



EAST CENTRAL INDIANA
REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, (CEDS) Plan 2018-2022

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1. Introduction

Purpose of the CEDS Plan:

This CEDS plan is intended to layout the various individual and joint economic development priorities of the East Central Indiana Regional Planning District member communities. The plan also recommends actions for spurring the various projects to assist in the promotion of sustainable development and regional growth. The CEDS is required by the US Department of Commerce's, Economic Development Administration (EDA) in order to qualify for assistance under the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Programs. Intended to be a mechanism for incorporating economic development with other regional plans, this CEDS was developed in coordination with the regional leaders, planners and elected officials serving in various public and private capacities. Projects for inclusion relate to economic development, transportation, infrastructure, sustainability, land use, environmental conservation, redevelopment, general community betterment, workforce, housing development, as well as disaster prevention and management.

The CEDS was developed around five main elements.

1. Section 4: A summary background – describing the region's current economic situation, including discussions of the regional local economy, population numbers, human assets and environmental challenges and how they may promote or constrain the regional economy.
2. Section 5: A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis – assessing the regional economy including threats from internal and external trends and forces. In sum, this section examines the problems and opportunities for the region.
3. Section 6: An action or strategic direction plan – setting and prioritizing economic development vision and goals including opportunities and projects that will bring about real change within the communities.
4. Section 7: A summary listing of catalyst strategic projects, programs and activities that are intended to be carried out by the Counties, Cities and Towns in 2018-2022.
5. Section 8: An evaluation benchmarking framework has been developed to input criteria and performance measures- relating to the evaluation of progress and the plans implementation.

1.1 Counties:

The 2018-2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Report/Plan for an East Central Indiana region is comprised of the following four counties. This CEDS also incorporates various projects from participating cities and towns within each of the counties. Individual city and town projects are listed with their respective member counties.

1. Delaware County
2. Henry County
3. Grant County
4. Jay County

All four counties are authorized and designated as redevelopment counties by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Special note: Henry and Jay counties respectfully do not contribute financially to the ECI Regional Planning District. Both counties are not currently part of the district's board. For purposes of inclusion and as a result of their past participation, projects that were compiled in those counties during their period of participation are included in this report. It should be recognized that the City of Portland in Jay County participated in the planning process as well as other various towns in both Henry and Jay Counties. Both Delaware and Grant counties participated in the planning process and both are strong current participating members of the organization.

1.2 Enabling Legislation

The ECI Regional Planning District was formed in September of 2009 under Indiana Regional Planning Commission statute IC 36-7-7 and in accordance with EDA guidelines. The district serves as the state designated multi-county regional planning district whose mission is to serve the economic development, planning and grant development needs of Delaware, Grant, Henry and Jay Counties. Under the statute, the Regional Planning District functions as a tool to assist local governments with development processes, coordination and management of District programs and services, and act in an advisory capacity between units of local government.

1.3 District Organization

The ECI Regional Planning District currently operates with a twenty-three (23) member board, including one voting member appointed by the Governor of Indiana, as required by IC 36-7-7. The Executive Board consists of seven (7) voting members (including the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) as well as the Governor's (non-voting) appointee. A listing of the board members is included in Section 3.2.

1.4 History of CEDS:

The CEDS Vision Report/Plan is intended to be revised once every five years. CEDS Performance Reports/Plans are produced annually. The Performance Reports track the progress and implementation of CEDS projects and updates information as needed. The CEDS Report/Plan is intended to be a “living” and ever changing document. Previous CEDS Performance Report/Plans for the four county District were prepared in 2003, 2009, and updated in 2012. Various other updates and amendments were made in subsequent years.

1.5 What the District CEDS Plan includes:

The 2018-2022 CEDS includes a summary economic and demographic overview of the four Counties of the district and their current economic situation. The CEDS also reviews the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the region. The key to this document is a listing of the highest priority economic improvement action projects intended and or desired to be carried out in each member community. An evaluation framework for implementing projects and measuring performance is intended to guide and promote the successful completion of the priorities.

2. Executive Summary Overview:

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Plan is a compilation of data, information and economic development priorities for the District developed and articulated by members of the District with input from community participants, elected officials, local businesses and residents. The CEDS committee has gone to great lengths to ensure collaboration and inclusiveness of the various entities in the region. The purpose of this action-oriented document is to provide a detailed profile of the regional vision and needs of the four county area. This CEDS serves as a reference guide and plan to the District in times of economic downturn and expansion. It’s purpose is to facilitate regional engagement and discussion, to coordinate, cooperate, and develop comprehensive regional actions to improve and sustain growth in the region.

Based upon feedback from the Regional Planning District Board, this document has been developed in conjunction with leaders from a broad group of public, private, and non-profit organizations. The Regional Planning District held a series of Regional Planning District meetings in 2016 and 2017. At each meeting, discussion centered around regional and local projects that are either in process or desired to be implemented in the future. Members of the Planning District are the responsible parties for the identification and implementation of the shared goals and objectives contained within the plan. Through this process, Planning District Members were given the opportunity to submit projects of importance and concern to be added to the CEDS update. In addition, various

public meetings and one on one meetings/interviews with key stakeholders were held throughout the region to gather input. The district staff also held what they refer to as “road shows” in each of the four counties. The road shows consisted of the facilitation of one large meeting with all elected officials invited for the sharing of ideas and best practices in the county. A number of collaborative efforts for both ongoing and potential new projects were identified from these activities and have been incorporated into this CEDS Plan. In addition, key economic development plans critical to the growth and enhancement of the regional economy have been examined and included. In sum, the development of this CEDS was a multi-faceted process that included input from board members with diverse background in businesses, the service sector, government, economic development, educational institutions, engineering, industry, transportation, utilities, human and health services, and the financial sector. The input has been compiled into this plan in an effort to identify the District’s priorities and bring about action to achieve regions goals.

