. In 2023, the EDC announced a partnership with TOOTRiS, the nation's largest Child Care platform, to create a Child Care Benefit Initiative. The TOOTRiS platform offers comprehensive child care options, flexibility and affordability so that working parents across Wayne County can maintain consistent employment. This initiative is one of the first adaptable solutions I have seen that helps employers when they struggle to match the fluctuating needs without shouldering the investment.

There are several large-scale projects that are coming into being and will continue to be a focus for the EDC for the next few years. Refreshing a 2021 housing study confirmed that vacancy rates in Wayne County are low and the demand is expected to continue growing. READI 2.0 projects were submitted across Wayne County and will start to come to life this year and next. Wayne County's HELP program will provide funding for several initiatives in 2024 including Main Streets, green space upgrades and a county-wide

blight elimination program. Many of these initiatives set the stage and will work alongside the Earlham Revitalize Richmond \$25M grant from the Lilly Endowment.

No doubt you will hear about these initiatives and more as they continue to develop. I am grateful to the incredible staff who supports these activities and who continue to facilitate awesome things for Wayne County!



Economic Development Partnership Awards

The Economic Development Partnership Award recognizes individuals or organizations who have gone above and beyond to strengthen Wayne County's economic development efforts.

Earlham College

The EDC would like to recognize Earlham College as a partner in economic development for their leadership in developing the Revitalize Richmond Plan that resulted in a \$25M grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.'s College and Community Collaboration initiative. The plan is supported by \$83M in committed investments in Downtown Richmond thereby representing more than \$100M in planned investment projects by numerous community partners and private investors. Earlham's leadership of this collaborative plan

to enhance the future of Downtown Richmond coordinated multiple partners, including the EDC, who will help facilitate numerous investment projects to enhance our quality of place. Through Revitalize Richmond, the goal is to activate, build, and connect areas of Downtown Richmond for the mutual benefit of the college and the community. The projects include the development of new urban housing, improved transit connecting Earlham's campus to downtown, new outdoor recreation opportunities in the Whitewater Valley Gorge and other quality-of-place improvements to help Earlham and Richmond grow together. This initiative is a great example of what can be accomplished through strong leadership, willing partner organizations, and dedicated individuals who share a common vision of a renewed Richmond.



Collaboration between Wayne County Government and the communities of Cambridge City, Dublin, East Germantown, Economy, Milton, Richmond, and Spring Grove led to the development of a Strategic Investment Plan for each community as well as a plan for the County. Each municipality was able to engage their own citizens to develop a list of areas of concerns/opportunities which, when refined, became a prioritized list of projects for each community.

Wayne County Government was able to utilize \$5.89M of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money to assist the towns in undertaking what could eventually become an overall investment of \$25M dollars. The seven participating communities each contributed a minimum of 30% of their available ARPA money, or roughly \$2.7M, toward completion of projects. By working together and with the support of several private partners, officials were able to leverage ARPA funding to accomplish far more than they could have done on their own. The completed projects will be lasting reminders of the benefits of collaboration while the experience gained in community engagement and cooperation will pay dividends well into the future. The EDC would like to recognize and congratulate the participating communities and Wayne County Government for their ongoing leadership and collaboration. We were honored to participate in the process.

Economic Development Supporting Communities

Cambridge City
Milton

Centerville
Richmond

Economy
Wayne County

Hagerstown

New Investment

We were excited to welcome two new companies to Wayne County in 2023. Liberation Labs and Anchor Ingredients began construction on sites in the Midwest Industrial Park (MIP) that were prime and ready for development. Liberation Labs brings a new industry sector to Wayne County with the construction of their state-of-the-art precision fermentation biotechnology plant. Anchor Ingredients expands rail access into the MIP with their new transloading facility to support our growing pet food cluster in the region.

Liberation Labs

Liberation Labs' new facility in Wayne County will be the first purpose-built commercial precision fermentation plant in the United States. Precision fermentation programs microorganisms to produce functional ingredients for plant-based food and other materials. Co-founder Mark Warner said, "The three things a biomanufacturing facility like ours needs are sugar, power, and people – and Richmond, Indiana has them all." He continued saying, "While sugar and power are commodities, a workforce experienced in manufacturing is not, which is why Richmond really stands out." The company also cited several other factors that set Richmond apart from other locations:

- Shovel ready site with necessary utility capacity
- Proximity to I-70, a Norfolk Southern mainline, and three regional airports for shipping and logistics
- Proximity to cost-advantaged carbon feedstocks
- Significant percentage of baseload power to the facility is clean, solar energy
- Proximity to three large metropolitan areas, providing adequate qualified labor.

