



Findlay · Hancock County
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FINDLAY·HANCOCK COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

OCTOBER 2023

IN FOCUS THIS MONTH

Workforce |

Industry Builds a Stronger Workforce with TechCred

The OHIO TechCred latest funding round and application opened November 1, 2023 and will close on November 30, 2023. TechCred gives employers the chance to upskill current and future employees in today's tech-infused economy. Employers who submit successful applications will be reimbursed up to \$2,000 per credential when current or prospective employees complete eligible technology-focused credentials.

Upskill - Credentials

A technology-focused credential prioritizes the development of digital skills or STEM-related technical skills for economic productivity. Examples of technology-focused credentials include those related to software development or utilization, advanced manufacturing and construction technology, data analytics, cyber security, broadband and 5G technology, and other emerging fields. Credentials on the approved list have been recommended by the Technology Review of Educational Credentials (TEHREC) panel of experts and approved by the Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education. Six step process:

1. Identify skills needs and employees
2. Partner with a credential provider
3. Apply online
4. Enroll employees in the program
5. Upload credential proof of completion
6. Employer receives reimbursement

<https://techcred.ohio.gov/>

Soon FHCED will partner with the *Center to Advance Manufacturing* to provide concierge services specific to the TechCred program. Concierge services will include assisting companies identify training candidates, assist with the application process and follow up through reimbursement.

Community Planning |

Findlay Catalytic Opportunities Plan

In the early summer of 2017, the *Findlay Catalytic Opportunities Plan* was prepared organized and led by Findlay-Hancock County Economic Development. Invited to participate in this business led planning process were representatives of City of Findlay, Hancock County, institutional and business leaders. The singular goal of the plan was to assist FHCED in identifying transformational opportunities near the river area of Downtown Findlay at the completion of flood mitigation. Leveraging momentum created by the public and private sector, improvements are adding jobs, enhancing streetscapes, and mitigating flood issues. The plan created a strategic direction for future business investment and is poised to be executed.

FHCED believes there can be alignment between the *Findlay Catalytic Opportunities Plan* and the *Findlay Forward* strategic plan. FHCED looks forward to working with the Mayor and City leadership in executing common objectives. In 2017, three major goals emerged from the *Findlay Catalytic Opportunities Plan* and FHCED has been taking action ever since:

1 ATTRACT DOWNTOWN HOUSING: Building on its strong base of employment, FHCED has focused on attracting downtown residential. Working with several private developers, some of Findlay's historic buildings have already been redeveloped into downtown residential from the Gaslight, Niles and Davis Buildings to a number of airbnb units in support of business visitors. With the expectation former Lincoln School and the Argyle site will be turned into a mix of residential and commercial in 2024, FHCED will continue to look for opportunities to expand downtown residential. The establishment of a Downtown Redevelopment District, if considered, has the potential to "light the fuse" on additional residential and commercial opportunities including support of infrastructure improvements.

2 STRENGTHEN CONNECTIVITY: Better and more attractive connections, for pedestrians and diverse mobility, are needed between the University of Findlay and downtown. With the advent of mobility lanes on Cory St., Blanchard Avenue and increased connectivity projects between the City and County, this goal is being realized day-by-day much to the satisfaction of those companies looking to retain young professionals recruited to Findlay but not from Findlay. Additionally, a more attractive and aesthetic connection between I-75 and downtown is needed. West Main Cross heading into downtown is indeed a gateway corridor. The *Findlay Catalytic Opportunities Plan* posits a number of opportunities and preferred options for discussion and further action.

3 REMAKE THE RIVERFRONT: With the planning, engineering, and funding in place for flood mitigation nearly complete, there is now the opportunity to revisit how the City of Findlay can better utilize its riverfront as a true community asset. Emphasis.... Community Asset. To achieve the fullest impact, however, all flood mitigation projects must be completed. Benching along the Blanchard River will only have minimal impact if not combined with the planned construction a dry storage basin south of Findlay and the replacement of the Norfolk Southern bridge near Cory St. Taken together these improvements and many smaller ones will enhance the public parks and private development potential of downtown. Downtown Findlay is a reflection of the health of a community.

Small Business |

FHCED encourages and advocates for small businesses, entrepreneurs, and those with a proverbial idea on the back of a napkin. From business planning to financing to launching operations, we are happy to assist. Depending on the business and its requirements, we may partner with the Small Business Development Center at Rhodes State College, Lima OH. Together we can help accelerate business growth, help create jobs, and contribute to the economy by providing consulting and training to existing companies, and new start-ups.

International | Fukui Prefecture JAPAN

In late October, FHCED hosted a welcome reception for six young business professionals from the Fukui Prefecture of Japan.

Over the past several years, Findlay has welcomed a group of young professionals from Fukui Japan to learn about American business and practice speaking English. Dr. Hiro Kawamura from the University of Findlay and Special Advisor to Economic Development, coordinates the trip each year. During their visit, the Fukui group will visit local government leaders, companies like Marathon Petroleum, Freudenberg NOK and DNC Hydraulics, attend classes led by business leadership, see NW Ohio including a Walleye game and much more. Findlay has established a close relationship with Fukui from former Consul General Matsuda. Matsuda San is now the Ambassador to Ukraine. Before moving on, Matsuda San requested Findlay establish a closer relationship with Fukui Prefecture, similar to the relationship that Findlay has with Saitama Prefecture. The visit will culminate in early November with an American style/themed dinner hosted by City of Findlay Mayor Muryn, and a farewell reception the following day, hosted by the University of Findlay.