

# Ann Arbor SPARK

**Semi-Annual Report**  
**City of Ann Arbor**  
**July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023**



Ann Arbor SPARK will advance the economy of the Ann Arbor region by establishing it as a desired place for innovation, business location and growth, and for talented people to live and work. The Ann Arbor region will be recognized for its academic, business, and community resources, and its collaborative culture.

<https://annarborusa.org/>





# Semi-Annual Report

## City of Ann Arbor

### July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023

## REPORT CONTENTS

- 03 Report Summary and Strategic Priorities
- 04 Business Development Activity & Metrics
- 11 Companies Visited
- 15 Project Pipeline
- 16 Marketing Updates *(Upcoming Events and Press Releases)*
- 23 Municipal Services Overview
- 24 Contact Details

# Ann Arbor SPARK | City of Ann Arbor

## Semi-Annual Report

This report focuses primarily on activity completed and results achieved by Ann Arbor SPARK's Business Development team during 2023 in Washtenaw County. We look forward to expanding our strategic vision in 2024 and beyond.



## Driving Smart Economic Growth in Service of Prosperity for All

The world is undergoing a sea of change of how people work, where they live, and what they value. The pandemic has exacerbated economic inequalities and made progress on environmental sustainability more difficult. A strategy of smart growth in service of prosperity for all will respond to these new challenges and create opportunities that will benefit our region. To deliver on this shared purpose with a strong commitment to equity and environmental stewardship, Ann Arbor SPARK will focus its efforts in the next three years on the four strategic directions below that have the potential to deliver value, mitigate risks, and are strengths of the organization. Our priorities include:



## Customized Business Attraction, Expansion, and Retention Support in Your Backyard

Ann Arbor SPARK is proud to serve your community and provide real-time, relevant resources for whatever you need related to business attraction, expansion, and retention, when you need it. Our team can assist with feasibility studies, review available sites for projects of any size, provide economic and labor market data and analysis, industry sector analysis, compensation analysis, facilitate connections to regional, state, and national partners, and much more. Contact Phil Santer at [phil@annarborusa.org](mailto:phil@annarborusa.org) to learn more.



# Ann Arbor SPARK 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.





# FY 2023 HIGHLIGHTS & NEWS

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT SUCCESSES



In 2023, Ann Arbor SPARK successfully assisted nine companies as they either planted roots in the Ann Arbor area or relocated their operations, resulting in the creation of 36 new jobs, the retention of 84 jobs, and a total capital investment of \$3,411,600.



Capoom, FreightMiner, and Scroll Technologies each located in Ann Arbor by taking a virtual presence at SPARK Central Innovation Center (SCIC).



Both NAVV Systems and Spellbound/ALTaity, LLC were retained after losing or outgrowing their office space downtown. Both companies have moved into available office space at SCIC.



Detroit-based Bamboo, a provider of all-inclusive, modern, and flexible coworking space and private offices, announced plans to open a site in downtown Ann Arbor. With the help of SPARK staff, Koddi became the first company to sign a lease with Bamboo Ann Arbor.



Insurance Quantified and GEOJump, Inc. also established new operations in the City of Ann Arbor with the assistance of SPARK business development team members.

