



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

**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR'S
REPORT
FOR
OCTOBER
2025**

Tammi Michali

From: RV, BFM Gaming <RA-BFM-Gaming@pa.gov>
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2025 1:14 PM
To: plichtenwalter@eriecountypa.gov; Ryan, Patrick
Cc: Perry Wood; Tammi Michali
Subject: Local Share Assessment Payment Notification - Erie County

External Sender - From: ("RV, BFM Gaming" <RA-BFM-Gaming@pa.gov>)

[Learn More](#)

This message came from outside your organization.

The blocked invoice was released yesterday.

In accordance with the Pennsylvania Race Horse Development and Gaming Act 42 of 2017, the Department is required to distribute quarterly the Local Share Assessment collected for interactive gaming and slots to the municipalities in which a licensed gaming entity is located. This distribution is based on the interactive gaming and slots local share assessment amount collected plus the slot machine license operation fee amount collected over Summit Township's budget limitation.

Erie County: **\$2,650,846.57**

Land Bank Jurisdiction: \$382,649.56

An ACH for the **2nd quarter of 2025** payment in the amount of \$3,033,496.13 should be deposited in your bank account within 10 – 14 business days. This payment includes the slots local share assessment of \$453,081.65 and the slot machine license operation fee of \$2,500,000.00. and the interactive gaming portion of \$80,414.48. Any reductions to the Gross Interactive Gaming Revenue (GIGR) and Gross Terminal Revenue (GTR) for promotional items is the result of the Gaming Bulletin 2015-01 and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's April 28, 2014 decision in Greenwood Gaming and Entertainment Incorporated v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Revenue (90 A.3d 699 (Pa. 2014)).

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you.

Jennifer Heckert | Division Chief
PA Department of Revenue
Bureau of Fiscal Management | Gaming Division
1147 Strawberry Square | Harrisburg PA 17128
Phone: 717.346.4004 | Fax: 717.787.6738
E-mail: jeheckert@pa.gov
www.revenue.pa.gov

ERIE COUNTY
 $2,650,846.57 \times .55 = 1,457,965.61$

ECGRA
 $2,650,846.57 \times .45 = 1,192,880.96$

Our mission is to fairly, efficiently and accurately administer Pennsylvania tax and Lottery programs.



ECGRA Communications Services Report

SEPTEMBER 2025

Meeting with Executive Director

Ongoing Social Media Management

Ongoing Consulting

IMPLEMENTED

PHOTOGRAPHY

- North East Wine Fest
- Goodell Gardens Harvest Festival
- Infinite Erie Momentum Event
- Lake Erie Lit Festival
- Albion Area Fair
- Edinboro Highland Games
- Pedal for Mercy
- Film Erie Partner Content

GRAPHICS

- Annual Report Quote Graphics x3
- Holidays
- Parks Fields and Trails grant opening

NEWSLETTER

- Bi-Monthly recap

RELEASE

- Parks Fields and Trails grant opening

IN PROGRESS

[AWAITING APPROVAL] WEBSITE

CONTRACT

SCOPE

AUDIT

SURVEY





ECGRA Communications Services Report

MISSION MAIN STREET RELEASE

CORRY RB PRESS CONFERENCE & RELEASE

SARAH REED ANCHOR BUILDING PRESS CONFERENCE & RELEASE



INFINITE ERIE PLAYBOOK: BE A PART OF ERIE'S FUTURE



Infinite Erie strengthens Erie's community and economic development system by identifying, cultivating, and prioritizing the projects and initiatives in the Playbook.

The **Playbook** is a living roadmap, outlining a pipeline of projects and aligning efforts toward shared goals – a dynamic strategy to continuously move Erie toward the infinite horizon.

PROJECT PORTFOLIOS



Neighborhoods and Main Streets



Anchor Investments in the Greater Core



Industry Clusters and Infrastructure



Inclusive Entrepreneurship

The **Playbook** will be published annually, establishing priority projects and sharing progress updates with the community. Infinite Erie provides resources and expertise to guide the implementation of the Playbook.

We help develop and champion Erie's shared agenda.

Find out if your project is ready!

Convener, Catalyst, Champion



AGENDA

- **INTRODUCTION**
 - TIM NECASTRO, ERIE INSURANCE PRESIDENT AND CEO
 - KIM THOMAS, INFINITE ERIE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- **2025 UPDATES**
 - INFINITE ERIE HOUSING PROGRESS & UPDATES
 - DIVERSE ERIE
 - ERIE COUNTY GAMING REVENUE AUTHORITY (ECGRA)
 - ERIE REGIONAL CHAMBER AND GROWTH PARTNERSHIP (ERCGP)
 - ERIE CITY REVITALIZATION AND IMPROVEMENT ZONE (CRIZ) AUTHORITY
 - ERIE COUNTY REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (ECRDA)
- **INFINITE ERIE UPDATES**
- **DISCUSSION**
- **CLOSE**



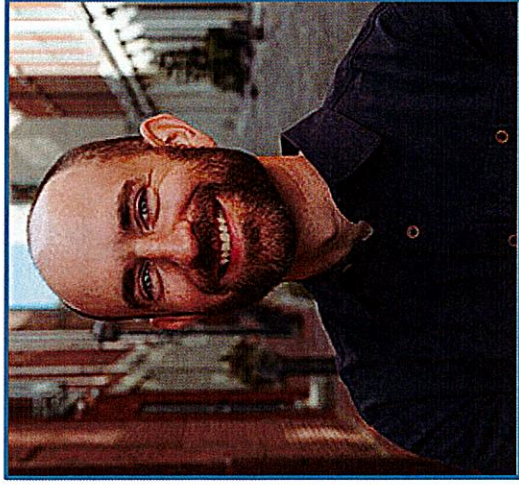
WHAT IS OUR ROLE?

