

City Council Report - July 2019

Economic Development

Amber E. Daulbaugh



Week #1:

7/1/19– 7/7/19

Had business meetings with the following: Hicksgas, Sonic, Pisces Pools & Spas, Inc and Assurance Home Inspection. Forwarded Economic Development website changes/updates to LaTisha. Attended Greater Fayette County Chamber of Commerce meeting. Continued to set appointments to meet with local businesses.

Week #2: 7/8/19– 7/14/19

Had business meetings with the following: Bernhardt & Cain Appraisals, Second Chance Animal Rescue of Fayette County, Culbertson Heating & Cooling, Willowbrook and SWAN. Visited multiple businesses in person giving them Business Registry Form encouraging them to complete/return. Attended ICSC Downstate IL P3 Luncheon Planning Meeting via phone. This event will be held 8/29/19 in Fairview Heights, 11am-3pm. Attended Council Workshop on Comprehensive Plan and Sportsmen's Boutique ribbon-cutting. Completing Intersect Illinois Project Green RFI, special thanks to Dan, Marty, Marlin & Mark for providing specific information requested. Further researched Workforce Development concept #Noblesville Works! This is a soft skills monthly campaign schedule the community of Noblesville, Indiana utilized to develop workforce. Invited and confirmed Mark Denzler, CEO of Illinois Manufacturing Association to tour Vanseal & OctoChem 8/22/19.

Week #3: 7/15/19 - 7/21/19

Had business meetings with the following: Daphne's, Sunset Storage, Hunter Appliance, Chancellor Outdoor Solutions and Edward Jones - Scott Kramer. Submitted Project Green to Intersect Illinois and at-

tended Retail Strategies and ICSC Webinars.

Week #4: 7/22/19 - 7/28/19

Had business meetings with the following: Ricky R Cox Land Surveying, Noise Music & Sound and Taylor Lock and Key service. Attended Soroptimist Retreat, meeting at Sunset Hill Country Club with Brian Stout, Rob Pickerall (Senior VP Commercial Lending St. Louis Bank) and Bill Walker, Greenville ED. Hosted Vandalia ONE Manufacturing/Transportation/Distribution/Logistics Work Group Meeting to determine days that the group will host both teachers and students at local manufacturing businesses promoting vocational education, skills and careers. Met with JR Derksen from Liberty Utilities, hosted EDC meeting, Senator Jason Plummer was the guest speaker and attended via phone conference ICSC Downstate P3 Program.

Week #5: 7/29/19 - 8/4/19

Had business meetings with Edward Jones - Patrick Maag. Mayor asked me to reach out and talk with Kristin Terry from the City of Macomb, Illinois; she explained to me their Downtown Renovation Grant Program that is subsidized through a TIF and how the program has helped them develop vacant buildings and enhance others. Invited local manufacturers to the IMA luncheon on 8/22/19 at Gallatin Street Grille. Began work on RFP through Intersect Illinois on Project Edamame, which is a foreign food processing company interested in expanding its operations in the Midwest by 2020. The company will produce soy oil and soy meals. They will be exporting most of its product to India and will have a capital Investment: \$15M (land, building and equipment) producing 20-30 jobs. Scheduled follow-up TIF Extension meeting with Jennifer Garrison and school board for 8/12/19 at 3:30pm.

Special points of interest:

- *As of 8/2/19 have received 144 completed Business Registry Forms.*
- *As of 8/2/19 have met with 110 of 144 businesses who completed Business Registry Form.*
- *As of 8/2/19 have 1,164 likes and 1,191 followers of the Vandalia Illinois Economic Development Facebook page.*
- **SAVE THE DATE:** *November 30, 2019 is Small Business Saturday.*

