



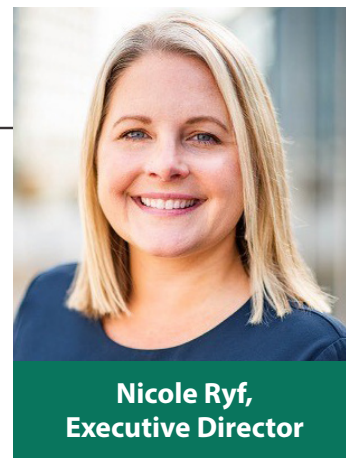
WAUKESHA COUNTY



A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The Waukesha County Center for Growth, founded in 2016, continues to evolve to meet the needs of the businesses and communities within Waukesha County, WI. Through our core functions of business development, municipal engagement, talent pipeline, and gap financing, we ensure that Waukesha County is a premier destination for businesses to invest and grow.

It has been a privilege to get to know county stakeholders and business leaders over my first few months leading the Center for Growth. I have been exceedingly impressed with the business-friendly communities and community-minded business leaders, who all collaborate to advance economic opportunities throughout the county. Throughout this report, you will see the impacts of the economic development efforts of our organization, which are largely possible thanks to our partnerships with organizations including the Waukesha County Business Alliance, Waukesha County, our municipal investors, and the Small Business Development Center.



Nicole Ryf,
Executive Director

The Center for Growth's biggest highlight of 2022 came at the end of the year, when Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow announced that the County would be making a historic \$4.5 million contribution to the GROW Fund. The GROW Fund is the Center for Growth's gap financing tool intended to support business expansions and assist with innovative workforce housing projects. Waukesha County's injection of funds will complement the contributions of our founding bank partners – Bank Five Nine, Johnson Financial Bank, BMO Harris Bank, and Town Bank – to expand our ability to serve the business community.

As we look to 2023, we plan to fully launch our formal business retention and expansion program, refine our small business programming and services, build upon our talent pipeline development efforts, and increase deployment of the GROW Fund, all in the name of helping our businesses and communities grow.

OUR TEAM

CENTER FOR GROWTH STAFF

Nicole Ryf
Executive Director

Waukesha County Business Alliance
As partner organizations, the Waukesha County Center for Growth utilizes the Waukesha County Business Alliance staff to support its mission.

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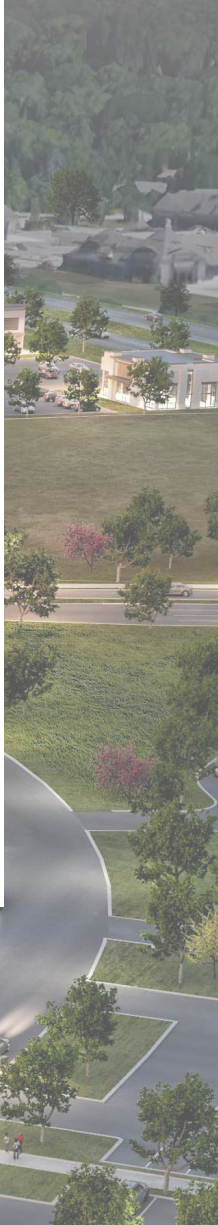
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Mike Shiels
Waukesha County Technical College

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*Waukesha County Center for Growth & Waukesha County
Business Alliance staff.*

WHO WE ARE

The Waukesha County Center for Growth is a non-profit serving as the lead economic development organization for Waukesha County, WI. Created in 2016, we are focused on expanding the County's economic base by ensuring our businesses and communities have access to the resources they need to grow.

Strategic partnerships are critical to our economic development efforts. Through our deep relationships with the Waukesha County Business Alliance, Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Waukesha County, and our municipal partners, the Center for Growth is able to leverage significant resources and expertise to serve existing and prospective businesses.

The key pillars of our work include:

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Center for Growth serves as a one-stop-shop to help existing and prospective businesses succeed and grow in Waukesha County. We work with local, regional, and state partners to help businesses find real estate options, navigate permitting processes, access incentive programs and financing tools, and generally address any challenges they may be facing.

Additionally, our partnership with the SBDC ensures Waukesha County small businesses and entrepreneurs have access to high quality, no-cost counseling services.

MUNICIPAL ENGAGEMENT

The Center for Growth provides technical expertise to Waukesha County and our municipal partners. This includes providing data, economic development best practices, and marketing efforts to promote the County and our municipalities to businesses and talent.

We also serve as the main point of contact with our key regional and state economic development partners, such as the Milwaukee 7 and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation. We help ensure our businesses and communities have access to regional and state programs, while also keeping partners up to date on developments in Waukesha County.

