

NOTICE

A meeting of the City of Evansville Economic Development Committee will be held on the date and at the time and location stated below. Meetings are typically held the 3rd Monday of each month. Notice is further given that enough members of the City Council may be present to constitute a “meeting” under Wisconsin statutes and this constitutes notice of any such meeting. Requests for persons with disabilities who need assistance to participate in this meeting should be made by calling City Hall: (608)-882-2266 with as much advance notice as possible.

City of Evansville **Economic Development Committee**
Regular Meeting
3rd Floor City Hall, 31 S Madison St, Evansville, WI 53536
Monday, November 17th, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Motion to approve the agenda.
4. Motion to waive the reading of the minutes from the August 18th, 2025 meeting and approve as printed.
5. Civility Reminder
6. Citizen Appearances
7. New Business
 - A. 2026 Goals
8. Old Business
 - A. 2025 Job Fair
9. Monthly Reports
 - A. Community Development Update
 - B. Chamber of Commerce Report
 - C. Tourism Commission Report
10. Discussion
11. Next Meeting Dates:
 - A. Regular Meeting: December 15th, 2025
12. Adjourn

-Joe Geoffrion, Chair

City of Evansville **Economic Development Committee**
Regular Meeting
3rd Floor City Hall, 31 S Madison Street, Evansville, WI 53536
Monday, June 16th, 2025, 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order.** 6:00 pm by Geoffrion.

2. **Roll Call:**

	Present/Absent	Others Present
Joe Geoffrion, Chair	P	Anne Kolasch, Nate Perty,
Kelly Shannon	P	Shawn Dunphy, Evansville Chamber of Commerce
Jon Alling	P	Colette Spranger, Com. Dev. Director
Paul Liesse	P	
Brandon Rutz	A	
Pat Carr	A	
Sue Berg	P	

3. **Motion to Approve Agenda as printed.** *Motion by Geoffrion, seconded by Berg. Motion carried unanimously.*

4. **Motion to waive the reading of the minutes from May 21st, 2025 meetings and approve as printed.** Minor change to reflect Alling’s absence in May. *Motion by Geoffrion, seconded by Berg. Motion carried unanimously.*

5. **Civility Reminder**

6. **Citizen appearances, other than listed agenda items**

Anne Kolasch attended to hear more about what was going on around the Community. She owns Food For Life, a part-time catering business. She works out of Creekside Place, which has a commercial kitchen.

7. **New Business**

Spranger and Geoffrion need to reschedule with Stoughton Trailers. Spranger is working to get others scheduled.

8. **Old Business.** Makerspaces were discussed, particularly on how to help business like Gordon Miller Woodworks offer hands-on opportunities. Currently there are limitations due to insurance liability. Alling and Berg have reached out to contacts at local workshop spaces in Madison and will follow up with Gordy Miller. Perry asked what kind of equipment is used at these spaces. Alling replies that almost any machine or specialized equipment could be used at a maker space. School district has a Community Service fund (Fund 80) that can be used for pools, tennis courts, pottery classes – anything that could be accessed by the public. There is potential to utilize this as a way to provide access to certain types of equipment here in Evansville that are sought after in maker spaces.

An inquiry was made regarding a job fair in the fall. It will be revisited at the next meeting.

9. Monthly Reports

- A. Community Development Update.** Spranger summarized recent and ongoing activities, including zoning revisions proposed at Plan Commission, ongoing hailstorm repair, and updates with the Park and Open Space plan. The City recently performed a Walk Audit. The initial results of that exercise were summarized well by Liesse. “Where we’ve made changes, we’ve made good changes.” Spranger also shared an overview of the downtown economy throughout the past year, as is required by the City’s participation in Connect Communities. There was an inquiry to see if it was possible to quantify the secondary impact of the hailstorm on the local economy. Restaurant and lodging have seemed to enjoy an uptick in service due to extra contracting crews being in town.
- B. Chamber Update.** Dunphy is preparing for the chamber’s annual golf outing, a significant fundraiser for the Chamber. She is also attending an informal meeting with Mark Pocan at the Vintage Roost. She included openings/closings around town, noting that the Grove Society was open again.
- C. Tourism Update.**
Sue Berg updated on mural #3 progress, mural #1 relocation, the tourism website, and the project to add new lamp post banners.

