

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

BREAKTHROUGH



ecrda

Erie County Redevelopment Authority

OUR MISSION

To facilitate retention and creation of jobs and increase prosperity in the Erie region while building the economic development infrastructure through the acquisition, development, and redevelopment of real estate in Erie County and through grant and lending opportunities to businesses and municipalities.

OUR NETWORK

- Enterprise Development Center of Erie County (EDCEC)
- Enterprise Development Fund (EDF)
- Erie County General Authority (ECGA)
- Erie County Industrial Development Authority (ECIDA)
- Erie County Community Services Financing Authority (ECCSFA)
- EIDCO

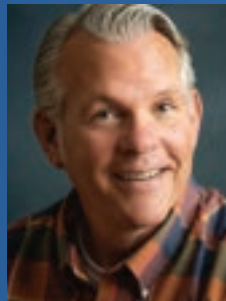
OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Kate Philips,
Chair



Harry Eighmy,
Vice Chair



David Knapp,
Treasurer



William DeLuca,
Secretary



Charles "Boo"
Hagerty

CEO'S MESSAGE



In early 2022, when we brought you our 2021 Annual Report, we gave a forecast that the year ahead would be filled with change — and that the Erie County Redevelopment Authority would be at the heart of that change. It's pretty clear that we were on to something with that prediction. Just a cursory glance at this year's Annual Report speaks to our breakthrough year.

ECRDA has been breaking records in lending, using our one-stop shop to support our local businesses.

We've been breaking barriers through grant funding, helping to support a range of enterprises — individuals, small businesses, start-up initiatives, and multimillion-dollar projects. This also allowed us to demonstrate our commitment to diversity, a promise we made in 2021's Annual Report, while also giving us the opportunity to create partnerships throughout Erie County.

And, perhaps most visibly, we are breaking ground — literally — with our real estate projects. That includes cleanup and demolition at the former EMI on West 12th Street and an exciting development at Joyce Savocchio Opportunity Park, among other projects.

We're proud of our accomplishments, but we see this as just the start of our momentum. We ended 2022 not with a period but with an ellipsis, signaling there is more to come. What will 2023 bring? Stay tuned ...

A stylized, handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Tina'.

Tina M. Mengine
Chief Executive Officer,
ECRDA

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TAKING ROOT

PROJECT: Grow Erie urban agriculture

UPDATE: Ready to move from planning
and design to implementation in 2023

There's something growing on the City of Erie's east side, and it's more than just a promising development. It's optimism — a feeling that there is a sound business plan, solid financing, community support, and fresh momentum to create a thriving business on a reclaimed brownfield site at Joyce Savocchio Opportunity Park.



The project, known as Grow Erie, is a partnership of the Erie County Redevelopment Authority, the Minority Community Investment Coalition (MCIC), and Integrated Agriculture Systems (INTAG). Once complete, Grow Erie will be an urban agriculture facility that promises to produce goods, create jobs, and help revitalize the lower eastside neighborhood.

Planning and design are complete, and a spring construction start is scheduled. Plans call for a commercial facility with more than 17,000 square feet of all-season high-tech greenhouses where fish and plants will be integrated. The process, known as aquaponics, is a combination of aquaculture, the breeding and harvesting of fish, and hydroponics, the growing of plants in a soil-free environment.

INTAG's patented waste-to-plant-nutrient production system recycles fish waste into natural growth nutrients that will be used for plant-life cultivation.



AQUAPONICS

Aquaponics combines aquaculture, the growing of fish, and hydroponics, the growing of plants without soil. In aquaponics, the fish and plants sustain each other — fish waste supplies nutrients to the plants, which clean the water that provides the fish habitat.

U.S. Department of Agriculture





“It’s their time. It’s the time to have clean industry on the east side and jobs available for those people who find it very difficult to find jobs.”

**FORMER
MAYOR JOYCE
SAVOCCHIO,
TO THE ERIE
TIMES-NEWS**

The facility will produce marketable fish and varieties of produce for wholesale, and is projected to provide more than 20 direct and indirect jobs to neighborhood residents.