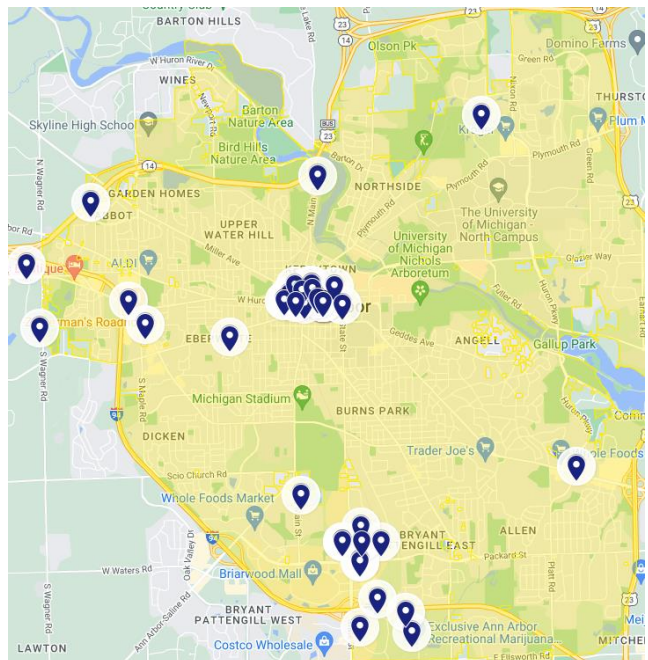


## SPARK RETENTION VISITS AND COMPANY GROWTH CALLS

SPARK's business development team members connected with 48 companies representing nearly 3,000 full-time employees from a variety of industries in the City of Ann Arbor in 2023.

Companies visited range in size from 0.5 to 400 employees and represent the Advanced Materials, Alternative Energy, Advanced Information Technology, Homeland Security and Defense, Education, Healthcare, Life Sciences, Business Services, Aerospace, and Banking and Finance industries.

The full list of companies visited can be found on [pages 13-15](#) of this report.



# FY 2023 HIGHLIGHTS & NEWS



## Best Practices Driving Economic Development in Cities Comparable to Ann Arbor

Compiled by Ann Arbor SPARK  
on behalf of the City of Ann Arbor



Commissioned by the City of Ann Arbor, Ann Arbor SPARK executed a benchmarking study from March to October 2023, examining the economic development practices of ten North American cities selected with assistance from Ann Arbor City staff. This study, undertaken through a combination of desktop research and virtual interviews, aimed to gather diverse insights to guide Ann Arbor's economic strategies.

### Report Highlights

- **Identification of an Internal Champion for Development Projects:** Nearly all of the communities interviewed as part of this research have an internal champion of development projects that is separate from the planning department.
- **Clarify the Process and Expectations of a Development at the Outset:** Austin's economic development leaders emphasize the importance of clarity at the project's outset regarding the City's support expectations.
- **Development of City-owned Property:** Cities need to have a vision and shared understanding of the importance of development of city-owned property.
- **Collaboration Between the Planning Department and External Stakeholders:** One example: Boulder has developed a transparent approach to its development pipeline and addressing project constraints. They partner with external entities to hold regular meetings that engage city officials, developers, architects, and other stakeholders to discuss projects and current constraints on the process.
- **Partner with External Organizations:** All cities analyzed have invested in regional economic development organizations that are external to city operations.
- **Incentivize Carbon Reduction Goals:** Most cities reviewed have carbon reduction goals, but none strictly mandate carbon neutrality. Most cities offered incentives to encourage developers to utilize carbon neutrality in their projects which were often tied to public support of relevant projects.

