



Strengthening the Wayne County Community and Economic Development Ecosystem: An Assessment

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Wayne Tomorrow and the
Wayne Economic
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EntreWorks Consulting and LOCUS Impact Investing

About This Report

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Executive Summary

In 2013, a group of Wayne County’s community leaders and concerned citizens came together in a collective effort, known as Wayne Tomorrow, coalescing around a vision to support “transformational development” to “ensure the overall financial and cultural success of (Wayne) County.” Since that time, the work of the Wayne Tomorrow has been driven by what we might call “people power,” i.e. the dedicated efforts of a core group of community volunteers and professional staff from key agencies and community organizations.

Their work has produced important achievements, including the 2017 Wayne Tomorrow Strategic Plan. But, more can and should be done. In an effort to further advance the Wayne Tomorrow agenda, its leadership, along with the Wayne Economic Development Corporation (WEDCO), commissioned additional research and planning, with support from EntreWorks Consulting and LOCUS Impact Investing, to develop a work plan for redesigning Wayne County community development programs, for managing and funding this work, and for implementing Wayne Tomorrow’s priority action items.

This plan includes a number of key components. It assesses current capacities and programs for supporting economic and community development in Wayne County. It finds that to date, the County has relied on a strategy of “doing more with less.” This approach has yielded some progress, but a lack of capacity—in terms of both finances and staff capacity—has limited Wayne County’s ability to capitalize on new opportunities and to build a stronger foundation for future prosperity.

The report’s core findings focus less on diagnosing the problem, and more on what to do about it. Several strategies to enhance the local resource base make sense. First, Wayne Tomorrow and its partners must do a better job of tapping into existing resources, especially grants from state and federal programs. Second, Wayne Tomorrow should consider creating several new investment vehicles to help spur additional contributions and support from local residents. Finally, a new structure for county-wide community and economic development—the Wayne Tomorrow Community Prosperity Network—should be created. This new network structure can encourage additional participation in—and resources to fund—the Wayne Tomorrow effort, while also enhancing staff capacities to support local initiatives and projects.

The report concludes with a series of mini-work plans that present initial steps for how Wayne Tomorrow and its partners—using these new organizational approaches—can best tackle several of the priority challenge areas identified in the Wayne Tomorrow strategic planning process:

- Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem
- Strengthening the Talent Development System
- Creating a Network of Community Hubs
- Addressing the Broadband Infrastructure Problem

These efforts are designed to help better position Wayne County to capture new funding and development opportunities and to improve local capacities to support community and economic development. For all of its history, Wayne County has been a community that works. It has a prosperous economic base and a desirable mix of attractive towns, scenic rural areas, and beautiful natural landscapes. This plan is part of a wider effort to nurture and build on this legacy, continuing Wayne County's long history of successful development and regeneration.

Background on Wayne Tomorrow and the Assessment Process

This report is part of a larger engagement with the Wayne Economic Development Corporation (WEDCO) to support creation of a Wayne County Community Investment Model.¹ The project has its origins in the creation and early operations of Wayne Tomorrow, a community effort to identify and implement “those key projects that are critically important to ensuring the overall financial and culture success” of Wayne County.²

As part of this work, Wayne Tomorrow sought outside consulting support to better understand approaches and models for financing local economic and community development initiatives. After a public review process, Wayne Tomorrow engaged EntreWorks Consulting, and its partner, LOCUS Impact Investing, to develop a work plan for redesigning Wayne County community development programs, for managing and funding this work, and for implementing Wayne Tomorrow’s priority action items.

This report summarizes the results of this research and project work. It begins with an assessment of current Wayne County capacities to support and invest in community and economic development. We find that current county capacities could be enhanced and improved, but that current resources to support such expansion are limited. As such, we offer a series of options and recommendations for improving Wayne County’s ability to tap into current funding streams, such as federal and state grant programs, and for creating potential new funding streams via community philanthropy and other approaches. Finally, we offer some preliminary and specific implementation recommendations for moving forward with some of Wayne Tomorrow’s most important and pressing community development ideas and initiatives.

Defining an Effective Economic and Community Development Ecosystem

The starting point for any discussion of strengthening the community and economic development ecosystem in Wayne County is an assessment of current Wayne County capacities. Table 1 below provides an overview of the organizations, focus areas and resources devoted to community and economic development in the county. The organizations included have a **primary** focus on some aspect of community and economic development. We recognize that many other organizations (e.g., the K-12 education system, Wayne Memorial Hospital) influence the economic prospects and future of the county; yet it is not the full-time job of these organizations to promote economic development.

¹ This project was funded with support from the Appalachian Regional Commission.

² *Wayne Tomorrow! Strategic Plan*, DRAFT, September 7, 2017, p. 4

While there are a number of organizations in the Wayne County community and economic development ecosystem, there are significant capacity constraints for these organizations.³ In total, we estimate that roughly \$1.5 million is invested in supporting key organizations that engage in community and economic development for the county. WEDCO and the Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance focus most directly on economic and workforce development. WEDCO has a broad mandate including its focus on attraction (via the Sterling Business Park) and business development (Stourbridge Project, in particular). In addition, it serves as the primary organization handling business retention and expansion and serving as liaison with state economic development agencies. Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance has a two-county mandate and a focus on career pathways, internships/apprenticeships and the community career and training centers. The two organizations focused more on community economic development – Downtown Hawley Partnership and Greater Honesdale Partnership – have limited financial and human resources and neither has a county-wide focus.

The source of financial support is as important as the total amount of resources devoted to economic development. It is considered desirable by industry standards to seek a 1:1 match of private and public-sector resources for economic development.⁴ Recent studies also suggest that private sources may account for as much as 70 percent of funding for many leading economic organizations today.⁵ Private funding sources can vary greatly, and can include dues, charitable donations, in-kind support, management fees, and interest income. In its current structure, WEDCO has private members but relies heavily on support from the county and grant income. The downtown partnerships and the Chamber rely heavily on business members, but overall contribution levels remain small. There is an urgent need to diversify the resources used to support economic development in the county.

WEDCO is also responsible for facilitation and communication regarding the Wayne Tomorrow process. This responsibility, added onto a full slate of economic development activities, creates a challenge for the county. During the interview process, interviewees expressed a number of views related to Wayne Tomorrow:

- Many of those interviewed were unfamiliar with Wayne Tomorrow, particularly the priorities that were identified through the process.
- Those who were involved indicated that the most important outcome of the process was getting people together across the county, healing some of the divisions created by the debate over gas exploration in the county and connecting organizations that were previously working in relative isolation from one another.
- Several interviewees who were involved early in the Wayne Tomorrow process were no longer participating actively because of the perceived lack of progress on priorities. In some cases,

³ This review focuses on organizations that primarily serve Wayne County, and thus does not include regional organizations such as the Northeast Pennsylvania Alliance or Pocono Counties Workforce Development Board.

⁴ Economic Development Research Partners, *Organizing for Success: Regional Economic Development*, International Economic Development Council, Washington, D.C., January 2017.

⁵ Economic Development Research Partners, *New Realities for Funding Economic Development Organizations*, International Economic Development Council, Washington, D.C., 2013.

progress had been made but not communicated across the county in a way that associated the progress with Wayne Tomorrow.

TABLE 1: Current Community and Economic Development Ecosystem in Wayne County Pennsylvania		
Organization	Focus	Resources
Wayne Economic Development Corporation (Wayne Industrial Development Authority)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Sterling Business Park – Stourbridge Project – NEPA/state economic development liaison – Wayne Tomorrow! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial: membership dues (private sector); county appropriation; grants; ~\$300K – Staff: executive director and two staff
Downtown Hawley Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Downtown beautification (Main Street Matters) – Tourism/promotion – Events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial: grants; membership (business and resident); ~\$80K – Staff: contract only
Greater Honesdale Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Downtown beautification (Main Street Matters) – Tourism/promotion – Events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial: grants; membership (business); ~\$100K – Staff: shared executive director
Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – State-designated Community Education Council – Community Career and Training Centers – Internships/apprenticeships – Career pathways – Certified Testing Center – PA Career Link/Federal WIOA Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial: program grants; PA CEC, WIOA, ~\$900K – Staff: executive director and seven staff
Chamber of Northern Poconos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Business promotion and resources – Tourism/promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial: membership (business) – Staff: shared executive director
Wayne County Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GIS mapping – Data – Municipal zoning/planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial: county budget; ~\$359K (2018) – Staff: 6 planners

In spite of the fact that many interviewees were unfamiliar with Wayne Tomorrow priorities, they identified a set of economic development priorities for the county consistent with those identified through the Wayne Tomorrow process:

- Workforce development and leveraging the county’s high-quality K-12 systems
- Broadband access and use
- Strengthen the tourism economy – build on their natural assets
- Light manufacturing at the business park
- Support for entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial youth

If Wayne County seeks to create a stronger community and economic development ecosystem to pursue these priorities, what should that ecosystem look like? Based on discussions with Wayne Tomorrow leaders, county leaders (elected and non-elected), staff of local economic development organizations, and a review of literature and other models for county economic development, we identified a number of functions that must be performed with adequate support and exceptional execution in order to have an ecosystem that can accomplish the priorities set out in the Wayne Tomorrow process. Table 2 below describes these functions, assesses Wayne County's current capacities related to specific functions, and notes if additional capacity needs to be built. We also reference similar types of counties that are effectively supporting this function and could thus serve as a potential model/resource for Wayne County leaders to consider going forward.

