

Strategic Plan



Business Retention & Expansion

The greatest and most productive job growth in our economy is often derived from existing businesses. Warren County has a vibrant business community that could continue investing in employees and facilities. The WIEDP has access to programs and groups that may be able to assist these companies.

- Goal 1 Communicate our interest, ability and capacity to assist local businesses to expand and add jobs and capital investment*
- Goal 2 Serve as a primary source of marketplace information*
- Goal 3 Match local business needs with available resources*
- Goal 4 Promote the development of the small business/entrepreneurship infrastructure*



New Business Attraction & Development

The Warren County area is an ideal place to invest in and locate any type of business venture. The WIEDP will promote and market the Warren County area to the outside world.

- Goal 1 Coordinate development of marketable sites and buildings.*
- Goal 2 Identify target markets and business sectors*
- Goal 3 Coordinate attraction projects*
- Goal 4 Market Warren County through regional allies*



Community Improvement

The WIEDP can serve as a catalyst, leader and coordinator of projects or initiatives that improve and move the goals of the greater community forward. The WIEDP will play a major role in these activities.

- Goal 1 Promote the Prairie Tech Learning Center for workforce training*
- Goal 2 Advocate for infrastructure projects*
- Goal 3 Develop a recognition program*
- Goal 4 Develop information network among incorporated communities*



Program Oversight & Investor Relations

Administration and development of the capabilities of the organization are key to its success. The WIEDP administration and staff will work and develop professional practices that equal or exceed our peers. Continued success of our organization means the economy is developing and the community is prospering. In turn, the organization can only move forward with investment by local business and government.

- Goal 1 Provide the highest level of professional communication to investors*
- Goal 2 Raise the necessary funding for programming & staffing requirements*



**WESTERN ILLINOIS ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP**

WIEDP Impact Report 2004-2008



Business Retention & Expansion

- Conducts yearly business retention and expansion visits to companies located in Warren County
 - **IMPACT** – businesses obtain needed resources such as training or assistance with expansion, and **maintain successful operations, employing residents in Warren County. 80% of new jobs come from existing business.**
- Assisted WS, Inc with business start-up needs through a \$5,000 small business loan.
 - **IMPACT** – After the closure of Western Stoneware, retained some of the **jobs** that were lost after the closure of that employer.
- Lead task force to address the closure of the University of Illinois Extension Research Farm in Warren County.
 - **IMPACT** – community resources and support were gathered to not only keep, but also **expand the University of Illinois Extension Research Farm in Warren County, keeping a state agricultural research asset as well as retaining jobs.**
- Provides employers with local technology training opportunities through Prairie Tech Learning Center.
 - **IMPACT** – providing resources to local employers, and therefore increasing the likelihood that they are content and stay in Warren County. **Secured a \$50,000 state training grant** to “pass through” Prairie Tech Learning Center for training area manufacturers.



New Business Attraction & Development

- Promoting Warren County as an ideal location for wind farm developments, and serving as the point of contact for potential developments.
 - **IMPACT** – development of the Monarch Wind Farm by Red Rock Financial in Warren County, which will **create 30 new jobs**. In addition, Clean Energy Concepts plans on locating an office in Monmouth due to the wind farm development which **will employ an additional 20 people**. **Warren County will generate revenue from the wind farm lease on the County Farm, generating; a sign on bonus of \$1,000/year for year one and two; a one time payment of \$4,640 for year two; and from year 3 forward generating an annual income of \$18,750 – \$45,538.**
 - Additional beneficial impacts of the Monarch Wind Farm:
 - County retains ownership of farm and increases in property value
 - Potential for expansion, thereby benefiting additional landowners and increasing tax base
 - County gains revenue by leasing “wind rights” of property without ancillary costs to taxpayers
 - Unique, smaller-scale commercial project; County will receive state and national publicity for green energy project
 - An allure for energy-intensive industries
 - Secure, low-cost energy keeps agriculture competitive
 - Wind data will be public via web; a marketing tool for additional development throughout county
 - **IMPACT** – development of a large-scale BP wind farm development covering Warren, Mercer, and Knox Counties, which is still in the research phase, but will also **create new jobs and revenue coming into the County.**

