



# BUSINESS VIEW magazine

MAY 2019

## The **Matt Laricy** Group *A few good years*

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# Business view magazine

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

I'm a writer. So, words are important to me – their meanings, their connotations, their ability to convey complex thoughts and ideas. Words are the tools that I use every day to tell the stories that appear in our magazine. I try to choose my words carefully, knowing that an incorrect word, here or there, can alter the reality that I'm trying to express. Because I have been entrusted by the people who tell me those stories, my solemn duty is to relay them to you, the reader, as straightforwardly and truthfully as I can. Thus, I spend much of my time and energy searching for the right words – constantly rethinking, refining, rewriting.

Not everyone has the same fealty to employing the right words. Some don't even seem to respect them at all. TV advertisers, for example, unlike the print advertisers in our magazine, often use words to confuse, to misdirect, to frame a nonsensical narrative whose intent is to go beyond rational thought in order to appeal to a different part of us – the emotional part that is more easily swayed; to convince us, more often than not, to purchase something that we may not really need, or, in fact, may not even be good for us. Don't get me wrong – I'm not against advertising. It's just that I would prefer to be told, in correct English, the benefits of a particular product or service rather than to have to face an endless onslaught of meaningless word salad.

This proclivity of mine - to insist upon the right words - has begun to make me an unwelcome partner at home, lately, as I have taken, more and more, to talking back angrily to the TV whenever I'm confronted with some pointless verbiage that I can only assume has been thought up by a gaggle of semi-literates buried somewhere deep within the bowels of some ad agency on a far-off planet where the rules of language are violated with unceasing regularity.

Herein, then, are a few of the choice slogans that I have had the unfortunate happenstance to gag on, recently. I defy anyone to define any one of them, or even to associate them with a material object that can be purchased

and enjoyed. The fact is, however, that each tagline is one that you, yourself, most likely, have already heard. And each one is, indeed, associated with a major product whose true identity I refuse to reveal because none of their manufacturers should be rewarded for their crimes against my mother tongue. After each is a short synopsis of my actual retorts. (I have left out all of the \$#@\*%^!s – my wife should be so lucky.)

“More for Your Thing” – More what? And what is my thing? What are you talking about?

“Open Happiness” – How can I open happiness? And can I close it once it's open?

“Impossible is Nothing” – Nothing is impossible, I can understand, but the reverse? That's impossible.

“Be Your Way” – How can I NOT be my way? It's MY way.

“Every Little Helps” – Every little what? It's certainly not helping me, now, so how about a little less nonsense? That would help, greatly.

“The Future of Awesome” – No, the future IS awesome. And it's not even that.

“Enjoy Better” – Don't you mean enjoy BUTTER?

“Think Different” – Actually, it's Think Different-ly. A verb must be modified by an adverb; think is a verb; different is an adjective, so it can't. . . Oh never mind!

Well, you get my point. Words can either be conduits of succinct communication or weapons of inanity. It all depends on who's slinging them. For my part, I will continue to strive to make the most of the ones handed down to me over generations.

As for the rest of the world: Badda Book! Badda Boom!



**Al Krulick**  
Editor-in-Chief





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# Opening Lines

MAY 2019

## WINNING STUDENTS THINK LOCALLY TO SOLVE GLOBAL ISSUES IN LEXUS ECO CHALLENGE

Think globally. Act locally. Isn't that how the maxim goes? Not for the inquisitive winners of the 12th annual Lexus Eco Challenge. By studying alternative farming methods, these students found and implemented innovative solutions to reduce pollution in their own communities and then spread their love of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) around the world.

More than 2,300 students in grades 6–12 participated in the Lexus Eco Challenge, an educational contest that empowers students to learn about the environment and take action to improve it. A total of \$500,000 in scholarships and grants is awarded to the winning student teams, their teachers, and schools each year.

Through the first two phases of the Lexus Eco Challenge, 32 middle and high school teams were

selected as finalists. Each finalist earned a \$10,000 prize to be shared among the team, teacher, and school, and was invited to embark on the final challenge to reach beyond their local community to inspire environmental action. The teams communicated their innovative ideas to a wide audience in the last round, broadening the reach of their work to people outside their communities.

Lexus and Scholastic, the global children's publishing, education, and media company, reviewed the finalists' innovative submissions and selected one middle and one high school team as the 2018–19 Lexus Eco Challenge Grand Prize winners. The Grand Prize-winning teams each receive an additional \$30,000, divided into a \$7,000 grant for the school, a \$3,000 grant for the team's teacher advisor, and \$20,000 in scholarships for the students to share. Eight First Place-winning teams are



awarded an additional \$15,000 in grants each.

This year's high school Grand Prize-winning team is the Aquapals from Arlington High School in Lagrangeville, NY. The Aquapals and teacher advisors Tricia Muraco and Maribel Pregnall focused on utilizing aquaponic farming techniques to reduce polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

"Our team was surprised to discover the impact of polychlorinated biphenyls on the economy of our area in the Hudson River Valley," said team member Spencer Koonin. "The lack of government pressure to clean up Superfund sites caused by PCBs and the historical loss of so many fisheries was shocking. We had to take action!"

From their research, the students generated a 35-page manual for aquaponic farming, which they shared with local students and legislators to encourage change within the Hudson River Valley. After establishing five aquaponic systems and presenting to over 1,000 students close to home, they turned their attention abroad, collaborating with 14 farmers in eight countries.

"The most important tool at our disposal was social media," said Krishna Koka. "Through our presence on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, we were able to show our progress to farmers across the planet."

"The Lexus Eco Challenge enabled our students to see the interconnection between science and



their everyday lives in the community around us,” said teacher advisor Tricia Muraco. “Then it pushed them to find those connections around the country and the world. They took what they learned, became master communicators, and made political, societal, and educational impacts with everyone they met along the way.”

“We learned that the plight of water contamination is shared by many around the world and that aquaponics is a solution that can help us all,” said Emme Magliato. “Though we live 9,000 miles away from Rusman in Indonesia, aquaponics have now provided both our communities with new options to produce safe and sustainable food.”

The Grand Prize-winning middle school team was Food Miles Matter from North Broward Preparatory School in Coconut Creek, FL. With the help of teacher advisor Hope Kennedy, the team tackled the problem of greenhouse gas emissions generated by interstate produce transport. Looking to eliminate “food miles” generated by trucked

produce from the diets of their classmates, the team partnered with their school cafeteria staff to identify and grow fresh produce in the school garden, just feet from where it would be eaten! “Our garden is very big and uses both aquaponics and aeroponics,” Ryan Folic explained.

Over the past 11 years, the Lexus Eco Challenge



**More than 2,300 students in grades 6–12 participated in the Lexus Eco Challenge**

has awarded more than \$5 million in scholarships that have helped more than 33,000 middle and high school students have an impact on their communities, learn about the environment, and improve their teamwork skills.

The Lexus Eco Challenge also provides

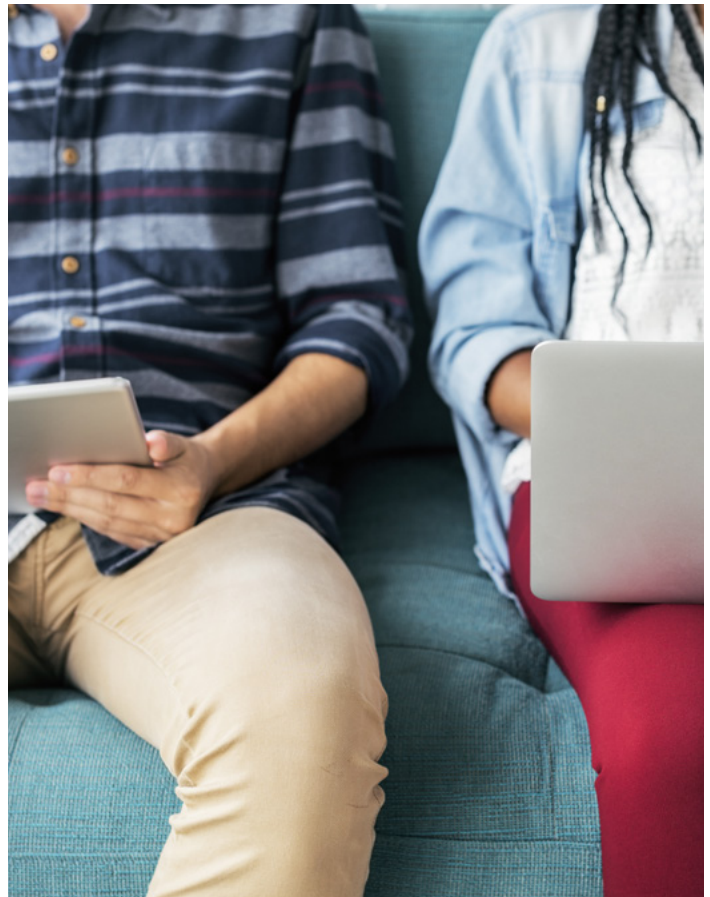




supplemental educational materials, created and distributed by Scholastic, to encourage teachers to integrate creative environmental lesson plans into their classrooms. For each year's challenge, the website has lesson plans and teacher instructions, including questions to help guide a discussion about the current challenge topic, facts about the topic, and guidelines for a specific classroom project.

The Lexus Eco Challenge is part of The Lexus Pursuit of Potential, a philanthropic initiative that generates up to \$3 million in donations each year for organizations that help build, shape, and improve children's lives.

Lexus will open the 13th annual 2019–2020 Lexus Eco Challenge this fall with \$500,000 in prize money for eligible students, teachers, and schools. Information on how students and teachers can participate in the “Land and Water” and/or “Air and Climate” challenges will be available this summer at [scholastic.com/lexus](http://scholastic.com/lexus).





UNIQUE VACATION LOCATIONS FOR  
LUXURY TRAVELERS



PICTURED  
*Tallinn, Estonia*

Luxury travelers today are seeking personalized itineraries in out-of-the-ordinary destinations that offer them exclusiveness and all of the VIP amenities of the more iconic, top-visited destinations. As a result, travel advisors, such as the luxury travel specialists at Travel Leaders Network, are catering to their requests, uncovering experiences and locations not yet at the top of the average tourist's radar.

"I had a client who wanted to rent a private island for his wife's 40th birthday," said Rey Alton, a Travel Leaders advisor in Houston, Texas. "He wanted space for a total of five couples, so they could include their friends, and he wanted a private chef capable of unique culinary options. We found them the perfect island – Cayo Espanto in Belize. It has only seven villas – the ultimate in privacy and an on-site massage therapist. At \$25,000 a night, it is also the ultimate in luxury."

Not all luxury travel is as pricey or as remote. "Luxury travel is trending toward unique vacation locations such as Greenland, which is only a 90-minute flight from Iceland," said Valerie Lederle, a Travel Leaders advisor in Colleyville, Texas. "A unique hotel with a small spa, a hot springs experience, a private champagne lunch overlooking the fjords or staying in a deluxe safari-style camp on the edge of the Greenland Ice sheet is a very unique and appealing experience."

"Luxury travel has evolved from being more than just five-star accommodations. It is also five-star itineraries," stated Allegra Lynch, a Santa Rosa, California-based Travel Leaders advisor. "For example, consumers don't necessarily think of traveling to the Arctic Circle, but they are open to the idea if they are able to join a luxury winter safari, complete with traditional igloo stays," she said.

Luxury travelers are most interested in exclusive access, including VIP tours, private cars and drivers, and customized culinary experiences, according to results from the most recent Travel Leaders Group travel trends survey. However, sometimes their customized experience is through community service in a foreign land.

"Some want to help with a community project or spend time, for example, in an orphanage in Africa for an extended period of time, not just for an hour or two," said Tom Mieczynski, a luxury Travel Leaders advisor in East Greenwich, Rhode Island. "They fulfill deeper connections with themselves by stepping out of their comfort zones and finding real meaning in their experiences."



PICTURED  
*Tasiilaq, Greenland*



**Here are several suggested destinations for luxury travelers looking to avoid the crowds and experience travel from a new perspective:**

**Ischia.** Set in the Tyrrhenian Sea, about an hour off the coast of Naples, Italy, is a small mountainous island called Ischia that is a dream for any traveler looking to get away from the hustle and bustle of the nearby Amalfi Coast, said Atlanta Travel Leaders advisor Marybeth Green, who just returned from Italy. “The major cities of Western Europe are wonderful, but Ischia offers the views, charm and experiences without the crushing crowds.” Ischia offers stunning views of the Bay of Naples and some of the best beaches in Italy. Ischia Pointe is home to most of the hotels, charming shops and cafes. Adventurous outdoor enthusiasts will want to head to the town of Fontana, where they can journey to the top of Mount Epomeo, which rises more than 2,500 feet above sea level and offers stunning 360-degree views of Capri and the Sorrentina Peninsula.

**Tallinn.** While virtually all European cities provide charm and culture, the port cities lining the Baltic shores – from St. Petersburg, Russia to Helsinki, Finland, are worth the trip. One stop in particular is Tallinn, the capital city of Estonia with its beautiful beaches and all the trappings of a modern metropolis. It’s one of the ports of call on the Crystal Cruises Serenity Baltic Treasures cruise that sails from Denmark to Sweden. “Tallinn is really a Baltic gem wrapped up in an easily walkable package,” said Ted Blank, a luxury advisor with Travel Leaders in Stillwater, Minnesota. “As overtourism becomes a fact of life in many destinations, travelers are seeking a stress-free alternative that still allows authentic cultural experiences. Less crowded destinations can offer tremendous historical, cultural, and culinary highlights in a serene environment, where the locals still welcome travelers with open arms,” he added. For example, Tallinn’s Old Town neighborhood, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with cobblestone streets, is one of the best-preserved medieval cities in Northern Europe.

**Tuamotu Islands.** A cruise in the southern Pacific Ocean is one way travelers can uncover the hidden gem of the Tuamotu Islands, a French Polynesian chain of almost 80 islands and low-lying atolls near the eastern part of Tahiti. Whether one arrives on a Silversea Cruises World Cruise or a 10-day Windstar Cruises sailing, it’s awe-inspiring to realize that the Tuamotus cover 16 regions in an archipelago that stretches across an area roughly the size of Western Europe. Manihi, built on a coral reef, is the farthest north of Tuamotu Archipelago and is less than a two-hour flight from Tahiti. This obscure getaway, known as the Island of Pearls, has the perfect lagoon for scuba diving, especially for people interested in searching for black pearls. “Traveling to destinations that are less crowded can be a great way for clients to really immerse themselves in the local culture,” said Lynch. Manihi is less inhabited than its largest sister, Rangiroa, and is a great location for connecting with the local fishermen.

**Canadian Rockies.** “The view of the Canadian Rockies onboard the luxurious Rocky Mountaineer train allows unparalleled views in a comfortable, relaxed setting, with all of the details taken care of,” said Blank, adding that there are opportunities to stop and visit the quaint mountain towns and parks. For one, Banff National Park is a bucket list destination that thrills millions of visitors a year, with certain areas in the Alberta park, such as Lake Louise, being extremely popular for hiking trails, skiing, and turquoise lakes. For a less crowded experience, but all the joys and natural wonders of the Canadian Rockies, venture across the border into British Columbia to visit Yoho National Park, which sits along the western slope of the Continental Divide of the Americas. Although Yoho is the smallest of the country’s national parks, within its borders is The Takakkaw Falls, the second largest waterfall in Canada and a sight to behold.

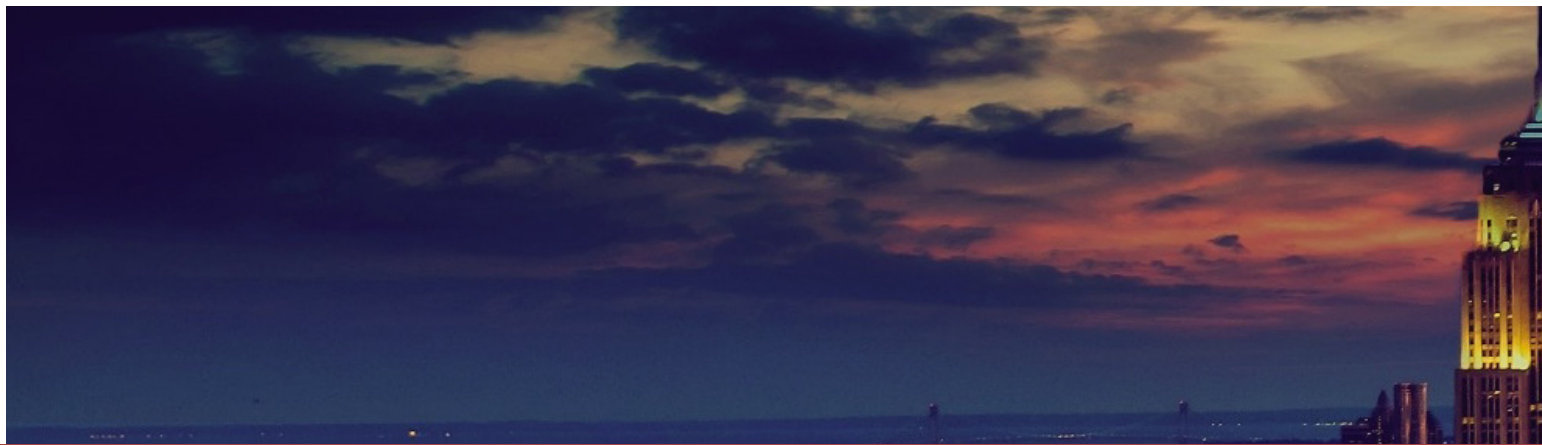


Luxury travel has evolved from being more than just five-star accommodations

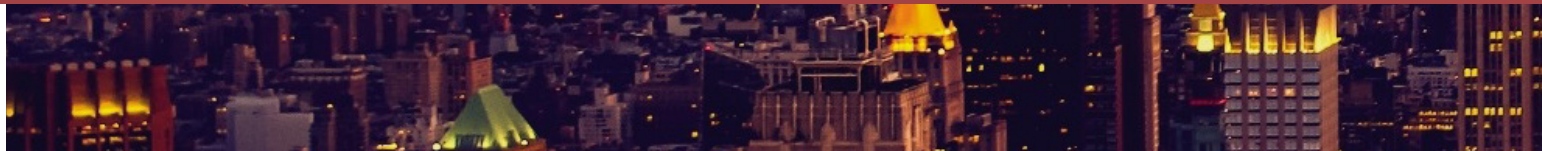


PICTURED  
*The Island of Ischia*





## WORLD'S TALLEST MODULAR HOTEL SET TO RISE IN NEW YORK CITY MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL'S VISION TO DISRUPT THE WAY BUILDINGS ARE



The world's tallest modular hotel, which will carry a brand of Marriott International, is on track to be stacked in late fall in New York City with prefabricated and pre-furnished guestrooms. Once erected over a 90-day period, the 360-foot-tall tower will represent a milestone for Marriott's ongoing initiative to encourage hotel developers in North America to embrace modular for new construction projects. To be topped with a modular roof and modular rooftop bar, the world's tallest modular hotel is expected to open in late 2020 as the AC Hotel New York NoMad.

"In North America, the construction process hasn't changed significantly in 150 years and it's ripe for innovation," said Eric Jacobs, Marriott International, Chief Development Officer, North America, Select and Extended Stay Brands. "The world's tallest modular hotel in one of the world's greatest destinations will act as a game-changing symbol to ignite even greater interest in modular among the real estate and lending industries."

The 168-room, 26-story AC Hotel New York NoMad is scheduled to rise at 842 Sixth Avenue with prefabricated guestrooms arriving at the hotel site fully constructed, inside and out.

Besides finished, painted walls, each "module" will contain a fully outfitted guest room – with beds, sheets, pillows, flooring, and even toiletries. The hotel's roof and rooftop bar are expected to be produced using modular construction, and its more customized public areas such as the restaurant and lobby are expected to be constructed using traditional methods.

Prefabrication is a process that Marriott has found typically reduces the construction timeline, curbs site waste and noise, and results in a higher-quality product produced with factory-level precision. The time savings comes from the ability to perform two crucial functions simultaneously – building the public spaces on site while manufacturing the guest rooms, offsite.

"This is the moment where modular construction takes center stage," says Danny Forster, a leading modular building advocate whose firm, Danny Forster & Architecture, designed the project. As he explains it, "This hotel takes every advantage of off-site manufacturing, as you might expect. But it does so in a way that defies expectation. We wanted to demonstrate that modular building can do more than just



This is the moment  
where modular  
construction takes  
center stage

## CITY THIS FALL, HIGHLIGHTING BUILDINGS GET BUILT

harness the efficiencies of the factory. It can produce a graceful and iconic tower. And yes, it can do so at the rate of an entire floor a day.”

Marriott, which has the largest pipeline of hotels in North America, began researching modular construction in 2014 to offset lengthening hotel construction times – a trend attributed to the nation’s building boom and resulting labor shortages. Since 2011, Marriott has seen the average time to build and open a hotel in North America increase by as much 50 percent, depending on factors such as location and size of property.

Since 2015, Marriott has been educating owners, franchisees, architects, lenders, consultants, general contractors, and other stakeholders across the industry about the benefits of modular by hosting town halls, factory tours, and stacking events. The company also worked with leading modular manufacturers to help them better understand the untapped demand that hotel development companies represent.

Since the launch of Marriott’s initiative, the company’s development partners in North America

have opened 31 Marriott-brand hotels – all low-rise structures – that incorporate prefabricated guestrooms and/or bathrooms, including a Fairfield by Marriott Inn & Suites in Folsom, Calif.; a Courtyard by Marriott in Pullman, Wash., and three AC Hotels in Oklahoma City, Louisville, Ky., and Chapel Hill, N.C. To date, the largest Marriott-branded modular-built to open is the 354-room, dual-brand Courtyard and Towne Place Suites by Marriott property in Hawthorne, Calif., while the first to also incorporate a prefabricated elevator bank was the Fairfield by Marriott Inn & Suites in Prairie, Wisc. Later this year, a developer will start stacking the first modular-built Moxy hotel in the United States in downtown Oakland, Calif.

The company continues efforts to support developers interested in leveraging prefabrication, most recently launching modular versions of its prototypes for four of its higher-volume brands: Courtyard by Marriott, Fairfield by Marriott, Spring Hill Suites by Marriott, and Towne Place Suites by Marriott. Underscoring its commitment to igniting demand for modular construction, Marriott this year is offering an incentive to development companies that leverage prefabrication for guestroom construction.





## MORE THAN HALF OF SMALL BUSINESSES PLAN TO OFFER NEW EMPLOYEE BENEFITS IN 2019

**M**ore than half of small businesses (56%) plan to offer new benefits to their employees in 2019, according to research from Clutch, the leading B2B research, ratings, and reviews firm. Clutch surveyed 529 small business owners or managers to learn about their 2019 employee benefits plans.

Small businesses offering new benefits are most likely to offer paid time off (19%), health

benefits (15%), and retirement benefits (11%).

Offering new benefits can reduce employee turnover. These benefits are often less expensive over time than the cost of recruiting and training new employees. “You’ve already invested the time, energy, and money to train [your employees],” said Bethany Holliday, Director of Human Resources for Cornerstone Insurance Group & Employer Solutions. “It costs a whole lot less to keep people



happy than it does to try and find new people.”

Thirty percent (30%) of small businesses do not have formalized HR resources such as an in-house HR staff, outsourced HR functions, or a contract with an HR consultant. Of companies without dedicated HR resources, only 1 in 10 (10%) offer benefits to their employees. Meanwhile, roughly two-thirds of companies with HR resources (64%) offer benefits to their employees.

“ These benefits are often less expensive over time than the cost of recruiting and training new employees

Experts say that small businesses are disproportionately likely to have a formalized benefits and HR structure as they grow. “I think organizations see the value in having an HR person or working with an HR consultant,” said Matthew Burr, Founder and President of Burr Consulting. “Just to understand how to do certain things and really understand how to execute ... I don’t think there’s an opportunity anymore just to skate by.”

Nearly one-third of small businesses offering new benefits (30%) are doing so to fulfill employee requests. More than one-quarter (27%) are doing so as a means of improving morale and reducing turnover. Far fewer companies are offering new benefits because they are required by law (13%) or as a result of union negotiations (9%). HR experts believe that small businesses will continue to respond to their employees’ desire for more robust benefits.

“We kind of shifted from paying a lot to, now, offering a lot of benefits,” said Christopher Willatt, Founder and Owner of Alpine Maids. “HR is really geared toward convincing our employees that this is a great job and doing everything to retain them.”





BV<sup>m</sup>

# Facilities Management



TOWN & COUNTRY  
SAN DIEGO



LAIID-BACK  
CALIFORNIA COMFORT

THE MATT LARICY  
GROUP



A FEW GOOD  
YEARS

GEORGE R BROWN  
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CHANGES COMING  
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RIGHT NOW,  
THERE'S MOMENTUM

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BUSINESS EVENTS INDUSTRY



# Town & Country **SAN DIEGO**

LAIID-BACK CALIFORNIA COMFORT





## AT A GLANCE

# TOWN & COUNTRY SAN DIEGO

**WHAT:** A resort hotel and convention center

**WHERE:** Mission Valley, San Diego, California

**WEBSITE:** [www.towncountry.com](http://www.towncountry.com)

The Town and Country Resort was the first hotel built in the Mission Valley region of San Diego. Constructed by local developer, Charlie Brown, in 1953, it was initially a 46-room motor inn, set amid farmland and pastures. It wasn't until 1970, three years after Brown's death, that his son, C. Terry Brown, expanded the property to include a convention center and a 10-story hotel tower. "Brown's vision for it, was to be a hotel people would take their families to, to come see San Diego, and eventually, to have meetings and conferences, there," says Director of Sales and Marketing, Susan Penman. "He had his mind set on turning it into one of the premier properties in San Diego."

Today, the Town & Country Hotel and Convention Center is, indeed, one of the largest convention hotels on the west coast. It offers a total of 220,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor space with a 42,000-sq.-ft. exhibit hall, two divisible ballrooms – 24,000 and 17,000 square feet – and 935 guest rooms. A landmark resort hotel for over 60 years, the Town & Country has been considered an iconic expression of the 1960's Southern California





vibe - relaxed, playful, and laid-back, with service that is engaging, approachable, yet unobtrusive, where everyone feels welcome.

But time has taken its toll on the property and now it is in the midst of an \$80 million facelift, slated to conclude in the middle of 2020, that will transform the 40-acre property into a go-to destination for vacationing families, as well as business travelers and conventioners. “Historically, we were almost a thousand-room hotel,” says Penman. “With the renovation, we’ll be taking that down to a peak of 675 rooms. The meeting space will stay; we’ll be adding a three-acre park along the Riverwalk and quite a few other nice amenities. So, over the course of the next year, the property will be transformed. Our goal is to bring it to a four-star level. It’s been a mid-three for a long period of time, so it needed a renovation.”

By the time the ambitious makeover is completed, about a third of the hotel’s structures will have been bulldozed and in their place will be a grand new entryway and lobby, three new restaurants, a spa and, in the center of it all, a two-acre water attraction, complete with a sandy beach, slides, waterfalls, and a lazy river-style pool. The redevelopment also will restore 8.1 acres of native habitat, and the new park will include a 2,500-foot-long, 14-foot-wide pathway along the river, linking with an existing trail.

While the convention center and the hotel’s

Regency and Royal Palm towers will remain, with 207 and 324 rooms, respectively, they will be modernized, as will 151 of the garden rooms, which will be redesigned in a beachfront milieu, situated on the edge of the future pool area and its planned sandy frontage. Also envisioned, are plans for private development of four residential towers with more than 600 apartments on the eastern and southern fringes of the property that would coexist with Town & Country’s hospitality and convention facilities.

With its new look and amenities, Penman says that the Town & Country will remain very competitive. “If you’re a group that’s price sensitive, and you’re looking at using a convention center, the cost can get very high,” she explains. “So we’re still looking for that client that doesn’t have millions to spend. We’re not going to compete with downtown hotels, directly, however the corporate, association, and social markets, when they come to this area, we can offer them something competitive, plus the ability to be only ten minutes from everything in the area. We’re very close to Old Town; we’re ten minutes from Mission Beach; ten minutes from downtown; and ten minutes from the city airport. So, we’re a really nice alternative to going downtown and spending in excess of \$300 for a room.”

In addition, on the technology front, the Town & Country is, “well set,” according to Penman. “We have a company called AVMS – our in-house audio/





# Town and Country

SAN DIEGO







visual provider and they do all of our internet. And then, we also have on property, Shepard, which is a design company that does all of the exhibits. Also, in-house, we have Edlen, which does all the lighting. So we offer a one-stop shop, similar to what the other convention centers offer.”

Town & Country is also undeniably “green.” Penman elucidates some of its programs and practices: “We do LED lighting; we’re doing a full conversion program, most of it was already done in the convention center, we’ll finish the rest of it this summer. All outdoor lighting is on clock control. We’re replacing all the older HVAC and refrigeration units, plus direct digital control on the HVAC, and frequency drive control

on the fan motors. Our entire kitchen is being completely renovated with all new equipment and high efficiency appliances. There’ll be heat reclamation from the wash water in the laundry. Bed linens and towels will be changed only on request; environmentally-friendly cleaning products; reduced hazardous products in the maintenance operations. We have a spray booth for painting and coating to reduce emissions. Recycled materials were purchased for guest room carpeting, and we’re recycling used pictures, furniture, and equipment to a salvage company, where possible. There are beverages from dispensers instead of using all bottled water; cloth linen rather than disposable products; reusable props and decorations; best







management practices by the maintenance and gardening departments; and stormwater filtering, onsite, prior to discharge to the sewer.”

When all is said and done, Penman believes that the “new” Town & Country will still stay true to its roots as a colorful, mid-20th century facility with a “fun” San Diego feel, albeit with serious

meeting space, great technology, and amazing service. “The reason this property does so well, is because we’re different; we’re not your ‘brass and glass,’” she avers. “We’re taking it in a different way. For example, we have an entire lawn filled with those plastic pink flamingoes. There’s a big sign in the center that says ‘Even the fabulous have to eat; go see the front desk





for flamingo food.' So, people laugh when they're here. We don't take ourselves too seriously, while giving you all the creature comforts that you need, we're also offering some fun things."

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The

# Matt Laricy Group

## *A few good years*

**M**att Laricy, founder of the Matt Laricy Group, a division of Americorp Real Estate in Chicago, Illinois, has had a few pretty good years. “In 2017, we finished with \$139 million in sales; in 2018, we finished with \$162 million in sales,” he reports. “So, it was a 20 percent growth year over year. To date, this year, we’re already up 30 percent. To top that off, we’ve been able to do it with less people than we had last year. So, we’re actually a smaller team – very efficient, very hardworking, and able to crush it. And once again, we finished as the Number

Four agent in the state. So, we’re outperforming people with less people and no big national backing behind us. So, it’s pretty impressive. For this first quarter, this year, we’re Number Two in the state. So, we’re one away from the top and the only independent company in the top 20.”

Solely a residential real estate company, the Laricy Group works the Windy City’s downtown neighborhoods: River North, Streetville, Gold Coast, Old Town, New East Side, West Loop, South Loop, Lincoln Park, West Town, Wicker Park/

### AT A GLANCE

## THE MATT LARICY GROUP

**WHAT:** A residential real estate firm

**WHERE:** Chicago, Illinois

**WEBSITE:** [www.mattlaricygroup.com](http://www.mattlaricygroup.com)





Bucktown, Lakeview, Logan Square, and The Loop. "It's not big parcels of land, but there are a lot of people in those parcels," Laricy states. "Our clients are anybody that buys, sells, or invests in the downtown markets."

Laricy, who has been named one of the top

30 agents under 30 in the country by the National Association of Realtors, as well as making REAL Trend's list of the top 1,000 agents, nationwide, is a third-generation realtor. "My grandfather was in real estate; my father started the company; and I always knew, as a little kid, that I would get into real estate," he





recounts. “When I graduated college in 2006, I was already licensed and started selling in South Chicago. I realized that the Southside market was not what I wanted to do, so I took the company downtown in 2008, which was one of the worst housing economies that America had ever seen. I don’t have any money; I’m 23

years old; we don’t have an office in the third largest city in the country, so it may not have been the best idea. But, where there’s a will, there’s a way. I hustled and built the group to where it is today, and we’ve been growing rapidly ever since. We grew so much, that in 2013, I started the Matt Laricy Group. I got a







storefront in River North, which is in the heart of the downtown Chicago market.”

While Laricy believes that springtime in Chicago is the “hottest time of the year” for buying and selling real estate, he adds that “the market is not as strong as it was in ‘16, ‘17, and ‘18. In ‘19, sales are down about four percent across the board for most people,” he avers. “We’re heading towards recession; everybody knows the economy, at some point, is going to slow down, and I think a lot of buyers know that. So, some people are second guessing a little bit;

inventory is finally starting to build up a little bit, which is making the market time a little bit longer. So, naturally, we’re going to have a cooler market, which is good. You don’t go up every year – America’s built on up and downs.”

“But we’re not slowing down,” he continues. “We’re only going to keep getting bigger, no matter what the economy is doing. The reality is, if you’re good at your job, you’re going to keep growing because people are still going to be buying and selling. I think the people who are really good at their jobs are going to get more business, because it’s going to be more









competitive and that means that the weaker agents are going to fall off and the stronger agents are going to stand out, even more.

“I’m actually excited, because when the economy slows down, people are going to stop advertising as much because they have to cut costs. What I’m doing is saving my money. Instead of going out and buying things, I’ve been stockpiling it away in what I call the ‘recession account.’ So, when the market does get really soft, I’m going to double down on my advertising. People are going to get nervous about spending money, and then I’m going to double what I spend in the worst times. Like they say, ‘You don’t get rich in good markets; you get rich in bad markets.’

People are still going to be buying and selling and when they only see a few, select number of people out there, because we’re the only ones advertising, that’s what is going to put us ahead.”

Another way Laricy intends to stay ahead is by building up his share of the luxury market, while still taking care of the lower-end buyers and sellers. “I used to do a couple of million-dollar sales a month,” he states. “I’m now doing a couple of million-dollar sales every week. Last year, I did 359 transactions; this year, I’m on pace to do about 420, and I’d say a little over a hundred of them are going to be million-dollar sales, including a couple above four million. So, it’s exciting to see. I’m going to continue to build the luxury division of our





PICTURED  
(L-R) Matt Laricy, Catherine Holbrook, Joe Rueck, Matt Piegza, and Mickey Hobson

group because that helps our sales numbers more, but you never want to forget where you came from. I believe you want to have a nice diverse portfolio, meaning that you want \$150,000 buyers and sellers, and \$10 million buyers and sellers, because if you have a diverse portfolio, no matter what the market is doing, you always have business.”

So, regardless of the economy’s ups and downs, the Matt Laricy Group should have a few more very good years, ahead.

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# George R. Brown

## CONVENTION CENTER

### In the middle of it all

**T**he George R. Brown Convention Center (GRB) opened on the east side of downtown Houston on September 26, 1987. The building was named for internationally recognized entrepreneur, engineer, civic leader, and philanthropist, George Rufus Brown (1898-1983), who donated six of the 11 blocks necessary to build the facility. “Right off the bat, it hosted the top 25 conventions and trade shows in the country,”

recounts Senior Vice President of Operations & General Manager, John Gonzalez. One of the challenges, however, according to Gonzalez was retaining those initial clients who hosted events at a time when Houston didn’t have the convenience of a convention campus. “The closest hotel was about four blocks away, but the headquarter hotel was close to a mile. At that point, the building was flanked with open parking lot spaces, and the myth was that there was nothing to do in the





city. What was really needed at the time was to take all of the entertainment and housing options available around the city and locate them centrally so that clients could take advantage of them.”

So, over the years, changes were made. In December 2003, two months before the City of Houston hosted its second Super Bowl, the Hilton Corporation opened its 1,200-room Hilton Americas Hotel as an anchor and headquarter hotel, and the Convention Center expanded its contiguous ground level space to about 700,000 square feet, while adding three new exhibit halls and more meeting rooms. “That really changed our dynamic as far as bookings, because we were one of the only centers in Texas to have a hotel of that magnitude, connected,” Gonzalez explains.

## AT A GLANCE

# THE GEORGE R. BROWN CONVENTION CENTER

**WHAT:** A premier convention venue

**WHERE:** Houston, Texas

**WEBSITE:** [www.grbhouston.com](http://www.grbhouston.com)









PICTURED  
Vice President &  
General Manager, John Gonzalez

Then, in 2011, the GRB changed its designation from a city-owned entity, which reported to the City Council, to an LGC (Local Government Commission), the Houston First Corporation, which reports to a Board of Directors. “The move helped us streamline our processes,” Gonzalez avers. “We learned from the experience of building the Hilton and were able to accelerate our construction timeline— getting approval and building the 1,000-room Marriott Marquis, which is attached on the north end of the building, in nine months. We are now anchored on each end with 2,200 rooms.”

At the same time, the City decided it needed to think seriously about revitalizing its downtown. “Once the approval was given to build the Marriott Marquis, the funding was given to do a revamp of our district in preparation for Super Bowl LI in 2017,” Gonzalez says. “We underwent a \$1.5 billion investment in the new entertainment district, Avenida Houston, and we spent close to \$250 million on revamping the Convention Center.”

“Prior to our renovation project, we had five

separate entrances for five separate halls, with no contiguous concourse space,” Gonzalez continues. “We had minimal lobby space - close to 300 square feet. So, working with our design team, we built a concourse, a grand lobby with new terrazzo flooring and video boards, and a new front door to create a welcoming space for visitors. We reduced the eight lanes that separated us from our 12-acre park, Discovery Green, to two lanes and expanded our outdoor event and leisure space in the process. We added six restaurants along Avenida Houston with four on the ground level of the building, and the other two just across the street on the north and south sides of the building. During the Super Bowl, we hosted a million-plus visitors who came into this district and we didn’t want them to come for a four- or five-day period and feel that they had seen it all. We wanted to keep people coming back by showing them how dynamic and exciting Houston can be. So, I put together an event planning team for outdoor activities and, now, we have a full, onboard, outdoor development team that programs the space in front of the building so that





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Our designers fabricate custom scenic elements with a quality-control process that delivers both excellence and accuracy from concept to completion, while our producers ensure that the project stays on schedule and within scope. Our expertise and consistency ensure that our clients always look their best.

In addition, we craft media content, graphic design, and other visuals that engage audiences and underscore core messaging. At the intersection of creativity and technical execution, we develop content in any dimension, and on any surface. Our in-house media department can shoot original content, animate, or use our in-house studio to create the perfect complement to your overall event design.

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when conventioners finish their convention or trade show, they're walking out into a completely different environment— to an extension of the park. We always wanted that space to be active.”

Today, the GRB hosts between 250-275 unique events every year. It is run by the Houston First Corporation, the city's Destination Marketing Organization that also manages more than 10 city-owned buildings and properties, including the George R. Brown Convention Center, the Hilton Americas-Houston Hotel, the Jones Hall for the Performing Arts, the Wortham Theater Center, the Talento Bilingue de Houston, the Miller Outdoor Theatre, Houston First Outdoors, and Theater District Parking.

The GRB has 34 full-time, Houston First Corporation employees, and at peak times, over 500 staff members, including its service partners. Its clientele is a mixture of trade shows, conventions, and corporate events, with a particular emphasis on the medical community. “Being that Houston has the largest medical center in the world, we've made a push to attract the medical market,” says Gonzalez. “We've seen that, because the medical center has between 150,000 -200,000 employees in its own district, we've attracted a lot of medical business over the past years.”





In a competitive industry, Gonzalez believes that the GRB has several advantages, not the least of which is its high level of customer service. “I believe our service levels are unmatched,” he states. “Our philosophy is that we’re a building that doesn’t say ‘No.’ We want to make sure that not only is the event successful, we’re going to find a way to exceed your needs and expectations. We have an employee customer service program, the Five-Set Standard Program. Every one of our employees goes through training to learn our five-step process for delivering excellent customer service, and it’s embedded in our service team. So, with our can-do attitude and our southern hospitality, we’re seeing results in retaining clients and attracting new ones. And that isn’t just within the four walls of the building – that extends to all of our city services in the Houston area. We’ve put on three Super Bowls; we’ve put on two Final Fours, and as a community, everybody, from the top down, gets involved.”

“We also rank amongst the top in technology,” Gonzalez adds. “Smart City has been our partner

since 1988, and we offer free Wi-Fi services in all the public areas of the building and meeting rooms. Every client has different requirements, so we sit down with them from day one and say, ‘What are your immediate needs?’ We get down to the exact details of what they need here in the building. As a host of the Super Bowl, we had to upgrade our Cisco-powered network. So, we’ve been able to provide wireless service for 18,000 users at one time.”

In addition, the Convention Center is a LEED Silver building. “All of our cleaning products are green,” Gonzalez states. “Last year, we composted 52.25 tons of recycling, which is equivalent to about 104,000 pounds of food, and we work with the Houston Food Bank, Second Servings, and other local food recovery organizations to donate any uneaten food to local shelters at the conclusion of every event. We have a single stream recycling system in the building, so anything that goes into a bag, we send offsite to be sorted and processed. We’ve retrofitted our meeting rooms to all LED lighting. We did a





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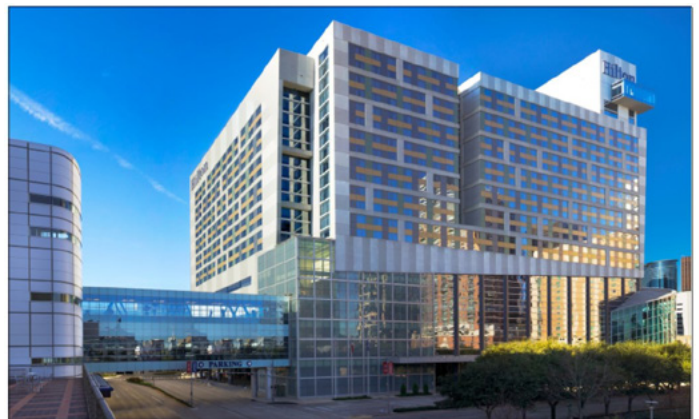


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huge upgrade to our carpet in the public space about seven years ago and all of the carpet tiles in the building were then repurposed to other city properties throughout the Houston area.”

Going forward, Gonzalez elaborates on some of the conceptual study opportunities related to the GRB’s five-year Master Plan to repurpose space within and surrounding the building: “One thing we’d like to do in the near future is to repurpose about 124,000 feet of space into flex space, where we envision a 60-70,000-square-foot ballroom, flanked by multi-purpose meeting space with an overview to a new deck park that’s being built directly behind the building. The Master Plan study includes adding 300,000 square feet of contiguous, column-free space that would give us about 825,000 square feet on the ground level, while being anchored by a total of four hotels, one at each corner of the 1.8 million-square foot facility.”

Gonzalez believes that people are now thinking about Houston more and more as an exciting and inviting city in which to hold its conventions

and trade shows. “We speak over 99 different languages in the city,” he notes. “And it’s the culinary capital of the United States. The diversity and vibrancy of our community, including our rich and inspired culinary landscape, sets us apart and makes Houston an attractive destination for visitors.” And with Avenida Houston, now a thriving entertainment district complete with dining, hotels, and nightlife, he intends that the George R. Brown Convention Center will be right in the middle of it all.