10. Discussion

11. Next Meeting Dates:

- A.** Regular Meeting: July 16th, 2025 at 6:00 PM.

12. Adjourn.

2026 Economic Development Committee Goals

11/17/2025

2025 Goals

- Business Visits
- Improving the website
- Plan for contacting new businesses within the first 90 days, coaching new businesses
- Continue to grow working relationships with the school district and library

2026 Suggested Goals

- Continue business visits
- Continue website improvements
- Library business/work space (with Commitment to Community Funds)
- See Comprehensive Plan for more ideas

2026 Budget

Account Number	Account Title	Amount
100-56820-210	Professional Services	\$4,500
100-56820-300	Expenses	\$1,500
100-56820-305	Membership Dues	\$2,000
100-56820-400	Plan Implementation	\$1,000
100-56820-410	Marketing	\$1,000
100-56820-420	Print Materials	\$1,000
100-56820-720	Building Improvement Grant	\$6,000
	Total	\$17,000

X. Economic Development Goals and Objectives

These economic development goals and objectives serve as a way to put the vision statement into action, through a series of to dos. Below are Goals and objectives for the Economic Development Chapter:

Economic Development Goal 1: Retain and Expand Existing Businesses in Evansville		
Supporting Objectives	Measurable Benchmark or Outcome	Priority
1. Visit existing local businesses to understand opportunities and challenges they face.	Ongoing, regular site visits by City staff and Chamber	Top
2. Redevelop and use the City of Evansville website as an economic marketing tool.	- Increase page hits - Update information quarterly	High
3. Coordinate with other local rural communities and local, county and state organizations to expand regional economic development opportunities.	Implement Sustainable Energy chapter of plan along with Edgerton/Milton	High
4. Redevelop Building Improvement Grant (BIG) and Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) programs	Goal of implementation by end of 2023	High
5. Implement user-facing online permitting and payment system.	Underway; goal of implementation by end of 2022	High
6. Continue to monitor ordinances to streamline approval process.	Ongoing City Staff commitment	Medium

Economic Development Goal 2: Attract New Businesses to Evansville		
Supporting Objectives	Measurable Benchmark or Outcome	Priority
1. Strategically offer TIF incentives to businesses that would otherwise have difficulty obtaining alternative funding sources.	- Create an internal strategy for existing districts - Identify potential incentives	Top
2. Identify existing underutilized commercial and industrial spaces in order to expand tax base without demand for major infrastructure.	Identify, engage with, and provide incentives for building owners	Top
3. Improve offerings for business assistance.	- Develop a welcome packet/guide aimed toward businesses, with information about zoning approvals, permitting process, and site development. - May be developed along with City website overhaul - coordinate among City staff, committees, and other stakeholders how to manage bandwidth to be responsive to incoming requests.	High

Economic Development Goal 2: Attract New Businesses to Evansville		
Supporting Objectives	Measurable Benchmark or Outcome	Priority
4. Attract new businesses through advertising and regional marketing programs. (e.g. LOIS, Gold Shovel Site Verification, brochures)	• Use available properties list to feed to larger networks • Utilize Gold Shovel Site Verification and other similar outreach programs	High
5. Determine suitable land sites for new and redeveloped commercial and industrial space for new businesses.	• Maintain available properties list and update website monthly	High
6. Prepare tailored pitches and incentive packages for the desired industries identified in this chapter.	• Identify local workforce skillsets that may be attractive to new industries • Identify and reach out to retail/service businesses whose services are currently lacking in Evansville. • Develop appropriate marketing materials	Medium