Table 2: Functions of an Effective Economic Development Ecosystem			
Function	Current Capacity	Needed Capacity	Models
Data and research – socio-economic; health; infrastructure; education/workforce skills, etc.	– Wayne County Planning Commission	– Need more focus on community and economic development data/research – Complement to limited capacity at WEDCO to do more	– East Arkansas Planning and Development District renew East Arkansas Data Dashboard – The New North (WI) community/economic development website
Public Relations/ Marketing/ Communications – within the county; with external stakeholders; visitors	– Chamber of Northern Poconos – Downtown Hawley Partnership – Great Honesdale Partnership	– None focused on Wayne Tomorrow; identified as an important need in interviews – Each organization has limited capacity to take on more	– Lubbock Economic Development Alliance (TX) Year in Review (IEDC Award Winner) – Fuquay-Varina (NC) State of the Town Address (IEDC Award Winner)
Grant seeking/writing – monitor and respond to state/federal funding opportunities		– Great need based on data ranking of Wayne’s capture of federal funding compared to 390 small counties – Additional capacity could explore less traditional sources of funding (e.g., philanthropic, crowdfunding)	– Region 5 Development Commission (MN)
Community engagement – connecting to municipalities; facilitating community hub network	– Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance – Community Career and Training Centers – The Cooperage	– Great need beyond workforce but something to build on with library system	– Incourage (WI) Annual Community Picnic – Holt County (NE) Hometown Leadership Institute
Capacity building in municipalities – model ordinances, training on economic development, infrastructure, etc.		– Great need	– Appalachian Gateway Communities program – National Association of Counties High Performance Leadership Academy (online)
Attraction/Business Retention & Expansion/Entrepreneurship	– WEDCO		– Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation

Ideas for Closing Ecosystem Gaps

This review of Wayne County's current infrastructure for community and economic development identifies several critical gaps that warrant further attention. At root, most of these challenge areas relate to resources. Building a more prosperous and resilient Wayne County economy will not occur on its own. It will take money and people who can identify priority areas and lead program implementation.

Finding more resources is easier said than done. There is no single strategy or "silver bullet" that will generate the new funding needed to build local capacities. Instead, Wayne Tomorrow and its partners should identify a few targets and approaches that are most likely to produce additional funding to support community priorities. The groundwork for this targeting has already been laid through the Wayne Tomorrow process. However, there is a need to prioritize the ideas generated through that process and then build an implementation strategy around those priorities. Ideas for doing just that are included later in this report. The good news is that new funding needs are not massive. Of course, the county would benefit in the unlikely event that it attracted new multimillion dollar investments. But, it will also benefit from small increases in resources devoted to community and economic development. Funding increases in smaller amounts (\$10,000 to \$100,000) can make a big difference by publicizing local initiatives and funding the "people power" that is the real driver of community and economic development success.

Small amounts of funding build capacity, i.e., funding allows local people to devote more time and energy to core community needs. These small investment increments can help expand Wayne Tomorrow from a well-meaning and committed group of volunteers to a county-wide coalition with a tangible and feasible work plan. There are many examples, highlighted throughout this report, where such small investments can have a catalytic impact. For example, as part of the North Carolina Rural Center's Small Town Economic Prosperity (STEP) program, each community team received a \$5,000 mini-grant to use as they developed their community plans. Funds were used for many purposes, such as paying for the design and development of promotional materials for the communities, producing brochures about business resources, supporting events that brought the community together. In Southwest Virginia, RALLY SWVA (Real Action Leadership Learning Southwest Virginia) provides small towns with \$3,000 grants for community projects that must be developed in an inclusive process that also supports local leadership training and community planning.

Several strategies to enhance the local resource base make sense. First, Wayne Tomorrow and its partners must do a better job of tapping into existing resources, especially grants from state and federal programs. Regular grant opportunities from major foundations should be targeted as well. Second, Wayne Tomorrow should consider creating several new vehicles to help spur additional contributions and support from local residents. Finally, a new structure for county-wide community and economic development—the Wayne Tomorrow Community Prosperity Network—should be created. This new network structure can encourage additional participation in—and resources to fund—the Wayne Tomorrow effort, while also enhancing staff capacities to support local initiatives and projects.

**Community Development through Philanthropy:
Growing Neighborhood Leadership for Community Development**

Back in 1991, **The Winston-Salem Foundation** (NC) was a small community foundation with limited assets looking for a way to help neighborhoods and neighborhood organizations improve the quality of life in the region. How could communities develop the assets – the leaders and social capital – needed for some of the region’s poorest places to thrive? And what difference could the Foundation make with its limited assets?

After first seeking and failing to receive significant financial support from a national private foundation, The Winston-Salem Foundation decided to launch Neighbors for Better Neighborhoods, an incubator for neighborhood supports, on its own. The idea: provide small amounts of financial assistance (\$90-\$5,000) and technical assistance to neighborhood associations. Grants go to support community gardens, summer youth programs, and community block parties. Over time these small investments helped identify and develop community leaders, build alliances and bring together neighborhoods to solve significant local problems. It also helped the foundation and local philanthropy forge working relationships with a broader and diverse set of community leaders. Neighbors for Better Neighborhoods became its own organizations with investment from The Winston Salem Foundation, other regional grant makers, and the local United Way. Annually the Winston-Salem Foundation grants Neighbors for Better Neighborhoods \$75,000 to make small grants.

In twenty-five years, it is hard to capture everything that’s come about thanks to the Foundation’s investment in the small grants program. In 1997 the program helped create community development corporations for targeted neighborhoods. It also led to the creation of the Neighborhood Institute for Community Leadership to train residents in leadership development, real estate, urban planning, program development and economic development. Today the program works in 13 neighborhoods with 14 paid interns. It spearheads resident feedback in community planning, helps develop physical amenities like playgrounds, and coordinates volunteer activities across the region. The investment in Winston-Salem’s community leaders and good community processes has become a model for how other foundations deploy small amounts of resources to mobilize and engage a community.

Tapping into Existing Resources

For much of its history, Wayne County has been characterized by a strong independent streak. It has enjoyed sufficient economic capacity to fund needed services without requiring significant levels of outside funding and support. While this independent streak is laudable, the County can and should do a better job of accessing funding and other resources for which it is eligible.

In general, rural regions and small towns face obstacles in accessing outside funds due to staff and resource shortages similar to those facing Wayne County. A 2010 US Department of Agriculture study found that rural-based non-profits received only 5.5 percent of the value of major foundation grants invested between 2005 and 2010, despite the fact that these organizations served 19 percent of the U.S. population.⁶

In recent years, Wayne County has done a poor job of tapping into various grant and financing programs operated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and various federal agencies. One snapshot from the Urban Institute is instructive. Table 3 depicts recent Wayne County performance in terms of attracting federal funds from ten key programs such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and business funding programs such as the Community Development Financial Institutions initiative. It compares Wayne to 390 small U.S. counties (with between 50,000 and 99,999 people) from 2011 to 2015. It finds that Wayne County ranks at or near the bottom of all U.S. counties for its ability to attract federal community development funds.

TABLE 3: Wayne County: Federal Community Development Financial Flows and Ranking among Small U.S. Counties for 2011 to 2015

Wayne County Ranking	Rank of 390 Small Counties/ Percentile
Combined Community Development Funding	#387/1st Percentile
--Housing	#341/1 st Percentile
--Small Business	#387/4 th Percentile
--Impact Finance	#259/34 th Percentile
--Other Community Development	#195/51 st Percentile

Source: Urban Institute, Community Development Financial Flows, 2018.

This Urban Institute dataset tracks a small subset of federal programs over a single period of time, so some caution is warranted in terms of interpreting these results. Nonetheless, the figures do suggest that Wayne County could improve upon its current performance in competing for and winning federal and state grant funds. A similar financial flow assessment for state government programs does not exist, but interviews with community leaders suggest that the county could also improve its performance in attracting state program dollars as well.

⁶ Lincoln Arneal, "Report: Rural-Based Organizations Receive Fewer Grants than Urban NPOs," *Nonprofit Hub*, August 4, 2015. Available at: <http://nonprofithub.org/grant-writing/report-rural-based-organizations-receive-fewer-grants-than-urban-npos/>

Interviews with community leaders suggest that Wayne County's lagging performance stems largely from a limited focus on potential grant opportunities. No single entity reviews potential opportunities, and a consensus listing of high-priority projects (linked to grant opportunities) does not exist. As a result, Wayne County often fails to compete for government or foundation grants for which it may be eligible.

Several simple steps could help address this gap. As a first step, County and community leaders must develop a consensus list of projects or initiatives that deserve priority attention for future grants. The Wayne Tomorrow process identified potential priority areas but was not able to move to identifying actionable projects. As a next step, the Wayne Tomorrow team should vet current priorities to identify specific actionable projects that may align with funding priorities from government agencies or private foundations. Several potential priority areas are discussed later in this report.

An important capacity building step for Wayne County involves the development of in-house expertise in grant-seeking and grant-writing. Many Wayne County non-profits, such as WEDCO, are able to pursue and win grants, but lack a full-time capacity to identify and compete for these opportunities. Wayne Tomorrow should work with county officials to support a full-time position or equivalent capacities focused on grant seeking and grant writing. This effort might entail hiring a grant writer on a full-time or contract basis, or using existing resources and services provided by groups like the County Commissioners of Pennsylvania (CCAP). Wayne Tomorrow partners should also engage more actively with state and regional resources, such as the NEPA Alliance's NEPA Grantmakers Forum.

The proposed grant writer position should be tailored to ensure that the writer has some experience and familiarity with leading community development programs at state and national level. Among federal programs, key targets should include funds from the USDA and the Appalachian Regional Commission. At the state level, potential opportunities could exist via the Keystone Community Program, the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP),⁷ and others. Beyond these general focus areas, other issue areas where public funders are now especially active include broadband, supporting a culture of health, and food systems development.

Building a Home-Grown Resource Base

In addition to improving Wayne County's ability to access outside funding streams, Wayne Tomorrow and its partners should also develop new home-grown funding sources by tapping into the existing wealth among county residents and visitors. This is propitious time for such work, as Wayne County, and the country at large, are in the midst of one of history's most consequential transfers of wealth across generations. As the baby boomer generation retires, researchers estimate that, across Pennsylvania, roughly \$310 billion will be transferred across generations.⁸ (See Appendix B for additional details).