## PREFERRED VENDORS

### ■ **Staging Solutions**

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# The Ernest N. Morial Convention Center

## Changes coming in the Big Easy

The Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, in New Orleans, Louisiana, was named after Ernest Morial, the city's first African-American mayor who served from 1978-1986. Originally opened in 1984, as part of the Louisiana World Exposition, today, the Center is the sixth largest convention facility in America with the nation's largest contiguous-space exhibit hall at 1.1 million square feet. The Center also offers 140 meeting rooms, a 4,000-seat theater, a 30,000-sq.-ft. ballroom, and a 60,300-sq.-ft. divisible, column-free ballroom with a 25,000-sq.-ft. pre-function area.

The Morial Convention Center is managed by New Orleans Public Facility Management Inc., a not-for-profit organization operating under the



direction of the Ernest N. Morial New Orleans Exhibition Hall Authority, a political subdivision of the State of Louisiana. Since its opening, the Center has been a leading contributor to the city's robust tourist economy, producing \$85.7 billion in economic impact, including \$5.4 billion new tax revenue for state and local governments. It is funded by a combination of its own operational budget, and hotel occupancy and restaurant taxes. Just under 500 full- and part-time employees work for the Convention Center, which hosts an average of 140 events, annually.

Over the years, the building, whose frontage is over a half-mile long, has undergone several expansions – 1984, 1991, and 1999. “Since then, there was a





## AT A GLANCE

# THE ERNEST N. MORIAL CONVENTION CENTER

- WHAT:** The sixth largest convention facility in America
- WHERE:** New Orleans, Louisiana
- WEBSITE:** [www.mccno.com](http://www.mccno.com)





fourth phase of expansion planned right before Hurricane Katrina; in fact, they'd already drilled the piers for the building," explains the Center's President & General Manager, Michael Sawaya, who came onboard in early 2018. "However, after Katrina, demand was less than forecast, so we did not build an additional exhibit hall, even though, prior to that, they had reached the practical maximum in occupancy. We did, however, build the 60,000-sq.-ft. ballroom in 2014."

Currently, Sawaya says that the Center's main focus is establishing a new headquarters hotel. "It's a 1,200-room hotel that we're in negotiation with a private development group for," he reports. "The hotel project is critical to our success here. It's the one thing that, we believe, is a gap to what we offer versus our competitors, so it's something that we're very serious about pursuing. We're in the early stages of our negotiations with the property developer, but we feel confident that we're going to get a deal done in order to develop that, and our goal is to open by Super Bowl in 2024,



PICTURED  
*Michael Sawaya,*  
*President & General Manager*





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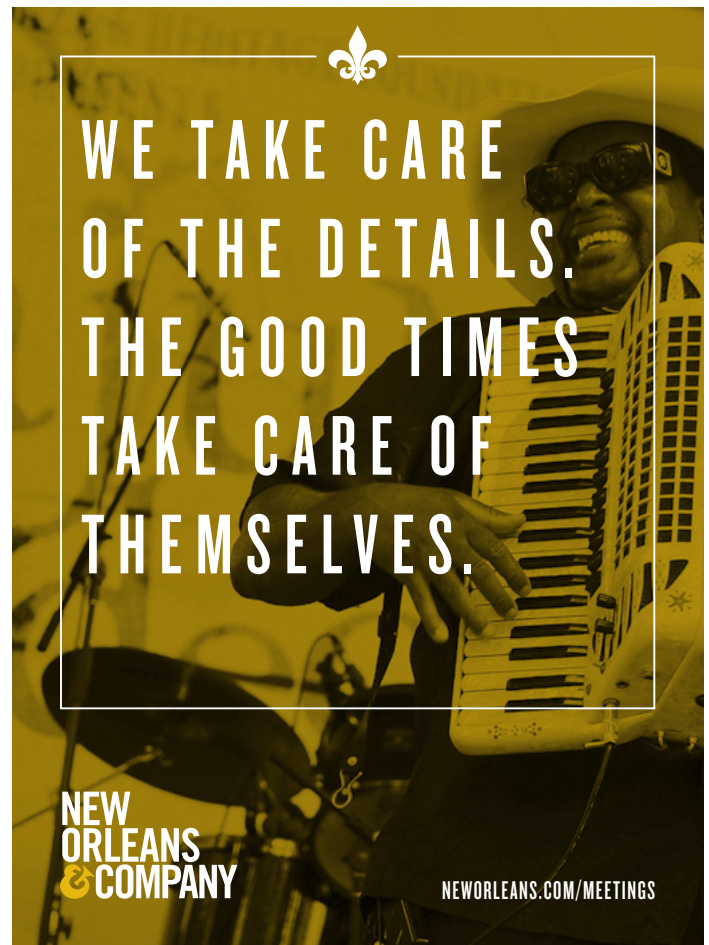


because that's when you welcome the world. In addition, our Board has approved \$557 million worth of critical improvements to the facility, portions of which are 35 years old."

Another ongoing project, just outside the Center, is the renovation of Convention Center Boulevard. "It's currently under construction," says Sawaya. "Before, there were four lanes of highway traffic on the main corridor in and out of the city, immediately in front of the building. We're going to create a much safer and more appealing first impression of our building by having a linear park; we will change from a four-lane highway to a very inviting pedestrian pathway that spans the length of our building. So, there'll be two lanes of traffic on the far side, away from the building."

The new, \$79 million pedestrian park, expected to be completed by late 2020, will update the urban environment with tree-lined plazas, bike lanes, covered porches, outdoor event spaces, water features, public art, and shaded sitting areas. It will also connect the bustling Warehouse/Arts District with the historic French Quarter, and dramatically transform the guest experience at the Convention Center. "It creates a much more inviting and safe environment," Sawaya continues. "It will include a multi-modal center for shuttle bus, ride share, and taxi. Also, around the hotel site, we have a total of 40 acres that we're developing for entertainment, specialty retail, and residential. Those are all things that represent over \$1.5 billion worth of new product offerings that we'll have for our customers in the future."

Meanwhile, Sawaya points out some of the Center's current advantages. "The destination appeal is obvious, but it's a matter of having the capacity of putting on a show where you can use all of the facility, so the size and the capacity to do the bigger shows are key for us. When you have as much exhibit space as we do, they're always interested. Also, having a great airport is critical. We have a new billion-dollar airport opening and that doesn't happen very often, so flight service into a new airport is key. And our charge, here, is to make sure that anything that we do lines up with industry best practices.



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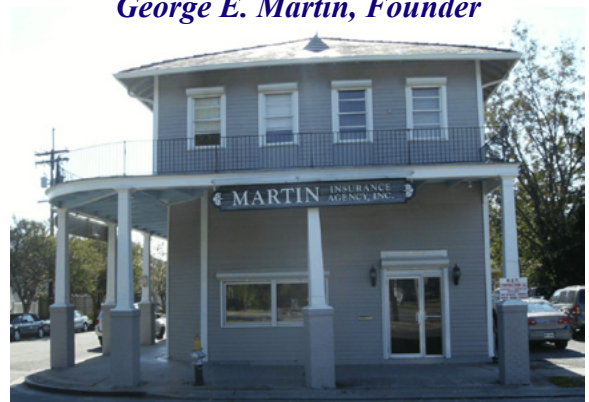
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So, our goal, right now, is to get LEED Silver certification, not only through our improvement projects, including a new roof, but also through our operating practices. We have established a sustainability department and we have a dedicated staff that's working with local and regional entities to reach that goal of LEED Silver.”

Regarding technology, Sawaya believes that the Center is extremely competitive and up-to-date. It boasts a 1-gigabit per-second fiber-optic

Internet backbone that is 100-percent redundant and burstable to 10 gigabits per second. Digital, flat-panel information systems are strategically placed throughout the main lobby, meeting room levels, and in pre-function areas. In addition, key card access and a fully integrated, digital signage system with screens were implemented in all 140 meeting rooms and throughout public spaces. Its highly qualified and experienced production team offers a full slate of integrated services for all lighting, audio, video, and rigging needs, in-house,











or to support an outside contractor. The Center also offers a full suite of HD video equipment for a variety of satellite broadcasts, presentations, or recording formats and the trained personnel to design, capture, and edit programs, on-site. “However our plan is to bring in a consultant to do an analysis of our IT system throughout the building and to make recommendations on current, as well as future, improvements,” Sawaya remarks. “So, recognizing that it’s a high priority for us, our intention is to invest in it annually, so that we can make sure that we have the best technology of any building in the country.”

A first class venue in one of America’s most vibrant cities, the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center is clearly poised for a busy and productive future.

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IRP's latest project completed for the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, is a testament to its custom fabrication capabilities. IRP fabricated food and beverage equipment is found in stadiums, arenas, and venues across North America and Canada. All IRP equipment meets industry regulations and is NSF and UL approved. IRP fabrication innovations and structural integrity set the standard in the industry, with the majority of the carts still functioning in the field long after ROI is realized.

- **Manning Architects** [www.manningarchitects.com](http://www.manningarchitects.com)

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Manning Architects and ESKEWDUMEZRIPPLE, a joint venture, are proud to serve the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center by providing the Master Planning and Architectural Design for their public park. The new park space will repurpose 7.5 acres of roadway into a lushly landscaped continuous pedestrian promenade that will integrate the convention center with the vibrant culture of New Orleans with a series of grand porches and other amenities.

- **StageRight Corporation**

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# RICHMOND RACEWAY COMPLEX

On track for a winning future







The thrill of great auto racing; the excitement of top-billed celebrity concerts; state-of-the-art event and exhibition facilities. As a multi-dimensional destination venue, Richmond Raceway Complex in Richmond, Virginia has it all, including an enviable history in the motorsports world that harkens back to 1946. Today, the Complex consists of five permanent exhibition/meeting facilities and plays host to over 200 events, annually, from consumer/trade shows to outdoor festivals. Focused on development of a thrilling, memorable, and unparalleled guest experience, the Richmond Raceway Complex is certainly on track for a winning future in the industry.

Business View Magazine recently asked Megan Hazzard, Director of Events at the Richmond Raceway Complex, for her insights into the fast-paced world of event management and growth at this unique and popular venue. The following is an edited transcript of that conversation.

**BVM:** Can you give us an overview of the Richmond Raceway Complex?

**Hazzard:** “We have a rich history that started with the racetrack. International Speedway Corporation purchased the property in 1999; however, the track has been in operation since 1946. We’ve

## AT A GLANCE

# RICHMOND RACEWAY COMPLEX

**WHAT:** A racing, entertainment, and exhibition venue

**WHERE:** Richmond, Virginia

**WEBSITE:** [www.richmondracewaycomplex.com](http://www.richmondracewaycomplex.com)







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grown a lot over the years – today, we have over 100,000 square feet of indoor space, and 1,200 acres, including the three-quarter-mile, D-shaped oval where we host two NASCAR double-header weekends, each year. We also have Virginia Credit Union LIVE! – a 6,000-seat amphitheater for concerts. In all, over 200 live events are held on property every year at the Complex.”

**BVM:** What do you think makes you different from other event locations?

**Hazzard:** “We’re not a typical convention center like you’d find in a downtown area. With our 1,200 acres, we do a lot of outdoor events and festivals, but we also have huge indoor space, where we host consumer trade shows, such as the Richmond Boat Show, Virginia Outdoor Sportsman Show, Bizarre Bazaar, and Southern Women’s Show. We also do a lot of things outside the box, for example we host a Beer, Bourbon, and Barbeque festival in the Main Expo Hall, and we host dog shows, where we’ll have 1,500 dog breeds, here. In May, we have the Virginia Senior Games Pickleball

Tournament; so lots of activities. We will host a dozen concerts at Virginia Credit Union LIVE!, the region’s only covered amphitheater, as well.”

**BVM:** Have you done any significant upgrades, recently?

**Hazzard:** “We just completed a \$30-million redevelopment in September 2018. The project, Richmond Raceway Reimagined, has further expanded our events footprint. We can now do additional outside-the-box events in our new covered garage spaces, and there’s a great corporate meeting space in our new Victory Lane Club overlooking Gatorade Victory Lane. With a partition door separating the 1,885-sq.-ft. Victory Lane Club from a 1,169-sq.-ft. Suite, the space can be made more intimate for smaller meetings, or the two rooms can be combined for a larger area. We’re looking forward to hosting our NASCAR weekends in that ‘reimagined’ space, and growing our events portfolio. It was a private investment from our parent company, International Speedway





Corporation. They're based in Daytona Beach, Florida, so from a state perspective, it was actually \$30 million reinvested back into the Commonwealth of Virginia."

**BVM:** Have you upgraded technical amenities and sustainable practices to keep competitive?

**Hazzard:** "In January, we announced to all our show promoters that we are able to

offer complimentary Wi-Fi in the exhibit halls, the amphitheater, and our infield. The complimentary Wi-Fi has been a huge hit among vendors, and specifically with promoters. The new infield also has programmable heating and cooling devices that we can do remotely from our phones. The same with the amphitheater lighting; we can control with a mobile app..





“As for sustainability initiatives, in addition to the LED lighting we just installed in the Main Expo Hall, we do extensive recycling in the infield and campgrounds. We have also had some solar energy partners; we welcomed Dominion Energy to our Military Hospitality over race weekends, and they are going to provide solar phone charging stations on our Midway. As well, our concessions and catering departments work on a lot of food

donations. We actually did a sustainability study last year – we’re still waiting on some of the results – but it was a great partnership between NASCAR Green, Richmond Raceway, and Arizona State University.”

**BVM:** Are there any other partners or relationships that are valuable to your success?

**Hazzard:** “We work closely with all our vendors



and partners to offer as many options to support events as possible. Exhibits Incorporated does our pipe and drape, both for shows and for us on race weekends. Harris Electric has been with us, I think, since we were built in 1946, so we call them for all things electrical. We're obviously a long-time Toyota sponsor, so the vehicles we drive on the property are Toyota-branded and manufactured in the U.S.. We also have some important new relationships – Virginia Lottery is partnering to support all the Wi-Fi initiatives on the property, and Dominion Energy is working on solar power and some other initiatives that may come to fruition in the future.

“We are also a big community partner. We host Richmond Region Tourism, Chamber RVA, and other community events at the Complex. We always want local partners to be on property to showcase our new projects in the infield. Virginia Commonwealth University has a Center for Sport Leadership program and we do a Sports Executive Social for them in our Victory



## FAST FACTS ABOUT RICHMOND RACEWAY:

**LENGTH:** ¾-mile D-shaped oval  
**WIDTH:** 60 feet with a 10-foot apron  
**BANKING:** 14 degrees in turns, eight degrees at starting line, two degrees on back stretch and two degrees on the front stretch  
**SEATING:** 51,000  
**PARKING:** More than 800 acres of free parking

### IMPORTANT DATES:

**October 12, 1946:** Track hosts its first race, which was an open-wheel race at what was then known as Atlantic Rural Exposition Fairgrounds. The track was a ½-mile dirt surface.

**April 19, 1953:** First NASCAR race in the “Grand National Division” (today known as Sprint Cup Series) was won by Lee Petty

**1959:** Track begins hosting two NASCAR Sprint Cup Series races per season, a streak that remains intact today

**1968:** Track surface is paved

**1988:** Track becomes known as Richmond International Raceway and undergoes a massive reconfiguration. Seating capacity is increased to 50,000 and the track is re-measured at ¾-mile, the current configuration.

**1991:** Lights are added so Richmond can host its events “under the lights.”

**2003:** Track surface is repaved.

**2017:** Track becomes known as Richmond Raceway and announces an infield renovation project called “Richmond Raceway Reimagined.” **2018:** FanGrounds, modernized infield, opens as a new fan experience in the infield including new concession stands, seating areas, entertainment spaces, and a walkway in the new garages.



Lane Club during race weekends. We also host Henrico County Technical Education graduation in Virginia Credit Union LIVE!, the region's only covered amphitheater. We host a Neighborhood Night Out for our local community, as well. We have a neighborhood committee that meets every other month to keep in the loop about what events are upcoming. We are woven into the fabric of our community, so we want to always keep an open dialogue with our neighbors."

**BVM:** What are the most important points you'd like people to know about the Richmond Raceway Complex?

**Hazzard:** "About half a million people attend non-race events, annually. Some events, alone, will bring in 20,000, so we keep very busy, year-round. With new additions and an increase in concerts, that number will continue to grow. We currently have 37 full-time employees, plus contractors and others. On NASCAR weekends, when people come in from other tracks and we have part-timers and security, that number goes up to over 1,000.

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"The Richmond Raceway Complex is so diverse. We are unique in motorsports in having so much indoor, climate-controlled space on property. We have a monthly call with all of our sister tracks in the International Speedway Corporation family to go over events we're working on, and most would love to have 100,000 square feet of space with the opportunity for built-in new business, annually. It's a fun job that's different every day.

"Our property showcases what a unique facility we have. We even have a warehouse where several television series and films have been produced – we even have the biggest green screen, I believe, in North America. It's a 200,000-sq.-ft. warehouse and the entire backside is painted green. That really helps the Virginia Film Office sell different shows to produce in the Commonwealth. We're a jack-of-all-trades here, and we're lucky that we get to do so much. A lot of people reminisce about coming out in the past for the Virginia State Fair, or the Strawberry Hill steeplechase races, or in the '90s when our amphitheater first came to life. It's amazing how much has changed, and how much we continue to grow."

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# THE RP FUNDING CENTER





# Right now, there's momentum

**T**he RP Funding Center is a convention and entertainment complex in Lakeland, Florida, comprising two exhibition halls, an arena, and a theater. Currently, it is home to the Florida Tropics SC of the Major Arena Soccer League and the Lakeland Magic, the Orlando Magic's affiliate in the NBA G League.

According to Executive Director, Tony Camarillo, the idea of a convention center in Lakeland had been talked about since the 1960s, and construction actually began in 1972 and completed two years later. "At that juncture, the building was titled the Lakeland Civic Center," he recounts. "At the time, it was sort of an anomaly; a one-of-a-kind facility in Central Florida. It became a mecca for music and entertainment for quite a few years through the '70s and '80s – mostly rock 'n' roll. People like Elvis Presley, the Rolling Stones, Michael Jackson, U2, Bruce Springsteen, to name a few, played there."

"The name changed to the Lakeland Center in 1994, when we pretty much doubled the size of the building," Camarillo continues. "Sikes Hall doubled in size; a second Exhibit Hall was

added, as well as renovations to the Youkey Theatre and Jenkins Arena. Every space received an upgrade with this \$20 million expansion."

The City of Lakeland sits midway between Orlando to the east and Tampa to the west, and over the last few decades both of those cities have built and expanded large convention centers that began to compete vigorously with the Lakeland Center for business. But Camarillo stresses that the Center has several competitive advantages. First of all, there's the new name. "In May 2017, we became the RP Funding Center," he explains. "It's a revenue driver for us to the tune of about \$150,000 a year, and it also brings us a lot of exposure. RP Funding is a mortgage and real estate company that operates mostly out of Central Florida; their advertising is wide-ranging and we saw it as a great opportunity to build a brand, here. Second, in addition to great customer service, the Center has a great food service team, here. People love the food," Camarillo asserts. Finally, the Center is what he calls "that triple threat. We have the arena, we have the theater, and we have the meeting space, so our business has become more multi-faceted."

## AT A GLANCE

### THE RP FUNDING CENTER

- WHAT:** A convention and entertainment complex
- WHERE:** Lakeland, Florida
- WEBSITE:** [www.rpfundingcenter.com](http://www.rpfundingcenter.com)



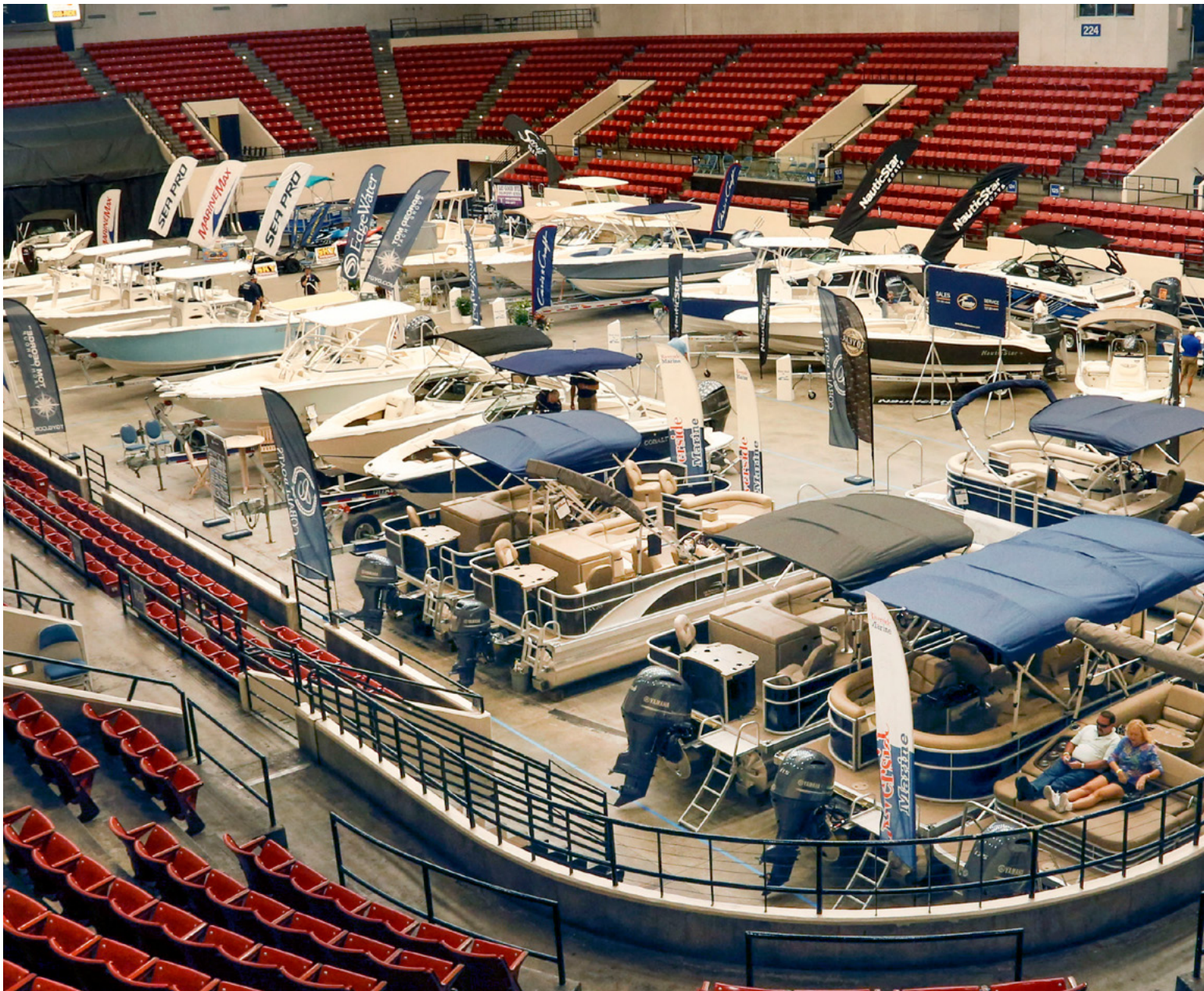


## THE RP FUNDING CENTER

“There are competitors out there,” Director of Sales, John Oney, agrees. “Our main competitors are the Ocean Center in Daytona, and, of course, the two large conventions centers to our east and to our west. But Lakeland proves to be the middle ground. We’re right off of I-4, which is an easy in and out from Tampa International and Orlando International, so we’re in a good spot, there. And being city-owned and operated, and a non-union facility, gives us a leg up on our competitors. With all the services that we have in-house: AV, F&B, we have the opportunity to control costs. When you talk to meeting planners and they look at the RP Funding Center, the value that we provide is tremendous. So, we hang our

hat on the fact that we’re a value destination, we’re family-friendly, and there’s a ton of things to do here in Lakeland, outside their event.”

Today, the RP Funding Center hosts between 400 to 500 events a year; everything from minor league, professional sports teams – hockey, indoor soccer, and basketball – to meetings, cheerleading events, concerts, etc. It is staffed by 40 full-time employees plus seasonal and part-time staff as needed. And it has recently completed a \$14-plus million renovation. “The building was becoming a little bit dated,” Oney explains. “So, we have new carpet and flooring and walls throughout the building. We’re more of a









hotel-quality space; there are soft surfaces where there were hard ones before; it's a warmer feel."

The arena upgrades include new LED video boards, a basketball court, courtside seating, showers, an expanded press box, and an improved locker area and offices for the G League's Lakeland Magic. The theater is now equipped with new seats, a new stage curtain, and new paint and carpeting are on the way. All meeting rooms got new paint and carpeting, as well. "We've been pretty up-to-date with internet and Wi-Fi service, but that is always something we're striving to improve upon," Oney adds. "So, we are in a good place, right now, but there are going to be some upgrades to keep up with technology; it's an ongoing thing. Lighting throughout has been replaced by LED lighting, so we have a good handle on that, not only from a clean looking standpoint, but also from a cost standpoint; it's made a major impact on our budget and energy consumption."

Oney says that the Center has also done a "pretty good job with our green initiatives. We've got solar panels on the Sikes Hall, which cover the entire rooftop and that helps supplement our energy bill, so we can save some costs for our booth vendors," he explains. "We've got a premium coat of sustainable roofing and waterproofing system on all the surfaces, so that will help. And we've got a pretty substantial trash program; we do have the recycle bins and the trash bins and we try to

do the best that we can to 'divide and conquer' the waste, here. We have an onsite food and beverage team with Spectra Foods that, I'm sure, is looking at composting in the future. But, we wanted to get this renovation thing going forward, and then move forward with those other initiatives."

Lastly, as part of the renovation, Oney says that in response to feedback from meeting planners and attendees, the Center has created a lounge area and visitors' center. "The whole renovation was a collaboration, not just with the City of Lakeland, but with Visit Central Florida, which is our tourism partner," he notes. "The Visitor Center kiosk is an area that has fast charging stations and an area where attendees can purchase attraction tickets – Disney, Sea World, Busch Gardens, Legoland. We tried to soften the convention center feel so when folks have meetings with us, they also have places to network and relax and enjoy the scenery. We've got a whole wall that has beautiful artwork. When they're not studying or working or training, they can peruse the artwork. Those are the things we're trying to sell to the meeting planners."

Going forward, Camarillo reports that the Center figures prominently in the City of Lakeland's Master Plan as a key sports and entertainment anchor. "One of the things on the horizon is an idea to add an outdoor soccer stadium. That's part of the plan that's being produced," he states. In fact, all of the necessary infrastructure is already









in place, including power, water, and sewer lines for a 3,500-seat stadium between Veterans Memorial Park and the RP Funding Center, with land available to expand the stadium with an additional 1,500 seats, if necessary. “We hope to get more development, from that, whether it’s retail, restaurant, apartments and/or condos,” he adds. “So we’re excited to be part of that. We already have a developer that’s building a hotel to the east of us. We sold them our east parking lot, so they’re putting in a Marriott Spring Hill Suites. We already have a Hyatt Place on property, so that will double our hotel rooms and

we believe that will be a huge influx for us.”

“If I had to sum up in one word what’s going on here, that word would be ‘energy,’” says Oney. “In the last couple of years, certainly with our renovation, the naming rights, the addition of the Lakeland Magic and the Florida Tropics, it’s creating a new vibe; not just at the venue, here, but in downtown. The other word to describe what’s happening here is ‘connectivity.’ Our venue is an anchor and we’re trying to connect it with the downtown area. You’ve got five blocks between us and downtown and we’re trying to make that





feel a lot shorter. I think with all the concepts and ideas in the Master Plan, that connectivity is going to be huge for us, in the future. So, we're really excited about that. When I speak to meeting planners and event managers from across the country, and we tell them our story, it seems that that's the thing that lights them up and gets them interested - there's a lot of activity. Right now, we've got some momentum."



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# The SeaGate Conve



## AT A GLANCE

## THE SEAGATE CONVENTION CENTRE

**WHAT:** A performing arts and convention venue

**WHERE:** Toledo, Ohio

**WEBSITE:** [www.toledo-seagate.com](http://www.toledo-seagate.com)



# ntion Centre

## DOING BUSINESS IN TOLEDO

The SeaGate Convention Centre is a convention center located in downtown Toledo, Ohio. Opened in 1987, the Centre's exhibit hall has approximately 75,000 square feet of space and seats up to 5,100 for a banquet, 9,000 for a meeting, and 4,000 in a classroom configuration. It can be divided into three smaller halls, and, when used for concerts and stage shows, can seat 2,000, 3,000, or 5,900, depending on how many halls are utilized. The Centre also features over 17,000 square feet of additional meeting space.

Originally owned in partnership by the City of Toledo, Lucas County, and the University of Toledo, today, Lucas County is the sole owner of the Convention Centre which, since 2008, has been managed by the SMG Corporation, a worldwide venue management group headquartered in West Conshohocken, Pennsylvania that specializes in managing publicly-owned facilities. SMG also operates the nearby Huntington Center, an 8,000-seat, multi-purpose arena that was completed in 2009 to replace the now-demolished Toledo Sports Arena.

Steve Miller, SeaGate's General Manager says that the Centre hosts between 135-160 events a year. "We have the public shows – the RV Show, the Home Show, the Auto Show, and we do a lot of sports business - youth wrestling, youth

cheerleading, youth gymnastics," he reports. "We also do some Ohio State association business and quite a few regional corporate events. We don't do a lot of national business; our focus is on the local and regional, and, obviously, we don't compete with the bigger markets that have much more space than us. We compete on the state association business with Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dayton, and Akron, with the type of shows that would fit in our facility. For example, the Ohio Library Association rotates around the state and we would compete with a majority of the larger cities in Ohio. On a regional basis, we compete with Akron, Dayton, Cincinnati, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, Grand Rapids, Michigan,







Lansing, Michigan, and, Lexington, Kentucky.”

Helping SeaGate to compete is its participation in SMG’s robust national program that all of its managed facilities follow. “When you come to our facility, you’re going to get that consistency with the SMG policies and procedures, and how we do business,” Miller states. “Our competitive advantage is our staff and the service levels we’re able to provide.” He does admit, however, to some of the Centre’s drawbacks: “We have an older, tired facility that’s been around for quite a few years

and hasn’t had a lot of tender loving care. And our hotel property situation isn’t the greatest, right now, either.” That being said, the playing field is about to be further leveled via some new construction projects, recently announced by the Lucas County Board of Commissioners.

This summer will see the start of a \$70 million project with three aspects: a 15-20,000-sq.-ft. ballroom, capable of seating up to 1,000, where the entrance to an underground parking structure now exists; a new exterior for the 32-year-old





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Centre; and a new, 200-room dual branded Hyatt Hotel. The 47-year-old Hotel Seagate, which now is partially demolished and has no walls, will be redeveloped into a Hyatt Place hotel with 128 nightly rooms, and a Hyatt House extended stay hotel with 68 suites with full kitchens. “It’s going to be financed with bonds, debt through short-term loans taken out by the County, the hotel/motel tax, and we’re also working on a naming rights deal we’re very close to signing,” says Miller. The project, slated for completion in a little more than two years, is expected to double the impact of visitors to Toledo to \$50 million, annually. Miller adds that, once the expansion gets started, the Centre is also going to be upgrading its technology systems “to make sure we’re keeping up with what the latest and greatest needs to be for convention centers.”

Meanwhile, SeaGate can claim that it already leads the pack when it comes to sustainability practices and programs. It has earned a LEED existing building certification, and Miller says that the

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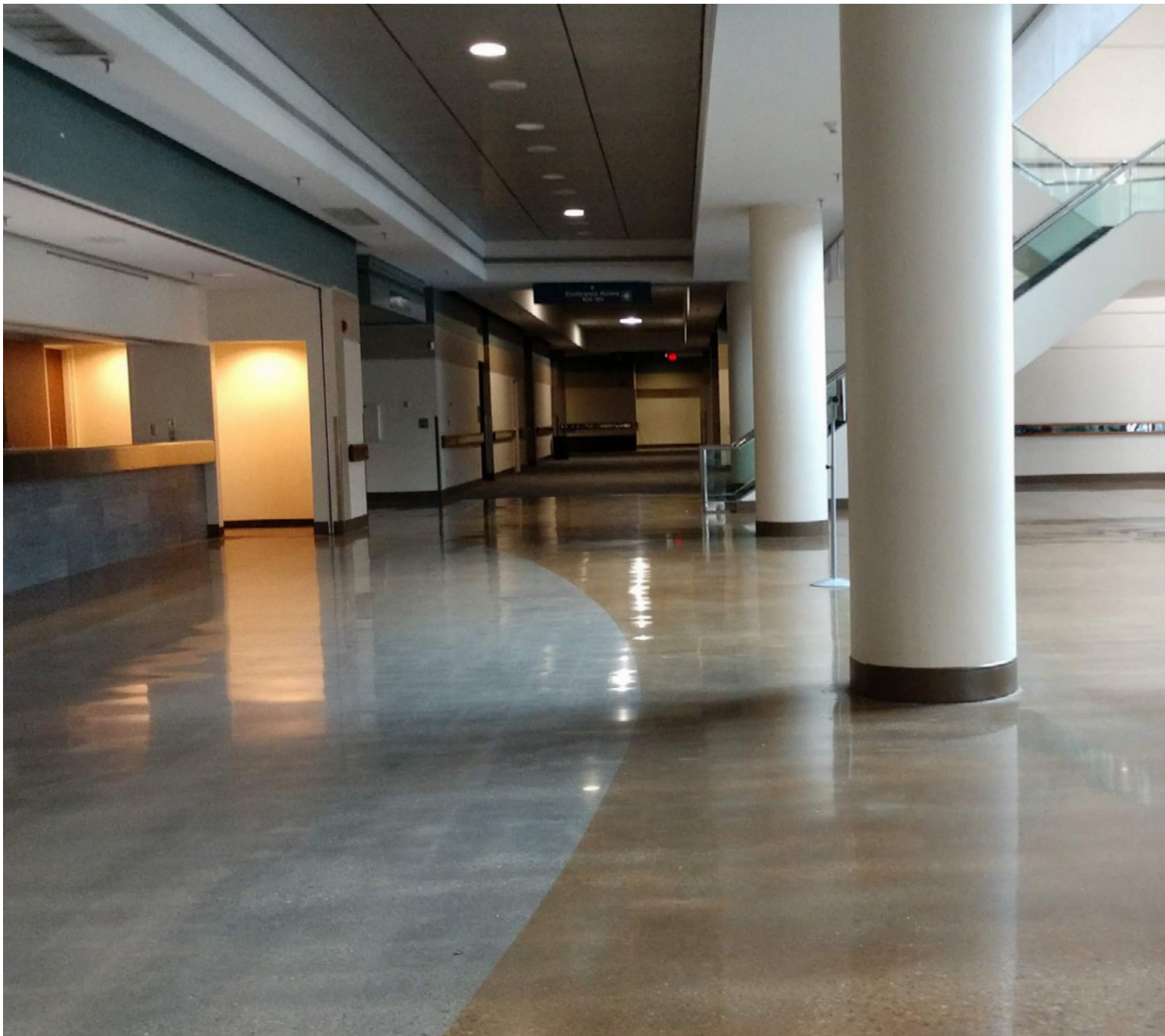
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## THE SEAGATE CONVENTION CENTRE

Centre has a robust paper, plastic, and aluminum recycling program, and is working on adding a food recycling program, as well. “We’ve also done a lot of energy upgrades,” he states. “We have micro turbines in the facility, which are, in essence, gas-fired engines that make their own electricity. So, as natural gas is getting cheaper and cheaper, we get our turbines running with natural gas to turn that into electricity. We’ve also upgraded all of our lighting systems to LED to try and save that energy cost. So, we’re working very hard to make the building as energy-efficient as we possibly can.”

While awaiting the new updates, Miller touts the City of Toledo, itself, as a good reason for meeting planners to consider the SeaGate Convention Centre as an attractive site for their next event. “We’re very accessible; we’re right at the crossroads of I-75 going north and south, and the Ohio Turnpike, or I-80 and I-90 going east and west, so it’s very easy to get here,” he remarks. “The Detroit Metro Airport is only 45 minutes away, so there are a lot of direct flights going in and out, not only nationally, but internationally. And there are lots of things to do in Toledo. We have a lot of great





amenities – we were voted the Number One minor league sports town in 2018 by Sports Business Journal; our city is home to one of the top zoos in the country – the Toledo Zoo; the Imagination Station science museum thrills young and old; The Toledo Museum of Art has earned a global reputation for the quality of collections and an architecturally significant campus; additionally our park systems are second to none in this region. We have a lot to boast about in Toledo!”

“As far as the Centre – when you come here, we’re

going to take great care of you; you’re going to have a great experience, and, you’re going to want to come back. And, I think the expansion project coming down the pike is going to be a big positive for us, not only as a convention center, but as a market to really get our name back on the map. I think we’ve been below the radar screen quite a bit for the last five to eight years. And, now that we’ve got some great positive things to announce, I think people are going to get excited again to do their business in Toledo.”

---



## PREFERRED VENDORS

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# Manufacturing View



## NATIONAL WELDING CORPORATION



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National Welding Corporation (NWC) is an innovative solutions contract welding company with “mega-sized experience.” Addressing customers’ complex welding management challenges with dependable, cost-effective performance is an NWC specialty. The company has performed production welding services from Boston, Massachusetts to Anchorage, Alaska; from tunnel work, 450 feet underground to bridge work 120 feet above ground. Most projects performed by NWC remove welding from the contractor’s critical path; taking production welding practices to the field, using custom-designed welding trucks, trailers, and rigging equipment, so the contractor can focus on more lucrative portions of the work.

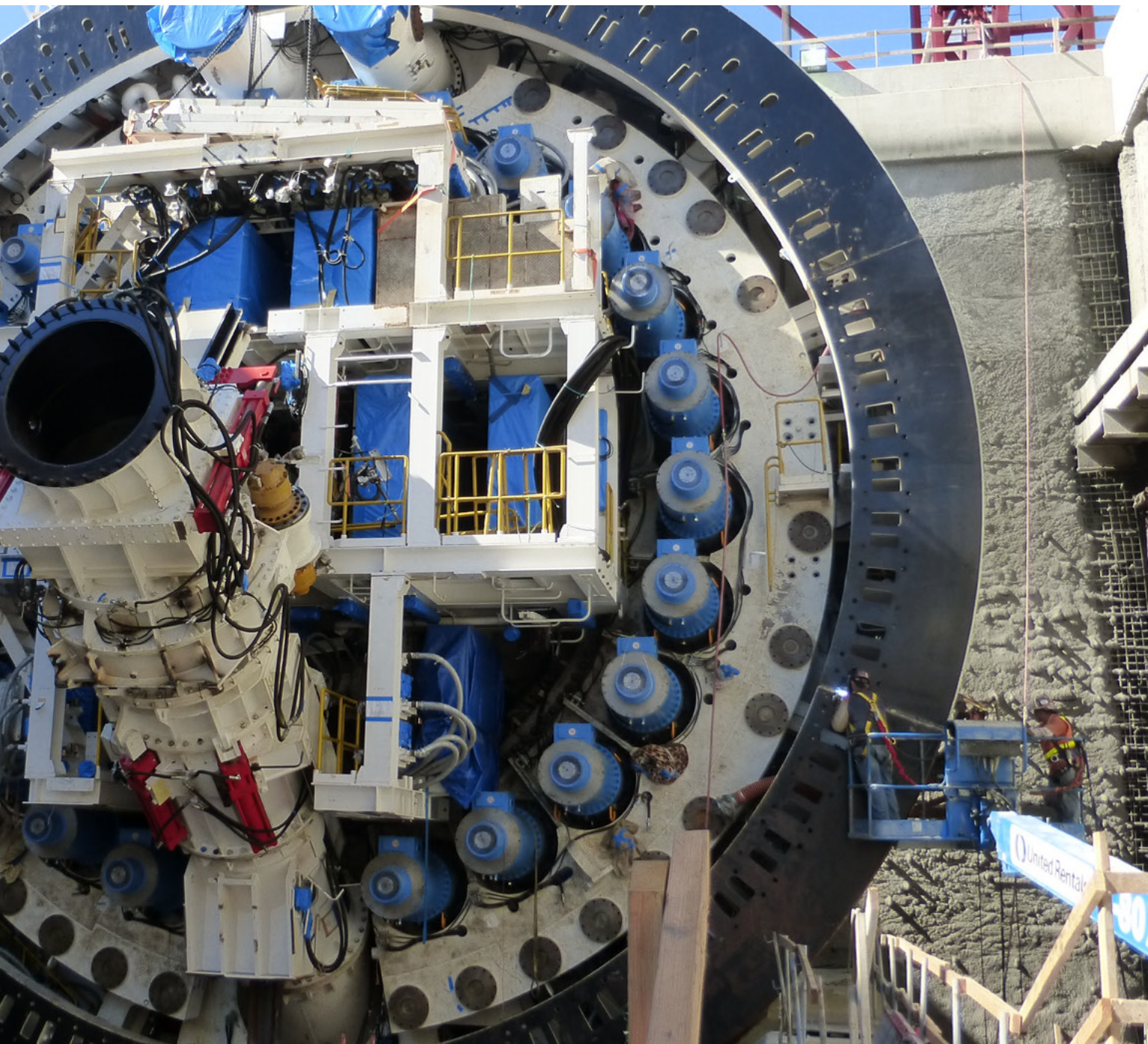
That being said, the true measure of the company’s success comes from its inspiring team culture, where management, workers, customers, and suppliers are all treated as family. Business View Magazine recently asked National Welding Corporation President, Nash Williams, about the history, current operations, and future goals of this ambitious company he formed two decades ago. The following is an edited transcript of that conversation, along with stories of some amazing projects they’ve accomplished.

**BVM:** How did NWC come into being?

**Williams:** “I founded National Welding Corporation just over 20 years ago (1997). I had previously been involved in the utility construction business since the late ‘70s, and started NWC after recognizing the nationwide need for high-production, field-welding services. While manual/stick welding is readily available throughout the country, the use of field-automated systems is not prevalent. While pursuing the welding business, I was solicited to join the AWWA (American Water Works Association) and ASCE (American Society of Civil







## AT A GLANCE

# NATIONAL WELDING CORPORATION

**WHAT:** Innovative solutions contract welding company

**WHERE:** Midvale, Utah

**WEBSITE:** [www.national-welding.com](http://www.national-welding.com)

Engineers) committees that write the standards. Over time, I became the Chairman over a couple standards involving large diameter water pipe and hydroelectric penstocks. Bryan Hansen, our Vice President, and Gedas Grazulis, our Operations Engineer, are key to our operations and also involved with these standards. The Associations have been instrumental to our evolution.

“As the company grew, concurrently, the U.S. infrastructure was in search of methods





to rehabilitate large steel pipelines. So, we coupled our welding and developed innovative methods to install steel liners within tunnels and pipelines. The difficult-to-perform projects seem to be the best and most fitting opportunities for our company.”

**BVM:** What do the firm’s operations and capabilities encompass?

**Williams:** “At NWC, we consider ourselves a specialty subcontractor for the heavy civil construction industry and target unique work scopes that match our abilities. A strong market for us is to provide innovative solutions for tunnel/pipeline rehabilitation and solve

constructability problems by designing one-off equipment. The best way to describe this capability is by telling you about a few projects.

“We were awarded a hydroelectric project in rural Georgia that required us to install a 12’ diameter pipe made from 1” thick steel plate to reline an existing 1,000’ long penstock through the middle of a dam. The challenge was that each pipe section weighed 50,000 pounds and the existing tunnel only allowed 8” of annular clearance. While traveling through the tunnel, our system also had to manipulate the pipe in every axis, due to irregularities within the existing tunnel which was built in the early 1900s. It was a good challenge.