Economic Development Goal 3: Support the local workforce		
Supporting Objectives	Measurable Benchmark or Outcome	Priority
1. Seek opportunities to partner with trade schools, the middle school, high school, businesses and organizations to ensure workers have the skills needed to succeed.	• Continue to foster a relationship with the Evansville Community School District.	Top
2. Investigate alternate commuting options for those traveling to/from Madison or Janesville, esp. in collaboration with other entities (e.g. WisDOT)	• Engage with regional partners when funding or programming becomes available	Medium
3. Increase the supply of affordable housing options for existing and incoming residents.	• See Housing Chapter for related goals and objectives. <u>Specific section?</u>	Medium

Economic Development Goal 4: Continue to maintain and improve the City's quality of life		
Supporting Objectives	Measurable Benchmark or Outcome	Priority
1. Improve parking and wayfinding signage to direct traffic towards existing amenities.	- Interim outcome: mark and sign municipal sidewalk routes - Long term outcome: rebranding campaign to update signage system (Potential tourism budget item for Fall 2023)	Top
2. Continue to support and collaborate with the Evansville Tourism Commission.	- Ongoing marketing and event planning. - Explore how tourism and Evansville's historic character can provide opportunities or compliment potential entrepreneurs.	High
3. Continue support for historic preservation in Evansville's four historic districts.	Develop grant program for businesses within the City's historic districts	High
4. Implement the adopted Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan 2020-2025.	Park Board implements action items from Plan.	Medium
5. Maintain building inspection and property maintenance guidelines.	- Continue to provide active enforcement of code violations - City to organize response of violations between Public Works, Police, and Community Development - Develop plain language information regarding common violations	Medium
6. Maintain and promote multimodal transportation infrastructure to accommodate both business and residential use	- Install multiuse path along Water Street - Safe railroad crossings - Mark route and become an official designated Ice Age Trail Community - See Transportation Chapter for additional goals and objectives	Medium

**Economic Development Goal 5:
Create a supportive environment for entrepreneurship**

Supporting Objectives	Measurable Benchmark or Outcome	Priority
1. Provide opportunities for incubating new businesses in Evansville	• Identify common barriers and support needs of start-up businesses • Partner with Janesville Innovation Center to identify potential businesses looking for space to expand • Consider establishing a physical space for businesses to temporarily run	Top
2. Work with Chamber of Commerce to promote networking opportunities and outreach.	• Continue promotion of After 5 networking events • Partner regularly with Chamber on Lunch and Learn events • Develop business-to-business mentoring opportunities	High
3. Identify infrastructure challenges experienced by entrepreneurs. (e.g. broadband, wireless service)	• Identify, track, and maintain database of level of service and fees with existing telecommunication providers	High
4. Coordinate with educational and community institutions to provide continuing educational opportunities.	• Ongoing; in partnership with Chamber, ECSD, and other stakeholders	Medium
5. Continue to support home-based occupations, marketing expanding ordinance language if needed.	• Ongoing City Staff commitment	Medium

Economic Development Goal 6: Emphasize improvements within City's economic development corridors		
Supporting Objectives	Measurable Benchmark or Outcome	Priority
1. Market and promote 11 acre City-owned site along Union Pacific Railway	- Sell site to appropriate user - Increase interest in developable rail sites near Evansville - Re-open rail corridor between Evansville and Oregon	Top
2. Rehabilitate and redevelop City-owned 155 E. Main site	- Remediate site with a WI DNR Brownfield Grant - Develop a master plan for site - Sell to appropriate user	High
3. North Union Street/Highway 14 Corridor	Continue to implement suggestions in the Allen Creek and North Union Street Redevelopment Master Plan	Medium
4. East Side -- Highway 14 Corridor	Develop Master Plan	High
5. West Side – County C Corridor	- Develop Master Plan - Investigate new opportunities for neighborhood commercial development	Medium
6. Water Street	Improve infrastructure along street, including sidewalks or multiuse path, curbing, and in improved stormwater conveyance	Medium



Job Fair Success!