⁷ RACP funding was recently secured to help finance expansion of the Silk Mill project in Hawley.

⁸Center for Rural Pennsylvania, *Wealth Transfer in Pennsylvania 2016*. Available at: http://www.rural.palegislature.us/publications_wealth_transfer.html

This transfer of wealth creates significant opportunities for Wayne County where more than \$1.64 billion is expected to shift across generations over the next decade.⁹ This total value translates to more than \$77,000 per household in Wayne County. While this total value will not be captured for community purposes, even a small share of this transferred wealth could have large consequences. The Center for Rural Pennsylvania estimates that capturing five percent of this transferred wealth in Wayne County could generate an additional \$81 million between now and 2025.¹⁰

Community Philanthropy

Wayne Tomorrow and its partners should develop a range of strategies to capture some share of this transferring wealth along with resources that continue to be based in Wayne County. A series of tools and initiatives to spark local investing and giving in support of community development are needed. Wayne Tomorrow should support creation of a local philanthropic fund designed to invest in community and economic development projects across the county. The mechanics of this fund could vary depending on circumstances. At the simplest level, the fund could be established at the Wayne County Community Foundation (WCCF), which has a strong track record of investing in local scholarships and community projects. Creating a new affiliated Wayne Tomorrow Community Development Fund would offer a means to attract donations and to target philanthropic investments to Wayne Tomorrow priority areas. (See Appendix A for further discussion).

Community Philanthropy in Nebraska

One source of inspiration for such an effort is the work of the Nebraska Community Foundation (NCF). NCF has spearheaded a “just 5%” campaign with its community affiliated funds across the state designed to set goals to capture a small portion of the wealth that is transferring across generations. Communities have captured funds through the creation of field of interest funds to support entrepreneurship, early childhood education, youth engagement, etc. More information can be found in the [Community Success](#) section of their website.

If the option of partnering with the WCCF is not feasible, a second approach would entail creating a new foundation to support Wayne Tomorrow priorities. While this option is less preferable, it would also allow for expanded local community development investments. The fund could be created with support from the NEPA Alliance’s Non-Profit and Community Assistance Center, which is now working to create a similar fund focused on Monroe County.

There is a growing trend of community foundations across the country taking a stronger role in economic development.¹¹ Foundations can bring a more diverse set of tools and resources to this role than do other community and economic development organizations. In addition to grant dollars,

⁹ Ibid, pp. 5-6.

¹⁰ Ibid. pp 2-3

¹¹ Deborah Markley, et al. A New Domain for Place-Rooted Foundations: Economic Development Philanthropy. *The Foundation Review*. Volume 8, Issue 3, September 2016. Available at: https://locusimpactinvesting.org/file_download/inline/6a9101bf-5eba-4f7d-bca7-515a0640c2e7

foundations bring convening and relationship power – the ability to connect with and bring together people across racial, geographic, political, power, class, profession, sector, and other divides. Foundations can bring unbiased research and analysis to community conversations, and authentically engage residents in analyzing the local economy and designing strategies to achieve prosperity goals.

For example, the Greater Dubuque Foundation (IA) helped its region deal with issues related to diversity by sponsoring Inclusive Dubuque, a peer-learning network of key community stakeholders that are addressing how to make the community a more welcoming place regardless of race, age, culture, gender, class, etc. The foundation also hosted a Data Walk, inviting members of the community to explore data related to academic achievement, childcare, economic opportunity, equity and inclusion, etc. and to participate in community conversations about how data can inform foundation strategic planning process and the identification of critical community issues worthy of targeting.

Foundations can engage donors in advancing innovative or proven approaches to economic development, and they can use their fund-building skills to help build financial capital pools that can be invested to create ongoing community prosperity. They can even directly invest in local enterprises and placemaking from their own portfolio. The Community Foundation of Central Wisconsin made a \$200,000 investment into a business loan fund operated by the local community action agency. The foundation’s capital does not have the same job creation criteria found with many government funding sources, giving the agency and its financial institution partners the ability to make loans based on overall impact on the community. The Marin County Community Foundation (CA) operates the CommunityFirst Loan Fund to support nonprofits in their community. Many nonprofits have difficulty accessing capital from traditional financial institutions and this fund is filling a gap. Similarly, Colorado’s Telluride Foundation is now spearheading efforts to recover from coal mine and power plant closures in Western Colorado. These efforts include new workforce development programs, entrepreneurship programming, and a region-wide economic diversification strategy. Other more detailed examples of philanthropic support for community economic development are included throughout this report.

Other Community Funding Strategies: Crowdfunding and Local Funding Pools

Community development philanthropy offers one time-tested means to generate new resources for Wayne Tomorrow and its partners. Other vehicles that provide direct funding to local projects or businesses—without any philanthropic connections—should also be considered. Creating a local loan or investment pool is one option. A number of regions around the U.S. are creating “locavesting” models that typically operate like an angel fund with a hyper-local focus.¹²A related model operates like an investment club where dollars are invested in local companies as opposed to the stock market. Finally, the fund could operate as a simple micro-grant program that invests in worthwhile community projects.

¹²For background, visit <https://www.locavesting.com/how-to-invest-local/local-investing-groups-lions/> and <https://www.local-investing.com/>.

Many of these local investing groups are affiliated with larger national movements such as Slow Money, a national campaign to build local food systems.¹³ This effort has engaged 27 groups around the US, including a nascent chapter in Hawley: Slow Money Delaware River. Port Townsend, Washington's LION (Local Opportunities Investment Network) is one of the longest established groups with this type of local investment focus. It has operated since 2006 and has invested more than \$2.6 million in local businesses since that time. Most LION investments remain quite small, with an average deal size of \$64,000.¹⁴

Crowdfunding presents a newer set of options. Crowdfunding is the practice of raising funds from a large number of people, typically over the Internet. The practice began gaining traction in the mid-2000s when sites like Kiva, Prosper, and GoFundMe, were introduced as tools to raise money for social causes, arts and culture, and community projects. Most crowdfunding efforts operate via a reward or donations-based model. Via this approach, project sponsors simply use crowdfunding to attract donations or contributions that include a gift such as piece of art or a music recording.¹⁵

As crowdfunding models have evolved, they are increasingly used as a means to fund companies and community projects. These uses may work on a traditional donation model, but they may also offer a return to contributors/investors. Equity crowdfunding has grown in use since federal passage of the 2012 JOBS Act, which created new federal rules to manage equity crowdfunding platforms. Other sites use a peer-to-peer lending model where individuals can loan money to one another without using a bank or other financial intermediary. Statistics on the state of crowdfunding vary greatly, but it is estimated that hundreds of such sites now operate around the US.

These various crowdfunding models operate via differing rules and procedures. Equity-based crowdfunding presents a complex set of rules and regulations, and, as a result, most sites are operated by larger for-profit entities with a national or global scope. Examples include LocalStake, Angels List, Crowdfunder, and Fundable.

Equity crowdfunding is generating growing interest, but it still remains a niche market. However, there is a growing body of data that shows increased business usage of crowdfunding platforms and on-line lenders. Moreover, crowdfunding seems to be a particularly useful tool for women and minority entrepreneurs who may face fundraising challenges with banks and other traditional finance sources.

These varying approaches to crowdfunding come with different pros and cons. Because of the complexity involved with equity crowdfunding, most community-focused sites operate via a simpler model, seeking donations for community projects or operating with a peer lending model for business investments. Another option is to develop partnerships with private or non-profit organizations that can help manage programs, websites, and marketing efforts.

¹³ To learn more, visit <https://slowmoney.org>.

¹⁴ To learn more, visit <https://www.local-investing.com/how-to/local-investing-clubs-and-networks>.

¹⁵ For background, see Tellus Institute and the WealthWorks Initiative, *Guide to Crowdfunding for WealthWorks Value Chains*, January 2014. Available at: <https://www.wealthworks.org/sites/default/files/resources/value-chain-crowdfunding-guide.pdf>.

The Wayne Tomorrow effort should explore a variety of crowdfunding options to support community development project investments. A simple giving platform, akin to Kickstarter, could be established relatively quickly.

Crowdfunding platforms will likely gain greater interest if they provide tax deductions or investment returns to investors. A number of communities have developed partnerships with national firms to assist with local crowdfunding platforms. For example, Pittsburgh uses the ioby platform to raise tax-deductible funds for neighborhood projects across the city.¹⁶ Smaller communities in Kansas are also working with the ioby platform as part of the Kansas Health Foundation's Healthy Communities Initiative. In Southwest Virginia, the Opportunity SWVA team has used a specialized Kiva platform to promote and fund local companies.¹⁷ Similarly, the City of Philadelphia has partnered with IFundWomen to create a platform to help Philadelphia's women entrepreneurs raise outside capital.¹⁸ Several privately-led platforms, such as Pittsburgh's Honeycomb, have also entered the marketplace.¹⁹ At the national level, The Local Crowd seeks to set up crowdfunding efforts for rural communities. It is now working in a number of regions around the US, thanks in part to funding from the USDA.

New Organizational Structures

In addition to accessing new resources and building local funding capacities, Wayne County should also consider a rethinking of how it manages its support for community and economic development. The days of a single organization being "in charge" of economic development are gone. This single "leader" has not been replaced by a single new model. Instead, communities are developing organizational models that fit their unique needs and circumstances. These different approaches do share several characteristics:

- They engage multiple partners who bring diverse perspectives to the table.
- They engage new partners that have not traditionally been involved in business and economic development decision-making.
- They are multi-disciplinary, bringing perspectives from different sectors, professions, and the public, private, and non-profit sectors.
- They are flexible and can be configured to address multiple community challenges. They are not just about the traditional economic development role of job creation but can focus on a range of issues including quality of life, workforce development, and housing.
- They are distributed in that different teams tackle different issues and challenges.

