

ANNUAL REPORT

2023

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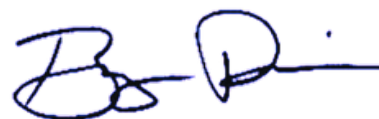
DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Welcome to yet another annual report, highlighting the Economic Development Corporation of Greensburg/Decatur County's (EDC) achievements and initiatives in fostering economic growth and prosperity in our community. 2023 was a year that fooled many economists in their initial predictions of recession and job loss, proving the US economy was strong enough to continue to grow in both GDP and jobs created, some figures nearing their pre-covid milestones. However, challenges persisted with inflation, interest rates, and key global conflicts. Navigating these highs and lows required a flexible strategy, allowing a community to capitalize on opportunities and adapt to unforeseen circumstances. At the EDC we try our best to practice such an approach, and we're able to do so through coordinated efforts with our Board of Directors and other stakeholders.

In 2023 we continued to focus on growing our community, concentrating on traditional business attraction and retention efforts such as assisting with incentives, touring local industries to help determine needs and future plans, and even embarking on the first trip to Japan in over a decade to connect with businesses that have made significant investments in our area. Equally, Jess made great strides in focusing on our workforce, centering on the next generation through launching programs such as the Opportunity Expo and Manufacturing Day in our schools. But even while addressing these "traditional" economic development topics, our office was able to remain in a leadership role in quality of life (QOL) initiatives in our community through downtown renovations of the Jobst Building, the launching of the Inclusion Park, facilitating broadband conversations, and both managing and applying for additional READI funds regionally—just to name a few. We recognize that there are historical levels of both public and private funding available for communities our size at this time (particularly for QOL projects) and that we must make every effort to capitalize on these programs. This is best accomplished through teaming with other individuals and organizations both locally and regionally, capitalizing on existing efforts and resources to leverage additional support to complete projects and develop new ones. Cooperation will always open new opportunities.

With this in mind, we continue our work toward growing Greensburg and Decatur County with our local and regional partners. I believe we have every reason to be optimistic about our community's economic prospects, and together we will continue to pursue a proactive economic development agenda that strengthens our community's resilience through the ups and downs of a changing world.

Thanks,



Bryan Robbins
Executive Director

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



BROADBAND INTERNET

With the expansion of broadband internet service remaining a primary goal, the EDC helped to establish Decatur County as a Broadband-Ready Community, co-hosted a workshop from the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth who discussed available infrastructure funds set to come from the federal government in 2023-2024 and how to apply, assisted the Decatur County REMC in assessing their broadband endeavor, and facilitated MainStream Fiber's interest in the area.

JOBST BUILDING

Helped coordinate with the City, McCammet Construction, Glenn and Nancy Jobst, and MainStreet Greensburg to initiate the redevelopment of a three-story building on north Franklin Street downtown. The public-private partnership agreement was not only used to address a dangerous structure, it helped to leverage additional READI investments for the Franklin Street streetscape improvements.



INCLUSION PARK

The opening of the "Building Bridges" inclusion park at Rebekah Park in Greensburg marked the 2nd completed project funded by the READI program in the ARI Region. The installation is designed specifically for children of all ages and abilities, and has become a significant attraction in the community.

UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

As a member of the steering committee, helped to develop the City's first Unified Development Ordinance, which combines various aspects of zoning, land use, and development standards into a single document. It will streamline and simplify the regulatory process for development within Greensburg, based on input from focus groups and stakeholders, as well as the general public.

COMMUNITY HOUSING

The increase in housing quality, quantity, and selection continues to be an ongoing focus for the EDC, and efforts continued in 2023 to attract both local and regional builders to invest in Greensburg. Meetings and visits included Joyner Homes (homebuilder), K2M Development (mixed-use), Ironman Development (mixed-use), and Whitaker Construction (multi-family).

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



OPPORTUNITY EXPO

Decatur County hosted the first countywide Opportunity Expo May of 2023 at the Greensburg Community Schools' Fieldhouse. The event showcased 45 local businesses and was attended by more than 240 seniors from North Decatur High School, South Decatur High School and Greensburg Community High School. The purpose of the Expo was for students to gain exposure to seasonal and entry-level jobs, internships and career knowledge.



REALITY CHECK

North Decatur, South Decatur, St. Mary's and Greensburg Junior High School 8th-graders got an opportunity Monday to investigate adult life – and see what it costs – during “Reality Check,” a program sponsored by the EDC and the Greensburg Optimist Club. Representatives from nearly every profession – car dealers, insurance brokers, utility office workers, grocers, salon workers, childcare workers and more – were on hand to help 8th-grade students understand what to expect financially as adults.