Convener, Catalyst, Champion

Infinite Erie strengthens Erie's community and economic development system by identifying, cultivating, and prioritizing the projects and initiatives in the Playbook.

We help develop and champion Erie's shared agenda.

HOUSING ACCELERATOR



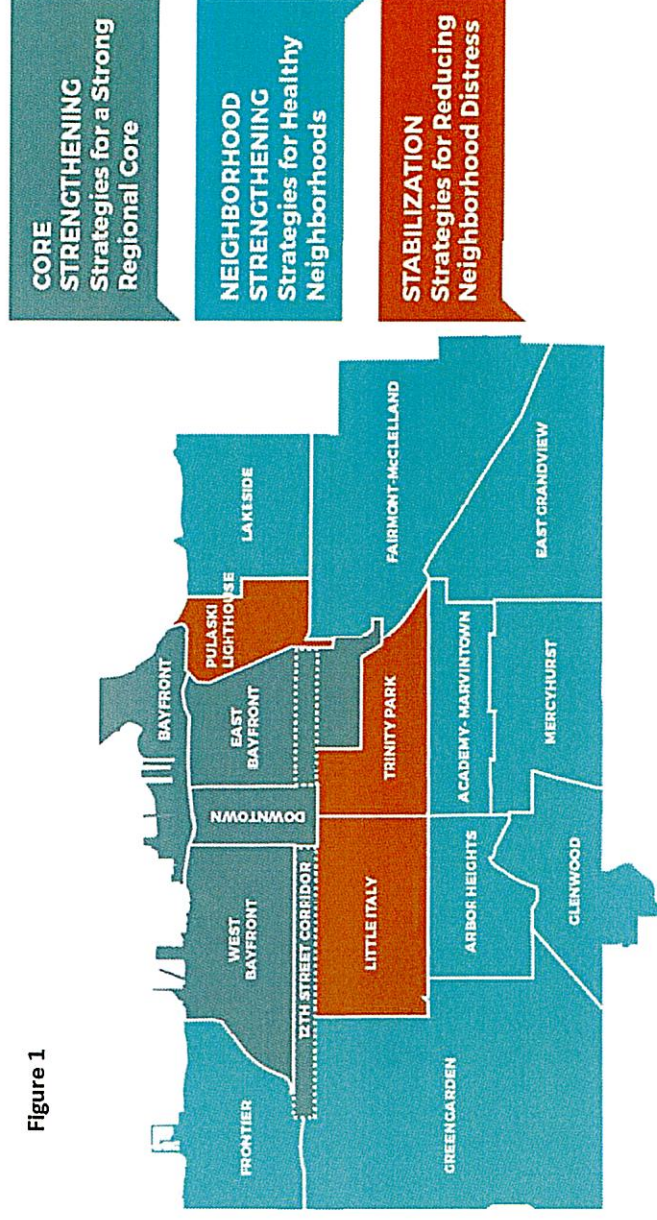
Wyatt Schroeder
Infinite Erie, Housing Director



OUR "WHY"

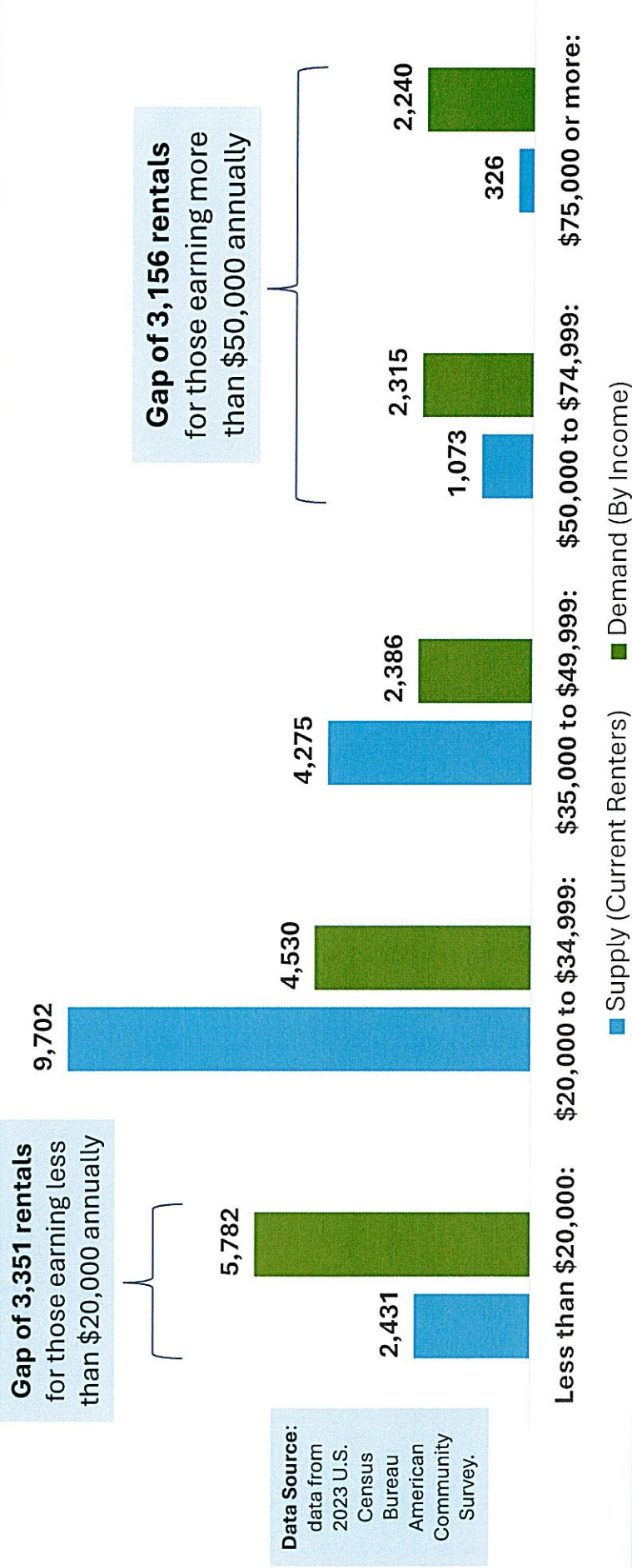
- Understand the current housing need
- It's not enough to remove blight
 - We demoed over **200 parcels**
 - We built **84 new units** from 2011-2023
- Our goals:
 - We must replace blight with stable housing and productive blocks
 - Stabilize neighborhoods and make a visible street-level change
- Develop a **concrete and focused action framework** to guide investment and development over the next decade.