The CEDS was developed around five main elements.

1. **A summary background or otherwise known as a regional analysis-** describing the region’s current economic situation, including discussions of the regional local economy, population numbers, human assets, challenges and how they may promote or constrain the regional economy.
2. **A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis-** assessing the regional economy including threats from internal and external trends and forces. In sum, this section examines the problems and opportunities for the region.
3. **An action, goals and strategic direction plan-** setting and prioritizing the regions economic development goals and measurable objectives including opportunities and projects that will bring about real change within the communities.
4. **A summary listing of strategic projects, programs and activities-** that are intended to be carried out by the Counties, Cities and Towns in 2018-2022
5. **An evaluation benchmarking framework-** criteria and performance measures for evaluating progress implementing the region’s action plan.

Based on public input and feedback from local officials, coupled with the review of many CEDS reports from regional districts throughout the U.S., this updated document has been formatted to maximize user-friendliness. One of the difficult challenges with any new planning effort is maintaining momentum. With this in mind, this plan restricts the use of formality and bureaucratic language and acronyms in order to support and engage forward thinking action and visioning. The goal is for this plan to become a stronger resource for the District that is continuously referenced and followed as a guide to advance projects.

The 2018-2022 CEDS Report/Plan update outlines the region's vision for the future. It acknowledges the regions current position and answers the questions "Where are we headed?" and "What projects do we want our communities and region to advance in the coming years?" In answering these and related questions the region can better focus on developing priorities on issues such as amenities, workforce, education, target industries, transportation, and quality of life. The CEDS lists specific steps to meet regional priorities so that achievement may be tracked. Also, the CEDS provides evaluation measures by which the region can gauge success. The CEDS is a living document that can be quickly updated to reflect any changes in the region. This document is intended to be used as a reference guide, funding resource, and planning tool.

2.1 2017-2022 Top CEDS Regional Priority Projects

Delaware County-

- Exit 45/I-69 and St. Rd. 28: Utilities need extended to this intersection to allow for new business attraction at this optimal interstate exchange.
- Park One Infrastructure Improvements: The development in the Park One Business Park has created the need for a stop light at the intersection of Executive Park Blvd. and SR 332. Nearly five hundred (500) employees and over one hundred (100) semi-trucks daily navigate this intersection.
- Park One Utility Expansion: Water and sewer utility expansions are needed to accommodate future development in the Park. Town to consider expansion of utilities.
- Park One Rail Loading Dock: Truck access to the spur needs developed. Currently working with Good Industries as a trans-load operator.
- Complete the road to AquaBounty and open up more available acreage for the Albany Industrial Park.
- Continue to market the Fuson Road and Daleville Shell buildings.
- Work to brand the South Muncie Industria Center with the development of signage and landscaping.
- Continue to get blighted, abandoned and tax delinquent properties back on the tax rolls. Work with the regional planning district to issue RFP's for developers and end users.

Grant County-

- Seeking a housing developer for a new housing development in the area of I-69/SR 18.
- Greenways/Trails Development: Completion of connection to existing Cardinal Greenway to connect Grant County to Delaware County.
- Complete a US EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant application in cooperation with Grant County, Marion and one other selected regional partner.

- Explore options to create “Welcome to Grant County” signage along I-69.
- Infrastructure road/water/sewer at I-69 and SR 18 and 35 in relation to potential new economic development projects.
- Address options to improve road drainage on I-69 south of mm 264.
- Widening I-69 and improve the interchange ramps to better accommodate truck traffic.
- Assist towns with Community Crossing Grant applications for road funding.
- Develop a program to identify commercial/industrial properties with delinquent taxes that can be repurposed.
- Seek funding for blighted structure demolitions.

Henry County-

- Infrastructure improvements needed at interchanges along the I-70 corridor.
- Expand water and sewer service to the SR 109 and I-70 interchange.
- Expand water and sewer service to the Wilber Wright and I-70 interchange.
- Promote cooperation between Knightstown and the South Henry Regional Waste District.
- Develop a marketing plan for the I-70 corridor.
- Development of trails/connections to county/city/town park and recreation infrastructure.

Jay County-

- Address twelve (12) Combined Sewer Overflow and Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades in Portland.
- Develop a County-wide master plan to address the flooding issues County wide.
- Seek federal funding to assist with the alleviation of flooding issues.
- Housing: Develop new stock in all categories of housing opportunities (single-family, apartments and condos) for future growth in Jay County.
- Renewable Energy Opportunities: Work with the Renewable Energy Task Force to create opportunities in Jay County.
- Continued implementation of 20/20 Vision Plan for Jay County.
- Target value-added agriculture-based industries for growth in Jay County.
- Spec Buildings: Develop a spec industrial building.
- Brownfield Redevelopment Initiatives: Further development of specific Jay County and area-wide community brownfield projects and a regional brownfield coalition, including, website development; site inventory and status; assessments; remediation; re-use of sites; grant sourcing; and public/private collaborations.
- Ag Sector: Develop, nourish and strengthen the agriculture sector of local economy.
- Encourage growth in the Jay County park system, trails (hiking, walking) in order to increase the health and vitality of the community and add to quality of life.
- Bring high-speed internet to the County.