TALENT PIPELINE

Through our invaluable partnership with the Waukesha County Business Alliance, the Center for Growth provides innovative and customized talent pipeline solutions to help businesses address their workforce challenges. Programs like Schools2Skills™ expose middle and high school students to manufacturing careers, while tours of the Waukesha County Technical College Integrated Manufacturing Center provide insights for employers on the breadth and depth of programs available to train their workforce.

The Center for Growth and Alliance also have cultivated strong relationships with institutions of higher education across the region and the state. We are able to facilitate meaningful conversations between employers and educational institutions to ensure businesses' workforce development needs are met.

GROW FUND

The Generating Resources and Opportunity in Waukesha County (GROW) Fund is our unique finance tool intended to help businesses grow and to address the demand for workforce housing. Originally founded by contributions from four local banks and a family foundation, the GROW Fund recently was the beneficiary of an historic \$4.5 million contribution from Waukesha County. •

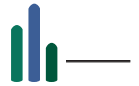
MISSION

To connect businesses and communities with the resources they need to grow in Waukesha County.

VISION

A vibrant economy where businesses and citizens thrive.

A STRONG EMPHASIS ON BUSINESS



One of the pillars of our countywide economic development efforts is to support existing businesses through our Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) program. In 2022, we had the opportunity to visit with over 40 companies to learn more about their businesses and provide resources to help them grow.

Here are some of the highlights:

Waukesha County is THE place where cool products are made. As part of our BRE program, we have had the privilege of touring many local manufacturing operations and learning more about these businesses. These are not your grandfather's manufacturing operations – these plants are highly sophisticated and automated, and their employees are highly-trained. Our local manufacturers are making products we use every day and are constantly innovating. Just a few of our companies (there are many!) making cool products include:

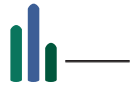
- Glenroy in the Village of Menomonee Falls makes flexible packaging, including packets for Emergen-C and standup pouches for peanut butter and jelly.
- Sussex IM in the Village of Sussex manufactures Mr. Lid Storage Containers and cosmetics packaging.
- INNIO in the City of Waukesha is helping lower the energy industry's carbon footprint by remanufacturing Waukesha Engines.

Many of our businesses are family-owned and have long histories in the Waukesha County community. Our business leaders have a strong passion for their businesses. These companies value their employees and their customers and have had decades of success as a result.

- VJS Construction Services is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year and continues to evolve to serve its clients through a holistic development process.
- Gross Automation, founded by Bob Gross over 25 years ago, has helped increase productivity and lower costs for more than 100,000 customers through automation and electrical control technologies.
- IEWC, headquartered in Waukesha County, was founded in 1962 and now has almost 30 locations in 10 countries.
- MSI General has been family-owned for three generations and has cultivated a corporate culture built on the core values of integrity, commitment, trust, passion, and teamwork. These values are highlighted throughout the company's headquarters, which also serves as an innovative showcase of unique materials and design options for clients.



BUILDING THE NEXT GENERATION



As the battle to win talent becomes more intense throughout the region, Waukesha County businesses continue to double down and put energy into developing the future pipeline in partnership with the Waukesha County Center for Growth and the Waukesha County Business Alliance.

Our organizations remain committed to building robust business-education partnership programs to support the talent pipeline. This past year, businesses throughout the region again opened their doors to expose hundreds of students to career opportunities now and in the future.

Schools2Skills™, our most notable program, hosted 16 tours throughout the year, giving over 500 students from 17 schools a chance to walk inside manufacturers and Waukesha County Technical College. This year these efforts were amplified with the first Experience the Trades Expo. Hosted at the Waukesha County Expo grounds by the Alliance and Center for Growth, the event showcased 35 construction and manufacturing companies for nearly 1,500 students from approximately 20 schools in the region. Students had the chance to operate machines, tools, computers, and robots while interacting with the business community.



The Center for Growth and Alliance continue to further serve the business community, through robust programs such as Mini Business World of Waukesha County. In partnership with the WMC (Wisconsin Manufacturing & Commerce) Foundation, this program allowed more than 200 high school students from 11 schools to engage in activities to gain further knowledge in economics and financial literacy. Mini Business World was held at Waukesha County Technical College in spring and Carroll University in fall.

The Center for Growth and Alliance look forward to working with the business community and educational institutions to build upon these efforts in 2023. Many Schools2Skills™ tours are already scheduled for the second half of the school year, and plans are in the works for a career expo focused on health-related fields this spring.

