

Ann Arbor SPARK Semi-Annual Report

City of Ann Arbor

July 1, 2017 - December 31, 2017



<http://annarborusa.org/>

Ann Arbor SPARK will advance the economy of the Ann Arbor region by establishing the area as a desired place for business expansion and location... by identifying and meeting the needs of business at every stage, from those that are established to those working to successfully commercialize innovations.

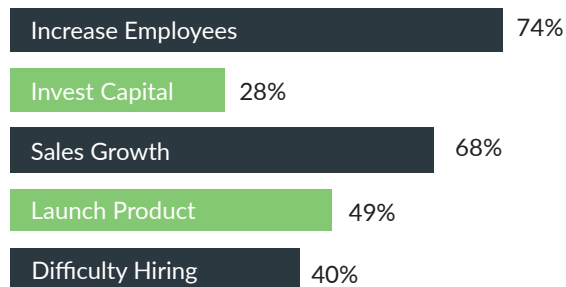
2017 Successes - Full Year Overview

Project Successes

17

Applied Dynamics International Inc., Barracuda Networks, Inc., BreadCrumb Insights, LLC, Comerica Bank, DaySmart Software, Dusty's Collision, Endra Inc., Ford Labs, ICON Interactive, Lear Corporation, Logic Solutions Inc., May Mobility, Inc., Parrable, Inc., SimuQuest, Inc., TUS International Limited, Workit Health, Inc.
Includes 4 Talent Successes. See page 9.

In the next year, companies in Ann Arbor plan to...



2017 was a high growth year for Ann Arbor companies. The percentage planning to increase headcount continues to rise, and more and more are reporting sales growth.

Projected New Jobs - 2017 Projects

402

City of Ann Arbor
Investment \$\$ per Job:
\$186/job

Retained Jobs - 2017 Projects

397



Growth Calls

47



of full time staff at
these companies in Ann
Arbor:

4,389

Total Investment



\$8.8 M

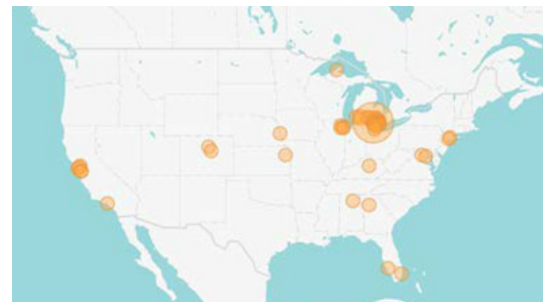
Main sources of investment: Applied Dynamics International, Barracuda Networks

City of Ann Arbor ROI:

\$117 / \$1
Private Investment City Investment

Tech Homecoming 2017

15 participating companies
581 people registered (134% increase in registrations year over year)
266 people checked-in (129% increase in attendees year over year)
140 resumes collected (21% increase in resumes captured year over year)
17 states represented (see pg 22 for more information)



Ann Arbor SPARK's Business Development Mission

Maximize **job creation** and **capital investment** by **growing** the region's GDP through the **retention** and **expansion** of established driving industry companies that sell goods and services outside the Ann Arbor region, and through the **targeted attraction** domestically and internationally of similar companies that could succeed in our region.

Ann Arbor SPARK's Business Development Metrics in the City of Ann Arbor

COMPANIES ASSISTED	Q3-Q4 2017	Q1-Q2 2017
Number of retention visits	12	35
Number of responses to attraction prospect or site consultant requests for proposals ¹	3	14
JOBS - 2017 PROJECTS (see page 5)		
Projected to be created (over the next 3 years) ²	188	214
Actual jobs created (in the first 6 months)	70	124
Jobs projected to be retained	147	250
Actual jobs retained	147	350
TALENT - 2017 MICHIGAN WORKS! PROJECTS (see page 12)		
Number of jobs supported by training funds ³		99
Training funds leveraged		\$97,138
INVESTMENT		
Taxable value of new private investment	\$2,058,750	\$4,117,500
Total value of private investment	\$5,060,000	\$3,802,411
City of Ann Arbor Support		(2017 total) \$75,000
MISCELLANEOUS		
Number and value of investments leveraged through and including federal and state grants and incentives, foundations and other sources that assisted businesses or organizations	One State of Michigan incentive of \$650,000	One State of Michigan incentive of \$750,000
Number of facilitations, advocacy initiatives, and communication efforts by SPARK to address economic development needs and concerns	See Appendix	-
Number of start-up businesses assisted (exclusive of LDFA) ⁴	-	-

¹Number of requests to which SPARK electronically submitted properties located in the City of Ann Arbor.