New governance structures are emerging, and they are having a big impact on small town economic and community development strategies. In addition to the characteristics cited above, successful approaches also embrace regionalism and seek to build partnerships between local leaders and elected

¹⁶<https://www.ioby.org/Pittsburgh>

¹⁷<http://www.opportunityswva.org/kiva/>

¹⁸<https://beta.ifundwomen.com/philadelphia>

¹⁹<https://www.locavesting.com/crowdfunding/honeycomb-brings-crowdfunding-pittsburghs-local-businesses/>

officials at the state and federal levels. Finally, they also embrace public-private partnerships as the core principle driving most development programs and investments.²⁰

In many ways, Wayne Tomorrow is already designed to operate in this fashion. It has engaged multiple partners and focused on a wide array of community issues. Yet, Wayne Tomorrow has not succeeded in marrying these new organizational structures to existing capacities and resources that are available to support community and economic development in Wayne County. It relies on volunteer spirit and labor, which brings new ideas and energy to the table. But, at the same time, volunteer spirit has limits, especially when it is not accompanied by professional staff support and sufficient funding to finance new projects, products, and ideas.

To address the significant priorities identified via the Wayne Tomorrow process, this assessment suggests that additional capacities are needed. To harness those capacities, county leadership should consider institutionalizing the Wayne Tomorrow process through the creation of an action-oriented network, the Wayne Tomorrow Community Prosperity Network. This network can and should address similar issues as raised by the Wayne Tomorrow effort, but it should include a stronger focus on implementation and program execution.

Wayne Tomorrow Community Prosperity Network Structure

Several steps should help ensure that the new Wayne Tomorrow network can successfully implement its core agenda items. As a first step, a full-time network manager or coordinator should be hired or designated. This individual would ideally be employed in county government or in an appropriate organization, such as WEDCO or the Wayne-Pike Workforce Alliance, with a core mission focused on economic and community development. The network manager's role encompasses several core functions:

- Sharing information across the Wayne Tomorrow network
- Promoting the work of the Wayne Tomorrow network
- Tracking progress toward Wayne Tomorrow goals
- Holding project teams accountable for outputs and outcomes

The network manager's primary tasks involve promoting the work of Wayne Tomorrow and keeping the community updated on Wayne Tomorrow strategies, implementation progress, and results of this work. The effort should include a widely publicized webpage, extensive public outreach efforts, and a regular public accounting of progress (or lack thereof) on key objectives. (Further details on future work plans for Wayne Tomorrow are presented in the next section.)

²⁰ Will Lambe, *Small Towns, Big Ideas: Case Studies in Small Town Community Economic Development*, University of North Carolina School of Government Research Paper, December 2008. Available at: http://www.iog.unc.edu/programs/cednc/stbi/pdfs/stbi_final.pdf.

An effective network manager operates like a network weaver, i.e. “a person who takes responsibility for making networks healthier; (they) do so by connecting, people, coordinating self-organized projects, facilitating networks, and being a network guardian.”²¹ This function and role differs greatly from the skill-sets often found among traditional economic development professionals. In this position, the network weaver must support qualities such as collaboration and nurturing, while also serving as an effective coach and listener who is willing and able to support all partners in the network. In terms of specific skills and temperament, the person should have good writing and communications skills and some experience in understanding how the public sector works. In terms of personality, network managers are bridge builders who enjoy and promote regular interactions with diverse types of people. Ideally, the manager will have strong social capital and be viewed as a respected member of the community.

The network manager does not create or lead the network. They activate and nurture it. The Wayne County network structure is already in place thanks to the existing work of Wayne Tomorrow. This new structure and new position are simply designed to activate current network functions and goals. As described in more detail below, the network would transition the current task force structure to an action team structure and the network manager would support each action team, ensuring that progress is made and reported to the executive team and the broader community.

Each task force focused on specific action areas should formally identify two co-chairs who assume responsibility to push for completion of assigned tasks and to report out on activities, outputs, and outcomes. These task forces should include a mix of community volunteers, business leaders, and professionals based in county government or relevant non-profit organizations. The new community network should operate according to the existing guiding principles used to support the Wayne Tomorrow planning effort. Within this list of principles, the most critical item is the commitment to “open and candid internal communications.”²² These principles should be further supplemented with several other commitments, including:

- Cultivation of trust, openness and accountability
- Support for cross-sector partnerships and engagement
- Maximizing resources for the community, not the network
- Promotion of inclusion and diversity

In terms of operations, the Wayne Tomorrow Community Prosperity Network would act in a manner similar to other types of collective impact organizations, a growing field of community building efforts based on “the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem.”²³ Like other collective impact efforts, the Wayne Tomorrow network is uniting around a common agenda where partner organizations collaborate to achieve key community goals.

²¹ June Holley, *Network Weaver Handbook*. Available at: <https://networkweaver.com/network-weaving-handbook/>

²² *Wayne Tomorrow Strategic Plan*, p. 5.

²³ John Kania and Mark Kramer, “Collective Impact,” *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Winter 2011.

Collective impact efforts typically share several characteristics which align well with the Wayne Tomorrow model. They begin with a common agenda. Participants share a common understanding of the problem, and agree that it can best be solved via a joint effort. Working together, they agree to shared measurement approaches where all participants collect data and share results consistently. Their activities are mutually reinforcing, i.e. they may be engaged in different activities but they are all aligned with a mutual plan of action. Participants also commit to consistent and open communications across all players and partners. Finally, this entire effort requires backbone support via dedicated a staff member who helps to coordinate participating organizations and agencies.

Based on this common agenda—already developed via the Wayne Tomorrow process—action teams focused on specific issues or focus areas will be developed. Each focus area or action is led by an organizations or individuals who assume responsibility to drive implementation and to share progress and outcomes with the wider network. Each action team is a small cohort committed to progress in its given focus area.

Wayne Tomorrow Community Prosperity Network Outreach

The new network structure must aggressively and proactively promote the vision of Wayne Tomorrow across the county. At a minimum, outreach should involve the following activities:

- Regular communications, perhaps biweekly, on Wayne Tomorrow’s work and activities in Wayne County. This outreach should occur via e-newsletters, a project website, social media, and other mechanisms.
- Regular outreach, perhaps once per month, to local municipalities to share updates on Wayne Tomorrow’s work. Typically, these sessions will coincide with regular township or borough meetings.
- An annual summit that assesses Wayne Tomorrow’s progress and sparks wider conversations about what’s happening in Wayne County.

Ideas for Advancing the Wayne Tomorrow Agenda

The current Wayne Tomorrow strategic plan (dated September 7, 2017) contains excellent ideas for advancing community and economic development in Wayne County. This plan can and should serve as the foundation for future work by a new Wayne Tomorrow network. However, the plan requires several minor tweaks to ensure that future work is successful and consequential. First, the current number of priority projects should be reduced. At present, the plan identifies nine major priority areas, along with at least 33 identified projects and action items. These priority areas include many laudable ideas and projects, but they require significant refinements to ensure that the Wayne Tomorrow effort focuses time and resources on a few very high priority areas and projects. One way to identify these high priority areas is to look for those that require collaborative, cross-sector leadership and action and

are not currently addressed by a single organization. For example, the continued development of the industrial park falls squarely into WEDCO's domain and may not require focused involvement from Wayne Tomorrow. Other Wayne Tomorrow priorities, such as building the regional food system or advancing the entrepreneurial ecosystem, do share these characteristics and thus should be a higher priority for the new network.

Second, clear authority and accountability for specific focus areas and action items is needed. Specific individuals and organizations should be publicly identified and asked to assume a primary and public leadership role for overseeing implementation of relevant action items. Under the current plan, responsibility and accountability are not specified. Each work group must track their progress and report these results to the Wayne Tomorrow network (and the interested public) on a regular (e.g. quarterly) basis. These results should then be shared on the Wayne Tomorrow website and in other public communications.

Finally, project teams should be developed in a more systematic manner. Volunteers should be encouraged, but all groups should contain individuals, such as county staff or local educators, with official responsibilities in a given focus area.

Using this new model and the criteria described above, the Wayne Tomorrow Community Prosperity Network should begin its new phase of operations with a focus on four priority areas identified in the Wayne Tomorrow Strategic Plan:²⁴

- Entrepreneurship
- Talent Development
- Community Hubs Strategy
- Infrastructure

These four areas offer high potential to improve local economic performance, and also benefit from strong local interest within the Wayne Tomorrow networks. These four areas offer a more manageable and focused set of strategic goals for Wayne Tomorrow. Work in other issue areas should be continued but would not be identified as a top short-term priority for the Wayne Tomorrow efforts. As this effort moves ahead, other issues can be added to the agenda when and if circumstances dictate. But, for the next 12 months, the Wayne Tomorrow network should focus most of its resources on these core areas.

Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Wayne County

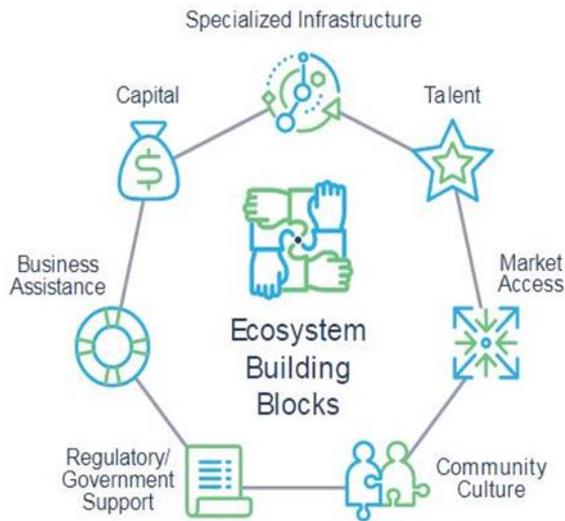
In a recent research project for the Appalachian Regional Commission, EntreWorks Consulting led a project team that provided an assessment of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Appalachia.²⁵ As part of that work, the team identified seven elements of an entrepreneurial ecosystem that together help to

²⁴ The issue of local agriculture development is being addressed by a separate project team, and, for this reason, is not included in this assessment.