The company announced a partnership with Richmond's Ivy Tech Community College to create and implement a training program for new employees so when the facility begins production in the last quarter of 2024 employees will be able to hit the ground running. The EDC facilitated the sale of 36 acres in MIP Phase I, provided a \$250,000 EDIT Grant, facilitated a tax abatement award from the City of Richmond, and connected the company with an opportunity to obtain an Economic Development Rider from RP&L and IMPA. As a result of the project, the company will invest a minimum of \$115M and create 45 new jobs at an average hourly rate of \$35/hour, plus benefits. We're thrilled to be able to welcome this new biotechnology company to Wayne County!

2023 Project Investments

Total new investments - \$420,726,000

Total number of new job commitments - 184

Total number of jobs retained - 321



Anchor Ingredients

Another company that saw value in the proximity of a Norfolk Southern mainline, Anchor Ingredients, announced the construction of a transload and pet food ingredient processing facility in Phase II of the MIP. The new facility will position Anchor Ingredients in the heart of a growing pet food manufacturing cluster in east central Indiana and west central Ohio. The company broke ground on their new state-of-the-art facility on 36 acres of land purchased from Blue Buffalo which will expand rail infrastructure within the MIP and provide bulk storage, warehouse space, and onsite ingredient processing as well as the latest in quality assurance testing to meet the demands of their customers. The EDC supported the company by facilitating the negotiation of a \$900,000 grant from the Richmond Redevelopment Commission to be applied towards the construction of an onsite rail spur. Anchor has also applied for an Economic Development Rider from RP&L and IMPA. This project will result in a minimum investment of \$39M and the creation of 30 new jobs at an average hourly rate of \$25/hour, plus benefits. We welcome Anchor Ingredients to the MIP and are excited to see what the future holds for the pet food sector in our region with this new project.



Work continues at the Anchor Ingredients site.



Construction is underway at the Liberation Lab site.

Business Retention & Expansion

We were eager to assist three local companies with their expansion projects in Wayne County in 2023. In addition to working with these companies on their expansion projects, EDC staff made 71 business retention and expansion visits to Wayne County companies during the 2023 calendar year. Assistance provided included connecting employers with educators at both the high school and college level, to workforce training grants and job fairs, as well as providing information on the Foreign Trade Zone program and other resources.

Supply Source Enterprises

In 2020 Impact Products and Safety Zone merged to become Supply Source when they were acquired by H.I.G. Capital. With this merger an opportunity arose to combine operations and improve the footprint of their distribution centers, optimizing their network to bring inventory closer to customers and give them increased access to products. This led to an expanded footprint of their operation in Richmond with the addition of new warehousing and distribution center locations. As a result, Supply Source is in the process of investing \$726,000 in their facilities and new equipment and plan to create 49 new jobs at an average hourly rate of \$16.25, plus benefits. The company received a \$25,000 EDIT grant from the EDC to assist with costs associated with the purchase and installation of new equipment and employee training.

Menasha Packaging Company

In 2022 Menasha Packaging Company, a subsidiary of Menasha Corporation, acquired Color Box. Menasha Corporation was founded in 1849 and is one of the oldest family-owned manufacturing businesses in the country. They specialize in the manufacturing of corrugated packaging, display merchandizing, and signage as well as offering integrated printing and converting and fulfillment facilities helping customers protect, move, and promote their products. To operate more efficiently and increase profitability Menasha plans to consolidate their two Richmond operations into their facility located at 1056 Industries Road. The project includes the purchase and installation of new equipment and employee training for the new machinery. As a result of their \$66M investment Menasha has obtained property tax abatements from the City of Richmond for investing in their manufacturing plant and retaining 321 jobs in the community.

General Mills - Blue Buffalo

Indiana Governor, Eric Holcomb returned to Wayne County to help Blue Buffalo break ground on their second expansion in Richmond. The pet food company, owned by General Mills, is adding a 169,000 SF addition to its processing operations and warehouse capacity. This addition increases the building's footprint by more than 40 percent by adding another extruder line, three new packaging lines, and an associated mix and transfer system, increasing production of their high-quality dog and cat food. The expansion announcement came just four years after celebrating the grand opening of the Richmond facility. This expansion will lead to an additional \$200M investment and the creation of 50-60 new jobs at an average hourly wage of \$24/hour, plus benefits. The EDC has assisted the company with an application for an Economic Development Rider from RP&L and IMPA and is working with the City of Richmond on the issuance of a Tax Increment Financing bond to support the investment project.