²These jobs are projected to be added over the next three years, we will update the numbers as we interact with the companies and determine progress.

³These are separate from the jobs reported on page 5 and refer only to jobs supported by grants received from Michigan Works! Southeast.

⁴All businesses that are start-ups in the region are assisted by the Business Accelerator division of Ann Arbor SPARK, funded through the LDFA.

Companies assisted during this semi-annual contract period

July 1, 2017 - December 31, 2017

SPARK acts as project manager for both Ann Arbor and the companies it serves. Our project management efforts can be fairly simple, such as conducting data analysis that a company may use in its business planning, or as complex as full project management for significant company expansions. This would include everything from:

- Connecting them to proper resources
- Working with the site selection community to help determine a location for a project
- Fully managing the tax incentive paperwork and the process it may require
- Creating communication plans
- Traveling to company locations outside of the state
- Making presentations to key public and private decision makers
- Talent recruitment efforts

When companies apply for Local or State incentives they fill out applications that require both job creation and investment estimates. SPARK considers these projects a success after it is publicly announced, or when the proper approval process has taken place for the incentive sought by the company. SPARK's jobs and investments numbers are based on these project announcements provided by the companies. SPARK monitors actual job creation and those results are shown in this report.

SPARK supports a company directly or it supports the consultants the company utilizes during its expansion. Whatever role SPARK might play, we capture jobs and investments for projects that we have played an active role in helping a company make a decision to move forward.

SPARK celebrates all projects that may have an impact on our region. We do not count jobs and investments where SPARK was not directly involved.

Specific Projects Unique ID#	Projected New Jobs (2017-2019)	Actual new jobs (created since beginning of project)	Projected retained jobs	Actual retained jobs as of 12/31/17	Current FTE (As of last contact)
8359*	2	9	NA	NA	9
0750	1	0	50	50	50
8454*	65	52	NA	NA	52
2280	9	0	9	9	9
1379	1	0	25	25	25
0539	101	0	63	63	63
7448*	9	9	NA	NA	9
Total	188	70	147	147	217

*Attraction project, company new to the area. (these numbers only represent growth projects, not talent projects)

Companies assisted during previous contract periods

July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2017

Specific Projects Unique ID#	Projected New Jobs (at time of project)	Actual New Jobs (created since beginning of project)	Projected Retained Jobs	Actual Retained Jobs as of 12/31/17	Current FTE (as of last contact)
0513**	NA	15	60	60	75
0704**	NA	47	175	175	222
0794	20	40	180	180	220
0993	50	0	60	60	60
1422	115	0	250	250	250
1717	9	5	10	10	15
1838	50	15	0	0	15
3279	1	2	12	12	14
4506	25	30	20	20	50
4507	297	246	154	154	400
5091	5	-11	11	0	0
5510*	35	42	NA	NA	42
6289	80	162	45	45	207
6523	8	8	2	2	10
6926	75	67	51	51	118
7098	5	18	13	13	31
7113*	5	5	NA	NA	5
7152*	85	15	NA	NA	15
7162	1	1	1	1	2
7184*	12	13	NA	NA	13
7341*	2	7	NA	NA	9
7448*		9	NA	NA	9
7511*	6	6	NA	NA	6
7612*	7	8	NA	NA	8
7656*	1	2	NA	NA	2
7662*	1	1	NA	NA	1
7687*	2	2	NA	NA	2
7728*	1	5	NA	NA	5

(continued on next page)

Companies assisted during previous contract periods

July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2017

Specific Projects Unique ID#	Projected New Jobs (at time of project)	Actual new jobs (created since beginning of project)	Projected retained jobs	Actual retained jobs as of 12/31/17	Current FTE (As of last contact)
7748*	1	47.5	NA	NA	47.5
7783*	8	8	NA	NA	8
7810*	15	7	NA	NA	7
7862	14	4	1	1	5
7869	20	0	145	145	145
8037*	4	3	NA	NA	3
8047*	2	1	NA	NA	1
8253*	1	1	NA	NA	1
8341*	10	21	NA	NA	21
8521*	3	3	NA	NA	3
8545*	70	75	NA	NA	75
Total	1046	930.5	1190	1179	2122.5

*Attraction project, company new to the area.

**Retention project, company considering leaving the area.

Ann Arbor SPARK Metrics – Investment

July 1, 2017 - December 31, 2017

Investments are recorded based on publicly available information of capital expenditures on real property, leasehold improvements, and furniture and fixtures. Companies may make additional capital investments that we are **not aware of**, or they may use alternative methods such as leasing equipment to acquire assets for growth opportunities. Recent changes to property tax law that allow for personal property exemptions make it less likely that a company would record all investment dollars at the time of an expansion or attraction project.

