Executive Director’s Report
For
July 2019
Ridge Policy Group Activity
ECGRA June 15 – July 15 Report

Funding Received by Erie County

- City of Erie and Erie Innovation District will receive $500,000 from ARC POWER pending their response to resolve several questions that ARC has about the application. This news is not yet officially public. Ridge Policy Group helped to socialize the ARC POWER application beginning last year, including by scheduling meetings in DC with ARC officials, the relevant authorizer of the awards, Karen Fabiano. We also helped Karl complete his feasibility documents through engagement with ARC and with the initial drafting of the grant application, including by finding the data to support that Erie is a coal impacted community, which is a requirement for the ARC POWER application.

- Erie Innovation District was approved for a $2 million-dollar construction grant from EDA to build their Smart Tower and build up capacity. This news is also not yet officially public. RPG helped to socialize this grant with EDA by introducing EID to EDA’s regional program director and garnering a better understanding of EDA funding priorities.

RPG Relevant Meetings and Calls

- Held meetings with appropriate state officials with and on behalf of Mercyhurst University and the Innovation District in support of their budget requests and RACP applications

RPG Relevant Activity

- Provided ARC County Economic Status Designations for Erie
- Helped socialize and support Edinboro’s DCED Manufacturing Training to Career Grant
- Held conversations with Bridgewater Capital on SBA Makerspace Grant

Funding Opportunities Presented

**Federal Opportunities:**

**ARC Grant**

This week, the U.S. Department of Labor announced $29 million is now available via the Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities (WORC) initiative to implement innovative approaches to provide enhanced training and support activities to dislocated workers, new entrants in the workforce, incumbent workers, and individuals affected by substance use disorder returning to work. Successful awards, ranging from $150,000 - $2.5 million, will support workforce development activities that prepare eligible participants for good jobs in high-demand occupations aligned with a state, regional, or community economic development strategy. Communities across Appalachia, especially those underserved by other resources, are encouraged to apply.
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: NICK SAMSEL 814.651.0704
JUNE 28, 2019

MEDIA ADVISORY
ERIE INNOVATION DISTRICT TO ANNOUNCE
2019 SECURE ERIE ACCELERATOR COHORT

WHAT: The Erie Innovation District will introduce the companies of the 2019 Secure Erie Accelerator cohort. This event will provide background on each of the companies, an outline of the programming and events during this 10-week initiative, and recognize our current business partners and sponsors, including Erie Insurance and Plastek Group.

WHEN: Tuesday, July 2nd beginning at 2 p.m. Light refreshments will be provided.

WHERE: VNET Headquarters - 121 West 10th St., Erie PA 16501

WHO: Interviews will be available before and after the event:

Karl Sanchack, President & CEO of Erie Innovation District
Rebecca Styn, VP of Ventures, Erie Innovation District
Jordan Fuller, SEA Program Manager, Erie Innovation District
2019 Secure Erie Accelerator Cohort
Other elected officials and business leaders

Launched in 2016, the Erie Innovation District is a non-profit organization created to reshape Erie and promote economic growth; integrate academia, industry and government, and attract startups and workforce candidates. Our vision is to create a place-based urban development initiative that transforms Erie into a safety and (cyber) security innovation hub that attracts new businesses, jobs, and venture investment. Find out more at: www.ericinnovationdistrict.com

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From: Mark Peterson <kchamberlain@bridgewaycapital.org>
Sent: Wednesday, June 19, 2019 1:00 PM
To: Tammi Michali
Subject: Our Impact with People and Places in Erie

Kenya and Sean Johnson, Johnson Real Estate Properties
Erie Shared Impact

On May 15th Bridgeway celebrated the 7th anniversary of our Erie office. We brought together over 100 of Bridgeway’s clients and partners to celebrate our shared impact. The event recognized the success of our clients and the significance of Bridgeway’s growth in Erie.

Clients Making a Difference

Investing in Erie’s people and places builds the path to community revitalization. Our clients build vibrant business corridors and advance equity through real estate development.

Bridgeway helped Kenya and Sean Johnson acquire real estate for their child care business, Learning Ladder. As the Johnson’s real estate business grew so did our relationship. The Johnson’s are building their business and a better community.

Ember + Forge is sparking community revitalization in downtown Erie. For Hannah, Ember + Forge is about more than coffee. The coffee shop is about rekindling Erie’s commitment to community and supporting local entrepreneurship.
Investing in Impact

Since opening our Erie office in 2012, Bridgeway has invested over $20.5 million in people and places in northwestern Pennsylvania. We generate high social impact while we maintain strong financial performance. This past year, we made $2.2 million in loans and our loan loss rate was 0.6%.