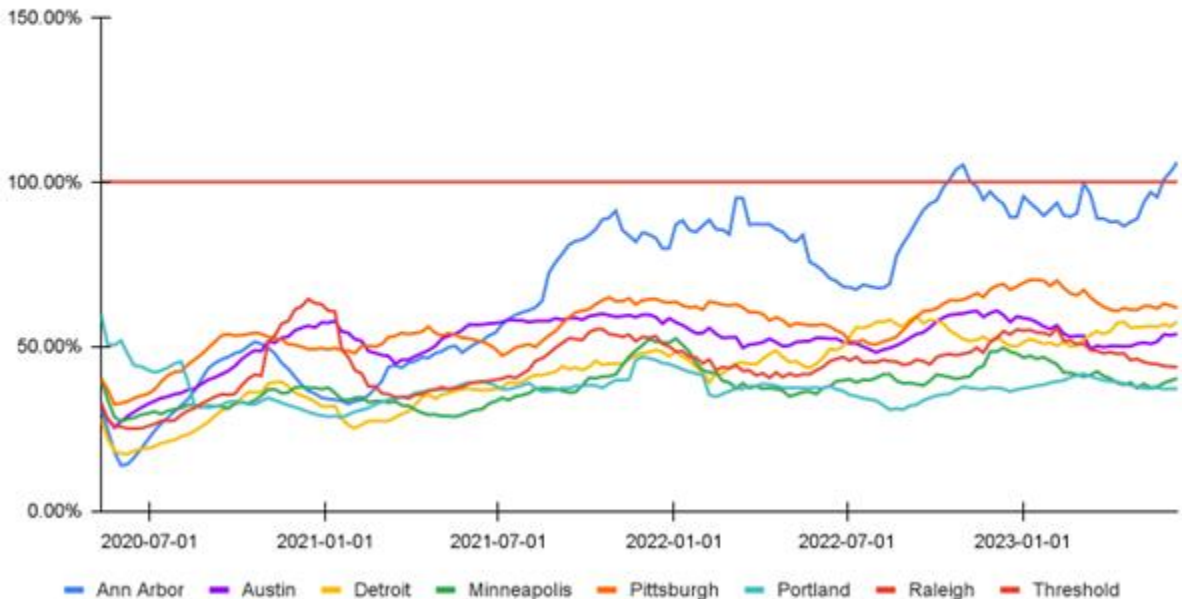
# FY 2023 HIGHLIGHTS & NEWS

## ANN ARBOR'S DOWNTOWN ACTIVITY SURPASSES PEERS

Ann Arbor's downtown recovery has not only returned to pre-pandemic levels, but it has outpaced that of communities we are typically stacked up against, including Austin, Detroit, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, Portland, and Raleigh:

### UT Cities Project Recovery Quotient

Benchmark Cities - May 2020 - June 2023, Weekly



Ann Arbor SPARK partnered with students at the University of Michigan to update data originally developed by the University of Toronto's to explore how activity in North American cities has changed since the pandemic. Ann Arbor, represented in blue, shows activity downtown is outpacing other cities.

Despite an active downtown, the shift to remote work was noted across all teams as a considerable influence on what downtown space use looks like now in Ann Arbor:

- According to a commuter and employer survey conducted by TheRide, there has been a significant decline in daily commuting to Ann Arbor from 2018 to 2023, with a marked increase in remote work.
- Michigan State University's State of the State Survey shows that Washtenaw County has the largest percentage of workers who can work remotely.
- Google's mobility data shows that workplaces in Washtenaw County have not returned to pre-pandemic levels of weekday activity, due to the higher concentration of jobs that can be performed remotely.

View the full blog post [here](#).

# FY 2023 HIGHLIGHTS & NEWS

## ANN ARBOR SPARK LEADING A CHILD CARE COALITION

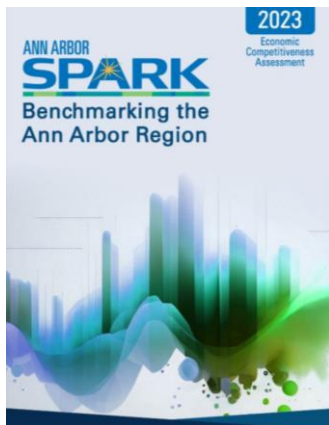
In March 2023, Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced that 16 organizations serving Michiganders in 81 counties are receiving \$2.4 million in Regional Child Care Planning Grants from the Early Childhood Investment



Corporation's (ECIC) Child Care Innovation Fund, helping them expand child care options, serving more families, and lowering costs for parents. You can learn more about the coalition and read the latest reports online here: <https://annarborusa.org/childcare>.

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## SPARK RELEASES 5TH ANNUAL BENCHMARKING REPORT



In Q3 2023, SPARK released the 5<sup>th</sup> iteration of the [Benchmarking the Ann Arbor Region](#) report. The purpose of the report is to take the pulse of the Ann Arbor region in comparison to a specific competitive set of technology-driven communities and their economies.

Key findings in 2023 show that most rankings either remained stable or have improved since the previous report was released. Notably, Ann Arbor ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in University R&D Expenditures, 3<sup>rd</sup> in population movement/net migration, 3<sup>rd</sup> for share of remote jobs, and 3<sup>rd</sup> for venture capital activity.

