



E·C·G·R·A
ERIE COUNTY GAMING REVENUE AUTHORITY

**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR'S
REPORT
FOR
AUGUST
2022**



Strategic Planning Committee Meeting

Wednesday, August 10, 2022
10:00 am
5240 Knowledge Parkway
and via zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85069002441>

Meeting ID: 850 6900 2441
Password: Not Required

AGENDA

1. Presentation – Diverse Erie Loan Fund
Gary Lee
Tina Mengine
2. Multi-Municipal Collaboration grants
3. Mission Main Street grants
4. Good of the Order



Listening Session

ECGRA/Edinboro/McKean

Thursday, August 11, 2022

1:00 pm

- I. Welcome & Introductions
- II. Summary of ECGRA's Funding in Support of Edinboro and McKean (ECGRA)
- III. Overview of ECGRA funding through ARPA (ECGRA)
- IV. Review of Edinboro's and McKean's strategic plans in the following areas: (Edinboro/McKean leaders)
 - a. Support for small business
 - b. Support for residential revitalization
 - c. Anchor buildings, problem properties, & main street façade needs
 - d. Infrastructure
 - e. Maintenance & development of parks
 - f. Other matters of strategic importance



Listening Session
ECGRA/Millcreek
Thursday, August 11, 2022
10:30 am

- I. Welcome & Introductions (Councilman Scutella)
- II. Summary of ECGRA's Funding in Support of Millcreek (ECGRA)
- III. Overview of ECGRA funding through ARPA (ECGRA)
- IV. Review of Millcreek's strategic plans in the following areas:
(Millcreek leaders)
 - a. Support for small business
 - b. Support for residential revitalization
 - c. Anchor buildings, problem properties, & main street façade needs
 - d. Infrastructure
 - e. Maintenance & development of parks
 - f. Other matters of strategic importance



Listening Session
ECGRA/Fairview
Wednesday, August 17, 2022
1:00 pm

- I. Welcome & Introductions (Councilwoman Schauerman)
- II. Summary of ECGRA's Funding in Support of Fairview (ECGRA)
- III. Overview of ECGRA funding through ARPA (ECGRA)
- IV. Review of Fairview's strategic plans in the following areas:
(Fairview leaders)
 - a. Support for small business
 - b. Support for residential revitalization
 - c. Anchor buildings, problem properties, & main street façade needs
 - d. Infrastructure
 - e. Maintenance & development of parks
 - f. Other matters of strategic importance

June 2022

Meeting with Executive Director
Ongoing Social Media Management
Ongoing Consulting
June Comms

IMPLEMENTED

8 Total June posts
4 Total graphics created
2021–22 Annual Report

IN PROGRESS | 2022 Grant Releases and Graphics

Annual Report Graphics
Holiday Graphics

IN PLANNING

Grants Events
Parks Fields & Trails 2 year report
ECGRA Playbook
Roadshow Tours

July 2022

Meeting with Executive Director
Ongoing Social Media Management
Ongoing Consulting
July Comms

IMPLEMENTED

- 12 Total July posts
- 8 Total graphics created
- Annual Report Graphics

IN PROGRESS | 2022 Grant Releases and Graphics

- Renaissance Block grant release
- Event planning
- Holiday Graphics

IN PLANNING

- Grants Events
- Parks Fields & Trails 2 year report
- ECGRA Playbook
- Roadshow Tours

Tammi Michali

From: Georgia Del Freo <gdelfreo@GECAC.org>
Sent: Thursday, August 4, 2022 8:01 AM
To: Nick DiPlacido; Tammi Michali
Cc: Jamilya Gates
Subject: RE: ~~2022~~ Summer JAM
2021

Good morning,

Just to add one piece of information to what Nick had sent. Pam's decision to focus additional recruitment efforts on the city of Erie was based on directions from the County of Erie to realign efforts to have enrollment closer to a 50% city/ 50% county split. This has been a program goal since the inception of the program.