Our clients' success inspired us to do more. In partnership with the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority, we launched two new programs that invests in Erie’s entrepreneurs; the Erie Inclusive Fund and Erie Minority-Owned Business Accelerator. The fund will invest $5 million in loans in Erie County over the next three years; with a commitment to invest half in minority-owned businesses.

The Erie Inclusive Fund fuels inclusive economic growth, while the accelerator offers a support system to maximize the success of growing minority-owned businesses. Together, they create a strong ecosystem for minority entrepreneurship in Erie.

ERIE OFFICE

$ 20.5 MM since 2012
$ 2.2 MM in 2018
$ 5 MM over the next 3 years

0.6% 2018 loss rate
Event Highlights

Over 100 of Bridgewater's clients and partners celebrated our shared impact at the Warner Theater in downtown Erie.
Our mailing address is:
Bridgeway Capital
707 Grant St Ste ‘920
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1945

Add us to your address book
Multi-municipal grant enables Corry, Wayne Township to purchase truck

BY SARAH JUNGER
sarah@mycorryjournal.com

A bucket truck was recently purchased with a multi-municipal grant for the city of Corry and Wayne Township. The truck cost $11,900, according to City Manager Jason Bieni.

In July 2019, a multi-municipal grant was approved through a collaboration between Corry and Wayne Township to purchase a bucket truck. Erie County Gaming Reinvestment Authority provided $11,900, and the Tri-County Council in Viciniti provided $1,000 in matching funds.

The bucket truck, which is a work truck with an attached aerial lift, was purchased to help people with the air to work, as to be shared by Corry and Wayne Township.

It was found at Albir Industries in Birmingham, Alabama, a used and new equipment company for utility, telecommunications, tree and construction markets. Corry Public Works Department Lead Operator Mark Lentzky and City Mechanic Clayton Reepsey were sent down to look over the truck.

A 2013 Ford F650 with an 80’ bucket, which can go up to 42 feet high, Lentzky said. The truck is a powerstroke diesel with about 60,000 miles on it, Lentzky added.

Travel expenses for Lentzky and Reepsey to fly down and inspect the truck were $2,360.33 and were reimbursed by the Tri-County COG. City Manager Bieni said.

Albire Industries included the expense in their purchase price, Leninzky said. See Truck, P2

A multi-municipal grant attained in 2019 by the city of Corry and Wayne Township to purchase a bucket truck has resulted in a recent purchase of a 2013 Ford F650. The truck was purchased for $11,900 from Albire Industries in Birmingham, Alabama. Standing behind the truck is Corry City Mechanic Clayton Reepsey during an initial inspection of the vehicle in Birmingham.

UNION CITY — A team of historical and architectural consultants is taking a look at downtown Union City with an eye toward preserving and improving the Main Street corridor.

They’re also looking at ways to improve public spaces downtown. The consultants are expected to recommend a plan of action to Union City Borough officials by November.

The public is invited to learn more about the historic preservation planning project and share ideas to improve the downtown during a public meeting at Union City American Legion post on June 27.

A draft historic preservation plan will be presented at a second public meeting later this summer.

The preservation plan is intended to outline potential improvements for 19 commercial buildings between High Street and Concord Street. Buildings to be considered have not been determined, Union City Borough Secretary Cindy Wells said.

“We’re figuring, financially, that it’s the number of buildings we can consider,” Wells said. “The 19 buildings have not been selected yet.”

The historic preservation plan will also look at streetscape improvements, and maybe a theme to unify the facade improvements.

“We already have lighting and benches. It might be something else to tie in all of the projects,” Wells said.

The consulting team includes preservation specialists from Pittsburgh-based citySTUDIO, TKB Planning and Milton Ogul Architecture.

The firms were hired by the borough this spring.

The American Legion post is at 0225 Route 6. The June 27 public meeting will start at 6 p.m. RSVPs are requested by June 21 at 438-3331 or secretary@unioncitypa.us.

Valerie Myers can be reached at 766-1931 or by email, or follow her on Twitter at www.twitter.com/ETMyers.
Girard Borough receives grant for master plan

By Sandy Rhodes
Editor, FLAG area

Girard Borough is on its way to implement a master plan that will serve its downtown for years to come.