Also planned for the site is an additional greenhouse to be made available to local residents and groups for community agriculture. A 2,500-square-foot polycarbonate greenhouse will be climate controlled, with the aid of natural gas heaters and end-wall cooling fans, to allow for year-round crop production. That means no matter how many feet of snow are on the ground, the greenhouse can produce healthy food in a clean, safe environment.

The Grow Erie project is an important development for the area near East 16th Street and Downing Avenue, which is home to some of the most diverse and underserved populations in the city:

- It promises jobs in a neighborhood with a median household income of just \$23,000.
- It brings a source of fresh, locally grown food to a USDA-designated food desert.
- It furthers ECRDA’s commitment to diversity by serving a minority neighborhood that includes a number of New Americans from more than 20 countries, according to Census data.

The promise of an innovative, viable industry coming to Savocchio Opportunity Park aims to remedy decades of neglect and divestment. Strong support from community leaders indicates the Grow Erie project is a priority.

Grow Erie is incorporated in a number of development plans, including the City of Erie's Investment Prospectus, Erie's Inclusive Growth: A Framework for Action, Investment Playbook (2022), and the Eastside Grassroots Coalition Strategic Plan.

To date, \$1.8 million has been secured for Grow Erie, including funds from the City of Erie and Erie County American Recovery Plan Act, Diverse Erie, the Erie Community Foundation, and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

But no matter the degree of investment, or the number of public and private organizations with buy-in, a project can only ultimately succeed with a successful business model. And in terms of Grow Erie's viability, that means customers.

To that end, Grow Erie already has an advantage, with Curtze Food Services as a partner. The sixth-generation Erie wholesale food distributor, headquartered near Savocchio Opportunity Park, will be a primary customer.

Curtze sees tremendous advantages in cultivating and sourcing local goods, including produce and fish like trout and walleye, from Grow Erie. As B. Scott Kern, Vice President and General Counsel for C.A. Curtze Co., testified to Erie County Council, "Having a local supplier for some of these items will eliminate transportation costs and supply chain challenges. Ultimately, it results in fresher goods for our customers."

With plans in place and plentiful support, Grow Erie is poised to bring a transformation to a long-vacant lot on Erie's lower east side. As Kern testified: "This is for real."

"This ambitious project will allow us to locally source products that we currently purchase from California and Mexico. Grow Erie is not only good for our business — it's good for our customers, it's good for our employees, and it's good for our neighbors."

BRUCE KERN AND B. SCOTT KERN, CURTZE FOOD SERVICE

A \$40 MILLION INVESTMENT

With four transformational projects, ECRDA's impactful investing in the City of Erie is improving neighborhoods and creating jobs.



1 JOYCE SAVOCCHIO OPPORTUNITY PARK: In partnership with MCIC, working to create Grow Erie aquaponics enterprise, bringing jobs to the area near East 16th Street and Downing Avenue. See story, page 2.



2 FORMER EMI SITE: In a highly visible project, remediating the site of the former EMI, an anchor of the West 12th Street corridor, to create an innovative, high-tech business park on a welcoming campus. See story, page 8.

"Working with the ECRDA team these last couple of years has produced tangible positive change in the City. We look forward to what's ahead."

ERIE MAYOR JOSEPH SCHEMBER



3 FORMER QUIN-T SITE: Cleaning up the former Quin-T Tech Paper and Board site, demolishing the abandoned (and often dangerous) old building and site at East 16th and French streets.



4 BERRY PLASTICS EXPANSION: Working with Berry Global to clear a site at West 15th and Myrtle streets for a 90,000-square-foot warehouse, which would create jobs and secure the company's presence in Erie.

IN THE WORKS

PROJECT: Ironworks Square development

UPDATE: Demolition work ongoing after lengthy cleanup process completed

Just under two years after the Erie County Redevelopment Authority purchased the crumbling and abandoned former Erie Malleable Iron facility, the corner at West 12th and Cherry streets has a very different look.