Thank you,
Georgia

Please note: I am sending this email at a time that is convenient to me. Please do not feel obligated to reply or take action outside of your normal working hours.

From: Nick DiPlacido <ncdiplacido@GECAC.org>
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 3:15 PM
To: Tammi Michali <tmichali@ecgra.org>
Cc: Georgia Del Freo <gdelfreo@GECAC.org>; Jamilya Gates <jgates@gecac.org>
Subject: RE: ~~2022~~ Summer JAM
2021

Good Afternoon Tammi:

Just a quick update regarding the information being requested by you. This year we have 136 participants in the Summer JAM Program. The City of Erie to Erie County spit is 40:60 (55/81). We had approximately 198 youth show interest in the program however a number of them did not fully complete the application or provide necessary documents. Of those showing interest but only providing partial applications, the majority would have been city participants had applications been completed.

I have attached a list of employers that had demonstrated an interest in the program by completing employer applications. Most of the youth participants came to the program with an employer preference which we tried to accommodate. The high-lighted employers are those who were assigned participants. The unhigh-lighted employers are those who were not assigned participants.

Your observation of Corry's involvement is probably staffing related. Desiree Higley, the previous Summer JAM Program Director, had many ties to the Corry area which was reflected in recruitment and placement. Upon Desiree's resignation, Pam Masi, Division Manager, took over some of the recruitment efforts. Pam felt that the program was well enough established in the Corry area and concentrated her efforts in the City of Erie, holding numerous mini orientations in an effort to recruit participants.

I hope you find this information useful. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

2022 Summer JAM Participating Employers

Albion Assembly of God	11311 Rt. 18	Albion, PA
Asbury Woods Partnership	4105 Asbury Rd.	Erie, PA
Martin Luther King Center/Bayfront NATO	312 Chestnut zSt.	Erie, PA
Bethany Outreach	254 East 10th St	Erie, PA
Bethesda Lutheran Services Trinity Center	462 W. 18th St.	Erie, PA
Boys & Girls Club	1515 East Lake Rd	Erie, PA
Blue Rock Construction LLC	1854 East 26th Street	Erie, PA
Buzz of Union City	64 N. Main St.	Union City, PA
Career & Dreams (Booker T Washington)	1720 Holland St.	Erie, PA
Charter School for Excellence (Perseus House)	1511 Peach St.	Erie, PA
Christian Ministries of the Apostolic Faith Church	930 Liberty St.	Erie, PA
City of Corry	100 S. Center St.	Corry, PA
Community Access Media (CAM)	142 West 12th St	Erie, PA
Corry Lumber	630 East Columbus Ave.	Corry, PA
Dafmark Creative Arts Program & John Horan Apt.	1033 State St.	Erie, PA
Demeter Premier	714 E South St.	Corry, PA
Double Dippers Ice Cream Shop	5320 Buffalo Rd A	Erie, PA
Dynasty Construction	206 S First Ave.	Corry, PA
Erie County Housing Authority	120 South Center St.	Corry, PA
Erie School District	148 West 21st Street	Erie, PA
Executool Precision Tooling	2727 West 16th St.	Erie, PA
Fat Lenny's	443 West 8th St.	Erie, PA
Footlights Theatre Performing Arts	817 Washington Place	Erie, PA
Gannon University	109 University Square	Erie, PA
GECAC	18 West Ninth St	Erie, PA
Girard School District	1203 Lake St.	Girard, PA
Hagan History Center	356 W 6th St.	Erie, PA
Handled with Care Child Care	925 State Street	Erie, PA
Hands (Housing & Neighborhood Dev. Service	7 East 7th St.	Erie, PA
Harborcreek School District	6375 Buffulo Rd.	Harborcreek, PA
Hayes Tree Farm	11215 Springfield Road	Girards, PA
Iroquois High School	4301 Main St.	Erie, PA
J.H. Auto Parts	955 North Center St.	Corry, PA
KC Ice Cream	13283 US 6	Corry, PA
Keystone Research Corporation	3823 West 12th St	Erie, PA
Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier (LEAF)	1501 West 6th ST	Erie, PA
Magnolia Run Kennels	9827 Franklin Center Rd.	Cranesville, PA
Pennsylvania International Academy	8155 Oliver Road	Erie, PA
Premier Manufacturing, LLC	1001 State t.	Erie, PA
Sarah A Reed Children's Center	2445 West 34th Street	Erie, PA
The Vintage Garden Floral	58 N. Main St.	Union City, PA
Towne & Country Motor	635 E Smith St.	Corry, PA
Taco Bell Whole Foods (Taco Bell)	4305 Peach Street	Erie, PA
YMCA of Corry	906 N Center St	Corry, PA
The Learning Ladder Early Child Care Center	2502 Peach Street	Erie, PA
Youth Leadership Institute of Erie	1306 East Lake Rd	Erie, P a

