

State of the County 2022

On behalf of County Commissioners John Frey, Jim Fulwider and Dan Guard, the County Council, our 12 other elected officials and our 216 employees, we present the 2022 State of the County.

As we enter in to the County's 201st year, we are honored to work for the people of Montgomery County – who continue to make this a great place to live and raise a family.

2022 was an exciting year in which we experienced economic growth, expanded services, continued collaboration, and achieved outstanding performance.

Our economic development efforts continued to yield positive results. The County partnered with Tempur Sealy to complete the construction of Comfort Drive and other infrastructure improvements which will allow Tempur Sealy to begin production in 2023.

In addition, Nucor Steel announced a \$400 million dollar expansion, and the County is working with Nucor to make this expansion a reality. Part of this process involves the planning and design for an overpass on

Nucor Road over US Highway 136. Both the Tempur Sealy and Nucor projects will bring new jobs and growth to Montgomery County.

This economic growth has presented an opportunity to expand the local housing market. The County has engaged home builders in an attempt to attract more homes. And despite adverse economic indicators, the County issued 61 new residential building permits in 2022 and approved a new development that will generate 17 new homes.

The County also approved the design of an extension of Purple Heart Parkway east of U.S. Highway 231. The County is partnering with the City of Crawfordsville on this project in order to open this area to new development and provide new transportation options for residents.

The County will continue to encourage job creation and make necessary infrastructure improvements. In 2022, the County began a review of its land use plan, road plan, and other infrastructure plans in order to accomplish this goal.

The County also partnered with the Montgomery County Community Foundation, the City of Crawfordsville and local employers to support

the Foundation's Early Childhood Education Center project. The County agreed to donate the former County office building on South Boulevard for the location of this Center. This Project will provide much-needed early educational opportunities to children and help promote economic development.

The County also completed the Mace Drainage Project along US 136. This important public health and drainage project was funded primarily with grant funds and contributions from the State of Indiana.

The new County Government Center opened in 2022, and the Center allows residents to conduct business with ease and convenience. In addition, 2022 saw the expansion of services to our citizens. The County implemented a service to alert residents to road closures, improved our website, expanded remote pay options and other services which make interaction with County government more convenient for citizens.

The County continued and expanded its efforts to collaborate with the City of Crawfordsville in order to improve services to County residents. Aside from the Purple Heart Parkway extension, the County and City partnered to provide county-wide emergency medical services, improve

E-911 services, remediate the closed landfill, and obtain State grant funds for roads and parks. These collaboration efforts expand services and save tax dollars.

As we moved away from the COVID health emergency and eased back to a more normal governmental service environment, the County Health Department was recognized for its extraordinary efforts during the pandemic and received the Chamber of Commerce Community Organization of the Year Award.

The Highway Department implemented a comprehensive road improvement and maintenance plan in 2022 and paved 21 miles of roads. The Department obtained State grants for 9 miles of this work, saving County taxpayer dollars.

The Board of Commissioners and Plan Commission worked hard in 2022 to address citizen concerns regarding the possibility of large-scale commercial solar development. The Commissioners adopted amendments to the County Zoning Ordinance to address these concerns.

As the County began its celebration, in 2022, of the 200th anniversary of the establishment of Montgomery County by the State Legislature, other anniversaries were observed. The Town of New Market celebrated its 150th anniversary, and Shades State Park celebrated its 75th anniversary.

2022 was also a time of transition. Tom Mellish, Don Mills, Mark Davidson and Mark Smith ended their service on the County Council. Judge Harry Siamas retired from the Circuit Court and Jennifer Andel finished her final year as County Auditor. Amber Reed and Shari Harrington ended their service, respectively, as Director of our Health Department and Director of our Emergency Management-Homeland Security Agency. We thank all of these public servants for their dedication and commitment to our County.

In 1822, there was much excitement here about the possibilities for this County. When the Legislature carved out Montgomery County from Parke County, there were only about 500 residents in the County. But the local residents were optimistic about the future, and they quickly went about the business of providing for the construction of roads, schools, a courthouse and other facilities in order to serve the needs of the citizens. That mission continues today. And County officials are

committed to continue to work with our residents and businesses to make Montgomery County a great place to live and work. 2022 was a year of exciting opportunities and accomplishments, and we expect that to continue in 2023 and beyond.

Thank you and may God bless our county, state and nation.