



E·C·G·R·A
ERIE COUNTY GAMING REVENUE AUTHORITY

**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR'S
REPORT
FOR
OCTOBER
2024**



Board of Managers Meeting

Thursday, September 26, 2024

1:30-2:30 p.m.

Microsoft Teams

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 223 223 369 065

Passcode: ZHo4A4

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Action items**
 - a. Election of Officers
3. **Review**
 - a. Bylaws & Operating Agreement (approved by ERCGP Board)
 - b. Financial Commitments to Date
4. **Breeze Update**
 - a. Expanded service opportunities
5. **Legacy Carrier Status Update**
 - a. American
 - b. United
6. **Other Business**
7. **Adjournment**

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ECGRA Communications Services Report

September 2024

Meeting with Executive Director

Ongoing Social Media Management

Ongoing Consulting

Sep Comms

IMPLEMENTED

September social media posts
2 new graphics created in September
Infinite Eric x ECGRA House Event Photography
Strategic Marketing Planning meeting for fall with Executive Director

IN PROGRESS | 2024 Grant Releases and Graphics

2023–2024 Annual Report graphics

Harborcreek HERT-237 MMA – grant awards

Media advisory and pitching
Press Event
Press release and distribution

Parks Fields and Trails – grant awards

Media advisory and pitching
Press Event
Press release and distribution
Grant recipient graphics

Anchor Building – grant awards

Media advisory and pitching
Press Event
Press release and distribution
Grant recipient graphics

Holiday Graphics

#ECGRAworks content from grant recipients

1





ECGRA Communications Services Report

IN PLANNING

Fall event planning /scheduling (First Assent, Lead Assets, Redevelopment Authority)





ECGRA AWARDS MULTI-MUNICIPAL COLLABORATION GRANT FOR EMERGENCY VEHICLE IN EAST ERIE COUNTY

**GRANTS DESIGNED TO CATALYZE FUNCTIONAL COOPERATION ACROSS ERIE'S 38
MUNICIPALITIES**

NEWS*NEWS***NEWS***NEWS***NEWS***NEWS***NEWS***NEWS***NEWS**

For Immediate Release: October 8, 2024

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ERIE, PA (October 8, 2024) – Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority (ECGRA) announced \$34,000 of funding to support the purchase of a new ambulance for Harborcreek Township Emergency Response Team Program (HTERT), a multi-municipal collaboration between Brookside Fire Company, Fairfield Hose Company and Harborcreek Fire Department.

“ECGRA’s multi-municipal collaborations grants were designed to support this type of outside-the-box problem solving by local leaders across Erie County,” said ECGRA Executive Director Perry Wood. “The HTERT-237 collaboration is remarkable example of how municipalities can work together to solve challenges across geographic and political barriers to benefit their citizens. This investment is fundamental to providing emergency response capabilities for thousands of residents across the east-county.”

ECGRA initially invested \$23,000 to support the purchase of the HTERT-237 ambulance in 2015. Since then, the crew has used the ambulance to respond to more than 2,200 calls.

“ECGRA funding has continuously been invested directly to our communities to help us make the major investments necessary to manage EMS needs of our citizens,” said Dean Peppicello. “By working together, the HTERT has created a proven model to tackle the EMS crisis facing

communities across Pennsylvania. ECGRA funding helps us to continue supporting local volunteer fire departments by assisting in answering emergency calls when department volunteers are unavailable."

The HTERT team has responded to calls in Harborcreek Township and neighboring municipalities including Wesleyville Borough, Lawrence Park, North East and Greenfield Townships. The team responds to a variety of locations including single-family homes, apartment complexes, nursing homes and businesses. They are equipped to respond to structure fires, motor vehicle accidents, advanced life support situations, fall victims and basic patient assistance.

The Multi-Municipal Collaboration Grants were launched in 2012 to catalyze functional cooperation among Erie County's 38 municipalities and to support economic growth and vibrancy in the community. For more information about applying for a multi-municipal grant, visit www.ecgra.org.

An impact investing organization, ECGRA's mission is to empower the nonprofit sector, municipal governments, and economic development agencies to revitalize Erie County. ECGRA is endowed with local share gaming revenue from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania via the Horse Race Gaming Act. Local share gaming revenue is an assessment of the licensed gambling industry in Pennsylvania. ECGRA administers Local Share Gaming Revenue Authority on behalf of Erie County government.

MARKING 50 YEARS OF PRESENCE

Emmaus looking Forward

Granting Hope
Jacqueline Sanchez-Small, OSB, Staff Writer

Children out on boats in Lake Erie, on their first fishing trip, a narrow alleyway transformed into a garden, a walk-in freezer filled with donated food, light streaming through the windows of an art studio: in recent months, Emmaus Ministries brought each of these everyday miracles to life through the help of grants from several organizations.