Business Profiles



Assurance Home Inspection Services is owned by Gary Manley, who started his business in 2011. Gary is a trained and licensed home inspector through the state of Illinois who conducts thorough home inspections for those in the market of purchasing homes as well as those sellers being proactive in identifying any concerns before placing their home on the market. Gary's vocational & college education along with twelve years roofing experience inspired him to make the decision to start his own business inspecting homes. He spoke on the earlier days when he'd get out and "beat the bushes" to find potential clients or realtors who would utilize his services. He now serves 22 counties in Illinois. Depending on the size of the home, an inspection can last 2-3 hours. He prides himself in being honest and thorough with clients and will ask many questions to give them the best value he can. Gary enjoys being his own boss and values his work/life balance. Anyone who is interested in requesting Gary's services can learn more by visiting his website at www.assuranichis.com and submit an online request or call him at 618.339.0941.

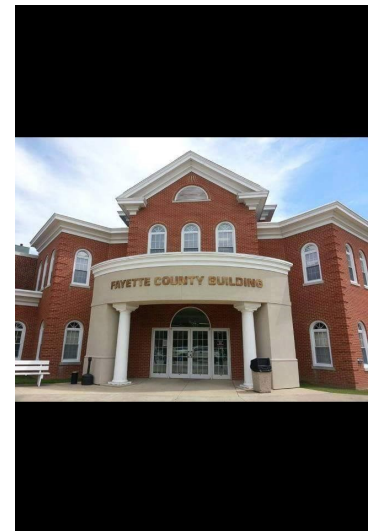


Pisces Pools & Spas, Inc. is located at 1410 Sunset Suite A and is owned by Karri Kampwerth and managed by Amber Skibinski. I recently met with Karri (who I will forever refer to as the Pool Doctor), who has 31 years' experience in water chemistry, sales and service. One of three locations, Pisces Pools & Spas is a family-owned business and has been in Vandalia since 2004, and overall, the family has been in business since 1983. Karri said she started working in the business as a 5th grader and has never looked back. At Pisces, they sell and install above ground pools, as well as sell spas, pool and spa equipment and accessories, water care products and Big Green Egg Grills and Eggcessories. "We Know Water", is an understatement as I witnessed multiple customers bring in pool samples for water testing during our meeting. Karri provided the water solutions each customer needed with specific directions and chemicals to make their pool water safe. To learn more about all of their services and products, visit their website at www.piscespools-spas.com, visit their Facebook page or call them at 618.283.4207.



Brand Ventures (Sonic Drive-In) is located at 1615 North 8th Street and is operated by Director of Operations, Cindy Moulton, who's been with the business since it's opening in 1999 and General Manager Brandy Kershaw.

I recently met with Cindy to learn about the quick service restaurant. Guided by the mission, "Every Guest Every Time", Cindy credits their success because of the customer service they provide not only to those in the community, but also for those travelers who need a break from Interstate 70 driving. Involvement in the community is also very important and evident as they donate to many school and sports fundraisers and local benefits. Commonly known for their Sonic Carhops, Cindy expressed that many customers utilize the Sonic Mobile App as well as the POP menus located in each drive-in stall providing digital menu board ordering. To learn more about Sonic's menu, visit their website at www.sonicdrivein.com or visit their Facebook page! They are open Sunday through Thursday 7:00am-11:00pm and Friday & Saturday 7:00am-Midnight.



Founded in 1821 and named in honor of Marquis de LaFayette, a French hero of the American Revolutionary War, Fayette County, Illinois serves 21,620 residents (Esri 2018) and is located at 221 S 7th Street, Vandalia which is the county seat. I recently met with County Clerk & Recorder Vicki Conder who gave me a tour and introduced me to services provided. Under the direction of Jeff Beckman, Chairman and 13 elected individuals of the Fayette County Board, who oversee 6 standing committees the services provided are captured in the following areas:

Emergency Management Agency, Health Department, Highway Department, Circuit Clerk, Clerk & Recorder, Coroner, Sheriff, Treasurer, Probation Office, Public Defender, Regional Superintendent of Schools, State's Attorney and Supervisor of Assessments. All of these areas serve residents in multiple ways, from organizing, maintaining and overseeing records, elections, court proceedings, safety and security, collection of taxes and maintenance of county roads and bridges, just to name a few. Open Monday through Friday, 8:00am-4:00pm, visit their website at www.fayettecountylvillinois.org or call them at 618.283.5000.