Next round of Renaissance funds to help improve Corry coming soon

BY KATHLEEN SPINAZZOLA

kathleen@thecorryjournal.com

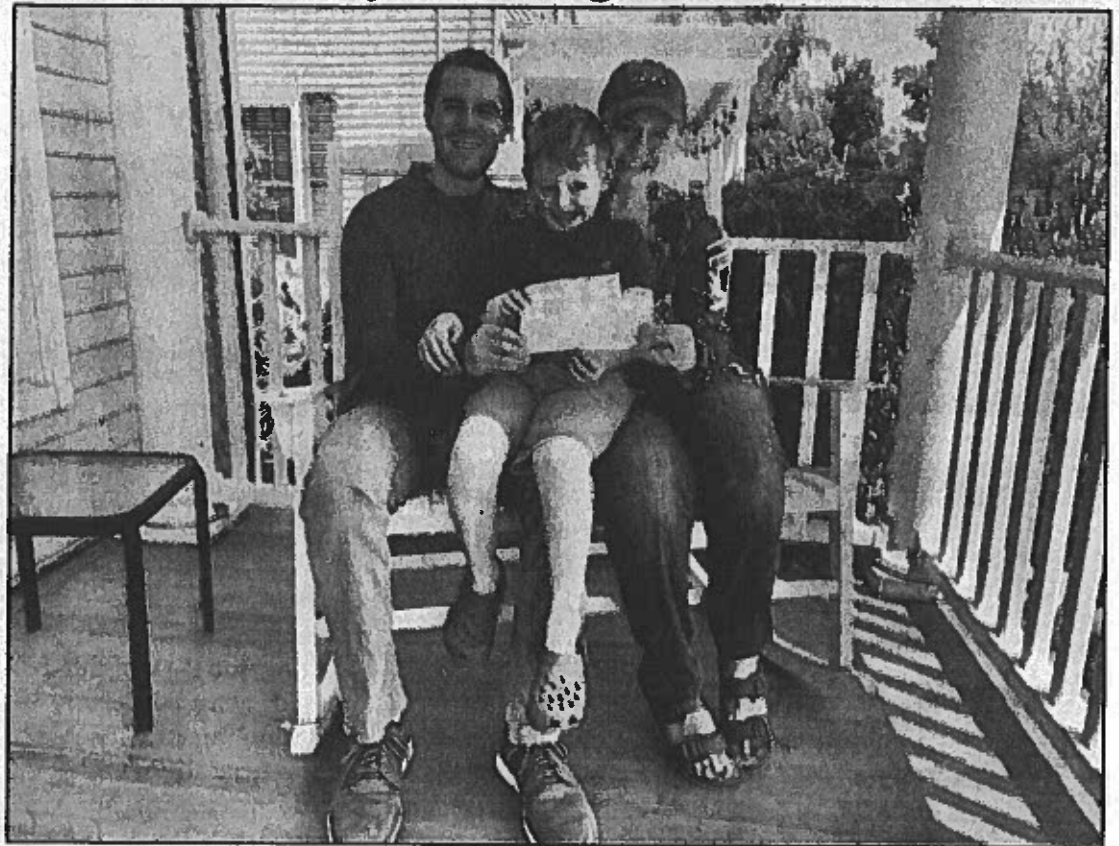
Impact Corry has announced that the next round of Renaissance Block funding will soon be available for Corry homeowners.

