



2023

ANNUAL REPORT



June 2023 Hallmark II Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, photo courtesy of Hallmark Cards, Inc.

"Growing Liberty"

Liberty Economic Development Corporation
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www.thinklibertymo.com



Our Organization

Mission: Promote economic growth in the Liberty, Missouri area.

The Liberty Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) is charged with helping the Liberty area grow and prosper. LEDC is built on a solid foundation of teamwork as a public/private partnership among business leaders, city and county government, education, and pro-business and civic organizations. Since January 2004, LEDC has focused its efforts on business attraction that leads to job creation, retention and expansion of existing businesses, continuous improvement, and communication.

Our Focus

Business Attraction

LEDC is tasked with marketing the strengths of the Liberty area to attract new business. Through its attraction efforts, LEDC promotes the assets and advantages of conducting business in Liberty to prospects outside the Liberty area, the community as a whole, and LEDC Investors.

Business Retention and Expansion

We are committed to retaining the existing businesses in the Liberty area and facilitating their growth and expansion. LEDC serves a critical role as an ombudsman for the business community to identify tools and resources that encourage and support business growth, thus creating and maintaining a healthy business climate.

Strengthening the Organization

LEDC must raise its own operating funds, which includes contracting with public entities for economic development services, as well as soliciting investment dollars from private sector partners. This provides an opportunity to identify operational improvements and demonstrate the impact and achievements LEDC has each year with a constant focus on effectiveness.

Improve Communications

Through communication, LEDC educates its audiences about economic development and the impact it has on the community. LEDC serves multiple audiences and must tailor its message and delivery to each. We reach investors, site selection professionals, the commercial real estate network, and small business owners and entrepreneurs through events, articles, civic involvement, presentations, and progress reports.



Letter From LEDC Chairman Greg Crowley



Dear Liberty Economic Development Stakeholders,

As we approach the end of another remarkable year, I am honored to reflect on the collective achievements and milestones that define Liberty's economic landscape. The past twelve months have been a testament to our community's resilience, collaboration, and unwavering commitment to fostering sustainable growth.

In the face of economic challenges, Liberty Economic Development has remained steadfast in its mission to cultivate a thriving and dynamic economic environment. Our dedicated team, in partnership with local businesses, government entities, and community leaders, has navigated uncertainties with resilience, adaptability, and a shared vision for a prosperous future.

I am delighted to report that Liberty has experienced notable advancements in key sectors, with innovative initiatives driving economic expansion and job creation. Our commitment to nurturing a diverse and inclusive business environment has yielded positive outcomes, contributing to the overall well-being of our community. In 2023 alone, Liberty welcomed a new Amazon fulfillment center, a new Hallmark distribution center expanding that company's presence in Liberty, the expansion of Ceva's presence in the community, AT&T, Sleep Outfitters, and U.S. Motor Works. Since 2019 13 companies have called Liberty Home, over 650 million in investment, over 6 million sq. feet built and over 4,000 new jobs!

Key to our success has been our successful collaboration with local developers, which has not only bolstered economic opportunities but has also enhanced the quality of life for our residents. These partnerships exemplify the spirit of cooperation that defines Liberty, showcasing what can be achieved when diverse stakeholders come together for a common goal.

As we bid farewell to 2023, let us acknowledge and celebrate the collective efforts that have positioned Liberty as a beacon of economic vitality in the region. Our achievements would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the The City of Liberty, The Liberty Economic Development team, our valued partners, and the businesses that call our community home.

Looking ahead to 2024, Liberty Economic Development is poised for even greater accomplishments. We will continue to foster innovation, attract investment, and support initiatives that enhance the economic prosperity of our region. Our commitment to sustainable development, job creation, and community well-being remains unwavering.

In closing, I extend my deepest gratitude to each member of the Liberty Economic Development family for your contributions, dedication, and passion throughout the year. Together, we have laid the foundation for a future filled with promise and opportunity.

Wishing you all a joyous holiday season and a prosperous New Year!

Sincerely,
Greg Crowley
Chairman, Liberty Economic Development

2023-2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Raghu Adiga
Liberty Hospital

Dan Hegeman
Evergy

Tony Reinhart
Ford Motor Co.

Mayor Greg Canuteson
City of Liberty

Walter Holt
Pony Express Bank

Jim Rucker
The Rucker Group

Greg Crowley
Crowley Furniture

Andy Hrasky
Magna International Inc.

Brenda Slivinski
Liberty HyVee

Shane Davolt
GM Peters Insurance

Dr. Elizabeth Macleod Walls
William Jewell College

Brandon Smith
City of Liberty

John Fisher
Central Bank of the Midwest

Mikenna McEntee
Amazon MCI9

Ellen Todd
Curry Real Estate Services

Matt Fortier
LMV Automotive Systems, LLC

Dennis McIntire
B&B Theatres

Dr. Jeremy Tucker
Liberty Public Schools

Ed Grusch
Hallmark

Kent Peterson
Hawthorn Bank

Curt Wenson
City of Liberty, Ex-Officio

Mark Harding
The Scarbrough Group

Gayle Potter
Liberty Area Chamber

Gerald Wicklund
Wicklund's Carstar

2023-2024 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chairman – Greg Crowley
Owner, Crowley Furniture

Member at Large – Andy Hrasky
Group General Manager, Cosma
International Group of Magna
International Inc.

