

# Switzerland County Economic Development Strategy Update Newsletter

## What's New:

- *Construction Begins at Markland Business Park*
- *Next Steps of Economic Development Strategy Planned*
- *Switzerland County Unveils Small Business Assistance Tool*
- *Community Welcomes New Project Coordinator*

## CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON MARKLAND BUSINESS PARK

Construction began in November on the Markland Business Park. Work is expected to continue through 2009. The first construction item was the installation of a new water line from near the Belterra Casino to the park site. Water service will be provided by the Patriot Water Company. Early roadway construction is expected to begin at the site as soon as utility installation is completed.

The beginning of construction marks the end of a long planning and design phase for the project. In order to present a more attractive site to prospective employers, county leaders

took the time to conduct all pre-construction planning and permitting before marketing the site. The entire pre-development process took just over 18 months.

The Markland Business Park was originally studied in 1994. A ten-year plan to develop and market the property was created in 2006. The site was one of twenty certified by the State of Indiana as *Shovel Ready* in early 2007. It was at that time that Switzerland County began planning to make the site attractive to a wide variety of businesses.



**Construction on the Markland Business Park began in November.**



## NEXT STEPS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY PLANNED

Switzerland County has entered the fourth year of its current economic development strategy. SCEDC is currently engaged in several activities to commemorate this milestone and to plan for the future.

A Progress Report of the county's first economic development strategy is scheduled for release in early 2009. This report details the county's progress on the 31 action steps called for in the original strategy as well as new projects undertaken by the community and regional

changes that could impact future growth.

SCEDC has researched the regional economy and successful initiatives in other areas to serve as a backdrop for a new economic development strategy. Preliminary development of the community's new economic development strategy is already underway, with planning meetings expected to kick-off in the spring of 2009. A completed strategy document is expected by the end of 2009.

## SWITZERLAND COUNTY UNVEILS SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE TOOL

SCEDC has added a new tool to its website, called *Tools for Business Success*, to help small businesses and entrepreneurs get the information they need when starting and growing a business.

The site contains business startup information, including a business start-up kit, sample business plans, as well as sample forms to establish a business. It also includes information on small business training offered locally and online.

The site also offers tools for

existing businesses, including a Business Report Card, financial calculators, a website grader, a payroll tax calculator, marketing support, a customer survey tool and more.

The site is designed to allow small businesses to conduct research and get basic information at their own pace and on their own time. Tools are also offered to help businesses navigate the current economic climate. New tools and information will be added as government programs and the needs of small businesses change.

## COMMUNITY WELCOMES NEW PROJECT COORDINATOR



**Mike Busch will be coordinating the EcO15 Initiative for Switzerland County.**

An ambitious effort to build upon Southeastern Indiana's economic growth areas, including Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare Services, and Hospitality & Tourism, is underway in Switzerland County.

The Economic Opportunities 2015 (EcO15) project is funded primarily by the Lilly Endowment Inc., which provided grants supporting the creation of a truly regional system of life-long learning. The vision of the project is to connect the residents of ten counties within Southeast Indiana through education to better economic opportunities by the year 2015.

The EcO15 initiative directly impacts the counties of Bartholomew, Dearborn, Decatur, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson,

Jennings, Ripley, Ohio and Switzerland.

Locally, the Community Foundation of Switzerland County, Inc. (CFSCI) is the fiscal agent of grant funds for the EcO15 project and provides leadership, oversight and management support services for the regionally-focused initiative. Implementation of the project will be carried out by SCEDC.

Coordinating the local EcO15 efforts is Logansport-native Mike Busch. A life-long Hoosier, Mike previously served as the Executive Director of the Fulton Economic Development Corporation in north-central Indiana. He also led the North Central Indiana Economic Development District, and chaired the task force that produced

two nationally-recognized reports linking economic development success with the local workforce. Earlier in his career, Mike worked for Ivy Tech State College's Workforce and Economic Development division, and was a staff member for the late U.S. Congressman Jim Jontz. He also served as a county commissioner for eight years. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Busch assisted two communities devastated by Hurricane Katrina with re-development efforts—the Mississippi county that suffered the worst of Katrina's destruction, and a parish in Louisiana north of New Orleans.



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