INDEPENDENCE

Building a model for rural innovation and opportunity
TRADITIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Tends to focus on a few key areas

--> Recruitment

--> Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E)

--> Community Development
Independence offers the accessibility and connectivity of a big city, and the charm and quality of life of a small town.
ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET

Our flexible, collaborative and innovative government empowers local business and community members to get things done quickly.
AN EQUITABLE & ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY

Intentional outreach and a ‘Yes’ mentality creates opportunities for people and businesses regardless of their economic and social backgrounds.
CURRENT PROJECT: SMART AG & TECH INNOVATION

Leverage MINET, local resources and unique relationships to stay on the right side of the digital divide

- Become a hub for innovation and development of agricultural technologies
- Prepare our youth for the economy of tomorrow
- Actively look for collaborative opportunities
- Creates a focus around downtown economic activity
Solidifying a Path Forward

- Implemented several pilot projects, including two NIST GCTC action clusters
- Part of leadership team for Smart Ag/Rural Supercluster
- Hosting well-attended ag tech and entrepreneurship meetups
- Funded Rural Innovation Catalyst position
Project: Intel Berry Tracking

- Field to fork tracking of environmental conditions
- Track progress, set alerts, monitor crop at a granular level throughout the process
- Opportunity to integrate blockchain for shipping logistics and food safety certifications
- Scalable pilot with applications to many other crops
- Opportunity to add additional sensors or leverage data for other purposes (FHWA)
Independence Days in Independence

20,000+ people attend. We only have about 30 staff and volunteers including 14 sworn officers to monitor.
CREATING A VIRTUAL SITUATION ROOM

Won an international smart cities competition and partnered with Italian company TeamDev to develop and deploy a pilot.
Current Project:
Data Science for the Public Good

- Partnership with OSU & Extension
- Identify challenges in rural communities and apply university data science resources
- Working with area vineyard owners on a pilot project
- Modeling weather and microclimate predictions for actionable info on bud break and bloom
- Potential to scale to other berry/fruit crops
New Mobility Options

Secured funding to explore development of low-speed shuttle between Independence and neighboring Monmouth. Potential to test autonomous solutions.
Workforce Training: Makerspace

- Spun out of mobile makerspaces through OSU and our library
- Teaching youth entrepreneurship
- There is an opportunity to implement very quickly.
- Public display or demo nights to broaden interest
Entrepreneurship and technology events and activities surface and better connect resources within the community – it’s easy to get involved.