

Building a thriving



20 BOONE EDC
25 ANNUAL REPORT

Boone County, together.



BOONE EDC
— BETTER IN BOONE —



**“In 2025, we listened,
we partnered, and we laid the
groundwork for a Boone County
where growth strengthens our
communities and opportunity is
accessible to all. The progress
you’ll see in this report reflects
what’s possible when we move
forward together.”**

- ANDREA KERN, CEO

**Support
Local**

A circular seal with a dark border. Inside the seal, it says 'PROUD TO BE' at the top, 'INDIANA OWNED' in the middle, and a map of the state of Indiana at the bottom.

OUR SHARED VISION

FOR BOONE COUNTY

At the Boone County Economic Development Corporation, our work is guided by a shared vision: a thriving, connected, and prosperous future for all municipalities and Boone County itself. We believe that every community; whether Lebanon, Zionsville, Whitestown, Jamestown, Advance, or Thorntown should be a place where families can live comfortably, parents can go to work with confidence, and businesses can grow and innovate.

Our values: advocacy, responsiveness, commitment, innovation, and connection shape every initiative we pursue. We are committed to sustainable development, ensuring that the progress we create today lays the foundation for generations to come. And through meaningful partnerships, we actively connect people, ideas, and resources to amplify impact across the county.

We envision Boone County as a place where families can thrive, businesses can succeed, and the entire community can share in the prosperity we are building collectively. This is a shared commitment to turning potential into opportunity and transforming Boone County into a model of thriving, inclusive growth.



LETTER FROM THE CEO

Stepping into my role as CEO this past April, I recognized that Boone County's rapid growth presents both challenges and incredible opportunities. I knew that Boone County was the fastest-growing county in Indiana, and that the next few years had the potential to be defining for this community. I also knew our work would be strongest if it reflects the voices of the people who call it home. That's why my focus this year has been listening, learning, and planning; laying the groundwork for lasting impact in areas like childcare, housing, and job creation that strengthen our community for today and tomorrow.

This year, we celebrated significant milestones in economic development. We welcomed three major new investment projects totaling millions in investment and hundreds of new jobs. These successes reflect both the vision of our leaders and the strength of our community partnerships. We also saw expansions from already existing employers adding nearly 1,300 jobs and significant investments right here in Boone County.

At the same time, we celebrated our existing businesses and community achievements, reminding us that growth isn't just about numbers, but about people and the lives we impact.

We also invested in quality of life and early learning. The 180 in Color art installations brought vibrancy to five communities, while the Boone County Early Learning Coalition is strengthening childcare capacity, a vital foundation for our community's future.

Finally, small businesses, the backbone of Boone County, continued to thrive. Through our Microloan Program, we supported local entrepreneurs helping them grow and contribute to our shared success.

This year has shown what is possible when vision, collaboration, and commitment come together.

Boone County is transforming, and it's doing so because of the people who call this community home. Thank you for being part of that transformation. Together, we are shaping a stronger, more vibrant future for Boone County.

Andrea Kern

2025: A LANDMARK YEAR FOR BOONE COUNTY ECONOMIC GROWTH

Business Expansion Strengthening our Local Economy

Three of our existing employers: GXO, Caterpillar, and NewCold, announced significant growth plans, strengthening our local economy and providing meaningful opportunities for our residents.

Companies growing (all in Lebanon):



TOTAL INVESTMENT:

\$495.7M

TOTAL NEW JOBS:

1,340

TOTAL ANNUAL
PAYROLL IMPACT:

\$66.2M

Business Attraction: Welcoming New Partners in Boone County's Future

In 2025, Boone County strengthened its regional competitiveness through a series of major business attraction wins and forward-looking development projects. Fiber Global announced it will open its second manufacturing facility in Whitestown, highlighting the county's growing advanced manufacturing sector and signaling long-term expansion potential. Ring Container Technologies selected Boone County for its first Indiana facility, expanding the local manufacturing ecosystem and underscoring the county's strong workforce and logistical advantages.

Alongside these attraction successes, 47 Commons; a new development led by Tom and Jake Merritt, marks an important step in ensuring homegrown businesses can grow alongside the county's larger industrial investments. 47 Commons fills a long-standing gap for local trades, specialty contractors, and technical service companies that have struggled to find appropriately zoned, build-ready sites.