Bernhardt & Cain Appraisals, Inc. located at 606 West Jackson is a family-owned business by Bryan Cain and sons, Matt and Mitchell Cain, all of which are qualified, state-licensed appraisers. I recently met with Bryan to learn about the services they offer to the community. Since 2002, they've provided Commercial, Residential and Farm land appraisals for local Farmers, Attorneys and Bank Lenders in Fayette and the surrounding counties. To help provide a secondary income to the family's farming business, Bryan started in the appraisal business as an apprentice under Don Bernhardt and then a few years later, purchased the business from him. The Cain's pride themselves in doing good, quality work in a timely fashion and very much cherish their family-work atmosphere (as you can see

Grandson Noah in the picture!). To learn more specifics about the different reasons why you may want an appraisal conducted visit their website at www.bernhardtcainappraisals.com or call them Monday through Friday, 8:30am-3:00pm at 618-283-0985.



Hicksgas Propane Sales & Service is located at 1704 Veterans Avenue and is operated by District Manager, Chris Smith, who's been with the business for the last 19 years. I recently met with Chris to learn about the services they provide Vandalia. Formerly Old Capitol Gas, who originally started in 1926, was purchased by Hicksgas and relocated to its current location in 1995. The most southern branch of the 23 Illinois & Indiana propane retailers, Hicksgas provides residential, agricultural, commercial/industrial and cylinder propane sales and service. Since 1962, they've also been providing residential, commercial and rental sales/service for Water Conditioning Services. This includes water softeners, problem water filters and reverse osmosis drinking water systems. To learn more about propane and water conditioning solutions at Hicksgas visit them Monday through Friday 8:00am-5:00pm, call them at 618.283.3120, visit their website at www.hicksgas.com or check out their Facebook page!

Willowbrook of Vandalia is located at 1124 Sunset Drive and is owned by Kaye Kibler, RN and Brenda Winskill, a licensed nursing home administrator. I recently met with Brenda and Morgan Becker, LPN and Residence Director of the Vandalia location, which opened in March 2018. One of four locations (Marshall, Effingham and Savoy), Willowbrook has been in business since 2010 and is an assisted living residence for those who have Alzheimer's disease and other demen-



tia related illnesses. They strive to work in partnership with residents, family, physicians and staff to provide quality, individualized care that puts residents affected by dementia in a position to live successful lives as well as produce great moments throughout the day where they feel at home. Their goal is to set community standards, exceed expectations for those they serve and provide a compassionate resource for the community. Their staff to resident ratio is 1:4 and have the capacity to serve 12 residents in Vandalia. To learn more about Willowbrook, visit their website www.willowbrookliving.net, their Facebook page or call to schedule a tour at 618.431.2125.



Second Chance Animal Rescue of Fayette County is located at 1332 North 1150 Street, which is 2.5 miles south of Bluff City; for the past ten years, Second Chance has been led by President, Cindy Simmons, alongside multiple volunteers. Lynn Brown started the rescue utilizing donated land from the Schukar family in 2003. The facility is a volunteer-based animal rescue that saves and gives dogs a second chance at a forever home.

Cindy is very proud of the two-years old TAILS program at Vandalia Correctional Center, where dogs receive 4 weeks of training from offenders, preparing dogs for successful adoptions. She also oversees the Bark Park (located 3 blocks east of Kennedy Boulevard off of Main Street), where people can take their dogs to play in a safe, clean and fenced in area. Cindy credits Karen Hunter for keeping the park clean as she changes all of the trash and makes sure all is well. Cindy appreciates the communities support of the rescue, through financial and supply donations as well as time that volunteers give to help run the rescue. She is always looking for volunteers, so, if you'd like to volunteer, donate money/supplies or learn more about adopting a dog, visit their Facebook page or call Cindy at 618.780.1807.