Figure 1



Erie has a 6,000-unit Shortage of Deeply Affordable and Workforce Rentals

Comparing what people are paying for rent (**supply**) vs. what they should be paying (**demand**) if they paid only 30% of their income to rent.



Erie is Behind on Housing Development

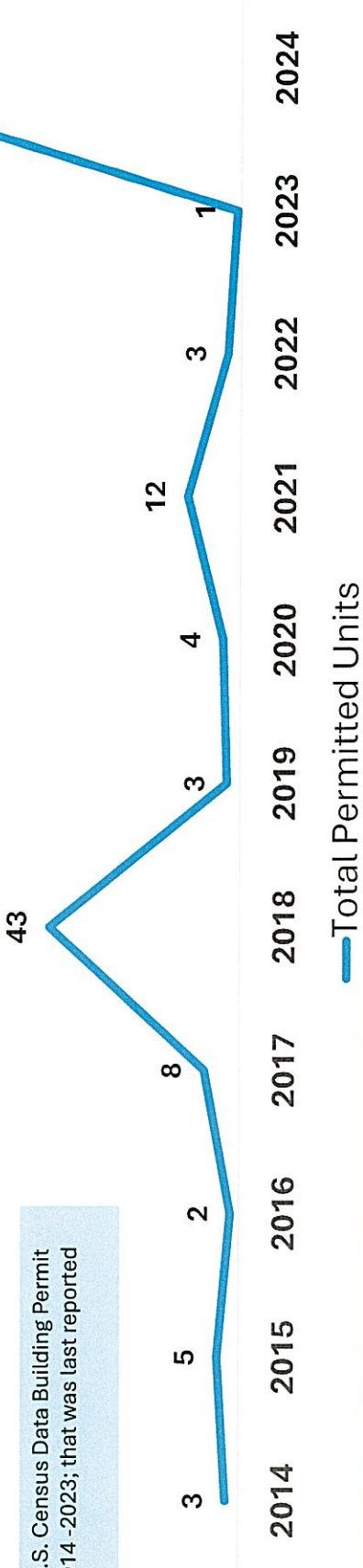
In the decade from 2014-2023, the City:

- > 210 parcels demolished blight
- 84 new units created

13% multifamily units
87% single-family homes

Source: U.S. Census Data Building Permit Survey (2014 -2023; that was last reported year)

NOTE: EDDC developed 104 rental units in 2024





INFINITE ERIE HOUSING ACCELERATOR

In 5 years, build and preserve:

250 units of affordable & workforce housing

1) Build

Goal	250 units
Build/rehab 200 affordable or workforce units	
Build 50 permanent supportive housing units	
Increase Black homeownership rates	
Facilitate Housing Accelerator Workgroup	

2) Fund

Fundraise	\$26,000,000
Launch Infinite Erie Housing Accelerator Fund	
Braid the \$26M gap needed to fund 250 units	
Facilitate Housing Investment Workgroup	

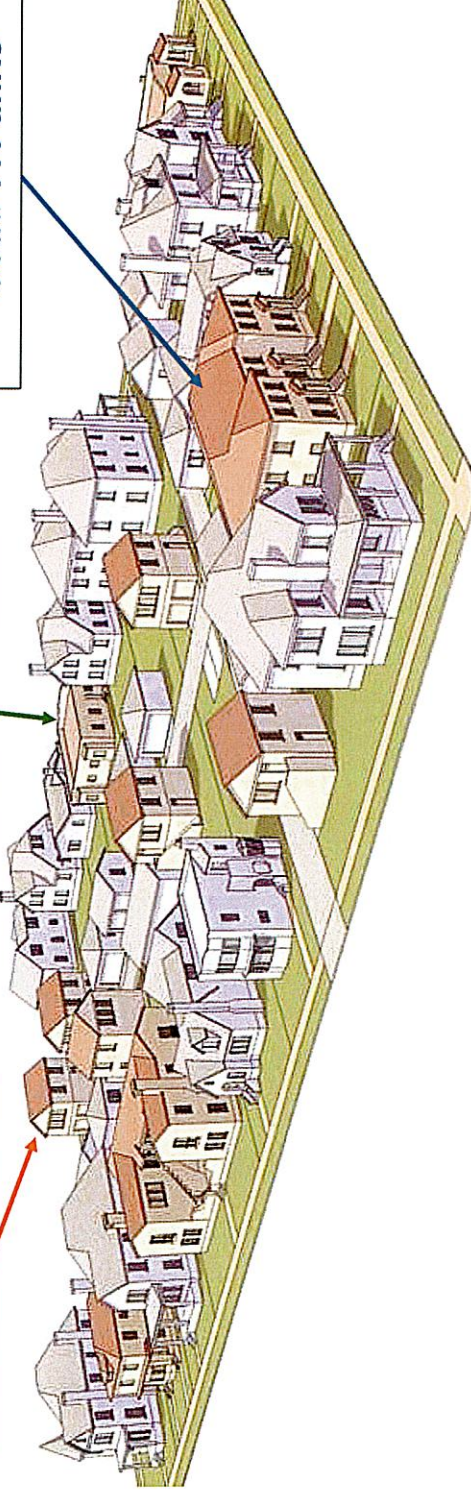
Units located in priority neighborhood clusters