Gone is the unsightly — and unused — pedestrian bridge that spanned West 12th Street. Gone, too, is one side of the once-hulking, block-long brick structure, given way to demo crews that moved in starting this fall. Less visible, but no less important: Literal tons upon tons of waste — drums of caustic chemicals, tanks of toxic substances, and coal ash piles across four floors — have been hauled out for safe disposal, a necessary first step.

With cleanup completed and demolition of the west-end structures beginning soon after — a \$2.5-plus million endeavor, all told — attention has turned to the new use for the site. Funding for cleanup and demolition came



800 Drums of waste hauled from EMI site. Also: 240 totes, 400 crates.

40+ Tons of trash removed. Also: 3,000 pounds of liquids and sludge.

BOSTWICK DESIGN PARTNERSHIP





from American Rescue Plan Act funds, both from the City of Erie and Erie County, as well as the Erie City and Erie County land banks and an EPA Brownfields Grant.

Part of the century-old building will be retained, maintaining the historic character of the corner. It will be paired with a high-tech new structure into what ECRDA has dubbed Ironworks Square — a mixed-use development with built-to-suit space for offices, technology, and light manufacturing.

Updated artist renderings from Bostwick Design Partnership show a sleek, modern design on the new west end of the building, with the stalwart brick structure — though spruced up for its new role — anchoring the east corner. Ample green space, gathering areas, and public art make for a welcoming campus, and create a sense of neighborhood along the West 12th Street corridor.

The blend of old and new is a nod to Erie's industrial heyday — still so apparent on the West 12th Street corridor — accompanied by a clear acknowledgment that Erie County is focused on technology of the future.

"We want to redevelop communities and neighborhoods ... and we see

that here on 12th Street," said Neil Weaver, then acting secretary of the state Department of Community and Economic Development, after touring the site in July. "We think it's great — has great opportunity, great bones."

The next phase of the project will see renovations of the existing buildings that will remain on the site, with an estimated cost of \$20 million. Funding for that phase so far has come from the state Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program, federal appropriations, a Community Development Block Grant, and American Rescue Plan Act funds, with additional funding applications pending.

"Investments like this take a lot of effort on the local, state, and federal levels, and working cohesively for the same goal is how things get done. I ... look forward to seeing the transformation take place."

**SEN. DAN LAUGHLIN,
IN AN E-NEWSLETTER**



BREAKING RECORDS

LENDING REPORT: ECRDA's one-stop shop for public financing hits milestone, closing 100th loan

48

Loans issued by ECRDA in 2022 to Erie County businesses, totaling \$6,222.657.

609

Jobs in Erie County created and retained by ECRDA lending in 2022.

What do a daycare, a pizza shop, and a foundry have in common? All are Erie County businesses that have benefited from a loan from the Erie County Redevelopment Authority.

And they're not alone — they're just three of 100 recipients of loans issued through ECRDA's one-stop shop for public financing, managed by the Office of Capital Finance and Lending. It's responsible for administering the City of Erie Enterprise Fund; the Millcreek, Summit, and Harborcreek Township revolving loan funds; a Small Business Diversity Fund; the Enterprise Development Fund (CDFI); and its own revolving loan fund.

Those funds have expanded in 2022, thanks to new partnerships. The Enterprise Development Fund, for example, administers the newly launched Diverse Erie Small Business Fund. Diverse Erie launched the fund in August to support the creation and growth of BIPOC-owned businesses in Erie County, earmarking \$500,000 and leveraging public and private investments to create a \$2 million fund.

The one-stop shop, just two years old, closed the 100th loan in December 2022. In all, the 100 loans represent a total of \$17,667,776 in loans issued, leveraging a private-sector investment of \$50,158,763 in the community.

What's more, those 100 loans can be credited with creating more than 300 new jobs and retaining more than 1,150.

Those loans were large and small, ranging in size from \$8,000 to \$1,000,000 over the past two years.

For Mary Euell, the recipient of a Diversity Loan in 2022, an ECRDA loan allowed her Erie business, Barb's Family Learning Group Daycare, to purchase a van to safely transport children in their care, including for school pickups.

"We are extremely thankful for the opportunity and pleased with the way the Erie County Redevelopment Authority helped us bridge certain gaps in order to expand easily," Euell said.

