

# Economic development requires some teamwork

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## City, county working together

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If Huntington County and City officials could describe the current state

of economic development in one word, it would be teamwork.

Teamwork was a common theme during the Huntington University Foundation Breakfast Series, where officials from the city and the county spoke about the industry and economic development in Huntington.

"Economic development is a team sport and it's probably best described as a marathon that involves a relay," Mark Wickersham, executive director of the Huntington County Economic Development Corporation, said.

He said Huntington is doing so well in the area of economic development

because so many different people are involved, in some way, with economic development.

"And, frankly, it's not always the same in every community, for some reason," Wickersham said. "We are very fortunate to have this kind of cooperative group working for the betterment of our commu-

nity."

Huntington County Commissioner Leon Hurlburt said he has been in local government for 20 years and is seeing "some really exciting things happen" because of teamwork, partnership, collaboration and action.

These four things have

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helped bring about many different projects, including central dispatch.

"There is no way that that can happen unless you have the cooperation of everyone," he said. "There are communities around us that have been trying for years; they haven't been able to do it."

Cooperation, Hurlburt added, also helped with Lower Huntington Road.

"It's a four-mile stretch that really needs to be updated," he said. "Again, through the collaborative efforts between Huntington County and Huntington County ... we come together, we put \$50,000 in they put \$50,000 in to put together some studies to move that project forward."

Cooperation has been used or is being used to help bring a learning center to Huntington and to help move the Roanoke Public Library, Hurlburt added.

Huntington City Mayor Brooks Fetters was also at the meeting, though preferring to have Roger McClellan, president of Perfection Wheel in Hun-

tington, speak, saying most of what he would say has already been said.

McClellan said Perfection Wheel has been in business since December of 2010 and had a lot of support from people in the area, including Wickersham and various other members of the community.

"The engineers of the city were very helpful in explaining the process of a startup operation and what it takes to start that," he said.

In the end, he needed the support of people such as Wickersham, Fetters, Hurlburt and everyone else who gave support.

"We're blessed to be in a community where we have the leadership that we have," McClellan said.