Past Chairman – Tony Reinhart
Director of Government and Community
Relations, Ford Motor Company

Member at Large – Dr Raghu Adiga
President and Ceo, Liberty Hospital

Vice Chairman – Kent Peterson
Market President, Hawthorn Bank

Member at Large – Mayor Greg Canuteson
Mayor, The City of Liberty

Treasurer – Dennis McIntire
VP of Strategic Development and
Innovation, B&B Theatres

Member at Large – Brandon Smith
Economic and Business Development
Manager, The City of Liberty

Secretary – Jim Rucker
Broker/Owner, The Rucker Group -
@Re/Max Revolution

LEDC STAFF



Ralph Boots
Executive Director



Jolinda McClintock
LINK Business Facilitator/
Administrative Assistant

LAST 5 YEARS OF GROWTH IN LIBERTY!



2019-2023

DAKOTA BODIES 2019

KENCO - 2020

SCARBROUGH - 2021

BERLIN PACKAGING - 2022

WALGREENS - 2022

REVLOGICAL - 2022

AMAZON MCI9 - 2022

AMAZON MCI3 - 2023*

CEVA - 2023*

AT&T - 2023*

HALLMARK DISTRIBUTION CENTER II - 2023*

SLEEP OUTFITTERS - 2023*

U.S. MOTOR WORKS - 2023*

SIX PROJECTS IN 2023 *



INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

Investment	\$650,000,000
Acreage	580+
New Jobs	4,000+
Square Feet	6,000,000+
Property Taxes Without Developments (over the life of abatements)	\$63,000
Property Taxes With Developments (over the life of abatements)	\$29,500,000

These are numbers based on development that has actually gone vertical

2023 RIBBON CUTTINGS



- In June Hallmark celebrated the opening of their 850,000 sq. ft. Liberty II distribution center in Liberty off Shepherd Road with a ceremonial ribbon cutting. The Liberty II facility is an expansion of the current Liberty Distribution Center which has been in Liberty for over 50 years. With this expansion Hallmark anticipates more than 1,400 full-time employees working between the two facilities and about 150 seasonal part-time employees. Expanding the Liberty campus honors Hallmark's commitment to sustainability by reducing transportation needs and using an estimated one million fewer cardboard boxes annually for outbound shipping. Photo courtesy of Hallmark Cards, Inc.



- Amazon leadership, partners and Liberty city leaders gathered at the over 1 million sq. ft. bulky item facility in June to celebrate the opening of Amazons MCI3 bulky item site. At the celebration Amazon generously donated \$10,000 to the Liberty Parks and Recreation Foundation.

Liberty Hospital announces intent to partner with The University of Kansas Health System



- After an eight-month search in 2023 for a health system partner, Liberty Hospital announced its intent to pursue a partnership with The University of Kansas Health System. Leaders at both organizations have signed and executed a non-binding Letter of Intent (LOI) to partner. The signing of the LOI also marks the start of the final phase of due diligence and partnership planning between our organizations. The hospitals expect to complete the work and announce the details of the final agreement early in 2024 around the time of Liberty Hospital's 50th anniversary. It is already abundantly clear that the benefits of this partnership will be numerous and far-reaching for the patients, staff, providers and Northland communities. As part of The University of Kansas Health System, Liberty Hospital and clinics will be at the forefront of today's healthcare needs, and we will continue our significant contributions to the local economy and community. See more information and follow the progress at www.libertyhospital.org/herewegrow.

HR ROUNDTABLE



- LEDC created an HR Roundtable for Liberty employers to collaborate on HR related issues such as transportation, child care and mental health.

CONSULTANT TRIP TO NYC



- Executive Director Ralph Boots attended a consultant event to NYC through the Missouri Partnership.

LEDC 2023 Project Activity

- 56 Project Leads
- 29 Submitted Proposals
- 6 Projects Located in Liberty
- 40 Business and Industry Visits

LINK 2023 Activity

- 72 Businesses Total
- 208 Total Contacts
- Top 3 types of assistance
 1. Marketing/Social Media
 2. Business Concept
 3. Research & Referrals

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



- December 2022 we loaded a bus full of LEDC Investors for a Windshield Tour of Liberty Industrial projects that have been built, are in progress, or breaking ground in the near future. We made a stop at Hallmarks Liberty II facility for a hard hat tour and presentation from reps from Opus Development and Hallmark. Cutter Gale with GaleHart Communities spoke about the planned Montage development during our tour.



- We celebrated Mayor Lyndell Brenton's 24 years of civil service and 10 years as The City of Liberty's Mayor. Congratulations Mayor Brenton!





- Liberty Public School students took part in the “Workforce of Tomorrow” LEDC Investor Event at Liberty High School in April. LPS Superintendent Dr. Tucker moderated a group of LPS students on what they are looking forward to in their future employers. The students did an amazing job sharing their insights on the future workforce.