Its location at I-65 and SR 47 offers direct regional access, making it an ideal setting for specialty contractors, technical service companies, advanced light industrial users, and small manufacturers who rely on efficient mobility and proximity to clients.

“For Jake Merritt, the vision extends beyond business strategy. “Boone County is home,” he says. “I grew up here, my friends and family are here, and I am excited to have the opportunity to be a small part of the change I want to see in the County.”

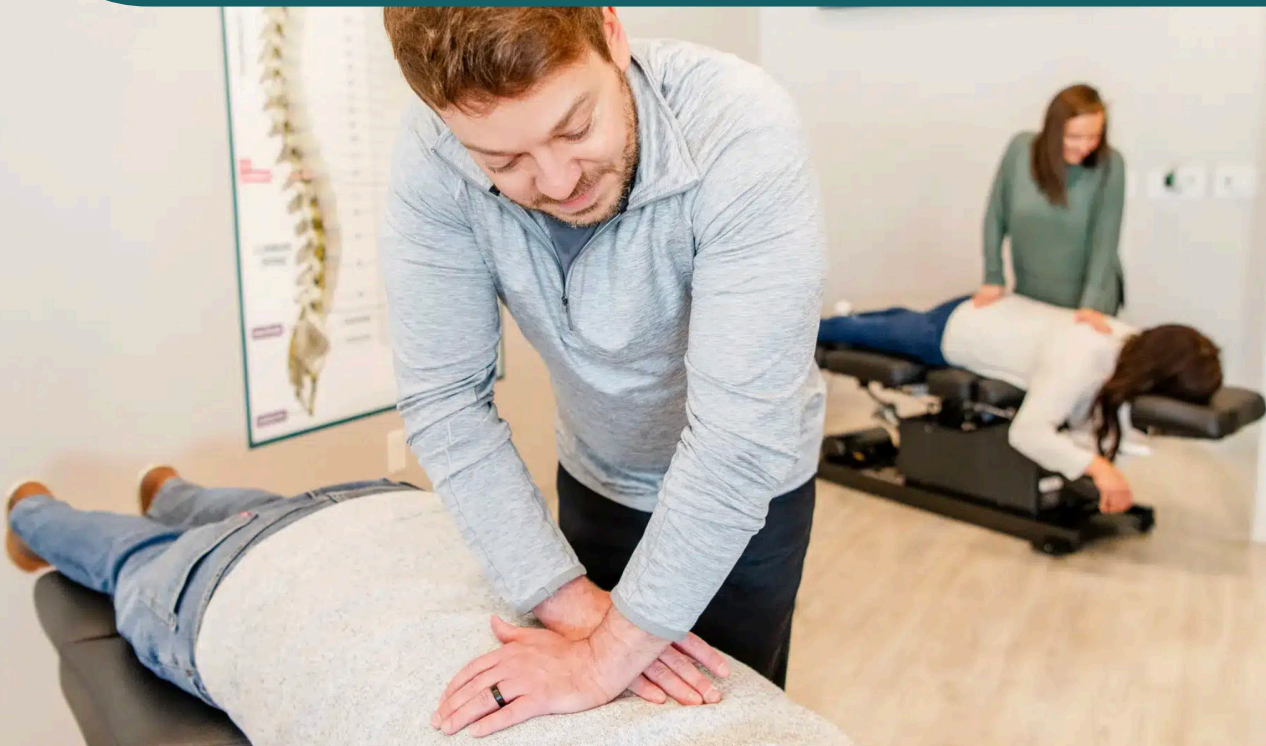
The Merritts anticipate a 5–10 year buildout, with utilities extending to the interchange and development expanding across all four corners.

Overall, Boone County's 2025 business attraction and development achievements, including 47 Commons, represent \$136.4 million in Phase I investment, with the potential to reach \$306.4 million at full buildout. These projects are projected to generate 281 new jobs and \$11.5 million in annual payroll.



SUCCESSES AND WINS: EMPOWERING GROWTH THROUGH THE BOONE EDC MICROLOAN PROGRAM

In 2025, we continued supporting small businesses across Boone County through our Microloan Program. The program provides flexible, low-interest financing to local entrepreneurs, empowering them to invest in their growth, innovation, and community impact. This year, two examples display how the program is making a real difference in Boone County's economy and quality of life.



