

# HAMILTON COUNTY ALLIANCE

*Enhancing the Economic Health and Quality of Life in Hamilton County*

Since its establishment in 1992, the Hamilton County Alliance has served as an organization focusing on a singular goal: to promote economic development for Hamilton County, Indiana, thereby improving the quality of life for its residents. Operating as an independent, private not-for-profit organization, the Alliance serves the entirety

of Hamilton County. Funded by both the public and private sectors, the organization is governed by a 17-member Executive Committee and

Board of Directors of more

than 50 individuals.

These dedicated individuals concentrate their activities on attracting and retaining businesses that create a strong

tax base through the provision of high quality jobs and capital investment.

## A FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

The Alliance pursues several tightly focused strategies to stimulate economic development in the county. The organization's professional staff works to attract new employers from the national and international business arenas. They utilize economic research conducted on Hamilton County and competitor markets to promote the county as a premier business location in the Midwest. The Alliance does this through an outreach marketing program including online advertising, print media and direct sales. In addition, the Alliance has staff dedicated to the retention and expansion of existing Hamilton County businesses. Recognizing the importance of entrepreneurship,

the Alliance initiated a program in 2005 and has since spun this effort off into an independent entity (Entrepreneurship Advancement Center). The Alliance also works to facilitate cooperative economic development efforts among the county's governmental units. Key economic development-related services provided by the Alliance include:

- ▶ Attracting new business to the county
- ▶ Retaining existing businesses and helping them to grow
- ▶ Collecting and preparing demographic reports keyed to communities, the county, or specific locations
- ▶ Maintaining a database of available sites and buildings
- ▶ Providing a web presence to expedite the distribution of Hamilton County information across the internet
- ▶ Assisting businesses in obtaining financial resources to provide their employees with new skills and technology training
- ▶ Assisting communities in developing economic development strategies and policies that enhance their position and competitiveness in the marketplace
- ▶ Marketing Hamilton County to the national and international marketplace.

In addition, the Alliance actively assists companies in accessing the variety of programs, including tax credits, grants, and exemptions, offered by the State of Indiana to assist business growth.

The varied initiatives of the Alliance have resulted in a proven track record of success. Since its inception in 1992, Alliance-assisted projects have generated an estimated \$10 million in local tax revenue for Hamilton County governments. More than \$1.1

*Carmel: 'round about right*



billion in new capital investment has been generated by new and expanding businesses. Over 250 companies assisted by the Alliance have made more than 11,000 new job commitments. Alliance job creation efforts have supported the construction of more than 7,300 homes in the county. The organization's aggressive existing business outreach efforts have generated more than \$13 million in grant awards to enable companies to upgrade their employee skill sets. Some of the most visible projects assisted by the Alliance include ADESA, SMC, Porter Engineered Systems, Midwest ISO, Sallie Mae, Helmer, ITT, Liberty Mutual, IMMI, Firestone, Walker Information, Comcast, and ACES Power Marketing.

### ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF LIFE

Realizing that a healthy economic base is the cornerstone for a vibrant community, the Alliance closely monitors the metrics for measuring its success in enhancing the quality of life for the residents of the county. Those barometers have consistently pointed to the organization's successes in capitalizing on Hamilton County as good place to live, work, and play.

In 2008, *Forbes.com* identified Hamilton County, Indiana as the best place to raise a family in America. More recently, Fishers and Carmel were both recognized in 2010 by *Money Magazine* as Top 15 Places to Live in the U.S. Other national accolades for Hamilton County include its ranking by *American City Business Journals* as a top ten county in its "National Quality of Life Ratings." Noblesville, Indiana, has made a national list of top 10 communities for "Best Places to Raise a Family" based on standard of living, education, health and safety, lifestyle, and population profile. Fishers was also ranked by *Money Magazine* in 2005 and 2006 on its list of the "Best Places to Live in the

U.S." based on quality of life indicators and opportunity measures including ease of living, health, education, crime, park space, and arts and leisure. Finally, in 2010, Carmel won the Outstanding Achievement Livability Award by the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Reflective of the Alliance's focus on economic development, a *CNN Money* article in 2009 ranked Hamilton County as one of the nation's 25 fastest growing job markets with an increase of 57 percent.

The quality of education offered by a local school district is another critical area for rating the quality of life and, here again, Hamilton County has received high marks. *Forbes/Great Schools* in 2011 identified Carmel Clay Schools as a "Top10 District" in the U.S., the only Indiana school district to make the publication's list. In addition, *Expansion Management Magazine* in 2006 ranked four Hamilton County school districts in its "Gold" category of the top 17 percent of all school districts in the United States.

"Hamilton County has emerged as a premier location for business and families in the Midwest. The collective effort of the Alliance's public and private sector partners has produced a lifestyle unmatched in Indiana. The Alliance will continue to market the qualitative assets of the county



to assure a strong economic future", said Jeff Burt, President, Hamilton County Alliance.