Culbertson Heating & Cooling, Inc. is located at 1001 West Randolph Street and is owned by Tamara and Marlin Filer. They recently purchased the business this past May from Bob & Dan Culbertson, who established the business in 1988. Tammy shared that they are a business focused on professionalism and performance; focused on providing each and every customer with faster, better service and the best professional workmanship that they can't get anywhere else. They provide both residential and commercial heating and cooling installation, maintenance agreements for residential or businesses, service repair on all models as well as sheet metal fabrication. They are very proud to offer 24/7/365 emergency service as well as financing options to their customers. They will be hosting their Grand Opening Friday,

September 6, 2019 and invite everyone to attend to learn more about their services, enjoy a free lunch and meet the crew. They are open Monday through Friday, 7:30am-4:30pm and can be reached at 618.283.4679.



Brian W Dossett, M.D. Ltd. is located at 1029 N 8th Street and is owned and directed by Dr. Brian Dossett. I recently spoke with his wife, Laura Dossett, who serves as Manager. Originally from Rochester, Illinois, Dr. Dossett graduated from the University of Illinois Springfield and did his three-year residency at Community Hospitals of Indianapolis. He knew he wanted to start a business in a small community and was presented with an option to pay off student loans by locating in either a rural community, within a prison system or an inner city. He chose Vandalia and began his practice in 1990, working out of the Mark Greer Hospital, currently the Senior Renewal building and then purchasing/moving to Dr. Rames' building in 2001.



Dr. Dossett and his staff of nurse practitioners, nurses and receptionists provide acute and chronic medical care for adults and children. To learn more about the services provided with Dr. Dossett, please call them at 618.283.4469.



Chancellor Outdoor Solutions is located at 104 West Gallatin Street and is owned by Daylen Chancellor. In 2015, he purchased the business, which was previously known as Tippet's Fix-It from Ralph Tippet, who started the business in 2009. First called Econo-Qual Repair, focused on small engine repair, Chancellor Outdoor Solutions emerged becoming an authorized dealer of Grasshopper & Simplicity commercial and residential lawn mowers and RedMax hand-held power equipment. They provide service, repair work and restoration on products they sell as well as a variety of lawn mowers, yard equipment and chainsaws. They have the capability to research, locate and order many parts and also offer radiator repair and sales. They are a local, family-owned and operated business that subscribes to a no pressure selling business. To learn more about Chancellor Outdoor Solutions, visit their website at <https://chancellor-outdoor-solutions-llc.business.site/>, their Facebook page or call them at 618.283.9037.



Hunter Appliance Heating & Air, Inc. is located at 1130 North 5th Street and is owned by Allen and Deb Hunter, who have been in business since 1992. Allen got his start in HVAC services in 1986, working for Dean Bowen of Bowen Cabinet & Appliance. Services their certified HVAC technicians provide include both residential and commercial HVAC & Geothermal installation, replacement, maintenance and service repair and are focused on energy efficiency and environmentally friendly heating and air-conditioning solutions. They also sell and service a variety of new and used appliances and have a showroom with multiple brands to choose from. They are diligent in providing great customer service, guiding and educating their customers from start to finish. To learn more about their services, visit their website at www.hunterhvac.com, visit their Facebook page or call them at 618.283.3224.



Edward Jones – Scott Kramer, Financial Advisor is located at 427 West Orchard Suite A. Scott began serving clients in 2017. While Edward Jones' mission is "Making Sense of Investing", Scott shared with me what guides him professionally: "My vision for building my practice at Edward Jones is to service my existing & new clients by helping them and their families meet their long-term goals.