Expanding Healing and Wellness at Pure Life Chiropractic

Pure Life Chiropractic, a locally owned and operated clinic in Zionsville, leveraged the Boone EDC Microloan to expand its service offerings with cutting-edge technology. Drs. Shelby and Brandon Wagner used their microloan to acquire a Lightforce Class IV laser—the highest wattage continuous laser available—trusted by professional sports teams for injury recovery.

Since integrating the new laser therapy, Pure Life Chiropractic has already seen remarkable outcomes. The service is staffed by a dedicated laser technician twice a week, with plans to offer discounted packages and monthly memberships to make ongoing wellness accessible and affordable.

Founded in 2022, Pure Life Chiropractic exemplifies the power of the Boone EDC Microloan Program to help local businesses invest in high-impact technology that enhances community health and well-being.

TOTAL LOAN AMOUNT:

\$47,500

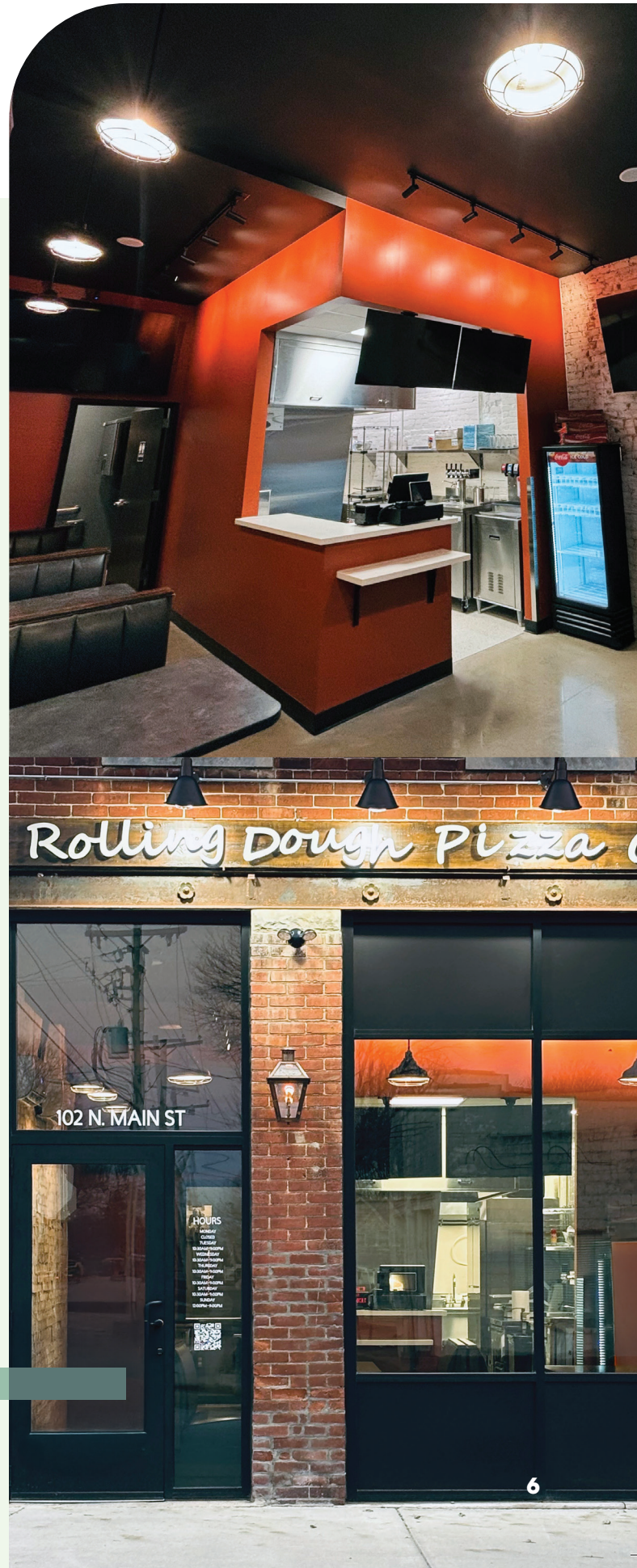
Bringing New Flavor and Community Gathering to Advance with Rolling Dough Pizza Co

In Advance, Indiana, the Boone EDC Microloan Program is fueling a family's dream of opening a warm and inviting neighborhood pizzeria. Renee and Kyle Schnoor, owners of Rolling Dough Pizza Co, received a microloan to finalize construction and purchase kitchen equipment and food inventory as they prepare to launch their restaurant this winter.