LOCAL CHILDCARE

An issue highlighted during the Covid pandemic, which continues to develop, is the need for more quality local childcare in our community. The EDC conducted meetings with the Carousel Play & Learn Center to assess the needs of our largest provider, which proved to be a need for labor force and training, as well as determining how to offer competitive salaries. The EDC also worked with the Building Blocks (organization contracted with FSSA to help facilitate and certify new and existing providers) to analyze Decatur and surrounding counties' demand, and seek-out opportunities to address the issues.

MANUFACTURING DAY

Classes at Greensburg, North Decatur, and South Decatur High Schools heard from guest speakers representing industries such as Resonac, Honda, Indiana Assemblies, and Delta Faucet on Manufacturing Day in the Fall of 2023. Students were educated on careers in advanced manufacturing, including first-hand accounts of work/life balance, and how one can take advantage of programs at each facility to advance their position. Students were also given info for potential future internships or summer employment.



REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



I74 DUKE ENERGY GRANT

The I74 Corridor Group were recipients of a Duke Marketing Grant used to purchase and program tablets to be taken on site selector visits. The tablets were equipped with key regional information: stats, maps, and profiles, all to be used during elevator speeches with businesses and representatives as needed.

INDIANA POWER PARTNERSHIP

Sponsored by the utility companies serving Indiana, the EDC represented the South Central region at site selector events in both Greenville, SC and Atlanta, GA. The “speed-dating” formats provide face-to-face discussions with prominent consultants in the US, allowing LEDOs to market assets from their region.

READI 2.0 APPLICATION

Capitalizing on the success from their READI 1.0 planning and implementation, the ARI region kept momentum in applying for the State’s READI 2.0 program. Additional planning and focus group inputs were held in preparation, building on the strategies and results of the first round and led by HWC Engineering. Awards will be announced in spring of 2024.

FORMATION OF THE RDA

2023 marked the official establishment of the Accelerate Rural Indiana Regional Development Authority (ARIRDA), solidifying the cooperation between the Counties of Shelby, Rush, and Decatur, as well as the City of Batesville. The RDA is the formal grant recipient for READI 1.0 funds, and the lead for the area’s READI 2.0 application.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



JAPAN TRIP

Accompanied by the Mayor of the City of Greensburg, the EDC made the first trip in over a decade to Japan, to visit companies that have made investments in our area, including Nipro, Honda, Resonac, and Gecom. The trip was made in conjunction with the South Central Indiana Economic Development Group (SCIEDG), and our cohort was well received. Activities included a well attended SCIEDG reception for all Japanese investments in our region, as well officials with leads on additional potential investment opportunities.



REDM COMPLETED

The I74 Corridor (Shelby, Rush, Decatur, Ripley, Franklin and Dearborn counties) held a joint meeting; with area Purdue extension offices, CN Consulting, and Lee Lewellen of the IEDA, to present a final draft of the area's Rural Economic Development Model. The strategy identifies opportunities for creating new markets, applications, or processing facilities, based on our current agricultural assets. The goal is to create new markets and income for local farmers, generate more local jobs connected to agriculture, and capture a greater source of revenue for the region's communities.



MEAT AND GREET

In conjunction with the Indiana Small Business Development Center Agribusiness Department, we hosted an informational session for area meat processing entrepreneurs, outlining financial programs for those interested in developing or expanding their processing services. Also showcased training opportunities for those wanting to go into the profession.