Industrial Park Development

The EDC and its Industrial Park Committee have been working alongside our partners at both the city and county to ensure we have marketable land to attract new investment and accommodate local expansions. The EDC is responsible for marketing and managing the two industrial parks in the county. Below is an update on each park's recent activity and work overseen or supported by the EDC.

Gateway Industrial Park (GIP) - Cambridge City

- The Western Wayne Regional Sewer District's new wastewater treatment plant came online in 2023, allowing for discharge of up to 1.8 million gallons per day from existing park tenants and prospective companies. This new capacity opened up the opportunity for the EDC to market this park and the 95 acres available for development.
- The Town of Cambridge City continues to work on increasing water capacity for the GIP. In 2023 a new well was installed as well as upgrades to the water treatment plant. The next phase of improvements includes the construction of a new 1-million-gallon capacity water tower on an acre of ground south of SugarCreek along with a water main extension to serve the water tower.



Midwest Industrial Park (MIP) - Richmond

- The EDC, in partnership with the City of Richmond and Wayne County Government, planned for and eventually acquired 335 acres for development of Phase III of the MIP. The first step in making this land shovel-ready for development was to demolish structures on the properties including four residences and 14 outbuildings. Sarah Mitchell, Economic Development Manager, coordinated with the Richmond Fire Department to conduct a controlled burn on three residential sites, including several accessory structures which provided needed training for Richmond and several small towns' fire departments. Richmond Neighborhood Restoration, along with several salvage contractors, salvaged architectural features and building materials to be used in their future projects.
- The Richmond Sanitary District engaged an engineering firm to plan for future capacity needed to support new industry over the next several decades. The final Preliminary Engineering Report should be completed by the end of 2024.
- 3 MIP tenants; Blue Buffalo, Anchor Ingredients, and Liberation Labs all broke ground on large-scale construction projects with investments in the park totaling \$354 million. The EDC's Industrial Park Committee reviewed and approved all building plans in accordance with the park's covenants and restrictions.



TOOTRiS Childcare Initiative

Reliable and affordable childcare is a major concern facing working parents. In the fall of 2022, the EDC and Forward Wayne County collaborated with the Purdue Center for Regional Development to survey working parents about their childcare needs. Out of 276 responses, half indicated they have childcare needs now or will in the future. Nearly 59% said they relied on a friend, family member, or another household for their childcare needs. These types of arrangements for childcare leads to 26.6% of workers electing to leave the workforce and another 12% to reduce work hours. When asked, workers indicated assistance with childcare was a top preferred benefit to be offered by employers. Based on the survey data, the EDC entered a partnership with web based childcare platform, TOOTRiS, to create a Childcare Benefit Initiative aimed at helping area employers grow or retain their workforce. Through a \$21,500 grant from the Duke Energy Foundation and an additional \$8,180 from the EDC, financial support was provided to the first 1,700 employees who signed up to use the website to support their childcare needs. Spots have been secured by Hill's Pet Nutrition, Berry Global, Earlham College, Primex Plastics, Primex Design & Fabrication, Northeastern School Corporation, and Dot Foods.

Career Pathways

The EDC coordinated with staff from Western Wayne Schools to provide internship opportunities for selected high school students. We were able to connect the high school students with two employers, Blue Buffalo and Dot Foods, for internships in maintenance, quality control, and human resources. Additionally, the EDC partnered with organizations on a number of job and career fairs for high school and college students who are looking for a career to connect with employers who are looking for talent.

Talent Attraction & Retention

Workforce attraction and retention is integral to Wayne County's continued economic growth. The EDC has worked on several initiatives and projects to help employers attract and retain talent.



Home in Wayne is a multi-pronged initiative created to provide information to people who are looking to call Wayne County home and to assist employers with their talent attraction and retention efforts. The initiative strives to provide data and information potential new residents would be interested in to help them make the decision to locate to Wayne County. In 2023, we began efforts to make the initiative more accessible to employers and our partners who are also involved in marketing Wayne County as a great place to live, build a career, or start a business. We surveyed employers and our partners and held workshops where we discussed the elements involved in creating a unifying voice and message for the brand. This information will also be used to create a digital toolbox available to employers and partners to use in their own promotional efforts. Marketing assets will also be created that can be used to support our partners' own efforts in promoting Wayne County.



