



## ***PCDC Quarterly Update***

Perry County Commissioners | August 22, 2023

### **A. ATTRACTION**

- **Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) RFI Summary** – So far in 2023, 57 RFI's have been received (as of 8/21) representing a wide range of projects and industries. The number of jobs have ranged from 20 to 4K and capital investment has ranged from \$2M to \$5B. There has been an increase in requests for existing buildings as well as an uptick in requests for sites that are rail served. Large parcel of land requests have also increased. Based upon the criteria of the RFI's, we have been able to submit responses to 7 of the RFI's.
- **IEDC Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)** – The State is currently in the process of developing a CEDS, like the regional plan recently completed by Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission. Indiana is one of only a few states pursuing a statewide CEDS, which will enable the state to directly compete for future rounds of EDA funding. In June 2023, the IEDC and a consultant conducted statewide sessions with economic development professionals and other stakeholders to gather input and insight from local communities. I participated in the Activating & Retaining Talent session.
- **Project 61523** – Received a call from a commercial real estate agent representing a client in need of property with port and rail access. Worked with PCPA to identify a potential location which was provided to agent.

### **B. RETENTION & EXPANSION**

- **Business Roundtable** – Meeting held on July 18<sup>th</sup>. Agenda included presentations/information from Andrea Lendy of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), Whitney Zellers of the Southwest Indiana Workforce Board, Katie King of Tell City Ivy Tech Career & Technology Center, and myself. Information shared included an overview of the IEDC and its services, funding opportunities for upskilling employees, training curriculum at Ivy Tech, and more. Representatives from six local major employers were in attendance.
- **Manufacturing Resource Roundup** – Scheduled for August 24<sup>th</sup> at Spencer County Community Center; Partnering with ISBDC & Spencer County Development Corporation to bring representatives from multiple state agencies including Indiana Procurement

Technical Assistance Center (PTAC), Conexus Indiana, INVets, IEDC & ISBDC. Information about this event was shared with local employers at the Business Roundtable Meeting as well as via email. We will continue to share up to the event.

## C.

- **Waupaca**
  - Continuing to communicate with company regarding potential expansion project. Earlier this year, I compiled and provided information to plant leadership about current and potential projects in the areas of housing, childcare, workforce development, quality of life/quality of place, and infrastructure as well as state level programs and incentives.
  - Plant leadership has inquired about the ownership of Steel Road, which is the admission roadway to Riverview Industrial Park, in terms of maintenance, upkeep, etc. I was able to locate an agreement from 2021 related to “mowing, brooming, and removal of snow and ice,” however I do not have a signed copy and am unsure if one exists. I have asked Kris Hammack to see if she can find one. Regardless, the agreement does not appear to address general maintenance.
- **Riverview Industrial Park (Waupaca & Webb Wheel Properties)** – Still working on this; I have provided the legal property description needed to record the mitigation on Webb Wheel’s property to the County; Once recorded, transfer from RDA to RDC to Webb can be complete. I am also in the process of recording additional bat and stream mitigation areas related to Riverview, including working with the City of Tell City to record stream mitigation on its property in the Troy Industrial Park.
- **Automated Routing** – Met with new company leadership in July and shared the services of the PCDC.
- **Project B** – Project, which involves the relocation/expansion of a local business, is continuing to progress. More information will be provided when possible.

## D. TALENT RETENTION & ATTRACTION

- **MakeMyMove/Remote Worker Attraction** – We launched this program in January 2023, offering \$7K incentives to qualified workers willing to relocate to Perry County. MakeMyMove (MMM) will specifically target remote workers, however being a remote worker is not a requirement of the program. Eligibility is based upon being an out-of-state resident with an individual income of \$50K+ who is either employed remotely/able to bring their job/business with them or who has accepted an employment offer to work in Perry County.

In addition to the cash incentive, the program includes over \$2K of local contributions like 3 months high-speed internet, gym memberships, gift certificates, and more. These additional incentives not only help to attract more applicants, but they also help to get new residents rooted and involved in the community once they move here which results in them being more likely to stay.