A new Donato's pizza location received a 2022 loan from the Harborcreek Township Business Development Revolving Loan Fund, created in 2022 from a partnership between ECRDA and Harborcreek Township.

For Erie Bronze & Aluminum, a Fairview Township foundry, a 2022 ECRDA loan helped the company purchase a new molding machine and mold handler, allowing the company to go from 12 to 15 molds per hour to up to 180 molds per hour.

"Working with Chris Groner and Ethan Bennett at ECRDA made the financing process a breeze," said Cory Knight, vice president and chief financial officer at Erie Bronze & Aluminum. "They were attentive and understood Erie Bronze's vision for growth."

"We expect this machine to be a game changer that will allow us to grow as a company and give back to the Erie community by providing more high-quality paying jobs in our area. ... We could not have done it without the help of the ECRDA."

**CORY KNIGHT,
ERIE BRONZE &
ALUMINUM**

\$8,000

Smallest loan in 2022.

\$500,000

Largest loan in 2022.

\$129,639

Average loan in 2022.

BREAKING BARRIERS

GRANTS REPORT: Businesses boosted by funding, even as ECRDA breaks records for grants received

It was another busy year for the Erie County Redevelopment Authority in terms of grant funding — both in funding that ECRDA distributed to community businesses and organizations, and in funding that ECRDA received for projects and initiatives.

Funding distributed includes grants for new small businesses and creative endeavors and management of state Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program grants.

2022 also saw a record total of grants received by ECRDA, topping \$23,000,000.



GRANTS DISBURSED BY ECRDA

Nine existing businesses that felt negative effects from the pandemic received Shuttered Venue grants, a program supported by American Recovery Plan Act funding that continued from 2021.

The thriving StARTup program, which benefits creative endeavors, awarded 13 grants. The program, expanded this year to be open to non-traditional creative entrepreneurs — those who might not be creative professionals, but who are taking their businesses in creative new directions.

Notable among this year's grant recipients: 12 of 25 businesses receiving assistance are minority-owned or woman-owned.

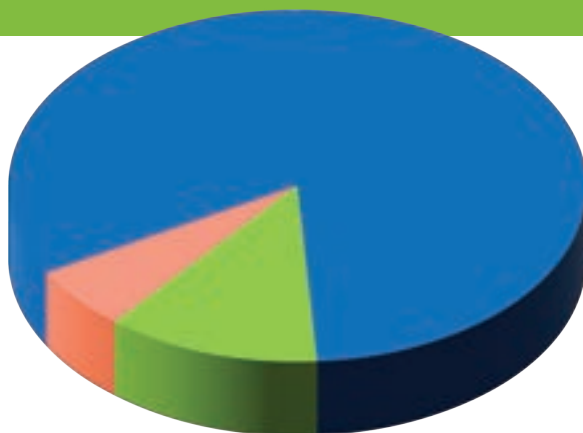
Ansumana Komba Gbembo, for example, received a StARTup grant for his minority-owned business designing and creating custom African garments.

Jennifer Reed, owner of Relish, received a grant not to support her beach-glass jewelry store, but to create opportunities for other artists. Her StARTup grant supports an effort to mentor 12 emerging women artists, giving them booth space at the Great Lakes Beach Glass and Coastal Art Festival and leading them to find the tools and confidence needed to adapt their crafts into careers.

"We have 12 emerging women artists that this is their first exposure to ... give them an idea of what it's like to have a business in art."

JENNIFER
REED, TO
YOURERIE.COM

2022 GRANTS DISBURSED



25 businesses assisted for a total of \$524,285 in grants:

- **Shuttered Venue:** \$431,285
- **StARTup:** \$63,000
- **New Small Business:** \$30,000

RACP AWARDS

Projects sponsored by ECRDA in 2022:

- **Corry Catch:** \$2,500,000
- **Corry Green Junction Park:** \$1,000,000
- **EMI/Ironworks Square:** \$3,000,000 and \$4,000,000
- **Erie Zoo Veterinary Center:** \$3,000,000
- **FXI:** \$3,000,000
- **Gannon University Athletic Center:** \$1,500,000
- **Julia House:** \$1,000,000
- **Project Resolve (with Penn State Behrend):** \$1,500,000
- **Shearer's:** \$1,750,00

RACP MANAGEMENT

In addition to distributing grants, ECRDA also assists various organizations in the community by acting as an applicant for funding from the state's Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program, known as RACP for short.