“Another interesting project was the installation of a 72” steel pipe through a two-mile-long tunnel located beneath New York harbor crossing between Staten Island and Brooklyn. From the tunnel portal on Staten Island, the first piece of pipe had to be hauled by locomotive to Brooklyn. Along the way, the tunnel had vertical misalignment which required the pipe to be installed with some sections 4’ above the tunnel floor, yet other sections had only inches of floor clearance. Again, we had to create a system to handle the variables.

“In addition to our specialty tunnel work, we provide and manage skilled, high-production welders for heavy wall steel construction projects. We have worked on more than 250 projects in over 40 States, including some of the more difficult areas such as Boston, New York, Chicago, and San Francisco. Our projects have included bridge seismic upgrades, welding structural supports for subway stations in Manhattan, assembly and welding of a large

cooling pipe at the nation’s largest rocket test stands, and pipelines up to 33’ in diameter.

“NWC has several recognizable achievements, including welding the main piping for the country’s largest water treatment plant, located in NY. We provided the welding services to assemble the world’s largest tunnel boring machine in Seattle (Big Bertha). We also assembled and welded the recirculating cool pipe for the nation’s largest nuclear power plant. Although we have experienced many novel projects, it’s our strength to adapt to a variety of projects which has treated us well.”

**BVM:** How does enhanced technology and equipment come into play for creating custom solutions?

**Williams:** “Using computer design we build custom pipe/material transportation handling equipment in-house which allows us direct control over our projects. Our ability to create





and design specialty equipment specific to a project creates a nice package for our clients and lends itself to expedited performance. It's still amazing to me that we can create a 3D model for a unique piece of equipment, operate the equipment within a computer-generated work space, and verify it will work. We then convert the model to piece drawings and send them to our fabricator, electronically, who enters the part into their cutting machines. We receive those parts for assembly, usually, within a week.

“Our unique pipe carriers have allowed the rehabilitation of tunnels and pipelines previously thought to be obsolete and in need of replacement. Over the years, we have developed an arsenal of custom equipment packages which are intended to improve efficiency of our work force. Production welding skids and trailers combine welding machine, gas bottles, and tools all in a single package that can be handled by crane or a track hoe to the work area. Our tunnel packages are designed to be low profile and can be steered

from both directions. Additional equipment includes a diesel-powered workman cart which can carry a worker with equipment through pipeline down to 48” in diameter and miles in length. These carts are designed with fume scrubbers to allow for underground operation.

“As far as capital investments, we are focused on infrastructure expansion, upgrades, and rehabilitation. We have developed patented systems to fortify the structural integrity of pipelines that can also be used for bridge columns upgrades. When we see the need for unique equipment, or a novel approach to improve the progress rate for a project, we don't hesitate to develop what is needed for optimal performance. From an environmental standpoint, our developed tunnel equipment includes treatment of exhaust fume to acceptable levels for confined spaces. We also utilize multi-unit electric power welding machines, which avoids the need for numerous engine-driven welders.”



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**BVM:** What is the significance of relationships to the growth of your business?

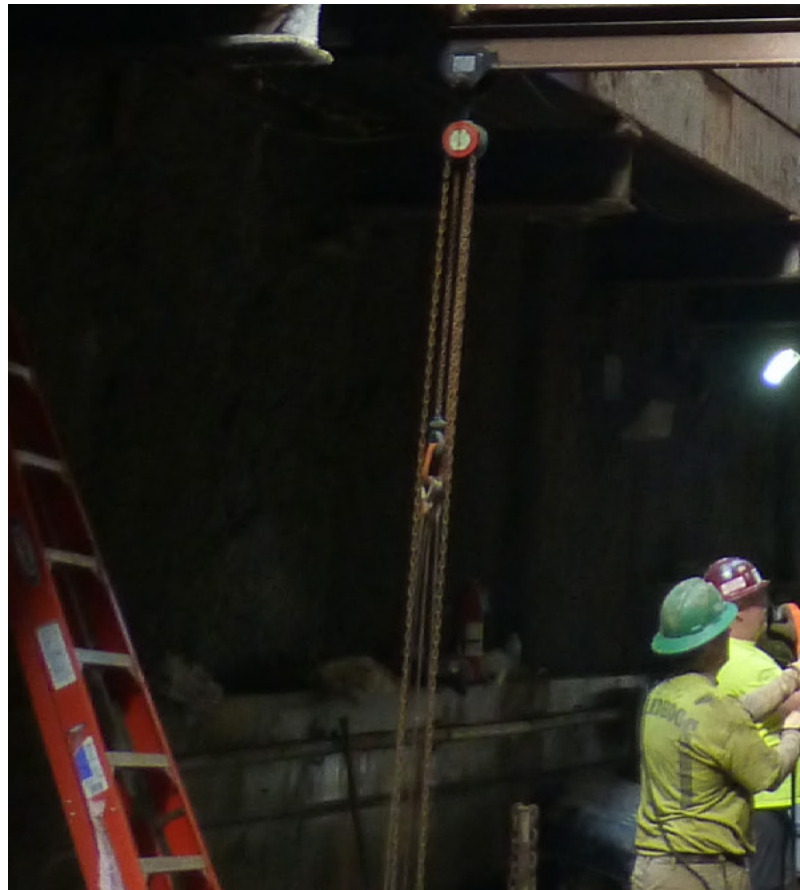
**Williams:** “We work with some of the largest heavy civil contractors in the world and we’re often a small, but critical, component on multi-billion-dollar projects. Despite their size, the hierarchies of these companies all seem to know each other. Performance is critical, as the memory of one bad job lingers long after that of a hundred good projects. NWC frequently uses large national supply houses to provide consistent/familiar equipment and materials to our work force, although local suppliers are sometimes a better option when our work schedule runs around the clock or the project is in a remote location. We pay our suppliers early and strive to take good care of them, as keeping them happy facilitates great support when we need their help.”

**BVM:** Speaking to company culture, why would someone want to work for NWC?

**Williams:** “To begin with, our motto is ‘When it’s got to be done now and it’s got to be done right.’ The company, by design, feels like an extension of family and this pertains to all levels. Workers are trained to treat management as a team player that can facilitate a good work environment. And management is trained to treat all workers with respect, as they are able to perform tasks you are either unwilling or unable to perform. Without this mutual support, a project can go tragically bad. Our open forum culture welcomes new ideas and concepts. We have found that encouraging others to share concepts for an application can be the catalyst needed for the best solutions.”

**BVM:** How do you market the company?

**Williams:** “Past performance of difficult projects over 20 years tends to get noticed by our peers and publications, which support strong word-of-mouth exposure. Our website has been devised to be a resource for the welding industry and provide tools for the pipe welding industry. Current plans include a weld cost estimator with general weld production rate guidance for field-welding applications. We also mail out a



photographic calendar which showcases a dozen or so projects we worked on through the previous year. Initially, our website was not expected to generate business, but instead was intended to demonstrate our ability and presence to our current/future clients. We are now intending to generate business using the website by becoming a major resource to our industry and developing new markets utilizing that knowledge.

“Looking to the next five years, we intend to gain market share via our unique ability to adapt material handling methods, which are often combined with welding, and to follow the growth expected in the infrastructure market. There is a lot of creativity involved in our specialty. Our focus on novel approaches for rehabilitation of pipelines provides a good market opportunity for us.”





## PREFERRED VENDOR

- **Montana Fabrication Works LLC.**  
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## ASSOCIATION AT A GLANCE

# THE PRESSURE VESSEL MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

- WHAT:** A national organization representing manufacturers of pressure vessels
- WHERE:** Glen Ellyn, Illinois
- WEBSITE:** [www.pvma.org](http://www.pvma.org)



# The Pressure Vessel Manufacturers ASSOCIATION

Recently, Business View Magazine submitted several written questions to members of the Pressure Vessel Manufacturers Association (PVMA) to find out more about the Association's mandate and services. The following is an edited transcript of that correspondence:

**BVM:** Can you tell us a little about the history of the Association? What was in

the minds of its founders? What was the need that the Association felt had to be filled? What was its original mission and did it change over the years?

**Larry Dildine, PVMA President and President of Phoenix Forge Group:** "The Pressure Vessels Manufacturers Association is a Chicago-based trade association representing manufacturers of pressure vessels along with their suppliers





& service companies. The PVMA was formed in 1975 to serve as a voice of the industry in matters pertaining to regulations, codes, and standards governing the design and manufacture of pressure vessels. Its main purpose was to assure representation in accordance with the ASME (American Society of Mechanical Engineers) Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code, Section VIII, Division 1 and 2. To this day, PVMA maintains a respectful liaison with code writing and safety enforcement agencies such as the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and The National Board of Boiler & Pressure Vessel Inspectors.”

**Alan Ryshavy, PVMA Board Member and President of Penway Inc.:** “PVMA was started by a handful of companies that made small ASME vessels for air service, propane, HVAC, and other industries. Most of the vessels manufactured by these companies were mass produced to sustain economies of scale. Buckeye Boiler, John Wood Co., Kargard, and Brunner Engineering were some of the first founding companies. Most,

if not all, operate under different names now due to differing mergers and acquisitions.

“All of these companies had their own individual problems with the ASME code rules at the time. Most of the rules were created by individuals from large engineering firms who volunteered their time to ASME code committees. Most of these individual’s firms built large high pressure vessels, but not high volume multiple duplicate tanks. Many of the PVMA’s founding company members that attended the ASME meetings complained that their companies were being treated unfairly. The rules simply didn’t apply well for the types of products they were producing. Hence, the PVMA was created as a universal voice for these companies.

“Over time, suppliers were added as associate members, other ASME UG-90 c(2) (multiple duplicate manufactured vessels) shops joined, and later the National Board of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors was asked to send











representation to attend the meetings as well. Throughout the years, great progress has been made in revising the ASME Code to include sections that are more specific to the multiple duplicate vessel manufacturers.”

**Jeff Church, PVMA Executive Director:** “In its short history, PVMA has established a proven record for communicating fabricator needs and viewpoints - based on industry consensus - to code-writing and enforcement agencies, including the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, the National Board of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors and appropriate state agencies.”

**BVM:** What is PVMA’s membership? Has

the number changed significantly over the years, and if so, why? Are there different tiers of membership? Are there any associate members from different industries? How do you communicate with the membership? What are the benefits of membership?

**Larry Dildine:** “The membership represents the very best and well-known industry manufacturers of multiple duplicate ASME Section VIII (c) (2) shops. The membership further includes manufacturers of specialty design pressure vessels. Supplier members consist of fittings, heads, welding, steel, etc. components to the vessels. Service members consist of major insurance companies, software, etc.





“Over the years the membership has seen a lot of consolidation but remains stronger than ever as a voice for their industry. We hear, continuously, from our membership about the tremendous value they receive in having an ASME consultant report on issues before they become part of the permanent codes and standards. Without the PVMA consultant keeping everyone apprised of proposed changes, there could be new codes and standards that would have an adverse impact on the membership’s competitiveness.”

**Jeff Church:** “PVMA gives members the opportunity to exchange information on technical and manufacturing issues, and discuss the impact of regulations and standards on their operations.

PVMA positions are communicated to code-writing and standards-making agencies giving even the smallest manufacturer a voice in development of regulations and their application. Members participate in a wide-range of PVMA programs that benefit their companies and the pressure vessel industry including association meetings, statistical programs, technical research and liaison/monitoring of various entities which impact on the industry.”

**BVM:** What is the size of the Association’s staff? What do they do? What are their main priorities? Are there any major changes planned for the near or long-term future?







**Jeff Church:** PVMA is managed by an Association Management Company, CM Services, Inc. CM Services has been managing trade associations for over 40 years. Their staff develops, maintains, and advances PVMA's mission, which is being the voice of the industry in matters pertaining to regulations, standards, and codes to which the industry is subject."

**BVM:** What does the landscape look like for the industry over the coming decade? How will the Association continue to be a viable voice for the industry?

**Larry Dildine:** "The industry has a very positive outlook especially with all the enthusiasm to maintain and promote USA manufacturing. PVMA will continue to retain an ASME consultant and liaison with National Board of Boiler & Pressure Vessels to make certain their input is heard and has significant input on future codes, standards & regulatory changes.

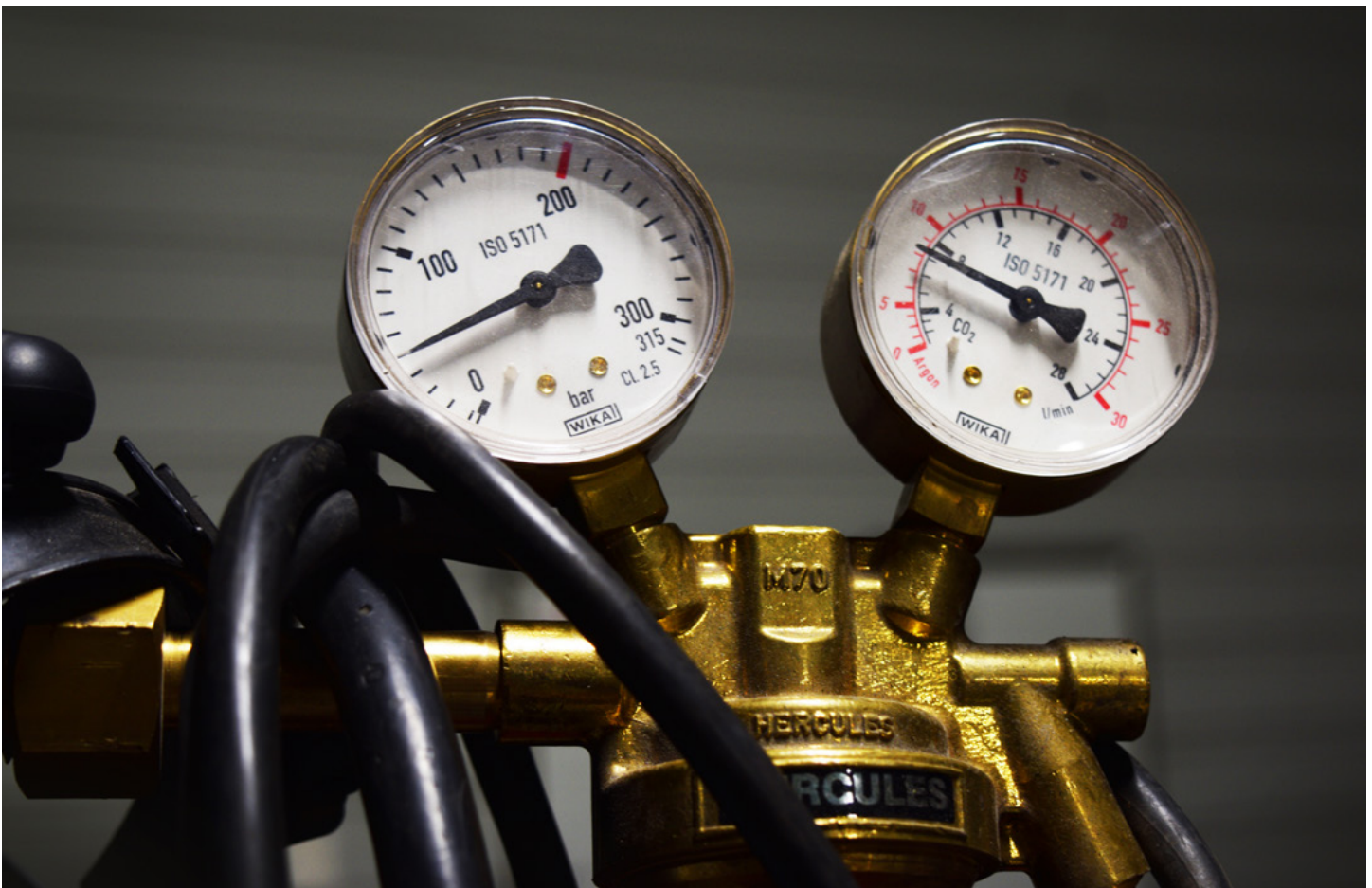
**BVM:** If you were writing a profile on the Association, what are the salient points that you would like a reader to take away from it?

**Larry Dildine:** "PVMA provides the voice for the members to guard against costly errors in proposed codes, standards and regulatory changes.

PVMA retains an ASME Consultant that serves on applicable ASME committees and provides a quarterly report of items of interest and concern to the group.

PVMA members are proactive on critical issues such as how best to deal with the ever changing codes, standards, and regulations.

PVMA members maintain a positive working relationship with The National Board of Boiler & Pressure Vessel Inspectors."









# COMMERCIAL METAL FORMING

## Playing the infinite game

To some, the making of carbon, steel, and aluminum tank heads and tank accessories might seem like a strictly prosaic endeavor.

Bob Messaros, on the other hand, President & CEO of Commercial Metal Forming (CMF), the leading tank head manufacturer in the U.S., has more poetic, even mystical, ways of describing his business. “We’ve defined it as ‘playing the infinite game,’” he avers. “It’s about constantly driving towards something new and different; constantly improving every day and being an advocate for our customers;

helping them look at the world differently and offering them better economic solutions.”

“The dilemma in that is, most of the time, they don’t understand what the unmet need is,” Messaros continues. “So, our purpose in creating value for our customer is to work across their entire horizon of disciplines – engineering, design, production, purchasing, quality – to solve problems that exist in the application or to look for better economic solutions. So, it’s all about value creation; it’s not about getting an order, today. Yes,

### AT A GLANCE

## COMMERCIAL METAL FORMING

- WHAT:** A tank head manufacturer
- WHERE:** Headquarters in Youngstown, Ohio
- WEBSITE:** [www.cmforming.com](http://www.cmforming.com)





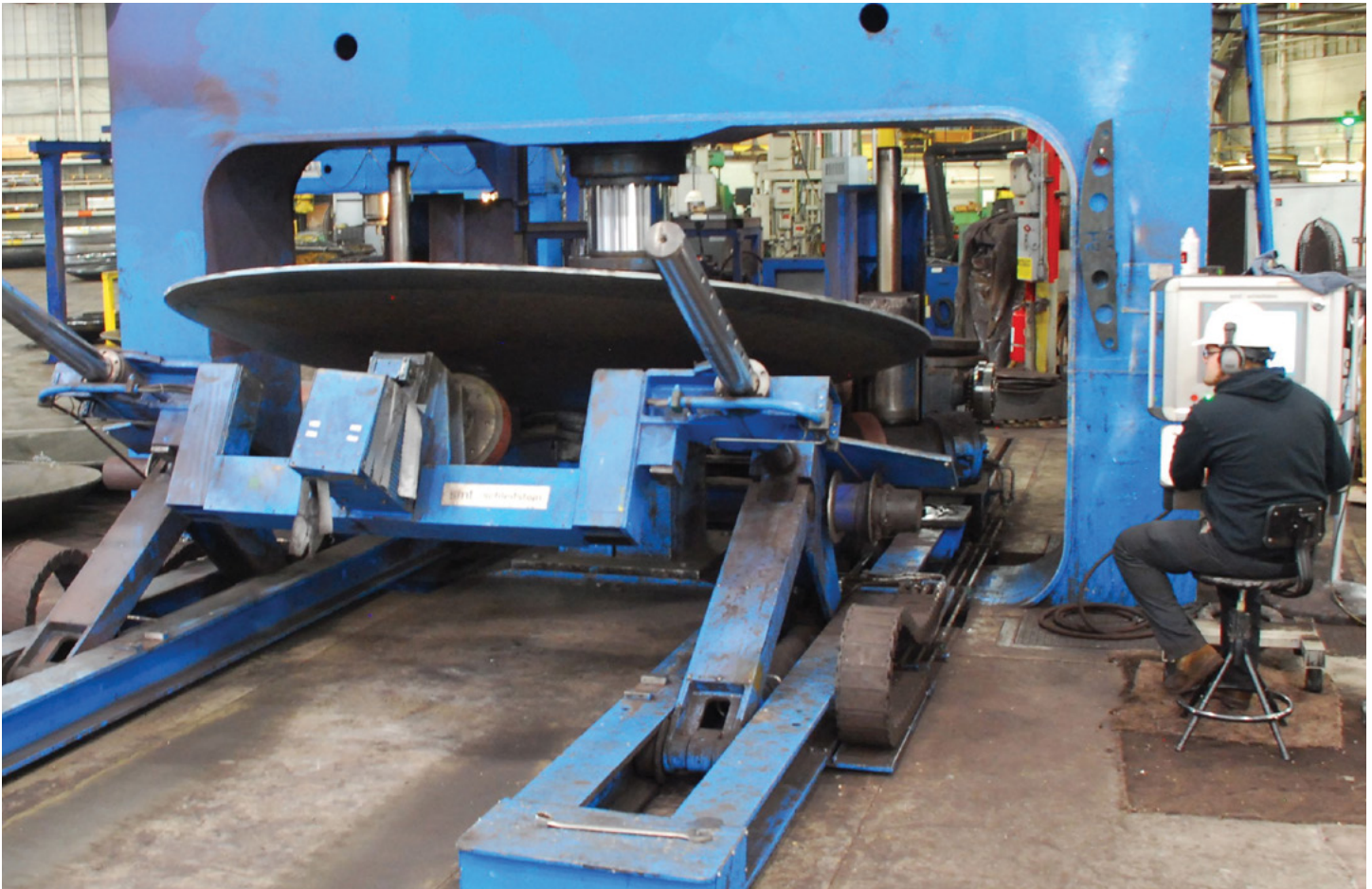
it's important to grow the bottom line, but that only happens if you're looking at the horizon and trying to collaborate with customers on where they want to go and how we can be an advocate for them and a resource to be part of that success.”

Of course, there are more prosaic facts concerning Commercial Metal Forming: the company had its origin in 1920, as a business unit of Commercial Shearing and Stamping, a privately-held firm, owned by the Cushwa family. It went public in the 1960s as Commercial Intertech, after its product line had evolved into hydraulics and steel

tunnel plates. In 2000, Parker Hannifin purchased Commercial Intertech, kept the hydraulic division, but spun off the metal stamping operation a year later. Since then, Commercial Metal Forming has been owned by a variety of private equity groups.

Today, CMF supplies over 400 different tank head and tank accessory items to over 3,000 customers throughout the U.S, Canada, the Middle East, and South America, in 30 different market segments, including: air receivers, petrochemical, LP Gas, oil field, construction equipment, rail and truck transportation, oil and gas separation, food





processing, and filtration. Other product lines include medical chair and instrument bases, valve actuator and diaphragm covers, lawn mower decks, and commercial dishwasher components.

“From a market presence standpoint, we’re the largest independent tank head manufacturer in the U.S.,” says Messaros. “There are tank heads in all kinds of products. We could be providing pressure vessel heads to the petrochemical, oil, and gas industry for fracking plants that would be



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making propyl ethylene products, to a small air compressor you might even have in your garage to inflate the tires on your car or your bike. So, it's very diverse. We make heads as small as four inches in diameter, up to 300 inches in diameter."

"We're the only tank head producer that has multiple facilities," he continues. "We have three facilities in the U.S. - Youngstown, Ohio is the largest; followed by Orange County, California; and then Saginaw, Texas. In each manufacturing facility, we have redundant capabilities to allow us ultimate flexibility for our customers. In manufacturing, things do happen – a press goes down. So, we have the ability to move that application to another process and meet the needs of the customer. In each of the manufacturing facilities, we also have distribution centers that allow us to set up lean programs for some of the larger customers that help them be more efficient and lower costs."

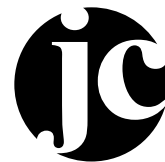
Going forward, Messaros says that CMF will always look to invest in new machines and equipment,

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as it continues to explore new capabilities. In the past, the company has made several key, strategic acquisitions which have helped it become more successful, and this coming summer, it is rolling out what he calls “one of the largest machine equipment investments this company has made in its history. When we talk about future investments and acquisitions, we do it from a customer point of view,” he adds. “How can this investment in new equipment or this acquisition parlay into future successes for our customers? So, in August, we’ll be launching with a new, very lean manufacturing line that can change the game in the marketplace for our customers in a specific diameter range - and us.”

CMF will also continue to invest in people. “It’s everybody’s responsibility to be looking





for new talent,” Messaros states. “A continued increase in talent and capability translates into doing different things within the marketplace that will further create more value for us as a critical partner to our customers.”

Currently, CMF has about 175 employees. “From a people standpoint, it’s not an enormously large company,” Messaros admits. “We’re a very lean organization, but our competitive advantage starts with our people and what drives them. And what makes us unique is our culture. We’ve accepted the responsibility for the success of every person we touch. So, consequently, the viewpoint that we have concerning our employees is: how do we make a difference in their world? Because that translates into making a difference in our customers’ world.”

“The biggest thing about Commercial is that it’s driven by a culture of purpose,” Messaros states, waxing poetic, again. “It’s all about your purpose and why you exist; how are you fulfilling that? Some days you fulfill it well by your actions and other days, you screw it up. That’s part of life. We do a good job, internally, of assessing ourselves, everyday, and we’ve got a high level of people who understand, ‘Did I create value, today, or not?’ And it all starts with creating value for the customer. It can be as simple as a customer calling up with a problem. Then it becomes our problem to solve. It’s a complement to the ‘infinite game,’ in that it’s a journey. And success is a very long-term view.”

## PREFERRED VENDORS

- **American Alloy Steel**  
*www.aasteel.com*
- **JC Enterprise**  
*jhcent@zoominternet.net*





BV<sub>m</sub>



# General Aviation



## REDDING MUNICIPAL AIRPORT



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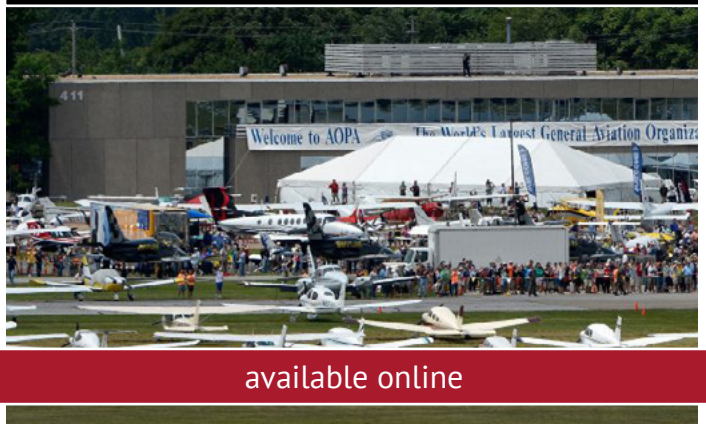
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# Redding Municipal AIRPORT

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OPPORTUNITY AWAITS





Redding Municipal Airport is a general aviation and commercial airport located six miles southeast of the City of Redding in Shasta County, California. It is one of two airports operating under the jurisdiction of the city's Department of Public Works Airports Division, the other being Benton Airpark, situated on 158 acres on Redding's west side. Benton Airpark was the town's first airport, purchased in 1920 for the purpose of developing an aerial landing space.

The Municipal Airport was originally the site of the Redding Army Air Field, acquired by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1942 for the Army Air Corps. Its mission was advanced fighter training

of new airmen, prior to their deployment overseas into the combat zones of the Pacific, China, Mediterranean, or European Theaters. "The Airport came into existence right toward the end of the war," explains Airports Manager, Bryant W. Garrett. "It came on line in December 1944, and it was fully staffed, and up and running, in the summer of '45. After the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the war came to a conclusion, quickly. And by 1949, it was handed off to the City of Redding."

According to Garrett, the Airport didn't "take off" until the late '70s and early '80s, with mostly general aviation activities. Over the





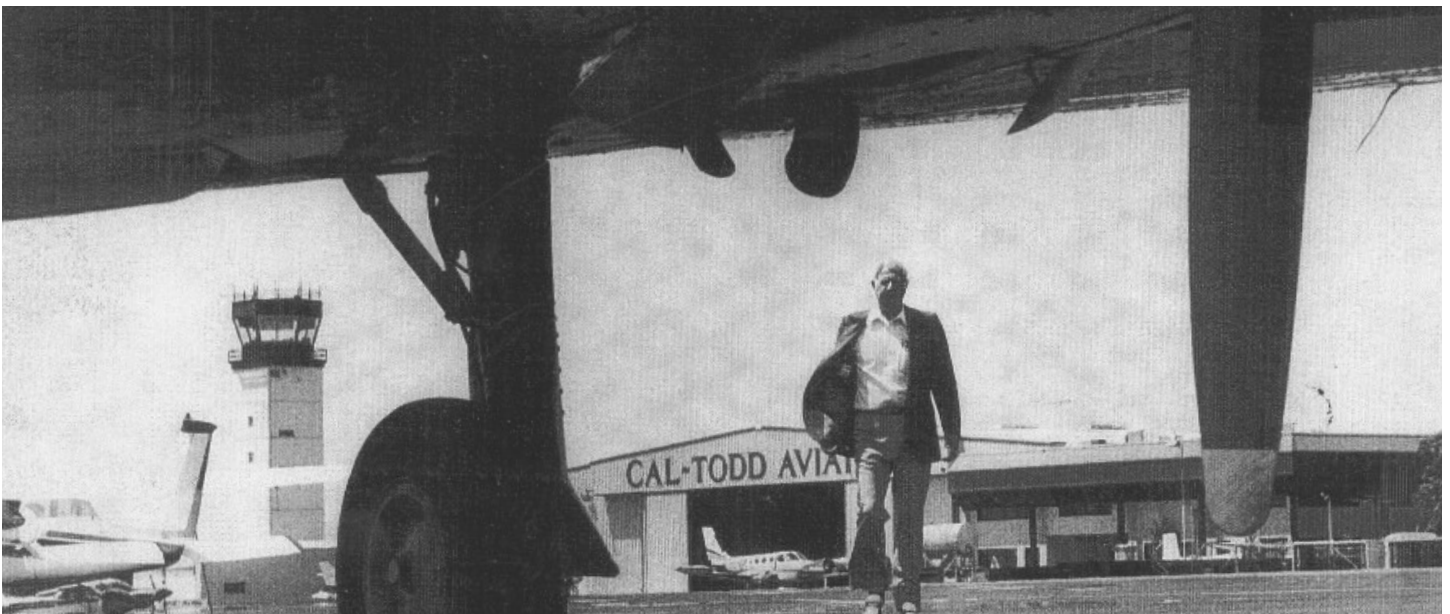
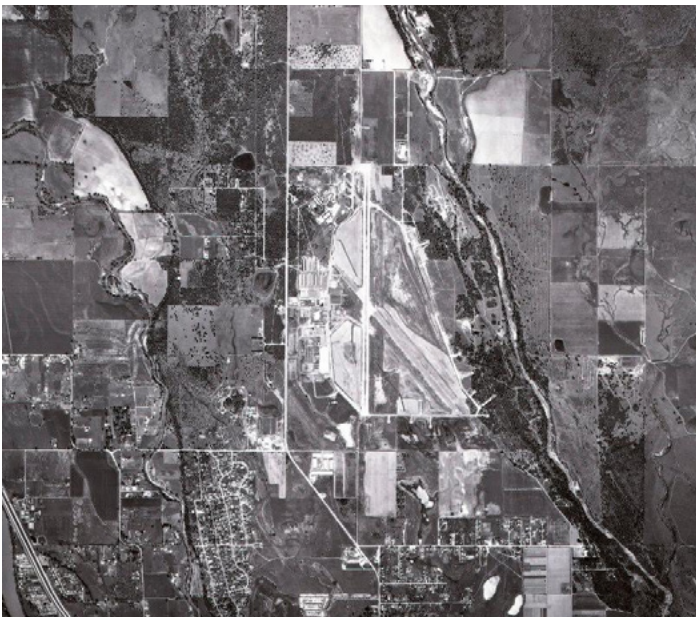
AT A GLANCE

REDDING  
MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

**WHAT:** A general aviation and commercial airport

**WHERE:** Six miles southeast of the City of Redding in Shasta County, California

**WEBSITE:** [www.cityofredding.org/departments/airports/redding-municipal-airport](http://www.cityofredding.org/departments/airports/redding-municipal-airport)





years, five commercial airlines provided passenger service at Redding, and four are now gone. Hughes Airwest flew Douglas DC-9-10s and McDonnell Douglas DC-9-30s to San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland, and Seattle; Frontier's Boeing 737-200s flew to Denver via Sacramento; Pacific Express BAC One-Elevens flew nonstop to San Francisco and on to Los Angeles, and also to Portland; American Eagle turboprops operating for American Airlines flew nonstop to San Jose, San Francisco, Eureka/Arcata, and Klamath Falls. United Airlines, which came to Redding in 1983, still flies non-stop and direct to San Francisco, with four flights a day on Bombardier CRJ 200s. This March, United will also begin adding service to Los Angeles.

Regarding Redding's GA community, Garrett reports that between the Municipal Airport and Benton Airpark, "there are about 227 hangars - single-occupancy hangars such as T-hangars or Port-A-Ports - and most of them are full," he reports. "There are 105 at Benton, with the balance at Redding. Right now, out of roughly 110-120 hangars here, I probably have 12 that are vacant." Unlike most GA airports Redding does not have a waiting list, and Garrett believes that is due to some prolonged maintenance activity. "We had a \$7.5 million pavement project in the vicinity of the T-hangars, and we replaced approximately 13 acres of very old pavement," he says. "So, I believe that in the next 12 to 24 months, we'll be completely full."





Garrett has no immediate plans to build any new hangars because he doesn't think they'd sell. "You've got to charge a rent that's proportionate to the capital investment, and now it's costing upwards of 900,000 to a million dollars for a bank of ten hangars," he remarks. "I'm not sure the market is out there for people to be paying that. You would not build homes if you can't fill them, and you would want to make is so that you're charging a reasonable amount of money to recover the cost of your capital. So, the more they cost, the more we have to charge."

Redding Municipal operates as an enterprise fund, which essentially means it's supposed to be self-sufficient - without any support from the general fund. "That's the basic rule," says Garrett. "And if you added up my last ten years of profit and loss, we're in the black, but not by much. I operate on about \$2.2 million in sales and my expenses are roughly, \$2.1 million."

Redding Municipal has two asphalt runways: 16/34 runs north/south at 7,003 x 150'; and crosswind runway 12/30, at 5,067 x 150'. And Garrett has notions about both of them. "I would like to see some major changes to the Airport's geometry," he states. "Three tenths of one percent of the time, I don't have anything other than straight down on one end of the runway or the other. So, in essence, very, very seldom do I need a crosswinds runway. So, even though, on paper, we have two runways, we only have one at a time because they intersect. And so, the smaller runway does not get a ton of use and I would like to see it pulverized, so we can lay out a parallel, general aviation runway to the east. Then, they could run simultaneous operations, and we could even entertain for an ILS (Instrument Landing System) and use it as a training runway."

Garrett would also like to lengthen the main commercial runway. "As an air carrier runway, about the shortest runway you want to deal with is 7,000 feet; and we're at 7,003," he notes. "So, what I would like to do is use the U.S. Forest Service that has a place on the Airport, as part of my rationale to get a runway extension. We own a sufficient amount of land on the north end of the field to extend the runway maybe 1,600 feet and end up







with about 8,600 feet, which would allow us to entertain among the largest of their fire-fighting aircraft – a DC-10. They could operate with full fuel and full retardant out of our field with 8,600 feet.

“So, that’s what I’m trying to sell, right now - that, along with the one I already brought up, which is the parallel runway. I believe if we go in that direction, with the concurrence of the FAA to move forward on either of those, that will set the stage for the fill-out of the rest of the raw land that’s at the Airport. Right now, we have a considerable amount of land, but until those changes are made, I think it’s going to be difficult to attract new business, because the easiest-to-develop land is on the east side of the Airport and that’s where all the changes would be. And so, it’s difficult to entice people to make investments over there, when there could be a runway put right through the middle of their project.”

In order to get those proposed changes made, Garrett says he would have to convince the FAA to increase the amount of the Airport’s funding. “Like every other airport, we are beholden to the FAA for our share of discretionary money,” he says. “Based on our size, we’re only getting slightly over the million dollars a year minimum. But I think if you look at where Redding is, strategically - we’re the furthest north on the I-5 corridor before you get into Oregon - I think that we can increase our prominence significantly with the right facilities. I think that debate will prevail with the FAA and I’m hoping that we would see some good discretionary funding from them.”

Meanwhile, Garrett says that some more immediate projects currently in the design stage should be implemented over the next 12-24 months. They include the reconstruction of a taxiway and the blast pad on the approach of runway 16/34. “Along with that, we’re due a surface rejuvenation on both runways,” he adds. “Even though I want to end up pulverizing runway 12/30, the intersecting shorter runway, until the FAA buys off on that, I have to maintain it to standards. The FAA requires a life of at least three years. So, if we chose to do the new runway, which would start off with an environmental assessment, it

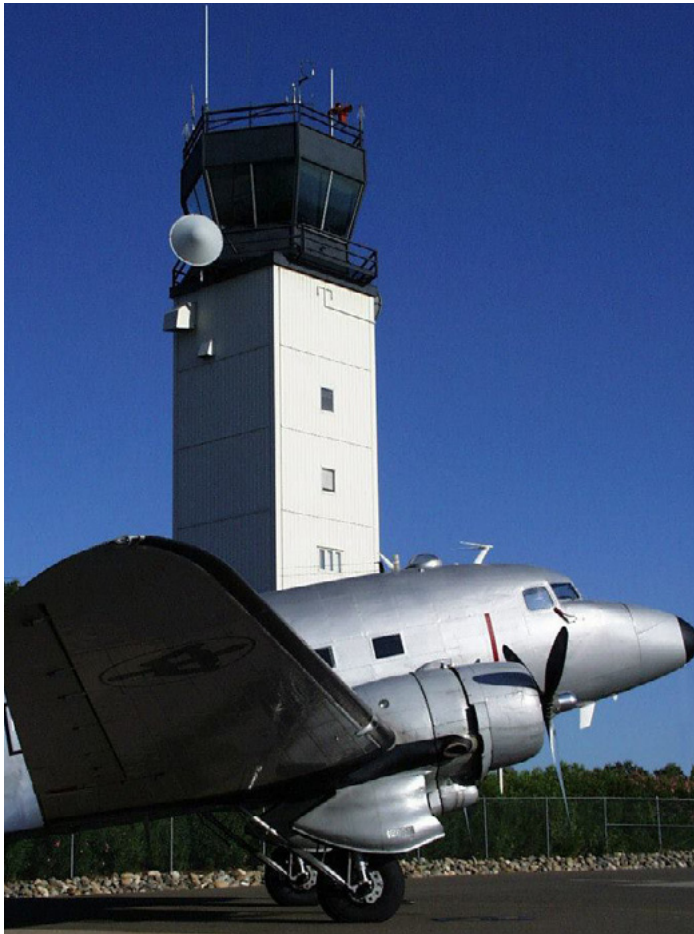


would be five years before we would be ready to construct it. So, I'm very comfortable with doing a surface treatment on both runways."

"We're going to replace all of the roadways in front of the terminal building; that's going to be a big public pleaser," he continues. "We did a \$10 million terminal renovation in 2014; we're now working on a lot of the pavement surfaces, but as you come into the Airport, the pavement is in dire need. I would guess it was originally put down in 1979 or 1980 and hasn't had anything major done on it since that time. It's lived its useful life and needs to be completely reconstructed. So, we're looking at reconstructing all of the roadways and I'm hoping that we're successful in trying to get the discretionary money. They came up with the additional billion dollars worth of discretionary money in a spending bill and this is the first year of it. The definition of what they consider to be a successful project is one that is not going to score high on the usual airport improvement program funding because

it's a lesser priority and roadway projects tend to fall in that category. We didn't make the cut for the first round, but I'm waiting to hear on the second round and hope that that comes about. That's about a \$7 million project. It's 100 percent funding, so we don't have to have a local share."

"We also had a magnetic variation change, so we're no longer runway 16/34," Garrett adds. "We need to change it to runway 17/35; change out all the signs, the vertical signs and the surface-painted signs, and all the publications, plus a lot of back and forth with the aviation community and the tower. So, it's a lot of work. I'm also trying to get an instrument approach for my north, which every now and then, we fall back on using the back course off of the ILS. Two years ago, Skywest (which operates the United flights) told us they would no longer fly that. So, my air carrier on-time operations and cancellations are now kind of at risk if I don't have this new approach, and they won't give me the approach until the magnetic heading has been



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changed. So, it's kind of like those little puzzles you used to do as a kid when you had those 16 squares and 15 little blocks and you had to put them in order. You've got to be strategically looking ahead as you put them in place and that's what it's taking to get all this done."

Another one of those little blocks that Garrett is trying to nudge into place is how to increase air carrier operations to get more commercial travelers to use the Airport. And right now, the competition is winning. He explains: "You take a 50-mile radius around Redding, and since there are no other large airports within that 50-mile radius, you would assume, that all things being equal, that all the people who live in that area and fly, would fly out of your airport. That would be 100 percent of those people; but I only maintain 12 percent of that population. So, I have an 88 percent leakage to the competitor airport and that is Sacramento. Sacramento is, obviously, a medium hub and we're a non-hub. But if the pricing is correct, the convenience factor should play in and I should be able to hold, certainly, more than 12 percent. So, the question is why is there such a disparity between those that are coming to the closest airport versus those that are going elsewhere? Well, you've got at least one low-cost carrier – Southwest – that dominates Sacramento. And then the other part of it is, it's just a nice, easy, straight shot down I-5 from Redding to Sacramento. So, that's what people are doing and I'm trying to convince them, the commercial flyers, that there's a better option here at home.

"Like it or not, airline passengers equal profitability; it's a simple equation. The only reason that we have a profit is simply because of the amount of air carrier activity we have. We had a lot more of that activity in our past – and not the distant past. Going back to 2005-06, we had non-stop service to Portland, with connecting service to Seattle, and we had non-stop to Los Angeles. So, I'm trying to reconstruct our past that I believe fell away only because of the national economy and the crash that occurred in 2008-09. For the Airport, it should be a low hurdle to get back to what we were just a little over a decade ago. I think the non-stop service to L.A. is the start of it and I think

there's a high opportunity for a non-stop heading east to Denver, and certainly to restore our service from the past to both Portland and Seattle."

Garrett concludes that with more and more people moving from the San Francisco Bay area into the California heartland – to places like Redding – the city and the Airport are well-poised for future growth and development. "I think there's just a lot of opportunity," he avers. "We're a Part-139 certified field; we have a thriving general aviation population and the larger corporate aircraft; we've got the Fire Attack Base; we have a feeder operation for Federal Express; we've got a vibrant training environment with Iasco Flight School and Air Shasta, a helicopter training base. Redding is just waiting for the capital investment that we can't all handle ourselves. So, we're looking for strategic partners and I believe that once we get it started, it will be the beginning of much higher demand for the empty land that we have available. There's just a lot of opportunity at Redding."

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# *The* **Allen County** *Airport*

## A diamond in the rough

The Allen County Airport is a public use airport located five miles southeast of the central business district of Lima, Ohio, an area rich in aviation history. “The first flight of an airplane in the Lima area occurred on Friday, July 28, 1911, at the old Allen County Fairgrounds, which is now the site of Lima Memorial Hospital and surrounding homes,” recounts Airport Manager, Josh Tattrie. “The pilot was Calbraith Perry Rodgers, a pupil of Orville Wright, in a Model-B Wright Biplane with a 35 horsepower engine. Fifty cents admission was charged. Rodgers made three flights that day. He stayed low so that persons outside the grounds could not get a good look at the event without paying an admission.”