- **IMPACT** – announcement of the EcoPoint wind farm, a proposed utility-scale project located primarily in southern Warren and northern McDonough Counties. EcoEnergy www.ecoenergyllc.com is the developer of the project and is proposing a 100 MW farm which equates to approximately 67 towers. The current target area encompasses 8,000-10,000 acres representing 25-30 landowners. Wind projects of this scale will employ approximately 200-250 people during construction and will employ 6-12 FT positions for on-going maintenance and service. EcoEnergy expects to be under construction within 24 months of October 2008.
- Spearheading a short-line rail expansion project.
 - **IMPACT** – Great business retention and expansion tool, providing additional **capital investment and job creation in Warren County**. Establishing additional infrastructure network for Warren County area businesses.
- Coordinates evaluation of possible sites for new business locations, updates online profiles of all of the communities within Warren County on the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity Website, and lists available business property on the Location One Information System.
 - **IMPACT** – Necessary step one in getting Warren County on “the map” for any potential new business locations.
- Market Warren County through involvement with regional groups including the Western Illinois Corridor Council and the BNSF US 34 Logistics Corridor.
 - **IMPACT** – draws attention to Western Illinois, and specifically Warren County as a potential location for business locations.

Community Improvement

- WIEDP exercises grant writing expertise to obtain outside funds to assist and improve our community.

Total Grant Money Brought into the Community by WIEDP:

Illinois Power Bright Ideas Grant for a Phantom Art Gallery, featuring local artists (2004)	\$2,000
Illinois Art Council for an Art Tour Brochure, featuring local artist entrepreneurs (2004)	\$675
IL Dept of Commerce & Economic Opportunity Grant for start up costs of Prairie Tech Learning Center (2004)	\$38,500
The Mellinger Foundation Grant for start up costs of Prairie Tech Learning Center (2005)	\$45,000
The Monsanto Fund Grant for start up costs of Prairie Tech Learning Center (2005)	\$19,111
Part time Experience Works employee to provide administrative assistance to the WIEDP office (2000 – 2005)	\$42,000
Full time VISTA member for one year to help further the mission of WIEDP (2005)	\$28,000
VISTA members serving at non-profits in Warren County – service provided at 5 different locations, over a period of 3 years. (2006 – present)	\$252,000
The Moline Foundation Grant (2006)	\$5,000
Hispanic Health Mini Grant (2006)	\$4,999
4-H Program Grant for a 4-H Technology Club (2006)	\$1,300
Lisa Woessner Memorial Award to fund a computer game camp for youth (2007)	\$475
Moline Foundation Grant for equipment for Prairie Tech (2007)	\$4,000
Microsoft Unlimited Potential grant for software and curriculum for Prairie Tech (2007)	\$38,000
ETIP Grant for workforce training (2006 – 2008)	\$50,000



USDA Grant for Courthouse repairs (2007)	\$30,000
Moline Foundation Grant for Entrepreneurship (2008)	\$3,000
Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation Grant for energy efficient upgrades to indoor lighting systems in the Warren County Courthouse, Annex, and Jail	\$19,760
American Association of University Women Grant for the Women's Opportunity Network (2008)	\$9,340
Senate Appropriation Grant for Warren County Courthouse Elevator Repairs	\$86,000
Total	\$679,160
Average per year from 2004 - present	\$135,832