As of 8/21/23:

- 542 Applicants
- 131 Pre-Approved
- 21 Offered
- 8 Accepted

- 2 Relocated Households
- \$102,463 in New Annual Economic Output
- \$8,552 in New Annual Tax Contribution
- 0.71 Local Jobs Created
- 4 Movers in the Pipeline (California, Utah, Florida, Guam)

In July, the Perry County offer reached 143K people on Facebook and Instagram and our marketing video still has the most views of any of the MMM marketing videos. MMM is launching a new display advertising campaign to increase awareness of remote relocation offers specifically targeting business development professionals, engineers, finance professionals, IT professionals, program & project managers, marketing professionals, etc.

We are continuing to collect and save the information that can be garnered from the backside of the MakeMyMove portal as it is a treasure trove of testimonials about our community AND the success of the Pick Perry marketing campaign, brand, website, etc.

Below are some of my recent favorites:

***Jordan from Arizona***

- Question #1 - What is most important to you as you evaluate your future home?
- Answer #1 - To be closer to family.
- Question #2 - What appeals to you most about Perry County?
- Answer #2 - I absolutely love that area! It's so close to Louisville. I have also read that Perry County has the hilliest city in Indiana. I was born and raised in Lafayette, IN, which is incredibly flat, and have lives very close to the mountains in Phoenix, AZ. It would be similar to both locations. I have a young son who is 7 months old. I feel like this would be a great, safe place to raise him.

***Christy from Florida***

- Question #1 - What is most important to you as you evaluate your future home?
- Answer #1 - To find someplace with a lower cost of living.
- Question #2 - What appeals to you most about Perry County?
- Answer #2 - We are looking to find a safe and new place for our children to grow and learn, we them to be able to safely experience life and the outdoors. We want a place to truly call home and to be able to participate in our community. We want to be to explore our town and the outdoors.

***Crystal from Florida***

- Question #1: What is most important to you as you evaluate your future home?
- Answer #1: To find someplace with a lower cost of living.
- Question #2: What appeals to you most about Perry County?
- Answer #2: Perry County is beautiful – I have had the pleasure of visiting once. I love the welcome feel there, and the naturally peaceful feeling that being there draws out of me. I prefer to own land, where I am somewhat rural, and build a home.

### ***Angela from Ohio***

- Question #1: What is most important to you as you evaluate your future home?
- Answer #1: To contribute to the community.
- Question #2: What appeals to you most about Perry County?
- Answer #2: The small hometown feel, I want my son to be able to have a safe place to have his High School experience.

### ***Tracy from Michigan***

- Question #1: What is most important to you as you evaluate your future home?
- Answer #1: To contribute to the community.
- Question #2: What appeals to you most about Perry County?
- Answer #2: The forest and hills sound incredible as does the strengthening commerce and community in this area. A welcome package that includes gym memberships, coffee and wine? Oh, and ice cream! Couldn't ask for more. I also appreciate the "We expect success" from your school district as my 3rd grade son's education is important and I would love the chance to be involved in the school and community.

### ***Kelly from Ohio***

- Question #1: What is most important to you as you evaluate your future home?
  - Answer #1: To have more things to do.
  - Question #2: What appeals to you most about Perry County?
  - Answer #2: What appeals me most about the area is the fact that there is so much to do! Regardless of what your hobbies are, this city has what you are looking for. No matter if you are an outdoor enthusiast, or love shopping with your friends or taking a walking through a local park. The reason I am interested in this program is because I am looking to make a fresh start in new place. I have been married for 11 years and am currently going through a separation so this would be an amazing beginning to my next chapter.
- **Pick Perry Campaign** - We are continuing initiatives to retain and attract residents by connecting them with local employment and networking opportunities, community organizations, housing, etc. Community Welcome Bags continue to be a popular request with local realtors and a great way to connect with potential new residents.

## **E. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

- **Perry County Learning Partnership/College Success Coalition** – Met with ASPIRE Planning Committee on 7/26 to begin planning for 2024. The date has tentatively been set for November 1<sup>st</sup>. The group discussed potential theme ideas as well as pre-event activities that could take place to make the event more impactful for students. The group also brainstormed ideas for future workforce development related initiatives.
- **Talent Development on the RISE!** – This event, scheduled for August 31<sup>st</sup> at the Huntingburg Event Center from 8 AM – 12:30 PM CST, pairs school districts and employers to learn alongside one another on the why, what, and how of successful work-based learning partnerships. Jason Bearce, the Vice President of Education &

Workforce at the Indiana Chamber, will be the keynote speaker. Jody French with Perry Central Community Schools is helping to organize the event and she has asked that we attend and invite/encourage some of our local employers to join. We plan to share the information with our Business Roundtable distribution list as well as extend personal invitations to key employers who would benefit from the information shared.