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## ANN ARBOR SPARK'S CEO PODCAST: MILTON DOHONEY

Milton Dohoney, Jr., the City Administrator for the City of Ann Arbor, discusses the importance of growth, the vitality of the downtown community, the upcoming Bicentennial celebration, and more in a recent episode of SPARK's CEO podcast series. Listen to the full interview [here](#).

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## FOCUS ON STATE STREET IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Ann Arbor SPARK staff have been instrumental in the process of creating a special assessment district within the City of Ann Arbor, known as the State Street BIZ. The purpose of the State Street BIZ is to promote the area as an attractive and inviting gateway into the City of Ann Arbor. In 2023, we worked with the Michigan Legislature to update the law, which was signed by the Governor in the fall. We anticipate implementation of a State Street BIZ in 2024.



# CITY OF ANN ARBOR METRICS

Companies Assisted		YTD 2023
Number of growth visits held		48
Number of attraction prospect site visits <sup>1</sup>		3*
Number of responses to attraction prospect or site consultant requests for proposals <sup>2</sup>		6
Jobs		
Projected to be created (over the next 3 years) <sup>3</sup>		36
Jobs projected to be retained		84
Investment		
Taxable value of new private investment		\$1,705,800
Total value of private investment		\$3,411,600
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 <sup>4</sup>	No incentives awarded to companies in the City of Ann Arbor in 2023	

<sup>1</sup>Number of discreet projects that were physically toured around sites in the City of Ann Arbor.

<sup>2</sup>Number of requests to which SPARK electronically submitted properties located in the City of Ann Arbor.

<sup>3</sup>These 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.

<sup>4</sup> [Michigan Economic Development Corporation Business Development Program Projects](#)

\*The COVID-19 crisis limited our ability to physically tour space. This figure includes virtual visits done with site consultants that lead global site search projects.



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.

# Ann Arbor SPARK Metrics:

## JOBS

SPARK acts as project manager for both the communities it supports 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.**



FY 2023

# COMPANIES VISITED

Growth calls are a core economic development strategy that involve proactively outreaching and engaging with the existing employer base in our region to determine where they face opportunities and challenges. Growth calls recognize that businesses are dynamic entities that involve constant change. These calls allow SPARK to:

- gather information about local businesses that can be aggregated to reveal trends,
- determine valuable resources that could assist in the company's development,
- identify growth projects that require assistance, and
- serve as an ombudsman between businesses and government.

SPARK conducts hundreds of targeted growth calls each year that result in numerous referrals to resources, services and opportunities of which companies are often unaware. The most common referrals involve accessing talent, access to capital or business development/sales opportunities. Proactive outreach helps companies address challenges before they become problems, supports their continued growth and helps them see that this region is invested in their success.



SPARK HELD GROWTH VISITS WITH

## 48 COMPANIES

January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023

These companies ranged from 1 to 400 employees and encompassed a diverse range of industries including Advanced Materials, Alternative Energy, Advanced Information Technology, Homeland Security and Defense, Education, Healthcare, Life Sciences, Business Services, Aerospace, and Banking and Finance.

**Together, companies contacted represent 2,941 full-time employees.**

FY 2023

# COMPANIES VISITED

Company Name	Current FTE (as of growth visit)
ALTality, LLC	6
Ann Arbor T-shirt Company	66
Atomic Object	81
Bamboo-Ann Arbor	1
Black Tea Motorbikes USA	1
Censys, Inc.	125
DaySmart Software	90
DEO USA, Inc.	2
e-cell secure, LLC	2
Feonix Mobility Rising Ann Arbor	1
FreightVerify, Inc	80
Fresh Coast Climate Solutions	1
Genomenon, Inc.	125
Google AdWords	400
Human Element, Inc.	52
InfoReady Corporation	26
ITHAKA	150
J. Keller Properties	10
JNS Facility Maintenance, LLC	45
Jottful, LLC	7