“In the mid-1920s, the best known local aviator was “Rollie” Thompson, who flew his biplane in the Lima and Indian Lake areas,” Tattrie continues. “There were

### AT A GLANCE

## THE ALLEN COUNTY AIRPORT

**WHAT:** A public use airport

**WHERE:** Lima, Ohio

**WEBSITE:** [www.llencountyairport.com](http://www.llencountyairport.com)



## THE ALLEN COUNTY AIRPORT

no airports as we know them, thus relatively flat grassy meadows were used. Fuel was automobile gasoline carried in cans and strained through chamois skins in funnels to avoid engine-stopping vapor. In the summer of 1929, the first regularly scheduled air service for Allen County began. Mason Dixon Airline operated between Detroit and Cincinnati using Ford Airplanes. The Ford Tri-Motor cruised at nearly 90 miles per hour.

“Newly elected President Franklin D. Roosevelt looked for some way to put many of the unemployed back to work and the WPA (Works Progress Administration) was created to do civic projects, paid for by the U.S. Government. Locally, it was decided to create an airport for Lima. In December of 1933, a site was selected on farmland east of Baty Road, near Allentown. The owner, farmer Scott Neely, leased about 136 acres of his farm at \$1.00 per year to start the project. In 1940, the U.S. Government started the Civilian Pilot Training Program (CPTP) for college students to learn to fly, and this program provided a large quantity of young men who later entered military training programs. In June 1940, a Primary CPTP Program was started at Lima Airport. Lima native, Charles J. Parsons, a flight instructor for military pilots through the war years, took over the operation at Lima Airport in 1945. Fast forward to 1962 – that was the year our current airport terminal was built. It served the local community and surrounding areas of Lima. When the facility was built in the ‘60s, we had DC-3s providing regional airline service out of Allen County to Columbus, Cleveland, Detroit, and Dayton.

“Today, our traffic mainly consists of corporate flights into Lima, charter traffic, freight, fuel stops, heavy lift construction helicopters, low level pipeline patrol, power line patrol, medical flights, and helicopter/organ surgical teams, as Lima supports two hospitals. We are on call, 24/7, for after-hours fueling of emergency service. Even the State Highway Patrol as an aviation department that lands in airplanes and helicopters for fuel, or to conduct missions with other local agencies. The military lands often in the summer - usually in Apache and Black Hawk helicopters and the like.”



PICTURED ABOVE  
*Local aviator, “Rollie” Thompson*









## THE ALLEN COUNTY AIRPORT

Today, the Allen County Airport is owned by the Allen County Regional Airport Authority, which also operates the FBO, contributes some funding for the Airport's operational budget, and pays for its two full-time, and one part-time, employees. "We do rely on the county for funding, but fuel sales and hangar rent are also key," Tattrie explains. "There have been years, out here, that have been really hard. In 2008, the County didn't give the Airport any money for operations; hangar tenants had to volunteer to keep the Airport up and running. About a year later, 2009-10, the County appropriated funds and they hired a manager at the time, who was the only employee, to do everything. That lasted for about a year. In 2011, funding increased, and the Airport has been going up, ever since. We also lease 500 acres of farmland, which helps. The FAA and ODOT (Ohio Department of Transportation) provide funding for capital improvement projects, which is a huge help. Without that funding, we wouldn't be able to make any improvements, at all."

Recent projects at the Airport have included a

new snow removal equipment building, erected in 2017, the repaving of 5,000 feet of the 6,000-ft. runway 10/28, which is now fully-grooved, and a new beacon tower. "Future projects will be the replacement of runway 10/28 taxiway lighting with LEDs, and in about three years, we're hoping to sealcoat everything," Tattrie adds.

"We also put together an Airport Improvement Plan, funded by our own funds," he notes. "We thought that would be a five-to-ten year plan, but we actually completed it in two years. Some items included: 24-hour lobby access for pilots to get into the terminal; we don't have 24-hour fuel service available, yet, but we're hoping to get self-service pumps here, in the next couple of years. I was able to add high-speed internet, which took almost two-and-a-half years to acquire. We did a lot of painting and maintenance of the buildings, and we added new furniture. We have a wildlife mitigation plan in effect; we also trap coyotes and fox, deer, etc. And, right now, we're trying to acquire EPA permits to introduce de-icing operations for this coming winter. We're working





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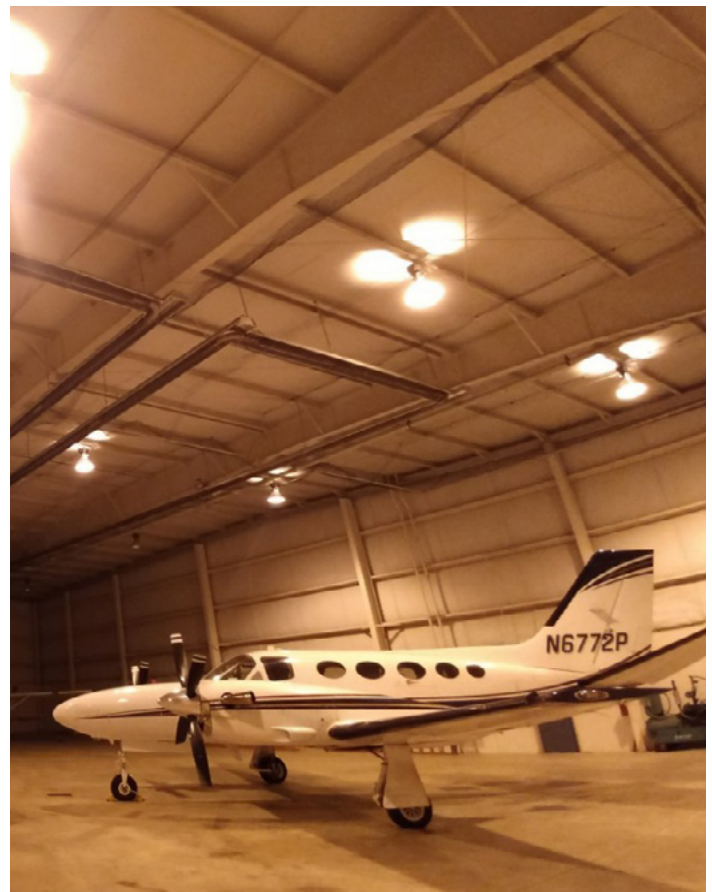
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with General Dynamics on that; they donated \$5,000 in funding to help acquire equipment and pay for the permits. And, we're working with local, state, and federal agencies to install an RCO, which is a Remote Communications Outlet, to have proper two-way communication from the ground all the way up to 3,000 feet and higher; right now we're lacking that."

Tattrie reports that there are about 35 GA aircraft based at the Airport, mostly single-engine, piston planes. "Our 40 T-hangars were at full capacity at one time, but around 13 years ago, we had an 85-mile per hour microburst windstorm come through; it knocked down C and D Row and that pulled about 14 aircraft. Those guys were older and almost done flying, so they took their insurance money and ran. A and B rows are still very old, but with proper maintenance and care, they will last a while longer. So, we've only been at three quarters capacity since that windstorm. But we've had some new hangar tenants move in lately – the economy is improving and I'm starting to get more and more calls. We've also just added

flight instruction, for the first time in nine years. We purchased a Cessna-172; we upgraded the avionics and that brings new faces into the Airport. Learning to fly is the lifeblood of a small airport; without it, our Airport didn't have much of a future, in my opinion. We're here for the community and we want to provide the services, and with the economy getting better, we can do that again."

Another potential project would be the expansion of the Airport's business tenants to include non-aviation enterprises. "There are no non-aviation related businesses based on the field, but we've had a lot of interest," Tattrie remarks. "The Allen County Economic Development has been getting inquiries. We have 500 acres of farmland surrounding the property; we have city water, sewer, high speed internet, and fire hydrants, so we would love to develop a business district with direct runway and taxiway access. So, that would be the grand future plan for the Airport – to provide those services. The County would lease the land to anyone who wanted to build out here."









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Finally, Tattrie believes that, sometime in the future, the Allen County Airport’s terminal will move. “Our Airport terminal is old and has been remodeled several times over the years since 1962, and I believe it is nearing the end of its lifetime,” he states. “Future plans will locate the airport terminal on the opposite site of the property closer, to Highway 117, which, ultimately, will increase foot traffic and public awareness.”

“I like to think we are a small airport doing big airport things,” says Tattrie, in conclusion. “We give tours to local schools. Field trips come out every year - usually just little kids, however, I have some older disabled kids who are interested in aviation work. We have a maintenance facility they can tour. We usually let them sit in airplanes, and corporate aircraft on the apron usually let the kids take a tour. Foam airplanes and coloring books are handed out to the youngsters. I’m hoping to introduce them to drones, this year, with local, commercial drone operators. We have the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) giving cadets flights, at times - new eagles who need to be pushed out





of the nest for the first time! The AOPA (Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association) hosted the Rusty Pilots Seminars two years in a row, and the FAA hosts seminars. In 2018, we had the Collins Foundation giving tours and rides in their B-17, B-24, B-25, and P-51 WWII aircraft, and the year before, the Commemorative Air Force gave tours and rides in their B-17. It's always a big hit with the local community. A lot of WWII vets make the journey to see their beloved aircraft. Unfortunately not many are left in this day and age. I'm also most proud of catering to Air Force 1 on two occasions, now. We are always looking to expand, whether in purchasing new equipment, land, adding employees, or taking more safety training. We really are a diamond in the rough here in northwest Ohio, and we are doing our part to ensure we have a prosperous future."

## PREFERRED VENDORS

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# The Del Rio International Airport

CONVENIENCE AT THE BORDER







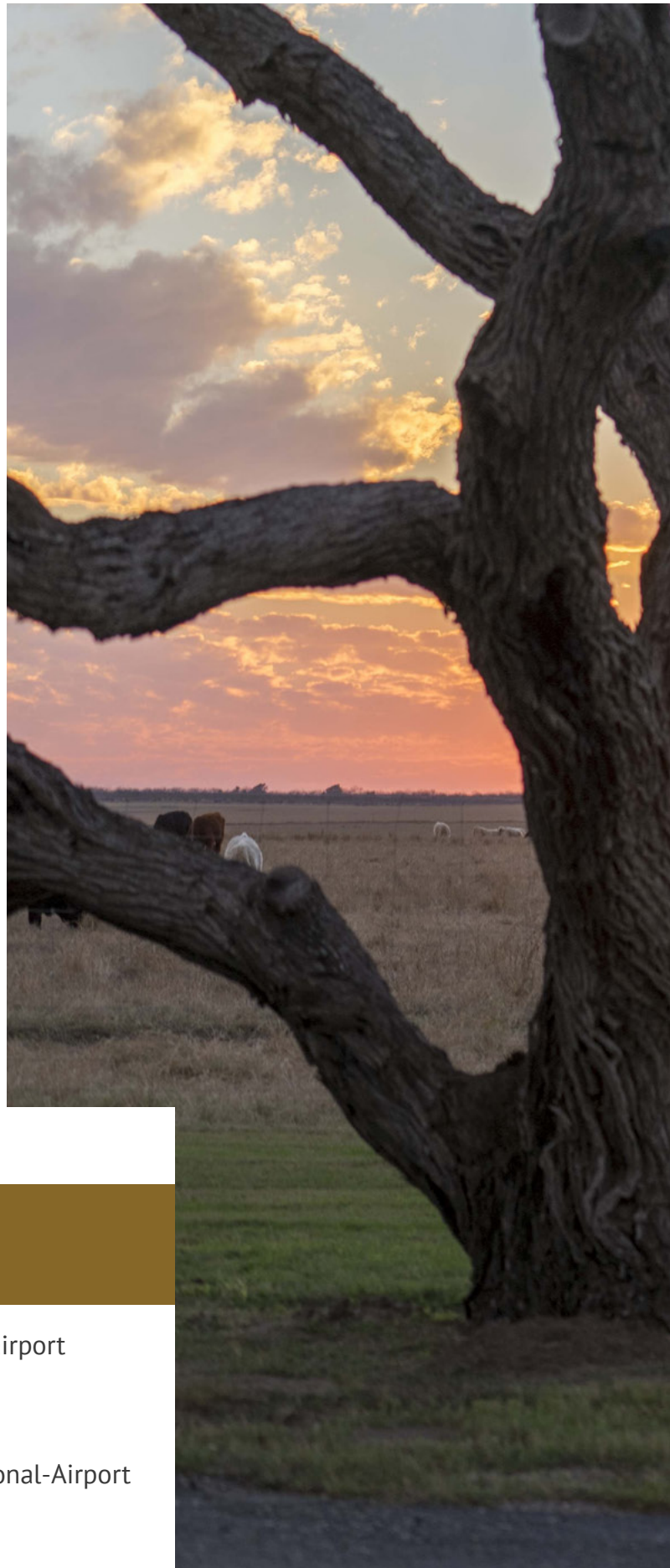
**T**he Del Rio International Airport is located two miles northwest of the City of Del Rio, in Val Verde County, Texas, and only several miles from the Mexican border. A commercial and general aviation facility, the Airport encompasses 268 acres and has one 6,300-ft., asphalt runway. It is owned by the City of Del Rio and run by a seven-member Airport Advisory Board appointed by the City Council that is responsible for its operations and development. On the other side of the city, sits Laughlin Air Force Base, the largest pilot training base in the U.S. Air Force, and home to the 47th Flying Training Wing of the Air Education and Training Command. On weekdays, the AFB sees more takeoffs and landings



than any other airport in the country.

Laughlin AFB, originally named Laughlin Army Air Field, was commissioned in 1943 to train B-26 pilots and aircrews during World War II. “When the war was over, they turned those fields back to the municipalities and counties,” says Juan Carlos Onofre, Airport Manager at Del Rio. “This one, in particular, was returned to Val Verde County in 1945. Since then, it was owned and operated by the county, but back in the 1960s, the county turned it over to the city, and now, it’s run by the city.”

Del Rio was served in the late 1940s and early 1950s by Trans-Texas Airways, which flew Douglas DC-3s to El Paso, Houston, San Antonio, and other Texas cities. Other commuter airlines at Del Rio included Lone Star Airlines, Texas National Airlines, Alamo Commuter Airlines, Amistad Airlines, and Wise Airlines. From June 7, 2012, until April 2013, ExpressJet, operating as United Express, served Del Rio International Airport for United Airlines with Embraer ERJ-145s flying nonstop to Houston Intercontinental Airport. For several months in 2017, Texas Sky Airlines, operated by Contour Aviation, scheduled a daily flight between Del Rio and Dallas/Ft. Worth International Airport, using a British Aerospace Jetstream twin-turboprop. Since November 2018, American Airlines/American Eagle has provided two departures and two arrivals a day from Del Rio to Dallas/Ft. Worth, using the 44-seat Embraer ERJ 140 jet.



## AT A GLANCE

# DEL RIO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

- WHAT:** A commercial and general aviation airport
- WHERE:** Del Rio, Texas
- WEBSITE:** [www.cityofdelrio.com/412/International-Airport](http://www.cityofdelrio.com/412/International-Airport)









Del Rio International Airport is home to six on-airport businesses, which offer services such as fuel, pilot amenities, aircraft maintenance, and air cargo. It is also home base to 44 general aviation aircraft, and, unlike many small, U.S. regional airports, Del Rio doesn't have a waiting list. "We have a lot of rotation on the hangar space, since we are neighbors with the Air Force Base," Onofre explains. "There are a lot of Air Force personnel that have airplanes and they rotate their assignments every two or three years, so, currently, I have no one on a waiting list for hangars."

Del Rio International Airport has been a Part 139-certified airport since 2005, and serves as an airport of entry for international flights. "We are one of the authorized ports of entry, so we get a lot of the general aviation traffic that comes back from Mexico's vacation destinations," Onofre notes. "They make a quick turnaround for customs and fuel and then go back to whatever city they came from - charter planes, mostly. And because we're sitting next to the border, we get all the





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commercial traffic from Ciudad Acuña, which is our sister city on the Mexican side. We get a lot of the 'maquila' industry - a lot of those things that are manufactured in Mexico and go to the United States, pass through here. So, we get a lot of that air freight traffic - car seats, air bags, car wiring - from Del Rio to the companies in the states."

"The growing opportunities for doing business in Mexico makes this an attractive airport, if you're a USA company with a main office here and an extension in Mexico," Onofre adds. "We have Alcoa, Blue Line, Caterpillar - those big companies see the importance of our strategic location and take advantage of having warehouses here on the Del Rio side and the Mexican side. So, we get a lot of those corporate flights here, as well."

The Airport also serves as a training ground for pilots from Laughlin AFB, who utilize its runway, which is equipped with high-intensity lighting, and supported by VOR-A, ILS, and RNAV(GPS) approaches, in order to experiment with different types of landings and takeoffs.



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with different types of landings and takeoffs.

Two recent additions to Del Rio are Rio Grande Aviation, an FAA-authorized repair station, and Southwest Texas Junior College, which is establishing an aircraft mechanic program, there. “They’re going to have their classroom here at a hangar,” Onofre reports. “In the near future, they are going to be able to graduate students who are capable of getting their mechanic’s license.”

Del Rio also has some adjacent acreage available, and Onofre says that the city has an economic development corporation that is trying to recruit businesses to a potential Free Trade Zone, with connectivity to the Airport. Currently, FedEx has a shipping facility, there, next to one of the Airport’s ramps.

At the moment, there are no construction or upgrade projects going on at Del Rio, but that doesn’t mean that Onofre doesn’t have a wish list. “We’re trying to see if we can have a cargo facility that will be able to meet customs standards, so we can accommodate cargo inspection; we do not have that at the moment,” he remarks. “Our customs and border protection do not process any cargo at Del Rio – they just process passengers. Another one that is in informal talks is an extension of the runway. Right now, we have a 6,300-ft. runway, and the idea would be to extend it up to 8,000-8,500 feet, to be able to accommodate the new jets that the Air Force is going to have for training. That would be a big plus in support of the Air Force’s mission, and a big plus for us, because we could also accommodate bigger cargo planes.





being used, you can get more FAA money to invest in your facility. So, it's a win-win for us."

Victoria Vargas, Public Relations Director for the City of Del Rio, neatly sums up the Airport's main advantage. "We are the only airport with commercial service in about a 150-mile radius," she states. "So, it's very convenient, not only for our city, but for surrounding cities, including those in Mexico, to come to our Airport, then to fly to Dallas with American Airlines to wherever they want in the world."

## PREFERRED VENDORS

- **Del Rio Chamber of Commerce**  
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# Walla Walla

## REGIONAL AIRPORT


The Walla Walla Regional Airport is a commercial and general aviation airport located three miles northeast of the City of Walla Walla, in Walla Walla County, Washington, in the southeastern corner of the state, an area famous for its wines, wheat, and sweet onions. “The first municipally-operated airfield in Walla Walla was back in 1922, near our present-day Airport,” says Jennifer Skoglund, Airport Manager since 2009. That original airfield property was soon abandoned, but in 1929, the newly formed Walla Walla Airport Association, together with the local Chamber of Commerce, secured funding to establish a new facility, which the City of Walla Walla took over in 1930.

In 1942, the War Department took over and announced that it would be spending

over \$7.5 million to construct an Army Air Corps training airfield adjacent to the existing airfield at Walla Walla. “They built over 300 buildings and they were equipped to house, feed, and train, approximately 6,000 men at one time,” Skoglund continues. “During World War II, we were home to the 91st Bomb Group for B-17 training. The 91st Bomb Group made quite a few well-publicized missions in Europe. Then we also had the B-24 Liberator crews. When the military was done, they surplused the Army Airfield and that’s when the City of Walla Walla, and the County took it over.”

In 1989, the Port of Walla Walla assumed ownership and operational responsibility of the Airport from the city and county, and changed its name to Walla Walla Regional Airport. Today, the Airport encompasses 2,319 acres with one asphalt /grooved runway, measuring 6,527 by





# GATEWAY TO WINE COUNTRY

## AT A GLANCE

## WALLA WALLA REGIONAL AIRPORT

**WHAT:** A commercial and general aviation airport

**WHERE:** Three miles northeast of Walla Walla, Washington

**WEBSITE:** [www.wallawallaairport.com](http://www.wallawallaairport.com)





150 feet. The facility also includes a college flight school, an FBO, a charter flight business, an ag-spray business, and many general aviation and corporate hangars. It is the home base of approximately 100 GA aircraft, and Skoglund suggests that there is “lots of land available for lease. So, we can certainly work with a developer or a private person who wants to come in and build,” she explains. “I wouldn’t be surprised if, in the next few years, we were to add some more T-hangars. We also have, from the war days, large, 11,000-sq.-ft. barrel hangars. So, we will have a couple of those available that will be fixed up and back on the aviation market.”

Over the years, Walla Walla has been served by a variety of commercial airlines, including: Portland Airways, United Airlines, Empire Airlines, Inland Airways, West Coast Airlines, Hughes Air West, Cascade Airways, Horizon Air, and Mountain West Airlines. “But as the planes have gotten larger, we are now down to Alaska Airlines, operated by Horizon Air,” says Skoglund. “We have daily service to and from Seattle, Washington. Our current

schedule, depending on the time of year, is either two round trips, or three round trips, a day.”

In addition, the Airport is also home to many non-aviation businesses. “We have quite a diverse industry out here at the Airport,” Skoglund reports. “We have about 80 businesses - everything from small mom-and-pop businesses all the way up to a large winery or a large manufacturing business. We lease out the old army airbase buildings. On landside, we are home to about 17 wineries, three breweries, and two distilleries. So, our Airport District, aka Business Park, is a very popular space, and there is definitely land on the aviation side to build. The Master Plan has identified areas and then, on the non-aviation side, there is also plenty of land to develop, where we can do long-term land leases.”

Walla Walla Regional Airport has eight full-time employees, co-located with other Port of Walla Walla employees who provide administrative and accounting services. “We are fortunate to be port-owned,” Skoglund admits. “The Port





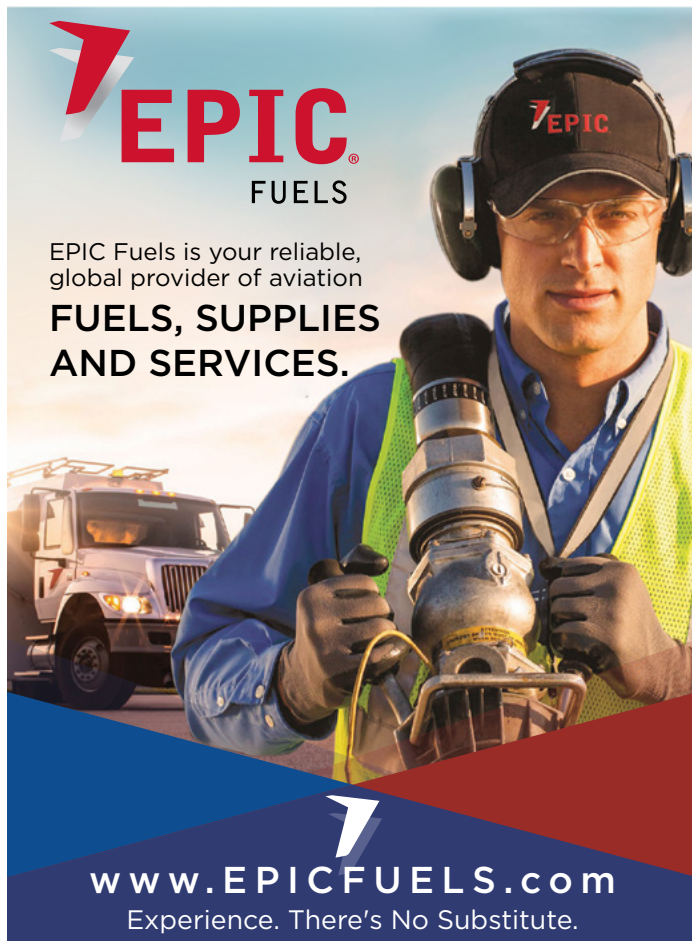


of Walla Walla puts in money, each year, for certain projects; so that really helps us.”

The most recent Airport project, a \$14 million taxiway reconstruction, completed last fall, was funded through the FAA's Airport Improvement Program. “That was long overdue,” Skoglund notes. “It was old, 1942 concrete with many layers of asphalt overlay. For future projects, we're looking at a study of our main runway for drainage and grading. We are also looking at some equipment procurement for snow removal and a new building. And we need to keep up with our apron rehabilitation; we have some old aprons that continually need maintenance. The security area in the terminal building, where the TSA works out of, at some point, will need to be enlarged, and also our holding room, especially if we go to a larger size aircraft, because, right now, Horizon Air has a 76-seat, Q400. And when you put that many people in the secure area, it gets pretty tight, so we're looking at an enlargement project, in that regard.”

Regarding nearby facilities, Skoglund says that Walla Walla does leak some commercial passengers to the Tri-Cities Airport in Pasco, because that airport has multiple airlines and multiple destinations. In the GA realm, however, she believes that with its new FBO, Gorge Aviation, and its recent and upcoming improvements, Walla Walla will become more and more competitive as time goes by. “We have been without an FBO for a few years, which has been difficult, but we now have a full-time FBO and I think we have a very positive outlook for operations, here,” she states. “I definitely see us being competitive with our other, nearby airports.”

Another competitive advantage lies in the fact that Walla Walla Regional Airport is the gateway to an area in Washington which has been experiencing a decided uptick in tourism. And with a lot of activity in the City of Walla Walla, as well as its surrounding countryside, Skoglund believes that Walla Walla Regional Airport serves as an important community



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partner, contributing to its economic development by getting people in and out of the Valley via commercial and general aviation.

“We have become quite the tourist destination,” she adds. “It’s not unusual that every weekend, we’ll see some jet out on the airfield, and our commercial passenger traffic continues, each year, to have record growth because of tourism. We are a wine destination in Walla Walla Valley; we are home to about 140 wineries. So, we have world-renowned wines and we’re getting people coming here from Seattle and the northwest, in general. And we’ve also been getting worldwide reception. Walla Walla was actually named, last year, by Travel & Leisure as one of the top communities to travel to. So, we’ve gotten a lot of recognition for tourism and that has really increased the use of the Airport in terms of commercial service passengers and general aviation. So, that’s been exciting.”







## PREFERRED VENDORS

- **EPIC Fuels**  
[www.epicfuels.com](http://www.epicfuels.com)
- **Walla Walla University**  
[www.wallawalla.edu](http://www.wallawalla.edu)





# Yampa Valley

## REGIONAL AIRPORT

### THE GATEWAY OF CHOICE

**Y**ampa Valley Regional Airport is located in Routt County, Colorado, two miles southeast of Hayden and about 25 miles west of Steamboat Springs and its nearby ski areas. A resort mountain facility, the Airport covers 671 acres at an elevation of 6,606 feet, and has one asphalt runway, 9,998 feet long. “The Airport was constructed back in 1966, based on demand - commercial air service being something important to the community,” explains Airport Manager, Kevin Booth. “The location was picked based on land availability and compatible terrain around Hayden.”

“Like most commercial service airports, we evolved over the years,” Booth continues. “Now, we have a 10,000-foot runway and commercial parking for seven aircraft, and we’re sized for 767s. It’s evolved from no terminal, to a rudimentary terminal, to a terminal that was modified back in 2006 in a three-phase program that wrapped up in 2012, which got us to where we are, now. Back in 2015, we had a major construction project that paved the shoulders on the runway and resurfaced it, and we resurfaced a lot of our taxiways and widened our connectors.”





## AT A GLANCE

# YAMPA VALLEY REGIONAL AIRPORT

**WHAT:** A resort mountain commercial and general aviation airport

**WHERE:** Hayden, Colorado

**WEBSITE:** [www.yampavalleyregionalairport.com](http://www.yampavalleyregionalairport.com)





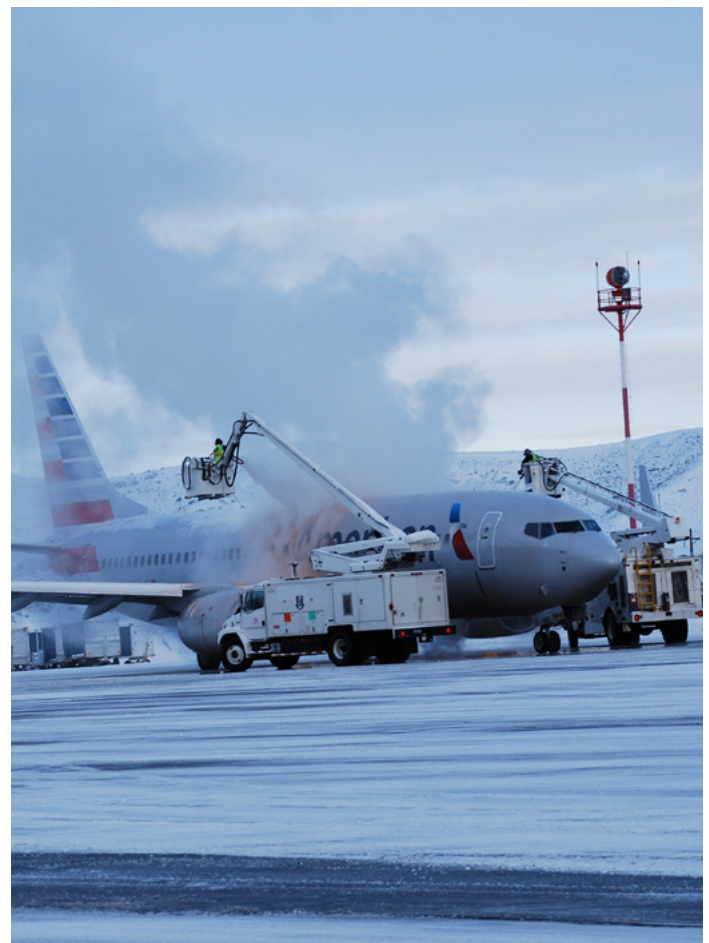


“We just completed a \$5.5 million commercial apron expansion this past summer,” Booth adds. “And, right now, we’re in the planning stage with our engineers and the FAA to start another terminal expansion project. We’re going to add space and improve flow in our terminal by expanding our secure area on the back side of TSA and adding a gate, back there. And then, we’re going to reconfigure our ticketing area to add additional ticketing work space and improve access to some of our bag belts. That’s going to happen this year. We also submitted for a terminal expansion project that dovetails with that one. If we get that, it’ll mean two additional gates, beyond the one that we’re going to do in 2019; so that will take us through 2020 and 2021.”

Yampa Valley Airport has one FBO, Atlantic Aviation, which is planning to break ground soon on a new facility. “Essentially, they’re going to dislocate from where they are now, which is right next to our commercial terminal, and they’re building their own apron and terminal facility for their customers on the eastern side of the Airport,” Booth explains. “They’re going to more than double their ramp space; they’re going to have a brand new GA executive jet terminal that will be architecturally designed to fit a beautiful mountain resort like ours. By the end of October, we’re going to have a brand new GA executive jet facility run by one of the best FBOs in the country.”

Should the Airport ever need to expand its footprint, Booth reports that there are about 50 acres inside its security and wildlife fence that can be developed. “And then, we have about 250 acres that the county owns, that if we re-fenced and rerouted one particular dirt county road on the east side of the Airport where the FBO is moving to, we could expand that end, easily, to accommodate those acres.”

The Yampa Valley Airport is, in fact, owned by Routt County as an enterprise operation, and it is expected to be self-sufficient, without relying on the county’s general fund for its operational budget. It is also a seasonal airport, whose busy period generally extends from mid-December to the end of March, or early April, depending





on the area's snow cover. "Then we're staffed at our greatest, because that's when our demand is highest," Booth notes. "Currently, we have direct flights on five major air carriers to 15 different cities. So, this time of year, my staff is about 80; and then in the off-season, when our direct flight program goes down to one or two flights a day, we go down to a staff of about 30 for about eight months out of the year. That's just my staff, the county employees. All told, this time of year, we have almost 500 employees at the Airport that work here – the ground handlers, the airlines, and the tenant organizations that lease space in the terminal."

In addition to its commercial service, the Airport also has about a dozen home-based GA aircraft. "We do have a robust GA operation, but a lot of it is drop off and pick up," Booth avers. "It's a lot of executive jet traffic with a lot smaller percentage of piston, so, it's mostly turboprop and jet." There are also daily cargo flights from UPS and FedEx.



Regarding its commercial airline service, Booth admits that Yampa Valley maintains a slight competitive relationship with three nearby, peer competitors in the mountain resort airport business: Eagle County Airport, which serves Vail; the Aspen/Pitkin County Airport; and the Jackson Hole Airport in Wyoming. "I'm not really competing day-to-day," he claims. "But, we do compare ourselves with them, certainly, in the costs to the airlines to fly in here, and the kind of service we provide. And we do have advantages for the airlines in that we have a longer runway than any of the other facilities. And we really are blessed for a mountain resort airport, in that we don't have significant issues with high terrain. And we have a radar system that was installed here as the first of its kind that gives the FAA and Denver Center the ability to control right down to ground level and see airplanes taxiing on our ramp - that's the wide area multilateration system (a ground-based surveillance system that can be installed in areas where radar is limited or not possible.)"

Regarding the Airport's GA traffic, Booth notes





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that there is a GA airport in Steamboat Springs, so there is some competition there, as well. “Certainly, whenever somebody in a general aviation aircraft decides to come to this area, they have a choice – they can go to the Steamboat Airport, which has a very short runway and limited capacity. Our advantage over that airport is our runway is more than twice as long as theirs; we have a more robust staff for snow removal; we have high terrain; and we have precision approaches. So, depending on how your aircraft is configured and the avionics that it has, I would say we’re a much safer airport to come and go in the wintertime or the summer. And the FAA recently redesigned some of our instrument approaches to lower the minimums on it, making it even safer to come and go from here.”

Booth adds that the Airport is also growing its services, year over year. “We just brought in a fifth carrier this year; right now, we have service from United, America, Delta, Jet Blue, our new carrier, and Alaska Airlines. So, five of the top six or seven airlines in the country

provide service here, seasonally, and United’s here year round with commercial service to Denver, and, typically, in the summertime, United will also provide direct service to Houston.”

Yampa Valley is also convenient. “The U.S. highway between ourselves and downtown Steamboat is well-maintained in the winter; it takes about 25 minutes to drive it,” Booth remarks. “But, probably our biggest asset, besides being convenient, is we’re small and easy to get through; there are no long lines or delays; TSA is very responsive, as is our staff, as a whole. And I’m very proud of the level of customer service that we provide everywhere – from the restaurant, to the gift shop, to our passenger services folks, to our partners on the airline side. We really take good care of the people that come and go. I hear that all the time and it’s written all the time in comments. People love the Airport.”



---

## PREFERRED VENDOR

- **GO Alpine**  
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# Food & Beverage



LOUISIANA  
SPIRITS



THE HOME OF BAYOU RUM







# LOUISIANA SPIRITS

## *The Home of Bayou Rum*

**R**um is a distilled alcoholic drink made from sugarcane, which is a type of grass. Cane products, such as juice, syrups, sugars, and molasses, are turned into rum by a process of fermentation and distillation. The distillate, a clear liquid, is drinkable as is, or aged in oak barrels. Rum production occurs worldwide with top producers in the Caribbean, Philippines and India. This fact triggered an idea among three friends in Louisiana - brothers Tim and Trey Litel and Skip Cortese - who wondered, one day, while sitting in a duck blind near the Lacassine Wildlife Refuge, why there wasn't a vibrant domestic rum business in the United States, given that the Bayou State is one of the largest sugarcane

### AT A GLANCE

## LOUISIANA SPIRITS

- WHAT:** A rum distillery
- WHERE:** Lacassine, Louisiana
- WEBSITE:** [www.laspirits.net](http://www.laspirits.net)



producers in the world. Indeed, the ingredient which is central to rum – sugarcane – had been cultivated in their home state since the 1700s, but no one had yet harnessed this abundant natural resource to create a top-notch, U.S. premium rum.

So, in 2011, the trio decided to start their own distillery, and two years later, they opened Louisiana Spirits in Lacassine, LA, right on the edge of sugarcane country. “We use 100 percent natural, unrefined, Louisiana molasses, from a local, family-owned sugar mill in Louisiana called M.A. Patout & Son. They’ve been making sugar here since 1825. What we get from them is blackstrap molasses, and between the molasses and yeast strains we use, we knew we could make something pretty exceptional.”

Today, the distillery’s Bayou Rum family consists of seven “expressions” – Bayou White and Bayou Spiced are in the unaged category. The premium aged category includes Bayou Reserve, Bayou Mardi Gras XO and Bayou Single Barrel. Louisiana

Spirits also launched a new liqueur brand known as Gator Bite. This portfolio currently contains the popular Gator Bite Satsuma Liqueur and the new Gator Bite Coffee Liqueur. Combined, all expressions have been recognized more than 100 times in tasting competitions, worldwide.

Jeff Murphy, Bayou Rum’s Operations Manager and Master Distiller, who had joined the company in 2012 after years of experience as a distiller and craft brewer, was soon accompanied in 2013 by Master Blender Reiniel Vicente, a second generation Rum Blender, just as full production commenced. “I make great rums and Reiniel makes them better,” Murphy quips. “Reiniel is in charge of the finer points of the blending and aging process as well as quality control. Between the two of us, we taste every batch to see if it meets the high standards we hold ourselves to.”

“Fast forward to the end of 2015,” Murphy continues. “We were approached by Stoli Group USA, and they were interested in our brand.” Stoli







PICTURED  
(L-R) Reiniel Vicente Diaz, Master Blender and  
Jeff Murphy, Master Distiller





Group USA is a U.S. importer and marketer of alcoholic beverages, headquartered in New York City. Formed in 2013, the company is a subsidiary of SPI Group based out of Luxembourg, one of the world's most dynamic wine and spirits organizations. "By then, we were up to about 15,000 cases a year in seven states. They liked what we were doing and said they wanted to start distributing our product. In July, 2018, they bought us out. So, now, we're a wholly-owned subsidiary of Stoli, and we're expanding rapidly throughout the world."

According to Murphy, expanding into a market dominated by several giant distillers was helped not only by its acquisition by a major distributor, but also by the preceding worldwide boom in craft beer. "That was a huge benefit to the young craft distilling movement, because you had this group of consumers who were already experimenting with small batch, small volume, non-mainstream products," he explains. "And that gave us an open door to expand." Another advantage, he believes, is the distillery's proximity to the sugarcane fields. "Rum is one of those universal spirits that can be made anywhere but you can't grow sugarcane everywhere. There is something to be said about driving throughout the area







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knowing that the sugarcane we see growing in the fields will one day be turned into Bayou Rum. The connection to the land is there, the connection to the farmers and the sugar mill is there, and you can taste the passion and dedication of Louisiana in every drop of Bayou Rum.”

Success for Louisiana Spirits has resulted in the need to grow. “We are in the final stages of our first expansion in about four years,” Murphy reports, “which means more barrel storage. We are building a Barrel Library that more than doubles our current barrel inventory.” Also included is an event center that will be able to hold weddings, along with corporate and special events. All should be complete and open by the end of May or early June. “We get a lot of interest in hosting special events and it’s been a big boom for the area for us to be out here.” In fact, Louisiana Spirits has become a major destination for locals and tourists alike. The distillery holds six tours, daily, and hosts tens of thousands of visitors a year from around the globe. Indeed, eight out of its 19 employees work in the onsite gift shop and the just-opened coffee shop inside an old farmhouse that was built in 1903. “We have two more phases planned for the future,” Murphy adds. “It’s volume driven, so when we hit certain

marks in sales, the next phase of the expansion kicks in. First, warehousing and increased bottling capacity. Then we will be increasing production capacity. This year our plan is to triple 2018 sales.”

By all measures, the future looks bright for Louisiana Spirits and Bayou Rums. “Rum is starting to have its day in the limelight,” Murphy states. “Globally speaking, premium whiskeys and tequilas have been on the upswing over the last ten or fifteen years, and rums are again being recognized as a premium spirit. Rum is not all sandy beaches and umbrella drinks and people finally understand that rum can be as complex as bourbon and scotch. We’re focusing on the fact that we can make a great award-winning product here in Louisiana. We have a unique climate and soil characteristics that separate from the Caribbean. So, I think that our process may set us apart from most rums on the market. There’s no reason why every liquor store in the world can’t have a high quality, premium, Louisiana-made rum on the shelf. We think there’s enormous potential to take a bite out of that market and get our own niche going and be known as American’s rum brand.”

## PREFERRED VENDOR

### ■ **Lallemand Biofuels & Distilled Spirits (LBDS)**

[www.lbds.com](http://www.lbds.com)

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# The Ministry of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

*By The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, P.C., M.P.,  
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard*

Canada is a maritime nation, home to the world's longest coastline. Protecting our vast system of nature is a source of great pride for Canadians. It is also the source of many good middle-class jobs. For this reason, we've partnered with the United States to protect and manage the Great Lakes, and an abundance of freshwater resources.

As the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, I spend a great deal of time considering how our government can do more to protect our environment while growing our economy.

Trade is an essential component of this. For all nations – but particularly for a country like Canada, with its large geographic expanse and relative small population base – having secure and predictable access to international trade



## ASSOCIATION AT A GLANCE

## THE MINISTRY OF FISHERIES, OCEANS, AND THE CANADIAN COAST GUARD

- WHAT:** A ministry of the Canadian Government
- WHERE:** Ottawa, Canada
- WEBSITE:** [www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/index-eng.htm](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/index-eng.htm)



# Oceans, and n Coast Guard





is crucial. Our government has recognized this reality and has, over the past three years, worked to put into place a platform on which Canadian companies can grow and succeed, and the economy and society as a whole can benefit.

## AN OCEAN OF OPPORTUNITY

Just this past year, our government has opened up three new avenues for international trade through trade agreement: the new NAFTA, and our trade agreements with the European Union and with the Asia-Pacific region.

With these deals, Canada has become the only G7 country to have free trade agreements with all other G7 countries, giving us access to almost two-thirds of the world's markets and its 1.5 billion consumers. And our government is keeping up with the momentum: We are setting a target to increase Canada's overseas exports by 50 percent by 2025. We know more has to be done to help Canadian exporters take advantage of the opportunities created by the trade agreements we have secured, and our ambitious Export Diversification Strategy will do just that. Our proposed measures will invest \$1.1 billion over six years to help Canadian businesses access new markets.

## THE ECONOMIC SCALE

The fish and seafood sector is a growing sector in Canada; it employs over 76,000 workers from coast to coast. In 2017, the commercial fishing industry landed almost \$3.9 billion worth of fish and seafood, and is now the single largest food commodities exported by Canada, valued at almost \$7 billion, annually. This sector is incredibly important to the economic vitality of Canada.







## THE NEW NAFTA

The new Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement on trade is good news for Canada's fisheries and seafood industries. The fisheries and oceans commitments in this deal are the strongest in any free trade agreement in the world. They will help grow Canada's ocean economy and will protect this critical ecosystem for our children and grandchildren.

Under the new NAFTA, our fish harvesters and seafood industries will continue to have tariff-free access to our largest seafood export market, the United States. Canada's exports to the U.S. topped \$4.3 billion in 2017. Ensuring that our

fish, crab, lobster, and other products can be sold to the U.S. – tariff free – is critical to supporting middle-class families and creating jobs.

Beyond the direct economic importance of the new NAFTA, this agreement contains significant measures focused on promoting and enhancing ocean health – actions that will help to ensure that our children and grandchildren can enjoy all of the benefits our oceans provide.

Through this agreement, our three countries have committed to promoting trade in sustainably managed fisheries, to preventing overfishing, and to working together to protect marine habitat from pollution and invasive species.







