**Expanded Focus Will Guide County’s Future**

County Commissioners and County Redevelopment Commission Secure Expertise to Assist in Strategic Growth of County

**Crawfordsville, IN – September 13, 2017 –** Commissioner President, Jim Fulwider announced today they are

seeking to recruit a County Engineer who will be responsible for planning, designing, and supervising construction, maintenance, and repair of County infrastructure. This is a position the county has had vacant for several years. As the Commissioners look to the future growth of Montgomery County, hiring an engineer is a critical first step. “We have a good location in the greater Central Indiana region, but have been somewhat overlooked in past years when it comes to attracting talent and business, said Jim Fulwider, “Mayor Barton has taken the lead on addressing some of the reasons which include availability of workforce, lack of housing inventory, improvements to infrastructure, quality of place amenities, and marketing. We need to support these efforts and position ourselves accordingly to assist in the growth of our community. Up to this point we have done as much as we can, but we need to concentrate our efforts going forward.”

The Commissioners’ expanded focus to-date includes Commissioner John Frey participating in the county-wide workforce development roundtable, as well as all three Commissioners working collaboratively with Mayor Barton on economic development efforts. “Collaboration with the City is just the tip of iceberg, said Fulwider, “We also plan to look at ways to partner with the County Redevelopment Commission in the future.” For now, filling the County Engineer position is a priority. Most importantly because he/she will focus on identifying funding streams such as grants for trails and federal funding for roads, infrastructure, and planning. The Commissioners have tried to do this, but find it is not an effective way to operate. “We really need to work proactively, not reactively, said Commissioner Phil Bane, “Many times we learn of a funding opportunity at the last minute or may miss them all together. The County Engineer will be able to look long-term and create a plan and timeline that will help us maximize these opportunities.” The position is currently listed on the County’s website, on Indeed.com, the Association of Indiana Counties’ website, and through Purdue’s Local Technical Assistance Program’s jobs site.

Another entity that is looking more strategically at the future of our county is the County Redevelopment Commission (RDC). Its President, Ron Dickerson, announced today they have secured contracts with three key service providers. HWC Engineering, who is currently conducting the county’s new Economic Development Plan, has been engaged to provide additional planning and guidance once the plan has been completed. Peters Municipal Consultants will be providing detailed financial analysis and guidance for the TIF District, and CRMorphew Consulting will provide organizational development assistance and economic development planning guidance. “The RDC members unanimously agreed this team of specialists will help develop a

systematic growth plan for our county and set the stage for a more competitive landscape,” said Dickerson. RDC member and County Commissioner, John Frey agrees. “We have to look long-term and prepare for the future. The decisions we make today (or don’t make) will have a lasting impact and it’s our responsibility to create a community that future generations can enjoy.”

CRMorphew Consulting is also on contract with the City of Crawfordsville to create and implement the new economic development program for Crawfordsville and Montgomery County. “Utilizing Cheryl’s expertise in conjunction with the City was a key reason to engage her services for the RDC,” said Gary Booth, RDC member and County Councilman, “We discussed with Mayor Barton to ensure we were not duplicating efforts and also saw this an opportunity to collaborate on economic development initiatives.”

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