FY 2023

# COMPANIES VISITED

Company Name	Current FTE (as of growth visit)
Larky, Inc.	14
LiveRoad Analytics Inc	2
MACOM Integrated Circuits-Ann Arbor	50
Mechanical Simulation Corp.	35
Merative	200
Merit Networks	100
Mouvit, LLC	2
NAVV Systems, Inc.	13
NETSCOUT Systems, Inc.	140
NetWorks Group	18
Nokia Deepfield	100
Nostrum High Performance Inc.	23
Office Evolution	1
Pure Visibility, Inc.	15
Rydberg Technologies Inc.	9
SafeSend	200
SBD North America	20
SDocs, Inc.	30
Sequoia Applied Solutions, Inc.	14
SkySpecs, Inc.	248
SNIAMOD LLC	4

FY 2023

# COMPANIES VISITED

Company Name	Current FTE (as of growth visit)
Soundskrit	23
Synecdoche Design	7
TGI Direct	1
Torrent Consulting, LLC	145
Warmilu, LLC	5
Wolverine Radar Company	2
Workit Health, Inc.	250



FY 2023

# PROJECT PIPELINE

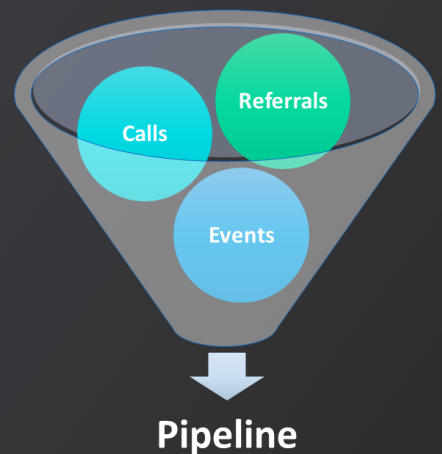
SPARK's project pipeline is a tool that enables our business development team to monitor the status of all active calls, referrals, events, and more. Our pipeline keeps us ahead of the game and allows our team to quickly prioritize high-impact projects and identify and address any issues in collaboration with our partners along the way.



CURRENT PIPELINE AT A GLANCE

## 58 PROJECTS

SPARK's current pipeline represents the potential for 8,917 new jobs, 2,095 retained jobs, and more than \$7.4 billion in total investments in the region. Projects represent a variety of industry sectors, including Research and Development, Life Sciences, Advanced Information Technology, Alternative Energy, Advanced Manufacturing, Advanced Materials, Food and Beverage, and Business Services.



### Pipeline Update

The business development team continues to field an unprecedented number of site search requests for space in Washtenaw and Livingston counties for both attraction and expansion projects. Site search requests come in for both existing space and vacant land to suited for new construction, but the most common requests this year so far have been for vacant land suited for industrial use (whether it be light industrial for the purpose of R&D or heavy industrial for manufacturing purposes).

As always, our team works closely with state and regional partners to keep sites in Washtenaw County at the forefront for companies when aiding with attraction, retention, and growth activities.



# Ann Arbor SPARK Talent Engagement and Marketing the Region

For more than 15 years, SPARK has served the greater Ann Arbor region as a catalyst for economic development. We accomplish this by building awareness of the region as a destination for business and manufacturing development and growth. Our team of knowledge experts attracts, develops, strengthens, and invests in driving industries to help our communities prosper.





# a2TECH360

Ann Arbor's Week-Long Celebration of Innovation

## 2023 Events Recap

Learn more at [a2Tech360.com](https://a2Tech360.com)



# 3,870+

Total Registrations



# 2,621

SPARK Event Registrations



# 1,250+

Partner Event Registrations



Registrations from:

7 Countries

23 Different States

280 Unique ZIP Codes



September 14



September 14



September 15



September 15



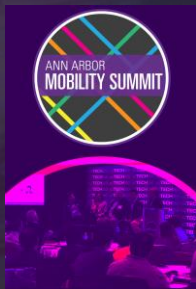
September 16



September 18



September 18



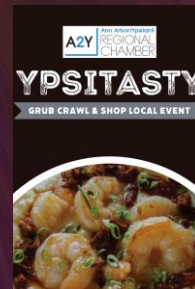
September 19



September 19



September 20



September 20



September 20



September 21



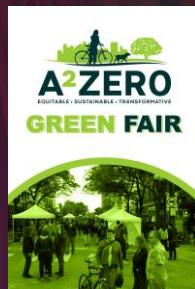
September 21



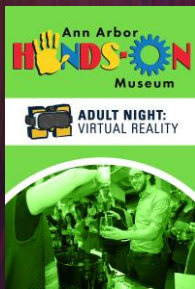
September 21



September 22



September 22



September 22



# tech home coming

CONNECT WITH COMPANIES HIRING IN THE ANN ARBOR REGION.