From Colette Spranger <c.spranger@evansvillewi.gov>

Date Thu 10/23/2025 14:34

To Jason Sergeant <j.sergeant@evansvillewi.gov>; Dianne Duggan <d.duggan@evansvillewi.gov>; Luna, Lesley R
- DWD <lesley.luna@dwd.wisconsin.gov>; Graham, Gail <g.graham@swwdb.org>

Bcc Brandon Rutz <brandon.rutz@gmail.com>; Bronna Lehmann <lehmann.bronna@eagerfreelibrary.org>;
Evansville Chamber of Commerce & Tourism <evansvillechamber@gmail.com>; James Otterstein
<james.otterstein@co.rock.wi.us>; Joe Geoffrion <joe@rmberghomes.com>; Joe Geoffrion
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<pat.carr@evansvillefordllc.com>; Paul Liesse <paul.liesse@gmail.com>; Sue Berg <srb_home@hotmail.com>

Hi all, thought I'd give a quick recap of yesterday's job fair.

- 19 employers signed up to attend, 15 showed up
- 7 were Evansville-specific employers
- A firm count of 48 job seekers, and I know we missed a handful of people when the event started up. Probably 55 job seekers total.
 - o This is about double last year's count.
- Where people came from (of those who were willing to share)
 - o Evansville: 16
 - o Janesville: 5
 - o Beloit: 2
 - o Albany: 2
 - o Edgerton: 2
 - o Argyle, Madison, Orfordville, Milton: each 1
 - o Out of State: 1
- How people heard about it (of those willing to share)
 - o Banners (at Franklin Park, Piggly Wiggly, City Hall): 11
 - o Family/friends/word of mouth: 6
 - o DWD/Job Center/Unemployment: 8
 - o Facebook/Internet Search: 3
 - o Veterans Affairs: 1
 - o Probation Officer: 1
- Anecdotally....
 - o Job seekers seemed very focused. Few came without a plan or an idea of what they were looking for.
 - o Witnessed lots of conversations between recruiters and job seekers — people didn't just wander around.
 - o This is an estimate, but I would say 80% of job seekers were over 40 years of age

Big thanks to all who helped!



Community Development Updates

November 2025 Colette Spranger, Community Development Director

- **Hail Storm 2025**

- o 1,540 minor improvement permits pulled to date
- o Project costs are now over \$42.3 million
- o “Silver Lining” / Indirect Benefits of Storm
 - Tried to reach out to see if we could quantify this – “not easily” is the answer
 - Increased demand and revenue for food service, hotel
 - More “anecdotal”: heard that one car service location saw an uptick in tire replacements...due to nails

- **170 E Church**

- o The DNR did their Phase I Environmental Assessment last week. Waiting for results.
- o The DNR is putting the 170 E Church site out to bid for redevelopment planning through another grant. (This was funded by the EPA, so it was iffy for awhile if it was going through.)

- **Business Updates**

- o Domino's to open mid-December
- o Kwik Trip is still on schedule
- o Romano's (remember them?) is looking at the old Evansville Blooms site at 150 Union Street
- o Possible space for Edgerton Hospital identified in the downtown

- **Other Updates**

- o The City's own housing rehabilitation funds for low-income households and landlords providing affordable housing is no more. The State of Wisconsin is reconfiguring how these programs are ran. City is waiting for instructions on how eligible households can access these funds, which will now be managed at a regional level.



November 2025
Evansville Area Chamber of Commerce Update
Shawn Dunphy, Executive Director

Community Activities and Upcoming Events

Upcoming Chamber Events/Ribbon Cuttings/Grand Openings

Ribbon Cuttings: Renew Company LLC, Allison Becker Wellness Group - TBD
 Olde Fashioned Christmas Friday 11/21 & Saturday 11/22
 Community Coffee December 9th Bank CMG
 Annual Meeting December 15th The Night Owl Food & Spirits, 11 a.m.
 Bowling Tournament February 6th
 Evansville Art Crawl May 8th
 Golf Outing June 19th