²⁵ To access project materials, visit www.arc.gov/ecosystems.

create a robust and effective system of support for entrepreneurial talent and innovation in places like Wayne County. These elements include (see Figure below):

1. Specialized Infrastructure – incubators, co-working spaces, maker spaces
2. Talent – youth entrepreneurship, workforce suited to entrepreneurial ventures
3. Market access – market research and intelligence, sector strategies (e.g., regional food system work)



4. Community Culture – entrepreneurial recognitions and awards, networks, mentoring
5. Regulatory/Government Support – easy access to information, support for navigating regulatory requirements, business ombudsmen
6. Business Assistance – courses and counseling related to business planning, social media/marketing, financials, etc.
7. Capital – microloans, debt, equity, philanthropic.

Table 4 compares three Appalachian counties that were included as part of the case studies for

the research effort described above and Wayne County. The table identifies the elements of the ecosystem present in each county and shares some of the limitations in those systems. Wayne County has some of the elements of an effective ecosystem but there is work to be done to build a robust system.

TABLE 4: Ecosystem Comparisons for Wayne County (*challenge areas in italics*)

Ecosystem Element	Garrett County MD (2015 pop. = 29,460)	Athens County OH (2015 pop. = 65,886)	Cattaraugus County NY (2015 pop. = 77,922)	Wayne County PA (2015 pop. = 51,198)
Specialized Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Garrett College Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation: incubator including cyber lab – Co-working space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – LIGHTS Ohio University Initiative – 4 innovation centers and make spaces – Ohio University Innovation Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – incubator – ACENet kitchen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Olean Business Incubator (on main street) – partnership between Chamber, Empire Zone and Olean Business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Stourbridge Project – incubator, co-working space

		incubators – 2 campuses	Development	
Talent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Entrepreneurship courses at 3 higher education institutions – Workforce development challenge – No youth entrepreneurship efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Hocking College culinary program – EntreEd – youth entrepreneurship in some places (with Hocking College) – Ohio University’s Dare to Dream pitch competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Community college entrepreneurship certificate program – St. Bonaventure business school entrepreneurs hip courses – Olean Business Development Corporation courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance – internship/ apprentice programs – Career Centers (libraries)
Market Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – State programs only – Limited local efforts to capital on natural assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Chamber regional branding – 30 Mile Meal, Brewed on the Bikeway) – ACENet regional food system – Rural Action Chesterhill Produce Auction – APEG Ohio Wood Products Database 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Alleghany Business Center – state Entrepreneurial Assistance Center – County Economic Development web portal – connect to state export assistance aid – No “front door” to county resources 	
Community Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Power of Possibility summit, events, Meet Up Groups, annual Maker Fest – Mountain MD Tech Network – Chamber business networking events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Startup Weekends – Chamber networking events, Cash Mobs, Women’s Summit – Supportive local businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Downtown revitalization efforts in city of Olean – Strong business leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Wayne Tomorrow process – Limited outreach about priorities and limited action
Regulatory/ Government Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Business start-up guide – Grants for façade improvements, etc. – Chamber review of local business climate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Athens City – Special Improvement Districts, Downtown Redevelopment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Olean Business Development Center – communicates business needs to government 	

		District, Innovation District – Limited political clout and attention at the state level		
Business Assistance	– POP workshops, training, coaching – SBDC local office – GIEC IceHouse courses	– Ohio University SBDC courses – LIGHTS – ACENet counseling and support for clients – TechGROWTH Ohio support for startup, tech entrepreneurs	– Cattaraugus County Consulting Corps – St. Bonaventure student corps – Jamestown Community College SBDC – Need for more outreach and focus on technical assistance	– State SBDC (University of Scranton)
Capital	– Banks – Tri-County Council’s Summit Financing Solutions small business programs – Western MD Revolving Loan Fund – Incentives: county business property tax credit and MD Job Creation and Enterprise Zone tax credits (2 zones in the county) – Mountain MD Angel Investors Group – structure but challenges doing deals	– Banks – County Revolving Loan Fund – TechGROWTH Ohio – early stage capital for tech companies (associated with Ohio University) – Micro capital gap – Working capital – no longer have a community development financial institution serving the county – Community investing by successful entrepreneurs has potential but no infrastructure to facilitate it	– Banks – Southern Tier Enterprise Development Organization revolving loan fund – Western Region Corporation loan fund – Olean Revolving Loan fund for small businesses and Downtown Property Improvement Program for businesses – County Microenterprise Development Fund – Lack of angel investors and venture capital	– Banks – NEPA Business Finance Center (loans) – Wayne County Economic Growth Fund – KIZ/KOZ incentives (Stourbridge and Sterling)

This comparison identifies several areas where the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Wayne County could be strengthened.

- Build on the Stourbridge Project– Wayne County has specialized infrastructure that could become the centerpiece of efforts to build a stronger entrepreneurial economy. Efforts should continue to strengthen the programming offered on-site and to provide outreach to engage more entrepreneurs in using the facility. The opportunity exists to leverage this important investment to shore up other elements of the ecosystem.
- Youth Entrepreneurship – As discussed below, youth entrepreneurship programming, offered at Stourbridge and through the schools, is one way to build a stronger culture of entrepreneurship as well as the skills needed for young people to succeed in the jobs of tomorrow.
- Market Access/Business Assistance – Both these elements of the ecosystem need to be strengthened. The regional food system research being conducted for the county may provide the raw information and input needed to better understand how that sector might be strengthened through intentional efforts focused on expanding markets by connecting existing producers to local and regional markets and institutional buyers. There is a great deal of research and federal program support for local and regional foods, and Wayne County should consider ways to tap into both this expertise and funding support. Wayne Tomorrow should also consider using the Stourbridge Project as a way to bring the services of the SBDC into the county on a more consistent basis. Many communities not served locally by a SBDC offer free office space, support outreach to local entrepreneurs and otherwise help create a demand for SBDC services that justifies dedicated staff and office hours in the county. Identifying space at Stourbridge and demonstrating demand by Wayne County entrepreneurs is a good next step for strengthening business services in the county.
- Capital – Addressing capital access needs of businesses in the county is likely not a short-term action item. However, one starting point would be a capital scan of existing business lending resources. Wayne County has strong local banking institutions; one starting point would be to assess what demand for capital they are seeing from local businesses that they are unable to provide. A next step might be to catalog the state and regional resources that might be accessed to support business capital needs, such as the Small Diverse Business Capital Access Program. While the SBDC does not provide capital, they do provide a capital resource list that could be shared with Wayne County entrepreneurs.
- Community Culture – One important step that Wayne Tomorrow could take is to send a message that the county is ready, willing and able to support entrepreneurs. Again, building on the presence of the Stourbridge Project, Wayne Tomorrow could create a web page that provides interested entrepreneurs with information about Stourbridge and other services to support business startup and growth. A number of smaller counties have used the Tools for

Business Success platform to create such sites.²⁶ In addition to information, Wayne Tomorrow might consider hosting entrepreneur meet-ups at local businesses across the county. These events provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs to network with each other and for the community to show its support and appreciation for local businesses.

Community Hubs

As part of the Wayne Tomorrow process, the Quality of Life working group has focused on the creation of community hubs as a way to build stronger social capital and opportunities for residents to come together for social and educational activities. The concept of “third places” – defined as places that strengthen communities through social interaction – has been discussed in academic and other circles for a number of years.²⁷ The most likely formal locations for community hubs are public libraries, already “hubs” in Wayne County as internet access locations; churches; schools; community and senior centers. In addition, coffee shops, breweries and art spaces serve as less formal gathering spaces.

Libraries

Especially in smaller communities with limited recreational facilities, libraries often serve as important community hubs, as is true in Wayne County. These spaces can also serve to advance other goals for the county including serving as places to provide resources to aspiring entrepreneurs and even serving as maker spaces. One good example is Boundary County Library in Idaho, serving a population of 12,000 residents. Given the decline in timber and agriculture in the county, the library repurposed space to try to support people who wanted to start or grow a business. They provided space for educational/training programs as well as business resources. With expressed interest in a maker space, at a smaller scale than the Stourbridge Project, the library repurposed the basement and used a combination of USDA and private funding to equip it with a 3D printer and other equipment. One of the unintended outcomes of these transformations has been the attraction of a new, younger and creative group of library patrons who use the facility and have brought a new energy to the community.

Churches

Churches have traditionally offered worship services and space for community groups such Boy and Girl Scouts, support groups and after-school programs. As they consider their missions to serve the community, some churches are supporting the creation of community gathering spaces such as coffee shops. Hillside Church in Marysville, WA runs The Living Room Coffee House. Started in a strip mall, the Living Room now operates in a repurposed church building. The coffee house opened in response to a community tragedy and has operated as a non-profit gathering spot for young and old in the

²⁶ See <http://www.toolsforbusiness.info/>

²⁷Stuart M. Butler and Carmen Diaz, “Third places” as community builders, *Upfront*, The Brookings Institution, September 2016. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2016/09/14/third-places-as-community-builders/>.

community. The Christian Community Development Association has other examples of churches running social enterprises that also serve as community hubs.²⁸

Private/Non-profit Enterprises

There are a number of different examples of private businesses and non-profit enterprises opening their buildings to serve as community hubs. The Barry Community Foundation is located in a large, centrally located church building in Hastings, Michigan. In addition to their offices and other local organizations, they have maintained the sanctuary space as a performing arts center that offers opportunities for youth and adults to participate in theatre. They also operate a community kitchen that is used for a youth culinary program. This programming has made their facility a hub for community programming and resources.