As workforce remains a top priority for our employers, we believe encouraging and engaging the next generation is a winning strategy in the battle for talent. •



SMALL BUSINESS STORY



Tammy Imme opened Apple Ridge Academy (ARA) in 2010 and has overcome numerous obstacles while keeping true to the school's mission.

When ARA first opened, it had only four employees. It now has 67. The school started with one leased location in New Berlin in 2010 with a licensed capacity of 76, and expanded the building to increase capacity to 120 in 2012. Additional growth occurred with the opening of the Brookfield location in 2014. Tammy then purchased the Inspire Learning Center (ILC) in 2021, which included 10.5 acres of land. The school operated ILC in addition to two other Apple Ridge locations until the end of the lease. At that time, Tammy connected with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) for advice on future growth.

Phil Ostroski, a consultant at the SBDC and partner of the Waukesha County Center for Growth, helped Tammy when she found the new property by helping to navigate the due diligence and feasibility of the acquisition of the building and the business currently operating there.

"Phil was incredibly knowledgeable during the due diligence process and was very open about financial and business systems. He was a great

help with the valuation of the assets," Tammy said.

The SBDC also helped with obtaining financing through the Small Business Administration (SBA). In June 2022, the small business moved to the New Berlin location on 166th Street and combined ILC and ARA back into one program again. This new program, called Apple Ridge Academy - New Berlin, has an increased licensed capacity of 184.

The Entrepreneurial Training Program (ETP) offered through the SBDC was the first formal experience Tammy had with business plan development and financial systems. The detailed processes in the course and the guest speakers were invaluable.

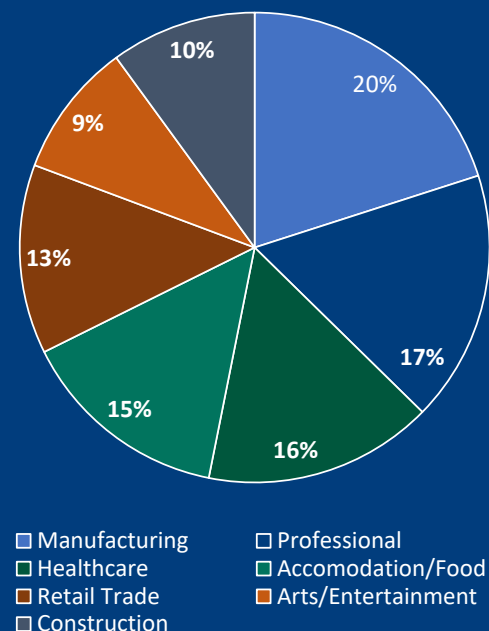
Tammy said, "ETP prepared me to answer rapid-fire questions when applying for financing with WWBIC at the beginning of our journey. Without this preparation, we could not have taken the next steps to opening a business."

Future goals for Apple Ridge Academy are to continue learning and emphasizing the importance of the work they do, inspiring their team members to commit to professional growth, and to advocate for the profession. Tammy said, "We want to continue making connections with our children, families, staff and communities for the good of our youngest learners."

Through our unique partnership with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), the Center for Growth is able to provide no-cost counseling for small businesses and entrepreneurs in Waukesha County. This counseling can include services such as help writing a business plan, accessing financing and capital, and developing financial projections.

In 2022, the SBDC served 257 small businesses and entrepreneurs in Waukesha County and provided more than 1,475 hours of support. This assistance resulted in Waukesha County small businesses securing almost \$5.5 million in financing to support their growth.

2022 Small Business Clients By Industry



A KEY TO THE LABOR SHORTAGE



As we work to strengthen the economy in the county, it is important that we work together with our communities to tackle the biggest barrier facing our employers: finding enough qualified employees. Waukesha County employers are currently struggling to fill hundreds of open positions, which impacts our businesses, our quality of life, and threatens economic development for the county, region, and state. We have tremendous potential to positively impact economic growth by solving workforce challenges for our employers.

One of the key contributing factors to the labor shortage is the lack of **workforce housing**. Eighty-five percent of Waukesha County businesses plan to expand their workforce in the next three years. However, employers already struggle to fill open positions. In industries like construction and manufacturing, more than 86 percent of companies are having trouble attracting and retaining employees.

The current workforce challenge, coupled with employers' planned workforce growth, points to a critical need to get more talent into Waukesha County. Waukesha County's low unemployment rate has exacerbated an already dire workforce shortage for area employers.