The couple has been restoring the building they purchased five years ago, transforming the lower level into a modern, cozy space that will serve handcrafted pizzas made with locally sourced ingredients.

“**Renee Schnoor reflected, “This restaurant has been a labor of love since the day we bought the building. With help from the Boone EDC, we’re finally able to turn our vision into a reality.”**

Opened in December 2025, Rolling Dough Pizza Co is another example of how Boone EDC's financial support nurtures entrepreneurship and enriches Boone County's economic and cultural fabric.



**180 IN COLOR:
A YEAR OF
COLLABORATION,
CREATIVITY, AND THE
ARTISTS WHO BRING
BOONE COUNTY
TO LIFE**

In 2025, Boone County saw what can happen when creativity becomes a shared investment. Through 180 in Color: a collaboration between the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, the Boone County Economic Development Corporation, the 180 Region, and municipal partners across the county; public spaces were transformed through color, texture, story, and community voice.

It was a year that strengthened the region's creative economy by investing in the artists who call this place home, including Boone County native Anita Gordon, whose work in Thorntown and Advance embodied the initiative's spirit.

An Artist Shaped by the Place That Shaped Her

For Gordon, the opportunity to create large-scale public artwork in her home region carried deep meaning. "These projects brought me so much joy; I love an opportunity to create public art in general but being able to help bring bright and colorful pieces on this scale to my hometown region means the world," she says.

Her murals, rooted in community stories and shaped by hundreds of small interactions, reflect the mission of 180 in Color: elevating local artists, energizing public spaces, and showing residents that creativity is part of Boone County's identity and future.



Thorntown: Murals That Welcome, Encourage, and Inspire

In Thorntown, Gordon completed three murals, each shaped closely by community direction.

"Although each mural has its own unique visual elements and goals, both town groups were driven by the same desires to bring joy, add color, and celebrate the local community," she explains. "Thorntown gave passionate directional cues, and even great visual drafts, to ensure that the final product's story conveyed is one of a welcoming sense of community making strides to enrich the lives it may cross."

Those directions guided three new visual anchors in the community. Welcome Home blends abstract fields and creeks near the library and Lion's Park. Dream Big offers a daily message to students walking to school. So Glad You're Here delivers a Main Street greeting that affirms belonging for everyone entering town.

Advance: A Community-Painted Celebration of Identity

In Advance, Gordon designed a collage-style mural, an approach shaped by the stories she received. "I feel that the history and insight shared by Advance's committee led to a more collage-style design, given the amazing number of things that the community has accomplished."

The painting process became a community celebration in itself.

"As with all mural projects, one of my favorite parts is the interactivity that happens between viewer and surface," she says. "These are not just walls with color. As they are painted, the interactions that happen shape how much character a piece will have."

She remembers the moments that became part of the mural forever:

"Attention to detail on a piece of popcorn or an RC car are stories passed down from long-time residents of that reference while I paint. Wiggles that made my sunset field line better are kids' brushstrokes moving with joy as they make history in their hometown."

Lebanon Sensory Arts Garden: Inclusion in Full Color

In Lebanon, 180 in Color helped transform an underused corner of the Big 4 Trail corridor into the Sensory Arts Garden, created in partnership with the Arc of Greater Boone County.

Filled with tactile sculptures, musical components, sensory plantings, and artworks by Arc Artisans, the space celebrates creativity, accessibility, and inclusion. It is now one of Lebanon's most engaging and welcoming public features.

Whitestown: Nature Reflected Through Shade and Structure

At Whitestown's Jackson Run Park, 180 in Color supported the creation of an artistic shade structure inspired by the surrounding natural environment. This installation offers a meaningful blend of visual interest and functional comfort, reflecting Whitestown's commitment to parks that foster connection and neighborhood identity.