Economic Development

Job Fair & hiring Event on October 22 at Creekside

Tourism Updates

Chamber Projects & Happenings

Planning Evansville Olde Fashioned Christmas November 21 & 22
 Membership Renewals Coming December
 Fall Fest October 18th - well attended, vendor market,

NEW Businesses

Twig & Rue (formerly Preloved Thrift Co.) new owners
 State Farm - Diane Berg
 Kwik Trip opening March 2026

Facebook Followers (Chamber admin pages)

Evansville Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism - 3114
 Evansville WI Events - 3193
 Evansville City Wide Rummage Sales - 2362
 Evansville Art Crawl - 770
 Olde Fashioned Christmas - 841
 Evansville Fall Fest - 1390

City of Evansville
Evansville Tourism Commission
October 2025 Summary Submitted by Sue Berg

The Evansville Tourism Commission met October 9, 2025. The Commission meets every other month: February, April, June, August, October and December.

Updates:

Rex Theater / Mural #3: Artist Jim Richter continues to work on the finishing touches to the mural, pending cooperation from the weather.

Five Ladies / Mural #1: The five portraits need a new home. Sue Berg reported that the Grange Building was sold and the new owners declined to allow the portraits to be placed on the building. Installation is on hold pending a new location. Tony Wyse was making inquiries with other building owners and Lindsey Yoder from Sign Art Studio also is exploring an option with a local building.

Website update: Discussion focused on increasing traffic to the website, and the desire to expand content and imagery.

Lamp post banners: Abbey Barnes reported that the banners arrived. One banner had an error and the vendor is re-doing it.

Ice Age Trail Mammoth Hike Challenge: The Mammoth Hike Challenge—occurring during the month of October—included promotions for Ice Age Trail Communities. Evansville was listed and selfies at the Evansville Circus Mural were encouraged as documentation of participation in the challenge.

Rock County Tourism Guide: Sue Berg reported that data collection—including calendar information—is underway for the 2026 Guide.

Tourism promotional/social media campaigns: Shawn Dunphy reported that a social media campaign is underway to promote the upcoming events set for October 18.

Upcoming activities with Tourism Potential

- a. Fall Fest and Monster Mash Oct 18
- b. Merchant Trick or Treat Oct 25
- c. Olde Fashioned Christmas Nov 21-22
- d. Small Business Saturday Nov 29
- e. Annual Evansville Craft Fair Dec 6
- f. Ecumenical Choir Concert Dec 7

Next meeting dates are December 11, 2025, and February 12, 2026.

City of Evansville
Evansville Tourism Commission
November 2025 Summary Submitted by Sue Berg

The Evansville Tourism Commission does not meet in November. The Commission meets every other month: February, April, June, August, October and December.

Updates:

Five Ladies / Mural #1: The Women's Fund in Janesville hosted a reception that recognized several grant recipients including the Evansville Tourism Commission, which received a \$1000 award toward the funding of framework for mounting the Five Ladies Mural. Installation is pending. Building owners of a desired location are considering a proposal.

Rock County Tourism Guide: Data collection was completed and sent to the publisher of the 2026 Guide.

Upcoming activities with Tourism Potential

- a. Olde Fashioned Christmas Nov 21-22
- b. Small Business Saturday Nov 29
- c. Ecumenical Choir Concert Dec 7

Next meeting dates are December 11, 2025, and February 12, 2026.

Evansville Economic Development Committee

2026 Meeting Dates

Meetings typically held at City Hall, 31 S. Madison Street, at 6:00 PM
Dates, times, and locations subject to change. [See City website for details.](#)

Monday, January 19, 2025

Monday, February 16, 2025

Monday, March 16, 2025

Monday, April 20, 2025

Monday, May 18, 2025

Monday, June 15, 2025

Monday, July 20, 2025

Monday, August 17, 2025

Monday, September 21, 2025

Monday, October 19, 2025

Monday, November 16, 2025

Monday, December 21, 2025