I plan on adding value to my community by continuing to give to and serve in local organizations like the Lions Club. I want to help my clients and future clients plan for future goals and make for sure those goals are protected. By partnering together and getting them on track, I'm bringing a value to them and their families, which is the reason I'm here. We serve." Scott believes in doing the right thing at the right time as financial & life situations occur. He prefers having contact with his clients 4 times and no less than once a year, as it's important to address these life changes. Whether people are certain or not, his goal is to make sure people are really okay, through protection and helping people reach their financial goals to build wealth, live off of wealth, protect wealth or transfer their wealth. To learn more about Edward Jones and how Scott can help you, visit www.edwardjones.com/scott-kramer, Edward Jones-Financial Advisor: Scott Kramer Facebook page or call at 618.283.0640 or 618.292.8686.



Daphne's, located at 1410 Sunset Drive Suite F, is a locally owned and operated video gaming lounge and bar with video poker/games/slots. I recently met with owners Zac Kopp, Jason Paslay and Mark Meadows to learn more about the business they opened in October 2016. The opportunity to open this business arose when they needed to fill Suite F as the rest of their building on Sunset was utilized. Video gaming became a popular opportunity and they wanted to create a space where people could enjoy this form of entertainment. They pride themselves in providing a clean, roomy, hospitable and friendly atmosphere. Patrons receive complimentary drinks and food while playing and are eligible to win promotional items and

receive a punch card that provides \$10 on their 11th visit. Within the coming months, they will be adding an additional machine as well as new games on all six units. To learn more about Daphne's, visit their Facebook page or call them at 618.431.2194.



Sunset Storage, located at 1410 Sunset Drive, is a locally owned self-storage facility that was opened in January 2016. I recently met with owners Zac Kopp, Jason Paslay and Mark Meadows to learn more about the business. They pride themselves in being the only secure storage facility as they have an enclosed lot that is fenced, gated and equipped with video surveillance. Customers gain access to their storage units utilizing their own specific punch code assigned to them. They have 130 units that range in the following sizes: 5x10, 10x10, 10x15, 10x20 and 10x30. In July 2018 they expanded their storage capacity in Brownstown and have 30 units. To learn more about Sunset Storage, visit their website at www.sunsetstorageil.com where you can check rental availability and create an account to login/pay for units. You can also contact them on their Facebook page or call them at 618.339.8639.

Business Profiles



NOISE Music and Sound is located at 512 West Gallatin Street and is owned by Ed Taylor. I recently visited with Ed to learn more about his music business. Started in 1998 at age 42, Ed, who's always had a passion for music and playing the guitar, decided to leave his construction career and focus on providing the community with professional music services. Being downtown is important to him; he grew up only 2 blocks from downtown and could often be found at his grandparent's hardware store, Taylor Hardware. Ed sells stringed instruments, can service and repair guitars and bass guitars, provides guitar and bass guitar lessons, installs sound systems, offers some electronics repair work and sells accessories for band instruments. He thoroughly enjoys helping his customers solve problems and loves talking with them about music. To learn more about music, you can visit Ed Monday through Friday 10:00am-5:00pm and Saturdays from 9:00am-4:00pm; he can be reached at 618.283.0421.



Ricky R Cox Land Surveying is located at 1102 North Fifth Street. A family-owned and operated business since 1993, Rick recently talked with me about how he got started as well as the services he, his wife Penny and two sons, Gary and Cody provide Vandalia and Fayette County. Rick first started in the surveying field completing an internship with Ron Lange and became a licensed surveyor in 1993, when he opened his business at his current location, built in 1896, the original Fayette County Fair Gatehouse. Services they provide include: boundary/property line surveys and staking, ALTA surveys, Topographical surveys, Legal descriptions and professional plats of surveys, subdivision layouts and residential development, construction staking, SITE plans and consulting for a diverse group of businesses (ex: TESLA). He also serves as an expert witness for land law, an officer of the court, has previously served as an advisor to Kaskaskia College and teaches online courses. He emphasized the importance of representing the public interest, public and property safety and their clients in an impartial capacity. To learn more about their services, visit their website at www.rickvroxlandsurveying.com, their Facebook page or call them Monday through Friday, 8:00am-4:00pm at 618.283.2637.