Tech Homecoming offers job seekers a unique opportunity to network with area companies looking to hire in a happy hour setting. The goal of the event is to connect talented professionals with Ann Arbor and its vibrant tech ecosystem, which has produced hundreds of startups and billions in enterprise value in the past five years. In 2023, the event was hosted by Venue by 4M with 16 participating companies and nearly 375 registered job seekers.

## PARTICIPATING COMPANIES



## SPONSORS



# FY 2023 Highlights

## Ann Arbor SPARK Press Releases

**[CEO Podcast: Drew Vielbig, Ranger Power:](#)** As a growing number of municipalities and companies commit to carbon neutrality goals, the demand for renewable energy sources increases. One organization that is helping achieve that vision is [Ranger Power](#). Listen [here](#). 1/16/2023

**[Podcast: Skip Simms Retires from Ann Arbor SPARK, Remains with MI Angel Fund:](#)** Skip Simms was one of Ann Arbor SPARK's first employees when it was created a couple decades ago to provide business training and services to the Ann Arbor tech community, including engineers coming out of the University of Michigan. 1/17/2023

**[Ann Arbor SPARK Hires Sarah Cicotte as Director of Mobility, Driving Continued Innovation in Region's Thriving Industry:](#)** Ann Arbor SPARK is pleased to announce the hiring of Sarah Cicotte as its new Director of Mobility. In her new role, Cicotte will lead the organization's efforts to drive innovation and growth in the region's mobility industry.

**[Michigan Works! Southeast Receives up to \\$3.6 Million to Assist Area Businesses:](#)** Michigan Works! Southeast will receive up to \$3.6 Million from the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Opportunity (LEO) to train workers at 66 companies throughout the region. Collectively, these 66 companies will train 1,883 employees, which includes 789 new hires and 330 United States Dept. of Labor Registered Apprentices. 2/2/2023

**[CEO Podcast: Sue Shink, State Senator:](#)** The journey from neighborhood advocate to state politician can take many forms, including growing a family, owning a small business, and COVID challenges. Listen [here](#). 2/20/2023

**[Michigan Works! Southeast Announces Relocation of Washtenaw American Job Center:](#)** The workforce development agency will relocate to 1201 E Ellsworth Road, near Stone School Road in the Ann Arbor city limits. The new facility is centrally located within Washtenaw County and will offer more space for career seekers. 3/1/2023

**[CEO Podcast: Dr. Santa Ono, President of the University of Michigan:](#)** In this episode, Dr. Santa J. Ono, the newly appointed president of the University of Michigan, discusses the importance of universities and their partnerships with the private sector in creating and growing technology-based companies, and how these collaborations help commercialize research and benefit the Ann Arbor region's economy. Listen [here](#). 3/20/2023

**[Recapping the Best of SXSW 2023: Highlights and Insights:](#)** [South by Southwest](#) (SXSW) is an annual conference and festival in Austin, Texas, that brings together a diverse range of professionals from various industries, including music, film, technology, and entrepreneurship. Learn more about Midwest House and SPARK's involvement in SXSW [here](#). 3/31/2023

# FY 2023 Highlights

## Ann Arbor SPARK Press Releases

**[GAASHRM Partners With Ann Arbor SPARK, Cahoots and Tech Companies in Downtown Ann Arbor to Highlight Local Talent](#)**: On Thursday, May 18th, a collaborative event organized by Ann Arbor SPARK and a local network of human resources professionals will spotlight Ann Arbor's growing technology hub. 5/5/2023

**[Comcast RISE Program Expands to Washtenaw County](#)**: Comcast has announced the expansion of its Comcast RISE program to Washtenaw County. Comcast RISE is committed to supporting the growth of all small businesses, while advancing the objectives of diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as community investment. The program was created to help businesses and their communities thrive with a focus on economic growth. 5/10/2023