Renaissance Block is a home beautification grant that matches dollar for dollar up to 50% of what a homeowner invests into their home improvements. For example, if a property owner spends \$500, a \$250 reimbursement will be made.

The grant will pay up to \$5,000 per home.

In 2019, the Renaissance Block grant funds first became available through the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority. The program allowed for up to \$150,000 for Corry homes.

By early 2020, four neighborhoods had been earmarked for the grant money after an application process narrowed down where the money would go. ECGRA had created a list of criteria, which included consecutive houses wanting to participate, neighborhood organi-



Jordan Schrecengost/Contributed photo

Dominick Rodriguez, Sarah Rodriguez and 5-year-old Andy Rodriguez gather on their newly renovated front porch. The family was able to receive matching grant funds through the Renaissance Block grant program in order to complete the work on their home.

zation, effective communication between neighbors and community investment.

At that time, the cluster of homes dubbed "School

House Block" was first of the four neighborhoods to receive funds for renovations. The area is comprised of homes between Wayne Street

and North Center Street, from East Bond and East Irving Street to East Frederick Street.

◀ See Funds, P.3

Erie is Cooking Up Something New

Erie's Inclusive Growth: A Playbook for Action provides menu for \$1.1 billion of investment strategies and projects

By Ben Speggen

To better know what something is, sometimes it is best to first understand what it is not. In the case of *Erie's Inclusive Growth: A Playbook for Action*, it is important to recognize it is not another plan.

Bruce Katz and Kim Thomas are each quick to make that point to me on separate Zoom call interviews. Both are well-positioned to know what Erie's "Playbook" both is and can be. And knowing the who behind it and in front of it helps to comprehend both the *what* and the *what-comes-next*.

Katz is the founding director of the New Localism Advisors. He is the playbook's architect, along with Florian Schalliol.

Thomas has been hired to direct the investment playbook's "Nerve Center" — a distinctive feature of both the present and future of the playbook, which will provide, as the playbook notes, "day-to-day support to the entities implementing the projects of the Playbook." That is, moving forward from its announcement, there is already infrastructure in place to get identified projects moving along.

Neither Katz nor Thomas are strangers to Erie or this work.

Thomas has worked in media, government, and economic development in Erie. Before heading up the Nerve Center, she served as the director of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's northwest region office, which includes Erie and 12 other counties, for over seven years.

Katz first arrived in Erie to present at the Jefferson Educational Society's Global Summit in 2014, discussing his widely praised book "The Metropolitan Revolution," which showcased cities and their successes and the people there driving progress. Katz has remained engaged with Erie over the years, consulting on various projects and ideas, and appearing at additional Global Summits.

For years, a Katzian mantra had been: The federal government is not coming to save you. Or, in other words, towns and cities control their own destinies, and progress happens — or does not —

at the local level.

But then, COVID-19.

At the onset of the global pandemic, Katz asked me to help write an early response to the U.S. federal government's early actions — or inactions — in the wake of a once-in-a-century global crisis. First and foremost, COVID-19 was a global public health crisis. But it was also crippling businesses and creating an economic crisis. In late March 2020, we made the case for why we believed Erie's downturn was "a Proxy for the Nation," arguing that a renaissance a decade in the making ran the risk of being stunted, or, worse, undone, without purposeful immediate government intervention at the federal level — and that many other towns and cities now faced similar situations to Erie's.

The pandemic has, indeed, prompted an unprecedented flow of federal dollars. Beginning during the Trump administration and continuing into the Biden White House, the federal government is deploying trillions of dollars to communities nationwide.

Katz commonly likens the dispersing of funds to a fire hose.