The borough was recently awarded a $20,000 Keystone Historic Preservation Planning Grant.

"The economic vitality of Girard is dependent on a vibrant and well-maintained downtown. To that end, the borough applied for and was awarded $20,000 to develop a downtown master plan for its central business district that integrates historic preservation principles and strategies throughout," said Melinda Meyer, president of Preservation Erie. "The plan will identify specific goals and objectives, and provide realistic implementation strategies that will achieve a very basic and fundamental vision for downtown Girard, rooted in the desire to attract people and investment."

The grant, which is from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, requires a 1:1 cash match.

"Girard Borough Council has committed $10,000 of the borough's funds to support this effort, and the Girard Downtown Committee is currently pursuing the remaining $10,000 needed for the project," Meyer said.

The group is hopeful to develop the downtown master plan next year with the plan coming to fruition in January 2021.

Meyer said a downtown master plan is an important part of the group's plan to develop the downtown area.

"The downtown master plan will be important because it will be proactive and outline a cooperative process that can lead to successful implementation of many community needs and wishes," Meyer said. "This type of plan will also permit the opportunity for the community to take a comprehensive look at a variety of projects being planned by multiple stakeholders and help potential partnerships, investment opportunities, and coordinated implementation efforts to emerge."

In July 2018, Girard received $21,000 from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority's Mission Main Street grant program that was, in turn, distributed to five property owners to make facade improvements.

Regarding this current grant, Girard's funds were part of the Commission's $2.5 million grant given to historical and heritage organizations, museums and local governments.

The commission awarded 57 grants selected from 96 eligible applications. Grant amounts ranged from $5,000 to $25,000 for project grants and $5,000 to $100,000 for construction projects.

"These grants make an enormous difference to communities across Pennsylvania," said PHMC Executive Director Andrea Lowery. "They assist townships and municipalities in revitalization and development efforts, providing funding for vibrant use of historic buildings within their communities. We are thrilled to provide increased funding to more than $2.5 million this year, supporting 57 projects, including several in distressed cities."

Keystone Historic Preservation Grants provide funding to support projects that identify, preserve, promote and protect historic and archaeological resources in Pennsylvania for both the benefit of the public and the revitalization of communities. Funding also supports municipal planning initiatives that focus on historic resources or may be used to meet building or community specific planning goals. The program also supports construction activities at resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

These grants receive funding from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund. This fund is supported annually from a portion of the state realty tax revenue.
Coming soon

Workers are renovating a 1,275-square-foot area at Presque Isle Downs & Casino in Summit Township, shown here on June 13. The area, which once housed slot machines, will become the casino’s new sportsbook betting area. The state gaming commission has licensed the casino for a sportsbook, but casino officials have said when it will be operational.

Presque Isle Downs’ sportsbook plans advance

By Matthew Klink

In a non-smoking section on the third floor of Presque Isle Downs & Casino, workers from Bauer Specialties have been renovating a 1,275-square-foot area for the casino’s new sportsbook. The area will feature a new sportsbook, which is expected to be operational soon.

The new sportsbook will feature a variety of betting options, including football, basketball, hockey, baseball, tennis, and more. The area will also have a large video display showing live game action.

Casino officials have said that the sportsbook will be a popular destination for fans of all ages. "We are excited to offer our guests a new and unique way to enjoy live sports," said a spokesperson. "We believe this will be a great addition to our casino and will attract even more visitors to Presque Isle Downs & Casino."
City’s Historic Preservation Plan process

BY JORDAN SCHRECENGOST
jordan@thecorryjournal.com

UNION CITY
Members of the Union City community are invited to learn about the borough’s Historic Preservation Plan as well as share their ideas and goals for UC’s commercial historic district at a meeting next week.

The borough of Union City is hosting its first public meeting to introduce and gather input for a Historic Preservation Plan being developed for the UC’s commercial historic district.

The public meeting will take place at 6 p.m. on Thursday, June 27, at the American Legion LeBaron Post 237, 9225 Route 6, Union City. Everyone with interest in preserving and improving the commercial historic district is encouraged to attend.

Anyone planning to attend is asked to RSVP by emailing secretary@ucborough.us or calling the borough office at 814-438-2331 by Friday, June 21.

Union City Borough Secretary Cindy Wells said people can still attend the meeting even if they don’t RSVP, but she added that they need to have an idea of how many people plan on coming.

