



**City of Bloomington
Office of the Common Council**

August 21, 2024

Economic Development Administration

U.S. Department of Commerce
Chicago Regional Office
111 North Canal Street, Suite 855
Chicago, Illinois 60606-7204

To the Economic Development Administration,

As members of the Bloomington City Council, we express our support for the initiative, in collaboration with Owen and Brown counties, for the EDA's Short Term Planning Program funding to support the creation of a CEDS to secure a designation for a new Economic Development District (EDD) for the State of Indiana.

In unison with our partners we feel that this proposal directly aligns with our local economic goals while having the potential to harness the unique strengths of our region. This proposal focuses on key areas such as workforce development, industry synergies, transportation infrastructure, and the promotion of our rich natural and cultural assets.

Workforce and Industry Synergies:

Pooling the workforce talent across Owen, Monroe, and Brown counties creates a diversified labor pool that is essential for attracting businesses and fostering innovation. Our region is home to robust industries ranging from advanced manufacturing to information technology and healthcare, which stand to benefit greatly from this collaboration.

Natural and Cultural Resources:

Our region boasts significant natural assets, including McCormick's Creek State Park, Monroe Reservoir, and Brown County State Park. The proposed EDD will not only help us preserve these treasures but also enhance them through eco-tourism and sustainable development initiatives. Additionally, our cultural heritage, highlighted by institutions like the Eskenazi Art Museum and the Indiana Limestone Symposium, will be further promoted through coordinated regional efforts.

Climate Action and Sustainability:

An EDD could potentially further expand our regional efforts in regard to climate action. The City of Bloomington is already a part of a collaborative initiative called Project 46, focused on climate resilience and sustainability across the counties of Monroe, Brown, and Bartholomew. The formation of an EDD may provide more unique opportunities to further integrate climate action into our regional economic development plans. By promoting renewable energy, reducing our carbon footprint, and enhancing the resilience of our communities against climate change, we can protect our environment and position our region as a leader in green innovation. This commitment to sustainability will attract businesses and residents who prioritize environmental responsibility and contribute to long-term regional prosperity.

Transportation Corridors:

Strategic planning of transportation infrastructure, such as the Highway 46 corridor and the Monroe County Airport, is critical to improving connectivity and accessibility within the EDD. An efficiently connected transportation network will attract businesses by providing efficient access to regional and national markets.

This regional collaboration, under the guidance of the various economic development corporations, is well-equipped to meet the expectations of an EDD. The ability of our communities to maintain a high level of planning and development reflects our readiness to take on the responsibilities that come with such a designation.

The Bloomington City Council endorses this request to begin work towards a CEDS plan and respectfully urges the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, to approve our application for the EDA's Short Term Planning Program funding to support the creation of a CEDS. We are confident that this will serve as a critical step forward in advancing economic opportunities and prosperity within our region.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

City of Bloomington Common Council

Isabel Piedmont-Smith, President
Bloomington Common Council