2.2 Grant Funding Assistance Opportunities for CEDS Priorities

The projects listed in the region's CEDS Report/Plan may qualify for funding from local state and federal grant sources. Sources of funding include local community foundations, Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIF), County Economic Development Income Tax (CEDIT or EDIT) plans, Transportation Improvement Plans (TIP), Bond Anticipation Notes (BAN), Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA), Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), Indiana Bond Bank, US Department of Commerce (USDA), Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Justice (DOJ), US Department of Transportation Infrastructure for Rebuilding America Grants (USDOT INFRA Grants), and others. Although it is important for an entity to have projects listed in the CEDS, such listing does not guarantee funding from any of the funding sources. All grants and project funding processes can be time consuming and take months to work through the various required steps. It is important to seek expert legal and financial consultation, plan accordingly and anticipate the time required to properly execute getting funding in place. The text below gives a brief explain of some of the most popular grant funding programs.

Community and Local Foundations:

Community and local foundations are tax-exempt charitable organizations that provide support, primarily for the needs of the geographic community or region where they are based. Organizational foundations can award various grants annually on behalf of multiple donors or a single institutional fund. Examples include: Henry County Community Foundation, Grant County Community Foundation, The Community Foundation of Muncie & Delaware County, The Ball Brothers Foundation and the Moorehead Family Foundation.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF):

Tax increment financing, or TIF, is a public financing method that is used as a subsidy for redevelopment, infrastructure, and other community improvement projects. TIF Districts are established by local government for the purposes of capturing tax increment that is made available for redevelopment type projects. Local redevelopment commissions can share information on TIF boundaries and the Indiana Gateway provides information of available amounts and spending.

County Economic Development Income Tax (CEDIT):

The county economic development income tax formally known as EDIT or CEDIT may be imposed on the adjusted gross income of county taxpayers. The entity that may

impose the tax is the county income tax council or the county council. Annually communities using this tax prepare an EDIT or CEDIT plan for use of the funds. Contact the County Commissioners or city/town councils on annual EDIT or CEDIT appropriation amounts.

State Transportation Improvement Plans (STIP):

The STIP is Indiana's four-year transportation improvement program. It is prepared in cooperation with local government entities throughout Indiana, including Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs), Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), and Regional Planning Organizations (RPOs). The STIP identifies the funding and the scheduling of transportation projects and programs by fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). It includes all state and local transportation projects funded with federal highway and/or federal transit funding along with 100 percent state funded transportation projects (including highway, passenger rail, freight, public transit, bicycle and pedestrian), and projects in the national parks.

Bond Anticipation Notes (BAN's):

BAN's are short-term bonds for the purpose of providing project funding on a short term basis until other anticipated income is obtained. BAN's are intended to be withdrawn when replaced by a larger long-term bond or other funding. Municipalities can work with their financial advisors to establish BAN's. The Indiana Bond Bank is also a source of BAN funding.

Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA):

The Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs is a governmental agency of the State of Indiana charged to work with local, state, and national partners providing resources and technical assistance that assist rural communities in shaping their visions for community economic development. OCRA Community Liaisons are available to assist with community planning and development. OCRA has funds for planning, technical assistance and infrastructure for municipalities. Contact the local OCRA Community Liaison for assistance. More information can be found at <http://www.in.gov/ocra/>.

Indiana Dept. of Transportation (INDOT):

The Indiana Department of Transportation releases an estimated \$80 to \$100 million dollars annually of federal transportation money for rural cities, towns, and counties. Projects are generally on state highways, however, funding can be awarded for projects included in the TIP or that have a large economic impact. More information and dates can be found at secure.indiana.gov/indot.

Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management (IDEM):

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) assists communities in meeting their environmental responsibilities and goals through environmental projects such as brownfield assessments and cleanups. In order to accomplish these projects, IDEM works in cooperation with other agencies to provide funding in the form of grants and loans. More information can be found at www.in.gov/idem/.

Indiana Bond Bank:

The Indiana Bond Bank is a quasi-governmental entity established by the Indiana General Assembly in 1984 to help assist local governments with the process of issuing debt. Bonds are available for a variety of local projects and require local municipal approvals. More information can be found at inbondbank.com.

US Department of Agriculture (USDA):

USDA Rural Development forges partnerships with rural communities to fund projects that bring housing, community facilities, business guarantees, utilities and other services to rural places. USDA also provides technical assistance and financial backing for rural businesses and cooperatives to create jobs. Rural Development promotes the President's National Energy Policy and ultimately the nation's energy security. Rural Development works with low-income individuals, state, local, private, and nonprofit organizations and user-owned cooperatives. More information can be found at <https://www.usda.gov/>.

EDA Public Works Program:

The EDA Economic Adjustment Assistance Program helps regions to improve a declining or downturned economy. The program focuses on areas that have experienced a loss of, or are under serious threat of losing, their economic base, such as a major employer leaving the area. The following is a list of EDA supported efforts. More information can be found at <https://www.eda.gov/>.

- Technology-based development
- Business Incubators
- Cluster-based development
- Aquaculture facilities
- Distance learning facilities
- Export programs
- Commercialization and deployment of innovative technologies
- Redevelopment of brownfield sites
- Development of eco-industrial parks

US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA):

Every year, EPA awards over \$4 billion in funding through grants and other assistance agreements. From small non-profit organizations to state governments, EPA works to help organizations achieve their environmental goals. Funding is available for Phase I and II environmental assessments as well as clean up assistance. More information can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/>.

US Dept. of Justice (USDOJ):

The Department of Justice offers funding opportunities to support law enforcement and public safety activities in state and local jurisdictions. The program assists victims of crime, provides training and technical assistance, conducts research and implements programs that improve the criminal, civil, and juvenile justice systems. More information can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/>.

US Dept. of Transportation Infrastructure for Rebuilding America Grants (USDOT INFRA Grants):

The INFRA program provides dedicated, discretionary funding for projects that address critical issues facing our nation’s highways and bridges. INFRA grants support the Administration’s commitment to fixing the nation’s crumbling infrastructure by creating opportunities for all levels of government and the private sector to fund infrastructure improvements. More information can be found at <https://www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/infragrants>.