**[CEO Podcast: Skip Simms, Michigan Angel Fund Manager](#)**: In this episode, Skip Simms, recently retired from Ann Arbor SPARK, shares the history of the Michigan Angel Fund, SPARK's origin story, and what retirement looks like for his family. Listen to the full interview [here](#). 5/15/2023

**[Ann Arbor SPARK Launches Coalition to Address Child Care Challenges in Livingston and Washtenaw Counties](#)**: This effort brings together local child care providers, families, policymakers, and businesses to address the issue of child care from an economic development perspective. The coalition will work together to develop and implement a regional action plan over the next 12 months. 6/12/2023

**[CEO Podcast: Sonya Callahan, VP of Comcast Business](#)**: In this episode, Sonya Callahan, Comcast's Vice President of Business, shares with guest host Phil Santer, Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff at Ann Arbor SPARK, more about the efforts Comcast is making to connect with the community. Listen to the full episode [here](#). 6/19/2023

**[Gov. Whitmer Signs Bipartisan Legislation to Continue Strong Economic Development, Support Small Businesses Across the State](#)**: Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed legislation to continue powering economic development and supporting small businesses across the state. 7/11/2023

**[CEO Podcast: Michael Bickers, Regional President, PNC Bank](#)**: In this episode, Michael Bickers, the Regional President of PNC Bank, joins us to discuss PNC's initiatives to support startups and small businesses, as well as their commitment to corporate social responsibility. Listen to the full episode [here](#). 7/17/2023

**[CEO Podcast: Meg Wallace, Senior Engineer, Toyota North America](#)**: In this episode, Paul interviews Meg Wallace, Senior Engineer at Toyota North America, discussing various initiatives aimed at workforce development and educational outreach in the automotive industry. The conversation touches on Toyota's local presence, investment, and adaptation to the evolving mobility sector. Listen to the full episode [here](#). 8/21/2023



# FY 2023 Highlights

## Ann Arbor SPARK Press Releases

### **Comcast RISE Awards 100 Metro Detroit Businesses with Comprehensive Grant Packages:**

Comcast announced the names of the 100 businesses in metro Detroit, including those in the greater Ann Arbor region that will receive grant packages. 8/22/2023

**FAME Signing Day Pairs WCC Students with New Employers:** WCC, manufacturers and regional workforce development organizations have joined hands to meet industry talent needs through the national Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (FAME) work-and-learn apprenticeship program. 8/23/2023

**CEO Podcast: Mike Psarouthakis, Director of Ventures, Managing Director, Accelerate Blue Fund, University of Michigan:** In this podcast episode, Paul Krutko, President and CEO of Ann Arbor SPARK, interviews Mike Psarouthakis, a key figure in building the Ann Arbor Region's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Listen to the full episode [here](#). 9/17/2023

**Recap of a2Tech360 2023: Celebrating Innovation and Community in Ann Arbor:** This year, the lineup was comprised of 18 events, taking place at various venues in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti from September 14 through 22, inviting a broad spectrum of community involvement. 9/25/2023

**Ann Arbor SPARK Receives 2023 Excellence in Economic Development Silver Award from the International Economic Development Council:** Ann Arbor SPARK has been honored with the 2023 Excellence in Economic Development Silver Award by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). This accolade is a recognition of SPARK's outstanding efforts in the Internet & New Media category. 9/26/2023

**Revitalizing Washtenaw County: Two Key Projects Receive RAP 2.0 Grants:** Michigan celebrated a major boost to its prosperity and infrastructure through the approval of \$99.2 million in grant funding under the [Revitalization and Placemaking Program](#) (RAP 2.0). Two significant projects will occur in Washtenaw County. 10/25/2023

**Tech Homecoming Offers Exciting Networking Opportunities in Ann Arbor's Thriving Tech Ecosystem:** Tech Homecoming, an annual event hosted by Ann Arbor SPARK aimed at fostering connections between skilled professionals and Ann Arbor's thriving tech community, is set to take place on Wednesday, November 22, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Venue by 4M. 10/26/2023

