

< Ronald Morrell Jr.



All

Photos

Reels

Events

**Ronald Morrell Jr.**

4h ·



As promised, if and when this deal became real, I said the details would be made available to the public. That time has come.

I have received a lot of advice about how I should handle this politically. But after prayer this morning, I was reminded of how I built the relationship I have with this community: by being open, honest, transparent, and authentically me. So, here we go.

First, let's get some of the nonsense out of the way:

- No, I am not running for higher office. I value my mental health too much.
 - I have not signed an NDA.
 - I am not going to change my mind at the last minute and announce that I am running for Mayor again.
 - No one has paid me or "bought me off."
 - I have not "sold out" the City. There is nothing for me personally to sell in this deal.
 - I have not accepted some big job in Indianapolis.
- In fact, I honestly don't know what I am going to do next.
- I am not moving. My family has been here for generations, and we will continue to be here. I breathe the same air and drink the same water as you do.

Now that we have that out of the way, let's talk about the facts.

What you see in the accompanying image are the

 **Ronald Morrell Jr.****All****Photos****Reels****Events**

about the facts.

What you see in the accompanying image are the facts of the potential deal that could come to Marion.

Is the deal perfect? No. No deal ever is.

I have been told by people far more knowledgeable in these areas than I am that Marion has the infrastructure necessary to support this development.

For example, Marion has approximately 12 million gallons per day of water capacity and currently uses approximately 3.5 million gallons per day. But please, do not simply take my word for it. Contact Marion Utilities and ask the questions yourself.

The same goes for our electrical capacity. I have been told we have sufficient power capacity, but again, do not take my word for it. Contact the appropriate representatives at Indiana Michigan Power and ask them directly.

If you have questions about the land involved, talk to the property owners and farmers who have chosen to sell their land to the company. Without willing landowners, this project cannot happen.

I want people to seek out the facts themselves, ask difficult questions, and make informed decisions.

Now, here is my opinion.

Is this the best deal for Marion?

I truly don't know.

And I believe anyone who claims with absolute certainty that they can predict whether this will be an incredible success or an absolute failure is overstating what any of us can know about the future

 **Ronald Morrell Jr.****All****Photos****Reels****Events**

overstating what any of us can know about the future.

We live in an economy that is constantly evolving. Industries change. Technology changes. Communities change.

For decades, Marion has passed on opportunities that some believe could have changed the trajectory of our city. A local pastor recently said something to me that stuck:

"We say no to everything here. It's time we finally give something a shot."

That does not mean we should say yes to everything. It means we should be willing to evaluate opportunities based on facts rather than fear, rumors, politics, or personalities.

There is another reality we cannot ignore.

Marion is facing a significant financial challenge beginning in 2029 as a result of SEA 1 passed by the Indiana General Assembly in 2025. Current projections indicate the City could lose approximately \$8 million from a roughly \$34 million budget.

That is not a small adjustment. That is a fundamental financial challenge.

And this issue is bigger than the City of Marion. Communities, counties, schools, and other local units of government across Indiana are dealing with the effects of these changes. This is not simply about what Marion has or has not spent money on.

Our options for addressing a financial loss of that magnitude are limited and difficult. We can

 **Ronald Morrell Jr.****All****Photos****Reels****Events**

magnitude are limited and difficult. We can dramatically reduce services and staffing. We can look to taxpayers for additional revenue. Or we can aggressively pursue economic development that expands our tax base.

For too long, Marion has been on the "have not" side of the equation.

I wasn't alive to experience the Marion of the 1970s and 1980s that so many people tell me about, when our community had greater resources and opportunities. Sometimes, compared to our current reality, those stories almost sound like folklore.

But I do know this:

If Marion chooses to pursue development of this magnitude, and if the projections become reality, our community could have resources to invest at levels we have never experienced before.

That could mean more resources for roads and infrastructure, parks, neighborhood revitalization, blight elimination, homeowner assistance, scholarships, public safety, and other investments that directly improve the lives of Marion residents.

But those potential benefits do not mean we should ignore legitimate questions or concerns. We should ask them. We should demand answers. And we should make decisions based on verifiable information.

So, Marion, we are facing a difficult choice.

It is too large for one Mayor, one council member, one organization, or one group of citizens to carry alone.

< Ronald Morrell Jr.



All

Photos

Reels

Events

one organization, or one group of citizens to carry alone.

Over the next several months, this conversation will probably become politically charged and emotional. There will be strong opinions on both sides.

My request is simple:

Listen. Ask questions. Verify information. Separate facts from rumors. And then decide.

Another local pastor recently told me:

"As a leader, you have to be willing to disappoint people you love."

That resonated with me because leadership is not always about making the popular decision.

Sometimes it means confronting difficult realities and being willing to have uncomfortable conversations.

From where I sit, and knowing the challenges Marion has faced for decades, I believe our community is at a crossroads.

I am not asking you to blindly support this project.

I am not asking you to blindly oppose it.

I am asking you to become informed.

Read the information. Ask the questions. Talk to the people involved. Challenge what you hear, including what you hear from me.

Then make your decision based on facts.

Because ultimately, this is your community.

As always, the choice belongs to all of us to create the Marion WE want.