2.3 Regional Program Strategies

The East Central Indiana region has identified and maintains five program strategies. These strategies are based on the general principles of “economic resilience” and an effective 21st Century based economic development model. The strategies are intended to articulate a new approach for the region’s long-term vision. The significance of terms and phrases such as “regional economic development”, “footloose jobs”, “regional attractors”, “quality of life” and “amenity building” are meant to help both local and regional leaders as well as the general public to understand themes that are used to develop this CEDS Report. These principals have been proven to assist communities and regions to avoid, withstand, and recover from economic shifts, natural disasters and the impact of climate changes.

East Central Indiana Strategies

1. Recognition that the state of Indiana and the nation as a whole are trending more to a model of Regional Economic Development. The new regional model helps to bring together expertise from various sectors of public/private/non-profit/government to work collaboratively in unison on projects that not only attract investment and jobs, but also improve the quality of life for the residents of the area. The goal is to improve and sustain regional planning and coordination with a particular focus on

bringing together workforce and economic development agencies with a shared vision and strategy for retaining and attracting workers and investment.

2. Support the diversification of the regional economy into those sectors that use advanced technology, generate higher paying jobs, retain existing residents and attract new residents to live and work in our communities.
3. Recognizing that this region has a high level of commuting into and out of the various counties; ensure that our quality of life and mobility is improved through excellent transportation and basic infrastructure. Focus on I-69 and other key transportation arteries is of great importance.
4. Collaborate, where appropriate, on connecting regional attractions and amenities; such as pedestrian/bike/food/cultural trails, housing, and manufacturing sectors.
5. Work towards the establishment of the Planning District serving as the central regional Economic Development District (EDD) with a focus on the betterment of schools, establishing better business retention and expansion programs and making the region a desired amenity and activity filled place for people of all ages to want to live and subsequently work.

3. Process for Updating ECI Regional Planning District's 2017 CEDS

In the summer of 2016, members of the Regional Planning District began to facilitate meetings with core economic development professionals, various local elected officials, and key targeted local business and industry leaders throughout the four county area. Staff met with all of the Regional Planning District members, as well as various economic development professionals, county commissioners, mayors, town council members, business leaders, government department heads, the service sector, educational institutions, utilities, various not-for-profit sector leaders, human and health services representatives and the representatives from the financial sector. All were invited to provide ideas, give input, share projects of importance— and be a part of the CEDS update process. The information that was gathered at these meetings was subsequently reviewed and considered for inclusion in this 2017 CEDS update.

3.1 Public/Private Participation and Information Gathering

From the beginning of this CEDS update, strong public and private engagement was encouraged by involvement in public meetings and providing information about the CEDS to members of the Regional Planning District. The District website was utilized as a tool to communicate the 2017 CEDS updating process. The 2012 CEDS is posted on the website and has the capability to be downloaded. The Comprehensive list of District

projects is also posted, along with forms so the public can identify and submit projects for consideration. Of the various information gathering sessions, staff attended and convened various meetings throughout the region to gather input. The following is a list of meetings where ECI staff was engaged to gather input for this CEDS plan.

- Henry County Elected Officials Visioning Session
- Grant County Visioning Session x2
- Jay County Visioning Session x2
- NE Delaware County/Town of Albany Visioning Session
- Attendance to County Commissioner Meetings in Delaware, Grant, Henry and Jay Counties.
- Attendance to the Delaware County Redevelopment Commission meeting x2
- Attendance to all ECIRPD quarterly meetings in 2016 and 2017.
- Attendance at City Council or Town Board or one on one meetings with officials in Jonesboro, Fairmount, Marion, Swayzee, Portland, New Castle, Yorktown, Selma, Albany, Daleville, Gaston, and Eaton.

In addition, this document has been developed in conjunction with leaders from a broad group of public, private, and non-profit organizations. The Regional Planning District held a series of Regional Planning District meetings in 2016 and 2017. At each meeting, discussion centered around regional and local projects that are either in process or desired to be implemented in the future. Members of the Planning District are the responsible parties for the identification and implementation of the shared goals and objectives contained within the plan. Through this process, Planning District Members were given the opportunity to submit projects of importance and concern to be added to the CEDS update. In addition, various public meetings and one on one meetings/interviews with key stakeholders were held throughout the region to gather input. The district staff also held what they refer to as “road shows” in each of the four counties. The road shows consisted of the facilitation of one large meeting with all elected officials invited for the sharing of ideas and best practices in the county. A number of collaborative efforts for both ongoing and potential new projects were identified from these activities and have been incorporated into this CEDS Plan. In addition, key economic development plans critical to the growth and enhancement of the regional economy have been examined and included. In sum, the development of this CEDS was a multi-faceted process that included input from board members with diverse background in businesses, the service sector, government, economic development, educational institutions, engineering, industry, transportation, utilities, human and health services, and the financial sector. The input has been compiled into this plan in an effort to identify the District’s priorities and bring about action to achieve regions goals.

3.2 What We Learned From the Process and inclusion of information

The CEDS is much more than a report required by the EDA. It should be called a CEDS Report/Plan – and utilized as a planning tool for all entities of local governments and the District. Planning and vision are not always foremost in the minds of elected officials, so development and implementation of a CEDS update stimulates strategic thinking. Also, by controlling the length of the document, and reproducing it in an easy to reference format, various entities are encouraged to keep a copy on hand to use as an important resource and planning tool. The CEDS should also connect with other community and regional planning instruments where possible. Local municipalities should remain focused and seeing through to completion the priority projects listed for their areas. Planning is the key to the continuing advancement of our region.