**Governor Whitmer Announces Over \$73 Million in Support for Entrepreneurial Hubs Across the State:** Governor Gretchen Whitmer joined the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to announce that 27 organizations, including Ann Arbor SPARK, have been selected to serve as entrepreneurial hubs across the state of Michigan, providing comprehensive resources and support to the state's small businesses. 11/9/2023

# FY 2023 Highlights

## Ann Arbor SPARK Press Releases

**[Washtenaw Community College Named #1 Community College in Michigan](#)**: Washtenaw Community College has been named the top community college in Michigan in two recent independent rankings. 12/8/2023

**[CEO Podcast: FAME Students with Nathan Sprague of Washtenaw Community College](#)**: In this episode of the Ann Arbor SPARK's CEO Podcast, host Paul Krutko discusses the Michigan Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (FAME) program at Washtenaw Community College. 12/18/2023

**[Climate Power's "Made by Michigan" Forum at Ann Arbor SPARK Highlights Michigan's Clean Energy Boom](#)**: Climate Power hosted a "Made By Michigan" clean energy roundtable at Ann Arbor SPARK to highlight the nation-leading clean energy investments and jobs headed to Michigan since the Inflation Reduction Act was signed into law last year. 12/18/2023

**[Local Companies Awarded Going PRO Talent Fund Grants](#)**: Congratulations to the businesses in the greater Ann Arbor region for being awarded grants from the [Going PRO Talent Fund](#). [Michigan Works! Southeast](#) has facilitated the [acquisition of \\$1,846,223.75](#), which will serve to train and develop the workforce in Southeast Michigan.

**[Ann Arbor's Downtown Activity Surpasses Peer Cities and Other Insights from Student Work at the University of Michigan](#)**: Ann Arbor's downtown recovery has not only returned to pre-pandemic levels, but it has outpaced that of communities we are typically stacked up against, including Austin, Detroit, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, Portland, and Raleigh. 12/21/2023

To view all press releases from Ann Arbor SPARK, visit our [Regional News](#) page.

# Ann Arbor SPARK | Municipal Services

Counties, cities, and townships are valued partners. Cultivating prosperity in the communities we serve is how we define success. Ann Arbor SPARK is proud to serve your community and provide real-time, relevant resources for whatever you need related to business attraction, expansion, and retention, when you need it. Our business development team can assist with feasibility studies, review available sites for projects of any size, provide economic and labor market data and analysis, industry sector analysis, compensation analysis, facilitate connections to regional, state, and national partners, and much more. When municipalities invest in Ann Arbor SPARK, we are able to deliver specific benefits and results.

## Municipal Investor Benefits

- Participation in SPARK's public-sector committee, which focuses on economic development opportunities in Washtenaw and Livingston counties and southeast MI.
- Outreach and services to growing companies located within their communities.
- The inclusion of appropriate real estate options and development of responses to requests for sites/proposals for business attraction.
- Access to regional and real estate data, demographic and business information, and the ability to leverage SPARK staff for customized research and data requests.
- Access to SPARK events.
- Consultation and deal structuring for economic development incentive programs and project management for major investment or job creation projects.

For higher-level municipal investors, Ann Arbor SPARK can provide guidance on strategic projects. This could include data, implementation of a specific economic development strategy like [Redevelopment Ready Communities®](#), neighborhood improvement programs, marketing of high-priority development projects, or other community-focused projects.

Additional consultation services could include, but are not limited to:

- Economic development strategies
- Brief economic impact studies
- Economic development technical assistance
- Grant support and technical assistance
- EPA brownfield assistance
- Workforce and talent pipeline development strategies
- Resources for state incentive programs
- Deal structuring and negotiation
- TIF projections
- Review or development of pro formas
- Assistance with PA 198s
- Customized research and data analyses

**MEET OUR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

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# Contact Details

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Ann Arbor SPARK will advance the economy of the Ann Arbor region by establishing it as a desired place for innovation, business location and growth, and for talented people to live and work. The Ann Arbor region will be recognized for its academic, business, and community resources, and its collaborative culture.