

2024 RCDG SEMIANNUAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVIEW



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RICHLAND
**COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
GROUP**

SPACE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.



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- Outreach to many local companies, several of these meetings have uncovered **expansion projects**. Ideally many of these will close in 2024 and be reported in end of year metrics.
- **179th**: Helping them locate temporary space outside of the base during their construction phase. This led to a strong connection for them with **OSU - Mansfield**.

Attraction

- We worked on a large project that looked promising, but in the end, we didn't have the utilities needed to support the size project that the company wanted.
- Attraction leads from JobsOhio are down this year compared to previous years.
- **Local attraction leads** where companies are reaching out to us are up! These projects are on a smaller scale, but with **much higher odds of success**.

Site Development

- **Spec building 2**: Adena Development had plans drawn and investors lined up for a second spec building at Airport West, but there was a gap in the financing due to inflation in construction expenses and high interest rates. We supported this building by finding the **R IPL program** and walking through the application process with them. A special thanks to the board of commissioners for supporting the application with enabling legislation.
- **Site Summit**: We leveraged all the resources from **TeamNEO** and **JobsOhio** to concentrate on how Mansfield can activate the **Aero site**, and how Ontario can be successful with ICP at the **Ontario Commerce Park**. This led to great collaboration and action plans we are carrying out now.
- **AOFF**: As part of the action plan from the site summit, we supported **ICP's Ontario** based ask, as did the commissioners, in their bid for dollars to subsidize the site prep and electrical infrastructure needs on the site.
- **Land Bank**: We partner with the Land Bank supporting the redevelopment of larger sites such as the former **YMCA** and **Westinghouse**.

Community Support

- **OARnet US30 expansion**: Broadband RFI went out and responses processed. We met with the best respondents and are now working to secure funding before issuing an RFP.
- **Madison schools**: Supported their district bond rating with economic development data.
- **Build Richland**: Helping our regulators work together and also created a **customer satisfaction survey tool** for the users of the system to provide constructive feedback.
- **AAM event**: Trying to get an event in Mansfield that features all the new technologies in **advance air mobility** so that we can take advantage of these new systems as they come online for the airport, as well as manufacturing supply chain.
- **ED Now**: Two mayors joined us along with several people from their administrations and board members for a great event talking about how economic development works at the local level and elected leaders can participate in efforts.
- **Land Bank**: Speaking at **brownfields conference** on behalf of the land bank.



SPACE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SHELBY.

Downtown Improvements

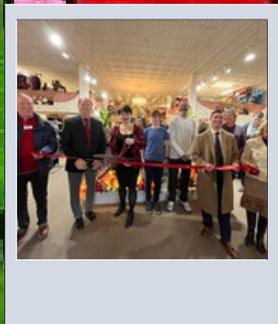
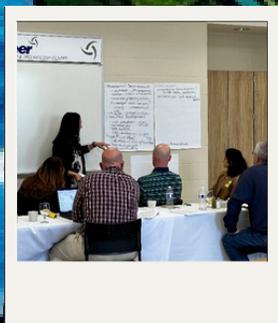
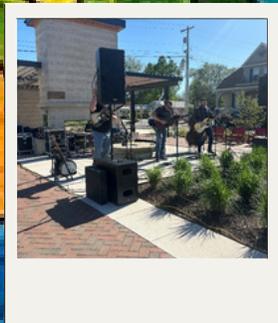
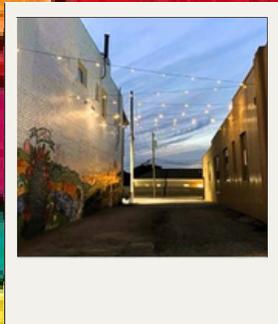
- Asked for and received \$20,000 in appropriations for **Façade Improvement Grant Funding**. Five projects selected. Total spend will be well over \$53,000.
- **Leadership Unlimited Capstone Project:** Beautification of alley between Kilgore and Hering and Pivot Creative. Added mural, lighting, planters and a bench.
- **Phase III Black Fork Commons Southlands Project:** Edge working through preliminary planning, finding other partners and resources to bring it to life.
- Worked with Shelby Foundation to facilitate the **purchase of three downtown buildings** to improve and bring back to useful life.
- Working with CIC to develop a plan for the **Shaw Building**. New Roof and removal of chimney and tuck pointing in 2023.
- CIC partnered with Shelby Foundation and Renaissance Theater for **Last Tuesday and Market Music in Black Fork Commons Plaza**.

Business Attraction / Retention

- Working with Shelby Manufacturer on new business line. Bringing City incentives along with **JobsOhio resources to facilitate growth** here as we are competing with multiple states for the business.
- **Former IGA:** Working with the former, courting potential tenants to bring life back to the building. We have met with and worked through multiple options and are working to bring the best scenario to Shelby.
- **Mickey Mart – Dunkin Donuts** broke ground in July for their new combo gas station/restaurant and carwash.