Jane Wagner, Coordinator of Sister Gus' Kids Cafe, wanted to make this summer especially memorable for the dozens of children participating in the program throughout June and July. The Erie Community Foundation, specifically the William and Ethel Hovis Fund and the Hear Erie's Youth (H.E.Y.) initiative, provided funding for field trips around the city, and for a special gardening project.

The field trips included a matinee at AMC Tinseltown, a day at the Erie Zoo, and an outing to Presque Isle with the SONS of Lake Erie, where the children went fishing and then spent the afternoon at the beach. "For a lot of the kids, those were brand-new experiences. They had never ridden the train at the Zoo, several had never seen a movie in the theater, and most had never been fishing. Even though the Peninsula is so close, it's difficult to get to, so several had never spent time at the beach before. They spent the whole time in the water and never wanted to come out," Jane said.

Meanwhile, at the Kids Cafe's home base on East 10th Street, the children were tending a new garden beside the building. Funded by a grant from H.E.Y!, aimed at bullying prevention, the children planted and tended lettuce, tomatoes, beans, peppers, herbs, and broccoli. "If we can learn how to take care of plants, we can learn to take care of each other and encourage each others' growth," Jane said. They marked the end of the summer program by sharing a salad made with some of the garden's early produce.



Upstairs from the Kids Cafe, Saint Mary's Space to Create, a former Catholic grade school converted into artist studios several years ago, recently benefited from a major grant from Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority (ECGRA), which went toward renovating the facade and glass doors, and installing energy-efficient windows. "It's a beautiful building, and it's important to keep it up, especially since it is full of kids and artists, who really appreciate beauty. Plus, the new windows reduced our energy usage by thirty percent," explained Emmaus Administrative Associate, Margaret Kloecker, who wrote the grant. She added that ECGRA "has done a fantastic job of developing personal relationships in the community and working with us to make sure all our needs are met, not just for day-to-day operations, but for this kind of large scale improvement." (continued on next page)

The Corry Journal

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Wednesday, September 18, 2024

Union City, county officials launch French Creek Trailhead



Maryann Mook/The Corry Journal

Erie County and Union City officials gather around as Merv Troyer of Union City, center, cuts the ribbon on the French Creek Trailhead at Devereaux Park in Union City on Friday.

BY MARYANN MOOK
Correspondent

Outdoor enthusiasts in Union City are now seeing a three-year plan for a trail extension become a reality.

On Friday, officials from the Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development, along with

Erie County Executive Brenton Davis and officials from Union City Borough, the Oil Region Alliance and the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail joined together for a trailhead launch and groundbreaking at Cafilisch/Devereaux parks at Bridge and Willow streets in Union City. The event included a ribbon cutting by Union

City's Merv Troyer and Davis.

This groundbreaking will celebrate the trailhead installation and park improvements at Cafilisch/Devereaux Park partially funded by a \$73,000 grant from the Erie County Greenways Program.

◀ See Trailhead, P.3

Trailhead

(Continued from front page)

Davis said Erie County gave \$73,000 to its Parks Plan for infrastructure.

"The community development is every bit as important as economic development; they have to go hand-in-hand in order to attract good competition and good employees here and have a good quality of life," Davis said. "Parks and recreation play a vital role in choice communities."

The trailhead will serve Union City residents and begin to implement the Erie to Corry Trail Feasibility Study, published in 2023. The Erie to Corry Trail Feasibility Study was produced to extend the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail through Erie County, and this will be the first purpose-built trailhead for this extension. It will also serve the French Creek Trail as outlined in Union City's French Creek Trail Plan, published in 2022.

The trailhead launch was the next step in the development of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail and French Creek Trail, which is a critical regional project to develop the outdoor economy in Erie County.

Jessica Horan, director of Erie County Planning and Community Development, said this trailhead really is the catalyst for two things — the French Creek Trail, and, in a broader sense, a plan to develop the Corry to Erie segment of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail.

"This serves as a trailhead to begin building 39 miles of trail," Horan said. "This will create an opportunity for those going to the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail to go on the Erie to Corry Trail."

"We developed the plan about a year ago and this is the first step in that development."

Union City Borough Manager Cindy Wells said it was an exciting day for Union City. She wanted to

thank the county, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority.

"I'm excited to see the project completed," Wells said. "It's been in the works a couple of years and it should be complete by mid-October."

"This is the completion of another phase of our Parks Comprehensive Plan and French Creek Trail Plan."