Lebanon Mural: A Bold Tribute to Heritage

On the historic Lido Building downtown, a new mural spells LEBANON in color-filled letters, each packed with imagery tied to the community's landmarks, landscapes, and agricultural heritage. It has quickly become a visual anchor in the city's core and a point of pride for residents.

Why Public Art Matters and What Comes Next

Gordon believes public art is central to small-town vibrancy. "I truly believe that the arts are one of the largest parts of community enrichment," she says. "When spaces are presented with arts, whether it be live or visual, it is a symbol that life here is meant to be enjoyed, not just survived."

Looking ahead, her hope is simple and abundant, "I hope that Central Indiana builds upon its growing support of the arts. There are so very many surfaces in our midst that could benefit from creative pops of color!"

If Gordon's murals are any indication, Boone County's brightest stories are still being painted.

"Communities that make an effort to fund public arts become destinations to linger rather than just leave or pass... Visual celebrations of the creative human mind are at the heart of any growth related to economic development, tourism, and entrepreneurship."

MAIN STREET MOMENTUM

HOW THORNTOWN, INDIANA IS REVIVING ITS DOWNTOWN THROUGH INCREMENTAL, HOMEGROWN DEVELOPMENT

Main Streets have long been the beating heart of small-town Indiana. Yet, like many communities, Thorntown's downtown experienced decades of quiet decline, shaped by economic shifts, suburban sprawl, and the loss of local businesses.

Today, thanks to the vision and perseverance of community leaders, entrepreneurs, and partners like Boone EDC, Thorntown is proving that revitalization can be rooted in authentic, incremental progress that honors the past while embracing the future. Through targeted efforts, including visioning sessions for Thorntown's small business owners and securing funding for public art installations; the Boone EDC has been a partner in transforming Thorntown's Main Street into a place of opportunity, creativity, and connection.





Incremental Change with Local Vision has Helped Reclaim History while Building Community

Thorntown's downtown renaissance began with a local family's commitment to preserving and revitalizing historic properties along Main Street, including the iconic Odd Fellows Building and adjacent storefronts. Partnering closely with the Thorntown Town Council, they identified key community needs: new retail spaces, a welcoming coffee shop, modern apartments above storefronts, and solutions for blighted properties threatening the area's character.

The family's investments have brought new life to these historic buildings. Beautifully restored apartments now feature exposed brick, vaulted ceilings, and charming Juliet balconies overlooking Main Street. These thoughtfully designed living spaces cater to modern needs while celebrating Thorntown's architectural heritage. The ongoing restoration of the Odd Fellows Building will soon add elegant lofts with custom ironwork and scenic views, complemented by enhanced streetscapes featuring trees, benches, and public art.

Entrepreneurship Flourishes

This revitalization has unlocked opportunities for local entrepreneurs, particularly women-owned businesses that now thrive along Main Street. Peggy Beck's Welcome to the Country Antiques & Home Goods blends history with modern charm, offering antiques and home décor in a space filled with character. Stephany Jackson's Sweet Linen provides carefully curated apparel and refined home goods, elevating everyday living with grace. Soon, Robin'z Nest, a spacious 3,600-square-foot café owned by Boone County resident Robin Wornhoff, will open as a warm gathering place serving coffee, breakfast, and lunch, with private meeting and event spaces to foster connection and collaboration.

Looking Forward: A Model of Incremental Urbanism

Thorntown's story is a powerful example of how steady, homegrown development, rooted in local vision, strategic partnerships, and community creativity; can restore the vitality of small-town America's Main Streets. Through years of dedicated support from Boone EDC and the collaborative efforts of investors, entrepreneurs, artists, and civic leaders, Thorntown's downtown is a living symbol of resilience, connection, and hope.



CHILDCARE IS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT—AND BOONE COUNTY IS LEADING THE WAY

Childcare is a critical workforce and economic development issue. The Boone EDC has deepened its commitment to supporting accessible, high-quality childcare by commissioning new research, partnering with employers, and launching new programs.

The Boone County Child Care Analysis Report (2024) revealed a clear gap:

- **67%** of children under six need care because all parents' work.
- Existing providers meet only **75%** of demand, leaving a shortfall of **600+ seats**.
- Average annual childcare costs exceed **\$11,200**, far above the state average of **\$8,000**.

