



# **2009** **Annual Report**



SWITZERLAND COUNTY  
economic development corporation

# SCEDC Annual Report

## Report to the Community

**2008 was a busy and productive year** for the Switzerland County Economic Development Corporation. From beginning to end, the year brought substantial progress on several of Switzerland County's largest economic development initiatives, but it also saw the creation of exciting new projects and tools that will improve the quality of life in our community.

This report provides a quick snapshot of progress made in 2008. For current information on initiatives, please visit the Switzerland County Economic Development Corporation's website at [www.switzerlandusa.com](http://www.switzerlandusa.com).

We thank you for your interest in Switzerland County's economic development efforts and look forward to reporting continued progress in 2009. ■



*Work continues on the Markland Business Park, an attractive site for business development.*



*The courthouse is a landmark in historic Vevay.*



*The Belterra Hotel and Conference Center attracts many visitors to Switzerland County.*

*The year saw the creation of exciting new projects and tools that will improve the quality of life in our community.*





## **Markland Business Park**

### **Planning Complete, Construction Begins**

The first phase of development of the Markland Business Park is expected to be completed soon. Switzerland County purchased the property for the facility in March 2007. Formal planning for the park began early the next month, with the hope of designing utility and infrastructure improvements within 18 months. In order to present a more attractive site to prospective employers, county leaders have taken the time to conduct all pre-construction planning and permitting before marketing the site.

The planning phase of the project has involved more than just site work. The Switzerland County Economic Development Corporation has been visiting industrial parks throughout the Midwest to identify what facility designs have been successful in other areas. Interviews have also been held with site location consultants and industrial real estate specialists to determine what park designs might be appealing to prospective businesses.

Site development planning for the project has included coordination with the utilities that are expected to service the park, identification of what upgrades will be needed for utility systems in the area, and what utility easements will be needed inside the park. Approval of the overall site development plan was needed from several state agencies. This included approval of the facility's roadway and drainage plans.

As this planning phase nears completion, early construction began in November 2008 and is expected to continue into 2009 and 2010. The first construction project for the park will be the widening of the main water line by the Patriot Water Company and installation of water lines into the park from near the Belterra Casino. Additional early construction projects will include the installation of electrical and natural gas service.

The Markland Business Park was originally studied in 1994. A 10-year plan to develop and market the property was created in 2006. The site was one of 20 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. ■

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## \$12 Million Lilly Grant Funds Regional Initiative Economic Opportunities 2015 (EcO15)

Lilly Endowment, Inc. has awarded \$12 million for a regionally-focused initiative called Economic Opportunities 2015 (EcO15). The vision of the project is to connect the residents of 10 counties, including Switzerland County, within southeastern Indiana through education to better economic opportunities by the year 2015.

The EcO15 initiative, being overseen by the Heritage Fund of Columbus, IN, will directly impact these counties. The key objective of the initiative is to advance citizens of the region by at least one level in their training, education, and/or job placement. Proceeds of the Lilly Endowment grants will be focused on three primary economic growth areas: Advanced Manufacturing, Health Care Services, and Hospitality/Tourism.

To coordinate and align the regional learning system, the grant will provide funds to staff an EcO15 coordinator located in each of the 10 counties. The EcO15 Initiative will be guided by a 40-member regional advisory council made up of representatives from each of these counties.

Once the EcO15 Initiative has been implemented throughout the southeastern Indiana region, it is expected to serve as a model within the United States for how regions educate their citizens and leverage that talent to drive the productivity and competitiveness of their regional economies.

The project seeks to create a regional system of workforce training and life-long learning. 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. The other EcO15 counties are Bartholomew, Dearborn, Decatur, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Jennings, Ripley, and Ohio.

A grant for phase one of the project has already been awarded to the county. In the first phase, a project director has been hired and planning and research will be conducted for later phases of the project. Additional grant dollars are available as a specific project plan is developed for Switzerland County. The project funding period is three years.