But you don't flood your whole house if only the kitchen and dining room are on fire. This new playbook positions Erie to turn talk — ideas, dreams, wishes, plans — more quickly to action, and action to revitalizing results — a renaissance restored, a better Erie for all by directing the stream of dollars at specific projects.

Erie, like many places, has an archive of plans. Some drill down at the municipal level. Others are scaled to countywide and regional levels. Some are just a few years old. Others drafted decades ago still have relevance today.

Unlike other cities and towns, Erie now has a playbook. The list of those that do is short.

The New Localism Associates and the Nowak Metro Finance Lab at Drexel University, so far, have created investment playbook toolkits for the downtown of Dayton, Ohio; a health innovation corridor in El Paso; and disadvantaged commercial corridors in Buffalo, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Greensboro, N.C. Next up: the downtown of San Bernardino in the inland Empire region in Southern California.



Bruce Katz (top) and Kim Thomas (bottom) are spearheading "Erie's Inclusive Growth: A Playbook for Action," which aims to accelerate Erie's pandemic-disrupted renaissance by directing federal funding to the right projects.

"What we have in Erie is a portfolio of real projects," Katz told me. "It is tangible projects that are costed out, that can raise capital from federal programs, from the state, and from banks, from CDFIs (Community Development Financial Institutions), and from investors."

Those projects came from studying and reviewing 12 of Erie's past and current plans, and from interviewing some 50 community stakeholders. What's emerged is Erie's playbook, which serves as a "living document."

Think of this as a restaurant with a menu. Thanks to the internet and social media, most restaurants have the ability to advertise their menus to prospective diners before they decide whether to sit down. The menu lists what is served — and by extension, what is not. Diners might be able to modify some dishes — Hold the tomatoes! Add some relish! — while others might come out as-is (you can't take the chocolate out of chocolate

ice cream).

With the menu comes the ability to say more than just "we serve food." Erie, through its playbook, expresses: Here is where we will invest money, how much it will cost, why it matters, and how it stands to improve our community.

To unpack and review the entire menu/playbook is an important thing to do, but not something we will do in-depth here. The living document lives on the Nonprofit Partnership's website, and should be something anyone who cares about Erie's present circumstances and wants a say in its future should review.

Briefly reviewing Erie's menu — err, its playbook — you will find 35 projects that build on identified strengths to address identified weaknesses, focusing on specific types of investments at a total cost of \$1.1 billion. They are both cross-cutting and place-based.

Cross-cutting projects focus on county and regional investment strategies.

They focus on how to accelerate local infrastructure and quality of life investments; build new clusters of industries in plastics, recycling, advanced manufacturing, and the blue economy; and grow Erie's entrepreneurship through new businesses, especially minority-owned ones.

The place-based projects emphasize investment strategies in the downtown, the bayfront, the 12th Street corridor, and various neighborhoods in Erie's "Greater Core." The argument for targeting Erie's Greater Core is that despite accounting for just 21 percent of the land area of the city of Erie and less than 1 percent of Erie County, the "Greater Core" accounts for one-third of all income earned countywide.

To those who might say that Erie's 35 projects read like a Cheesecake Factory "everything but the kitchen sink" menu, if we're pushing the restaurant analogy as far as it might go, Katz told me "35 projects may not be enough."

To Katz, the magnitude of the moment matters. It is not every day, or every year, or even every 25 years that the federal government does what it is doing.

What it is doing: Making funds available to places. What it is not doing: Making specific plans for places that will use these funds.

"Here's the moment to rise to the occasion, build the capacity in the public and private sectors, the civic community, and get these projects done if you want your community to really have a leapfrog effect," Katz said. "So, this is really your choice."

Choice can be seen in Erie's playbook being a "living document." This is where Kim Thomas, and others, come in.

"This is a living document, because it is not every project that there currently is, or that there will be, as we continue to implement this moving forward," Thomas told me. "This was created with a bias toward action."