Edward Jones – Patrick Maag, Financial Advisor is located at 427 West Orchard Suite C. The Edward Jones business was originally started in 1983 under Patrick's father, Ed Maag's leadership. Patrick, who grew up in the business, got his start at Edward Jones in 2006 as a Branch Office Administrator and worked his way up to Financial Advisor serving clients in 2009. Patrick, who served in the Army for 3 years and the Coast Guard for 4 years prior to his Edward Jones employment, enjoys working with people and is guided by helping them save money for whatever they want, whether that's retirement, education or

saving for a rainy day. He spoke intently of the personalized service they provide and tools that Edward Jones utilizes in helping people customize plans and identify investments that will work for each client they serve. To learn more about Edward Jones and how Patrick can help you, visit www.edwardjones.com and search Patrick Maag, Financial Advisor or call him at 618.283.0640.



Taylor Lock and Key Service is located at 512 West Gallatin Street and is owned by Ed Taylor. Since 2013, Ed has been providing 24-hour emergency locksmith services, making keys and rekeying homes and businesses in Vandalia and the surrounding area. He completed an apprenticeship under Don Holtcamp, who was the local locksmith for years. Ed worked with a PERC Card for two years and was then able to become a State licensed locksmith. Don retired and Ed, who has always enjoyed working with doors and hardware in his construction days, purchased all of Don's equipment and inventory and proceeded seamlessly with providing locksmith services. Ed expressed to me that he enjoys solving people's problems and if he is unable to, he will refer them to someone who can. Between his locksmith business and NOISE Music and Sound, he keeps busy and enjoys the personal interactions he has with his customers. To learn more about his services, you can reach Ed at 618.283.0421 or 618-367-1913.

Year in Review

This first year of employment has been one full of learning/researching, listening, developing relationships, networking with property owners, business owners/managers, brokers, real estate professionals and figuring out how to be Director of Economic Development for the City of Vandalia, Illinois. Here is a list of events/programs that were initiated: Shop Local Challenge, Shop Small Kickoff Breakfast/ Small Business Saturday/Shop Local event, Small Business Awards (awards given to Small Business of the Year - Blind Society, Amy Gaffney, Community Involvement Business of the Year - Clint Simpson State Farm, Female-Owned Business of the Year Sue Holliday, Hohlt & File Funeral Home, Veteran-Owned Business of the Year, Mark Meadows, Prowire, Non-Profit Agency/Group/Club of the Year - Lighthouse Pregnancy and Health Services, Tamela Polanin, Director and Economic Impact Business of the Year, Iya's and Friends, Anita Gottman), utilize Synchronist/CORE BRE, created CORE BRE Strategy and met with 6 of 8 local manufacturers/distributors/industries, enter/update LOIS website to promote/market sites and buildings for sale or lease, hosted Charlie White from Small Business Administration, Senator Jason Plummer at EDC meeting, invited Mark Denzler, CEO of Illinois Manufacturing Association to tour OctoChem & Vanseal and he hosted a business luncheon with other manufacturers from our area, assisted in planning and administering the ICSC Downstate P3 Luncheon at Fountains Conference Center in Fairview Heights 8/29/19, completed and submitted RFIs through Intersect Illinois and helped to administer Vandalia Bicentennial Celebration overseeing vendors. Collaborations have existed between Greater Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, WKRV/WPMB, Fayette County CEO Program, Fayette County Hospital and Vandalia ONE Workforce Development (I serve as the Chairman for the Vandalia ONE Manufacturing/Transportation/Distribution & Logistics Work Group). In May I became TIF Administrator and worked on the OctoChem TIF Application, which the Council approved of expansion to create 40-50 jobs. Have initiated efforts to extend TIF I, which expires December 31, 2022. The extension, if supported by all taxing districts with letters of support/ordinances and carried by our legislators (Blaine Wilhour and Jason Plummer) is only able to last 12 more years.