## THE EUROPEAN UNION

The trade agreement between Canada and the European Union, CETA, is an ambitious bilateral trade agreement with tremendous economic potential for the fish and seafood sector. CETA provides Canada with preferential access to more than 500 million consumers across the European Union. Before CETA, EU tariffs for fish and seafood averaged 11 percent and could reach as high as 25 percent. Today, almost 96 percent of EU tariff lines for fish and seafood products have become duty-free. This is great news for our exporters.

## THE ASIA-PACIFIC

Since being elected, our government has worked with other key Asia-Pacific countries to negotiate and conclude the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership – otherwise known as the CPTPP – which taps into 10 nations, including markets such as Japan, Vietnam, and Singapore.

Since December 30, 2018, the CPTPP entered into force among the first seven countries, including Canada, Australia, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Singapore, and Vietnam with completion of respective domestic ratification processes. Once fully implemented, the CPTPP will form one of the largest trading blocs in the world, representing 13.5 percent of global GDP, and providing preferential access to a market of 500 million new consumers for Canadian products. The countries in the Asia-Pacific region are home to some of the world's fastest-growing middle-classes. The CPTPP is the cornerstone for Canada's greater engagement with these countries and solidly anchors Canada's place in this growing market.

I should note that the CPTPP also includes a chapter on small and medium sized enterprises – aimed at making it easier for first time exporters to grow their companies abroad. It establishes a framework for cooperation in areas of mutual interest such as mitigating the impact of climate change, promoting and conserving biodiversity, addressing the illegal





wildlife trade, combating invasive species, and promoting sustainable fishing practices.

Once the CPTPP is fully implemented, 100 percent of fish and seafood tariff lines will be duty-free, leading to more competition and increased export potential for Canadian seafood and fish sectors in these markets. This, in turn, will result in greater job creation and higher wages for middle-class Canadians.

## INNOVATING FOR THE FUTURE

Through all of these trade initiatives, the Government of Canada is helping small and medium-sized enterprises build the skills and capacity to compete globally by linking Canadian businesses to global supply chains, multi-nationals, and global infrastructure projects.

Further, as of January 1st we have lowered the small business tax rate, yet again, from 11 percent to 9 percent, giving Canada one of the lowest small business tax rates in the world, and giving small businesses up to \$7,500 a year in savings.

Canada has been investing in innovation and the adoption of clean technologies so Canada's fish and seafood industries can be more sustainable, productive, and competitive. Close to \$500 million in national and targeted provincial funds focused on innovation, infrastructure, and science help our world class fish and seafood sector meet the ever growing global demand for high quality and sustainably-sourced Canadian fish and seafood products.

Much of this work follows our historic \$1.5 billion Oceans Protection Plan, the largest investment ever made to protect Canada's coasts and waterways. Under this plan, a world-leading marine safety system is being created, and marine ecosystems are being protected and restored. Stronger Indigenous partnerships, engaged coastal communities,







and science based decisions are supported.

Canada actively supports science, technology, and innovation. The industry-led Ocean Supercluster is a national undertaking positioning Canada to be a global leader in the ocean economy, including sustainable aquaculture, a sector with great opportunity for coastal communities and for middle-class jobs. Research, development, and infrastructure investments are encouraged and clean technology is supported. The regulatory process is being streamlined. Ocean resources combined with a strong science-based framework for aquaculture sustainability and growth, and preferred access to markets around the world, are among Canada's most significant advantages.

## **RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP MAKES GOOD BUSINESS**

Canada is also stepping up as a leader on the world stage by making oceans a central theme of our G7 Presidency in 2018. The focus is on combating illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing; tackling marine litter and plastics, including ghost gear from fishing vessels; and increasing the capacity of small island developing states and least developed coastal states to strengthen science and promote sustainable fishing practices around the globe.

Our government recognizes that a healthy vibrant ocean with strong fisheries management and a sustainable aquaculture industry is key to both protecting our environment and growing the economy. We are committed to continuing the momentum on both fronts – as businesses begin to take hold of the economic opportunities opened up through free trade agreements.



# LOUISBOURG SEAFOODS, — LTD. —

*The Taste of Tradition*





Louisbourg Seafoods Ltd. is a family-operated seafood business headquartered in beautiful Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. Owners James and Lori Kennedy credit the company's success to their hands-on management style and extensive experience in seafood production. Being in the fishing industry for more than 30 years has netted Jim and Lori a wealth of contacts and secured the evolution of the business. Today, Louisbourg Seafoods is a multi-million dollar a year company, steered by a visionary couple that thrives on moving forward. Family and community are core company foundations rooted

in hundreds of years of culture and tradition.

The firm harvests product using its own fleet of vessels and has direct control over each stage of production – in tandem with a strong commitment to the conservation and care of ocean species and habitat.

Allan MacLean, Senior Operations Manager of Louisbourg Seafoods, shares the history of the company: “Jim and Lori started their company in 1984. At the time, they were both fish plant workers in Louisbourg, struggling financially to



## AT A GLANCE

# LOUISBOURG SEAFOODS, LIMITED

**WHAT:** Family operated seafood company

**WHERE:** Louisbourg, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia

**WEBSITE:** [www.louisbourgseafoods.ca](http://www.louisbourgseafoods.ca)



raise their young kids. They saw opportunities to do something with the fishery in Louisbourg, which was very active, so they quit their jobs and started a stevedoring company; basically, unloading the fish vessels that were landing in Louisbourg. There were a lot of them. Business grew and they began buying lobsters from local fishermen. With the increased revenue, they purchased their first fish plant (groundfish) in 1991, around the time that groundfish went into moratorium. But Jim saw potential opportunities in other species that weren't strictly under moratorium, so they operated that groundfish plant for years by processing flatfish – grey sole, flounders, yellow tails. They developed unique markets in the U.S. and got a reasonable price.”

In 1999, the crab industry in Atlantic Canada was booming and the Kennedys converted the groundfish plant to a snow crab processing plant. That has become the anchor for the rest of the companies under the Louisbourg Seafoods group. Today, they operate four fish processing facilities: A crab plant in Louisbourg, Nova Scotia; a snow crab processing plant in Glace Bay, Cape Breton; a shrimp processing plant in North Sydney, Cape Breton; and a small facility for crab and lobster processing in Canso on mainland Nova Scotia. They also have a live lobster holding facility in Louisbourg. It was an abandoned fish processing facility that Jim purchased and repurposed; it can hold approximately 400,000 pounds of live lobster.

PICTURED  
Owner, Lori Kennedy







Louisbourg Seafoods currently employs around 500 people, and Jim and Lori continue to look for unique opportunities to reinvest back in the fishery and create more long-term sustainable jobs in the small coastal communities where they're needed. Jim Kennedy explains, "I ran the business and Lori ran the office and it worked out well. Lori's not involved in the office anymore, she's on the board of the World Ocean Council (WOC) and does a fair amount of travel, globally, for that. She's also done a lot of work on the PR front, promoting the product and the modern-day brand. We distribute all the different species we harvest and process under the Mira Bay brand. It's named after a famous song by Rita McNeil. We were trying to capture some of the

recognition around that song. And we live on the Mira River here, so it was a natural way to attach the Mira recognition to a seafood brand."

Company operations run the gamut. MacLean notes, "We hold in-shore and off-shore licenses; we're not fully vertically integrated but we do harvesting and processing and marketing. Where we've been trying to create some identity is in what the government calls secondary species - species that aren't harvested at a high level. Through discussions with buyers, we began to understand there was a demand for species found off the coast of Nova Scotia that no one here was harvesting. We obtained licenses to harvest two species, in particular, sea cucumber and whelk,



and we've been very successful in harvesting, processing, and marketing those. The company invested significant money into getting that up and running, and funds 100 percent of the science associated with it. That's something that sets it apart from other players in the Atlantic region."

For a relatively small business, the company does \$72 million in sales. And they have two permanent science people on staff. It's been the company philosophy for a long time that they need to be engaged in sustainable fisheries, and science is a big part of that. When there are questions the government can't answer, they get the answers themselves. This includes all species but, particularly, the secondary species, where the company has most likely gone far beyond industry expectations of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in relation to science.

Louisbourg Seafoods has a great partnership with Cape Breton University, in that regard. Many of the science projects they do in relation

to sustainable community fisheries are in full cooperation with CBU. Recently, Louisbourg Seafoods and CBU had a scientific document on whelk published in a well-respected science journal. The co-author of that article was a member of the Louisbourg Seafoods science group.

Finding workers in the seafood sector is becoming increasingly difficult. According to MacLean, "In some cases, we rely on temporary foreign workers. In fact, 57 percent of CBU students are foreign students, and we are firmly in discussions with the University about potential part-time employment opportunities to help support these students as they're going through their studies. We're also working on marketing projects with CBU, to have some of those students work for us as part of their educational program— they learn that side of our business and help us out. We have a great partnership with CBU, because they're located here and the company philosophy has always been if we can do it in Cape Breton then we should try to do it here."

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MacLean also gives a shout-out to local fishing communities and associations. “Through our work with these communities on an ongoing basis they continue to sell us the raw product. We have wholesalers we’ve been selling to for extended periods. It’s an environment built on relationships and we’ve had lots of long-standing relationships with other fish companies, where we provide fish to each other. Even though it’s a competitive industry, it’s all about trying to maintain a certain level of employment.”

Most of the finished products are, typically, sold in the States and some markets in Canada. But that’s slowly starting to change. Louisbourg Seafoods now ships a fair amount of fish into the Asian market, particularly China, and they’ve been actively engaged in trade missions to increase the scope of their markets, looking at ways to capitalize on the new trade arrangements with countries such as Japan and South Korea. Market demands are changing; even product form is changing for different markets, and the company



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— APRIL 18, 2019 —

**A MESSAGE OF CONGRATS  
FROM THE LOUISBOURG  
SEAFOODS TEAM:**

Louisbourg Seafoods is thrilled to announce that our owners,  
**JIM & LORI KENNEDY,**  
are being inducted into the  
Cape Breton Business Hall of Fame!

They are being recognized for their exemplary leadership in the values of business excellence, entrepreneurial spirit, and community leadership. We couldn't be prouder of them. Thank you to the Cape Breton Regional Chamber of Commerce and Cape Breton University for recognizing the invaluable contributions Jim and Lori have made, and continue to make, to our island.





## MIRA BAY SEA CUCUMBER WITH MAPLE CREAM SAUCE

To appreciate Sea Cucumber's unique qualities, it's very important to not overcook it, so if you are uncertain, just make the sauce, bring it to a boil, then add the cucumber meat and remove from the heat immediately. Stir the meat into the sauce and the residual heat will be enough to cook the cucumber perfectly.

### INGREDIENTS

#### MAPLE CREAM

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 3 whole shallots, sliced
- 2 teaspoons tarragon vinegar
- ½ cup white wine
- 1 cup 35% cream
- 2 teaspoons creamed horseradish
- 1 teaspoon Cape Breton maple syrup

Salt to taste.

### METHOD

#### MAPLE CREAM

Over medium-low heat "sweat" (sauté) the shallots in butter until translucent.

Deglaze by pouring in the vinegar and white wine.

Simmer the liquid until it is reduced by 2/3 and then add cream.

Reduce again by 1/3 and add Horseradish and maple syrup.

Toss in sliced sea cucumber meat and remove from heat.

Season to taste.







has been very flexible in that respect. The trade missions are normally supported by Atlantic Canada through ACOA or Nova Scotia Business Incorporated. “The province of Nova Scotia has been a huge supporter of the seafood business,” says MacLean, “but I would also say that it has been a huge supporter of Louisbourg Seafoods.”

As for the future of this innovative family business, Jim reflects, “I guess I’m like everyone else, I’m going to work at this until the big fellow takes me. I’ve got no plans to retire but I’m also working to put a succession plan in place in case I can’t do it someday. I’ve got 12 grandchildren, so, hopefully, one of them will eventually take the company. And, hopefully, I’ll have people around like Allan and some of the others on my staff to help my family go through the next moves of it.”

MacLean adds, “In planning for the next five years, we’ve been looking at developing the structure because we want the companies to grow, and to see if we can capitalize on these new

market opportunities that have been presented through trade arrangements. And to really have in place a very solid company, continue to build, to capitalize on unique opportunities, to try to be leaders in this part of the seafood world, and really emphasize, on an ongoing basis, about sustainable fisheries, and the need to provide jobs for the local communities.”

## PREFERRED VENDORS

- **Pearlmark**  
[www.pearlmarkfoods.com](http://www.pearlmarkfoods.com)
- **Cape Breton University**  
[www.cbu.ca](http://www.cbu.ca)
- **A&B Seafoods**  
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# Allegany County, New York

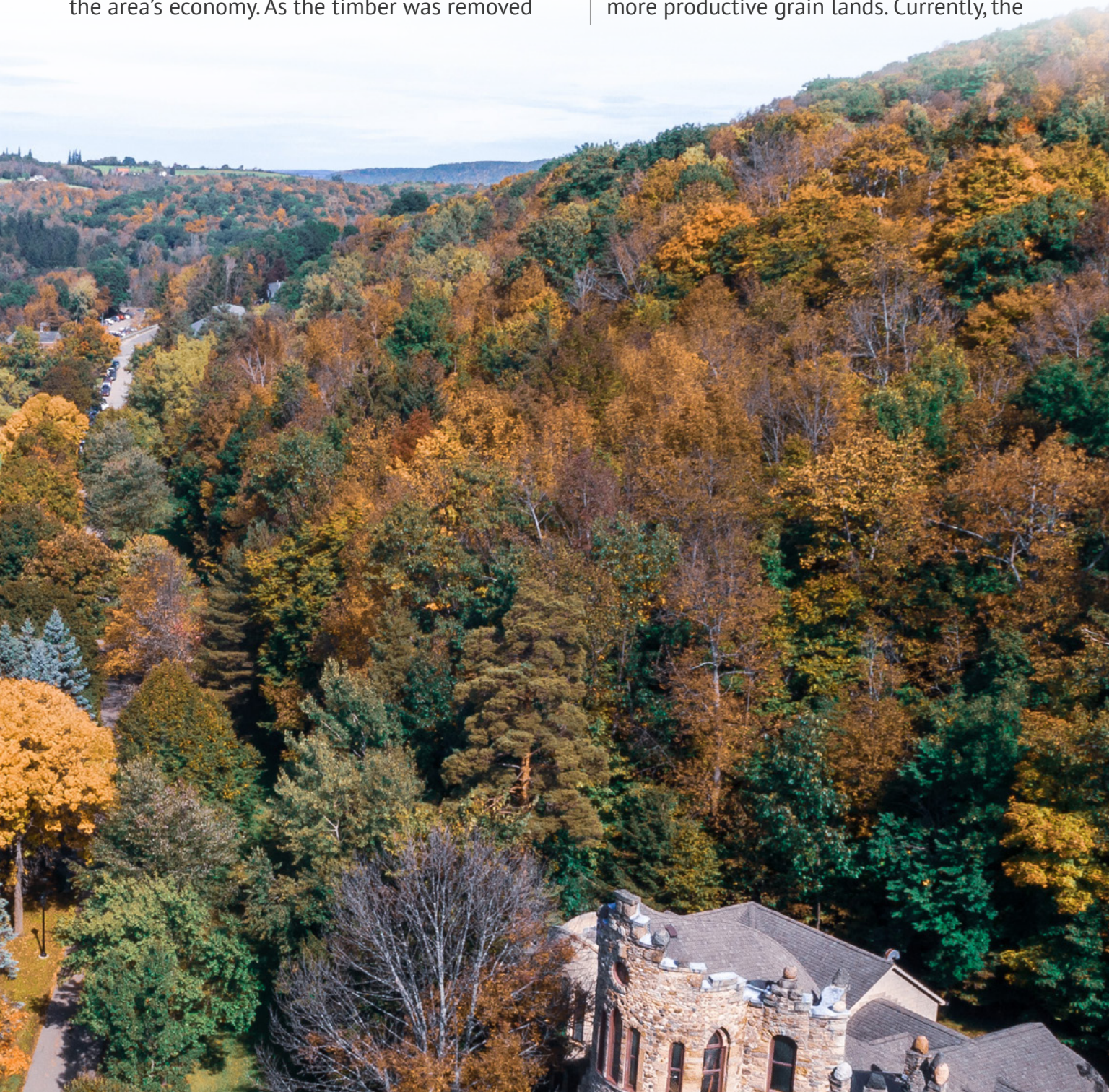
EMBRACING RENEWABLES





**A**llegany County, population, 47,000, lies in the southern tier of western New York State, just north of the Pennsylvania border. It is bisected by the Genesee River, which flows north to its mouth on Lake Ontario. In the early days of its settlement, the region's tall forests provided cut timber and were a main source of the area's economy. As the timber was removed

from the lower hills, and the land laid bare, agriculture crept in, and it is this industry that is paramount in the County, today. At first, grain was the principal crop, followed by wool growing and cattle raising, as the Genesee Valley Canal and, later, the Erie and other railroads opened the way to more productive grain lands. Currently, the







County's economy is driven by dairy and mixed farming; apples do well, while the humble potato is one of its main products, next to milk and hay.

The discovery of a great oil pool beneath the surface of the County was perhaps the most momentous occasion in its history. In fact, the first petroleum in the United States was noted by Roche-d'Allion, a French Jesuit, in 1627, near the current town of Cuba. But it wasn't until

the coming of the famous Old Triangle No. 1 well drilled in nearby Allentown in 1879, that anything came of the priest's find. Although the oil boom has long since passed, a fabulous amount of money came into the County in the late 1880s, and there were towns growing overnight. For fifteen years, the oil brought to the surface had more value than all the rest of the County's products combined. It could not last, at least on the scale at which it had

## AT A GLANCE

# ALLEGANY COUNTY, NEW YORK

- WHAT:** A county of 47,000
- WHERE:** The southern tier of western New York State
- WEBSITE:** [www.alleganyco.com](http://www.alleganyco.com)





started, and, today, oil production occupies a minor part of Allegany County's economy.

Though oil production is no longer prominent within the county, the production of energy continues in the 21st century in new forms, spurred on by the renewable energy programs at Allegany County's three institutions of higher learning: Alfred State College, Alfred University, and Houghton College.

"As far as renewable energy goes, all three colleges have been pretty active for a number of years," explains Craig Clark, the County's Director of Economic Development. "In the 1990s, Alfred State College started doing solar installations programs, and, actually, had a very large NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research and Development Authority) training program that was one of the largest in the state. We have a 100 kW wind turbine installed at the campus and had a 10 kW on a farm, back in the '90s."

"Alfred University and Alfred State College have







participated in two Solar Decathlons, one in China in 2013, and the other one in California, in 2015,” Clark continues. “Both times, the colleges got together and built a house.” (The U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon is a collegiate competition, comprised of 10 contests that challenge student teams to design and build highly efficient and innovative buildings powered by renewable energy. The winners are those teams that best blend design, and architectural and engineering excellence, with innovation, market potential, building efficiency, and smart energy production.) “So, we have a long history of being involved in renewable energy from the college perspective.”

In 2015, Houghton College completed a 2.6 MW solar project - “the largest solar array ever implemented on a New York college campus,” says Angela McKay, Assistant Director of Economic Development & Planning. “Since then, we had a few projects on the horizon. One is the Alle-Catt energy project - that’s a 380 MW wind farm that’s going to consist of 120 turbines. It’s a \$500 million

project and currently the biggest wind project being proposed in New York State; construction is planned for 2020, on the northwestern side of our County. We also have another solar energy project, called the Moraine Solar Energy Center - an 80 MW Solar Farm, with construction anticipated in 2021. That’s a \$100 million project and that’s going to cover about 500 acres in the town of Burns in the northeastern side of Allegany County. We also have some smaller scale, community solar projects just starting to take off. One is in the community of Caneadea. The project being discussed is enough to power up to 20 homes. Small scale solar projects are also being discussed in other communities, including Wellsville and Friendship.”

Another renewable energy project in Allegany County is the SUNY (State University of New York) Alfred Biorefinery and Commercialization Center. “We’ve been working on that for about three or four years and we have state and federal resources to build it,” Clark reports. Just this month, New York State pledged \$6.6 million for the Center, which provides the remaining funding









to get the \$14.2 million project off the ground. The project previously received about \$6.1 through grants from Empire State Development, the state Dormitory Authority, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and the Federal Economic Development Administration. The accumulated funding will enable construction to begin on the biorefinery prototype, which could be operation in two years. The biorefinery will follow a patented hot water extraction process to separate chemical byproducts from low-grade wood, biomass crops, and agriculture residuals that come from local sources. End products of this process include ethanol, methanol, acetic acid, and wood that can be used in home heating, composite lumber, biodegradable plastic, and biofuels.

All of these renewable energy initiatives have been integrated into the third revision of Allegany County's Comprehensive Plan, which is in the

process of being finalized. "We've made the Economic Development chapter of our plan more robust and prominent to address our current development needs, as well as devoted more planning to sustaining our natural resources, addressing possible future issues of climate change, and developing strategies for integration of renewable energy sources," McKay explains.

Meanwhile, the County is also hoping to grow its economy via other means. "We've been working with site selectors since 2016," Clark notes. "They've visited the County three times and they've given us a pretty good profile on trying to expand what we already are doing a good job at, which is advanced manufacturing and ceramics, which is big at Alfred University, as well as some other areas, including food production. Another initiative we've been working on is tourism. We have a pretty active ATV park in the County, being as rural





as we are, and we're trying to use our natural resources to attract people with UTVs (Utility Terrain Vehicles) and ATVs (All Terrain Vehicles)."

In addition, Allegany County offers its visitors a wide array of outdoor activities, including large and small game hunting, fishing, kayaking, hiking, backpacking, skiing, birding, photography, canoeing, and swimming, as well as a full range of cultural activities, shopping, dining, and sightseeing. By embracing renewable energies and building on its traditional strengths of agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism, a sustainable future is in sight for Allegany County.

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**Renewable.**  
**Efficient.**



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## PREFERRED VENDOR

- **EDF Renewables**  
[www.edf-re.com](http://www.edf-re.com)



# Construction View



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ASSOCIATION









# Highfill

## Infrastructure Engineering

### A PASSION FOR SERVICE

**H**ighfill Infrastructure Engineering, PC is an engineering and consulting firm specializing in community and municipal water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure engineering. The company was founded in 2004 by Tyler Highfill, a licensed professional engineer, who had become somewhat disenchanted with the large international consulting firm where he had worked for ten years. “It was a lot of great training, a lot of experience, and good people,” he recounts. “But, as time went on, I became more and more frustrated with what I characterize as corporate bureaucracy, which was pulling me away from prime time and project time to deal with these

#### AT A GLANCE

### HIGHFILL INFRASTRUCTURE ENGINEERING

**WHAT:** A civil engineering and consulting firm

**WHERE:** Cary, North Carolina

**WEBSITE:** [www.hiepc.com](http://www.hiepc.com)





administrative systems. I was reading about other large corporations and how they evolved and matured, or failed and died off. And what I realized was that my personality probably didn't mesh with the corporate world, so I set out to do something different; to go work for a small company. I still wanted to do consulting services in the water and wastewater arena, but with a smaller firm, with the hopes of eliminating some of these bureaucracies. That led to starting this company, Highfill. I felt that we could create an environment that was better for our clients and our employees, and, in the end, provide a better service."

In 2005, Highfill engaged Ray Cox, currently the company's Vice President of Marketing, as a business partner. "We were a small company with three employees," Highfill continues, "me, Ray and a part-time admin/bookkeeper, which was my wife; she was teaching during the day and doing the books at night. Ray and I had some early discussions about what we wanted the company to be. We brainstormed things like: Do



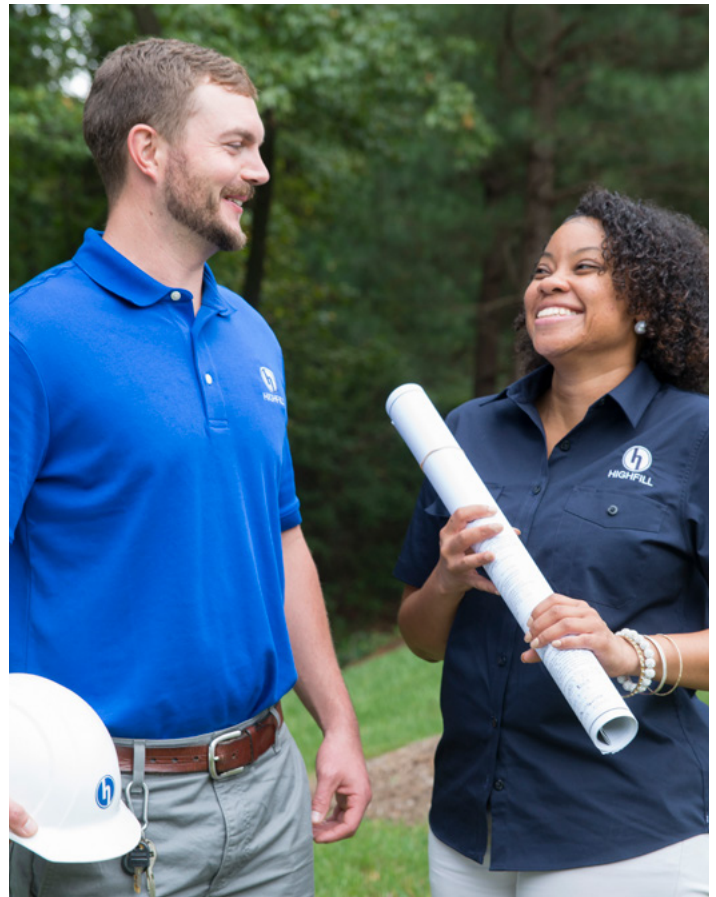
I have stayed with HIGHFILL for 13 years because I appreciate the focus on service, whether for clients or the community, and because the working environment allows me to grow as an engineer based on my personal effort."

**Paul Shivers, PE,**  
HIGHFILL Senior Project Manager



we want to be the best water treatment plant people in the world? Do we want to have some special technical niche? As we talked through that, what we decided was what we wanted to do was to have people with a solid, technical skill set, but to provide those services in a way that was unmatched by anybody else. So, we set out to focus on providing high quality technical services in a very high level service model. We grew the company based on that model and over time, have ended up where we are now.”

“When we were brainstorming, early on, about what we wanted to be known for, we settled on this idea of providing the best customer service,” Cox adds. “And we wanted to be the firm that our clients thought of whenever they had an urgent need and somebody that they could rely on. That was our vision. What we really try to emphasize with our clients is that we put ourselves in their shoes. If I am their project manager, what kind of service is going to make me happy, and reduce my level of stress? And







that's the approach – to make it as stressless and enjoyable a process as possible for our clients.”

Communications Coordinator, Allison Andrews, agrees. “Our company motto is ‘engineering is our profession; service is our passion.’ And that’s the message that we want to come across,” she states. “It’s not just rhetoric. People are hired based upon the idea that they’re service-oriented. It’s a really huge part of our culture.”

“A few years ago, when we were celebrating our tenth anniversary, we were doing some rebranding, and Allison shared the observation that she thought it ran a little deeper than customer service,” Cox remembers. “And I think she nailed it. Her observation was that all of our employees are involved in service, to some extent, outside of work. We have people doing mission work; people who are serving in the community; people that are coaching youth teams; all these avenues where people are giving of their time and talents. We call them ‘net givers,’ and these are the people we look for; people who are bent toward giving more than





# SEWER MAINTENANCE/ RESIDUAL MANAGEMENT



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they're interested in taking. Those are the folks that we look for when we're hiring and Allison said that it's a service culture and not just a customer-service culture. That's when we developed that motto. And that is our key focus. And in order to provide that, we have to provide a safe, rewarding, and balanced work culture for our employees. They have to feel that they are given the tools and the environment in which they can do their best work, so, in turn, they can focus on taking care of clients."

Both Cox and Highfill believe that the company's culture is what gives this small firm of only 22 employees a competitive edge in a marketplace dominated by large national and international firms with thousands of workers. Today, almost all of the company's work is in municipal water, wastewater, and stormwater utilities for cities, counties, and water districts, with a small percentage in industrial work, and an even smaller percentage in work for private developers. Highfill Infrastructure Engineering has four offices: a headquarters in Cary, North Carolina; an office in Wilmington, NC, which





PICTURED RIGHT  
 Founder, Tyler Highfill



opened in 2005; one in Winston-Salem, added in 2015; and the newest office in Columbia, South Carolina, which opened in 2016.

“We’ve just begun work on our first real sizable project with the City of Columbia,” Cox reports. “They’re working in compliance with a consent decree that they are in with the EPA. One of the key projects to comply with that consent decree is developing rehabilitation projects for some of their larger sewers – 15 inches and larger in diameter – and we are on the team that is helping them on those projects. That’s an exciting opportunity for us, working to help them in that regard. These will be up to ten, multi-million-dollar projects when they’re all said and done.”

Highfill remarks that, going forward, the company will continue to penetrate the municipal marketplace, while expanding its geographic reach. “If you draw a two-hour radius circle around our

four offices – that’s kind of the practical extent of our reach,” he explains. “So, our plan for expanding the business is to open more locations. And we’ve got some dots on the map, that when the right combination of people and opportunities come together, we’re going to open offices in those metropolitan areas, and, eventually, be able to cover, with this two-hour, radius circle, all of the high population areas in North and South Carolina. The reason we focus on these population centers is the ingredients for us for a successful geographic location are a vibrant and growing economic situation in that locality and aging infrastructure along with the growth. So there’s a need there for condition assessment, renovation rehabilitation, as well as new infrastructure to support the growth that’s going on. That’s why these population centers that are growing in the Carolinas are a good mix of those ingredients. So, our focus is geographic; we’re not looking to become industrial experts or land development





experts, although I think we'll continue to support industrial and private development, and land development. But our primary focus is in this arena that we think we're pretty good at."

In conclusion, Cox reasserts that in addition to high quality engineering efforts, the most important work performed by Highfill Infrastructure Engineering will always be its customer service: "Yes, we do good work in the trenchless technologies and other rehabilitation techniques, but that's a given. If you're not doing good work, your company is closed or on its way down. But you have to go beyond good work to be competitive; particularly a firm our size, which is competing with these national and international firms. And we think that passion and being driven to go the extra mile for our clients and treating them as part of our family and part of our team is that differentiator for us."



## PREFERRED VENDOR

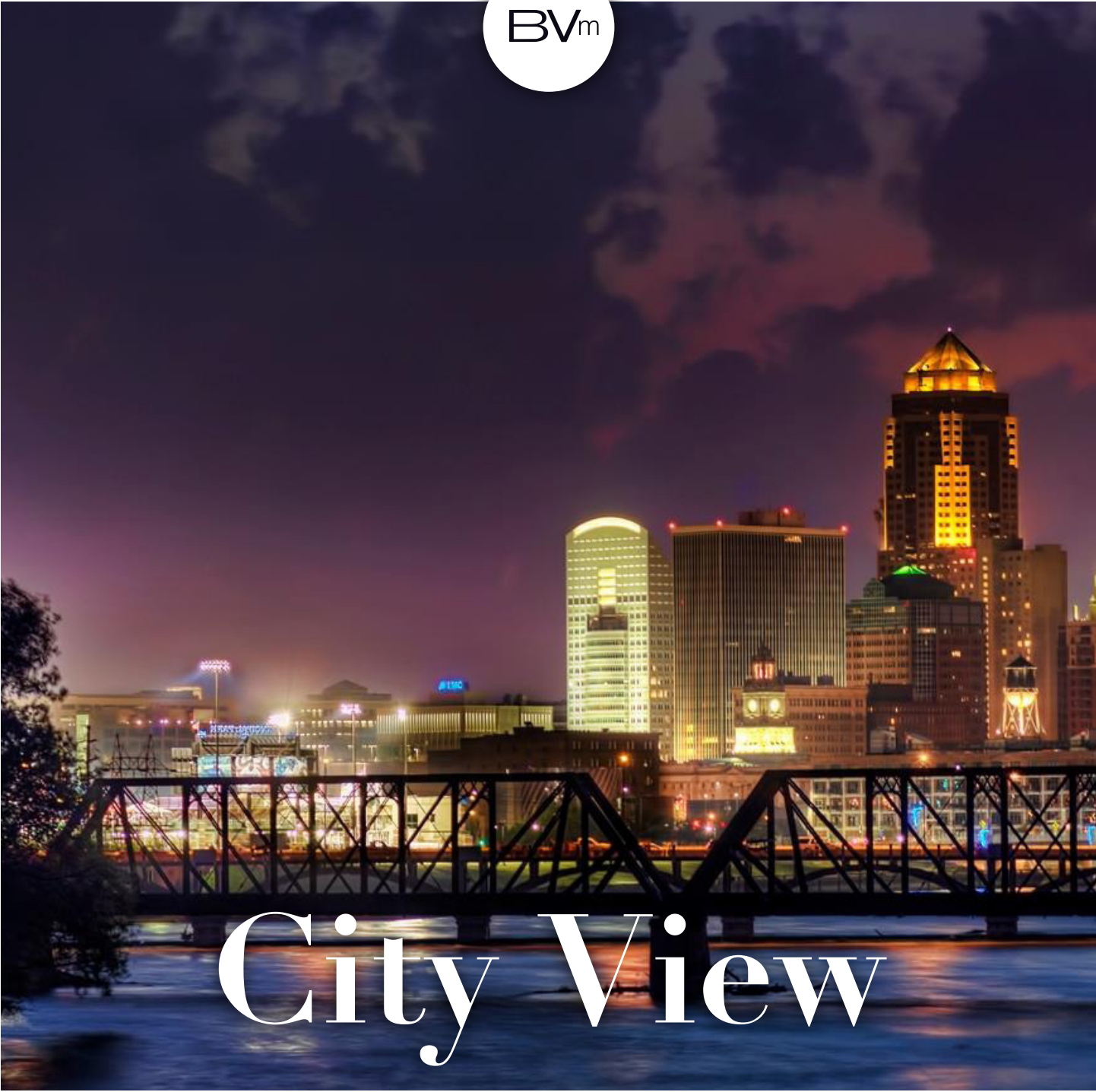
### ■ **Bio-Nomic Services, Inc.**

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THE NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION



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IMPROVING ITS INFRASTRUCTURE

**CLARINGTON,  
ONTARIO**



EXPERIENCE THE PLEASURES

**DEAF SMITH COUNTY,  
TEXAS**



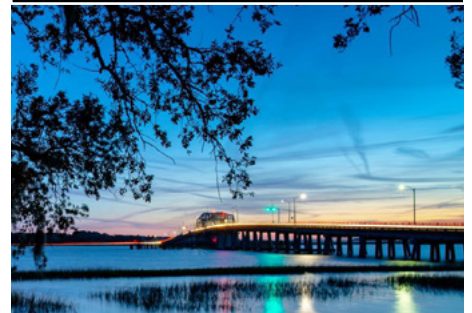
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ASSOCIATION



# *The New Hampshire Municipal Association:*

The Service and Action Arm  
of New Hampshire Municipalities

By Margaret Byrnes, Executive Director and  
Timothy Fortier, Communications and Member Coordinator

## **Local Government in New Hampshire**

**T**he mere mention of New Hampshire typically evokes the nostalgia of the famous lithographs by popular print makers Nathaniel Currier and James Merritt Ives of iconic New England villages, rural towns, and sweeping vistas. New Hampshire is also famous as the home of the first-in-the-nation primary, which history has proven can make or break a candidate running for president. But what New Hampshire is really known for is its town meeting.

Outside of New England, the concept of town meeting is generally foreign. Indeed, when describing our local government structure to non-New Englanders, we are often challenged with disbelief. Yes, here in New Hampshire, voters still rise from the floor to speak

### AT A GLANCE

## THE NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

- WHAT:** A non-profit association working to strengthen New Hampshire cities and towns
- WHERE:** Concord, New Hampshire
- WEBSITE:** [www.nhmunicipal.org](http://www.nhmunicipal.org)









and vote on items on the town warrant, such as adopting a town operating budget, authorizing the town to borrow money to renovate the public safety building, or leasing a front-end loader. Debate can be lively, and the voters can vote down these items or even amend them.

Of course, traditional town meetings are not representative of all New Hampshire's municipalities. Of our 234 municipalities, 13 are cities, and 7 are towns with a town council-town manager government, different from the "traditional" board of selectmen. While cities—and some of these town council towns—differ from the bulk of New Hampshire's towns in government structure, there is diversity even among this small group. Manchester, our biggest city, has a population of 110,301, while our smallest city, Franklin, has a population of 8,685. Geographic size also has no bearing on whether a community becomes a city or town. For example, the town of Pittsburg is 291 square miles and the city of Somersworth is only 10 square miles.

And whether a municipality is a city or a town, Dillon's Rule applies. In essence, this means that a municipality can exercise only the powers granted to it by state law. In other words, unless state law says a municipality can do it, the municipality cannot. Being a Dillon's Rule state generally means local officials spend considerable time lobbying the state legislature to approve bills granting local authority and disapprove bills imposing restrictions on them.

## The New Hampshire Municipal Association: Speaking with a Common Voice

Regardless of the size and form of government, municipalities rely heavily on volunteers or other elected officials who divide their time between their careers and families with their service to their municipalities. To assist these volunteers—and all municipal officials and employees—in







PICTURED LEFT TO RIGHT  
 Barbara Reid, Government Finance Advisor; Jim Maggiore, Board Vice Chair, Selectman, Town of North Hampton;  
 Shaun Mulholland, Board Chair, City Manager, City of Lebanon; Margaret Byrnes, Executive Director;  
 Cordell Johnston, Government Affairs Counsel; and Stephen Buckley, Legal Services Counsel

their important duties at the local level, the New Hampshire Municipal Association was founded in 1941 by a group known as the New Hampshire Mayors Club. The prevailing thought was that New Hampshire could benefit from the organization of a municipal league that would provide an organized forum for the exchange of information and ideas. In fact, 1941 incorporation papers show that the Association was founded “to promote good municipal government and thereby promote growth and prosperity of cities, towns and villages.”

Today NHMA has a 25-member board of directors and a professional staff of 10. Self-proclaimed as the “Service and Action Arm of New Hampshire Municipalities,” NHMA continues its strong legacy and remains a vibrant, dynamic non-profit organization serving local government. Membership is voluntary and must be approved by the municipality’s legislative body via the

budget process. Over time, NHMA has established a rich history of strengthening municipal governments through information, advocacy, legal services, training and other services to local officials, enabling them to serve their municipalities and residents more effectively.

## NHMA’s Advocacy: A Member-Driven Legislative Policy Process

NHMA’s advocacy is guided by policy positions. Because it is a member-driven organization, the legislative policy positions are set by NHMA members, not staff, through a defined process. Every two years, the process begins with the solicitation of policy proposals from town and city officials to create an initial issues list. The







NHMA Board chair then appoints legislative policy committees which meet during the spring to discuss these ideas, as well as the ideas committee members bring to the table. The full Legislative Policy Conference then takes place in September. Each member municipality, regardless of size, has one vote and is asked to appoint a voting delegate to cast its votes at the policy conference. As with a town meeting, conference attendees engage in lively debate on many issues, culminating in votes to establish the final policy positions, which must be adopted by a two-thirds majority.

To address the many legislative issues of concern to municipalities, NHMA has also adopted legislative principles that guide staff in setting priorities during any legislative biennium—a set of standing “core” principles. NHMA’s core legislative principles include supporting issues that provide greater authority to govern more effectively, efficiently, and flexibly at the local level, including local option legislation; advocating for maintaining existing local authority; supporting



efforts that maintain existing revenue streams to municipalities; and being watchful of proposals to downshift or reduce local aid in order to meet other funding commitments.

Because NHMA seeks to enhance the ability of New Hampshire cities and towns to serve the public, much of our advocacy is focused on money, particularly state-local government partnerships.

Every two years—2019 being one of those years—the New Hampshire Legislature crafts a budget to fund state responsibilities and priorities, including public education, highway maintenance, prisons, environmental protection, health care, and more. For decades, the state has been a partner with municipalities in different “revenue sharing” and “cost sharing” programs critical to the economic health and well-being of both our communities and the entire state. These have included programs that fund infrastructure improvements for roads and bridges, and for water and wastewater facilities; contributions to the cost of public safety personnel and teachers;









and programs that provide general property tax relief to offset public service expenses unique to each municipality. In 2010, to weather the state's recovery from the recession, there were significant reductions in every one of these municipal state aid programs. These reductions were of a magnitude that could not be offset by local spending cuts; consequently, they inevitably led to increased property taxes.

Although the State of New Hampshire has experienced significant revenue growth over the past decade, the legislature has not fulfilled its promise to return state aid to municipalities. Since 2008, there has been a significant reduction in municipal state aid programs, to the point that funding in 2019 is approximately 72% of the amount provided before the recession.

The state is in a much different financial position than it was in 2010, yet state funding for municipal programs remains suspended, frozen, reduced, or eliminated in the proposed budget. This leaves local property tax taxpayers

to continue shouldering the financial burden of providing essential public services that benefit the broader economic health of the state.

## NHMA's Legal Advisory Services

Although 49 out of 50 states have a municipal league or association like New Hampshire's, many of the organizations focus primarily or entirely on advocacy and lobbying. However, NHMA also provides its members with legal advice and training through our Legal Advisory Service. This department comprises two attorneys whose primary job is to provide general legal assistance to elected and appointed officials from member towns, cities, and village districts. In addition to answering thousands of legal questions each year, the attorneys prepare articles and handbooks and provide training through educational programs across the state on a variety of municipal issues. These attorneys work hard to educate municipal officials and employees on everything from compliance with New Hampshire's open government law (The Right-to-Know Law), to serving on a local land use board, to running town meeting.

## Making it All Happen

None of the above could happen without NHMA staff, who are all talented, knowledgeable, dedicated to NHMA and its members, collaborative, innovative, and fun-loving, yet serious about the work they do on behalf of NHMA members. The amount of work they produce is incredible, high quality, and on target.

All of us at NHMA believe strongly in local government and believe in local officials. We recognize it is not an easy job and that many of them are on the front lines on many difficult issues. NHMA is here to support them. Everything we do is for them, our members, whether it is legislative advocacy, Town & City magazine, providing legal advice, or presenting workshops. We count on the support of our members so we can continue to support our members!



# Millville,

NEW JERSEY





# EMBRACING THE FUTURE

**M**illville, New Jersey, a city of approximately 28,000, is located in Cumberland County, in the southern part of the state, some 45 miles south of Philadelphia. Millville, which incorporated as a township in 1801, derived its name from the numerous mills and factories built along the Maurice River, which, in turn, gave the town shipping access to the Delaware Bay. In 1806, an Irish immigrant, named James Lee, opened the area's first glass factory, making use of the large amount of silica sand in the region. For most of the next two centuries, Millville was a major U.S. glass producing center.

In fact, American poet, Carl Sandburg, immortalized the glass making prowess of Millville in a 1904

essay: "Down in southern New Jersey, they make glass. By day and by night, the fires burn on in Millville and bid the sand let in the light. Millville by night would have delighted Whistler, who loved gloom and mist and wild shadows. Great rafts of wood and big, brick hulks, dotted with a myriad of lights, glowing and twinkling every shade of red. Big, black flumes shooting out smoke and sparks; bottles, bottles, bottles, of every tint and hue, from a brilliant crimson to the dull green that marks the death of sand and the birth of glass."