PATH TO 250

1) CDC Model
Rehabbing single-family homes or duplexes.
Targeting homeownership
Goal: 40 units

2) Missing Middle
Live-Work space; Mixed-use; Buildings of 4-20 unit communities
Goal: 100 units

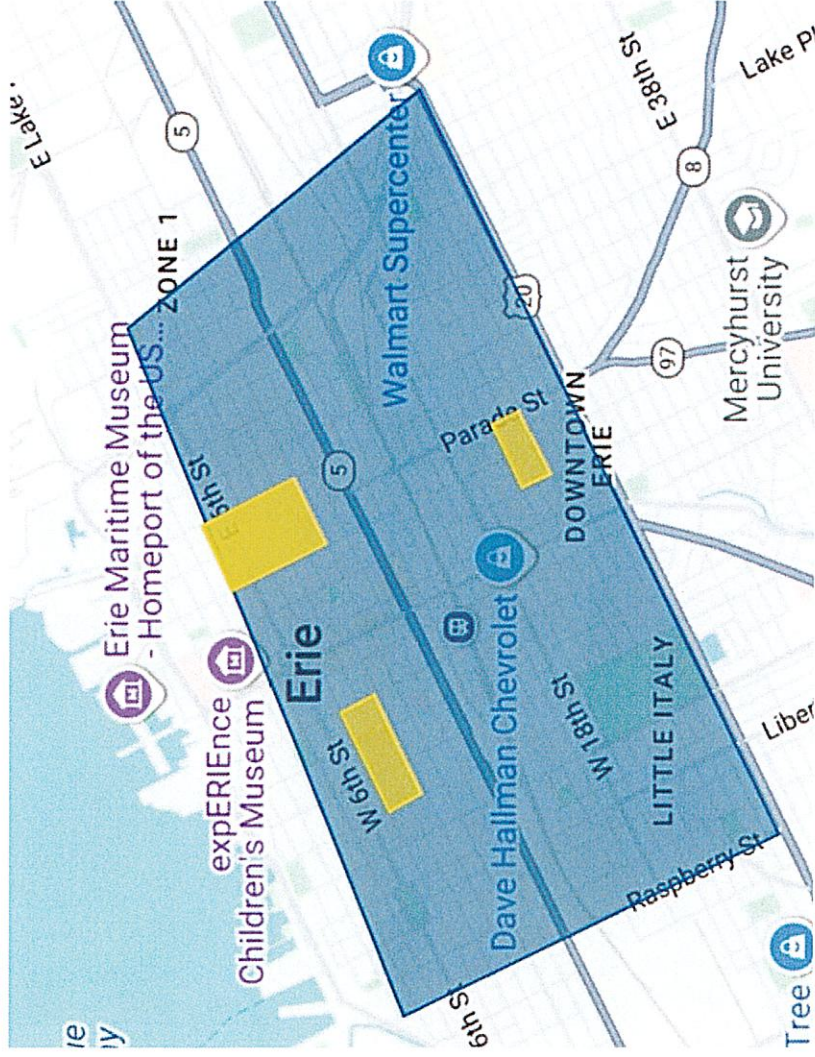
3) Multifamily Building using Tax Credits
Live-Work space; Mixed-use; Buildings of 4-20 unit communities
Goal: 110 units



All working together for 'infill development' where we filling the missing teeth on a street, making an intact block.

Visible community development.

THE "WHERE"

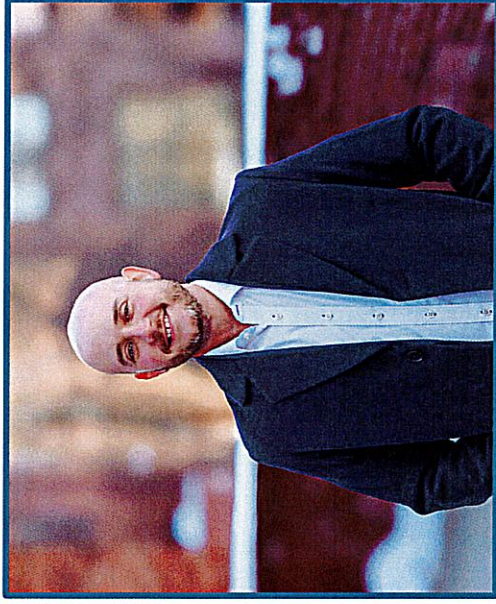


Infinite Erie Focus Area –
Core Neighborhoods
surrounding downtown

Priority Clusters – Identify
focused blocks for
community development
concentration

Priority Projects – Work
with you to identify projects
within clusters.

MOMENTUM FORUM



Perry Wood
Executive Director, ECGRA

Multi-year Projects for 2025-2027

- ▶ Childcare Initiative: Erie County Investing in Families
- ▶ Inclusive Entrepreneurship
- ▶ Innovation-based Economic Development
 - ▶ Beehives (10-year milestone)
 - ▶ First Ascent Biomedical & Workforce Center at I-HACK
 - ▶ Center for Competitive Manufacturing
 - ▶ Venture Studio

Childcare Access & Workforce Retention

Access to affordable, quality
childcare is tied to economic
mobility

Post Pandemic context

Jefferson Educational Society Studies
(Gould, Irwin, LaVette, Harkins)