That action means having projects now fit to investments the federal government has already identified. But it also means, in restaurant-speak, being able to update the menu as the seasons change, and as the public has time to offer more input (maybe don't hold the tomatoes! In addition to chocolate ice cream, can we add pie?).

With Thomas directing the Nerve Center, a steering committee is overseeing the execution of the playbook

and providing guidance and oversight to local organizations implementing projects. The committee includes local government (both the county executive, Brenton Davis, and Joe Schember, the mayor of the city of Erie), the Erie Community Foundation (Karen Bilowith), the Jefferson Educational Society (Ferki Ferati), the Erie Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership (James Grunke), Erie County DEI Commission (Gary Lee), Erie Insurance (Chris Marsh), and the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority (Perry Wood).

The steering committee and Thomas are developing the third element in the playbook's structure: Delivery Teams. These teams will conduct additional research and planning for exploratory projects from the playbook. Because the work is ongoing, the community's input will breathe life into the playbook's future.

"This playbook is Erie organizing for success, it's organizing for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to bring a disproportionate amount of investment to the people who live and work here," Thomas said. "It's our time. I've asked people along the way, as we've been launching this, to believe that Erie can be successful in this, to believe that Erie can be a poster child for a positive movement. This is our opportunity. The federal government is releasing trillions of dollars. Why can't we bring a significant amount of that here like we never have before?"

If not now, when? And if not in Erie, why not?

Those questions — and which projects move forward, which new ones are added — are already playing out, and will continue to play out, in Erie. How they are answered, and when, depend on who sits down at the table. Right now, reservations are open.

And with Erie being among the first places to organize such a document, and to take action on it, other people in other places will likely look to Northwestern Pennsylvania to see that this is the model for the day. Will the Erie recipe for success be franchised? All of the key ingredients are there.

Ben Speggen can be reached at bSpeggen@ErieReader.com and you can follow him on Twitter @BenSpeggen. For the record, the author was among the stakeholders interviewed by The New Localism Associates.

Erie Community Foundation
 Catholic Foundation of NWPA
 City of God Foundation
 Mercyhurst Prep School
 Sisters of Mercy Ministry Grant



Kathryn Duda
 Maureen Dwyer
 Barbara Edwards
 Michelle Flaherty
 Pat Genung
 Skip and Dottie Glover
 Penny Hanes
 Alan Hannibal
 Jeffery Hill
 Mary Hoffman
 Gary Johnston
 Judith Krasnesky
 Lori Krasnesky

Andy and Pat letters
 Pamela Wallen Bansidhar
 Patrick Weschler
 Mary Beth Whitman
 Margaret Wiles
 John Yaggy
 Mary Zenner

Home Improvement donors

Barbara Brairton
 Fr. John Adams



Non Profit
 Organization
 US Postage
 PAID
 Erie, PA
 Permit No. 22

Current Resident
 ECGRA
 5340 Fryling Rd Suite 201
 Erie, PA 16510

A PLACE OF WELCOME HOSPITALITY FOR AN EAST SIDE ÉRIE NEIGHBORHOOD, THE HOUSE OF MERCY, ESTABLISHED AND SPONSORED BY THE SISTERS OF MERCY, PROMOTES A HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD BY PROVIDING ACTIVITIES AND ADVOCACY THAT ENGAGE CHILDREN IN POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOR THEM AND THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD.



The House of Mercy completed a \$50,000 Home Improvement Project on Prospect Ave in 21-22. It included: siding replacement, roof repair, awnings, doors, windows and porch repairs.



before and after roof repair

Map of Eastside Grassroots Coalition



Monthly Eastside Grassroots Coalition Neighborhood Meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month at the Quality of Life Learning Center. Currently we are partnering with the City of Erie on an updated plan.

Prayers and sympathy to "ESPN" who was killed on Fairmount Pkwy and Downing Ave. on April 14, 2022.

Visit the House of Mercy online for more information!

WWW.HOUSEOFMERCYERIE.ORG
[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/HOUSEOFMERCYERIE/](https://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/HOUSEOFMERCYERIE/)