All information gathered was reviewed and vetted prior to inclusion. This process included assessment by ECI staff to consider the probability of success of the projects. In addition, projects were individually considered for availability of funding. While some projects may be difficult to fund immediately, all projects included are considered to eventually be achievable.

3.3 2017 ECI Regional Planning District Board Member Roster

Executive Director:

William Walters*

Executive Board:

President, William Hess, President Hartford City Council (Blackford Co.)*

Vice President, Marta Moody, Director Area Planning Commission (Delaware Co.)*

Treasurer, Michael Burton, President Grant Co. Commissioners (Grant County)*

Secretary, Randy Geesaman, Mayor City of Portland (Jay Co.)*

Member, James King, President Delaware Co. Commissioners (Delaware Co.)*

Member, Tanya Hiatt, President Gaston Town Board (Delaware Co.)*

Member, Shane Middlesworth, Vice President Grant Co. Council, (Grant Co.)*

Regular Board:

Kyle Johnson, Director of GIS (Delaware Co. Surveyor's Office)

Ronald Quakenbush, President Delaware Co. Council (Delaware Co. Council)

Pete Olson, Town Manager (Town of Yorktown)

Randall Dunnuck, Town Board President (Town of Albany)

Thomas Roberts, Town Board President (Town of Daleville)

Christopher Cook, Town Board Member (Town of Selma)

Michael Foster, Town Board President (Town of Eaton)

Don Wimmer, Surveyor (Grant County Surveyor)
Larry Leach, Mayor of Gas City (Gas City)
Bob McNutt, Mayor of Jonesboro (City of Jonesboro)
Richard Treon, Town Board President (Town of Fairmount)
Brian Hall, Clerk/Treasurer, (Town of Swayzee)
Bruce Long, Town Board President (Town of Upland)
Jerry Caudill, Town Board Member (Town of Van Buren)
Steve Kelly, Town Board President (Town of Sweetser)
(Town of Matthews-vacant)

(Governor's appointee- vacant)

* =CEDS Committee Participant

3.4 New ECIRPD Director

In the fall of 2016, the ECI Regional Planning District Board formed a committee to seek applicants to fill the organizations vacant director's position. This came after the announcement of the pending retirement of longtime director, Mrs. Pam Price. The position was advertised both locally and nationally and several resumes were received. The ECI board appointed a committee to conduct interviews and bring a recommendation before the full board for approval. In November of 2016, the committee introduced the top two candidates to the full board for consideration to succeed Mrs. Price. After much discussion, the board voted unanimously to hire Mr. Bill Walters as the incoming Director as of January 1, 2017. Mr. Walters had been a longtime participant on the ECI board representing the fast growing Town of Daleville as the town board vice president. Under Mr. Walters leadership, Daleville had grown to the point where the town now has the unique distinction of having more jobs (2,000) than residents (1,630). Bill had also participated three times in the ECI annual elected officials Washington DC Fly-in and he had served for two years as vice president of the ECI executive board. Mr. Walters' familiarity with the organization exceeded that of the other applicants.

In the spring of 2017, Mr. Walters enthusiastically undertook his new position as director of the ECI Regional Planning District. Since that time Mr. Walters has personally contacted and or visited with nearly every community in the region. In several of the communities, Mr. Walters has initiated various projects, grants and provided other technical advice. His reception and knowledge of the region has been welcomed. In the spring of 2017, Mr. Walters directed a successful Washington DC Fly-in by taking eight elected officials from the region to visit with members of Indiana's congressional delegation as well as the Department of Commerce, Department of Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Agriculture. In 2017, Mr.

Walters participated in all of the information gathering sessions related to this plan and he has provided input and direction as to the completion of this plan.

4. Summary Background of Current Economic Condition of the Region

4.1 Discussion of the Regional and Local Economies

East Central Indiana has seen a loss of population in recent years. There are many factors to blame for this decrease. Those factors include economic, physical, and social factors related to, an aging population, an increase in the number of what is referred to as “foot-loose” jobs, the loss of several major industrial facilities, the low number of higher paying skilled jobs, the perceived low quality school corporations, and the perceived lack of local amenities within the region. Additionally, ECI has low per capita and household incomes in comparison to the rest of the state, while the state as a whole is far behind US averages. Despite the fact that the region is home to Ball State University, Ivy Tech Community College, Taylor University and Indiana Wesleyan University, the percent of adults with a Bachelor’s degree also lags far behind Indiana and U.S. averages. Overall, due to the lack of regional investment and opportunity, people are choosing to move to regions with stronger economic growth and local amenities.

Three significant trends have emerged in East Central Indiana:

1. The region’s population has been in a period of decline, at which the same time the State of Indiana has enjoyed significant growth.
2. Educational attainment in the region is lower than that of Indiana as a whole.
3. The region is among the most economically distressed in Indiana. Several counties have been among the lowest median income levels and the highest poverty rates in the State. In 2013, when Indiana maintained a 15.4% poverty rate, Delaware County was at – 22.3%, Grant County – 18.6%, Henry County – 17%, and Jay County – 14.7%.

4.2 Population

Communities with a dynamic economy and high quality of life are keeping their citizens and attracting new ones. Residents reside in and move to communities that offer opportunity for jobs, education, cultural enrichment, recreation, safety and a healthy lifestyle. With a total population of 252,107 people in the ECI region, it is necessary that efforts are in place to continue to make investments in the individual communities to help promote population retention and growth. Economic distress has taken a significant toll on the regional population leaving many searching for jobs in other locations within the

state, accounting for some of the population loss. While Henry County’s population remained virtually stagnant from 2000-2017, Delaware, Grant and Jay counties lost anywhere from 2.6% - 8.8% of their residents. At this same time, the state of Indiana realized a population increase of almost 9%.