A diverse housing stock for employees and their families to choose from gives employers and communities an advantage when competing to attract talent. As an example, the median wage of a Civil Engineer, Credit Analyst, or an Architect in Waukesha County is about \$74,000. At that salary, a person could only afford a home costing about \$300,000. Similarly, Web Developers, Forensic Science Technicians, and Lodging Managers make about \$54,000 per year. That translates to being able to afford a roughly \$229,000 home.

These are people that we want, and need, to work AND live in Waukesha County.

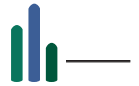
Exacerbating the problem is the mounting challenge of building new multi-family and single-family homes and apartments in the current market that can be considered "affordable" for many workers and young families. And home prices continue to rise:

- The cost for single-family construction is up 30 percent from two years ago.
- Wisconsin house prices are up 20 percent from 2019 through 2021; and up 40 percent since 2016.
- The Waukesha County median home sale price increased from \$290,000 in 2018 to \$338,000 in 2020.

The greatest challenge facing the business community – across Wisconsin and right here in Waukesha County – is the state's workforce shortage. Together, we can work with Waukesha County communities to identify and implement solutions that address the shortage of workforce housing in Waukesha County and provide more housing possibilities for our employees and their families. •



THE ROAD TO A VIBRANT ECONOMY



The economic vitality of Waukesha County and the southeastern Wisconsin region depends on modern, safe, and efficient infrastructure, from transportation to technology to water. From an economic development standpoint, an efficient, safe transportation network is key to economic growth. Transportation infrastructure is routinely rated as a top issue among business executives determining desirable locations for commercial investment.

In terms of flexible and more on-demand transportation alternatives, the region has successfully launched a pilot on-demand transit service called FlexRide. A public-private collaboration, FlexRide Milwaukee is helping connect workers from the City of Milwaukee with jobs in the suburbs. The 2022 pilot program served employers in Menomonee Falls and Butler and the service area will expand in 2023 with additional funding.

Aside from transportation infrastructure, access to water is also critically important to economic development and residential growth. For years, the City of Waukesha has worked to negotiate contracts, gain approval and construct pipes to bring Lake Michigan water to its residents and businesses via Milwaukee and returned to Lake Michigan through the Root River. More than 10 years of planning have gone into the \$286 million drinking water system, which will officially come online this year.

From a traditional infrastructure standpoint, one critical project for Waukesha County is redevelopment of the I-94 East-West corridor, between 16th and 70th Streets. Carrying \$25 billion in freight each year, this corridor is the heart and soul of the region and the state's economy. Locally, 27 percent of the jobs and 35 percent of the businesses in the seven-county region are within five miles of the Stadium Interchange, at the heart of 94 EW.

Whether it's roads, freeways, water, transit systems or other infrastructure projects, the effective flow of goods, services and people is fundamental to business growth and a vibrant economy. •



COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

The Rizzo Development in the **City of Brookfield** reached full completion of the infrastructure supporting the 26-acre Northbrook Commerce Center. This shovel-ready site can accommodate up to 332,000 s.f. of development, with the quickest approval process in Southeast Wisconsin.

Wildeck consolidated its operations into an updated manufacturing space in the **City of Waukesha**.

The construction on a 103-room Spring Hill Suites hotel began in the **Village of Menomonee Falls**. This will complete the redevelopment of a 67-acre brownfield site known as Whitestone Station.

Multiple businesses in the **Village of Mukwonago** underwent significant expansions. Examples include ProHealth Care adding 24 inpatient beds and 100 new jobs, and Banker Wire, a mesh manufacturing company, completing a 59,250 s.f. addition.

Projects within the first phase of the Olympia Fields redevelopment in the **City of Oconomowoc** including the Locklyn Apartments and a Sendik's Food Market, were completed. (1)

Generac Power Systems announced plans to invest \$53 million and add 700 jobs at their facilities across Wisconsin, including those in the **Village of Eagle**.

A 92,000-square-foot industrial building was completed in the Highlands Business Park in the **Village of Sussex**, with Adron and Badger Distribution as new tenants.

Artificial intelligence data startup Synthetica raised \$13 million and moved into a new office downtown **Delafield**.

Hendricks Commercial Properties broke ground on a mass timber structure in the **City of Delafield**. "The Grain" will have 60,000 s.f. of office space and s.f. of retail when completed in 2023.

Commercial real estate firm Irgens announced its intent to redevelop the 16-acre former Boston Store site at Brookfield Square mall in the **City of Brookfield**. The mixed-use development could include office, restaurant, and retail spaces along with a hotel.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

The **City of Waukesha** created the Storefront Activation Loan program and the Affordable Housing Rehab Loan program which provide low interest loans to make physical improvements to commercial spaces downtown and low interest loans to homeowners to improve and repair existing affordable housing units to help maintain their affordability and quality.

