

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FRANKLIN COUNTY LEGISLATURE AND FRANKLIN COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT  
AGENCY TO MERGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS**

**Plan Will Accelerate Efforts to Implement County Economic Development Strategy**

Malone – The Franklin County Legislature and the Board of Directors of the County of Franklin Industrial Development Agency (IDA) announced today a plan to merge the Franklin County Office of Economic Development with the IDA. In a joint statement Don Dabiew, Chair of the Franklin County Legislature and Justus Martin, Chair of the IDA Board of Directors said, “We share the same goals of building capacity and improving the delivery of economic development services across the County as well as implementing the Franklin County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). We believe this merger will allow us to accomplish these goals more quickly and more efficiently.”

Once agreements are approved and finalized between the County and the IDA, the IDA will provide economic development services under contract with Franklin County and Economic Development Director Russ Kinyon will begin a transition to the offices of IDA.

I am very encouraged by the progress we have made over the last several years since we hired Russ,” Dabiew said. “He brings expertise, professionalism and passion to economic development in Franklin County and he has built valuable regional partnerships and fostered positive relationships with countless business owners, local elected officials and other stakeholders.”

Martin also praised Kinyons’ accomplishments, work ethic and familiarity with the IDA. “We are very excited to get him on board. He knows our staff. He knows our board members and how the organization operates. Russ and CEO Jeremy Evans work well together and I expect a smooth transition. I can’t wait to see what he will bring to the organization and how he will leverage the resources of the IDA and the LDC for the benefit of Franklin County.”

Dabiew also noted that the IDA has become a true partner in economic development. “We are very pleased with the level of cooperation between the county and the IDA recently.” Martin praised the legislature for its investment and interest in economic development but also its confidence in the IDA. “We have shown a commitment to adopting best practices to implement a long-range strategy for success and as a result I think the Legislature is comfortable with us taking the lead in economic development.”

Franklin County Manager Donna Kissane expressed confidence that the county’s needs will be heard by the IDA. “This merger and contract for services will make it easier for us to access resources and expertise at the IDA. Jeremy and I have had numerous conversations about potential projects and initiatives that we can work on together. I have had the opportunity to participate in discussions with Evans and Kinyon together and the synergy they bring to the table as a team is impressive.” Evans agreed, “Successful economic development requires collaboration on a wide variety of topics and this partnership will allow us to more easily provide technical assistance or other resources to the county to address shared goals.”

Discussions about the merger have been ongoing for several months. Kissane and Evans said they believe the merger can be completed within a couple of months.

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