Coordinating the local EcO15 efforts is Logansport native Michael Busch. A life-long Hoosier, Michael 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. ■

### SWITZERLAND COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, INC. STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008 AND 2007

	2008	2007
<b>SUPPORT AND REVENUES</b>		
Contract service revenue	\$ 170,000	\$ 170,000
Grant revenue	50,190	30,000
Interest income	-0-	702
<b>Total support and revenues</b>	<u>220,190</u>	<u>200,702</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Economic development	228,773	161,667
Management and general	29,583	26,022
<b>Total expenses</b>	<u>258,356</u>	<u>187,689</u>
Change in net assets	(38,166)	13,013
<b>Net assets, beginning of year</b>	<u>126,575</u>	<u>113,562</u>
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<u>\$ 88,409</u>	<u>\$ 126,575</u>

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## SCEDC Begins Regional Study

The Switzerland County Economic Development Corporation has initiated a new research project that could change the way that Switzerland County looks at itself and its surrounding region.

The goal of the project is to establish a "Greater Switzerland County" statistical region that will enable the community to better understand and market its regional workforce and economy. This project has gained new importance since the completion of Kentucky Highway 1039 has considerably shortened the drive time to many surrounding areas.

Being able to identify the County's regional economy and present it to prospective businesses is critically important. The information gathered will be essential to effective planning and marketing. ■

## Wireless Internet Project Successful

A community partnership has brought affordable high-speed Internet access to much of Switzerland County. The Switzerland County Economic Development Corporation has partnered with the City of Rising Sun, the Patriot Water Company, and K95.9 Froggy FM to make the service available. The new service will cover north central Switzerland County.

SCEDC provided equipment to allow Rising Sun's wireless Internet service to be carried into Switzerland County. In late 2007, the project's first wireless Internet transmission equipment was purchased through the County Economic Development Fund.

Tower space to mount the equipment was provided by the Patriot Water Company at Quercus Grove and K95.9 Froggy FM at Center

Square. It was installed in February 2008. Internet service from both transmission locations is provided by ORVCOMM, an Internet utility operated by the City of Rising Sun.

Efforts to deploy high-speed Internet were called for in Switzerland County's 2004 Economic Development Strategy. In 2005, the Switzerland County Economic Development Corporation created a Broadband Advisory Group to assess and improve Switzerland County's access to high-speed Internet. This began a two-year process of surveying the demand for high-speed Internet in the community and identifying potential service providers. The first phase of Switzerland County's High-Speed Internet Initiative has been a great success. New service areas are expected in early 2009. ■

## Association of Indiana Counties Conference in Switzerland County

Switzerland County was selected as the host community for the 2008 Association of Indiana Counties conference. The conference, which was attended by more than 700 Indiana elected officials, was held at the Belterra Hotel and Conference Center. A Switzerland County Economic Development Corporation representative served on the host committee for the event. Also serving on the host committee were elected officials from Switzerland County and neighboring communities. The local host committee played a crucial role in the attraction, planning, and coordination of the event. The event gave Switzerland County great exposure with elected leaders from across Indiana. Local events included an evening of shopping, dining, and entertainment in Vevay's Main Street District. ■

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## **OFFICERS**

### **Jonathan Bond**

JD, CEcD  
*President*

### **Michael Busch**

*Vice-President  
Workforce  
and Business  
Development*

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### **Alex Buschermohle**

*Intern*

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## **BOARD MEMBERS**

Judy Firth  
*Chair*

Rhonda Griffin

Darin Gullion

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## **Switzerland County Unveils Small Business Assistance Tool**

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

The Tools program contains business start-up information, including a business start-up kit, sample business plans, sample forms to establish a business, and 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, and a customer-survey tool.

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. ■

## **County Approves New Comprehensive Plan**

Switzerland County leaders have approved a new comprehensive planning document for the community. The comprehensive plan, which gained its final approval in mid-July 2008, was the product of more than two years of planning and preparation by community volunteers. The plan was developed through a series of public forums held in 2007 and 2008. Community members were encouraged to attend and offer input. Final adoption of the plan

required approval by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, the Switzerland County Planning Commission, the Vevay Town Board, the Patriot Town Board, and the Switzerland County Commissioners.

The next step for the Switzerland County Planning Commission will be to develop new ordinances to implement and enforce the new Comprehensive Plan. This process is already underway and is expected to be completed in 2009. ■

## **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 early 2010. ■