The **City of Oconomowoc** hosted the inaugural season for Lake Country Dockhounds baseball at Wisconsin Brewing Company Park.

The **Village of Menomonee Falls** completed Village Park Phase II renovations, including a more than 12,000 s.f. inclusive play area, splash pad, pickleball/tennis courts, picnic shelter, trails, and an interior parking area – all supporting a vision for the park to be a gathering place.

The **Village of Mukwonago** opened its Outdoor Performance Stage in Indianhead Park. (2)

The **Village of Pewaukee** broke ground on a new Department of Public Works facility to replace the current facility that was constructed in 1973. The new facility is expected to be completed by June 2023 and is anticipated to meet the Village's space needs for the next 30 years.

Multiple employers in the **Village of Butler** and **Village of Menomonee Falls** participated in the FlexRide program, which provides free or significantly discounted on-demand rides for workers coming from Milwaukee.

Hamilton School District, which serves communities including the **Villages of Butler, Lannon, Menomonee Falls, and Sussex**, implemented a hydroponic farming unit project. These units will provide cost savings for the school district, give students the opportunity to learn about growing produce, and will add fresh, sustainable produce to school lunches.

AWARDS & ACCOLADES

The **City of Waukesha** won the Gold Medal Park award which honors public park and recreation agencies and state park systems throughout the United States. (3)



Areavibes.com ranked the **Village of Menomonee Falls** as the safest city in Wisconsin with over 25,000 residents in 2022.

Fred Winchowky, President of the **Village of Mukwonago**, celebrated 50 years with the Village. This unique long-term consistent stable leadership is critical to Mukwonago's growth and development.

Two Girls and a Farm, located in the **Village of Big Bend**, was featured on Wisconsin Foodie.

HOUSING

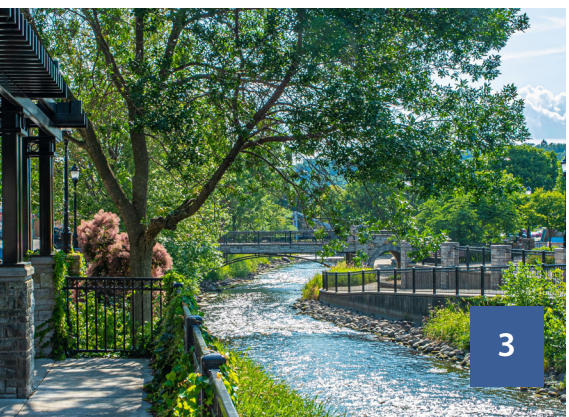
Over 300 new housing units were approved in the **City of Waukesha** downtown.



The **Village of Menomonee Falls** sold the 278-acre Silver Spring Country Club, allowing a residential subdivision containing 319 single-family homes and 48 duplex condominium units to be developed over the next 10-15 years.

The **City of Oconomowoc** continued to advance the Downtown N. Main Street/Rockwell project, a multi-story mixed use redevelopment with commercial first floor and 20 upper story condo units.

Construction started at the Glen at Pewaukee Lake subdivision near Cornerstone Development in the **Village of Pewaukee**. The 46-lot single family residential development located on the former St. Mary's School property is the first single-family development in the Village since 2005. (4)



The **Village of Sussex** approved of final plat for Redford Hills, a 45-lot subdivision on Richmond Road. The subdivision is built into a hillside and has far-reaching views of land south of the Village.

Wingspan Development is constructing a 215-unit luxury apartment project near Brookfield Square Mall in the **City of Brookfield**, with occupancy expected in 2023.

Three Pillars announced plans for a \$125 million expansion of its **Village of Dousman** campus. The project will add almost 200 senior living units along with retail space.



BEST PLACES TO LIVE IN WISCONSIN

Ranked by www.areavibes.com/best-places/wisconsin/.

- Village of Elm Grove - #5
- Village of Pewaukee - #6
- Village of Menomonee Falls - #8
- City of Oconomowoc - #9
- City of Brookfield - #16
- Village of Sussex - #22
- Village of Mukwonago - #25



PARTNERS



City of Brookfield
City of Delafield
City of Oconomowoc
City of Waukesha
Village of Big Bend

Village of Butler
Village of Dousman
Village of Eagle
Village of Elm Grove
Village of Lannon

Village of Menomonee Falls
Village of Mukwonago
Village of Pewaukee
Village of Sussex