In Raymondville, Texas, Lupe Ruiz started Wing Champs, a local family restaurant. He made sure to include high speed internet access as an added benefit to the community. As a result, his restaurant has become the after-school gathering space for young people who do not have internet access at home. The restaurant embraces this community hub role and welcomes local students.

Springboard for the Arts, a non-profit artist support organization has developed a resource center in their rural Fergus Falls, Minnesota location. In addition, they have purchased a new building in their St. Paul, Minnesota location and are developing it into a community hub with space for artists, a performance space and other community-designed features so that it can serve as the gathering space for a neighborhood that has experienced significant disinvestment.

One of the more innovative examples of the creation of a community hub is the Wisconsin Rapids-based In courage's development of the Tribune Building through a community design process. In courage, a community foundation, supported the facilitation of the community process that resulted in the design for the redevelopment of the building into a community education space and entrepreneur incubation space that is connected to the opening and development of the riverfront.

As the Wayne Tomorrow team considers how to build out a community hub strategy, several considerations should be foremost:

- Leverage existing infrastructure such as the internet hot spots in libraries to create multi-purpose community hubs that connect to other Wayne Tomorrow priorities (e.g., entrepreneurship).
- Engage private sector businesses in using their locations to host community events, including entrepreneur meet ups, community conversations about Wayne Tomorrow priorities, etc.
- Bring a cross-sector team of community leaders together to consider what additional properties across the county might be redeveloped into community hubs similar to the redevelopment of Stourbridge and The Cooperage.

²⁸ See <https://ccda.org/our-journey-toward-social-enterprise/>.

Talent Development

Talent Development encompasses the ideas and objectives developed as part of Wayne Tomorrow's Education and Workforce Development Task Force.²⁹ The September 2017 work plan identifies five broad goals for this work group:

- 1) Strengthen Business/Education Partnerships: Link schools to employers
- 2) Support Entrepreneurial Growth: Develop new small business training tools
- 3) Coalition Building: Identify new partnerships
- 4) Assure Availability of Lifelong Learning: Research career pathway programs
- 5) Develop Support for Existing and New Programs

While these goals are laudable, they lack detailed focus and tangibility. In their present format and structure, they do not help to identify specific action items or measures that could assess the success or failure of a given priority area.

Refinement of these concepts would help drive effective action. Specifically, new strategies and work plans should be developed to address the most pressing economic and community development challenge facing Wayne County and rural regions across the US: building a strong local talent base with the skills and competencies needed by employers today and in to the future.

Building a talent base can involve a wide variety of action items and focus areas, so further refinements are still required. Research from Wayne Tomorrow, the Wayne-Pike Workforce Alliance, and other regional studies suggests that Wayne County would benefit from improvements in career-technical education initiatives that train young adults for regional in-demand sectors like health care, manufacturing, energy, and logistics. These sectors have also been targeted as priority focus areas by the Pocono Counties Workforce Investment Area (PCWIA) and regional partners as well.³⁰

The Wayne Tomorrow network might consider several action items focused on these objectives.

- Build a Single Industry Career Pathways Coalition
- Build home based community college resources/Link Wayne County to the statewide Rural Community College Initiative
- Enhance local youth entrepreneurship programming

Career Pathways Coalition

Current Wayne Tomorrow plans include an appropriate emphasis on building closer ties between education and the local business community as part of a strategy to improve career-technical education in the county. Business education partnerships make great sense for all parties. They help students gain critical career skills and knowledge, and they provide a higher quality talent base for employers.

²⁹ Several other Wayne Tomorrow workgroups, especially the business and economic development workgroup) also included workforce related items in their priority lists.

³⁰Pocono Counties Workforce Development Board, *PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan*. Available at: <http://pcwia.org/PCWDBLocalPlan2017-2019.pdf>.

They offer further benefits in helping young people to find worthwhile career options within Wayne County.

Community leaders have made several past attempts to strengthen career-technical education, including efforts to create a local Career Technical Education (CTE) center for Wayne and Pike counties. Proposed new strategies should begin with smaller steps that first focus on building better business partnerships and addressing pressing challenges for leading firms and industries operating in Wayne County. We recommend creation of a Career Ready Wayne program targeted to selected school districts and industries. Ultimately, this program should address careers and training across multiple disciplines and industries and build on the Alliance's ongoing work with schools and industry. Yet, at the outset, it might begin via a partnership focused on one specific industry, perhaps manufacturing or health care. Building this first successful partnership can help to build momentum and a program template for use with other sectors.

This strategy should be based on several steps to be undertaken beginning in fall 2018 and continuing into 2019. They include the following action items:

- 1) Identify target industries and leading partners: As a first step, the Wayne Tomorrow team should quickly identify a local industry for initial project focus. Ideally, the sector should face pressing workforce challenges and also include employers with an interest and willingness to partner with local educators. Similarly, potential education partners (at the high school level and beyond) should also be identified at this time.
- 2) Convene a small working group of employers to discuss pressing talent needs. The group should include members of existing Occupational Advisory Committees (if relevant) along with other major employers operating in the target sector. This group should identify areas of greatest need as well as potential solutions.
- 3) Design new programs that link federal, state and regional career pathway resources to the needs of Wayne County employers

Community College

While the Career Pathway Coalition's initial focus will target high school students as they transition into the workforce, the broader Wayne Tomorrow effort should also address how best to bring community college programming and courses to the region. At present, Wayne County residents seeking community college courses must commute to other counties (mainly Lackawanna, Luzerne and Monroe) tap into online learning or satellite programs offered in Hawley and Honesdale.

These programs offer opportunities to Wayne County residents, but the range of available training options can and should be expanded. This expansion could occur via direct outreach to nearby schools, building on the work already underway at the Lackawanna College's Lake Region Center. An additional step could involve an alliance with the newly created Northern Pennsylvania Regional College (NPRC), which provides programs and training for a nine-county region of Northwest Pennsylvania.

At present, the Workforce Alliance has begun initial outreach to NPRC representatives. Expanding the service area of the new college will require legislative action, but it offers great potential to expand training offerings in Wayne County. Its programs are based at a series of training hubs, offering blended learning that combines on-line content with direct teaching as well.

A Wayne Tomorrow working group should address this challenge by executing a strategy to designate Wayne and Pike counties as part of the NPRC network. This initial work will entail several action items, including:

- 1) Research and data: Making the case for NPRC in Wayne County will require creation of a short white paper that presents data on local demand and need for access to these education and training resources.
- 2) Advocacy and Outreach: The group must also begin outreach to local state legislators who are willing and able to champion this cause in next year's legislative proceedings. Direct outreach and planning with the current NPRC leadership, which is already underway via the Wayne-Pike Workforce Alliance, should also be expanded.
- 3) Work Plan: Creation of a work plan for local access to NPRC programs and courses.

Youth Entrepreneurship

When compared to other nearby counties, Wayne County is home to a relatively strong base of programming focused on youth entrepreneurship. All three Wayne County high schools have FBLA programs (Future Business Leaders of America) in place. Similarly, FFA (Future Farmers of America) chapters operate in the Honesdale and Western Wayne school systems. These programs offer an excellent platform to provide basic training to students, and to add other programming that links high school training to wider community objectives and outcomes.

In addition to these national efforts, there are examples of youth entrepreneurship programs run by state or other organizations. NetWork Kansas, a statewide entrepreneurship initiative in Kansas, developed the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge Series. While the program started in a few smaller counties, it has grown to become a statewide competition, with regional competitions that feed into it. With support from the Appalachian Regional Commission, EntreEd has piloted America's Entrepreneurial Schools in a number of counties across the region. This partnership between K-12 educators and community colleges is designed to provide age-appropriate exposure to every child, in every grade, throughout their K-12 experience.

As a first step to expand local entrepreneurship programming, the Wayne Tomorrow team should consider sponsoring a county-wide youth entrepreneurship challenge that engages all county schools. The competition should include some limited training for students and teachers, small prizes for winning students and teams, and linkage to other county small business support programs, especially the Stourbridge Project.

Infrastructure

The current Wayne Tomorrow plan does not include a separate work group or project team focused on infrastructure, but several of the groups and task forces include infrastructure-related items in their focus areas, including:

- 1) Support a Forward-Thinking Broadband Technology Platform (Business & Economic Development Workgroup)
- 2) Support Strong Infrastructure in all Sectors (Business & Economic Development Workgroup)
- 3) Promote Effective Property Maintenance Standards across the County (Quality of Life Workgroup)

Wayne County has a large backlog of infrastructure needs and challenges and addressing these issues can and will be a top priority for county government, WEDCO, and others. Wayne Tomorrow can advance the local conversations on infrastructure by focusing its work on a few priority areas. We recommend two primary areas for Wayne Tomorrow actions over the next 12-18 months: broadband improvements and a renewed commitment to better management of existing infrastructure, especially water and sewer infrastructure.

Broadband

Broadband access and affordability is a big challenge for Wayne County, but Northeast Pennsylvania is not alone on this front. A recent Pew Trusts poll found that 24% of rural Americans (compared to 9% of urban residents) identify broadband access as a “major problem” in their area.³¹ Because of the pressing need for better rural broadband service, a host of federal and state programs are available to help finance new investments. These include the USDA’s Community Connect grants and Rural Broadband Loan programs, and Pennsylvania’s new Broadband Investment Incentive Program.

Given the high costs associated with broadband build-out in Wayne County, the Wayne Tomorrow team, even with new funding and capacity, will be unable to support this goal without extensive outside funding and investments. As such, initial work in this area should focus on “making the case,” i.e. specifying community needs and areas of greatest demand for high speed broadband in Wayne County. These findings should then be used to support grant applications and direct outreach to potential providers in Wayne County and beyond. This research can then be utilized in grant applications and in outreach to potential service providers.