Specific Projects Unique ID#	Projected New Investment	Taxable Value	Incentives
8359	\$0	\$0	NA
0750	\$0	\$0	NA
8454	\$690,000	\$345,000	NA
2280	\$0	\$0	NA
1379	\$0	\$0	NA
0539	\$4,370,000	\$2,185,000	State of MI incentive \$650,000
7448	\$0	\$0	NA
Total	\$0	\$0	NA

Some growth projects during this time period were based on growth or attraction projects that involved leases, leasehold improvements, and/or the installation of personal property like computers, furniture, etc. This information is **not** captured in a standard format. These projects did, however, involve the creation of **22** new jobs in the City of Ann Arbor.

Ann Arbor SPARK Metrics - Talent

SPARK worked closely with Michigan Works! Southeast in 2017 to increase applications to the Skilled Trades Training Fund. **4 companies** in the City of Ann Arbor were successful in their applications as a result.

In FY 2018, sixty-one companies in Southeast Michigan were awarded funding. Forty-two of the companies are located in Washtenaw and Livingston counties. The purpose of this fund is to provide financial assistance for companies to invest in employee training to enhance talent, productivity, and retention. It's a win-win: employers receive the talent necessary for quality work and future growth while employees develop skills needed for good jobs.

Moving forward, Michigan Works! Southeast says their staff will be working closely with area businesses and the local economic development organizations to ensure employee training goals are met.



Company Name	# of Jobs Supported by Training Funds	Training Funds Leveraged	Current FTE
SimuQuest, Inc.	8	\$11,163	7
Logic Solutions Inc.	6	\$8,760	50
ePack, Inc.	8	\$9,985	9
Dusty's Collision	77	\$67,230	142
Total	99	\$97,138	208

Ann Arbor SPARK growth visit program

Ann Arbor SPARK's Business Development team identifies companies for our growth program based on the following criteria:

1. Large Employers
2. Previous Investments
3. All firms from the previous year growth program with indicators of rapid growth (hiring, increased sales)
4. Firms with large infusion of capital or grant funding in the previous two years
5. Companies that were sold, or that are new to Ann Arbor
6. Companies that are having difficulty finding employees
7. Business Accelerator companies that have achieved sales or staff levels that graduate them to Business Development companies

12

Between July and December 2017, SPARK held growth visits with 12 companies in the City of Ann Arbor.

Economic Indicators from Growth Visits 1/1/2017 -12/31/2017

- 74% of visited companies are projecting they will increase headcount
- 28% of visited companies indicate they will invest new capital beyond maintenance
- 68% of visited companies project new sales growth in the next year
- 49% of visited companies are planning to launch a new product or technology in the next year
- 40% of visited companies have difficulty finding new employees

Growth visit highlights

SPARK held retention visits with 12 companies from July-December 2017. These companies ranged from 4 to 400 employees and encompassed the following industries: Information Technology, Business Services, Defense, Life Sciences, Optics, and Manufacturing.

Company Name	Current FTE (as of growth visit)
Altarum Institute	125
Applied Dynamics International Inc.	63
Coyote Logistics	207
Deque Labs	45
Eberbach Labtools	17
ForeSee Results, Inc.	222
Google AdWords	400
H3D, Inc.	20.5
Kulisha, LLC	2
NewFoundry	19
PsiKick	4
Warmilu, LLC	5
Total FTE of all visited companies	1,129.5

1. Google AdWords

Google is an important part of Ann Arbor's tech ecosystem and a growing part of the business community, especially with their new facility near Plymouth Road. In September 2017, Google celebrated the opening of their new facility with a public open house event. The event showcased the new 135,000 square foot facility and highlighted the opportunity to bring employees together from different locations in Ann Arbor.

2. Warmilu

Headquartered in a 2,000-square-foot production facility, Warmilu makes nonelectric warming blankets called IncuBlankets for infants. In 2017, the company scaled up from 2 employees to 7, and signed its first large contract.

3. Applied Dynamics International (ADI)

In 2017, ADI announced plans to invest \$4.4 million and create 100+ jobs in Ann Arbor. As a result, the company has been awarded a \$650,000 Michigan Business Development Program performance-based grant. Michigan was chosen over competing sites in Seattle and the UK. Ann Arbor SPARK is assisting the company in attracting talent for the new positions.

Ann Arbor SPARK Attraction prospect activity

When SPARK is contacted by the MEDC, consultants, individual firms, external referrals, and/or site selectors regarding attraction prospects and possible location requests we...