These shortages pose workforce consequences as Indiana employers lose an estimated \$3.05 billion annually in absenteeism, and turnover tied to childcare challenges. Locally, 80% of surveyed Boone County employers say childcare barriers directly affect their employees' ability to work.

Building Foundations for Countywide Solutions

In 2025, the Boone EDC helped launch the Boone County Early Learning Coalition, a collaborative network of childcare providers, employers, schools, and community organizations focused on expanding early learning opportunities.

“Accessible, high-quality childcare is essential to a strong workforce and a thriving community. When families have support, businesses—and communities—grow stronger.”
Andrea Kern, EDC CEO

The Coalition hosted its first event, “Energize, Educate & Empower,” a day of appreciation and professional development for Boone County early learning professionals. The event marked the first countywide celebration of the childcare workforce. The Coalition also began a strategic planning process to strengthen capacity, support providers, and equip employers interested in childcare partnerships or benefits.

As Boone County continues to grow, childcare access remains essential to keeping parents in the workforce, attracting families, and supporting employers. The Boone EDC is committed to serving as a resource and partner, in order to help businesses explore solutions and align community efforts around shared goals.



Innovation at IGH Steel

In 2022, IGH Steel Fabrication, Inc. in Lebanon helped establish Mighty Little Hands Academy, a nonprofit childcare and early education provider located on its campus.

The Academy offers full-day, part-time, and after-school options and provides IGH employees with a 25% tuition discount. This model has strengthened retention, reduced absenteeism, and expanded local access; illustrating the impact employer-supported childcare can have on both families and businesses.

BY THE NUMBERS: A YEAR OF GROWTH AND MEASURABLE IMPACT

In 2025, Boone County's economy continued to accelerate, fueled by strong business expansions, new investments, and a growing pipeline of opportunities. The Boone EDC supported long-standing employers as they scaled, and we also welcomed new companies ready to call Boone County home.

Hundreds of new jobs created, millions of dollars invested, and a robust slate of project leads that reflects the county's rising competitiveness. Behind each data point is a partnership, a business taking the next step, and a community moving forward.

EXPANSIONS

TOTAL INVESTMENT: **\$495.7M** TOTAL NEW JOBS: **1,340**
 TOTAL ANNUAL PAYROLL IMPACT: **\$66.2M**



ATTRACTIONS

TOTAL INVESTMENT (PHASE 1): **\$136.4M** FULL INVESTMENT POTENTIAL: **\$306.4M**
 COMBINED PAYROLL: **\$11.5M** TOTAL NEW JOBS: **281**



LEADS

LEADS: **107**
 DIRECT LEADS: **22** FROM IEDC: **78**
 FROM THE INDY CHAMBER: **6** FROM OTHER: **1**
 WE RESPONDED "YES": **65** WE DIDN'T RESPOND: **42**





2025 BOONE EDC

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LOOKING AHEAD

2026 AND BEYOND

As Boone County continues to grow, our focus turns toward sustaining that momentum through thoughtful planning, community investment, and a commitment to ensuring that all residents benefit from our progress. In 2026, we will complete a comprehensive strategic planning process designed to guide our priorities for the years ahead. This effort will align our economic development strategy with emerging needs, future opportunities, and the long-term vision for a thriving, resilient Boone County.



A key part of that vision includes a deeper engagement in housing development, with a particular emphasis on expanding “missing middle” housing options. Creating a wider range of attainable and diverse housing types will help support our workforce, strengthen local employers, and ensure Boone County remains a welcoming place for residents at all stages of life.



We will also continue to advance our work in the childcare and early learning space. Access to high-quality, affordable childcare remains one of the most significant barriers for working families and employers alike. In the year ahead, we will build on our momentum to expand early learning opportunities and strengthen the childcare ecosystem countywide.

Finally, our commitment to advocating for the quality of life and shared prosperity of Boone County remains at the heart of our mission. At the Boone EDC, we believe that rising tides lift all boats; and we will continue to champion initiatives, partnerships, and investments that enhance the well-being of our residents, the strength of our communities, and the long-term vitality of our local economy.



BOONE EDC
— BETTER IN BOONE —