In addition to this research effort, the Wayne Tomorrow team might also consider several smaller actions that can provide needed broadband access and raise public awareness of this issue among Wayne County residents. Specific action items might include creation of a hotspot lending program via the Wayne County Library system and creation of hotspots at community hubs around the county. A

³¹Monica Andersen, “About a quarter of rural Americans say access to high-speed internet is a major problem,” Pew Research Center, September 10, 2018. Available at: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/09/10/about-a-quarter-of-rural-americans-say-access-to-high-speed-internet-is-a-major-problem/>.

number of regions around the US are deploying wi-fi hotspots as an interim step to provide better broadband access for local residents. At libraries, lending programs provide mobile hot spots for use, especially for students who lack internet access at home. Most programs operate within existing budgets, and device purchase plans are negotiated with local providers. For example, in Jonesport, ME, the program supports 80 devices that each cost an average of \$40 per month.³² Funding for the program is provided by a coalition of community partners and donations.

Managing Existing Infrastructure

Within Wayne County, 22 township and six borough governments are in place to manage local government affairs. Infrastructure maintenance—especially as it relates to water and sewer infrastructure—is a core function and activity. These township/borough governments typically operate with small budgets and tiny staffs, with limited opportunities for professional development, networking, and training.

As part of an effort to improve coordination and collaboration across Wayne County, Wayne Tomorrow should consider creation of a Wayne County Municipal Association, with a mission to regularly connect township and borough officials. This group might begin operations with a broad charter, focused on networking and professional development. It could also focus specifically on issues related to water and sewer infrastructure, allowing for a deeper dive into core issues facing most local governments. Berks County (PA) has recently enjoyed great success with this model. The Berks Water and Sewer Association was created with support from Albright College’s Center for Excellence in Local Government. The group meets quarterly, often on-site in different townships, and provides a venue to network and to learn about leading practices. A similar group in Wayne County could help improve infrastructure maintenance practices and also serve as a means to better engage local officials in the work of Wayne Tomorrow.

While this new county network is specifically designed to improve infrastructure maintenance and to offer professional development opportunities to local officials, it has broader goals as well. Specifically, it offers a means to better engage township and borough officials in the work of Wayne Tomorrow and in the broader mission of advancing economic development in Wayne County.

³² A guide to “Starting a Mobile Hotspot Lending Program” is available at: <http://sites.utexas.edu/imlsedgesgrant/>.

**Community Development through Philanthropy:
Investing for Connecting and Financial Return**

Too small for big broadband business, Steuben County in rural Indiana was having trouble identifying how essential community institutions like schools, businesses, nonprofits and government departments could get connected to the internet. For-profit providers wanted customers like schools to pay the full cost of constructing their network, and on top of that would charge a substantial monthly fee per connected building. One popular option for connecting the community would have been municipal broadband – the local government building and maintaining a network for the region. However, it was too expensive, and in states across the country legislatures were passing laws preventing local governments from constructing their own broadband services. They needed an alternative.

The Steuben County Fiber Network, the builder and operator of the region's broadband network is functionally a subsidiary of the Steuben County Community Foundation. Early in the process, the foundation invested \$200,000 to launch the effort. Over the years, the foundation has raised another \$4.3 million in grants and other local government funds to build out the operations. Building the network also took significant time. The first discussion occurred in December 1999. The first connection happened in 2003.

The Steuben County Fiber Network now runs for 150 miles and offers 147 connections to 88 customers. This critical community network is the backbone for 911 communications, all schools and libraries, the community hospital, many businesses, other fiber networks, and three national cell phone companies. What's more, local leaders say the network gives the region a competitive advantage both in giving local entrepreneurs a leg up but also in attracting outside businesses looking for communities with high quality, affordable broadband service. It's been an economical investment too. It cost the region \$4.5 million to construct, but the foundation estimates that it saved the region \$5.5 million in service fees that would've been charged by private companies to provide broadband service. Annually, the network generates profits of just shy of \$100,000, and \$16,500 of that is return on the foundation's investment and is given out in community grants.

Next Steps Workplan

The workplan outlined here focuses on several specific areas. As stated earlier in this report, limited resources are the root of the challenges in developing a more comprehensive and robust economic development effort in Wayne County. In response, the workplan lays out a Resource Development Strategy for the county to consider. Effective approaches to addressing community and economic development often rely on more collaborative organizational structures – an overarching organization that helps identify, promote and ultimately realize the community’s vision for prosperity. An Organizational Development Strategy focused on Wayne Tomorrow is addressed in the workplan. Finally, the Wayne Tomorrow process identified a lengthy list of priorities. The workplan identifies four priorities and important proposed next steps to advancing those priorities.

Resource Development Strategy

It is important to distinguish between resources needed to support the community and economic development organization infrastructure in Wayne County and the resources needed to support specific programs. The proposed Resource Development Strategy is organized into two categories:

Organizational Support Resources and Program Support Resources.

Strategy and Next Steps for Building Organizational Support Resources	
Objective	Specific Tasks
Capture a larger share of state and federal resources designated for county-level community and economic development.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with county commissioners to consider how the Planning Department/WEDCO could support a shared part-time or contracted grant writer position; identify other potential partners who might benefit from shared grant writer (e.g., Chamber, Workforce Alliance). 2. Create a Grant Resources page on the WEDCO and County websites and promote to organizations in the county; include links to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Center for Rural Pennsylvania Resources page b. PA DCED Program page c. NEPA ARC page d. NEPA EDA page
Work with the Wayne County Community Foundation to create the Wayne Tomorrow Operating Endowment Fund, proceeds of which will support operations of Wayne Tomorrow structure, organization and outreach.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet with foundation staff and share examples of endowment funds targeted to economic development (see Appendix A). 2. Develop outreach materials and campaign for attracting donors to the fund. 3. Tie fundraising for the endowment to an overall “5% for Wayne” campaign to capture 5% of Transfer of Wealth anticipated in Wayne County (see Appendix B).

Strategy and Next Steps for Building Program Support Resources	
Objective	Specific Tasks
Identify ways to reallocate existing public and philanthropic grant resources to address specific capital needs, and potentially attract more private sector resources.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convene members of Slow Money group, community foundation staff, local bankers and entrepreneurs to identify the most critical capital needs. 2. Develop an inventory of capital resources (public, private, philanthropic) that are available to support economic development and identify gaps between supply of capital and demand for capital. 3. Consider how existing grants could be re-programmed to fill gaps including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Wayne Economic Growth Fund b. Wayne Community Foundation grants
Explore various community capital platforms and identify the most appropriate vehicle(s) to launch in Wayne County.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a working group within Wayne Tomorrow (but advertised to attract new participants) to research and identify the pros/cons of at least the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Kiva – becoming a Kiva Trustee to bring a source of micro loans to area entrepreneurs b. ioby – as a platform for specific community-generated projects that impact community and economic development 2. Explore how Day of Giving (sponsored by Wayne County Community Foundation) might be extended to support specific community and economic development projects in addition to the more traditional support for nonprofits.

Organizational Development Strategy

The organizational development strategy is focused primarily on Wayne Tomorrow – strengthening both organization and outreach to better achieve its objectives.

Objective	Tasks
Create a visible and well-structured Wayne Tomorrow Community Prosperity Network to oversee action on community priorities and conduct outreach that engages the broader community in both the work and the celebration of success.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a Network Manager position that is jointly supported by members of the Network. The manager would assume responsibility for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Promotion of the Network’s activities and priorities b. Tracking and reporting on progress

	<p>across the priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Maintaining a robust and up-to-date web and social media presence in the community d. Managing the network organization including meetings, grant seeking and reporting, and the work of the Executive Committee and the working groups <p>Ideally this position would be housed at an organization represented on the Executive Committee but supported in the short-term by contributions from Network members. Longer term, endowment proceeds would begin to support this position.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Create a more formal governance structure for the Network including an Executive Committee with two co-chairs who will lead meetings, oversee the Network Manager and ensure that the Network’s objectives are met. 3. To better support and encourage volunteers, identify up to three annual priorities for action and form a working group around each priority. Each working group should be charged with developing, with support from the Network Manager, an annual work plan with identified activities, outputs and outcomes that will be tracked and reported at Network meetings.
<p>Create and execute a defined outreach plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the vehicle for and frequency of communications to the county on the work of the Network; consider a monthly e-newsletter with bi-monthly social media posts. 2. Municipal outreach through regular township or borough meetings on a bi-monthly basis at a minimum. 3. Quarterly public updates held at community hubs around the county with the final public update being an annual Wayne Tomorrow Summit.

Priority Identification and Implementation

The Wayne Tomorrow process resulted in the identification of 10 priority areas to “improve and grow our communities:”

1. Stourbridge Project/Co-Working Space
2. Sterling Business & Technology Park
3. Marketing and Communications
4. Food Delivery Systems and Agriculture Development
5. Youth Projects
6. Broadband/Technology
7. Community Hubs
8. Education/Workforce Development
9. Recreation
10. Energy

While some of these priorities are “owned” by a specific organization (e.g., Sterling Business & Technology Park strategy driven by WEDCO), a volunteer-led effort like Wayne Tomorrow needs a more refined, short-list of priorities to organize around and implement. Based on the results of this assessment, four areas are prioritized in the workplan that follows: entrepreneurial ecosystem, talent development, community hubs and infrastructure. The next steps identified for each seek to build connections between the priorities so that efforts to advance one priority have a positive impact on the others.³³

Priority #1 – Strengthen the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

The assessment identified five areas where the ecosystem could be strengthened in Wayne County. One area, capital access, is being addressed through the recent LSA grant to create a \$300,000 local Revolving Loan Fund. The recommendation above to explore becoming a KIVA Trustee is another response to identified capital gaps. In combination with the strong local banks, these two interventions will help to address the micro, early stage capital needs of entrepreneurs in the county. A second area, leveraging the Stourbridge Project, is addressed in the three priority areas included in the workplan below.