One of Millville's legendary glass manufacturers was Wheaton Industries. Founded in 1888, by Dr. Theodore Corson Wheaton, it became a mainstay of the economy of southern New Jersey. Run by

## AT A GLANCE

### MILLVILLE, NEW JERSEY

**WHAT:** A city of 28,000

**WHERE:** Cumberland County, in the southern part of the state

**WEBSITE:** [www.millvillenj.gov](http://www.millvillenj.gov)





the Wheaton family for nearly its entire existence, at its height, the company had 41 factories throughout the United States and subsidiaries in 20 other countries. For many decades, it was said that if you lived in Millville, you probably worked at the Wheaton Plant, which, unfortunately closed down in the mid 1990s, with the loss of thousands of jobs, and today, still sits idle.

“The City is working with somebody who is looking to redevelop the Wheaton Plant as another industrial site,” says Samantha Silvers, Millville’s Supervising Planner. “We’re at the preliminary stages of looking at those redevelopment plans; they just submitted them, so I can’t say that there’s really anything on the books, yet. There is an active cleanup on it; it is being remediated. With that type of contamination, the cost to remediate it to something above an industrial standard is very costly. So, I don’t see it turning around and becoming a residential development or something, but to at least address the dilapidated buildings and get the lot cleaned up with new industrial development would be great.”

Millville’s other historic claim to fame is the Millville Army Air Field, dubbed “America’s First Defense Airport.” It opened in 1941, and soon became an important training and refueling site for the U.S. Army Air Forces during World War II. In its three-year existence, over 10,000 soldiers and civilians served there, with about 1,500 pilots receiving advanced fighter training in P-47 Thunderbolts. After the war, the Air Field was returned to the City of Millville.

Today, the renamed Millville Executive Airport is a thriving general aviation facility, owned by the city and managed by the Delaware River & Bay Authority. The Airport is New Jersey’s second largest, strategically located at the center of the Northeast Corridor, one of business aviation’s busiest flying corridors. Recently, Millville has had a portion of the Airport designated as a Foreign Free Trade Zone (FTZ). The United States government operates around 293 FTZs throughout the 50 states. They are secured, designated locations, in or near a U.S. Customs Port of Entry, where foreign and domestic



merchandise is generally considered to be in international commerce and, thus, exempt from many regular U.S. Customs rules and regulations. FTZs offer many benefits that importers can take advantage of to improve cash flow, increase global logistics efficiency, reduce redundant or unnecessary logistics costs, and retain flexibility.

“Right now, it’s about 140 acres that are so designated,” explains Silvers, “and we’ve been working with local companies to try to activate that designation, so companies that do a lot of imports, or even exports, can benefit. We can help them be more successful, here.”

Over the last several years, in addition to its aviation and commercial activities, the Airport has also become “a bit of a tourist destination,” according to Silvers. First came the Glasstown Brewing Company, located in the Army Airfield Historic District. “They have a following and they do a lot of different events at their location,” she notes. Upcoming in April is Glasstown Brewing’s

Annual Adult Easter Egg Hunt. “And after that, there was a distillery that came there.” That would be the East Coast Distillery, founded in 2014 by Carl L. Coombs III, a producer of a line of flavored moonshines, branded as Jersey Shine. Its tasting room features weekend tours.

Silvers adds that the city has recently approved an application for a “meadery” and “cidery” - mead being an alcoholic beverage created by fermenting honey with water, sometime adding various fruits, spices, grains, or hops; and cider being an alcoholic drink made from fermented crushed fruit, typically apples. “There’s also an antique gun shop out there, and we have the Museum.”

The Millville Army Airfield Museum, located in the original base headquarters building, displays large collections of WWII aviation artifacts of national interest. The historic complex includes the original WWII air base Link Trainer Building, which houses a rare, fully-operational link trainer; and the Henry E. Wyble Historic Research Library



**Congratulations to the city of Millville on this well-deserved recognition for its excellence in management of the City and its improvement projects. Flaster Greenberg is pleased to be considered one of the City’s strategic partners.**

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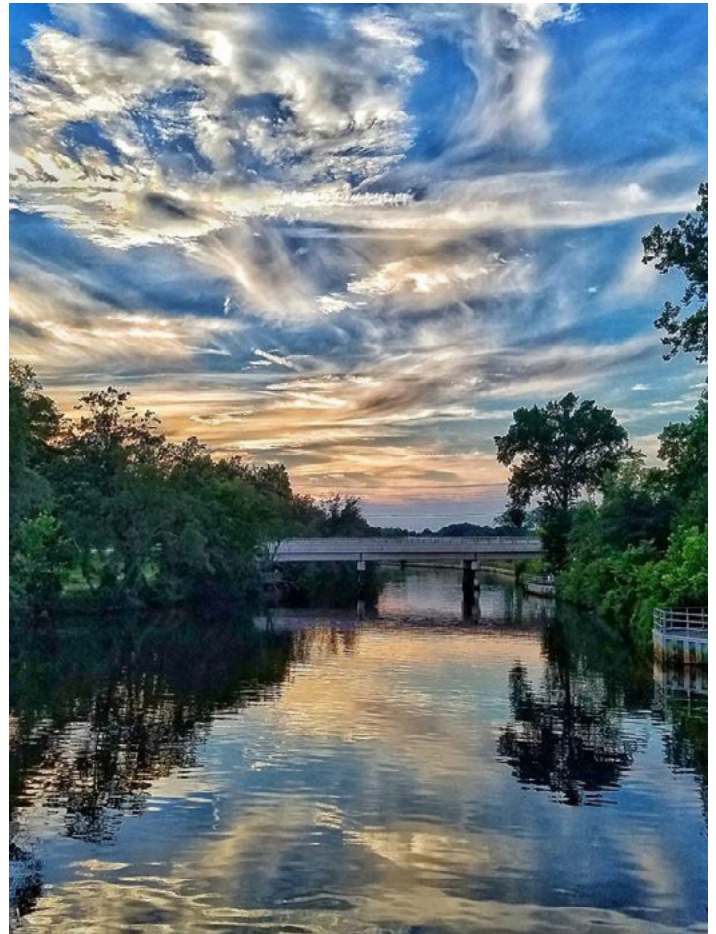
and Education Center located in a restored WWII warehouse, containing an extensive literary and video collection. Events include air shows and static displays of vintage aircraft.

“So, it’s been this little area to spend the day and enjoy things at the Airport,” says Silvers. “There’s also been interest to do another type of military museum, out there. That would be really exciting, because they would be renovating some of the existing historical buildings at the Airport, and that would add to that destination point.”

Outside the Airport perimeter is a 300-acre, city-owned industrial park, the Millville Airport Commerce Center. Silvers says there are a couple of pending contracts between the city and developers. “There’s a food processor, a recycling facility, and we’ve had interest from a cold storage facility,” she reports. “The food processor will be coming for site plan approval in May. That could be, at final buildout, a 487,000-sq.-ft. facility.” The Commerce Center is already home to RLS Logistics’ 56-foot tall, 1.6 million-cubic-foot, refrigerated warehouse, which the Newfield, NJ-based company built there in 2014.

Silvers adds that the City is also focused on the economic development of its downtown, and that several buildings there have recently changed hands. The old Regional Music building on High Street, which has been vacant since 2016, will soon be repurposed as a Taekwondo Center. “It’s a great thing for High Street and will bring people downtown,” she avers. “It’s right near the Arts Gallery and right near restaurants. There’s also a larger redevelopment project expected at the 500 block of High St. that will be underway, this year. They’ve acquired the property for the project; we’ve seen their renderings, so it’s a matter of putting together the financing and I think we’ll start to see some groundbreaking there, shortly.”

Silvers explains that the High Street corridor is located within the city’s 301 census tract, which has been recently designated as one of the country’s 8,700 Federal Opportunity Zones, a new economic development program, created by the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, that aims







to drive long-term, private investment into low-income communities. A census tract which has been designated as eligible, can receive private investments through Opportunity Funds, which allow their investors to receive certain tax benefits when they reinvest any unrealized capital gains into them for a minimum of five years. “We’re hoping to maybe benefit from investors looking to invest their capital gains in the Opportunity Zone,” says Silvers. “It’s something that we’re promoting even though we may or may not be involved in the projects.”

Another ongoing project in downtown Millville is the repurposing of a local hotel and catering hall - the Country Inn & Suites and the Heritage House/ Paper Waiter restaurant - into an assisted living and adult medical day care facility near the Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center. “We think that there’s going to be some good synergy with Wheaton Arts,” says Silvers. Founded as Wheaton Village in 1968, the Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center is a nonprofit organization with a mission to “engage artists and audiences in an evolving exploration of creativity.”



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At the heart of the Center is the Museum of American Glass, housing the most comprehensive collection of glass produced in the county, and one of only eight museums in New Jersey to be accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.

In addition to bringing more economic development to Millville – both at its industrial park and its downtown core - Silvers says that another focus of the city administration is revitalizing some of its residential neighborhoods “so that they’re places where people want to live. We’re working with the Holley City Development Corporation (HCDC),” she says. “They got an \$85,000, Wells Fargo regional foundation neighborhood planning grant, and they’ve been working with the residents of the neighborhood and the downtown businesses to put together a plan that’s neighborhood-based, not top-down driven; seeing what the concerns and goals are of the residents, and then incorporating that into a plan that the city will eventually adopt and incorporate into our plan. Meanwhile, we’re focusing our efforts on Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding and different types of funding to help turn around the Center City neighborhood.”

Turning things around in Millville is getting to be a normal routine. A recent successful turnaround was the renovation of the Levoy Theatre, first opened in 1908 as a theatre and dance hall,

then a venue for Vaudeville and silent films, and finally a Warner Brothers-owned movie palace. Due to increasing competition from TV and newer suburban movie theaters, as well as its deteriorating physical condition, the Levoy closed its doors in 1974. In the mid 1980s the store space on the ground floor was reopened for leasing, and the second floor mezzanine was torn out to create residential apartments.

A local non-profit group, the Levoy Theatre Preservation Society, struggled for years to raise money in order to purchase and redevelop the theatre, and finally, in 2010, a multi-million dollar financial package containing a combination of tax credits, private, and public funds was compiled, and work on the restoration of the theatre began shortly thereafter. The Levoy Theatre successfully re-opened in September, 2012. Much of the building’s new interior was modeled and matched to the historic features of the century-old venue; it features a small entrance lobby, followed by a larger ground-floor lobby, and a grand staircase leading to a mezzanine lobby. The new theatre seats about 700 patrons, has state-of-art sound and lighting, and a levitating orchestra pit. Today, the Levoy Theater is doing well. “Shows are selling out there,” says Silvers.

With new businesses popping up, old structures being brought back to life, a vibrant downtown arts scene, exemplified by the Glasstown Center





Arts District, an inviting downtown area for visitors to stroll, relax, dine, and shop for art and fine crafts, and residential neighborhoods being re-imagined, Millville, New Jersey is a city that is confidently embracing its future.



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*Rutherford County,*  
TENNESSEE  
*The Heart of Tennessee*





**R**utherford County, population 360,000, is located in the geographic center of the State of Tennessee. It was formed in 1803, and named in honor of Griffith Rutherford, a North Carolina colonial legislator and American Revolutionary War general, who settled in Middle Tennessee after the Revolution. During the Civil War, the county's location between Nashville and Chattanooga made it a hotly contested area; in fact, it was the site of one of the war's bloodiest conflicts, the Battle of Stones River.

Originally, an agricultural region, today, Rutherford County hosts a diverse array of manufacturing enterprises, with a large number of automobile plants dotting the region. Nissan, alone, has over 8,000 employees; Bridgestone/Firestone has 1,000; plus there are many other smaller companies that supply the auto industry. And Bill Ketron, the Mayor of Rutherford County, would like to see the auto industry expand even more. "We have a General Motors plant 45 minutes from here down in Springhill, Tennessee,

## AT A GLANCE

# RUTHERFORD COUNTY, TENNESSEE

- WHAT:** A county of 360,000
- WHERE:** The geographic center of Tennessee
- WEBSITE:** [www.rutherfordcountyttn.gov](http://www.rutherfordcountyttn.gov)



and we have Volkswagen in Chattanooga,” he says. “GM announced that they’re letting a lot of people go in some of their plants, but I’ve been working with General Motors and Nissan and we want Middle Tennessee to be the autonomous vehicle capital and the first to bring this new technology to the automobile industry.”

In addition to its automobile companies, other large area employers include: Ingram Content Group with 2,000 workers; National Healthcare Corporation, with another 2,000; Rutherford County Government and School System, which employs 6,000; Middle Tennessee State University, with the largest undergraduate population in the state, has 2,200 workers; and 1,500 people work at the Amazon Fulfillment Center in Murfreesboro.

Tourism is another major revenue driver for the County. “Tennessee has so many things to see,” says Ketron, who, before assuming the Mayor’s office was a State Senator from 2003-2018. “There’s the Great Smoky Mountains in the far east; and

Nashville in Middle Tennessee; and then the Delta Country down in Memphis,” he notes. “Our tourism dollars in Rutherford County rank No. 4 in the state. We have a national battlefield here. And when I was in the State Senate, I passed a bill that created the Whiskey Trail, similar to the Kentucky Bourbon Trail, that allowed whiskey distillers to grow. Prior to that, we only had three; now we have 43 in the Whiskey Guild and that creates an opportunity for economic development. They put some money in to create the Whiskey Trail so people can tour. Our vineyards are on the increase and the moonshine is legal.”

The County Mayor’s office is responsible for organizing and coordinating County government activities and overseeing its day-to-day operations and the delivery of services to its citizens. Ketron says that the three most important issues facing the County, today, are solid waste, transportation infrastructure, and schools, because, with an average of 96 new people moving into the community, daily, the County



PICTURED ABOVE  
Mayor, Bill Ketron











is one of the fastest growing in the country – most especially in Murfreesboro, the County seat, with a current population of 136,000.

“Rutherford County is trying to address the number one issue that’s facing our County and that is our current landfill issue and waste stream,” Ketron explains. “Our landfill receives trash from 23 different counties in the Tennessee area, Metro Nashville, included. So, we’re talking several million people’s trash coming into the landfill located in my County. So, we’re looking to see what our best alternatives are, and we want to set the standard in Tennessee for handling solid waste.”

Recently, Ketron visited several recycling and composting facilities in California and returned with a plan to replicate what he saw there. “Our landfill’s capacity is anywhere between six and eight years, but we need to start now; just to build a facility will take a couple of years,” he opines. “So, we’re looking at composting making up 60 percent – turning trash into dirt, and then,

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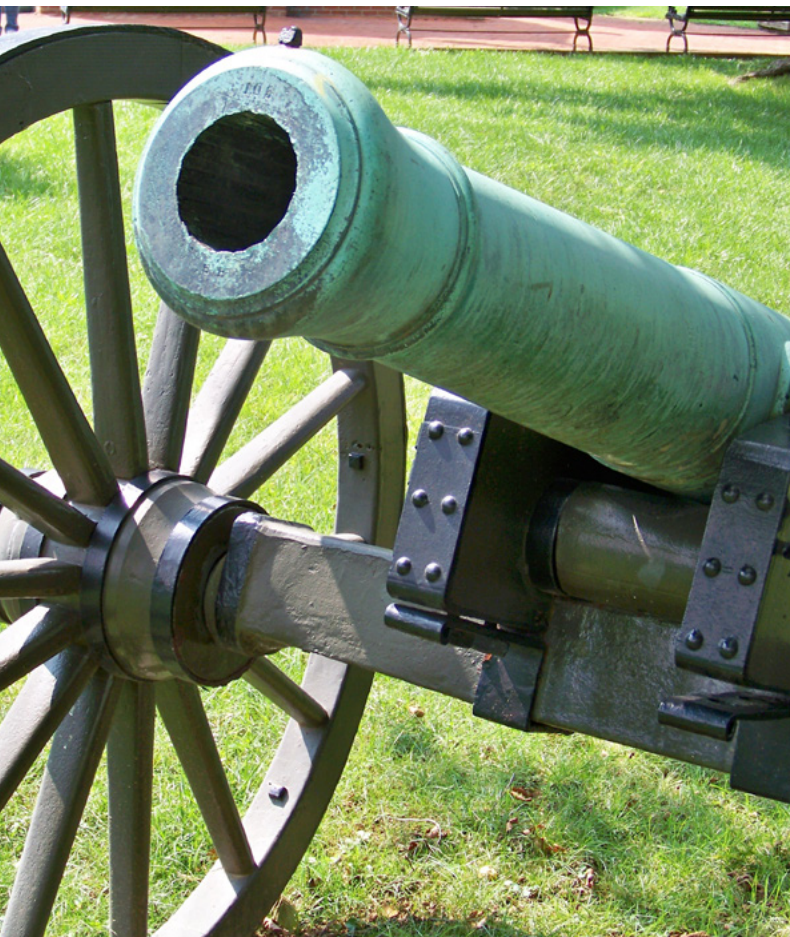
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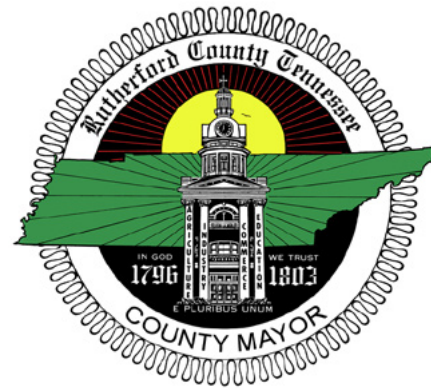
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probably, creating an MRF recycling facility like we saw in San Jose, California.” An MRF (Materials Recovery Facility) takes in a broad stream of solid waste and separates out recyclable materials through manual and mechanical sorting. The recyclables are then processed for market, and the non-recyclable materials are sent to a landfill or other disposal facility. According to Ketron, the County and its four major cities - Eagleville, La Vergne, Smyrna, and Murfreesboro - will probably create a Solid Waste Authority to handle the issue.

While the waste stream situation is being addressed, Ketron is keen on pointing out Rutherford County’s many advantages to any new residents or businesses with a desire to relocate. “We’re a no-income tax state, and we’re in the process of getting rid of the Hall tax,” he avers. (The Hall income tax is imposed only on individuals and other entities receiving interest from bonds and notes and dividends from stock. It was enacted in 1929 and was originally called the Hall income tax for the senator who sponsored the

legislation.) “Each year, over the next two years, it will totally disappear, so we’ll have no ‘Death Tax,’ no income tax, and no tax on capital gains. As long as you manage your sales and property taxes, it works out quite well. We have a great educational system; we’ve probably got the second or third strongest pension program in the country, which is 95 percent funded; we have a great greenway system by the river; and the quality of life here in Middle Tennessee is attractive to so many people.”







In fact, people are drawn to Rutherford County for its moderate climate, its diverse cultural and entertainment offerings, its top-quality healthcare and housing, and its low cost of living. This vibrant, Southern community represents a unique blend of Civil War history and a thriving 21st century community with all the amenities of a major metropolitan area. It's truly the "heart of Tennessee."

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# BOONE COUNTY, *Iowa*

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eventually became the county seat. In 1866, the Town of Ogden was also laid out along this busy rail line. Today, Boone County is comprised of Boone, Madrid, Ogden, Pilot Mound, Boxholm, Beaver, Luther, Fraser, and Berkley.

While it still enjoys the benefits of a strong railroad presence, Boone County offers so much more. Be as active or relaxed as you please while exploring the scenic Des Moines River





## AT A GLANCE

# BOONE COUNTY, IOWA

**WHAT:** Rural county, population approx. 26,000

**WHERE:** Central Iowa, near Des Moines

**WEBSITE:** [www.booneiowa.us](http://www.booneiowa.us)  
[www.boonecounty.iowa.gov](http://www.boonecounty.iowa.gov)





Valley. Enjoy the security of excellent jobs, fine education, healthcare, recreation, and a myriad of home-based opportunities for makers and artists of all disciplines. Boone is the birthplace of First Lady, Mamie Eisenhower, and home to the Iowa Municipal Band Festival, IMCA Super Nationals, and the biannual site for the Farm Progress Show, the nation's greatest agricultural showcase.

Kurt Phillips is Executive Director of the Boone County Economic Growth Corporation and also oversees operations of the Boone County Chamber of Commerce – two separate, private, non-profit organizations representing business and industry in different ways. He explains, “From the economic development office side, we are a county-wide organization serving the interests of County government and also the cities of Boone, Madrid, and Ogden, which together make up 70 percent or more of the county population of 26,000. About 12,500 people live in or near the City of Boone (the county seat) and because it has previously developed land for retail, commercial, and light and heavy industry, that’s where most

of my work is focused. We are seeing an uptick in capital investment - a lot of it is retail.”

The community of Boone sits on U.S. Highway 30. That four-way trunk highway is a bonus for transportation, access, and visibility. As a result, the city is expanding on the south side, and planning for smart growth in that direction is a priority. There is also a lesser degree of growth to the east, in the vicinity of the municipal airport.

The county’s biggest project to date is causing quite the excitement. According to Phillips, “We just received ‘shovel-ready’ certification for a 150-acre site, this week, after a year-and-a-half of work. We’ve done all the environmental, cultural, historical, archaeological research, and the title, ownership history, wetlands, and endangered species research. We’ve concluded what the level of utilities and services are at or near the site. We’ve vetted what our rail service will look like - it’s a big project that just came to fruition. The State of Iowa works with Quest Site Solutions out of South Carolina and through them we’ve







attained certification, which means we have a 150-acre site that's rip-roaring ready to go for larger industry. It's probably been 35 or 40 years since we've had a great piece of land in position to recruit industry on a national or even international level." The State strongly promotes those certified sites; there are about 24 in Iowa now. They are very attractive to site selectors, as well as CEOs and business development teams who go out and search for the next location for major industry. It promises to be a gamechanger for the county.

Boone County has an agriculture-based economy and is proud to be the home of Fareway Grocery Stores – one of the largest privately-held grocery chains in the country with about 120 stores across five states. The company started in Boone and currently employs about 600 people, locally. Boone County is also a hub node for the Union Pacific Railroad, which has several hundred area employees on the payroll. Three to four thousand commuters who live in Boone County travel 15 minutes to Ames, where Iowa

State University and the headquarters for the Iowa Department of Transportation are located. And some travel 30 to 40 minutes south to Des Moines. Phillips reports, "We see a lot of out-commuting here, as well as people coming in for the jobs in Boone County. We're in a unique location, but I feel we're on the uptick for growth and development of the county, as a whole."

The Boone County Chamber of Commerce, which also houses the Tourism Bureau, deals more with small business owners – assisting them, advocating for them, providing services and benefits to help them along, whereas, the economic development organization is more concerned with jobs creation and tax base initiatives - looking at the big picture and overall development of the whole county and its communities. It thinks larger, but certainly helps small businesses, as well. Being a dual-role executive over both organizations, even though they are separate entities with separate boards, Phillips has the ability to change hats and, along with his staff, help people in a variety of ways.

He notes, "We have a lot of work to do in workforce development. And each of the communities of size in our county is working on housing initiatives. We're close to the Des Moines market and, because of today's societal acceptance of driving a little way to your job, there are over 400,000 people in our labor shed to pull from. But unemployment being as low as it is in Iowa, hovering around two percent, most people are already employed. So, we're challenged with workforce development and if we're going to recruit people to come here, we have to make sure we have adequate housing. In that regard, we're very supportive of each community's local government in their efforts to facilitate new housing or rehabilitation."

To help with the workforce issue, Boone High School offers a work-based learning program that is career and technical education oriented. Both the Chamber and Economic Development organizations are involved with that. Describing the details, Phillips relates, "It is based on the premise that there are only two ways to grow your work force. You either birth them, raise

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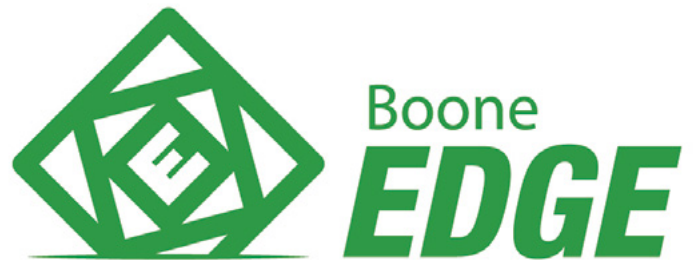






them, educate them, and keep them – or you bring them in from somewhere else. You can also retrain people and upskill them from, for example, a clerking job, to something more career oriented. All those things are in play. We're also closely working with the High School on a program they call 'EDGE.' The idea is to get students involved in understanding what jobs are available for them in business and industry, have that experience before they graduate and, then, as they leave high school, be better prepared to enter an apprenticeship program, if that's what they desire. Or they have a better sense of what they can do with a two-year degree or understand where their commitment should lie if they're going to seek a four-year or greater education."

He adds, "Considering the student loan crisis, it's important that students leaving high school have an idea of the career opportunities that exist for them – certainly we want to show them those opportunities that are in our backyard, so they know they can stay here and have a great job and make a great living. We also







want to make sure they are prepared to make good decisions at the start of their career.”

Simply stated, Boone County is not an industrial or manufacturing powerhouse. Its attributes have been more conducive to living a rewarding, prosperous life of a different nature. That being said, the county is definitely open to opportunities for the future. Phillips shares, “I think that as rural America changed over the last 30 to 40 years, from the mentality that you always lived and worked right in that one community, as people have become more comfortable with commutes or even telecommuting to work, that’s helping Boone County become a reasonable consideration for business and industry. With our proximity to metro areas like Des Moines, and even the smaller statistical area of Ames-Story County, we have renewed life here. That’s really the story of Boone County. We’re in a great position to see the most significant growth in business, industry, and quite possibly population, that we’ve seen in many decades.”



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# LANSING,





# ILLINOIS



## FOX POINTE OPENS

Lansing, Illinois, a village in Cook County, is a southern suburb of Chicago. It was first settled in the mid- 1800s, primarily by Dutch and German immigrants who came to the area to build homes, farms, and businesses. In the late 19th century, brickyards dominated Lansing's economy, and the Village supplied much of the brick to rebuild Chicago after the Chicago Fire of 1871. While onions, tomatoes, beets, spinach, and cabbage were common crops grown on its farms, it was onions that were most prominent; the suburban Chicago area supplied 80 percent of the country's onion sets in the 1930s and 1940s.

Today, in addition to being a bedroom community of Chicago, Lansing has a significant retail base, and is also home to some light manufacturing and distribution companies. The Village also has a viable downtown with lots of old shops and the newly completed Park Plaza, located on the site of an old railroad line at the southwest corner of Ridge Road, the Village's main thoroughfare, and Burnham Avenue, that hosts a farmers' market during summer months.

### AT A GLANCE

## LANSING, ILLINOIS

- WHAT:** A village of 30,000
- WHERE:** Cook County, seven miles south of Chicago
- WEBSITE:** [www.villageoflansing.org](http://www.villageoflansing.org)



Recently, the biggest news in Lansing was the September 28, 2018 grand opening of Fox Pointe, a concert and events venue that Village leaders hope will be a “destination driver” to bring people from the Chicago’s southern suburbs to this community of 30,000. Construction of the \$5.65 million project began in June 2017, and was financed with funds from the Village’s Ridge Road Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, which allowed it to set aside new tax revenue generated by new construction, redevelopment, or increased assessed property values resulting from improvements to the area, and use the money for infrastructure to support the new development in the district.

Built on a site that used to house a business called Fox Home Lumber, and right near the heart of Lansing’s downtown, Fox Pointe has a large amphitheater, a pavilion, a concession building, a building for restrooms, a landscaped entrance and a large green space. The lawn can hold up to 2,000 people, while the open-air pavilion can hold another 330 at 42 picnic tables.

“We completed the construction phase and we’re now moving into an operational phase of the venue,” says Village Administrator Dan Podgorski. “Last fall, we had a ribbon-cutting ceremony and then, subsequently, worked with one of our community organizations to host the first festival; it was a three-day, outdoor festival, complete with music, entertainment, food, and beverages, utilizing the entire facility. It was a little bit of a test run for us. Now, we’re hard at work at putting together a full schedule of events – 2019 will be our inaugural year. We are probably going to have close to two dozen events out there, this year.”

“What we’re trying to do out there is to make Fox Pointe a premium venue for concerts and events here in Lansing and, hopefully, in the south



PICTURED RIGHT  
Village Administrator,  
Dan Podgorski







suburbs and northwest Indiana, as well,” adds Fox Pointe Director Tony Troncozo. “We have a Wednesday concert series planned that will go 13 weeks starting the week after Memorial Day and going through Labor Day. We will also have a two-day Blues Fest in July, and we’re probably going to have a Food Truck Festival and other types of events like that. All events will have music and vendors, and we will have our own concessions there. That’s the goal for this year: to get the ball rolling with something between 20 and 25 events and then keep it going from there. Next year, I’m eyeing at least 40 events. We have about six months to work with and we are planning a few things, maybe, for the following winter, as well. That’s the rollout plan. Some of the events will be ticketed; the Wednesdays will be free admission to the public. We want to get this advertised citywide and in northwest Indiana to bring not only people from Lansing here, but all over the south suburbs.”

Ken Reynolds, Lansing’s Director of Communications, agrees. “Our whole goal is for Fox Pointe to be a premier destination, so we’re attempting to make sure that all elements of it, from concessions, to our logistics, to the talent we booked, to the marketing, is up to a standard that is going to make people, not only in our zip code want to come here, but also outside of here. You get one opportunity to make a first impression and we don’t want our concertgoers

PICTURED BELOW  
*Fox Pointe Director,  
Tony Troncozo*





PICTURED BELOW  
*Lansing's Director of Communications,*  
*Ken Reynolds*







and attendees to come and not go back and say, 'Hey, you've got to get out there.' To that end, all of us involved have tried to make sure that each decision was based on us having a premier destination. We also are going to rent the facility to those who meet the criteria of our usage policy. So, that's another opportunity to take this great piece of land and development and showcase it, not only with what we book, but also for other people and groups who want to use it."

Podgorski remarks that Fox Pointe's designation as a "destination driver" has already begun to show some potential dividends, even at this early stage. "We've already got some other business owners looking at vacancies on our





downtown Ridge Road, which is adjacent to Fox Pointe,” he notes. “So, it’s already starting to attract some interest, and we hope that it’s going to be that driver that brings not only people, but other businesses to our community.”

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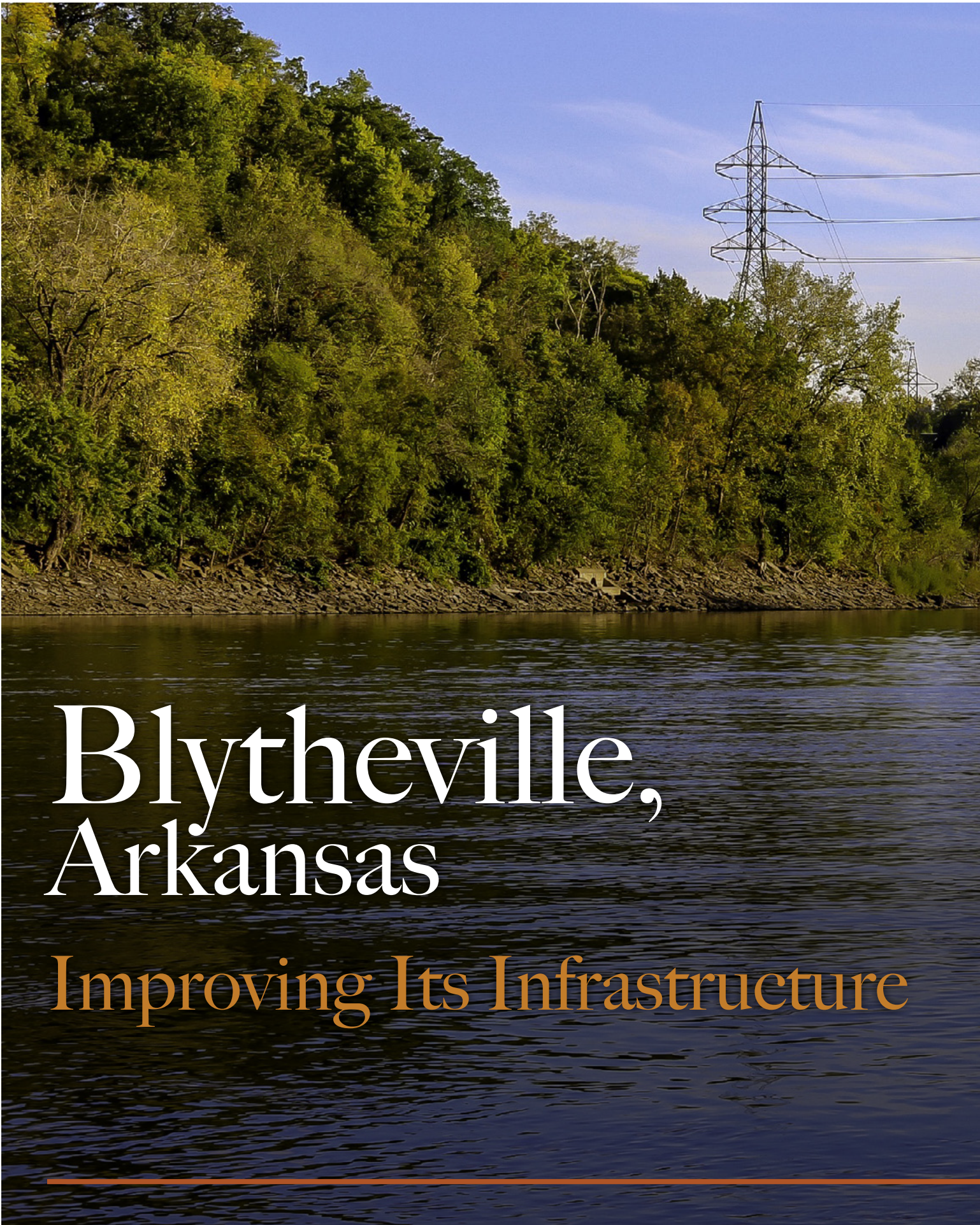
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## PREFERRED VENDOR

- **Christine Peterson,**  
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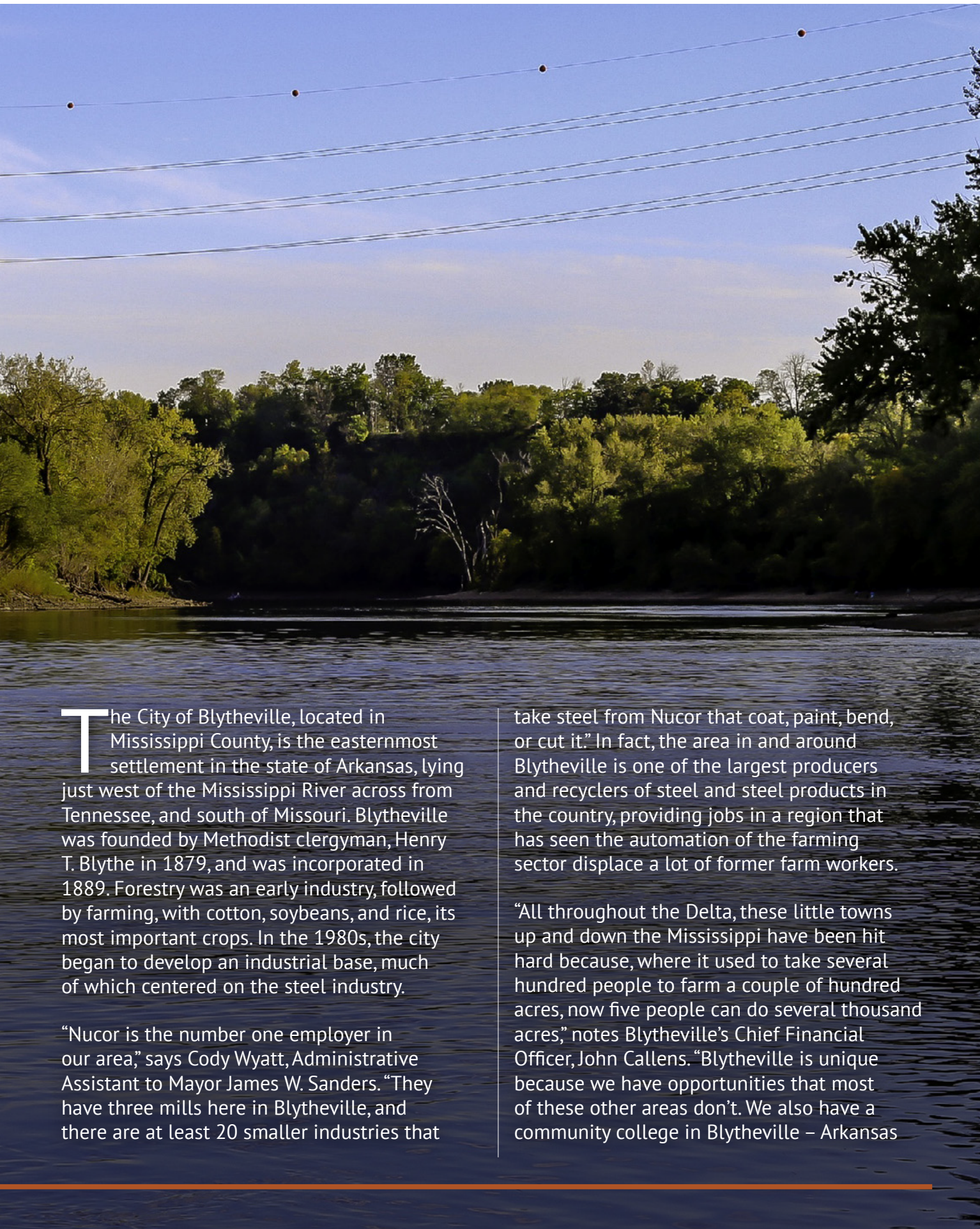


# Blytheville, Arkansas

## Improving Its Infrastructure

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**T**he City of Blytheville, located in Mississippi County, is the easternmost settlement in the state of Arkansas, lying just west of the Mississippi River across from Tennessee, and south of Missouri. Blytheville was founded by Methodist clergyman, Henry T. Blythe in 1879, and was incorporated in 1889. Forestry was an early industry, followed by farming, with cotton, soybeans, and rice, its most important crops. In the 1980s, the city began to develop an industrial base, much of which centered on the steel industry.

“Nucor is the number one employer in our area,” says Cody Wyatt, Administrative Assistant to Mayor James W. Sanders. “They have three mills here in Blytheville, and there are at least 20 smaller industries that

take steel from Nucor that coat, paint, bend, or cut it.” In fact, the area in and around Blytheville is one of the largest producers and recyclers of steel and steel products in the country, providing jobs in a region that has seen the automation of the farming sector displace a lot of former farm workers.

“All throughout the Delta, these little towns up and down the Mississippi have been hit hard because, where it used to take several hundred people to farm a couple of hundred acres, now five people can do several thousand acres,” notes Blytheville’s Chief Financial Officer, John Callens. “Blytheville is unique because we have opportunities that most of these other areas don’t. We also have a community college in Blytheville – Arkansas



AT A GLANCE

BLYTHEVILLE,  
ARKANSAS

- WHAT:** A city of 14,000
- WHERE:** Mississippi County, northeast Arkansas
- WEBSITE:** [www.cityofblytheville.com](http://www.cityofblytheville.com)

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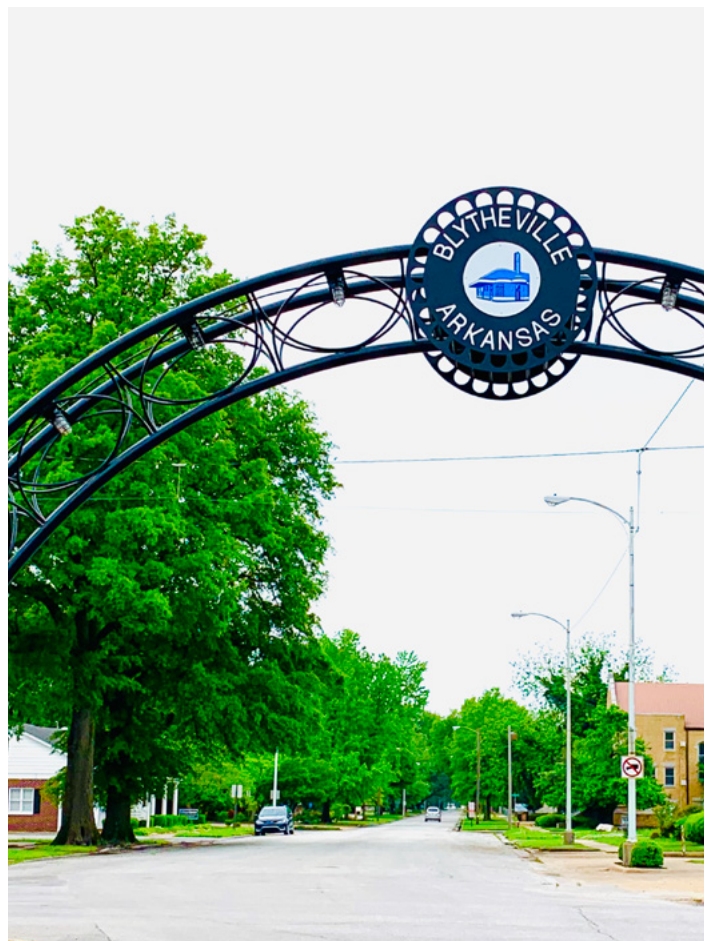
Northeastern College. They're noted for having the second highest salaries for their graduates, anywhere in the state. One of the reasons is that they have a structural steel program called Allied Tech, where you can get a two-year degree and start out in the \$70Ks, which is excellent in this area for a starting salary. So, there's a lot of opportunity for people in the steel industry."

While the overall economic picture of Blytheville looks positive, with employment in the steel industry available, Mayor Sanders admits that, just like many other cities in the country, his city has experienced a lack of infrastructure investment over the years. But that is something

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that is about to change. “What we’re doing now, is working on our infrastructure to better provide services to the people that live here,” he states. “We have an estimated \$14 million in projects, going on, right now, around the city. Our water department is having new wells drilled, plus new fire hydrants for \$5 million. We’re also working to have a new, \$8 million wastewater treatment plant built to ensure that we’re able to treat our water as it leaves our city, and stay in compliance with the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality’s regulations.”

Callens elaborates: “A major problem we have here is a lot of iron in our water, so one of the things that we’re doing with water is upgrading our filters. Then, in the past, we used chlorine gas as an additive in our water. But, we’re getting away from that, because the health department wants the city to get away from the use of chlorine gas because of its potential danger. So, we’ve gone to a liquid bleach, which will make it must safer for the community if something ever did

happen. We’re in an earthquake zone; a major earthquake could cause a leak of chlorine gas, which could cause some major health issues.”

“We’re always looking for areas we need to improve on,” Callens adds. “We brought water engineers in and we found out that, quite often, when a city expands, and moves outward from its water plant, it can have fire flow issues. So, we’re spending an additional \$800,000 to put in a non-potable well to add fire flow to certain areas, so when additional housing or businesses come in, we offer the protection that they need.”

“These investments that we’re looking at now are inspired to expand the longevity of our infrastructure systems,” Sanders remarks. “These are one-time fixes that we’re talking about to save money. For instance, regarding the wastewater plant - right now, the system that we’re operating on is over 30 years old. Because of the old equipment, we have high electric bills from the use of those old treatment facilities and their

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PICTURED  
Nucor-Yamato Steel Company

capacity is not as much as we need to treat our water. So, by investing in this new system, we're reducing the amount of electricity to give us a cost savings, as well as increasing the efficiency of the cleaning of the water that is being treated."

Another water-related project in Blytheville will be the installation of fixed-base, radio read meters to replace all residential water meters in the city. "In the past, you might have had a leak and you wouldn't know it for a month," Callens explains. "So, at the end of the month, you might have an outrageous bill. These new meters have the capability of reading minute by minute. Customers can download an app and it will give an alert if they have an extreme amount of usage. So, hopefully, that will save our citizens' money. That project runs about \$1.5 million, with all improvements for the water department totaling at \$5 million."