## F. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### • Housing

- **Furniture Row Apartments (7<sup>th</sup> Street Apartment Complex)** – This 36-unit complex in downtown Tell City is complete! As of early August, 27 units have been rented with 9 still available for rent. Nicole Risse, the property manager, has reported that she gets inquires almost daily.
- **Forest Canton Heights Subdivision** – Development is continuing with road paving set to begin very soon. The lottery for lot selection will occur on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. As the date approaches, we have been working with RDC President Jon Scheer and RDC Member Bill Dickerson to market the development by creating and boosting posts on social media. Our team has been asked to assist on the evening of the 23<sup>rd</sup>, however I am scheduled to be at VUJC for the Southern Indiana Gateway Event. Shiraz has committed to being present and assisting as needed.
- **Hoosier Heights Subdivision** – As soon as environmental approval is received, this project, which has the potential for 81 single family home sites, can begin.
- **Multi-Family Housing** – Continuing discussion with a developer on multi-family housing needs in the county.
- **Northern Perry County Development** – Attended a meeting in July regarding the potential of residential development in northern Perry County.

### • Child Care

- **Interim Study Committee on Public Health, Behavioral Health, & Human Services** – I was contacted by Jason Bearce of the Indiana Chamber and asked to attend and testify at a hearing of the Interim Study Committee on Public Health, Behavioral Health, & Human Services regarding the current state of Indiana's childcare system. The hearing took place on August 9<sup>th</sup> at the Indiana Statehouse. There were a ton of people in attendance including media. The Committee was very engaged during my testimony and they asked great questions after I finished. I was interviewed by the Statehouse File afterwards.
- **Potential Perry Child Care Partnership**– There have been two recent meetings with a potential partner. Discussions and research are continuing.
- **New Reimbursement Rates** – The Indiana Office of Early Childhood & Out of School Learning (OECOSL) recently released new provider reimbursement rates. Historically, reimbursement rates were based on market rate surveys rather than the actual cost of care which resulted in extremely low reimbursement rates especially in rural counties. Last year, I was able to use the state's methodology to increase Perry County's rate to one of the highest in

the state. I have been concerned that when the new rates were set, we would go down. ***Instead, on June 27, OECOSL announced a shift to a new cost-based approach for setting reimbursement rates that brings all rural counties across the state to be in line with Perry County!*** As previously shared, up until this point, cost models used by OECOSL have assumed that it is more expensive to provide care in urban areas. For the past couple of years, I have been advocating that it is equally, if not more, expensive to provide care in rural areas due to limited/lack of access to the goods and services required by state licensing. AND SOMEONE AT THE STATE LEVEL LISTENED! This is a HUGE win for rural childcare because it allows center-based care to become feasible in small communities! See attached for Perry's new rates which reflect an additional 20% increase! ***Leaving this on here because it deserves to be reiterated for at least one more month!***

- **Mental Health** – The Perry County Mental Health Coalition has been working on new ways to support the mental health needs of the community. Plans are being made to start a 501c3 that would be able to obtain grant funding for programs and facilitate more connections. Sheriff Malone has reported that mental health is one of the top concerns in the county. He would like the coalition to raise awareness of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. The group is moving forward with a new social media awareness campaign (#HealPerry) promoted by a new Mental Health Coalition of Perry County Facebook page.
- **Quality of Life Committee** – The rescheduled Chalk Art Contest & Event will take place on September 17<sup>th</sup>. Event details have been posted on social media. Planning for the Annual Farm to Table Dinner is underway. Scheduled for October 7<sup>th</sup> at Derby Community Center. More information regarding sponsorship opportunities and ticket sales will be available soon.

## G. ENTREPRENEURSHIP & SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- **Small Business Support** – We continue to partner with the Chamber to support/cultivate entrepreneurship in Perry County.
- **Indiana Small Business Development Center Partnership** – Doug Claybourn, one of the Business Advisors with the ISBDC, traveled to Tell City to meet with some local small businesses in mid-July. He stopped in the office after his visits and shared updates with me. I will be following up with a couple of them to offer assistance/support as they move forward with two new business ventures.