ECRDA also manages RACP grants for a number of organizations, helping them use their funding and remain in compliance with the grants.

In 2022, ECRDA sponsored nine RACPs, for a total of \$22,250,000. Projects awarded grant money include the Ironworks Square development, which received two grants, three projects in Corry, two projects in conjunction with local universities, and the expansion of Shearer's chip plant in Waterford.

ECRDA, now supporting Gannon University's RACP for its Athletic Center project, also managed an RACP for the I-HACK Center. Walter Iwanenko, who will begin serving as Gannon president in July, praised ECRDA for providing "valuable technical assistance" and guidance in using RACP funding.

"ECRDA has provided valuable technical assistance and the guidance necessary to advance our plans with I-HACK's Center for Manufacturing and Technology. Their ability to envision this cutting-edge facility where academics and industry meet will change the landscape of Erie and our region."

GANNON UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT-ELECT WALTER IWANENKO

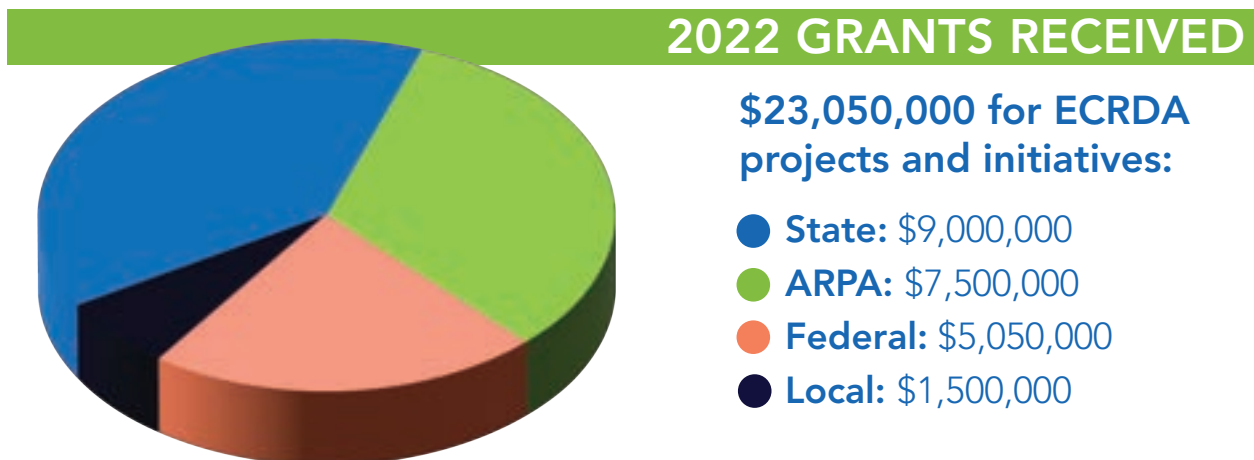


GRANTS RECEIVED BY ECRDA

The two state RACP grants awarded to the transformation of the former EMI site into Ironworks Square are among significant infusions of funding received by ECRDA in 2022. In a show of confidence for the potential of Ironworks Square, the project also received \$3 million in federal appropriations, \$2 million in American Rescue Plan funding and a local \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant.

The ECRDA also received a mix of federal, state, local, and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for other initiatives, including the Quin-T site remediation, the Savocchio Opportunity Park development, and the Berry Global expansion.

All told, ECRDA received \$23,050,000 in grants in 2022, a record investment that is helping the authority accomplish its goals of transforming the county's economy.



BREAKING GROUND

REAL ESTATE REPORT: \$5 million investment for countywide site development a highlight of 2022



ECRDA's accomplishments in real estate in 2022 have been a sign of a changing landscape — literally, in some cases.