The Historic Preservation Plan process will begin by studying the conditions of Union City’s commercial historic district, which is a 0.2-mile portion of Main Street between Concord and High streets. The planning process will also begin by gathering feedback from community members, elected officials and business and property owners.

“It’s going to help improve the appearance of our downtown,” Wells said of the plan. “It’s also going to help draw in potential tourism and, at the same time, develop interest from other businesses.”

The study will examine facades of the majority of the historic commercial buildings within the study area and the streetscape. The meeting invites the public at large to learn about the planning process and provide a consultant team with ideas regarding the historic main street.

The borough has hired a consultant team from Pittsburgh — citySTUDIO, T&B Planning and Milton Otgo Architect. The team has combined experience in preservation planning, as well as historic building preservation and rehabilitation.

“They’re all working on the same project as a team, all three companies,” Wells said. “They’re doing mini facade plans and a streetscape plan.”

Partial funding for the Union City Historic Preservation Plan comes from a $25,000 Keystone Historic Preservation Grant from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

A public meeting regarding a Historic Preservation Plan for Union City has been scheduled for 6 p.m. on Thursday, June 27, at the American Legion LeBaron Post 237, 9225 Route 6, Union City. The plan aims to improve a portion of Main Street.

Contributed photo

Additional funding was provided by the Corry County Economic Development Authority (ECRA), the Union City Community Foundation (UCCF) and the borough of Union City. RCCRA provided $10,000, UCCF gave $13,000 and the borough paid $12,000.

June’s meeting will be the first in a series of meetings within the next few months. The second meeting will seek to gather feedback on a draft of the Historic Preservation Plan. The planning process will end this fall with strategies for the public spaces and streetscape of the study area and proposed improvements for each facade reviewed in the study.

“They’re going to start working on the plans and then they’re going to come back and talk to us again,” Wells said. “The final plans won’t be done until November.”

The plan’s goal is to provide design and development guidance for the borough and to determine how to distribute grants and assist business and property owners in determining building repairs for each of the studied building facades.

“We’re going to have the Plan (Continued from front page)

- The Corry Journal, Tuesday, June 18, 2019

- The Corry Journal, Tuesday, June 18, 2019
Corry arts council fires up Fourth of July festivities

BY JORDAN SCHRECEHOOST
jordan@thecorryjournal.com

"Corryites won't have to travel far to enjoy some good, old-fashioned entertainment this Fourth of July," said Garrett Culver, Corry Area Arts Council secretary. "A good number of people probably have that day off from work so we decided to make it an all-day festival.

The live performances in city park gazebo will kick off at 1 p.m. with music from Bill Beeg and the Dixie Doodlers. Kokomo Time Band will take the stage at 3 p.m. followed by Happy Days at 6 p.m. Culver said Happy Days is a Thursday in the Park fan favorite and people are excited for the band to return to Corry.

Fourth of July festivities will continue with fireworks at the Corry American Legion at 9 p.m. Culver said people can park at the soccer fields near the American Legion, the nearby industrial park or the Legion itself. "It’s a whole day of music and events," he said. "If you have to work on the fifth, then you don’t have to worry about the fourth."

There will be vendors and food trucks set up at city park during the day, including Krane's, Phat Sam’s Gypsy Kitchens, and others. Interested vendors can still sign up by contacting Steve Nichols at Cobblestone Inn and Suites or emailing the arts council at corryarts@comcast.net.

Festival goers can also bring their own food and beverages from the park. "We’re trying to be fair and enjoy the live music and the atmosphere," he added.

The Old Fashioned Fourth of July Festival is a part of the arts council's regular Thursday in the Park concert series which is sponsored by Corry Community Foundation and Erie Arts and Culture.

Corry Community Foundation stepped up big, they bought us a new stage to put on a bigger performance," Culver said. Funding for Erie Arts and Culture has helped the arts council with Thursday in the Park and the upcoming festival, according to Culver. The arts council also manages a number of grants and sponsorships sponsored by the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority.

"We’re still able to provide us with the needed money to ensure we can offer grants to artists and organizations," Culver said.

Corry sends 2020 Census match

BY SARA JUKES
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A $1,000 match was approved by Corry City Council at a recent Council meeting to send to the Erie Area Council of Governments 2020 Census Outreach Coordination Project.

Govenment officials take a residential count very seriously, since census data is used to determine what funding is needed for planning the future of communities.