We continue to have a seat on the Southwest ISBDC Advisory Board, which meets quarterly. I was unable to attend the July meeting so Shiraz attended in my place and made some good connections while there.

## H. REGIONAL ACTIVITIES & INITIATIVES

- **21<sup>st</sup> Century Talent Regions/Southern Indiana Gateway**
  - **Meeting with Senator Braun** – Earlier this year, Jan Schuler-Hicks, SW Indiana Regional Director for Senator Braun attended Southern Indiana Gateway's Child Care White Paper Presentation. After the meeting, she followed up to say that she would like a chance to learn more about the issues. She reached out to me last week to set up a meeting with the Senator. We met at the corporate offices for Myer Distribution and were joined by a few other

representatives from the Region. While we have a long way to go, it is encouraging to see such an increased level of interest and acknowledge that this is an issue that needs addressed.

- **Child Care & Early Learning Work Session with Indiana Legislators** – The SIG region is planning an event on the evening of August 23<sup>rd</sup> at VUJC that will include Indiana legislators as well as childcare providers from the region. The goal is to illustrate to lawmakers the extreme problems within the Indiana childcare and early learning system as well as to propose some key changes that if enacted could positively impact childcare accessibility and affordability within the region. Jason Bearce with the Indiana Chamber is the proposed discussion facilitator. So far, five legislators have confirmed their attendance.

- **READI & Southwest Indiana Development Council**

- \$2,725,000 in READI funds coming into Perry County resulting in \$15M+ private investment; 60 new single-family homes before the end of 2026
- Projects Include:
  - **Forest Canton Heights Subdivision** – \$775 in READI funding; So far, \$729,300 has been disbursed to the Perry County Redevelopment Commission for the development of the Forest Canton Heights Subdivision. These funds covered the full cost of the site development work performed by Lutgring Brothers including common excavation & stabilization, stormwater pipes and inlets, roadway aggregate & curbs, and seeding & erosion control. This project has \$45,700 remaining of READI funds to be used. An invoice for water infrastructure has been submitted to the IEDC for disbursement.
  - **Hoosier Heights Subdivision** – up to \$1M in READI funding for water, wastewater, and/or roadways with a total project investment estimated around \$10M. Casebolts are working their way through environmental reviews; getting very close to starting.
  - **Tell City Sports Complex** – \$600K in READI funding for sanitary sewer and/or ADA facility for press box, concessions and restrooms; will begin immediately following next baseball season; City will be working on fundraising campaign in the coming months.
  - **Ivy Tech Workforce Training & Enhancement Project** – \$350K in READI funding for expansion of the Industrial Technology program at the Tell City Career & Technology Center (HVAC in labs and advanced automation & robotics equipment); has the potential to double campus enrollment.
- Members of the Indiana First Region are continuing to meet monthly to move projects through the state's grant management portal and to work through the drawdown/payment disbursement process. As Treasurer of SWIDC and an authorized signer on the Indiana First bank account, I have been working with the region's accountant, Budd Terry & Associates, to streamline the disbursement process and to manage administrative expenses.
- In June the IEDC hosted a quarterly READI event where they shared information regarding READI 1.0 and READI 2.0. Excerpts from the presentations were shared in my July report and are also attached to this report. Please let me know if you have

any questions, comments, concerns, etc.

- In preparation for the application process for READI 2.0, the Indiana First Region will be engaging a consultant to undertake the Indiana First Regional Opportunity Strategy. The region was initially formed nearly two years ago as a focused regional sub-set of the larger Southwest Indiana Development Council. This region, while unique in geographic relation, is united through the concerted effort to address the overarching goals for increased quality of life, quality of place, and quality of opportunity throughout the region. Building off the success of the existing Regional Strategic Investment Plan, this new plan will include an in-depth analysis of the established regional strategies, such as the Indiana Talent's Hometown workforce housing initiative, gauge successes, and to provide strategies for improvement. Key regional stakeholders will be engaged to assist in the development of this plan. Existing benchmarks identified in the original plan will be updated. This strategy will examine the existing regional alignment, noting best practices and identifying structural, policy, and operational improvement opportunities. Stay tuned for more information!