Next Steps for Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem		
Objective	Tasks	Resource Requirements
Prioritize youth entrepreneurship programming in K-12	1. Create a working group including high school career coordinators, 4H Cooperative Extension educator, business leaders, the Chamber and	1. Establish a youth entrepreneurship fund at Wayne County Community Foundation and

³³ While not included in the list of priorities addressed in this report, some discussion of the role of tourism in the Wayne County economy may also be warranted, given the natural assets of the region and the organizational infrastructure working on tourism in the county.

	<p>Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance to explore existing curriculum including Lemonade Day, Junior Achievement, EntrepreneurShip Investigation (4H) and Youth Entrepreneur Academy (Chamber program).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Connect K-12 entrepreneurship efforts to internship project of the Workforce Alliance. 3. Consider ways to host youth entrepreneurship activities at Stourbridge to build broader awareness of that resource among youth in the county. 	<p>approach successful entrepreneurs to support programming.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Leverage existing programming through 4H (ESI), Chamber (YEA) and Junior Achievement that require volunteers but limited financial resources
Demonstrate stronger community support for entrepreneurship	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a more robust online resource directory for entrepreneurs, building on existing resource page for Workforce Alliance. 2. Establish a monthly Entrepreneur Spotlight in regular WEDCO, county or Chamber newsletters and social media. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build from ARC entrepreneurial ecosystem inventory data for Wayne County 2. Assign as task for Wayne Tomorrow Community Prosperity Network Manager
Provide more on-site, in-county business assistance resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Working with SBDC at University of Scranton, establish regular bi-monthly office hours (one day/week) at Stourbridge Project. 2. Establish a mentor network or promote participation in the NEPA SCORE chapter to build on the retiree resources that exist in the region 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outreach to the business community via visitation and social media

Priority #2 – Strengthen the Talent Development System

Since the initial assessment interviews were completed and recommendations developed, there has been important progress made to strengthen the talent development system. The Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance is providing stronger coordination and leadership to create a networked system for talent development that includes CareerLink Services, a Career Academy, development of an internship program, efforts to bring the SHINE program to Wayne and Pike counties, and ongoing discussions with Northeast Pennsylvania Regional College which might provide an opportunity to bring two-year post-secondary education opportunities to the county.

The most immediate need identified in the assessment that remains to be addressed is building stronger connections between the business and education communities. The activities described below do not have large resource implications but will require intentional effort to convene these parties and identify opportunities to take action.

Next Steps to Strengthen the Talent Development System		
Objective	Tasks	Resource Requirements
Build stronger relationships between business and education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify a local industry sector with pressing workforce challenges and employers with an interest and willingness to partner with local educators at the high school level and beyond. 2. Convene a small working group of employers and educators to discuss pressing talent needs and potential solutions, including members of existing Occupational Advisory Committees (if relevant) along with other major employers operating in the target sector. 3. Choose at least one potential solution to act upon. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WEDCO and Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance leadership to identify key participants 2. Financial resources to be identified based on action taken

Priority #3 – Create a Network of Community Hubs

Wayne County has a number of community spaces that could form the backbone of a strong network of community hubs – seven community libraries, The Cooperage, the Stourbridge Project and Hawley Silk Mill. Creating this network could be accomplished with few additional financial resources since each has its own budget. The workplan below focuses on coordinated programming that relates to other priorities.

Next Steps to Create the Wayne Community Hub Network		
Objective	Tasks	Resource Requirements
Create an identified network of community hubs that support talent development and entrepreneurship efforts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Created a Wayne Business and Talent Development Hub “brand” or logo that ties together each site. 2. Host entrepreneurship training, meetups and youth entrepreneurship activities at Hub sites. 3. Identify additional business needs that can be met through the Hubs including shared space, equipment, etc. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider a logo design contest to generate interest in the county 2. Build on the existing community training site infrastructure in the libraries to add business resources 3. Consider sponsorships by local businesses of community hub sites

Priority #4 - Addressing the Broadband Infrastructure Challenge

Many of the workplan elements identified above are intentionally designed to be tackled in the next twelve months. The endowment building strategy and addressing broadband challenges are necessarily longer-term activities. However, there are two shorter-term steps that can be taken to address broadband access and use.

Addressing the Broadband Infrastructure Challenge		
Objective	Tasks	Resource Requirements
Develop a series of short-term interventions that increase both access and use of broadband technology across the county	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Host Internet 101 classes for community members at the community hubs, with a focus on using hot spot technology 2. Host e-commerce and social media training for entrepreneurs to build their online IQ 3. Establish a hot spot lending program at community hubs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with SBDC to identify existing programs that could be brought to the Hubs 2. Tap into and advertise the availability of federal and/or state resources to support Internet access for low-income residents (e.g., Lifeline program) 3. Consider sponsorships by local businesses of internet hot spots and programming

Appendix A: Building a Community and Economic Development Operating Endowment

Community foundations are flexible institutions that can adapt to meet the leadership, grantmaking, and even investment needs of the community they serve. Most foundations are relatively skilled at endowment building strategies. The opportunity exists to attract new and engage existing donors through the creation of an operating endowment to support Wayne Tomorrow. A number of communities have taken steps to create endowed funds through their community foundation with the explicit purposes of supporting the operations and programming of a local economic development entity. Some examples include:

- [Holt County \(NE\) Economic Development Fund](#) – established to support the operations of the Holt County Economic Development Agency
- [Greencastle/Putnam County \(IN\) Economic Development Center Endowment](#) – established to support the programs and operations of the county’s economic development organization
- [Consolidated Communications Endowment Fund for Economic Development and Community Leadership](#) – endowment started by a corporate partner at Southeast Illinois Community Foundation in support of economic development
- [Nonprofit Endowment Funds](#) – established at Oregon Community Foundation to provide ongoing operating and program support

There are a number of strategies that community foundations have used to successfully build endowments including:

- Challenge grants – These are more sizeable donations that are pledged to an endowment fund if certain fundraising targets are raised from other donors. The Kansas Health Foundation used challenge grants to build endowment capacity in community foundations across the state over the past decade. Other sources of challenge grants to consider include hospital foundations, significant corporations or local businesses, other foundations and long-term residents in the community. Challenge grants help to motivate broader community engagement and support because of they make individual gifts go farther.
- “All Giver” strategies – [Shickley, Nebraska](#) (population 341) has built a \$2 million endowment over the past two decades, raising \$750,000 in unrestricted endowment in the last two years alone. The foundation’s strategy is to seek 100% participation from community residents by creating a range of giving opportunities. Alumni are approached at an annual holiday event and those who give sport stickers indicating their donation. The Longhorn Club (named for the school mascot) was created to support long-term giving by young families. Each family commits to \$25/month to the unrestricted endowment and there are now 37 members.

- The Community Foundation of Northern Colorado has created a toolkit for nonprofit organizations in its service area that are interested in creating endowments. The [toolkit resources](#) could be useful guides for a Wayne Tomorrow Endowment building campaign.

While endowment building is a longer-term strategy, it should be combined with a more immediate outreach strategy to share the priority activities being undertaken by Wayne Tomorrow and early successes. Those successes become the story for why continued investment is important and how supporting the endowment is necessary to create a stronger Wayne Tomorrow now and in the future.

Appendix B: Capturing Transfer of Wealth

The Center for Rural Pennsylvania commissioned its first Transfer of Wealth™ analysis in 2008 with [an update](#) completed in 2016. That study, completed by the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship (now LOCUS Impact Investing), estimated that \$2.6 trillion would transfer from one generation to the next in the state from 2016 to 2065. If just 5% of that transfer was captured into endowments benefitting communities, \$130 billion in expanded philanthropic capacity would be realized across the state. For Wayne County, an estimated \$12 billion will transfer over the next 50 years; capturing just 5% would generate an additional \$600 million into endowments over that same period.

These numbers can seem daunting. However, community foundations have used the Transfer of Wealth™ results as a call to action. For rural counties like Wayne, this transfer of wealth is likely to represent a **loss** of wealth. As estates are settled when a local resident dies, most of those dollars will follow the heirs out of the county. It is this potential loss of wealth, at least a portion of which was built in Wayne County, that has motivated community foundations to launch campaigns to capture a small portion of the anticipated transfer into local endowments. As a result, the wealth can remain close to home and support the community in perpetuity.

A number of strategies have been used to claim some of this wealth transfer including:

- [Keep 5 in Kansas](#) – focused on getting donors to leave just 5% of their estates to a local community foundation
- [Endow Kentucky](#)–Kentucky Philanthropy Initiative used a Transfer of Wealth™ study to launch a “5% Give Back” media campaign and to advocate successfully for a state tax credit for gifts to endowments across the state
- [Nebraska Community Foundation \(NCF\)](#) – One of the first states to commission a Transfer of Wealth™ study in 2001 (and again in 2011), NCF used the data in 2002 to talk with community affiliate funds about building endowments by capturing “just 5%” of the anticipated transfer. At that time, there were only 18 planned gift in the entire state totaling \$6 million. In 2011, the new study estimated that \$600 billion would transfer over the next 50 years. In 2017, NCF affiliates have received 307 planned gifts estimated at \$61 million
- [Barry Community Foundation \(MI\)](#) – This foundation used the Transfer of Wealth™ estimates as motivation to ramp up endowment building efforts on behalf of the community. They used the 5% figure – \$43 million – as the centerpiece of community conversations – “What would it mean for Barry County to have an endowment of that size?” They coupled an “ask” with a vision for the community that came out of these conversations – a set of priorities for building a stronger community over time. The end result has been growth in their endowment from \$350,000 in 1995 to almost \$35 million in 2018.