The first census was taken starting on Aug. 2, 1790. From that point, a census has been taken every ten years to count the number of people in each household. In 1840, an amendment added inquiries of “the pursuits, industry, education, and resources of the country,” as well as school attendance, literacy and occupation, according to www.census.gov.

An accurate census count correlates to the number of representatives each community has in the government and can influence grant amounts received.

In an effort to achieve a more complete census count, Erie County is forming a 2020 Census steering committee called the Erie County Complete Count Committee.

To fund the 2020 Census related marketing and a contracted outreach coordinator, $100,000 grant is being sought from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority.

The grant requires $50,000 in matching funds.

The city of Corry is being asked to provide $25,000 and the 37 municipalities in Erie County are being asked for contributions to complete the match.

The requested amount for each municipality is based on population size.

With Corry falling between the 5,000 to 10,000 resident mark at about 6,000 residents, a $1,000 match amount was requested.

"That's our contribution for the Census match, based on population," City Manager Jason Biondi. "I think that's a reasonable amount to contribute to it to try to make sure we get as accurate census information as we can.

The vote to approve sending the match was unanimous.
WINDOW ON PROGRESS

When Tannenbaum founded PACA in 2011, he unveiled an ambitions 10-year plan. His goals for the building’s fourth floor include construction of an archery range, new studio and storage space, and additional rehearsal space.

Tannenbaum envisions building 1 is condominiums on the fifth floor, each about 700 square feet, to be rented to artists already working in the building or to “anybody who wants to live downtown.”

Some of the 11 tenants who have space in the PACA building include First Amendment Tees, ClaySpace, Attic Rehab, and PACA theater.

“We want to be partners where you see other people working hard, fixing up their buildings and making changes downtown and adding new opportunities for so many people,” Tannenbaum said.

“Whether it’s in the technology field, the art field, the business field, or entrepreneurial, everybody is working in the same direction. In my opinion, this is the first time in my lifetime that I’m seeing all of the arts in the water all working in the same direction, PACA wants to be a proud player.”

By mid-July, Tannenbaum expects the restored beveled, leaded glass window will be placed in this black marble area in the west facade of the PACA building.

“PACA officials initially thought about painting the frame white. "I think it was a wise choice going to mahogany and the fact that we went with clear varnish instead of painting it white," Rinpa said. "Instead it was going to be white, but as the project kept going along, I sent Mark some test pictures of the frame and he thought the mahogany was gorgeous and he said, ‘No way are we painting it white.’"

Tannenbaum, a native of Erie, said he wants the PACA building to look beautiful and offer the community something unique that no one else does. "We are looking at our position in the community and in the arts community, and we are here to serve," he said. "We want Erie to look nice, we want this redevelopment that’s happening in our community and the rejuvenation of our community to be successful."

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See WINDOW, A5

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See WINDOW, A5
Countywide Summer JAM Program gives students work opportunities in Corry

BY SARA JUKES
sara@thecorryjournal.com

The city of Corry has four young people participating from an Erie Summer Jobs and More program that makes work experience possible for participants ages 16-21.

Summer JAM is a summer job program that aims to employ young Erie County residents who come from low- to middle-income families. JAM is administered by the Greater Erie Community Action Committee, and is a collaboration between Erie County government, the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority and the Erie Community Foundation.

Working in Corry this year are four participants, two from the Union City Area School District and two from the Corry Area School District, City Manager Jason Biondi said.

The workers are paid through the program and no city money is spent on wages, Biondi said.

This year, the students will be given jobs at North Hills Municipal Golf Course, Corry Community Center and Corry Public Works Department, Biondi said.

"We're very thankful to have them; they've been an immense help," said Steve Bailey, director of golf at North Hills Municipal Golf Course, who has been working with the four teens this week. "They're doing a good job for us."

They are given work such as mowing, weed eating, painting, cleaning equipment at the golf course. They also assist during the Summer Recreation Program for kids at the Corry Community Center, Biondi said.

Keri Fink, operation manager of the Corry Community Center and executive director of the Summer Recreation Program, has worked with two of the teens, giving them tasks such as cleaning.

"The program is positive for the community and gives the youth that participate experience with marketable skills," Fink said.

Each employer in the countywide program manages its own positions, but whatever position the youths are given, each one is limited to working up to 180 hours from June to August. All students are paid bi-weekly and earn $7.25 an hour.

The program started with a weeklong orientation at Gannon University in Erie.

Students interested in participating or employers looking to hire may contact Ben Wilson at bwilson@gecac.org or 814-459-4581, ext 413.