- Respond with local area information: Demographics, industry sector information, university graduates, other useful information;
- Respond to site requests by searching for buildings, space, and vacant land based on site requirement, using site databases, broker blasts, and our knowledge of local real estate;
- Set up site visits with listing brokers and accompany company representatives on the site tour;
- Make introductions to local municipality officials to discuss the project and possible tax abatement;
- Work closely with MEDC on state incentives;
- Connect the attraction prospect with university, banks, attorneys, and other contacts to assist with integration into the business community.

Ann Arbor SPARK Attraction prospect activity - continued

Commercial Real Estate: SPARK works to communicate effectively about the double-edged sword of decreasing vacancy rates, mostly Downtown and in North Ann Arbor. Depending on the origin of an attraction company, the price of real estate can elicit polar opposite reactions. Downtown Ann Arbor is often attractive to a certain type of company, but not to all. We work diligently to learn as much as we can about the company's needs to communicate each site effectively. As part of this effort, we began publishing a blog post outlining the Swisher Vacancy Report each year. Below is an excerpt from the 2018 post, focusing on the 2017 Vacancy Report:

5 Things You Should Take Away from Swisher's 2017 Year-End Vacancy Report

1. **Demand for office space in Ann Arbor continues to grow.**
 - The market is currently at 92.8% occupancy, up from 91.3% in 2016, and nearly 79% during the Great Recession, continuing an eight year trend of vacancy rate decreases.
2. **Demand is highest in Downtown and North Ann Arbor.**
 - The Downtown vacancy rate is still very low at 3.6%, but slightly higher than 2016 (2.1%), while the North Office Area's vacancy rate has decreased even further to 1.6%.
 - These two areas are the most in-demand and currently command the highest price points. The North Office Area is 2.5 million square feet, with only 40,000 of that currently vacant. The vacancy in Downtown Ann Arbor represents only 26,000 square feet of space.
3. **Supply and demand is pushing companies to seek more affordable office space.**
 - The East Office Area saw the most dramatic change, from 16.6% vacancy to 9.7% vacancy. This makes sense as part of the larger supply and demand narrative: as office space in Downtown and North Ann Arbor becomes harder to come by, it gets more expensive, pushing companies to look in other areas. The logical conclusion is that prices will begin to rise even in these historically lower-priced areas.
4. **West Ann Arbor's vacancy rate doesn't tell the whole story.**
 - The West Office Area vacancy rate increased for the second year, from 13.9% to 17.2%. Most of this vacancy can be accounted for by one 18,000 square foot vacancy. There is ongoing demand for office space in the west part of town, with lots of activity in the 1,000-3,000 square feet range.
5. **Speculative building projects indicate a high level of confidence that these trends will continue.**
 - Developers are responding to this eight-year trend of continued vacancy rate decreases; there are a number of speculative projects under construction expected to be completed in 2018. This demonstrates confidence that there will be company expansions, relocations, and new startups to occupy the space.

Press releases - City of Ann Arbor - 2017

Ann Arbor SPARK Honors 18 Growing Companies with 2016 and 2017 FastTrack Awards: At its annual meeting, Ann Arbor SPARK presented its annual FastTrack awards to 18 Washtenaw County-based companies that have demonstrated fast growth. Several of the 2016 and 2017 FastTrack award recipients were multiple year winners. One of this year's winners, LLamasoft, has won a FastTrack award every year since 2008. FastTrack awards are presented to companies with impressive records of growth. Recipients of 2016 FastTrack awards were required to have revenue of at least \$100,000 in 2012, with an annual growth of 20 percent for the following three years. Recipients of 2017 FastTrack awards were required to have revenue of at least \$100,000 in 2013, with an annual growth of 20 percent for the following three years.

Barracuda to expand in Ann Arbor: Barracuda intends to add 115 new jobs in downtown Ann Arbor over the next four years. Ann Arbor SPARK will support Barracuda's expansion via its Job Portal, which helps facilitate connections between the highly talented workforce and employers located in the region. Ann Arbor SPARK will also help by promoting talent mixers to assist with recruiting high quality talent through the University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, and other targeted groups. Barracuda's open positions will also be featured in Ann Arbor SPARK's Talent Newsletter, a bi-weekly e-newsletter sent to over 10,000 subscribers. In addition, Ann Arbor SPARK will use its integrated marketing platform to help increase awareness of Barracuda's job openings. Barracuda will be able to leverage Ann Arbor SPARK's targeted social media network to increase its visibility to job seekers across LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook, as well as via Ann Arbor SPARK's website.