2 Grants Awarded:

58 Providers awarded just under \$1
million in workforce retention awards
serving 3,000 children (May)

28 Providers awarded just over \$1 million
to ensure 1,524 (848/676) slots through
startups & expansion (Aug)

Inclusive Entrepreneurship

NexGen
Innovation
Accelerator
@Ben Franklin

Equipping
Entrepreneurs
@BWC

Small Business
Cooperative
@Corry Higher
Ed

Food Forward
Initiative @EDDC

New Wall Street
Ventures @Erie's
Black Wall
Street

Refugee &
Immigrant Micro
Loans @USCRI

Innovation- based Economic Development

Beehives (3-year grant) - open application

First Assent Biomedical Workforce Center
@Gannon University I-HACK

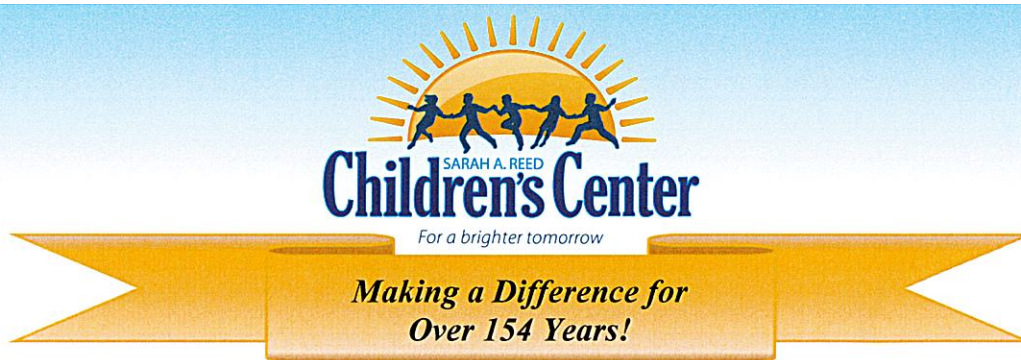
Studio 26 Mercyhurst University Venture
Studio

Center for Competitive Manufacturing @Penn
State Behrend

Est Investment: \$2.4 million 2025-2027

2026 ECGRA Funding Plan

- ▶ Special Events Grant January - March
- ▶ Renaissance Block Program February - September
- ▶ Arts, Culture, & Heritage February - May
- ▶ Mission Main Street April - July
- ▶ Anchor Building Program May - August
- ▶ Parks, Fields, & Trails August - October
- ▶ Community Centers September - December
- ▶ Multi-Municipal Collaboration Program - rolling



September 23, 2025

*Thank you for making a difference for our
children and families at Sarah Reed!*

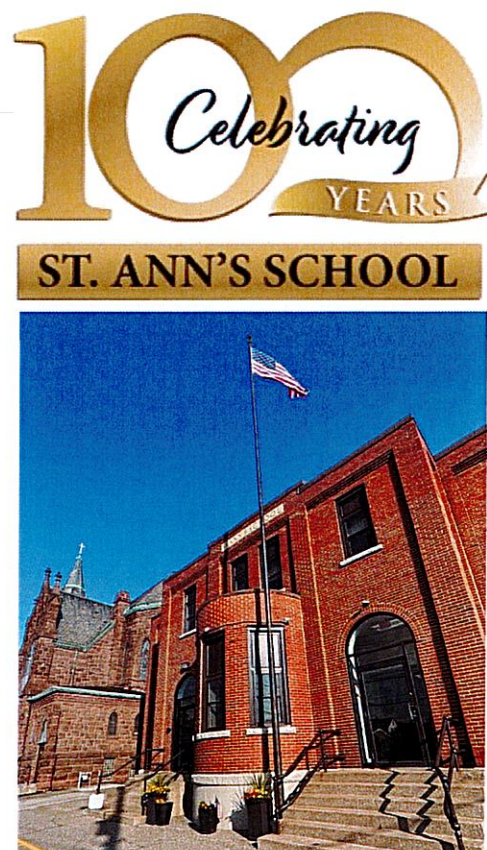
Perry Wood
Executive Director
Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
5340 Fryling Road, Suite 201
Erie, PA 16510

Pam Perry
Dear Perry,

On behalf of all of us at Sarah A. Reed Children's Center, I extend our sincere gratitude to you and your team at the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority for the generous award of \$55,000.00 through the **2025 Anchor Building Grant Program!**

The first installment of \$27,500.00, received via electronic transfer on September 12, 2025, will directly support our **St. Ann's Campus Centennial: Preserving the Legacy** project and make a meaningful impact at our historic St. Ann's Campus in the heart of the Pulaski-Lighthouse neighborhood. Thanks to ECGRA's vital and continued support, we are now able to begin the second phase of exterior masonry restoration on this century-old building—originally home to St. Ann's School, now celebrating 100 years of educating and serving Erie's children. Restoring the brickwork means our building will stay strong and beautiful for future generations, and we're so grateful for your role in making that happen.

As we mark this important centennial milestone at Sarah Reed's St. Ann's Campus, we are reminded of the many individuals and organizations whose generosity has enabled Sarah Reed to deliver care, compassion, and hope to more than 1,700 children and families each year. **ECGRA stands out as a strong and steadfast partner, and your investment helps ensure that children and families across Erie's east side continue to receive the behavioral health, mental health, and trauma-related services they rely on daily.**



Perry, please extend our deepest appreciation to your Board of Directors and the entire ECGRA staff for the difference you are making through the **2025 Anchor Building Grant Program!**

I will keep you updated on the masonry restoration progress and look forward to welcoming you and your team for a tour once this phase is completed, so you can see firsthand the lasting impact of ECGRA's generosity here in Erie County.

We wish you, your Board of Directors and your colleagues at ECGRA the very best!