County Populations:

	Population 2000	Population 2010	Population 2013 *Est	Population 2015 *Est	Current Population *Est	Percent Increase/ Decrease
Delaware County	118,769	117,671	116,989	116,019	115,603	-2.6%
Grant County	73,403	70,061	69,011	67,692	66,937	-8.8%
Henry County	48,508	49,462	49,035	48,894	48,521	+0.01%
Jay County	21,806	21,253	21,268	21,155	21,046	-3.4%
State	6,091,866	6,490,528	6,569,102	6,612,768	6,633,053	+8.8%

County Seat Populations:

City/Town	County	Curent Population *Est
Muncie	Delaware	69,010
Marion	Grant	28,592
New Castle	Henry	17,426
Portland	Jay	6,161

4.3 Regional Geography

The East Central Indiana (ECI) Region is located northeast of Indianapolis and directly south of Fort Wayne. Interstate I-69 is located in the western part of the region and I-70 runs near the southern border. The east side is borders the Ohio state line and S.R. 18 runs across the northern part of the region. The land is comprised of a relatively flat landscape that was forested until the time of the agricultural revolution. Rich soils and tilled drainage systems have led to agricultural land dominating much of the rural landscape. Annual crops consist of corn, soybeans and tomatoes. Each of the counties in the region have a county seat complete with a county courthouse in the largest cities.

These cities are Marion, Muncie, New Castle and Portland. Each of the counties is also dotted with several smaller rural towns and a few smaller cities. All of the population centers are connected with multiple state highways that transect the region. The region was part of the natural gas boom which took place during the 1890's. The boom attracted widespread producers of glass to the region which produced glass jars and bottles for several decades. In addition to working at the glass factories, several thousand skilled workers relocated to the region in the early to mid-1900's to become employed in various auto part factories and machine shops. The resulting manufacturing heritage gave way to the region later becoming part of the rust belt. Several of the regions large manufacturing facilities have now been shuttered and/or demolished. In 2014 the region was declared the manufacturing triangle from an EDA funded Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership Regional Plan. Currently, the region is home to three universities and one community college with multiple campuses.

4.4 Human Assets, Labor, Age, Education

East Central Indiana is wealthy with human assets, however unemployment and educational attainment slightly lags behind the state. Currently, approximately 5,943 people are unemployed in the region with unemployment rates ranging from a low of 4.6% to 5.2%. The State of Indiana unemployment rate is 4.4%. Of the various age groups, the majority of the regions residents are between the ages of 45-64 years old. Educational attainment in the various counties averages between 84-89% of the population with a high school diploma or higher. Residents with bachelors degrees amongst the ECI counties range from approximately 6.60% to 13.30% while the state average stands at 15.40%. The key focus of the plans to improve the region should address the need for new and better job opportunities with pay rates commensurate of the state and national averages. Fortunately, the ECI region has three outstanding universities: Ball State University, Taylor University and Indiana Wesleyan University, plus campuses for Ivy Tech Community College. Although ECI already enjoys the benefits of having these institutions as a part of the local economy, a key aspect in improving our communities is to retain the graduates of these institutions. Unfortunately, graduates seek jobs in other regions that have more opportunities and amenities, otherwise known as brain-drain. The ECI region is placing a renewed collaborative focus on the value of education and working with several educational organizations to ensure K-12 "A" rated schools. In addition, the region is addressing incentives for recent college grads to stay in the communities, as well as looking at various different ways to provide expanded certificate based vocational training.

Labor Force:

	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate

Delaware County	54,851	51,988	2,863	5.2%
Grant County	32,112	30,513	1,599	5.0%
Henry County	22,147	21,118	1,029	4.6%
Jay County	9,930	9,478	452	4.6%
State Unemployment				4.4%

Population by Age:

	0-4	5-17	18-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Delaware County	6,006	15,642	22,624	24,789	27,420	19,122
Grant County	3,686	10,237	8,766	14,121	17,791	12,336
Henry County	2,475	7,583	3,900	11,862	13,679	9,022
Jay County	1,557	3,951	1,741	4,663	5,608	3,526

Educational Attainment:

County	% No Diploma	% High School Graduate or Higher
Delaware County	10.5%	89.5%
Grant County	13.5%	86.5%
Henry County	12.2%	87.8%
Jay County	15.9%	84.1%

Detailed Educational Attainment:

	Total Population 25+	Less than 9th Grade	9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	High School Graduate	Some College No Degree	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate Degree or More

Delaware County	71,099	2,312	5,738	25,252	15,540	5,728	9,478	7,051
	100.00%	3.30%	8.10%	35.50%	21.90%	8.10%	13.30%	9.90%
Grant County	45,070	1,660	4,510	18,691	8,982	3,450	4,771	3,006
	100.00%	3.70%	10.00%	41.50%	19.90%	7.70%	10.60%	6.70%
Henry County	34,723	1,394	3,281	15,102	6,875	2,661	3,553	1,857
	100.00%	4.00%	9.40%	43.50%	19.80%	7.70%	10.20%	5.30%
Jay County	13,920	661	1,551	6,759	2,455	1,086	923	485
	100.00%	4.70%	11.10%	48.60%	17.60%	7.80%	6.60%	3.50%
State	4,316,273	172,868	351,986	1,494,302	901,226	355,635	664,747	375,509
	100.00%	4.00%	8.20%	34.60%	20.90%	8.20%	15.40%	8.70%

4.5 Economic Clusters within the Region

Following the loss of the automotive industry in ECI, focus has primarily been to work to attract other manufacturing, food processing, renewable green energy projects/ opportunities as well as educational and healthcare expansions. Traditionally, the ECI region has been well-known for primarily auto part, metal and fabricated product manufacturing, transportation equipment, agriculture and notably the glass industry. The decline of the automotive industry resulted in a large number of unemployed skilled workers, whom were soon swept into the metal and fabricated product industries, retired, or located to manufacturing facilities outside of the region. In 2010, Ginovus, a national economic development advisory firm, conducted a comprehensive Industry Cluster Study for East Central Indiana. The study revealed that ECI had generated a more diverse and comprehensive economic structure in the time during and following the Great Recession.