Tech Homecoming Spotlights High Tech Career Opportunities in Ann Arbor: Tech Homecoming is a chance to mingle over drinks and appetizers and find out about hundreds of jobs in Ann Arbor in tech, software, engineering, sales, and more! Participating companies include Google, FordLabs, Nokia, ProQuest, and ForeSee Results. Tech Homecoming is strategically held on Thanksgiving Eve to allow those who have relocated outside of Ann Arbor the opportunity to experience first-hand the exciting tech corridor that's developed in the region.

Ann Arbor SPARK Hires Komal Doshi as Director of Mobility Programs: Ann Arbor SPARK recently hired Komal Doshi as its entrepreneurial services director of mobility programs. In this role, Doshi will work with existing and new startups to identify and solve challenges, engage stakeholders, and build new relationships within the mobility industry. This new position at Ann Arbor SPARK, funded by the City of Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti SmartZone (Local Development Finance Authority or LDFA), was created to assist the entrepreneurial community in its engagement with new technologies and established companies in the industry. Doshi's impressive experience includes strategizing and growth and development at the University of Michigan's Sustainable Mobility and Accessibility Research and Transportation (SMART). She also developed and managed a range of global partnerships and collaborated with multi-sector stakeholders.

Press releases - City of Ann Arbor - 2017

Ann Arbor SPARK's A2 Tech Trek 2017 Set for June 16: More than 70 Downtown Ann Arbor Companies to Open Their Doors to Community... and Job Seekers!! Leading technology companies will participate in the third annual A2 Tech Trek on June 16, 2017, from 3 to 7 p.m. A2 Tech Trek, a free event, features open houses at downtown Ann Arbor's technology companies and organizations. Ann Arbor SPARK, with support from the Michigan Economic Development Corp, Ann Arbor/ Ypsilanti SmartZone (LDFA), and PNC Bank, is hosting the event..

Applied Dynamics International to Invest \$4.4 Million, Create 100+ Jobs in Ann Arbor: Applied Dynamics International, Inc., founded in 1957 in Ann Arbor, specializes in advanced computing and helps companies make better use of simulation assets through all stages of product development, testing, demonstration, training, and maintenance. The company, which is experiencing rapid growth, will invest nearly \$4.4 million and create 100 high-paying jobs as part of its expansion. As a result, the company has been awarded a \$650,000 Michigan Business Development Program performance-based grant. Michigan was chosen over competing sites in Seattle and the UK. Ann Arbor SPARK is planning to assist the company in attracting talent for the new positions. For information on careers with ADI, please visit <https://www.adi.com/company/careers/>.

The American Center for Mobility

Willow Run's Connected and Automated Vehicle Center Overview

In December 2017 construction of Phase 1 was completed, and ACM opened its proving grounds for testing. Also in 2017 AT&T, Toyota, Ford, Hyundai, and Visteon all became Founder-level sponsors with multi-million dollar contributions.

The first phase of the project - the construction of the high speed loop - was complete by the end of 2017. Both Visteon and Toyota immediately began testing at the site in December. The opening builds on years of involvement by Ann Arbor SPARK, Ypsilanti Township, elected officials, the University of Michigan, the State of Michigan, Washtenaw County, and numerous other partners to bring this project to the site.

SPARK is deeply involved in the ongoing work of the American Center for Mobility, helping to manage all aspects of the process, including:

- CEO Paul Krutko serves on the Board and as Treasurer of ACM;
- Providing back of the house support to ACM staff (human resources and finance management);
- Supervising the development of a technology park at ACM;
- Development of funding solicitation proposals;
- Business development (lead generation and relationship management for both users and tenants of the site);
- Managing the entirety of the Request for Partnership process (to find a partner to develop the tech park and headquarters facilities).

SPARK also creates and maintains marketing material for the site, including:

- [The American Center for Mobility - Driving the Future of Transportation](#)
- [Michigan's mobility research cluster](#)
- [Mobility companies in the region](#)
- [Mobility assets near the American Center for Mobility](#)
A map of resources and local companies
- [In the news](#)
Recent news about ACM
- [Search available properties nearby](#)

Below are some of the activities and efforts related to this project, which began in 2013. Note that this project is a key strategic project for the organization and this list cannot capture all of the activity and work that has been conducted over the past several months.