Sincerely,

Gary L. Bukowski, MA, CFRE
Associate VP of Development
Sarah A. Reed Children's Center
2445 West 34th Street • Erie, PA 16506
Phone: (814) 835-7602 • GBukowski@SarahReed.org

Cc: Tom Maggio; Grants Manager, ECGRA
Tammi Michali; Office Manager, ECGRA
Dr. Adrienne Dixon; President/CEO, Sarah A. Reed Children's Center
Karen Wagner, CPA; Chief Financial Officer, Sarah A. Reed Children's Center
Sue Popoff; Finance Supervisor, Sarah A. Reed Children's Center
Mary Beth Kilpatrick; Staff Accountant, Sarah A. Reed Children's Center
Tracey Sampson; Associate VP of Community Clinical Services, Sarah A. Reed Children's Center
Ron Rodney; Supervisor of SBLP, Sarah A. Reed Children's Center
Chris Hlifka; Director of Facilities, Sarah A. Reed Children's Center

Thank You and The Board of Directors For Your Important Support Through The 2025 Anchor Building Grant Program. We Have Made Some Incredible Progress At St. Ann's Over The Last Few Years As We Prepare For Historic School On Erie's East Side, in The Pulaski-Light House Neighborhood. And Continue To Serve Children Daily!!
I Thank You



Thank you for ECGRA's continued support of our children and families at Sarah Reed's St. Ann's Campus!

*No goods, services or other benefits of value were exchanged in consideration of this gift. Please retain this document with your tax records.



Dear ECGRA,

With sincere appreciation for all you do for us. This generous donation will help us give the students of Sarah A. Reed a better future.

Thanks From the Sarah A. Reed staff,

Michelle Sax

Mal W. John Jr

~~T. J. [unclear]~~

Ed Brown

Jon Reddy
Layne Mays

[unclear]

Jessie [unclear]

Curry [unclear]

Bill Houston
K. J. [unclear]

Matthew
Michelle Taylor

Jonash Galt

Thank you!

Leanne McGill

Darius Ocasio

[unclear]

Robert E. Jones Jr

Cathy B

Thank you!
Marcia [unclear]

Shun Holt

Ms Stewart

Robert [unclear]

[unclear]

Ben [unclear]





Dr. Gertrude A. Barber
Foundation

Making dreams come true.

October 1, 2025

ECGRA
ATTN Perry Wood
5340 Fryling Road, Suite 201
Erie, PA 16510

Dear Perry,

Expressing my gratitude for your unwavering support of the Beast on the Bay is truly challenging, as "thank you" hardly seems sufficient. Your consistent dedication and participation have played a crucial role in making this event the largest and most popular in our community. Thanks to your support, we successfully raised over \$800,000. These funds have enabled us to advance the work of the Barber National Institute in meaningful ways, including:

- Renovations to our pool
- Raised beds for our school garden area
- Meeting the needs of adults living and working in our community
- And much more

Together, we have created something truly impactful, making a positive difference in our community in more ways than this space allows. We have welcomed thousands to the Erie community from near and far. We have helped many to explore the wonders of Presque Isle State Park. We have allowed hundreds with intellectual disabilities finish strong alongside 10-mile participants. Thank you for being an essential part of this achievement!

With deep gratitude for standing with us to deliver a first-class event,

 Thank you Perry!

Laura Schaaf
Event Director

Chainsaw carvings spruce up UC's business district

FROM STAFF REPORTS

UNION CITY — Eighty years almost to the day since an iconic photo celebrating the end of World War II ran in "Life" magazine, a life-size chainsaw carving of that image and six other carvings were unveiled throughout Union City's business district.

That magazine image, a sailor's impromptu kiss of a woman in New York City's Times Square marking the surrender of Japan in August 1945, was the one image chainsaw carver Blain Blakeslee lobbied for this past spring when he, Union City Borough Manager Cindy Wells, and Union City Community Foundation Project Manager Steve Bishop first gathered to talk about the possibility of installing multiple carvings in the downtown.

Blakeslee said, he was drawn to the image because of the challenge he knew it would be to carve both figures out of one white-pine log.

"I feel my best pieces are the ones I'm most scared of," he said, semi-joking of his concern about inadvertently cutting off one figure's head

while working on the other.

The photo on which the carving was based is known as "V-J Day in Times Square," and celebrated "Victory Over Japan." The carving was installed in front of the Union City's Veterans of Foreign Wars post on East High Street just a stone's throw from Main Street. The remaining six carvings are all on Main Street between the Moose Lodge 882 at the Route 97 intersection and the new gazebo across from Union City Public Library.

Blakeslee did six of the seven carvings that all have a "nostalgic" bent to them. In addition to the V-J Day carving, Blakeslee carved a mailman and mailbox that have been installed on the Moose Lodge property, a milkman in front of The Buzz of Union City Cafe, a barrel-maker adjacent to the Union City Municipal Authority building in the center of the historic downtown, a fisherman on the southeast corner of the Main Street bridge over French Creek, and a policeman in front of the City Building.

Some of the carvings are a single piece of wood, while others include multiple pieces that are secured with

screws. The fisherman, for example, has a separate fishing pole, rocks and a tackle box.

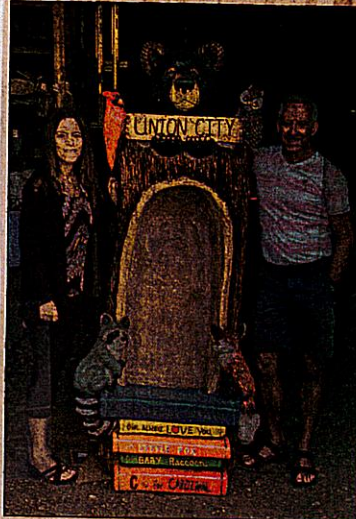
The final carving at the new gazebo across from the library is more whimsical and aimed at children and reading. The carving's base is a stack of children's books, with a nook in which children can sit next to carved figures of a raccoon and fox. Above them, a cardinal and owl sit on a "Union City" sign held by a bear.

That carving was done by Dawna Ceriani of Brockport, south of Ridgway in Elk County, who Blakeslee said befriended him at a chainsaw carving event when he started in the profession several years ago. Blakeslee said Ceriani has been carving for 20 years or more, and "now she's known anywhere in the United States" for her skill.

"I was honored to bring her in," he said. "I knew that piece was right up her alley."

"You don't forget the good people," Blakeslee said of Ceriani's welcome to the chainsaw carving field. "That was my way of returning that kindness."