- **IMPACT** – During the past five years, WIEDP has brought **over half a million dollars** into Warren County for projects which improve our community. **On Average, WIEDP's has been able to leverage \$148,290 per year from outside sources to spend directly on projects impacting the community, which is more than the WIEDP total yearly budget.**
- WIEDP serves as the administrator for the AmeriCorps VISTA program in Warren County. WIEDP files an application with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to obtain VISTA members to work on projects locally that reduce poverty, and local organizations can file sub-applications under WIEDP's umbrella. The VISTA members are then recruited locally to work full time at a project, and are compensated by the CNCS. It is a way for local organizations that do not have the funds to hire a full time staff person to get their program off of the ground, in order to reduce poverty within our community.
 - **IMPACT** – Currently, six local non-profit organizations are benefitting from full-time VISTA members – Big Brothers Big Sisters, Habitat for Humanity, Prairie Tech Learning Center, The Regional Office of Education's Even Start Program, University of Illinois Extension, and Starting Point. These VISTA members work to reduce poverty in Warren County. Through this program, **WIEDP has aligned the above non-profit groups with \$252,000 worth of service from AmeriCorps VSITA members at no cost to the organizations.**
- Maintains the WIEDP, Prairie Tech Learning Center, and Warren County websites.
 - **IMPACT** – **without a presence on the web, Warren County would not be on the radar of site selectors, or companies wanting to relocate.** The websites provide information on the community to current and potential residents, as well as current employers. The WIEDP website provides businesses looking to locate or expand in Warren County with specific economic development information. The Prairie Tech Learning Center website provides employee training information. To bear any relevance, or credibility, an organization or municipality really must have a web presence. Websites are the first point of contact in most cases, and if a website does not come up on a search, then the individual searching will probably just move on to the next location on the list. **Website development costs: Warren County, \$3,000; Prairie Tech Learning Center, \$3,000; WIEDP, \$5,000; in addition to the cost of annual maintenance, hosting, and improvements to all three sites.**
- Plays a leadership role in the Highway 34 Coalition, lobbying to expand Highway 34 between Monmouth, IL and Burlington, IA to a four-lane expressway.
 - **IMPACT** – **The expansion of Highway 34 would cause a positive economic impact on Warren County**, due to the fact that US 34 is a key regional corridor for the east-west movement of people and goods in and through west central Illinois. US 34 will be the major east-west corridor between Interstate 74 and the Avenue of the Saints, Interstate 218.

- Provides the ATHENA Award and the Leaders in Warren County Awards Program.
 - **IMPACT** – provides needed recognition to leaders in our business community to recognize those that keep our community thriving and encourage others to do the same. **Cost to WIEDP to provide the awards program, \$2,000.**
- Serves as the local point of contact for the Rural Partners Housing Program.
 - **IMPACT** – assists low income individuals who want to pursue home ownership.



Program Oversight & Investor Relations

- Provides information on economic development to the regional community.
 - **IMPACT** – keeps community abreast of issues affecting our economy and community, in order to create a proactive community, which is engaged and interested in the economic health of Warren County.
- Fundraising
 - **IMPACT** - allows for all of the activities and impacts above, through the continuation of WIEDP and an economic development presence in Warren County.

Highlights

- Business retention and expansion efforts, decreasing the chance of employers leaving the area, and increasing the chances of employers expanding.
- Business attraction efforts, increasing the chances of employers locating in the region. Due to WIEDP efforts, 50 new jobs in Warren County were announced in 2007, and 6-12 new jobs in 2008 associated with wind farm developments.
- 6 VISTA members, working full time at non-profits in the area through a grant from CNCS, a value of \$168,000/year.
- Grant money flowing into the community. WIEDP has pulled in an average of \$135,832/year since 2004.
- Warren County has representation in regional and state economic development groups, enabling Warren County to compete with similar communities in the region, which also have a presence in those groups.
- Warren County's web presence - keeping Warren County from automatically being eliminated from the first round of business location searches.
- Listing Warren County's available property on the Location One Information System – a nationwide online tool used by site selectors and businesses to find new locations and research information on communities.
- Serves as a guide for entrepreneurs in Warren County, increasing the likelihood of successful entrepreneurship ventures in Warren County.
- JOBS – WIEDP is dedicated to attracting & retaining jobs for our workforce, decreasing the likelihood of unemployment rates rising. With a current unemployment rate of 4.9% (May 2008), Warren County has a lower unemployment rate than 5 of the six counties surrounding us. Statewide, in May 2008, Warren County had the 12th lowest unemployment rate out of 102 counties. In May of '07, Warren County had the 18th lowest unemployment rate out of 102 counties in Illinois. WIEDP's efforts are consistently bringing in low unemployment numbers for Warren County.