In partnership with Wayne County Government and the City of Richmond we embarked on remote worker recruitment to take advantage of the growing trend of remote working. There are an increased number of people who are no longer tied to a physical work location and can live anywhere they desire and still do their jobs through the remote work model. Through Make My Move's website and marketing endeavors Wayne County is being promoted as an ideal location for remote workers to relocate to. Incentive packages were developed based on areas of interest such as culture or recreation. So far, the initiative has resulted in 10 remote workers and their families relocating to Wayne County. Those who have taken advantage of the incentives to move here report they made the right decision and love various aspects of living here. We're excited to welcome these new residents and continue the program into 2024!

Manufacturing Day

Known nationally as Mfg Day, this annual nationwide initiative of the Manufacturing Institute, a nonprofit workforce and education partner of the National Association of Manufacturers, is held on the first Friday in October. The EDC works with employers to plan and host tours for county high school students. Theresa Lindsey, Business and Workforce Development Manager, coordinates the tours with employers and participating schools so students can get a first-hand look at manufacturing environments, culture, and products produced, as well as skills needed and income potential. Students can talk with employers to learn about what's expected and what it's really like to work in a manufacturing facility. The company tours are also a way to demonstrate to students they can remain in Wayne County and have a successful career and quality of life. In 2023 seven companies opened their doors to 275 students from all five public high schools.

Participating Employers

Ahaus Tool & Engineering
Blue Buffalo
Dot Foods
Madison Kipp
Primex Plastics
SugarCreek
Transcendia

Participating High Schools

Centerville
Hagerstown
Lincoln
Northeastern
Richmond



Housing Development

Design concept for former Elder Beerman property



The EDC is working with numerous housing developers to address housing shortages across all housing types throughout the county. In 2023 we re-engaged Tracy Cross & Associates to update our 2021 housing study that was outdated due to increases in housing costs, rental rates, and related construction costs. This 2023 report indicated shortages in all types of housing including market-rate and affordable, both for sale and for rent, and single-family and multi-family options. The revised housing study now includes affordable housing needs in addition to market rate to give a full picture of the housing demands in Wayne County impacting all residents. We ended the year working on nine different housing projects in various stages of planning and development.

One notable housing project that is moving forward is the redevelopment of the site of the former Elder Beerman department store located at 601 East Main Street in Richmond. We announced in the fall that the city of Richmond selected Flaherty & Collins to redevelop the property that will result in the demolition of the existing structure to make way for a new 150-unit market-rate apartment development. This resort-style development will offer high-end finishes and on-site amenities that are currently not available in the county. This development will transform our downtown and add new residents who will frequent the businesses and use service providers in our central business district. This \$38M project was a collaborative effort that utilizes financial commitments from various sources including: IEDC's READI 1.0 funding and Redevelopment Tax Credit; City of Richmond's Redevelopment Commission through a TIF bond and cash contribution; Consolidated EDIT fund with support from Wayne County Government and the EDC Board of Directors; Wayne County Foundation impact investing loan, and an over \$23M investment by Flaherty & Collins.

Duke Energy Economic Development Partner Achievement Award - Valerie Shaffer

EDC President, Valerie Shaffer was awarded Duke Energy's Economic Development Partner Achievement Award. Stan Pinegar, President of Duke Energy Indiana said Valerie is an inspiration and was selected because of her ability to exemplify leadership and devotion to a community and region's growth. "With Valerie at the helm, the EDC of Wayne County had a tremendous year, celebrating announcements from Liberation Labs, Blue Buffalo, and Anchor Ingredients. Each year Duke Energy recognizes someone who demonstrates outstanding efforts in economic development and the honoree's passion about their work and being fully dedicated to combining their efforts with Duke Energy's to help bring economic growth and prosperity to communities served by Duke. Stan Pinegar said Valerie is deemed both a leader and a mentor to many in this field - including the Duke Energy team. "We are proud to recognize her leadership of the Indiana Economic Development Association and countless other organizations where she has devoted her time and energy."



(Photo, left to right: Hayley Tomlinson, Duke Energy; Sarah Mitchell, EDC Economic Development Manager; Valerie Shaffer, EDC President; Erin Schneider, Duke Energy)

Richmond Ranks in Top 20 Micropolitians Based on 2023 Projects

Richmond ranked 13th in Site Selection Magazine's Top Micropolitians based on project activity in 2023. (Read about 2023 projects beginning on page three.) The ranking appeared in the magazine's annual Governor's Cup edition. Indiana ranked 7th for Top States and 3rd in the East North Central Region for project activity.

Staff



Valerie Shaffer
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18 years of service



Renee Doty
Marketing & Communications
Manager
21 years of service



Sarah Mitchell
Economic Development
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6 years of service



Theresa Lindsey
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4 years of service



Rhonda Fisher
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2 years of service



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Home In Wayne



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