The project was funded with \$10,000 each from the Erie County Gaming Re-



Contributed photo

Blain Blakeslee, right, of Union City, carved six of the seven chainsaw carvings that were recently installed in Union City's business district. The remaining carving, which has been placed at the new gazebo across from Union City Public Library, was done by Dawna Ceriani, left, of Brockport. This carving includes a spot for a child to sit, and provides a whimsical photo opportunity for children.

mue Authority (ECGRA) and the Union City Community Foundation. Blakeslee, Wells and Bishop started with approximately 20 possible figures for the carvings and "whittled" them down to the seven finalists. Challenges included identifying locations that would minimize things like snow and road salt thrown by plows, vandalism, and suitably matching locations and characters.

Most of the carvings sit on treated wood to raise them off the ground, and most are secured to the ground with a piece of rebar up through the bottom of the carving. The Union City Borough Streets Department assisted the project by leveling and preparing three of the sites, and unloading and positioning the heavy carvings with a backhoe.

While the carvings are subject to year-round weather conditions, and being made of wood will break down over time, the organizers are hopeful they will last perhaps 12 to 15 years. They have discussed perhaps covering the carvings over the winters to help preserve them, but have not made a decision on that front.

◀ See Carvings, P2

Carvings

(Continued from front page)

The carving project is an outgrowth of Blakeslee last year carving and installing an old-time railroad conductor at Ron Jones Hardwood Sales, which is a former railroad station, on East High Street. Blakeslee said local resident Jeff Ferringer suggested he do more such carvings, and also suggested contacting Cindy Wells about the possibility of grant funding.

That initiated the discussions, with Blakeslee bringing to those talks some of the possible figures he habitually collects as he runs across them in his travels at things like yard sales.

"Since I started carving I've collected figures" for possible future carvings, he said. "Some of them I've not carved yet, but I want to."

The figures the trio settled on also led to more research, such as the barrel-maker leading Blakeslee to look into Union City's barrel-making history. Local barrel-making was tied to the discovery of oil near Titusville in

1861 and was a precursor to the community's more well-known furniture manufacturing.

With the funding secured, Blakeslee said he worked on one figure at a time, looking to complete each in about a week for a total two-month project.

"I only focus on one at a time," he said. "I'm not one of those carvers that jumps from piece to piece to piece."

"I treated it like a deadline," he said of his self-imposed one-week completion for each figure. "Sept. 1 was my goal, and we got it done."

The carvings mark another aspect of the revitalization of Union City's business district. Over the past six years or more, those efforts have included significant improvements to building facades, a lighting project, historic markers, interpretive panels, street trees, the new public parking lot and gazebo, murals, removing the former diner and improving the downtown's "gateway," a large chair to commemorate the community's history, and more.

Asked what feelings or emotions he hopes the carvings elicit, Blakeslee said, "You always hope it just brings a smile."

Beehive students seek public input on marketing, branding initiative for UC

FROM STAFF REPORTS

UNION CITY — Public input is being sought about Union City that will help "brand" and market the community to the outside world.

"Union City doesn't have a purposeful identity around which to create marketing in a strategic and consistent way," said Borough Manager



Cindy Wells. "We'd like to see the borough is working on the branding and marketing change that."

initiative with students at PennWest Edinboro, through what's called the Northwest Pennsylvania Innovation Beehive Network. Wells and Steve Bishop, project manager for the Union City Community Foundation, have videoconferenced with the students to begin discussing the elements that could be contained in the project.

One of the first consider-

ations is to gather the public's input, through a short online survey. The survey will be available through Sunday, Sept. 28, and can be found at surveymonkey.com/r/RN-LN6SH. It consists of only four open-ended questions, and should take only five to 10 minutes to complete.

Those questions include asking for input on colors that area residents feel reflect Union City for use in future marketing, adjectives that favorably and accurately describe the community, "feelings" that come to mind when thinking of Union City, and input on community qualities and assets.

"This public input is vital, and we would like as many people as possible to participate," said Wells. ◀ See Input, P2

Input

(Continued from front page)

The PennWest Edinboro students will work with the borough to develop the thematic colors, a Union City logo that can be used across various marketing platforms, and perhaps a marketing brochure and consideration of the borough's social media presence, time permitting. The project must wrap up by the time Edinboro's semester ends in December.

The Beehive Network consists of six centers that collaborate to encourage business growth in northwest Pennsylvania. Those centers include Edinboro, Erie County Public Library, Penn State Behrend, Gannon University, Mercyhurst University and Allegheny College. Each center operates in its own specialized area of expertise, which for Edinboro is through its Center for Branding and Strategic Communication.

The six Edinboro students working on the Union City project are doing so as part of a Contextual Design course under the direction of Cassandra Reese, an associate professor of graphic and interactive design.

The students, Skyler Ed, Paige Edwards, Garrett Conway, Brooklynn Gore, Trent Renelli and Morgan Price, each have specific roles in the project. Price is the communication lead, who handles the communication between the team and the borough.

"This project is a great way for us to gain valuable skills in working with real clients that we will need as we move forward after getting our degrees," said Price, "and working with one another in a team-based format where we all take on lead roles that give us insight into different parts of the process."