- Ashur our LEDC Spring 2023 Northland CAPS Intern was in the Global Business and Logistics strand. Ashur looks forward to studying business management and specializing in marketing in college. While he is interned for LEDC he was able to help small businesses with their social media marketing, and business research projects. He also helped us with a lot of LEDC Business!



- In May LEDC Investors got a behind the scenes look at the Amazon MCI9 sort facility!



- In September The City of Liberty launched a pilot program with IRIS, the app-based rideshare service offered by the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA), RideCo and zTrip.



2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



- September's Investor Event was held at T-SHOTZ. A solar specialist from MC Power gave a presentation about new trends in the solar industry and a security expert at ACS (Automated Control Systems) talked about the latest smart technology to help keep your building secure. After the presentations, we enjoyed playing some golf from the reserved top floor bays courtesy of MC Power and ACS!



- Paige was our LEDC Fall 2023 Network 53 Intern from Liberty High School. During her time with us not only did she support the LEDC side but she worked with our LINK Business Facilitation program to assist small businesses within the Liberty area. She is pictured assisting Follow Your Wave a Liberty based business with their marketing. Paige enjoyed getting exposure of the business field through her internship with the Liberty EDC.



Kent Peterson, LEDC Vice Chairman; Adam Hill, Scarbrough President & COO; Greg Crowley, LEDC Chairman



- In October Investors gathered at the Scarbrough Warehousing site in Liberty where Adam Hill The Scarbrough Group President & Chief Operating Officer Adam Hill spoke about the state of the economy and how it affects international trade and logistics.



COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS



- "Keeping Your Business Safe" & "Business Financial Planning" were the focus for our January and May community workshops. In January we gathered at CakeWalk Events, our panel of experts; Clay County Sheriff Will Akin, Lt. Nathan Mulch with the Liberty Police Department, Jackie Murtha Vice President of Clay County Savings Bank & Clay County Prosecuting Attorney Zachary Thompson talked about ways to help our Liberty Businesses stay safe. In May we met in the Corbin Mill board room and Rob Jones with RC Jones and Associates and Tim Guy with BancCard of America talked about things your business can do to stay on top of their business finance. These meetings are a collaborative effort between Liberty Economic Development Corporation, Historic Downtown Liberty, Inc. & Liberty Area Chamber of Commerce to support our Liberty area small businesses!



Thank you to our LINK Resource Team!



- Our LINK Business Facilitation Resource Team meets monthly to brainstorm ways to support our Liberty Small Businesses. This year we asked a couple of businesses that have participated in the LINK program to give presentations to the team! Thank you to Zipplicity Unluggage and Dream on Together Marketing for coming in to talk about your business concept and brainstorm directly with our resource team on ways to help your business grow!

We would like to recognize and thank the members of LINK Resource Team:

Ralph Boots, LEDC
 Jason Davey, Graham Law Group
 Conner Hazzelrigg, William Jewell College
 Walter Holt, Pony Express Bank

Bob Martin, Martin Marketing
 Curt McCoy, MFS Design
 Brandon Smith, The City of Liberty
 Michael Froeschl, Froeschl CPA's & Advisors

Kent Peterson, Hawthorn Bank
 Jeff Watt, Liberty City Council & Farmers Insurance
 Barry Holst, Victory Sign Company
 Chris Todd, Curry Real Estate Services

2023 LEDC INVESTORS

LEADERSHIP LEVEL



CHAIRMAN LEVEL



EXECUTIVE LEVEL



PRINCIPAL LEVEL

B&B Theatres
Evergy
Gilmore Bell PC**
Hawthorn Bank
Liberty Area Chamber of Commerce
Liberty Hy-Vee
Liberty Public Schools
The Opus Group
Pony Express Bank**
West Rock

PARTNER LEVEL

Ameren
BCCM Construction*
BMG Advisors**
BOS- Bank of Springfield**
Capitol Federal
Central Bank of the Midwest
Commerce Bank
CMT Trucking
Curry Real Estate Services
Don Fletcher
Farmer's Insurance -
The Watt Agency
Froeschl CPAs & Advisors
GaleHart Communities
GM Peters Agency, Inc.
Liberty Aggregates
McCownGordon
MC Power
Piper Sandler & Co.
The Rucker Group - TRG
Universal Construction

ASSOCIATE LEVEL

AGC Engineers
ACS Automated Control Systems
Amazon
Bonaventure
Clay County EDC*
Clay County Savings Bank
Dakota Bodies
Emery Sapp & Sons
MFS Designs
Newmark Zimmer
ReeceNichols Real Estate, Charles Small
Russ Weathers
Septagon Construction
S&S Field of Dreams
Spaces Inc.
Jim & Lisa Cooper - RE/Max Revolution
The Scarbrough Group
Turner Construction Company
Veterinary Center of Liberty,
Dr. Alan Rohlfing
Unite Private Network*
Wicklund's Carstar
Withers Brant Igoe & Mullennix PC

THANK YOU!

We would like to thank all of our Investors for your commitment and support.

Special recognition to our new Investors.

*New Investors

**Increased Investments