Union City's French Creek Trail Plan was published in 2022.

The French Creek Trailhead at Cafilisch/Devereaux parks is marked with a custom bike rack designed with chairs to showcase Union City as a historic town of furniture production.

The proposed Erie to Corry Trail will connect Union City to a growing network of trails in northwest Pennsylvania and beyond. The Erie to Corry Trail Feasibility Study & Tourism Analysis (from 2023) identifies a 39.5-mile trail route that traverses eight townships, two boroughs and two cities in Erie County.

Kim Harris, secretary for the Erie to Pittsburgh trail Alliance and outdoor program manager for the Oil Region Alliance, gave a history of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail.

The Erie to Corry Trail creates a direct connection to the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail, a 270-mile trail that is nearly 70 percent complete. In addition to the Erie to Corry Trail, the Corry junction Greenway Trail north of Corry is the other section of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail that is in Erie County.

Mile zero of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail is at Dobbin's Landing in Erie.

Also, the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail is a major corridor included in the Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition (IHTC), a vision to provide a 1,500 miles-plus multiuse trail network experience across 51 counties in four states — Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio and New York.

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Local buildings to see improvements thanks to Mission Main Street



Carol Fielding/The Corry Journal

Winger Suites and Williams Place on North Center Street is a recent recipient of the 2024 round of ECGRA Mission Main Street Grants for facade renovation.

BY CAROL FIELDING
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Various parts of downtown Corry will once again be receiving a facelift, thanks to the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority's (ECGRA) Mission Main Street Grants.

Six local businesses and one church were recently notified by Impact Corry that they are this year's recipients. Cindy's Mane Event (4 E. Main St.), Creative Edge (6 E. Main St.), Equitable Advisors (16 S. Center St.), Winger Suites and Williams Place (115-117 N. Center St.), Al Xander Co. (36 E. South St.), the former Mierhoff's building (40 N. Center St.) and Relevant Church (100 W. South St.) will each receive \$12,400 in matching funds for building facade renovations.

Main Street in 2013 following studies which demonstrated that improving main streets can drive job creation and promote tourism — two critical economic growth components. With Mission Main Street Grants, ECGRA targets revitalization along county-wide commercial corridors that are home to small businesses, historic structures and special events.

"Facade grants are essential," Gray noted. "They change the perception of what the downtown is. They welcome people to walk into the stores, and once they stop in Corry stores, they come back."

"The building owners come up with \$12,400 themselves, and the other \$12,400 comes from the grant," said Chuck Gray, executive director of Impact Corry.

The program started in 2019 as administered through Impact Corry, but faced delays due to Covid. Eighteen properties received matching funds from 2019 through 2023. While seven properties are funded in this round, there are still 26 more on the waiting list.

"There have been two rounds of funding, but Covid pushed everything back," Gray said. "And some of the businesses that were approved didn't even know if they'd make it through Covid."

ECGRA launched Mission

Brenda Kirik of Williams Place is excited to get started on the renovations to the Winger Suites and Williams Place building.

"This is such an exciting adventure," Kirik said. "I am trying to learn all I can to make good choices. Of course my mind is racing with ideas and possibilities."

Kirik added she is looking forward to deciding on a color scheme and possibly replacing windows and fake stones and removing a ledge left over from the previously removed covered walkways.

Josh Dyne, owner of Dynasty Construction and some of the buildings in this year's grant funding, is also grateful for the grant.

◀ See Street, P2

Street

(Continued from front page)

"The Mission Main Street facade grants have been extremely helpful for us to improve our buildings, and have been a great tool to encourage small businesses to rent our spaces," Dyne said.

The lone church in the bunch — Relevant Church — is looking to make the front of its building more inviting.

"The grant funding will go toward painting the building and making the front door approach more handicap accessible," said Jennifer Utegg of Relevant Church. Utegg said the church also has plans to resurface the parking lot, paint the sign pole and redo the sidewalks, although those projects will not fall under the grant guidelines.

Municipalities and non-profit organizations with

plans to renew historic commercial corridors can apply for Mission Main Street grants. A 1:1 cash match is required for all applicants. Projects may include overhauled streetscapes, revamped landscapes and restored facades.

Gray added Impact Corry is also exploring other grant-giving agencies, including Keystone Communities and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). She admits those avenues are "very competitive."

"The trend for funding is limited for facade renovation, so it takes a while," Gray said. "But we are not giving up, and we are not slowing down. We continue to apply for those 26 on the waiting list. And, there's a six-month turnaround from when we apply to when we hear anything. We appreciate everyone's patience just as much as we appreciate the generous grants from Mission Main Street."