Many business owners/managers were grateful that the City is taking interest in local businesses and appreciate that I met with them. Here is feedback from business owners/managers that I met with September 2018 - July 2019 when asked, "If our Community could do one thing to help you grow, what would it be?":

- City should be more supportive of businesses who contribute to community
- Get more manufacturing, factories and industrial business
- Enhance work force, focused on having soft skills, people skills and work ethic
- Need additional residents, grow population
- Lift up and recognize small business efforts; communicate message of being pro-business; show pride and celebrate small business; give local businesses the chance and opportunity
- Have more festivals, farmer's markets, events to bring people to town
- Have more Alderman support, eat at local restaurants
- Enhance tourism; bring travelers here
- Promotion of downtown businesses
- Sidewalks at night "appear" to be scary and unsafe
- Safer public transportation
- Lower property taxes
- More relaxed atmospheres during events, i.e. allowing alcohol
- Collaborations & marketing of local businesses and service programs
- Bring more business, jobs, residents
- Tax breaks on lots to build homes; provide residential incentives
- Open-communication with community and work with other communities
- Municipality needs to support local business – shop local as well
- Create an Occupancy Inspector, provide more affordable housing, add a housing authority
- Reorganize TIF Districts; businesses who bring money from outside of community want to feel supported by municipality and need financial help to expand on facilities, services
- Better planning & zoning; better use of available property and business placement
- Help find end-users (processing plants for product)
- Add additional business/employers, creates more jobs, help with marketing.
- Help local farmers get better prices for their grain
- Communicate with local businesses in ways they can get involved with community efforts
- Be a resource to local businesses
- Create some initiative/incentive that will help local healthcare facilities retain their doctors in the community, to be engaged and part of community

Year in Review

- Utilize the Library and services they offer
- Become a member of the Fayette County Farm Bureau and support their cause
- Utilize Fayette County Health Department's services
- Provide a sense of community, a common goal, co-mingle with everyone, bring fresh ideas; extend invitations to business owners to volunteer @ community events
- Provide a vetted directory of service providers (local contractors) on city website; city needs to use local contractors; bid sidewalk cleaning
- Encourage concept of everyone in town using each other's business/services so money stays local
- Spread the word on services provided without judgement; help identify local industries that will hire felons; help to find solutions on lowering recidivism
- Market local properties/sites/buildings in community
- Have an open-door policy and be open to communication, create relationships, bridge gaps between businesses and work with other communities
- Develop Vandalia Lake
- Find a nice, sit-down restaurant
- Lower rental, lease rates on buildings
- Educate future businesses on what services and businesses exist locally
- Help educate community on different services that non-profits provide and support them through donations
- Workman's comp law
- Build alliances
- Create Vandalia Shopping Guide
- Promote Vandalia with a focus on downtown
- Legalize side-by-sides on roads with regulations
- Post job openings and details on application process on City website for local businesses

I believe our Vandalia Comprehensive Plan will provide solutions to many of the concerns/suggestions listed above in the work that will be done moving forward, guiding economic development, tourism and City administration efforts. I'm currently researching workforce development initiatives that other communities have had success with and hope to collaborate with our local businesses in an effort to help them fill the many positions that currently exist. Whether its at our local manufacturers, distributors, hospital, small businesses, etc. my goal is to help them in whatever way we can to address their/our local workforce deficit. I would say that over 80% of the business owners I met with expressed how difficult it is for them to find good employees, who will show up on time and stay. Not only is there a skills gap that exists, but also lack of soft skills and work ethic. Vandalia ONE efforts will address these issues, but we need something NOW.

If any of you have questions regarding the business meetings or any of the initiatives I've discussed or would like to help in these endeavors, please let me know. Thanks!

Amber