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**BETTER JOBS, BETTER INVESTMENT RETURN SPUR  
HENRY'S NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT APPROACH**  
*Mayoral Candidate to Create Economic Development Coordinating Council*

*Fort Wayne, Indiana* – With an eye toward strengthening our economic health and improving Fort Wayne's return on job creation investments, Mayoral candidate Tom Henry today recommended the formation of an Economic Development Coordinating Council. The new council would enhance local and regional collaboration on this crucial issue and provide better oversight for City of Fort Wayne tax dollars dedicated to retaining and gaining jobs.

"The global race for jobs requires strength in numbers," stated Henry. "It takes all of us working together to compete worldwide. Fort Wayne has been a leader in building strong development partnerships, but I want to ensure that every tax dollar invested in our job creation efforts is used wisely. An Economic Development Coordinating Council will give our economy a collaborative edge and our citizens the checks and balances their public dollars merit."

In past decades, economic development activities in Fort Wayne and Allen County, while aggressive and professional, were divided between numerous entities and lacked coordination. Seven years ago, the City of Fort Wayne, Allen County and the Greater Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce formed and funded the Allen County Economic Development Alliance.

The City also invests significant economic development resources in several other organizations: Northeast Indiana Innovation Center (technology incubator), Regional Partnership (northeast Indiana economic development marketing group), and the Downtown Improvement District (downtown development). City tax dollars dedicated to these four groups total \$550,000.

Given the many local partners active in economic development and their varied missions, concerns have been raised in the community about organizational roles and priorities, work overlap and duplications, high operational costs, inattention to existing businesses, lack of transparency and level of success.

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# HENRY *for* MAYOR

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“Our fight for good jobs demands our best every day,” underscored Henry. “I support our ongoing job creation work and encourage the private sector’s continued investments. I salute each organization that works so hard to keep our good jobs in Fort Wayne and bring more high-paying jobs here. If elected mayor, I will take a participatory role in ensuring our citizens continue to be well served by these groups. The Economic Development Coordinating Council will create that point of accountability. It will help us better direct our efforts, get the best return from every public dollar, increase effectiveness and yield maximize results in retaining and attracting good jobs and businesses.”

The council will be composed of the organizations receiving City funding along with other principal job growth partners, such as: Indiana Economic Development Council (state economic development entity), WorkOne Northeast (workforce development and job training), the Greater Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce, Northeast Indiana Corporate Council, Northeast Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (transportation planning).

The council also will maintain communication with other groups focused on job creation and retention, including Region III-A (regional planning), and the many other economic development organizations and Chambers of Commerce in and surrounding Fort Wayne.

The Economic Development Coordinating Council will:

- Meet regularly;
- Help guide and prioritize the work of the many independent economic development organizations;
- Identify opportunities for cooperation;
- Keep all partners informed about what each organization is doing;
- Ensure that the efforts of these organizations are complementary and coordinated; and
- Give the mayor a regularly scheduled update on tax dollars expended and return on those investments, allowing for more informed funding decisions.

The council will not have any staff. It also will not have an independent budget.

“The Economic Development Coordinating Council will help us share information and promote growth more effectively,” added Henry. “The only cost will be our commitment to work together to build a stronger economy. I think that’s an investment we need to make.”

*Tom Henry is the Democratic candidate for Mayor of Fort Wayne. He is a successful business owner, a five-term Fort Wayne City Councilman and a nonprofit leader with deep roots in the community.*

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