

*From the President*

October 2007

### **CITY HIRES MATT MURPHY AS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

Mayor Jon Costas has announced that Matt Murphy will succeed Charlie McGill as Economic Development Director effective November 5, 2007. McGill will leave the post to become the Executive Director of the Entrepreneurial Excellence Center (EEC). The EEC will partner with Pittsburgh Gateways, a nationally recognized specialist on business incubation and business acceleration processes. The EEC will be housed in a two-story, 15,000 square foot building in the Belden Medical Office Complex currently under construction in the Eastport Business Park. The Center is slated to open in July 2008.

### **MEDICAL RELATED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS**

#### **PORTER**

Porter Hospital has optioned property at the corner of IN 49 and US 6 as a possible site for its new 225-bed facility. This official action was taken as part of Community Health Systems commitment to build a new facility in Porter County in its recent purchase of Porter. Porter officials are thoroughly investigating the site regarding utilities extension and zoning.

#### **MEMORIAL**

The Valparaiso City Council approved a new “Medical, Office & Technology (MOT) District” article for the city zoning ordinance. This new designation will apply to the property east of IN 49, between Vale Park and Burlington Beach Roads. This site was recently purchased by Memorial Hospital of South Bend has recently for its proposed phase-one 100-bed, \$130 million healthcare campus. The groundbreaking for this new facility is anticipated next spring.

### **DEVELOPMENT AROUND AIRPORT**

The VEDC and Porter County Airport Authority formed an Airport Zoning Development Committee (AZDC) to review various development activities in and around the Porter County Municipal Airport. This committee recently visited the South Bend Regional Airport to gain insight and ideas for Porter County development. South Bend has successfully encouraged business development near the airport which is beneficial to both the airport and the city. It has also been the catalyst for creation of new jobs.

Discussion is under way by the AZDC to develop a Request for Proposal to gain professional input for the development of a preliminary document to help guide plans for growth around the airport.

The AZDC was recently awarded a \$25,000 grant through the Porter County Commissioners that was matched by the VEDC bringing the total grant to \$50,000. These funds will be utilized to furnish the VEDC Board with a strategic unified land use and infrastructure plan.

### **ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (EID)**

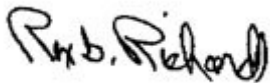
A final push is being made to achieve the necessary amount of signed petitions favoring a downtown EID ordinance. Passage of the ordinance would allow for self-assessment within a defined geographic specified benefit-area and would provide newly created revenue to fund projects and services above and beyond what the City of Valparaiso provides. The initiative has been a challenging endeavor that the VEDC is hopeful will result in an EID ordinance.

### **BUSINESS RETENTION CONTINUES**

Progress continues on business retention. The information obtained from retention calls has shown a need for a strategy to familiarize primary employers with available workforce resources. The Center of Workforce Innovations, under the leadership of Linda Woloshansky, has been most helpful in coordinating informational meetings with firms that are familiar with the educational leaders and agencies that can help them with issues in hiring at various levels.

### **ILLINOIS REAL ESTATE PUBLICATION FOCUSES ON VALPO AS A STRONG COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT MARKET**

*The Illinois Real Estate Journal*, a noted and respected publication based out of Chicago, included a feature story on Valparaiso in its August issue. The article reviewed the area's strong commercial and retail development that has occurred over the past few years. It noted both the residential growth as well as the brisk commercial and retail action that has occurred in this community. This kind of positive feature story coming out of Chicago only enhances the allure and interest of investment projects in Valparaiso.



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