Crews razed the brick smokestack that for generation had marked the Quin-T Tech Paper and Boards property near East 16th and French streets in the City of Erie. It was part of broader cleanup and remediation of the property that ECRDA has overseen since purchasing the property in 2021.

Cleanup of the Quin-T site, like remediation of the former EMI site and construction at Joyce Savocchio Opportunity Park, marked significant steps forward in ECRDA's progress in developing properties for new businesses and other community assets.

Not all of ECRDA's development is limited to reclaiming old industrial sites in the City of Erie. In a welcome move by Erie County Executive Brenton Davis and County Council, ECRDA was awarded \$5 million for countywide site development.



This marks a significant investment that will propel ECRDA forward and jumpstart the development of a new business park — the first new business park development in Erie County in decades. Construction of Fairview Business Park began in 1997, and Knowledge Park, in Harborcreek Township, opened in 1998. The 25-year gap amplifies a need to focus on land and building development.

“Erie County taxpayers have committed \$5 million of American Rescue Plan Act funds for the acquisition of future project sites and infrastructure necessary for land development,” Davis said. “Our investment in partnership with ECRDA will be leveraged with other outside sources, including local, state, and federal funds, giving Erie County taxpayers a significant return on their investment in the form of business expansion, attraction, and jobs.”

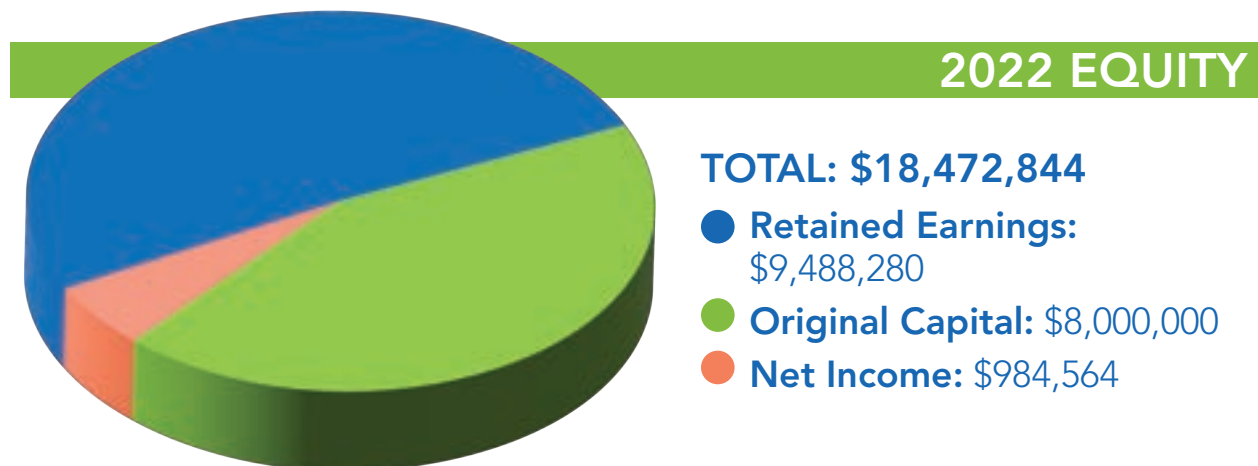
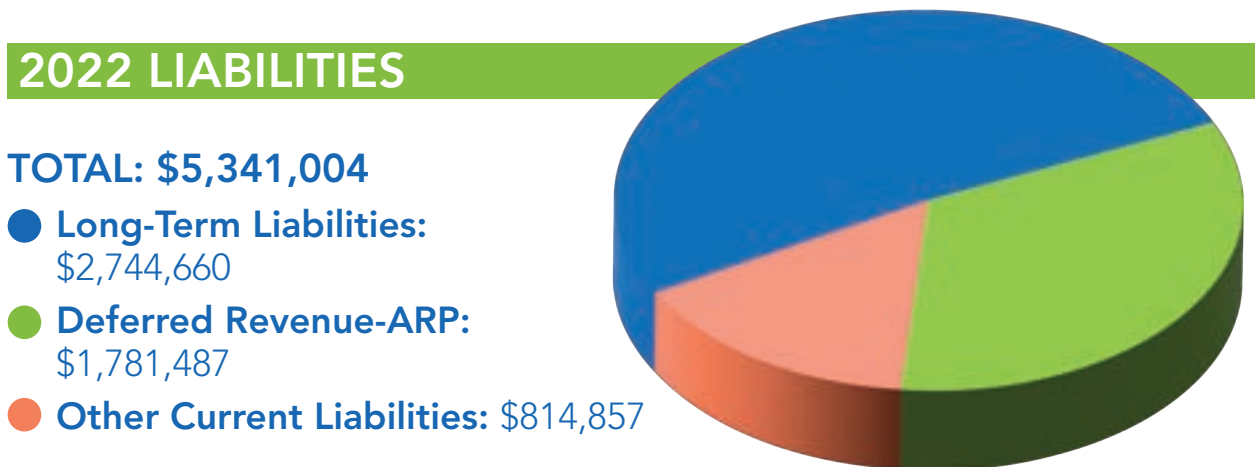
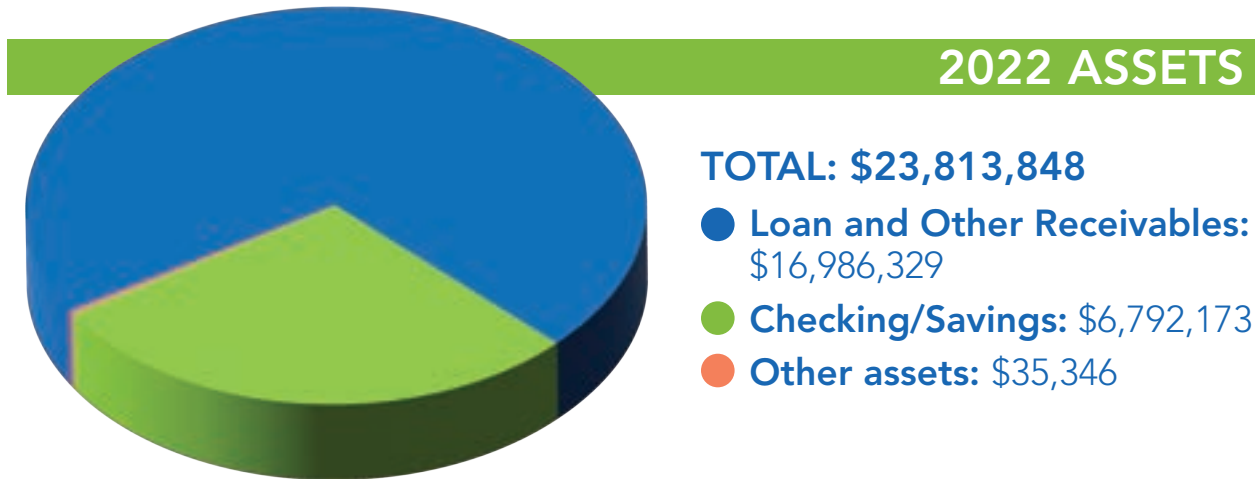
Erie County lacks suitable inventory for new business attraction and expansion, a need identified in the 2019 Competitive Realities study by Garner Economics. The report further identified the lack of inventory as the region’s biggest weakness — a vulnerability that the \$5 million investment can begin to change, as an imperative for the county’s economic growth.

“We look forward to working with ECRDA to take on the heavy lift of developing these rural sites into future economic drivers for our region and for generations to come,” Davis said.

“These projects are not achievable without the help of the ECRDA working as a strategic partner.”

ERIE COUNTY EXECUTIVE BRENTON DAVIS

2022 FINANCIALS



“As the team at ECRDA continues its ambitious and inspired approach to economic development in 2023, looking back is as exciting as looking ahead. This pivotal year has positioned our economic development professionals to succeed as they continue the transformational pursuit of job retention and growth across Erie County.”

KATE PHILIPS, CHAIR, ECRDA



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