Key Timeline Activities:

2017

- In December 2017, construction on Phase 1 of the project (the high speed loop) was completed, and American Center for Mobility opened its proving grounds for testing, with Visteon Corporation and Toyota Research Institute on site to begin testing operations.
- In September 2017, the American Center for Mobility and Ann Arbor SPARK released a Request for Partnership (RFP) for the development of its technology park which will include a headquarters and labs for the organization. The selected development partner will conceptualize and develop a world class tech park adjacent to the connected and automated vehicle proving grounds built on more than 500 acres at Willow Run. The partner will also manage the construction of the tech-park facilities. The 25 acre location for the 45,000 sq. ft. headquarters has already been selected based on its proximity to the ACM proving grounds. In addition to the headquarters, the project includes design and construction of a 13,500 sq. ft. lab that will be adjacent to the headquarters and the proving grounds. Ann Arbor SPARK is managing the RFP process.
- Throughout Q3 and Q4 of 2017, Toyota, Ford, Hyundai, and Visteon all announced their intent to support the American Center for Mobility (ACM) as Founder-level sponsors with a \$5 million contribution each.
- In April 2017, the Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF) pledged an additional \$15 million to see the autonomous and connected vehicle research facility in Washtenaw County reach the next stage in development. This brought total funding from the MSF to \$32 million.
- In Q1 2017, construction officially began at the American Center for Mobility at Willow Run in Ypsilanti Township. Phase 1 of the project - the high speed loop - should be complete by the end of 2017.
- ACM competed with dozens of sites around the U.S. to receive federal designation, announced in January of 2017: **"American Center for Mobility designated by US Department of Transportation as national automated vehicle proving ground"**. The solicitation of proposals for the designation of the Automated Vehicle Proving Grounds Pilot program was announced in late November by the USDOT and 10 facilities were selected. More than 60 organizations applied to receive the designation.

2016

- In the winter of 2016, the American Center for Mobility reached an agreement with AT&T as an exclusive cellular network provider until 2020 - teaming up with the Center, car companies and tech start-ups to test automated and connected vehicles. AT&T will also provide network service to allow the cars to talk to infrastructure, pedestrians and also to another car. The current partnership will now essentially provide the center with a lot more data.

- On November 21, 2016 Gov. Rick Snyder joined state officials and automotive technology leaders to celebrate the official groundbreaking of the American Center for Mobility at Willow Run in Ypsilanti Township. Earlier in November, Willow Run Arsenal of Democracy (WRAD) Landholdings Limited Partnership completed the purchase of the property from RACER Properties LLC, which paved the way for construction of the new facility. The property at Willow Run was acquired from Revitalizing Auto Communities Environmental Response (RACER) Trust following a \$1.2 million purchase agreement that was reached in July with WRAD, which will then lease the property to the American Center for Mobility.
- On July 26, 2016 the Michigan Strategic Fund approved a \$17 million investment for the finalization of the acquisition of land at Willow Run, operations, and to facilitate the design and construction of phase one of a state-of-the-art global center for research, development and testing for automated vehicles.
- In January 2016, Governor Snyder announced the State's intention to develop the site in his State of the State address. The American Center for Mobility was officially launched in January of 2016, ACM is a joint initiative among the State of Michigan – including the Michigan Department of Transportation and MEDC, the University of Michigan, Business Leaders for Michigan and Ann Arbor SPARK. The board of directors includes representatives from the university, BLM, and SPARK, which initiated the project and will play a key role in economic development tied to the center. Automotive industry and community advisory boards will also be established. CEO Paul Krutko serves as Treasurer of ACM and Ann Arbor SPARK provides back of the house administrative and managerial support to ACM.

2015

- Work began to organize a non-profit entity that would operate the American Center for Mobility, as well as begin the due diligence process for development of the site, owned by RACER Trust. In addition, outreach to industry partners continued.
- Continued outreach to stakeholders in Washington, DC and at the state level, as well as further development of the site plan and operating model.
- A working group was designated to continue work on the study, including the Center for Automotive Research, the Detroit Regional Chamber, Business Leaders for Michigan, MEDC, MDOT, Walbridge, the University of Michigan. The working group met several times over the course of 2015 to provide direction, develop materials and work on next steps for the site
- Ann Arbor SPARK and Walbridge were awarded a grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to conduct a feasibility study for the former manufacturing site to serve as a national center for connected and automated vehicle (CAV) research, testing, product development, validation and certification facility.

- SPARK staff began a series of meetings with key officials at the federal and legislative levels, briefing them on the importance of the project to the region, and to the state. Meetings included: Regular calls and meetings with the Michigan Congressional Delegation, including Representative Dingell, Senator Peters, and Senator Stabenow, as well as other members of the Michigan delegation. Briefings in Washington, DC with officials from the Department of Energy, Department of Transportation, Department of Commerce and the White House. Briefings with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Michigan Department of Transportation, University of Michigan, Ypsilanti Township and other community partners.
- TASS International completed “The Willow-Run Automated and Connected Car Test Site: A Technical and Business Assessment,” which outlined the site plan and key elements of Willow Run as a test center.