Blytheville is also working on upgrading its police department with a new \$2.75 million justice center, being paid for with a recently passed

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quarter-cent sales tax. Another key area of focus is citizen safety. “While we’re constructing our new justice center, we’re working with a company called SkyCop,” Sanders reports. “They place cameras in strategic areas of our town to monitor both ingoing and outgoing traffic, as well as our shopping areas, and even, in some cases, our residential areas, so people can feel safe because the areas are being monitored by cameras and fed back to both the police cars and the justice center. We understand that the city’s duty is not to be a thermometer to gauge the safety issues, but to be the thermostat to set an atmosphere of growth and safety for our constituents.”

“Downtown is another area that we’re concentrating on,” Sanders continues. “We have an active downtown commission, and we’re working collaboratively with the people downtown to make our city more attractive and get people to invest in our downtown.” To that end, the city has cleaned up its “Downtown Patio,” a former dilapidated business that is now used as a venue

and meeting space; it is planning a complete facelift for the Ritz Civic Center on Main Street; and it will repaint its famous Downtown Arches. Blytheville is also working on its streets. The city has spent funds on drainage work and has recently repaved several key thoroughfares, including McHaney and Franklin Streets.

“We’re trying to move in a different direction and utilize our tax dollars to work on the quality of life issues in our city,” says Sanders. “Growth usually stems from major transportation opportunities, which Blytheville is blessed to have many of. We have two airports, the Mississippi River, BNSF railway, Interstate 55, as well as Federal and State Highways. So, our intent is to draw people from the growing areas outside our city into our industrial and downtown areas, so that they can experience what all Blytheville has to offer.”

“I hope that people know that we are a very community-based city,” says Wyatt. “We are working hard to develop our community and improving the

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amenities for our citizens, even the things they don't see, such as the infrastructure improvements. Improving our parks and making them vibrant and welcoming is also something we really focused on this past year, and will do in the future, as well."

"And it's not about just doing it ourselves," says Mayor Sanders, in conclusion. "It's about getting a broad amount of people with new ideas that will help the quality of life, here in Blytheville."



PICTURED LEFT  
SkyCop cameras monitor  
areas to ensure safety

## PREFERRED VENDORS

### ■ Nucor-Yamato Steel

[www.nucor.com](http://www.nucor.com)

Nucor-Yamato Steel Company was formed in 1987 as a joint venture between Nucor and Yamato Kogyo with the goal of operating a steel mini-mill to manufacture wide-flange beams in Blytheville, Arkansas. Today, Nucor-Yamato Steel Company has the capacity to produce over 2.5 million tons per year of not only wide-flange beams, but also H-piling, sheet piling, standard I-beams, channels and various other structural shapes.

### ■ Greater Blytheville Area Chamber of Commerce

[www.GreaterBlytheville.com](http://www.GreaterBlytheville.com)

### ■ Arkansas Northeastern College

[www.anc.edu](http://www.anc.edu)







# Clarington, Ontario

EXPERIENCE THE PLEASURES

Clarington is a lower-tier municipality in the Regional Municipality of Durham in Ontario, at the eastern end of the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA). The municipality consists of urban communities, including Bowmanville (home of the municipal offices), Courtice, Newcastle, Orono, and several rural hamlets. That's the more formal description. At the other end of the spectrum - from apple blossoms to medical isotopes, salmon to cannabis - the Municipality of Clarington is evolving as a haven of economic diversity. Add in the pleasures of Lake Ontario vistas and the spectacular Oak Ridges Moraine, and there is no wonder that businesses, tourists, and residents, alike, are besotted.

Encompassing a total area of 236 square miles, Clarington has a large cache of developable land. Housing prices and taxes are among the most affordable in the GTA (Greater Toronto Area). The population sits just shy of 100,000, with a steady influx of more people moving into the area. Half of all development in the Durham Region has been happening between Oshawa and Clarington; an average 8.8 percent annual growth over the last five years.

The economy is growing on several fronts, and there is much news to share. Adrian Foster, now in his third term as Mayor of Clarington, reports, "We've got a cluster of cannabis growers here, including Starseed, Canopy Growth Corporation,





## AT A GLANCE

# CLARINGTON, ONTARIO

- WHAT:** A municipality of 85,000
- WHERE:** Durham Region of Ontario, east of Toronto
- WEBSITE:** [www.clarington.net](http://www.clarington.net)



and MediWanna (all licensed producers) and five more applications for new producers coming. In a couple of years, it may quite possibly be our second largest employer. And that business, of course, is absolutely booming.” In January 2019, Clarington Council voted 4-3 to opt in and allow privately-owned cannabis retail stores to operate within its limits. The Municipality has advised the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) of its decision and will be eligible to host, potentially, one of six stores slated to open within the GTA.

By opting in, Clarington will receive \$86,782 to help with the cost of legalization, including enforcement. The Municipality may also be eligible to receive more money from the Province. Ontario has promised to, potentially, share 50 per cent of the federal cannabis excise tax with municipalities if it receives more than \$100 million in the first two years. Initially, 25 stores will be allowed to open in Ontario, and one of the businesses that won the provincial lottery can choose the community as a potential location for its cannabis store. According to Foster, “For whatever reason, the people who were opposed to the stores, were very welcoming of the cannabis industry. And we’ll continue to reach out for opportunities – perhaps, there is a supply side to the business that makes sense to bring to town while we have a number of producers.”

Sheila Hall, Executive Director of the Clarington Board of Trade, is aptly referred to by the Mayor as “our economic development guru.” In that role, Hall sees the direct impact of the cannabis industry on the community from a development perspective. “Canopy and MediWanna both repurposed old buildings for their initial operations but, moving forward, most of the facilities will be new builds. They’re clustering in one area and we’re running out of space. They’ve gobbled a lot of it up, quite honestly.” The Mayor adds, “We provided servicing to some lands a couple of years ago, and these guys, basically, took it all. So, the money we put into upfronting the infrastructure has all come back to us in jobs and businesses. Now, we’ll need to look at doing something similar.”

In other positive economic news, the Darlington



Nuclear plant is in the midst of a \$12.8 billion refurbishment. Darlington provides about 20 percent of Ontario’s electricity, so the major overhaul of its four reactors is taking place one at a time, while the other three reactors are running. That means 2,000 extra people showing up for work every day, above and beyond those running the plant, and a significant rise in residential development. With a new 30-acre, Toyota distribution center currently under construction, as well, the employment situation will continue to thrive.

Clarington is the largest municipality, geographically, in the Durham Region and agriculture is a big part of the local economy. Algoma Orchards uses state-of-the-art planting systems to grow over 445 hectares (1,100 acres) of apples at their Clarington facility. Mayor Foster boasts, “Fifteen minutes from your front door, you can go berry picking, apple picking, be in a forest, go to the lake fishing, camping at Darlington Provincial Park. Hundreds of Quebecers come to Port Darlington and Bowmanville to





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But there are challenges to contend with – most important, the need for more serviced land. The Board of Trade has turned businesses away because it can't accommodate their needs. Recently, the Region of Durham Council has directed staff to look at its large amount of reserve funds, with the intent of investing them in the ground. And Clarington will be







a willing participant. Aging infrastructure is another challenge. Foster explains, “Because we have a number of small hamlets, I have a lot of community centers, some of which are historic buildings that are very difficult and expensive to maintain. The need for a new recreation center in Bowmanville has been a couple years in the making. But because we’ve got three major urban centers, if I build one of anything – a pool, an ice surface, whatever – I have to build three.”

Healthcare is a crucial component to the community and Clarington is looking at a major expansion to the Bowmanville Memorial Hospital. Council just committed \$5 million to that and is expecting an announcement from the province for more funding. In addition, the nuclear file is getting interesting. “Over half of the medical isotopes used around the globe come from Canada, and we’ll be looking at medical isotopes coming out of Darlington,” says Foster, “along with new technology in the nuclear sector – the small modular reactor (SMR).”

You can potentially build a reactor in a factory and double the input, and get it dropped at a different location. In the past, the focus has been on giant reactors. With an SMR, instead of stringing thousands of miles of lines to a remote northern location, you put the generation capacity right there. We already have a site at Darlington that was approved and has been maintained for additional base load in the future, and that could be a very interesting demonstration site.”

Five years down the road, the Mayor hopes the commitment for the GO Train comes to fruition with two additional stops in Clarington – one in Courtice and one in Bowmanville (the west central hub). “We’ll see high density mixed-use development around those stations,” he notes. “At the Courtice site: higher-price condos, with a southwest view to the lake and northeast view to the Oak Ridges Moraine. A ten-minute walk to the GO Train, immediate access to the 418, which takes you right to the 401 or the 407, maybe a 20-minute walk to the waterfront, and the



PICTURED  
Mayor, Adrian Foster



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Darlington Nuclear Plant



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*Bowmanville Memorial Hospital  
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Provincial Park is right there. That high density will allow us to maintain the green spaces we enjoy so much. We have two urban separators between Courtice and Bowmanville and that will be maintained, along with agriculture.”

“Renew Magazine lists Clarington as home to four of Canada’s top infrastructure projects, based on dollar value,” says Hall. “That kind of investment from different levels of government is a testament to our location and has drawn the attention of investors over the last few years. I would estimate that my office has seen five times the amount of leads we did five years ago. That being said, we sold all our serviced land in a very short period of time, so let’s hope we put ourselves in a place to capitalize on all that interest in the future.”

Mayor Foster admits, “There is lots of land available but servicing is the key in order to have businesses come here. For many years, the senior leadership attitude in the Region was that we don’t spend money on anything that might benefit

a private investor, which included servicing. But the new attitude is: we don’t care, we want the jobs. We’re going to look at the reserves we have and try to get servicing in the ground. We’ve also had Bell Canada come to town with high-speed fiber. They are busy pulling cable everywhere. We actually had a complaint from a company that they’ll have to buy all new equipment to handle the speed. That’s a great problem to have.”

“I encourage everyone to come for the Clarington experience,” Foster concludes. “We have thousands of acres of apple orchards. If you come in the spring, the apple blossoms are out, the fish are running; five minutes from my office is Bowmanville Creek. In the spring and fall runs, there will be over 10,000 salmon and trout, up to 20 pounds each – you can watch them going up the fish by-pass. And remember, in the morning, when the sun rises in the east over the GTA, it gently caresses Clarington first.”

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# DEAF SMITH COUNTY *Texas*





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**D**eaf Smith County is a rectangular expanse of land, 50 by 30 miles, located in the southwestern part of the Texas Panhandle, bordering New Mexico. Originally the home of the Apache, Comanche, and Kiowa tribes, the county was created in 1876, later organized in 1890, and named for Erastus “Deaf” Smith, a partially deaf scout and soldier who served in the Texas Revolution and was the first to reach the Alamo after its fall.

This semi-arid, high plains county sits atop the Ogallala and Santa Rosa Aquifers, today, its main source of water for consumption and irrigation. Its economy is built on farming – wheat, cotton, sorghum, other grains and vegetables - ranching, and feedlots. The City of Hereford, located 48 miles southwest of Amarillo, is the county seat and its only incorporated city. Hereford’s population is 15,000 - three quarters of the entire county’s. It was named for the Hereford breed of beef cattle, and the city calls itself the “Beef Capital of the World.”

## AT A GLANCE

### DEAF SMITH COUNTY, TEXAS

- WHAT:** A rural county of 20,000
- WHERE:** The southwestern part of the Texas Panhandle
- WEBSITE:** [www.co.deaf-smith.tx.us](http://www.co.deaf-smith.tx.us)



Hereford first grew as the county's main transportation hub at the turn of the last century, after the Pecos and Northern Texas Railway, a subsidiary of the Santa Fe line, built tracks from Amarillo to the Texas-New Mexico border. Today, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) still runs 75 trains a day through the heart of town. Highways began to run to and from Hereford as early as the 1920s, facilitating better movement of farm products, and linking it all to parts of the county and beyond. Today, the city is also served by the Hereford Municipal Airport, which offers a lighted, 6,100-ft. runway and can easily accommodate large corporate jets.

Caviness Beef Packers, a major area employer, is located five miles southwest of Hereford on the north side of Hwy. 60. The company is currently expanding its operations and will be adding another 600 jobs to its workforce by year's end. The Merrick Pet Care Company is another big employer in Hereford, and over the next several years, it will also increase its payroll by 500 new jobs. These



looming expansions present several challenges for both the county and city as they struggle to supply enough water to their corporate entities and enough housing for their new residents.

Regarding the water situation, Hereford Mayor, Tom Simons, reports that in addition to improving its reservoirs, the city is drilling new deepwater wells on recently obtained land. "That's going to be a long-term benefit," he states. "It's going, ultimately, to give us a water supply for 80 years. We have the Caviness packing plant, as well as one of the area's ethanol plants inside the city limits, which is a big user of water. We also have Nestlé (corporate owner of Merrick), which is another big employer and they continue to add to their facility. They have somewhere between 900 and 1,000 employees and they continue to grow."

Regarding housing, Wade Hawkins, Hereford's Economic Development Coordinator, admits that even without the coming new jobs, the city is in "a bit of a housing crunch. We've got quite a few custom-built homes, but no spec properties to house incoming people that aren't in the market for a custom home," he explains. "So, with those needs in mind, we've contracted a residential developer that has purchased 92 acres that adjoin the city, and will be annexed by the city, so it will have all city utilities supplied to them. That will initially be 240 lots for single-family housing. A few of those – 20 to 30 – will be for either duplex or townhomes. So, hopefully,







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that will give us a head start. We do have an apartment complex that showed some interest. It's going to be a nine percent, tax-credit facility that, if it's passed by the state, will be a 48-unit complex going in the north of town. We've also got some local builders - one of them is looking at putting in 16 duplexes in another part of town, out by the community college. So, hopefully, we're addressing some of those issues."

Regarding upgraded amenities in Hereford, Simons reports the city will be building a new community center to replace one built in the 1950s. "It will be a state-of-the-art facility, primarily for the benefit of local citizens, but also for the benefit of out-of-town events and larger gatherings," he says. "One room will have a capacity of 450, a smaller room for 150, and several other anterooms, as well as kitchen facilities. So, that's a big project for us."

"As far as our infrastructure in the city proper, the streets are in really good shape," he adds. "We have some recreational issues that we'd like to address; we're looking at doing some things at

our ballparks. A school bond recently passed - that's \$22 million to do a lot of improvements to the high school, as well as a new field house, more updates at the football field, and then, some work on all the elementary and junior high schools here that's badly needed."

County Judge, D.J. Wagner, notes that the county's major new infrastructure project will be a new jail. "We're looking at a 192-bed facility to be located on the outskirts of the city," he says. "Our current jail is over 60 years old, so we're looking to keep up with growing needs."

Wagner also believes that the county needs to keep up with current trends in technology, and, since the Texas Panhandle is known for its sunshine and its strong, steady winds, Deaf Smith County is actively seeking alternative energy companies to come in and set up shop. "There's a lot of wind energy in this part of the world; we have windy days all the time," he remarks. "So, we offer those windmill companies incentives to be here to construct those. We've







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got several that have been here for several years, and several that are being erected, right now. A lot of solar generating plants have looked at us, too; we have some pretty sunny skies for the most part, most of the year. We've had a few that have started the process of purchasing some land and going down that avenue, and we are looking to incentivize them, as well."

Hawkins agrees that incentivizing businesses to relocate or expand simply makes good sense. "The Economic Development Corporation's job is to recruit industry and business to the City of Hereford and Deaf Smith County," he states. "But each case is different; with Caviness, we did offer them a \$1.2 million incentive, essentially \$2,000 for every job they'll be creating, in the form of a forgivable loan if those criteria are met over a stated period of time. We've done similar things with Merrick Pet Food. Certainly, if a business was interested in coming to Hereford, we would look into anything we could do to incentivize them to be here."

Indeed, Hereford has proven to be a high-value, low-cost place to do business. With its convenient accessibility, highly productive workforce, favorable operating costs, aggressive incentives, and vibrant quality of life, Hereford provides a fertile environment for businesses to grow and prosper. Sitting at the crossroads of major shipping routes that stretch in every direction, Hereford provides easy access to markets, customers, and suppliers. Whether by highway, rail, or air, Hereford's transportation infrastructure facilitates fast, efficient flow of raw materials and finished goods across North America and the world.

"Agriculture and cattle are the things that drive us," says Simons, "We're very supportive of the agricultural industry and we're going to continue to do that, going forward. All of the entities and expansions that we talked about are pretty much based on the ag industry. The reason the ethanol plant is here is because they have a co-product that's fed to the cattle; the same way with the packing plant, the feed yards, the dairies, the agriculture that's produced here – we're geared





toward that. But we are open to anything else, so, of course, we're looking at other things, as well – sustainable energy, wind and solar. We have the right area for those kinds of things, and we're positioned well with our water supply. We're open to anyone who wants to move here."

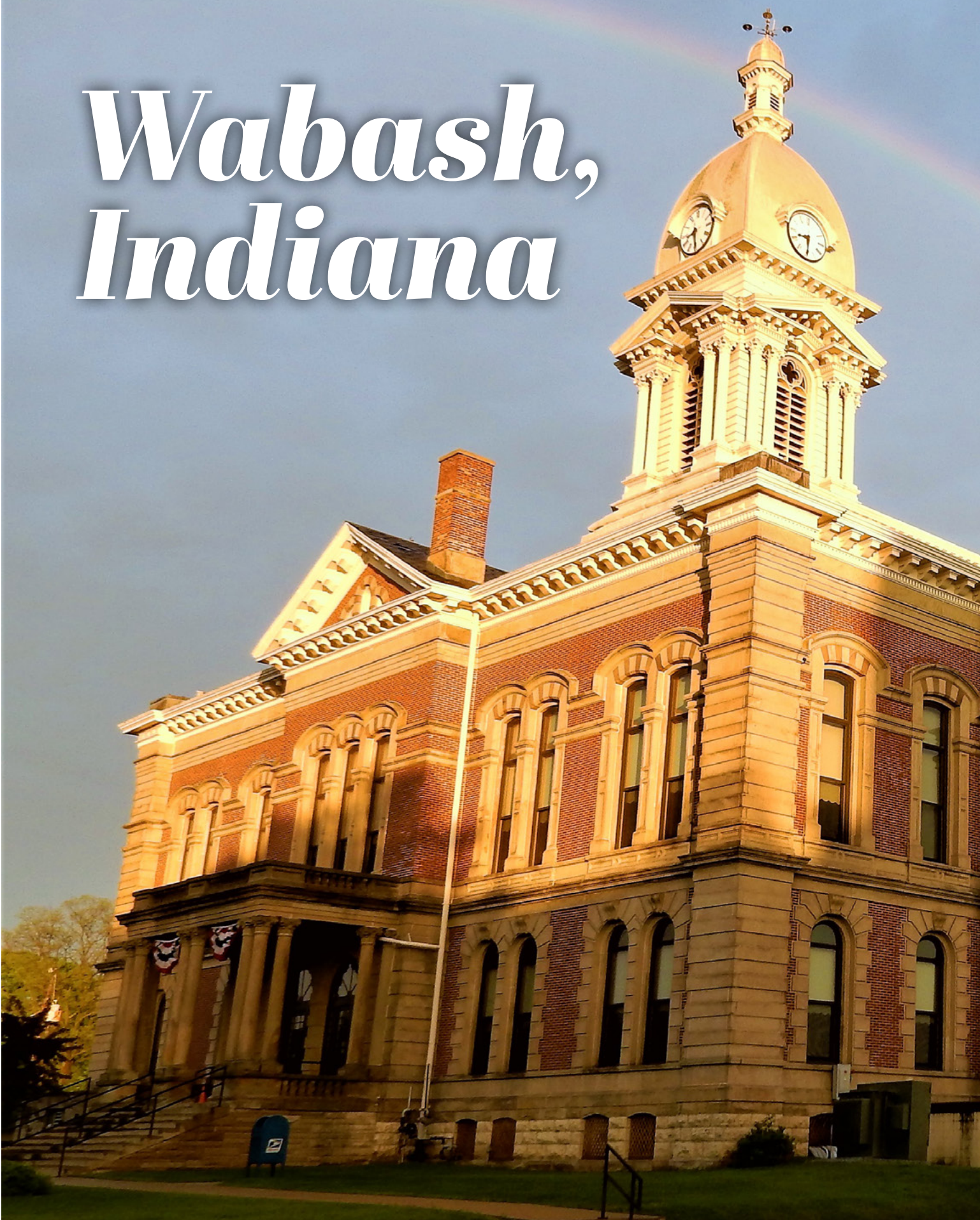
Simons ends with his own encomium to the good life in Deaf Smith County. "I've lived here for 47 years, and this place is a good place to raise a family," he declares. "It's a good place, with good, hardworking, trusting, God-fearing people. I think that makes us special in that regard."

## PREFERRED VENDOR

- **Merrick Pet Care**  
[www.merrickpetcare.com](http://www.merrickpetcare.com)  
*Merrick Pet Care, which was founded in Hereford, Texas, in 1988, is a leader in natural and organic pet care. Last year, the company made significant investments in the Deaf Smith County by opening a new cannery, adding 150+ new jobs and increasing wages for 500+ local team members.*
- **EDF renewables**  
[www.edf-re.com](http://www.edf-re.com)



# Wabash, Indiana





# ACCOMPLISHING GREAT THINGS

**W**abash is a city in Noble Township, Wabash County, Indiana. The name Wabash derives from a Miami-Illinois Native American term for “water over white stones.” The town was originally platted in 1834 by Col. Hugh Hanna and Col. David Burr on the north bank of the Wabash River, about ninety miles northeast of Indianapolis. Wabash is notable as claiming to be the first electrically lighted city in the world, because on March 31, 1880, at 8PM, four electrified lamps lit up the County Court House before a crowd of awed onlookers amassed

## AT A GLANCE

### WABASH, INDIANA

**WHAT:** A city of 10,200

**WHERE:** On the Wabash River, about 90 miles northeast of Indianapolis

**WEBSITE:** [www.cityofwabash.com](http://www.cityofwabash.com)





PICTURED  
Downtown Pocket Park from  
*Small Business Revolution* by  
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from its population of 3,800. One witness, present that evening, wrote the following: “The strange, weird light, exceeded in power only by the sun yet mild as moonlight, rendered the Court House square as light as midday.”

Today the population of Wabash is approximately 10,200 and its old electric lights are being replaced by LEDs, according to Mayor Scott A. Long. “Since taking office, one of my first goals was to look down the path of energy savings,” he recounts. “I grew up the child of a manager of a rural electric cooperative, so I was taught at an early age to turn the lights out if you’re not in a room. And technology has changed in such a way that we now have energy-saving capabilities that we didn’t have in the past. So, we retrofitted all of our city buildings with LED lighting to reduce energy consumption; and we took that program to our street lighting. We have decorative street lights, downtown; we swapped those bulbs out to LED. And with any future street light installations, we’ll make sure that the power company installs LED lighting throughout the city wherever we can.

Now, that’s going to be a long, arduous process, because you don’t often change your streetlights out. But, those were some of my initial goals and we’ve made great strides in doing that.”

Long, who was born in Wabash, returned to the city after seven years in the military. In 1994, he was hired by the local police department and spent the next 21 years as a police officer, as well as 16 years on the City Council. “So I had a little bit of knowledge about the city prior to being elected mayor,” he says. “I think it gave me a leg up on knowing the whole city, including the areas that most people don’t know about; neighborhoods that I saw as a police officer directly correlate to this job as a mayor and it gave me a little bit of insight when taking office. How can I fix the broken sidewalks? How can I deal with dilapidated properties and find ways to assist the homeowner in maintaining their property rather than go in with an order of demolition because it’s become an unsafe structure? So, that was also one of my goals. And it will save the taxpayers’ money in the long run because typically we’ll pay for an



PICTURED  
Charley Creek Inn Boutique Hotel  
Downtown



unsafe structure to be demolished, then we put a lien on the property through property taxes, and you may or may not recover that money.”

One of the reasons that residential properties have become run down in Wabash can be attributed to its overall economic situation. “We’ve been in a population decline for a number of years,” Long reports. “Back in 2008, we had a General Tire factory close, here in town. And that was, roughly, 850 jobs that disappeared almost overnight. Obviously, we didn’t have companies with 850 jobs to employ these people. Some of them found jobs, others decided to move elsewhere. So, a lot of the things that I do, right now, are things that I, and the people I work with, think will counter that and encourage people to move to our community. We work hard every day, thinking about our long-term plans: what do we need to do to draw these people in?”

One initiative to achieve that goal has been Wabash’s designation as an Indiana Stellar Community since 2014. The Stellar Communities program is a multi-agency partnership designed

to fund comprehensive community development projects in Indiana’s smaller communities. Participants include: the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, and the Indiana Department of Transportation.

“As a part of the program, the city put up \$1.3 million in a fund that was derived from Tax Increment Finance revenue that we had received,” says Long. “That resulted in over \$32 million investment in downtown buildings. And, along with that, a lot of these retail buildings have built out their second and third floors for apartments. In one of the projects, we took four side-by-side storefronts, downtown, that, years ago, had apartments above them that had become dilapidated. The project received \$8.1 million in tax credit funding to retrofit this building with 41 apartment units, along with one restaurant that remains downstairs. And 80 percent of the units are for 55 and older folks who don’t want to maintain a home any longer. They can live downtown in a nice apartment



and walk to a lot of amenities, downtown.”

A corresponding initiative was the city’s 2014-2018 Strategic Investment Plan (SIP), a four-year strategic plan defining a vision, a set of goals, and projects selected with input from many community members and leaders. The loft apartment project was part of the SIP, as was a program to help rehabilitate owner-occupied housing. Other projects in the SIP include: renovations to the Eagles Theatre, a 440-seat edifice built in 1906; creating an all inclusive playground at the John Drook Memorial Park; making improvements to the State Road 13/15 corridor; creating an outdoor amphitheater at

Paradise Spring; making various streetscape and connectivity improvements; establishing a combined Trails project; and continuing a façade improvement program for downtown buildings.

Long adds that the city is also currently investing in cleaning up dilapidated buildings that are considered brownfields, working with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management and the Indiana Finance Authority through the Brownfields Remediation program. “We are also tackling neighborhood blight, not only to demolish unsafe buildings in residential areas, but to ensure that replacement homes that are built on empty lots conform to the surrounding neighborhood,”



PICTURED ABOVE  
*Mayor, Scott A. Long*



PICTURED RIGHT  
*Wabash County Courthouse overlooking Downtown Buildings*





PICTURED  
*Wabash City Hall at Night*



PICTURED  
*Downtown Businesses on  
South Wabash Street*





he notes. “We want the character of our neighborhoods to remain intact and not build a modern home in a craftsman style neighborhood.”

Going back to the city’s overall economic picture, the good news in Wabash is that there are some thriving legacy businesses that have been in town for years. “Our longest tenured factory is Ford Meter Box,” Long reports. “They make water fittings out of brass and meter covers for water meters. A lot of those, not only in America but throughout the world, are manufactured here in Wabash. We have a paper mill that employs 200 people, and, most recently, Living Essentials is a company that produces 5-hour energy shots; they’ve located in Wabash some years back and probably have about 350 people working for them in three different facilities in Wabash. We recently attracted a company called 10X Engineered Materials that will take waste materials from an Owens Corning/Thermafiber Rock Wool Insulation Plant that’s been here for years, and recycle that waste material into usable products. They’re in the process, right now, of converting an old warehouse into their factory and should be up and running in the next couple of months.

“We contract with Grow Wabash County for our economic development needs,” Long continues. “Last year, this organization was streamlined when we combined the Economic Development Group (EDG) of Wabash County and the Wabash County Chamber of Commerce, to provide services for everything from small business enterprises, to industrial manufacturing businesses. This organization is located on the 2nd floor of Wabash City Hall which enables ‘One Stop Shopping’ when it comes to business development. This seems to work well for us.

“Also, we’re trying to get away from the ‘us versus them’ when it comes to surrounding cities, towns, and counties; we’re trying to get everybody to work together to make them understand that what’s good for Wabash is good for your community and what’s good in your county is good for my citizens. We’ve got an entire group in northeast Indiana that’s working hard to do that. The goal is to boost the population of those



PICTURED  
*Wabash River and  
Huntington Street bridge*



PICTURED  
*Charley Creek Gardens foot  
bridge and walking path*





PICTURED  
Charley Creek Falls at  
Wabash City Park



11 counties to one million people by the year 2025. So, everybody's working collaboratively on different levels of government to get that done."

Regarding the city's infrastructure needs, Long says the following: "The most important assets to a city are often not seen. The underground pipes that convey wastewater and stormwater are some of the most important assets my city has. They are not "sexy" and if they are out of sight, they are out of mind to your citizens! However, if that infrastructure fails, it really gets the citizens' attention. We are in the process of a Long Term Control Plan and are gearing up for the 3rd phase of 4 phases of mandated sanitary and storm line separations. This is a continuous process that I have kept pushing the ball on during my first three years in office."

Sustainability is also on Long's agenda. "My administration has taken a closer look at all aspects within the City of Wabash concerning sustainability," he states. "Since my first visit to the Accelerating Indiana Municipalities (AIM) Summit in 2016, I have been interested in how we, as a city, can do better. So, we completed two separate energy audits to see if there were other areas where we could save money. The only finding on both was to replace an antiquated boiler in our Police Department. We budgeted for that and completed the installation of high efficiency gas furnaces to replace the boiler system. And, of course, we have begun converting street lighting to LED at every opportunity. And any future building renovations will be done eco-friendly and green for as long as I remain in office." Currently, Wabash is awaiting the potential assignment of an intern from the Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs to come in and work on a variety of sustainable and green projects. "My hope is I can get a graduate student from the University's SPEA program to assist us to identify some of the things that we can do, economically," Long remarks.

Education is a particularly important agenda item, as well. "I work closely with our school system; I believe that our educational system is going to be the foundation for our community,



and will go a long way in attracting both people and businesses,” Long avers. “Likewise, the things we do from the city standpoint have to be desirable to the people looking to locate here, be they residents or businesses. I formed a Mayor’s Youth Council to tap into the minds of our high school students to see what it will take for them to locate here upon college graduation. We are fortunate to have two Internet Service Providers offering gigabit speed internet in the city. Anyone can live here in small town America and work online anywhere in the world.”

Regarding that greater world beyond Wabash, Long recounts that he recently spent a week in Japan and a week in China, visiting business and government officials in both countries and formalizing a Sister City relationship with Linhai, China. “I want to open Wabash to the world and the world to Wabash,” he declares. “So, in April of this year, we’ll have eight Japanese foreign exchange high school students coming to Wabash. We will send four students to Japan in July, and in August of this year, we’re slotted to have 20 Chinese middle school students come to Wabash. I think, to expose our local children to different cultures throughout the world not only benefits them, but their parents and everybody else, as well. In a small town, typically, the residents may not get outside the boundaries of their state, let alone their country. So, to be able to introduce that to them, I think will spur them to see other

things and other cultures; I think it will be very interesting. When I was in the military I went to Europe, solely. I didn’t make it to the Far East, so this trip was an eye opener for me.”

“In the next five years, I want to see realistic, continued growth in our schools, businesses, and population in the City of Wabash,” Long says in conclusion. “It took many years to get to the point we are now, and we have been rebounding to build ourselves back up. I have to continue this trend, not only for my children, but my grandchildren. We are slowly gaining momentum to do even greater things. Those outside of the community notice the improvements and frequently comment on the things that we have accomplished. Those who see the city everyday often don’t notice what is going on. So, I want them to realize that we are doing great things and are being recognized all over the State of Indiana for what we are accomplishing.”



PICTURED  
*Modoc's Coffee Shoppe  
and Apartments*



PICTURED  
*Wabash High School*





PICTURED  
Visit Wabash County  
Tourist Center Downtown

## PREFERRED VENDOR

### ■ G6 Communications

[www.g6com.com](http://www.g6com.com)

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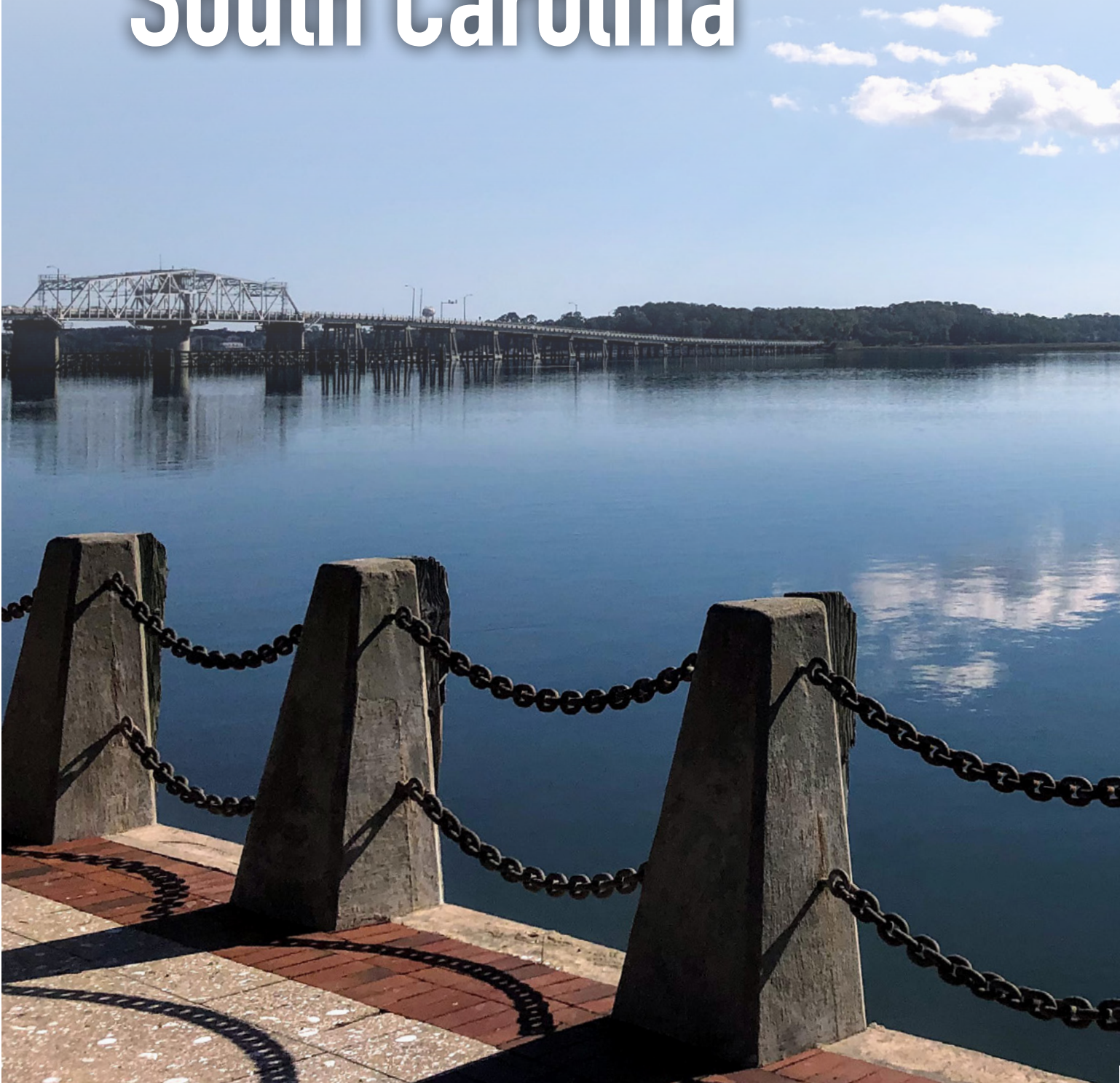
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# BEAUFORT, South Carolina





## WHERE HISTORY, CHARM, AND BUSINESS THRIVE

Chartered in 1711, Beaufort (pronounced BEW-fert) is the second-oldest city in South Carolina, behind Charleston. From its picturesque location on Port Royal Island, the city draws countless visitors who come to immerse themselves in its natural beauty, enchanting antebellum architecture, and Reconstruction period heritage. The Emancipation Proclamation was read in Beaufort – that legacy, alone, is beyond price and a story to be told and retold through the generations. Indeed, Beaufort stewards its history with pride, but contrary to being

“stuck in the past,” this ambitious coastal city and County Seat of Beaufort County is also proactively planning for a successful future – one that embodies its mantra as the place “where history, charm, and business thrive.”

Beaufort City Manager, William “Bill” Prokop, describes Beaufort as “a small to medium size city with around 13,500 inhabitants. But every day we service anywhere from 45,000 to 65,000 people going right by City Hall,” he notes. “So, we’re a very busy city for our actual size. Like many coastal cities in South Carolina,

### AT A GLANCE

## BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA

- WHAT:** 2nd oldest city in South Carolina; population approx.13,700
- WHERE:** Port Royal Island, SC
- WEBSITE:** [www.cityofbeaufort.org](http://www.cityofbeaufort.org)







our number-one issue right now is storm water and flooding issues, which started really heavily three years ago with Hurricane Matthew. We are now in the process of addressing nine major storm water and flooding areas throughout the city. The major concern is an 800-acre drainage area known as Mossy Oaks. We have all our engineering and funding in place, but for the next two to three years, after we have final approval from the Army

Corps of Engineers, DHEC (Department of Health and Environmental Control), and all the other regulators, we will move forward with, basically, mitigating a lot of the flood damages we have.”

That speaks to short-term infrastructure, but long-term planning is also in progress to address overall issues facing the city. A recently concluded program called “Beaufort 2030” involved 94 participants in two brainstorming sessions over two months, where they discussed the trends, the threats, and major issues facing the city. Among those invited to take part were middle school, high school, and college students, teachers, principals, company presidents, major developers, the dean of the university, head of the technical college, and local healthcare specialists – a full cross-section of the community, along with Beaufort city councilors, and area politicians.

Seven key needs emerged from Beaufort 2030:  
1. To increase the number of affordable housing units (workforce housing) in the city. 2. To increase







diverse career opportunities for early and mid-level professionals. 3. To increase the retention of locally-trained graduate students for local jobs. 4. To increase the emphasis for addressing childhood poverty. 5. To attract and retain talent in healthcare. 6. To collect good data. 7. To improve proactive collaboration when preparing for devastating storms – whether hurricanes or flooding. A program is now being put together around “what do we do” for those top seven issues.

Tourism is the city’s largest industry, followed by military-related establishments – Parris Island and the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort and a U.S. Naval hospital are all in close proximity. The fact that Beaufort’s population is growing at 3.5 percent, annually, with a predominately residential tax base, brings to the fore another important focus – demographics. Beaufort Fire Chief, Reece Bertholf, reflects, “One of the biggest things Beaufort has recently undertaken is an attempt to connect with residents that are not “upper in age.” The city is working hard to engage the working residents, residents with families, and

the people who will be the future of Beaufort. For the last 15 to 20 years, we have been a retirement destination. It may not necessarily encompass the city itself, but most of those 60,000 people we serve in our surrounding areas have had a career elsewhere and come here to enjoy their retirement. What’s come of that is a municipality stuck in the middle that’s not that aged – our median age is mid-30s – but that are working really hard to keep pace with the rising cost of living, of housing and construction, and the limited nature of retail and entertainment services. That was a big part of the Beaufort 2030 initiative: to bring younger, more energized people to the table, who are concerned with what Beaufort is historically – a beautiful natural place to live – but also have to find a way to marry that with an economic place to live and work.”

Beaufort is the only community in the Hilton Head/Sea Islands area with a true downtown. Prokop explains, “Bay Street is our main street with all the retail shops and restaurants. We have two new things going on downtown.





PICTURED BELOW  
 Beaufort, SC City Manager,  
 William "Bill" Prokop



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First of all, the University of South Carolina at Beaufort is expanding here. Just last year, they built 96 residential units for students to live, and under construction right now are another 96 units, with planned growth to, probably, double or triple that over the next five years. These are all honors program students coming from the campus in Bluffton. So, that is growing significantly, as well as the Technical College.”

The other factor promoting growth in the downtown core involves the prominent role of Beaufort and the surrounding Sea Islands during the Reconstruction era after the U.S. Civil War. This period in history was memorialized in 2017 by the establishment of a Reconstruction Era National Monument in Beaufort and legislation is slated to be passed by the Federal Government to make it a National Park. Also in the area is The Penn Center, site of one of the first schools for African-American slaves in the country, now a cultural and education center. With the increased interest in Reconstruction history, Beaufort has seen greatly expanded tourism in the commercial and retail/restaurant sectors.

As for redesigning the downtown to be walkable and bikeable for a younger generation, Prokop admits, “We don’t have to because we’re already laid out that way. During the Civil War, the North protected Beaufort, and all the homes built in the 1700s and 1800s are still there. It’s become what’s called “The Point” and all the architecture, the layout of the streets, are the way the ‘new’ modern planning statements say. What we’re doing now is infill; trying to get development for vacant lots, or houses that need to be upgraded.”

Beaufort is also home to Commerce Park. At 196 acres, it’s the largest industrial area in Low Country, Beaufort County. Prokop reports, “Two new companies have moved there in the last year and we’re in discussions to build a large spec building that could be, depending on which way you want to go, 60,000 to 120,000 square feet, to attract industry. Because we’re located right between Charleston and Savannah – 20 minutes off I-95 – we’re looking at a targeted recruitment of businesses in technology,







artificial intelligence, knowledge management, and advanced manufacturing and distribution. That's a major program we have going with our goal for economic development."

According to Bertholf, "Another initiative that's really gaining traction in the city is called the Beaufort Digital Corridor, a technology-based business incubator. The idea is to bring people in with start-ups in the technological fields and give them nice, trendy office space at reasonable rates, with other people doing like work next to them. It gives them an opportunity to incubate and start their business with a little help. There are professionals, onsite, who provide classes if needed and will meet with potential tenants of the space. They also provide community-based education for coding and other business acumen. It's modeled after the Charleston Digital Corridor. They worked closely with the city in partnership to start this and Beaufort has now spun that off and is expecting it to live on its own."

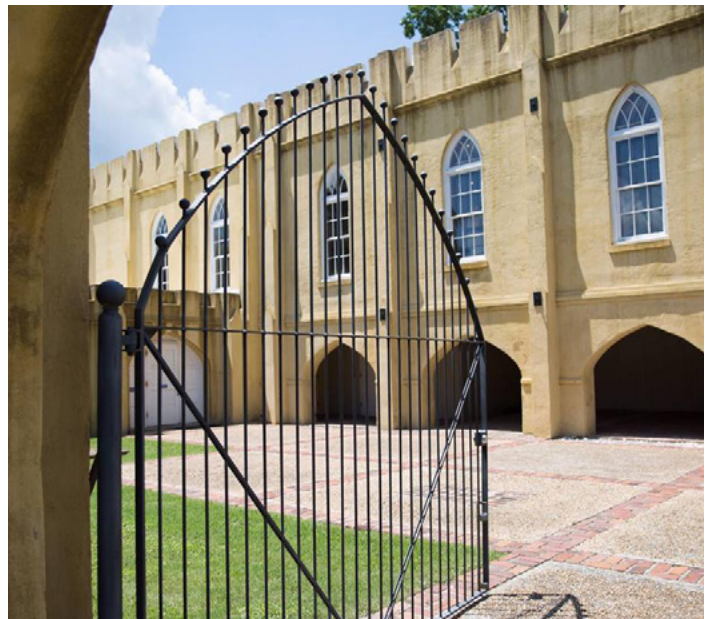




# BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA

In another recently completed project aimed at attracting businesses, funds from the city, the county, and a federal TIGER grant went into a 2½ year project to redevelop the entranceway into the city – a route called Boundary Street. Utilities were relocated underground, and travel lanes, medians, and pedestrian walkways were all redesigned. There is also a redevelopment overlay for that one mile, so new businesses coming in can model their designs after expectations in that corridor. The first new development broke ground just a few weeks ago. With a total project cost of \$33 million, the expected return on investment is about \$150 to \$160 million of new investment along that stretch of Boundary Street.

