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### **Wayne County Foundation Selected for Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow – GIFT VIII**

Wayne County Foundation received a grant of \$5 million from Lilly Endowment Inc. through the Community Leadership Implementation Grants component of the eighth phase of its Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT VIII) initiative. This is one of 30 implementation grants awarded through GIFT VIII, a statewide Lilly Endowment initiative designed to support the efforts of community foundations and their partners to strengthen quality of life for the people in the towns, cities, counties and regions they serve.

“We cannot begin to explain how grateful we are to Lilly Endowment Inc. for this grant,” said Rebecca Gilliam, Executive Director of the Wayne County Foundation. “Their vision for community development through community foundations across Indiana is unparalleled. We know that they received many great proposals. Being selected is an honor and a testament to our community’s engagement throughout the process.”

With the grant, Wayne County Foundation will implement a riverwalk, bouldering garden, and adventure playground in the Whitewater Gorge in Richmond, and an outdoor venue space in Cambridge City. These projects were selected from community comprehensive plans and feedback from stakeholders and residents across Wayne County.

The Foundation, through Forward Wayne County, will work closely with the City of Richmond Parks and Recreation Department and the Town of Cambridge City to complete these projects. In addition, the Foundation will work with nonprofit arts and culture organizations in Wayne County to activate the spaces.

“The impact that this will have on our county will be felt for generations,” said Acacia St. John, Program Director for Forward Wayne County. “These projects were carefully selected so that residents from all ages and abilities would have access to the sites, opportunity to participate in programming, and enjoyment for themselves and their families all year-round.”

During the Spring and Summer of 2025, Wayne County residents can expect to see site work, demolition, and buildouts happening in both locations.

The Wayne County Foundation, founded in 1979, is celebrating its 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and is excited to close out this celebration year with this generous and impactful gift from Lilly Endowment Inc. For more information, please visit [www.waynecountyfoundation.org](http://www.waynecountyfoundation.org).

In 1990, Lilly Endowment launched the Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) initiative to help establish and further develop community foundations throughout Indiana. Lilly Endowment hoped that Indiana’s community foundations could enhance the quality of life in their communities by convening

conversations among people of diverse ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, occupations, races and cultural traditions about their communities' most compelling needs and opportunities as well as the best ways to address them.

### **About Lilly Endowment**

Lilly Endowment Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly, Sr. and his sons Eli and J.K. Jr. through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company. Although the gifts of stock remain a financial bedrock of the Endowment, it is a separate entity from the company, with a distinct governing board, staff and location. In keeping with the founders' wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of community development, education and religion. The Endowment funds programs throughout the United States, especially in the field of religion, and maintains a special commitment to its founders' hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana.

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