2013

- In 2013, Ann Arbor SPARK released “Ahead by a Century: The Future of Automotive Technology” outlining how the Willow Run site could be utilized as a connected and automated vehicle testing center.

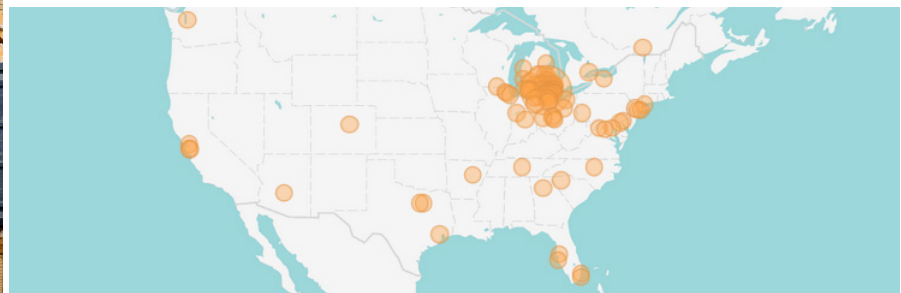


<http://www.acmwillowrun.org/>

Work continues on the project, which involves continued engagement with numerous stakeholders, including the federal government, industry and other partners.

Tech Trek 2017

Downtown Ann Arbor is a tech hub. Ann Arbor SPARK launched [Tech Trek](#) in 2015 to connect the community with the burgeoning tech scene in their hometown, allow companies to showcase their innovations, and enable job seekers to explore potential employers.



Ann Arbor Tech Trek is a free community event and a terrific opportunity to see the real gems located inside the doors of many area tech companies. It's also a chance to see what's unique about downtown Ann Arbor.

The event has nearly tripled in scope since its inception - with attendance increasing nearly 75% year over year.

2017 Highlights

The number of participating companies ballooned from 25 in 2015, to over 70 in 2017. Over 4,000 people registered for Tech Trek 2017, with approximately 2,400 ultimately attending. Much of this increase in engagement can be attributed to a strategic marketing campaign, which had a national focus.

230% growth in registration in 2017, with 30 states (see map) and 8 countries represented. With the increased size and complexity of the event, new measures were taken to maintain and improve the experience of the trekkers, such as the continued development of the [Tech Trek app](#), which was developed in collaboration with Ann Arbor software firm Arbormoon.

Check out the [Tech Trek website](#) for more information including a list of participating companies and photos from 2016 and 2017, along with a [recap video](#) for 2017.

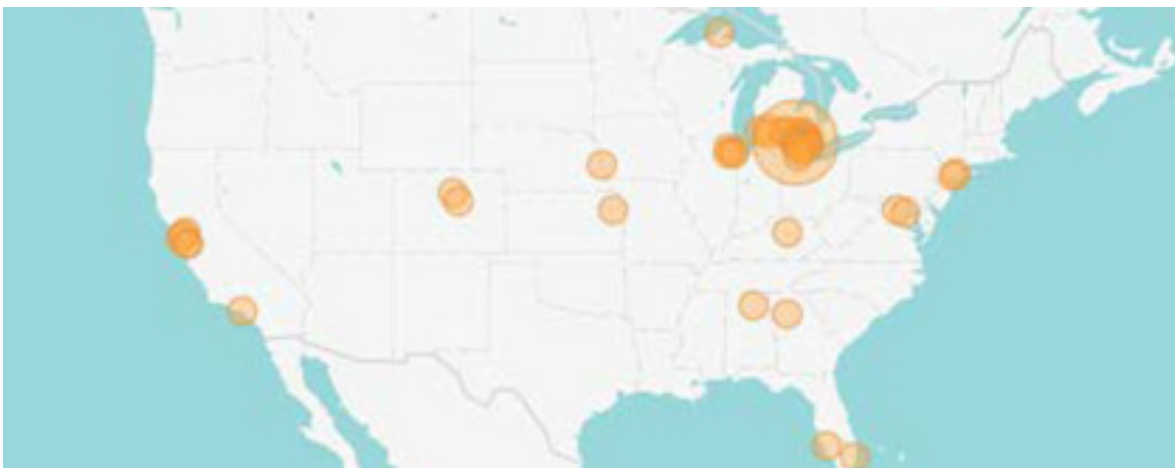
Tech Homecoming 2017



Tech Homecoming: In November, Ann Arbor SPARK sponsored Tech Homecoming, a showcase of Ann Arbor's tech community to people that come "back home" the night before Thanksgiving – traditionally one of the busiest bar nights of the year. Tech Homecoming offers an opportunity for out-of-towners to learn about our technology companies and see if there are chances to find new careers in Ann Arbor. In 2017 there were:

- 15 participating companies
- 581 people registered (134% increase in registrations year over year)
- 266 people checked-in (129% increase in attendees year over year)
- 140 resumes collected (21% increase in resumes captured year over year)
- 17 states represented

Registrations reached the following states:



Appendix

Facilitations, advocacy initiatives, and communication efforts by SPARK to address economic development needs and concerns

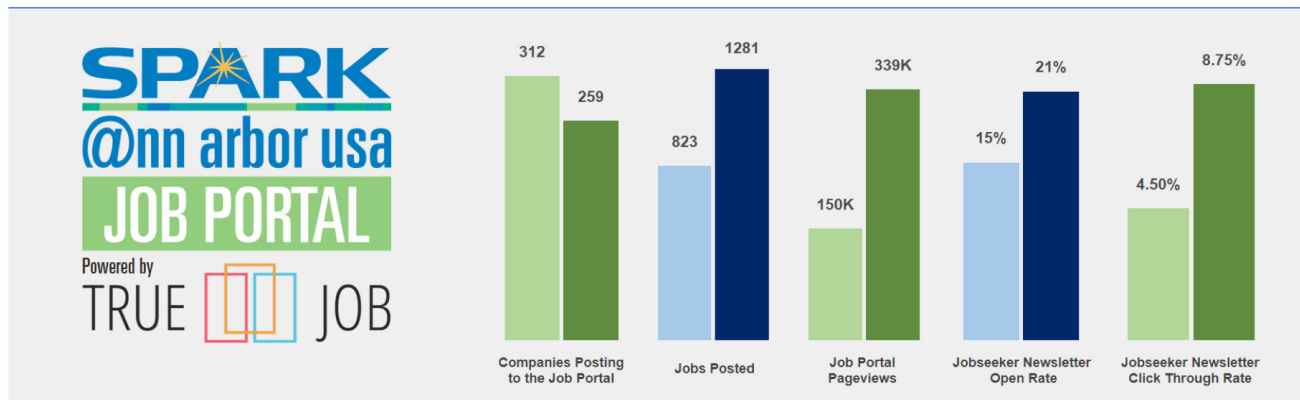
- Ann Arbor SPARK leads the **Greater Ann Arbor Region** initiative, a six county economic development effort that is focused on regional opportunities and leveraging our region's combined assets to pitch opportunities for national and international projects. These efforts include specific marketing materials and social media channels. Our efforts have resulted in the region's ability to respond to new project opportunities.
- **Benchmarking Study:** at the Annual Meeting, SPARK presented a comprehensive benchmarking study, analyzing the economic competitiveness of Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County in comparison to competitor regions around the nation. The study measured performance on eight metrics, highlighting areas where our region succeeds, and areas where we can do better. Read the full study [here](#).
- **Tech Talk 2017:** New to this year's Tech Trek was Tech Talk. Before walking the walk, community members were invited to hear talks by leading local innovators at the Michigan Theater. Modeled after TED events, speakers each had seven minutes to talk about their innovations, what they see happening in the world of tech, and what they foresee for the future. Tech Talk attendees also had the chance to submit questions for the speakers to answer. In this inaugural year, Tech Talk had 891 attendees. Participating companies included: Arbor Networks, Backyard Brains, Barracuda Networks, Duo Security, Girl Develop It, LLamasoft, Menlo Innovations, Nutshell, Spellbound, and Universal Robots. More information on speakers and format [here](#).



- Ann Arbor SPARK, in partnership with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) took a delegation of five Greater Ann Arbor companies to the **Michigan Technological University Design Expo** in April 2017 to engage with students and promote the Ann Arbor region as a great place to start a career. As part of the event, the Ann Arbor delegation interacted with over 100 students and several companies hired people because of the event.

Appendix - continued

- **SPARK Job Portal:** In 2017, the SPARK Job portal underwent a transformation with the help of local Ann Arbor startup TrueJob. The newly designed portal is more user-friendly for applicants, and allows employers to post jobs quickly and efficiently to reach a targeted, local pool of talent. TrueJob also allows SPARK to collect more and better data, which we look forward to sharing as the portal becomes more established. Employers can view resumes submitted by becoming a “job manager” [here](#).



comparing 2016 to 2017



Contact details:

Phil Santer, SVP of Business Development, Chief of Staff

phil@annarborusa.org

734-527-9176

<http://annarborusa.org/>

Ann Arbor SPARK will advance the economy of the Ann Arbor region by establishing the area as a desired place for business expansion and location... by identifying and meeting the needs of business at every stage, from those that are established to those working to successfully commercialize innovations.