The industry clusters within the district include:

- Advanced Materials
- Alternative Energy and Green Technology
- Agribusiness and Food processing
- Apparel and Textiles
- Biomedical and Biotechnical (Life Sciences)
- Defense and Security
- Education and Knowledge Creation
- Glass and Ceramics
- Manufacturing Super Cluster

- Primary Metal Manufacturing
- Fabricated Metal Products Production
- Machinery Manufacturing
- Transportation Equipment Manufacturing
- Transportation and Logistics

5. SWOT Analysis of Regional Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats

The SWOT Analysis is a compilation of comments or concerns that were noted during and compiled from the public participation and information gathering portions of this plan. The listed comments are in no particular order of importance nor are they intended to be representative of all opinions in the region. Some comments apply only to various locations throughout the region and should not be assumed to apply to all. In addition, many non-relevant comments relating to the strengths and weaknesses were omitted from the list. Nonetheless, the list is all encompassing of the main thoughts and ideas that should be considered of greatest importance and most impactful upon the region.

5.1 Strengths of the Region

- Crossroads of America
- Excellent transportation routes of state and interstate highways
- Ample available land and buildings for growth
- Good proximity to Indianapolis and Ft. Wayne
- Many brownfield sites have been assessed and are in various states of clean-up
- Three excellent Universities with ample educational resources and expertise
- Excellent Community College with multiple new campuses
- Many identified local natural attractions, Cardinal Greenway, White River, Parks, etc.
- Multiple successful co-working and entrepreneurial start-up locations
- Ample and Cooperative Utility Services ready for expansion and growth
- Several Tax Increment Financing Districts and other incentives available
- Strong agricultural and farming community
- Several successful faith based, civic and non-profit organizations in the region
- Several “A” rated K-12 school systems with growth potential
- Good working relationships between governments and the business communities
- Several successful locally based economic development and redevelopment projects
- Multiple successful community betterment projects
- Eagerness to compete for and attract new development and projects
- Willingness and desire to see the entire region improved

5.2 Weaknesses of the Region

- Population stagnation and loss
- Low per capita incomes
- Low educational attainment rates
- Aging population and labor force
- Brain-drain
- Shrinking tax base and decreasing assessed property values
- Workforce skills gap and drug issue
- Failing school corporations
- Perceived government corruption
- Deteriorating and inadequate highways and thoroughfares
- Obsolete municipal utility infrastructure
- Lack of funds for municipal amenity upkeep or development
- Lack of basic municipal amenities, sidewalks, streetlights, signage, parks, etc.
- Lack of business diversification region wide
- Lack of community planning
- Lack of development and aesthetic standards
- Lack of adequate housing options across all segments
- Lack of local attractions that define the region
- Few opportunities for meaningful certificate based educations and vocational training
- Inadequate workforce development efforts
- Inconsistent business retention and expansion programs
- Lack of co-working and entrepreneurial start-up space in rural areas
- Lack of cooperation among counties and LEDO's throughout the region
- Abundance of blighted and underutilized properties

5.3 Opportunities of the Region

- Excellent transportation networks to benefit the region
- Multiple undeveloped interstate highway interchanges
- Willingness and need to develop sites
- Transportation corridors and undeveloped land are a blank canvas
- Excellent opportunities for housing developers to expand operations
- Willingness to plan for and create new amenities specific to attracting new residents and retaining existing residents.
- Several unique regional attractions that need to be showcased
- Excellent education and training in both k-12, college, and vocational certificates that can be expanded upon
- Several sights with existing infrastructure in need of redevelopment and reuse
- Various entities available to assist in regional efforts. Units of government, labor, education, faith based, civic organizations and the public

- Multiple entrepreneurial co-working start-up spaces that can be expanded
- Diverse businesses and industries in the region that can be expanded

5.4 Threats of the Region

- Continued lack of funding for priority projects
- Unwillingness of regional collaboration
- Lack of experienced workforce
- Perception of low quality of life
- Perception of poor school systems
- Perceived corrupt governments
- Continued population loss
- Continued loss of remaining business/industry

6. Vision, Goals, Action Strategy & Action Steps

6.1 The Vision

The vision for the CEDS covers a five-year period (2018-2022) and plans for a greatly improved idyllic future for the region and the communities that lie within it. The tasks and implementation that shall be undertaken to complete the projects is critical for the vision to be fully realized. Each community's individual projects serve as the catalyst to improve not only their local jurisdictions, but also the region's overall strengths and competitive advantages. It is important that each community work in cooperation with the regional planning district and their local officials to ensure that projects move forward.