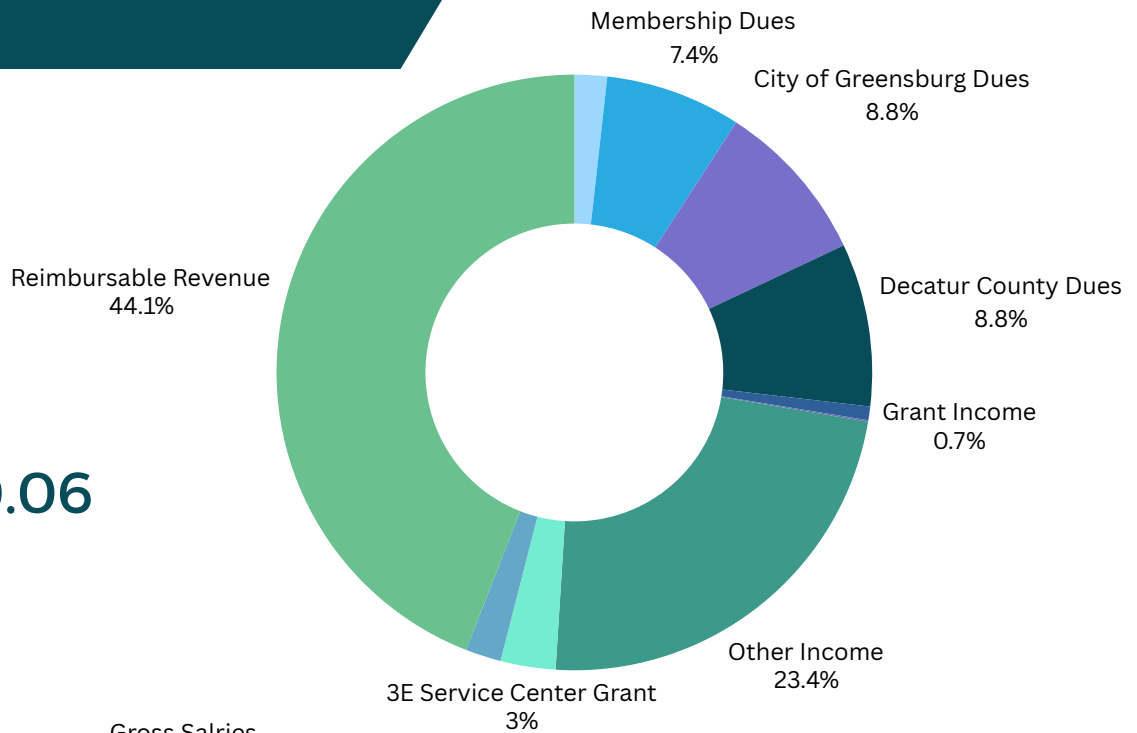
HERITAGE HILL EVENT CENTER

Assisted Emily and Evan Manship with the abatement and permitting processes for their Heritage Hill project, in which the abandoned St. Mary's Church and surrounding grounds were transformed into a high-class event location. This represented a substantial investment in a blighted area that held historical significance for the community.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

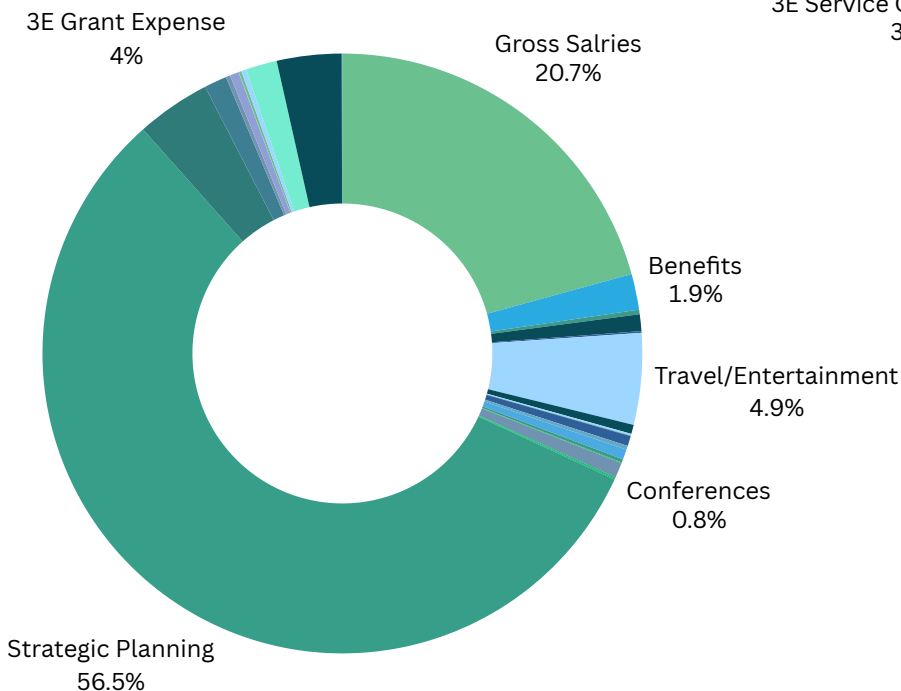
TOTAL INCOME

\$678,920.06



TOTAL EXPENSES

\$505,195.33



TOTAL ASSETS

\$829,567.11

REVOLVING LOAN FUND

\$235,362.88