Prokop sums up the highlights of what Beaufort has to offer: “We are building on our historic founding and architecture, but we’re also being prepared for the technology that’s needed for the future. In between that, we’re improving our infrastructure, whether it’s flood control, storm water, or the recently finished Boundary Street project. And, at the same time, we’re looking ahead and planning for the future. Like our tagline says: Beaufort is where history, charm, and business thrive.”







# PREFERRED VENDOR

- **McSweeney Engineers**  
[www.mcsweeneyengineers.com](http://www.mcsweeneyengineers.com)



# Cayce, South Carolina

## *Time for life*

**T**he City of Cayce (pronounced Kaycee), South Carolina is a charming riverside community in Lexington and Richland counties. As part of the Columbia, South Carolina Metropolitan Statistical Area, and all the urban benefits that proximity entails, Cayce's population of approximately 14,000 also reaps the rewards of small-town ambience and a burgeoning artistic and entrepreneurial hub. Accessibility is a breeze via the Columbia Metropolitan Airport, Interstate 26, and Interstate 77, while the new 70,000-sq.-ft. Lexington Medical Center facility is a gem of state-of-the-art healthcare. Combine those with a visionary local government that truly empowers its citizens to excel and, as the tagline professes, in Cayce it really is "Time for life."

"We're making smart investments," says Cayce City Manager, Tracy Hegler. "We're putting together great policy, but it's very thoughtful and strategically done. Every decision we make is wrapped around quality of life. We want to be a great place to work, live, play and do business but we are also a small city outside the state capital, and we don't want to grow haphazardly. We want to maintain that small town charm while growing wisely."







AT A GLANCE

CAYCE,  
SOUTH CAROLINA

**WHAT:** City along the Congaree River:  
population 14,000

**WHERE:** In Lexington and Richland Counties,  
South Carolina

**WEBSITE:** [www.cityofcayce-sc.gov](http://www.cityofcayce-sc.gov)



Cayce has just completed a \$30 million water line project, replacing almost 75 percent of in-city water infrastructure. Given the age of it, it was a major undertaking – but necessary to put an end to the brown water issues, pressure issues, and a few water line breaks that were very costly and disruptive. The project was done quickly and comprehensively with good investment that facilitated some very smart loans. In the end, the city was able to overhaul a major infrastructure source in just two years.

Hegler explains, “We had a main contractor, but divided the project up into seven different areas that were done concurrently. Obviously, it was a quality of life issue to provide better water but we knew it would be pretty disruptive to our citizens, so we placed great focus on community involvement; making sure we let them know what was going on, what they could expect, and having a hot line of sorts for any concerns that came up. There was a very human component to that project, even though it was technical, engineering, construction-related work. That proved successful and allowed us to get it done very quickly.”

According to Cayce Mayor, Elise Partin, “The tail end of that project was in our commercial district. We already had developed the Knox Abbott plan for traffic calming and pedestrian safety. (Knox Abbott is a key commercial corridor traveling through the City and surrounded by neighborhoods). Since we











knew we would be tearing up sidewalks to access water lines, etc., we layered those two projects – put the sidewalks back in with the landscaping buffer to the higher standards the new plan had created – and the synergy of them helped our dollars go further.” Coordination was key. Since many streets throughout the city were already scheduled to be repaved, the City worked with Lexington County and South Carolina Department of Transportation to postpone the paving until after the water line work was fully completed.

“With regards to the Knox Abbott project, if you’re heading from the airport into downtown Columbia to the State House or University of South Carolina, you are likely entering on Knox Abbott,” says Rachelle Moody, Assistant to the City Manager. “There is a high traffic count, and we didn’t have enough buffers between pedestrians and cars, so we’ve done a comprehensive plan: closing some driveways, and putting sidewalks farther away from the road. We’re moving all the power lines to one side of the road and raising them. We’re also planting a number of

trees along the roadway, installing electrical conduits and burying all of the communication lines. So, in addition to having fewer poles along the road, we’ll have significantly fewer lines running as well. We were able to bury the electric transmission lines around one of our busiest intersections, which will improve that area significantly and make it safer. The project had a total cost of \$8.5 million, but is well worth it.”

The Knox Abbott project does more than physically improve this important and iconic part of the City; it contributes to an already economically viable area in a way that will inspire people who travel through the city to stop and shop and eat and stay overnight.

These two large investment projects are paving the way for economic development and revitalization. Businesses along the Knox Abbott corridor are thrilled to see how it’s improving the aesthetics of their property – even though the work is being done in the right of way, they’re experiencing tremendous benefits. “We’ve had





a couple sales, as well,” says Hegler. “A large, mixed-use apartment community has just sold on that corridor for a higher value than you would typically get for an apartment unit. Another parcel recently flipped for a substantial amount, much more than we would have seen a few years ago - potentially as a direct result of these investments.”

Another of Cayce’s attributes is its natural resources. As the Mayor reports, “We have about 12 miles of River Walk in the city that connects seamlessly to the full trail system in the region; about 25 miles in total, along with other trails that are part of the Dept. of Natural Resources – dirt trails that go by the dam and past earth works that were built during the Civil War. The City’s portion was done with state funding and grants, various incentives, tax increment financing - creatively putting money together for something with unlimited value. We also had some land donated by private property owners along the river. This was a ten-plus-year development of the full River Walk, done in phases, and maintained on an annual basis by the City



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general fund. It's a highly popular resource."

Another example of savvy business creativity was the Steel Hands Brewing project – a significant economic development revitalization project with intentional recruitment of the largest production brewery in the midlands region. The Mayor reports, "This was a site where we had a recycling plant burning wooden pallets, illegally. The fire got out of control and raged for three days. Eventually, through a series of events, we gained the rights to the property. So, we sold it to Steel Hands Brewing and they have embraced that area. There is a steel facility across the street that donated a fair amount of rebar for artists to create with. The result is some amazing sculptures made out of rebar on the property now."

Breweries are known to be traffic generators, and Steel Hands Brewing is always packed with customers. It has also raised the profile of other businesses and restaurants because people are now travelling to the brew destination from out of town. Most of the traffic goes through the old heart of the City, and Cayce has taken a unique approach to revitalize that original downtown. "We're doing 'previtalization,'" says the Mayor. "It's about helping people to see what's possible. So, we asked owners to clean out their vacant buildings and we hosted artists inside while we threw one heck of a street party – music, food, drinks. When people went in to see the art, they also saw the buildings and their potential. Between the first and the second such event, we already had one business decide to locate on State Street and redevelop an existing building – Swatch Graphics – and it's thriving. We also have an artists' gallery and a coffee shop underway, and more are starting to follow."

"We also purchased a property in the same area that had a rundown home, a lot of crime, and which detracted from the whole street," adds Hegler. "We demolished the building and, instantly, saw investment in that corridor. Recently, we were awarded a Connected Communities grant from Central Carolina Community Foundation for that property to develop what we're going to call the "Art Lot." The front half will provide



free public parking, which is vitally important to a revitalizing street, with art space in the back. It will be a gathering place with a variety of grass and gravel, places to sit, a covered area, and a memorial to fallen police canines. We'll also host a competition for local artists to create permanent art features for placement on this lot. The whole downtown area has been designated an Opportunity Zone, so we're looking forward to what that means for development in that part of town."





The Opportunity Zone is new legislation for South Carolina that provides tax incentives for investments in designated areas. The City of Cayce is also considering some live-work zoning and policy implications that would continue to support the arts, to balance growth while retaining the unique character and not outpricing anyone in the community.

Mayor Partin sums up the best about life in Cayce. “As you can tell, we are proactive about our municipal responsibilities. We have a really good credit rating because we’re careful about what we do. And we have staff that is very thoughtful in the way they implement those projects. We know who we are. We are that small town in the middle of the bustling region and we like that. And we want to keep our identity. Over sixty percent of our residents have been here 20 years or more; generations of families stay in this city. That’s unique, and it’s an asset. It’s not just the elected officials and the staff that are making this city great; it’s the active participation of our residents.”

## PREFERRED VENDOR

- **AOS Specialty Contractors**  
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# Newberry, South Carolina

## BIG CITY AMENITIES, SMALL TOWN CHARM

Just off Interstate 26, in the picturesque South Carolina Midlands, lies the historic City of Newberry – a cultural icon where the past is revered and preserved, and the present generation is setting the stage for a vibrant, progressive future. Juxtaposing the old with the new, Newberry’s downtown is home to unique shops and eateries, the historic Newberry Opera House, the state-of-the-art Newberry Firehouse Conference Center, and Newberry College – one of the Southeast’s finest private, liberal arts institutions. Newberry’s location midway between the state capital of Columbia, and economic and cultural hub, Greenville, coupled with nearby waterways, forests, golf courses, and the popular Enoree River Vineyards and Winery, offers big city amenities and small town charm to visitors and residents, alike,

Newberry City Manager, Matt DeWitt, describes a particularly important infrastructure project. “We’re currently building a 3.5 million-gallon water tank adjacent to the Kraft-Heinz turkey processing plant in town. As a city, it allows us to deliver clean water to the plant, along with some onsite storage. The company is the largest employer in the area, and the largest Kraft-Heinz plant in

### AT A GLANCE

## NEWBERRY, SOUTH CAROLINA

- WHAT:** Historic, rural community; population approx. 10,300
- WHERE:** Midway between Columbia and Greenville, SC
- WEBSITE:** [www.cityofnewberry.com](http://www.cityofnewberry.com)





North America. They use about a million gallons per day so, in the event we experience a line break or interruptions in our system, they would have clean water to process turkey and stay in production. Otherwise it would be very costly to Kraft Heinz's bottom line."

The cost of the water tank is around \$2.65 million, with \$500,000 funded from the South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority, and about \$1 million from Santee Cooper (South Carolina's state-owned electric and water utility). The city is taking care of the remainder. This water tank doesn't just benefit one industry – it will allow Newberry to turn the pressure down on its system as a whole, because it's currently pumping hard all day long to get Kraft a million gallons of water, daily. Reduced pressure on the system will help the city from a cost perspective on the maintenance side. "This savings can then be turned around and used to further other economic development initiatives of the city," notes DeWitt.

Newberry's population has hovered between 10,000 and 12,000 for the last 50 years and currently numbers around 10,300. DeWitt notes, "Young families looking to be active and engaged in the community are attracted to recreational opportunities, so we are developing a \$6.4 million recreation complex – \$4.6 million of that cost comes from a capital project sales tax that's generated locally; the rest will be picked up by the city. The facility will house



PICTURED ABOVE  
Newberry City Manager,  
Matt DeWitt





a new splash pad/water park facility for our youth. In addition to baseball fields, rectangular all-purpose fields, a walking trail, and a five-acre pond, we're talking about doing some outdoor classrooms and a nature preserve area, where people can study different types of trees. We'll have a little cabin onsite with posters/displays of the area's indigenous animals as an educational piece. We're hoping to utilize the pond for things like our local firemen fishing rodeos to bring about community awareness. The site has a lot of potential as an educational tool, as well as for recreational activities.”

The recreation center development encompasses 100 acres, with over 80 acres more reserved for future residential development. Another single-family housing development across town is bringing in 84 new units. With Samsung recently locating in Newberry, the city anticipates an influx families looking for homes in the years to come. That means more jobs, not only at the largest Kraft plant in North America, but also at









Samsung, which is at half staff right now and will reach a potential of 3,000 employees.

The downtown core is another scene of forward-thinking development. “We’re very proud of the work we’ve done in the downtown district over the last couple of years,” says DeWitt. “We only have a handful of empty storefronts and with very active and engaged downtown merchants. Most businesses are fairly new and progressive, and the Opera House generates a lot of foot traffic. Our downtown is vital to the city’s success. We’ve spent the last eight years investing in our downtown, making it more pedestrian-friendly - simple things like the addition of benches, nice trash cans, pedestrian way-finding, and bike racks. We also did façade improvements. The City of Newberry can’t physically run the businesses, but we can make downtown a cool place to do business. We really feel that these aesthetic-type cleanups have done that. It’s evident in the amount business investment we’ve attracted.”

Bookending the downtown are new apartments – eleven on one end, nine on the other, created above storefronts, which will be made available sometime this summer. Investors are also interested in developing the upper floors in other buildings. Newberry Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Director, Scott Sawyer, speaks to another important demographic: “Retirees – they like to have an entertainment element. Along with the Opera House, we have a booming Newberry Arts Center downtown. It’s in the old hotel that’s being renovated to include second floor apartments and meeting space. We also built a tennis center in the last year-and-a-half that’s very popular. We’re making sure to market that for kids, right up to active older people. Our healthcare offerings have gotten much better, too, many things to attract people who are looking to retire.”

Connectivity is a key focus for this growing community. DeWitt reports, “A vital element is the fiber network we’re building. We’ve known for a long time that technology is vitally important



PICTURED ABOVE  
Newberry Parks, Recreation,  
and Tourism Director,  
Scott Sawyer







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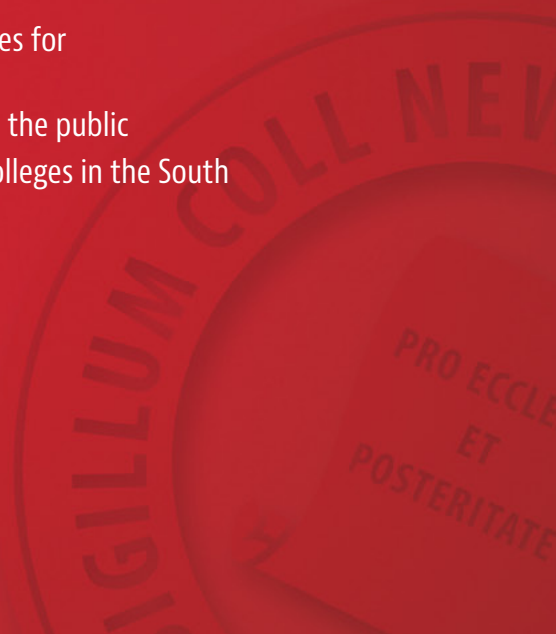
- Beautiful 90-acre campus located in historic Newberry, South Carolina
- Career-focused academic programs with a strong liberal arts core
- Active college/community relationships connecting students to area businesses for internships, community service and employment
- Vibrant campus life with countless arts and NCAA D II athletic events open to the public
- Named #12 Best Regional Colleges in the South and #3 Best Value Regional Colleges in the South (*U.S. News & World Report*)

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NEWBERRY, SOUTH CAROLINA

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Founded in 1856, Newberry College is a fully accredited, private, liberal arts college affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The College is ranked #12 for Best Regional Colleges in the South and #3 for Best Value by U.S. News and World Report.

With enrollment of nearly 1,200 students, Newberry offers an individualized undergraduate learning experience that allows students to have meaningful interactions with their professors. Students put their knowledge into practice through a focused program of internships, simulations and study abroad experiences.

The College offers a broad spectrum career-focused liberal arts majors along with pre-professional programs in medicine/allied health, law, engineering and ministry. Additionally, Newberry Online offers degree-completion programs for adult learners in Respiratory Therapy, RN-to-BSN, Psychology and Criminal Justice.

The Newberry Wolves compete in 20 NCAA Division II sports, along with cheerleading and dance. The College also will field its first intercollegiate esports team in the 2019-2020 season.

Newberry College provides two innovative programs to help student and families manage college costs in school and after graduation. The Tuition Promise freezes tuition for incoming freshmen for the four years they attend Newberry, and the Loan Repayment Promise helps graduates earning modest salaries to repay student loans.

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Learn more:

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to people of all ages in the community. The problem was that the city wasn't getting enough bandwidth to support folks who might operate their business from home on the internet. So, the last four or five years, we've been talking to industry leaders on how best to implement this fiber to the home program, and we've been fortunate to partner with a third-party provider who will light the fiber for the city. We'll build the network, so the system will be owned by the City of Newberry. It will allow us to bring gigabit speed internet to every business and home in the city. It will be subscription-based, but that kind of speed doesn't exist anywhere around here. now.

"I liken it back to the early 1900s, when Newberry decided to get in the electric business. The industry leaders, at the time, who provided electricity didn't want to serve the city because we were too small, so we had to get in the electric business and supply our own electricity to our residents. That's sort of where we are now with fiber. Technology is the electricity of the future, and we approached industry leaders for help to provide high-speed internet to our residents. It didn't work out, so we found someone who would step in and fill that gap for us. High-speed internet is an expectation now, like water, sewer, and electric, and we're positioning ourselves to continue to grow and prosper and move forward. It's an exciting time in the City of Newberry."

Tim Baker, Newberry Utilities Director, reflects on the city's innovative "Pay Go" system. "We recently started a pre-payment option for our utility customers, where they can monitor and track their usage to a smart phone," he explains. "This initiative required the city to make many upfront utility/IT improvements. Customers are given notifications of spikes in usage and when they are getting low in their account. They can recharge it online, or in our office, or pay a small convenience fee and recharge at several other providers including Family Dollar and Dollar General. By pre-paying, at the end of the month, they're not receiving a bill for \$300, if they had a water leak or problem with their HVAC unit, and they can now see those kinds of issues in real time. In every case where we've had a customer







adopt the program, there has been a reduction in consumption. So, it's definitely working. Being a college town, it's convenient for students who may only get paid every two weeks. Maybe they work in the hospitality industry for tips and they prefer to pay \$30 every few days on their bill versus one large bill at the end of the month. We currently have about 200 customers signed up and we expect more to roll in soon."

As City Manager, DeWitt is rightly proud of the work that's been accomplished so far, and the wealth of opportunities on the horizon. He shares, "Newberry is a liveable community with all the amenities of a much larger town that still provides an air of southern charm and hospitality in that small town environment. For me, I can get everything I need here, without all the hustle and bustle of Columbia, or Greenville, or Charleston. Tim and I are from the low country area of South Carolina. My parents recently moved here and they absolutely love Newberry. We're a little biased, obviously, but we think it's a great place. We're really happy with the progress we've made. We were recently named in the Top 50 Charming Small Towns in America by the Travel



PICTURED ABOVE  
*Newberry Utilities Director,  
Tim Baker*

Channel – the only town in South Carolina on that listing. We're excited to tout that and have people recognize what we're doing in our town to make it a better place to live, work, and play."

## PREFERRED VENDOR

### ■ **Newberry College**

[www.newberry.edu](http://www.newberry.edu)

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# Columbia Nutritional

Quality health solutions





Columbia Nutritional is a full-service custom, contract manufacturing company that is focused on the formulation and production of dietary supplements in the form of hard-shell capsules, tablets and powder drink mixes. According to its CEO, Ned Becker, “The company was formed in 1998, by a couple of smaller, family companies that were based in Vancouver, Washington. They cut their teeth working with small, independent, naturopathic doctors, chiropractors, and alternative medicine professionals to develop nutritional supplement products for their specific clients and specific functional needs. The Pacific Northwest is kind of a hotbed for alternative medicinal practitioners, given that Bastyr University is in the Seattle area and many of those graduates come out and open up their own clinics to serve patients in the area. So, natural products and alternative medicines are very popular here because of that.”

“Columbia was acquired about six years ago by a private group of investors who bought out the families that originally owned the company, and added some more production experience to grow the business,” Becker continues. “That private investor group is still actively involved to continue the

## AT A GLANCE

# COLUMBIA NUTRITIONAL

**WHAT:** A full-service custom, contract manufacturing services company

**WHERE:** Vancouver, Washington

**WEBSITE:** [www.columbianutritional.com](http://www.columbianutritional.com)



growth of the company in a very strong market, that's grown from about a \$6 billion market in 1995, to over \$46 billion in retail sales, today. So, it's been a very high growth industry."

Columbia Nutritional is strictly a contract manufacturer for a variety of brands, who then market their own product lines. Becker explains, "We take their formula idea, we create a specification of that formula, we source and test all the ingredients, and then we compile them together to manufacture them in a capsule format, or a tablet, or a drink mix formula. Then we'll package that product in the specific bottle or package that they require, adhere their label, or have their marketing information printed on the product, and ship it back to them for their resale, either direct to their consumers or the distribution channel that they work through."

The company has two manufacturing facilities, staffed by a total of 135 employees, a 75,000-sq.-ft. headquarters and manufacturing operation in

Vancouver, Washington, and a 24,000-sq.-ft. facility in Columbus, Ohio. "In Vancouver, we have all three of our major manufacturing capabilities, in terms of blending, encapsulation, tableting, and powder filling," Becker notes. "In the Columbus, Ohio facility, it's strictly a powder blending and powder filling operation to support some of our east coast clients. Those products are typically heavier in weight, so the shipping costs are more of a factor. So, we're a little closer to some of our markets that we serve in the eastern U.S. But, we serve clients all over the country, as well as internationally. Pills are pretty light in nature and cost-effective to ship in bottles, so, we really don't have any geographic limitations."

Becker reports that, over the last two decades, the company has produced over 4,000 individual formulations, sourced over 3,200 unique ingredients and packaging components, and developed and launched over 150 products, annually. Last year, it manufactured over 500 million capsules and tablets, 1.2 million







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kilograms of powdered drink mixes, and 6.8 million bottles of pills and powders. Columbia Nutritional is registered with the US FDA (Food & Drug Administration) and compliant with 21 CFR Part 111. It is GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) certified by the Natural Product Association through UL Laboratories.

Since becoming CEO a few months ago, Becker says he has concentrated on improving the company's internal processes and systems in order to get its clients' brands to market more quickly and efficiently, while still maintaining full compliance with FDA requirements. "Sometimes that requirement to get a product to market and ensure compliance may take a little bit of time," he

admits, "but we want to do it right with a sense of urgency and responsiveness. We're also working on creating programs for replenishment of our customers' products in a more timely manner, as well, working with our vendors to coordinate the inbound shipment timings and ensuring they have inventory of the raw materials."

"Finally, we try to be very proactive in our communication with our customers," he adds, "giving them weekly updates on the status of their orders; communicating any challenges or potential problems that come up; and working together to solve them from a partnership perspective. We want them to view us as an outreach of their own operation, emphasizing



improved communication on a regular basis.”

Going forward, Becker says he would like to see Columbia Nutritional expand its manufacturing capabilities. “Our goal is to increase our business to utilize a lot of unutilized capacity that we currently have,” he states. “We could probably double or triple our plant output over the course of the next three or four years without any major infrastructure investments, and our team has been focused on systems design and more experienced personnel in key areas. I just, recently, promoted our Vice President for Quality, Brea Viratos, to take the company to a higher level of certification status. I’ve also brought in a 15-year industry expert in customer service and product development support to lead up our team in those areas. I’m also expanding our internal expertise from an industry experience basis to get ourselves positioned for growth, and to be able to support larger brands that require higher standards than they may typically find in the industry.”



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“We’re also looking at investing in a specialized infrastructure for expanding probiotic manufacturing capabilities,” he adds. “The probiotic market is growing rapidly. We are in some early stage talks with a strategic partner that could help catapult our sophistication and knowledge in processing and manufacturing finished-dose, probiotic formulas at a higher level of standards. We do currently manufacture products in that area, anyway, but this will catapult us to another level of support and sophistication. It’s an exciting area that we’re investing in, internally.

“The other major investment I’m looking at over the course of the next couple of years is our laboratory testing capabilities. That is a big portion of our processing times - making sure that ingredients meet our specifications from a testing perspective. So, we are making an investment in adding microbial testing. We’re bringing in bioluminex; it’s a rapid test process. We’ll use that for both our raw material incoming testing, as well as our finished product testing to help speed up that

process and get a little more control. Over time, we’re looking at making even more investments in our lab capabilities to test for heavy metals and, eventually, more analytical and assay tests, as well.”

In closing, Becker touts Columbia Nutritional’s advantages in a rapidly growing and highly competitive marketplace: “Columbia has had a long, successful history and a lot of experience in the industry, working with a variety of different products and customers in terms of product needs,” he states. “We are focused on ensuring compliance from a quality and regulatory perspective. We’re very focused on servicing the customer. Finally, we’re well-positioned to grow with a lot of capacity for growth; we’re able to bring on new products and customers and put them into our manufacturing schedule.”

## PREFERRED VENDORS

- **BioCaps Enterprise, Inc.**  
*www.biocaps.net*
- **Jiaherb**  
*www.jiaherbinc.com*



# NATROL LLC

## A STAR IS REBORN

Natrol LLC, one of the leading Consumer Packaged Goods companies in southern California, is a global manufacturer of vitamins, minerals, and supplements (VMS), offering a variety of products for specific health needs such as better sleep, brain health, mood & stress relief, and beauty & anti-aging. Natrol brands also include Laci Le Beau, a line of herbal teas for weight control; and Shen Min and NuHair, hair rejuvenation products.

In the early 1980s, visionary CEO, Elliott Balbert, founded the company and soon began marketing nutritionally-based weight loss products, hence the name Natrol, for “natural control.” The company’s explosive success was fueled not only by its passionate leader Mr. Balbert, but by the Dietary Supplements Health and Education Act of 1994 in which the federal government defined what dietary supplements were and how they

## AT A GLANCE

### NATROL LLC

**WHAT:** A manufacturer of nutritional and herbal supplements

**WHERE:** Chatsworth, California

**WEBSITE:** [www.natrol.com](http://www.natrol.com)



## Mood & Stress



## Brain Health







## Beauty



## Sleep





needed to be marketed, sold, and legally labeled. “It laid the legal groundwork so that nutritional companies knew what they could and couldn’t do relative to the FDA (Food & Drug Administration), what claims they could make, what they could say to consumers, and how they could communicate the benefits of their products,” recounts Andrew Houlberg, Natrol’s CEO since 2007.

“Natrol continued expanding,” Houlberg continues. “By 1997, we occupied a 90,000-sq.ft. manufacturing facility, where we are today. In 1998, Natrol went public, listed on NASDAQ as NTOL. Throughout the ‘90s and early 2000s, Mr. Balbert acquired multiple companies as part of the expansion plan including Essentially Pure Ingredients, Prolab Sports Nutrition, Pure-Gar, and Laci Le Beau.”

Mr. Balbert was also a genius marketer. With every new product launch, he demanded healthy advertising budgets across mass media, beginning in health-conscious magazines, and then

expanding to mainstream magazines such as TV Guide, McCall’s, Family Circle and Woman’s Day. In 1990, Natrol began advertising on CNN’s Larry King Live with Mr. Balbert hawking Natrol products on-air in an interview format with Larry King, himself.

At the beginning of the new century, however, Natrol found itself facing marketplace changes that were beyond the company’s control. A decline in the overall dietary supplements sector was attributed to new studies questioning the validity of health claims of nutritional supplements, poor quality products from competitors with lower quality ingredients, an overall slump in the consumer marketplace, and market saturation.

In spite of the marketplace challenges, the Natrol brand had become so well known for its quality that it helped the company weather the fickle nature of consumer trends. In 2006, roughly a decade after herbal sleep aid Melatonin first hit U.S. markets, Natrol’s Melatonin became the number one selling brand





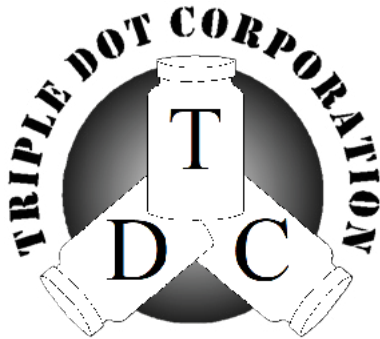
PICTURED  
Natrol LLC CEO,  
Andrew Houlberg



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in the U.S., along with its Ester-C, DHEA, and 5-HTP products. Natrol Melatonin continues to be the #1 selling brand in the nation.

“In 2014, Aurobindo Pharma USA purchased us,” Houlberg reports. “They’re a pharmaceutical company; we’re a nutraceutical company. So this was something different for Aurobindo, to move out of pharma and enter nutraceuticals. Since then, they’ve provided us very dynamic and strong technical expertise on the manufacturing side to help us improve our production efficiencies while we focus more on the commercial development of our products.”

Aurobindo’s ownership laid the groundwork for a resurgence of innovation. In 2017, Natrol launched a brain health product—Cognium—which is presently the third fastest seller in the U.S. mass market. And then, in 2018, the company launched a line of Natrol Gummies—melatonin, multi-vitamin, and other beauty-related products. According to Houlberg, “they are doing exceptionally well for us.”

Today, Natrol employs a workforce of approximately 250 full-timers, plus a small army of part-timers, brought in when production needs demand more support. 75 percent of sales are in the U.S., and 25 percent are overseas via a vast network of distributor partners. “The keys to success for us in other countries are three



## TIMELINE



### 1980

Founded in 1980 by Elliot Balbert, Natrol begins as a cosmetics company.

### 1982

Natrol enters dietary supplements business with a nutritionally-based natural weight loss product, hence the name Natrol, for “natural control.” This is the beginning of Natrol’s organic expansion into the area of nutritional supplements.

### 1998

Natrol introduces ProLab Nutri sports nutritional products for the physically active. Important for Natrol to begin international expansion, Natrol acquires Pure-Gar, Inc., a manufacturer of sports products Quintessense and High Performance. In 1998, Natrol acquires Beau, a maker of herbal teas for







**PROLAB.**



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body builders, athletes and  
ly, ProLab paves the way  
l distribution. Natrol also  
manufacturer of the garlic  
hgar Farms; and Laci La  
r weight loss.



**2007**

Natrol acquires Medical Research Institute, a sports nutrition company founded in 1997 and the first company to launch nitric oxide-based sports nutrition products.



**2014**

Aurobindo Pharma USA Inc. acquires Natrol and its well established brands and extensive distribution network.



things,” Houlberg explains. “One is finding the right distributor partner, and by that I mean they must have a deep knowledge of their market. Two, they must have an established infrastructure to be able to sell nutraceuticals. And three, they are highly motivated to want to be successful in their market. When we get that right, we’re extremely successful in the international markets.”

“In the United States, we’re by far the number one leader in melatonin and 5-HTP sales. But outside the country, it’s much more varied. For example, in Chile, we’re the number two multi-vitamin brand in the country because we have a highly motivated, knowledgeable distributor partner who has the powerful infrastructure in that country. So, we formulate to their demands. We also sell into Russia, China, and the Middle East through distributor partners.”

Houlberg adds that Natrol also has an increasingly powerful online presence overseas via American-based online retailers. “In fact, that’s an area of

tremendous growth,” he notes. “I refer to them as ‘onliners.’ American-based onliners ship all over the world. So, as Natrol only has a formal relationship in 60 countries, U.S.-based onliners actually sell to more than 160 countries in the world.”

In a highly competitive arena, Houlberg believes Natrol has distinct advantages. “Elliott founded the company based on delivering premium, quality products, and that continues to be central to our mission today. Quality is one of the three key components of our mission,” he remarks. Natrol is NSF-certified (National Sanitation Foundation); GMP-certified (Good Manufacturing Practices); an FDA-accredited facility; and it is, presently, pursuing USP (United States Pharmacopeia) certification for several of its products. “All of that guarantees an ever-improving quality component. Consumers can trust that what’s on the label is what they get, and is the freshest product available on the shelf,” Houlberg adds.

A second component of the Natrol mission is

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innovation. Two years ago, Natrol worked with a provider who developed a breakthrough product that helps consumers with cognition problems. Backed by multiple human clinical trials, the new product Cognium (cognition + cranium) was shown to help with memory improvement in a high percentage of consumers. “Now that’s innovation,” asserts Houlberg. “Also, consumer interaction plays a huge part in the constant improvement of our products. When we get feedback, we improve the formulation.

“The third pillar of our mission is agility. We’re not the largest manufacturer in the vitamin, mineral, and supplement segment; there are other American players bigger than we are. But because of our smaller size, we have greater agility. That agility converts into a better ability for us to work more closely with distributor partners so we are available, promptly, to help them better meet their business goals, build stronger relationships, and establish the trust that we need with them like the big customers Costco, Wal-Mart, and Target, and the smaller and medium customers

that make up our portfolio of over 200 different customers. Agility allows us to deliver really exceptional customer service, which I’ve made a priority for our company and now, pretty much reaches 100 percent almost all the time.”

Houlberg’s carefully crafted, five-year plan includes doubling the company’s business. “So, we’ve put together the essential building blocks and annual steps that will get us to that point,” he asserts. “The annual steps include improving even more our quality in our existing range of products, which are more than a hundred different formulas that we have commercialized around the world. True to our mission, we will continue improving and tweaking those formulas. We are also committed to adding new products, some of those products are in research now, others are about to be launched.”

For instance, Natrol is about to launch a kids’ melatonin product because there is a high demand from parents who are concerned that their children aren’t getting enough sleep. “In today’s society, children are exposed to much



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more blue light emitted from iPads and cell phones, computers, and other electronic media, and that affects children's brain patterns and can affect their sleep," according to Houlberg. "So, we've developed a child-friendly formula that's going into the market right now."

Part of Natrol's growth strategy also centers around creating deeper relationships with distributor partners to solve their problems and business needs better than others, while continuing to introduce new, relevant products in the marketplace in the short term. Houlberg intends to stay focused on

expanding those building blocks each year in order to double the size of the business.

"When you think about it, it's a very noble industry in which to work," Houlberg concludes. "We create products that may help people live longer, healthier lives. It's a whole lot more fun than selling things that aren't directly beneficial to their well-being. We have fun doing what we do and when we do that, we really succeed."

## PREFERRED VENDORS

### ■ **Triple Dot Corp**

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### ■ **Natoli Engineering Company**

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Natoli Engineering Company, the global leader in tablet compression tooling, is also a leading provider of tablet presses, R&D and production press software, and premium replacement parts for tablet presses and encapsulation machines. Additionally, Natoli provides formulation development and analytical services, unparalleled technical support, tableting troubleshooting, technical training, and the industry's most comprehensive tablet compression accessories catalog.

### ■ **Mingtai Chemical LLC**

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# PLANET **13** HOLDINGS, INC.

## What happens in Vegas...

**E**ven over-the-top Las Vegas has never seen the likes of this - a SuperStore Entertainment Complex that rivals anything on “the strip” for sheer WOW factor. What makes it so special? Well, beyond its spectacular rooftop array of giant waving lotus flowers, when Planet 13 opened its doors on Nov. 1, 2018, it became the largest, most advanced retail dispensary for cannabis in the world. Planet 13 Holdings, Inc. operates as a vertically integrated cannabis organization, holding six licenses in the Nevada market. Its shares trade on the Canadian Stock Exchange (CSE) and the OTCQB venture market.

Business View Magazine recently spoke with Larry Scheffler, Co-CEO of Planet 13 Holdings, Inc. for a behind-the-scenes perspective of this super-creative company, and his insights into the Nevada cannabis industry. The following is an edited transcript of that conversation.

**BVM:** What is the story behind Planet 13 Holdings?

**Scheffler:** “Long story short, about five years ago my long-time attorney, friend, and co-CEO of Planet 13, Bob Groesbeck, called me with the question, “Do you know they’re licensing marijuana here?” That led to talk about how we wished we’d been around in 1931 when they’d licensed gambling, and after prohibition when







## AT A GLANCE

# PLANET 13 HOLDINGS, INC.

**WHAT:** Vertically integrated cannabis company

**WHERE:** Las Vegas, Nevada

**WEBSITE:** [www.planet13holdings.com](http://www.planet13holdings.com)





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Moxie Seeds & Extracts was founded in 2015 to serve the growing demand for cannabis extraction. By making oils and other extracted forms of cannabis, Moxie serves the needs of patients who prefer or require an alternative means of consumption rather than smoking. Moxie was formed by a group of professionals with backgrounds in cultivation, extraction, and retail.

Moxie is committed to serving the needs of medical-cannabis patients through science and safety. Dedicated to cutting-edge innovation using the latest technology, highly trained chemists, and the strictest of safety standards, its mission is to create the healthiest cannabis-based medicine on the market—in a wide variety of formats—for patients in need.

Moxie has been awarded over fifty different accolades, namely for non-psychoactive Cannabidiol products, and was awarded the first production license for the extraction of manufactured cannabis products in Las Vegas.

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they'd licensed alcohol, and we thought – this is the chance of five lifetimes to be here for one of the last sins that prohibition ends.

“So, in 2014, we applied and got a medical cannabis license, opened our first store in 2016, and got a recreational license when that was legalized on July 1, 2017. We were six miles southwest of Mandalay Bay – along with 46 other people, that was a lot of dispensaries fighting for 2.3 million locals. We thought, why are we arguing about 2.3 million people when there are 55 million visitors on the strip? So, we did our homework and looked at all the zoning; you cannot sell or have a dispensary within the gaming corridor - that's about a mile either side of the strip. But there was a donut hole they'd zoned around – 2,500 feet from Wynn's front door at the heart of the strip.

“We found a 112,000-sq.-ft. building we liked, and it took us a year to talk the landlord into leasing it to us. Our first phase we opened was 40,000 sq. ft., for offices and dispensary. Trident

Construction is our general contractor. This was an old, tired building – great bones – but it was just a giant warehouse cooler. Everybody told us there was no way we'd get it done in five months. Trident made it possible. We could not have done it without them, they were fantastic. And our interior designer, Brianna Tiberdi, from TSquared was amazing to work with. Those two groups were paramount in executing our outrageous time frames. In March 2019, we broke ground on 23,000 sq. ft. more for a coffee shop, a bistro, and a 15,000-sq.-ft. customer-facing production facility.”

**BVM:** What kind of unique “experience” do you provide?

**Scheffler:** “Being in Las Vegas, we tried to out-Vegas Vegas with shows we imported from around the world. From floating orbs, the first permanent installation in the western hemisphere, to the 18-foot diameter ball out front with water coming over it, to interactive floors when you first walk into the building that are like giant iPads – 10 ft. by 16 ft. – it's like walking across a koi pond.



In the dispensary are orbs three feet in diameter driven by indoor GPS that do a show once an hour, floating above people buying product, changing colors and patterns, and dancing up on the 25-foot ceiling. The orbs are from AirStage, a small but very technically-savvy company.

“If you spend \$50 on purchases, you can go to our 124-foot-long outdoor art wall. If you stand 30 feet away after dusk, you can laser spray paint onto it - messages like, ‘Jill, will you marry me?’ Everybody takes a picture and puts it on social media and helps advertise for us. Then, you press a button and it’s gone. I do hours of research to source these special effects. Then Bob and I sit together and decide which one we’d rather do, which draws the most customers, which is most entertaining for the average person. We put our budget at \$1 million for this opening and it came to a total of about \$1.5 million, so we had to cut some.

“Our new project takes up one third of the 15,000-sq.-ft. production facility we just

announced. It’s 120 ft. long and 30 ft. deep with solid glass where you can watch the chocolates and gummy squares being made, and the bottling of the beer - like a Willy Wonka’s Chocolate Factory. On the little level above it, Ana robotics company has created two robotic arms – one that takes the cans and puts them on the conveyor through the canning process and the other puts them in the cases. That’s all fine but after a while it gets boring to us, so we had the company put one on a rail and, once an hour, it goes over to the other and pretends to hit it. Then they start dueling with wooden sticks. It’s all choreographed. One knocks the stick out of the other’s hand, the loser bows, the winner uncaps a bottle of beer, while the other one tilts an empty glass sideways, and the winning arm pours. They share a beer, then go back to work. Our shows always have to give something more for the tourists.”

**BVM:** What do your cannabis operations entail?

**Scheffler:** “We started with Medizin as the



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name of the company. Then, when we got our recreational license, we changed it to Planet 13 and Medizin became our main product line. We're vertically integrated so we have a grow, a production, a medical, and a recreational in Clark County. And we have a grow and a production in Nye County. That second site location is 120 miles northwest of Las Vegas.

"A funny story about that: a year and a half ago, we also bought a legal brothel in Nye County. The owner had died and we bought it from his wife. For about 14½ minutes, we held that brothel, then gave up the license, because we only bought it for the 80 acres of land. We then went to Nye County and had it hard-zoned for 2.4 million sq. ft. of cannabis grow. It's probably the largest area hard-zoned for cannabis in the U.S., right now. We only have 10,000 sq. ft. up there for R&D and to maintain our license, but it will be a great asset for the future. It's got municipal water; all the power you could need; in




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a remote area – no neighbors. A perfect location.”

**BVM:** Can anyone walk in and buy your products?

**Scheffler:** “The SuperStore is open to everyone. The good part is when you come in the Grand Hallway – which with the second phase done will be a football field long and 30 ft. wide – you don’t have to be 21 because you’re not in the dispensary. On the righthand side, we have guards and turnstiles and you need a card we issue with a barcode that allows you in the dispensary, so we know you’re 21. If you’re underage, you can wait in the Grand Hallway, go in the Bistro, the Coffee Shop, shop in the Gift Store. Those options attract a lot more clientele.

“The new Governor of Nevada is forming a Cannabis Commission, like the Gaming Commission. They will make all the rules for the state, because right now, it’s confusing and everyone is interpreting the law differently. When those regulations are in place, we’ve dedicated about 20,000 sq. ft. for a cannabis

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consumption lounge and a future club, if they merge it together with alcohol. We’d also like to have a 5,000-sq.-ft. patio, 15 ft. in the air. It faces the street and we have 65,000 rooms looking down on us. We’re going to put a splash pool up there, where you can stay cool, dance in the water, smoke cannabis... nobody in the world has this right now. The state limits the amount of cannabis you can buy to one ounce and medical is still a big thing for us. We didn’t forget about the locals on our loyalty program, and the veterans. They always receive a discount.”

**BVM:** Is future expansion on tap?

**Scheffler:** “Absolutely. It may not be this large, but we’d like to have a number of Superstores, four or five times larger and better than the nearest competitor, and still an attraction for that area. We have to blend into the fabric of the cities we’re moving into. Not every place is over the top like Vegas but everybody still wants to be entertained. And people tell us how safe they feel here. Our show of force on security – outside,





inside, every entrance – the good lighting, the atmosphere. They are so surprised and want to come back again. It’s like walking into a high-end shopping mall of a five-star hotel. We’re looking in four different states, right now. Watch for announcements very shortly. We’re very excited. Our big thing is location, location, location.

“There is nothing like Planet 13 in the world in size, in entertainment, in a destination. None of what we have has ever been seen in Vegas. People have seen the rest and this is entirely new. It’s a sensory overload. Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy what we’ve done!”



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# PREFERRED VENDORS

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Moxie Seeds & Extracts was founded in 2015 to serve the growing demand for cannabis extraction. By making oils and other extracted forms of cannabis, Moxie serves the needs of patients who prefer or require an alternative means of consumption rather than smoking. Moxie was formed by a group of professionals with backgrounds in cultivation, extraction, and retail.

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## ■ **Virtue Las Vegas**

[www.virtuelasvegas.com](http://www.virtuelasvegas.com)

Virtue Las Vegas is a premium craft cannabis brand, founded in the heart of Las Vegas. We are a family owned company that believes employee appreciation and customer service set us apart from others in the industry. Our philosophy is to provide the State of Nevada with true to form genetics and high quality cannabis products. As a small business, we are honored to work alongside Planet 13, who is revolutionizing the entire dispensary experience.

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## ■ **Evergreen Organix**

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