Housing / Community Development

- **Housing Development:** Working with several interested developers to continue to move housing forward. Local developer broke ground on E. Main Street Townhouses. All available buildable lots in the City have been improved. Working with City officials on next steps for housing.
- Reviewed housing strategies out of the **Senate Select Committee** at the State House for alignment and advocacy.
- **Strategic Planning:** Jessica is leading the City through an update of it's strategic plan from 2010.



SPACE FOR WORKFORCE.



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- There have been **27 visits** with businesses and education entities for the purpose of discovering needs, developing programs, or generating involvement.

Area 10 Workforce Development Board

- Board membership is filled and in compliance.
- Updated six policies this year to allow the board to move at the speed of business and better serve training needs.
- Received **\$100,000 BRN Grant** and developed www.midohioskills.com to promote and guide WIOA participants to training.
- Facilitated a grant award to **Area Agency on Aging for \$80,000** to develop in home mental health care.
- In 2024 we utilized **\$128,500** in Richland County for upskilling of 125 employees (2022 we utilized \$2,700, and in 2023 we utilized \$102,000).
- Established a **budget procedure** for the area based on ODJFS recommendations.
- Planned and hosted both **EmployMEpalooza Reverse Job Fair and the Richland County Adult Job Fair**.
- Presented at the **ACCE Educational & Talent Division Conference** about developing partnerships to better utilize WIOA.
- **Representing Ohio in the LMI Academy** – a 9 month program to assist in building better labor market indicator tools nationwide. We are one of 8 states in the program.

Programming

In 2024, we received a **\$50,000 Microsoft Techspark Grant**. Clint Knight and Angie Cirone partnered to write the grant, identifying digital upskilling as a priority in Richland County. Utilizing that grant, all of the following programs have been either built or administered by Angie and the Mansfield-Richland Area Educational Foundation, with support from Workforce Development. The growth of this partnership has been extremely valuable in delivering quality programming in 2024.

- For the 2nd year, we partnered with the MOESC and the Educational Foundation to support **Teacher Bootcamp**. Driven by an effort from the Lt. Governor's Office, this event puts teacher into businesses, and requires them to build curriculum around local industry. 2024 involved 11 teachers from Richland County and focused on technology advancements and digital skills.
- The Educational Foundation and 179th Cyberspace Wing conducted an **Arduino Camp** for 15 High School Students. These students spent 5 days learning the basics of writing code and developing a knowledge of digital skills.
- Along with NCSC, the Educational Foundation hosted **digital skilling camp** for elementary and middle school students in the summer of 2024. This event served as an early introduction to digital skilling and tech careers.
- In June of 2024, Stellar Robotics hosted "The Shawshank Showdown," a **national robotics competition** at Mansfield Senior High School. This event drew 19 teams from 3 states. The Educational Foundation and Workforce Development were partners in this event, and plan to build on it for 2025.



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Digital Marketing Presence

Google for Nonprofit Grant: Outbound marketing with Google Ads has seen a significant boost thanks to funding from the Richland County Foundation. We partnered with Vinyl Marketing to manage our \$10,000 monthly Google for Nonprofits account. Their efforts successfully raised awareness for Richland County's commercial properties and careers available. We're grateful for their contribution and are excited to take these efforts in-house, maintaining a focus on business and talent attraction through strategies like video marketing.

BrandRichland

The BrandRichland project continues to progress. The recent video premiere was well-received with over **230 video shares**. The brand's consistent, unified messaging has begun to strengthen overall awareness and foster a positive narrative about the county. Local businesses and organizations are adopting the brand, with **over 350 asset downloads**, leading to a more cohesive community identity. This initiative is helping to change perceptions and promote Richland County as an attractive place to live, work, and visit. In collaboration with Destination Mansfield - Richland County, and the BrandRichland Executive Committee, we continue to move the project forward. Look for a design contest soon!

Solar Eclipse

In preparation for the solar eclipse, a dedicated website resource was developed for Richland County businesses. The website, unique in its content, **attracted visitors from over 100 countries**. This initiative resulted in one of our most successful awareness campaigns, while we supported local businesses with navigating the event.

Mansfield Rising 2.0 Project

Listening to the community's needs, and in collaboration with NECIC, we organized a panel discussion led by survivors of gun violence in Mansfield in May, speaking to an audience that included public officials, law enforcement, education staff, and community members. This discussion clarified the need for addressing community trauma caused by gun violence. Sandy's proposed **Mansfield Rising 2.0 project provides a response to survivors of gun violence and the Mansfield community**. This project aligns with the Mansfield Rising goal of creating a feeling of security and inclusion, and the Chamber's vision to advocate for Richland County to be the premier place to live, work, and raise a family. The first draft of this project has been submitted and is awaiting review, with the final draft expected to be available to the public in late summer.





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A bright future drives Richland County. With every prospering industry, there is a community of support behind it. The potential in Richland County is limitless with the promise of cutting-edge technology. When you want to be a part of a community of creators, see with Richland County has to offer you.

Plan your future at RICHLANDAREACHAMBER.COM