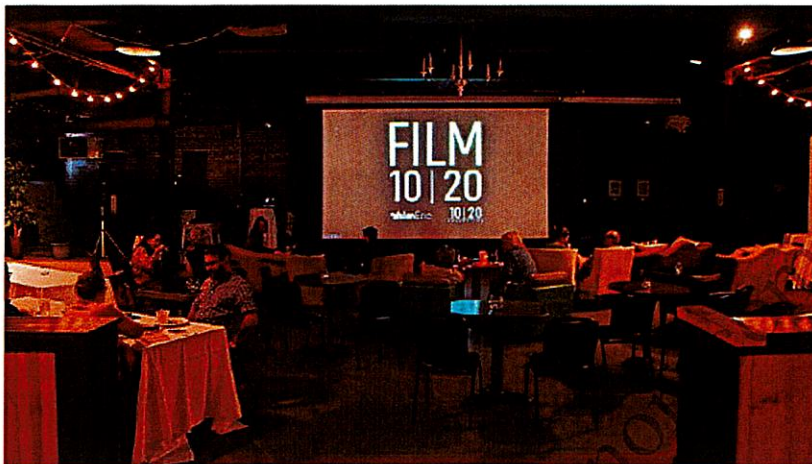
"From the perspective of assisting a local community, I see it as a meaningful way to give back to the surrounding areas of Edinboro for all the wonderful time I have been able to spend in this portion of Pennsylvania while going to school," she added.

As for the survey input she and her team are seeking from the community, Price called it "a meaningful step in being able to ensure that we can accurately reflect the area and its residents as a whole in this branding so that everyone can feel as though their voice has been heard and they have made an impact on their home."

Nicholas Sorensen

Erie Times-News USA TODAY NETWORK

OCT. 4, 2025



Film Erie has created a partnership with 1020 Collective at 1020 Holland St., curating a 12-week series known as the 1020 series. PROVIDED BY JESSICA TAYLOR

A new brand has been created for local filmmakers combining two film organizations in northwest Pennsylvania.

The new brand, Film Erie, is the combination of the Film Society of Northwest Pennsylvania and the Greater Erie Film Office. The 501(c)(3) organization focuses on film culture, or local filmmakers and enthusiasts, and programming of the Erie area.



Film Erie received a \$5,000 grant from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority. PROVIDED BY JESSICA TAYLOR

"We're just looking to bring it under one roof and create more of a solid film identity for northwest Pa.," said Jessica Taylor, executive director of Film Erie.

With the new rebrand comes some rebuilding, and Film Erie is still recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Pre-COVID, the Greater Erie Film Office and Film Society of Northwest Pennsylvania were gaining momentum, according to Taylor.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the

local film organizations saw productions stall and gatherings restricted or limited.

"We're picking up where they left off but with new board leadership this past year," Taylor said. "That includes organization restructuring, bringing everything under one roof, and looking to strengthen the film industry in northwest Pa."

Building a solid foundation for the local film industry

One major priority that Film Erie is focused on is building a crew and a database. Film Erie officials say they are looking to provide a central hub of resources for anyone wanting to film in Erie. The database will connect potential filmmakers with a local crew and filming locations.

When filmmakers come to Erie, Taylor said they scout locations and need resources including extras (background actors) or props. Film Erie is striving to be the VisitErie of the film industry where it can provide those resources to visiting filmmakers.

Advertisement

"We're looking to provide a central hub for resources so when someone wants to do a project here we can connect them with our local crew and locations," Taylor said. "When you bring a production into the area, it's like bringing in a company. They are going to need everything from accountants and lawyers to places to stay. We want to connect them with other organizations in the area that can help facilitate them."

Part of this plan includes a new website for Film Erie that has a frequently asked questions page with topics relating to filming in the Erie area.

Grants from Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority and Erie Arts and Culture

Taylor said the rebrand idea was aided through grants from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority and Erie Arts and Culture.

A \$3,267 special events grant, along with a \$5,000 arts, culture and heritage grant, both from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority, aim to support continuous and well-known projects from Film Erie, including the Eerie Horror Fest.

A \$5,000 grant from Erie Arts and Culture from the McCain Next Steps Grant will support the rebranding and strategic planning of Film Erie. Film Erie will also be providing an updated economic report and feasibility study for the newly formed organization.

Current projects from Film Erie

While focusing on building out its database, Film Erie also is assisting some independent filmmakers on projects and have corresponded with other filmmakers interested in filming in Erie.

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However, major fall projects are in the works for Film Erie, including working on a familiar festival while also resurrecting a film series. Part of the grant money from Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority will support the Eerie Horror Fest set for Oct. 10-11 at the Warner Theatre. According to the tax-exempt form 990 for 2023, the Film Society of Northwestern Pennsylvania spent \$100,437 on Horror Fest in 2022, the same year that they transitioned to the Warner Theatre and brought in cast members from "Children of the Corn."

"It's an amazing team of people and this is the 18th year of the festival," Taylor said. "It's always been an amazing team. Even for a genre film festival; they've brought in (film industry people) from all over the world and visiting guests. These are all opportunities that we can connect our local film community with."

Another portion of the grant money will go toward bringing back the FILM 10|20 series, a program that the Film Society held in the past.

The last time this series took place was in 2023 when the Film Society of NWPA hosted events and screenings such as Movie Magic at Kellar's Magic and Comedy Club and when the Film Grain Series took place at the Bourbon Barrel in 2019.

When Film Erie completed the rebrand, they pulled out the projector and screen that was housed at the former Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State St., and created a partnership with 1020 Collective, 1020 Holland St., curating a 12-week series. The FILM 10|20 series, according to Film Erie's website, "features a collection of films both new and old that reflect humanity's enduring tension between empathy and cruelty, unity and division."

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Viewers will find a mix of short films, locally made films, classic films, documentaries and more. The 10|20 series is centered around independent cinema and is also a gathering place where film fans and creators can collaborate.

“By getting the screen installed at 10|20, we will have a venue that will house events but also (is) accessible for local filmmakers to have a place where they are able screen their own work and have premiers...,” Taylor said.

More information, along with a schedule of films for the series, is listed at filmerie.org/film1020.

Where can I learn more?

If you are a filmmaker in Erie or looking for help on your film project, or to learn more about the nonprofit, visit filmerie.org.

Contact Nicholas Sorensen at Nsorensen@gannett.com.

While focusing on building out its database, Film Erie also is assisting some independent filmmakers on projects and have corresponded with other filmmakers interested in filming in Erie.

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