It is desired by those participating in and providing input to this plan that the catalyst projects truly come to fruition. Both the residents of each community and the civic leaders should become active in fully embracing the plan so that the realities of improving the local communities are successful. The perceived outcome will be greatly improved local infrastructure, including streets/roads/sidewalks, water/sewer, parks and amenities. Investment in these items will result in an increased quality of life, attraction of quality businesses, as well as retention of existing businesses. Furthermore, projects should improve local housing conditions and promote the development of new housing communities. Higher performing government and expanded educational opportunities are also critical hallmarks that must be consistently reviewed and improved upon to help ensure further growth and development within the region. Last but not least, the new economic development model of the 21st Century says that jobs now follow people rather than people following jobs. An investment in ourselves to improve the local

quality of life shall make our communities and region simply a better place for people and families to truly want to live. The region envisions that this better quality of life will attract and retain people. People in-turn, will be the new attractor of more employment opportunities and higher paying jobs.

6.2 The Region will be known for

- State of the art free-flowing highways and interchanges with well planned exits that promote traffic movement.
- Enhanced aesthetic appeal of the highways, interchanges, and communities.
- Housing types to serve the needs of every age group.
- The creation of amenities specific to attracting new residents and retaining existing residents. Parks, trails, sidewalks, landscaping, streetlights, signage, etc.
- Promote regional attractors that are unique to a place. These may include one-of-a-kind restaurants, sporting venues, outdoor recreational attractions, unique events.
- Excellent education and training in both K-12, college, and vocational certificates.
- Enhanced efforts to clean up blight and redevelopment of derelict properties.
- A diversified and well rounded commercial and industrial base.
- Collaboration and cooperation among units of government, labor, education, faith-based, civic organizations and the public.
- An enhanced entrepreneurial climate with programs and basic support for start-ups.
- Programs designed specifically to promote the retention and expansion of existing local businesses that call our communities home.

6.3 The Goals

A region's goals should be based upon its vision and should be structured in such a way that the vision can be achieved. The goals are the fundamental targets on which an organization should focus as it articulates its activities. The activity in turn should support one or more goals. East Central Indiana has eleven goals that shall guide the regional activity and provide a measurement by which to benchmark success.

The Goals of East Central Indiana:

1. Increased highway travel lanes and repaving of highways and main thoroughfares for the purpose of lessened travel times to and from points within the region.
2. Development and adoption of regional development and landscaping standards.
3. Recruitment and development of various new housing types.
4. Development and redevelopment of better parks, trails, sidewalks, landscaping, streetlights, signage, etc.
5. Identification of local attractors and further development and promotion of the place or event.

6. Improved or maintained statewide school district scoring of K-12 schools, less brain-drain of college students, and increased opportunities for technical certifications.
7. Local identification of blighted properties and development of programs and policies to clean-up/redevelop.
8. Promotion of commercial businesses and industry across all sectors. (Lessen focus on exclusively manufacturing)
9. Promote interaction and development of committees, boards with representatives from all sectors to help implement this CEDS plan.
10. Continue the development of entrepreneurs and start-ups in rural areas that are lacking services.
11. Develop individual county business retention and expansion (BR&E) call programs.

6.4 Action Strategy & Action Steps

The numbered Action Strategies below detail how East Central Indiana will reach its goals. Each of the strategies has one or more supporting Action Steps to work towards development.

***Action Strategy One: Development of the I-69 Steering Committee**

Recognizing that the region has a high level of commuting into and out of the four counties, ensure that the region's mobility is improved through excellent transportation, infrastructure and highway improvements. Connections to Indianapolis and Fort Wayne are critical for the region's longterm survival and competitiveness in the global market.

Action Steps:

- A. Develop the I-69 Regional Steering Committee. This committee shall be made up of members who represent cities, towns and counties who have representational municipal jurisdiction along I-69 or connecting corridors. Representative counties and municipalities beyond the region should also be invited to participate. This includes representatives from Madison and Hamilton Counties. Membership should also be extended to those cities and or towns who desire or are in process of extending their municipal boundaries to the highway. Collaboration and participation on the board with representatives of INDOT should be requested.
- B. Consider collaborating to seek EDA funding for the creation of an economic impact study focusing on the I-69 corridor.
- C. Seek information from INDOT on planned highway and infrastructure improvements in the regional area. Annually provide input to INDOT on potential highway improvement projects that could economically benefit the regional area.

***Action Strategy Two: Creation of Regional Development and Landscaping Standards**

In an effort to ensure that the region maintains beautification and aesthetic appeal, various standards for corridors and heavily travel arteries needs to be established as relates to development and landscaping standards. Long term beautification of the area will signify that the region is well governed, highly efficient and cares about the longterm preservation of assets.

Action Steps:

- A. Develop a committee comprised of local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) leaders to share ideas and best practices that are working in their respective jurisdictions.
- B. Share best practices and ideas with urban planners and other professionals in the communities for input.
- C. Work with legal counsel to draft documents that put into place standards that can be adopted by other smaller municipalities.
- D. Work with ECI Staff to share documents and standards with other members of the organization.

***Action Strategy Three: Development and Attraction of Housing Developers**

Within the region, there exists the need for the development of various housing types serving all the various age and demographic groups. Of particular interest is moderately priced mid-level executive and professional type housing, as well as condominium and or villa type housing for empty nesters and people over 55 years of age.

Action Steps:

- A. Identify communities that have immediately available land that would be suitable for a new housing development.
- B. Confirm availability of water/sewer/infrastructure necessary for the development of a new development.
- C. Discuss with with the local community the possibility of incentives necessary to entice development.
- D. Work with local leaders to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking developers for the property.

***Action Strategy Four: Development of Better Community Amenity Infrastructure**

Throughout the information gathering process, various respondents mentioned the need for improvements in the development and or redevelopment of better community parks, trails, sidewalks, streetlights, landscaping, signage, etc.

Action Steps:

- A. Each member community should enlist the assistance of the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) in cooperation with their OCRA Community Liaison to host a community visioning session and conduct a town wide SWOT analysis.
- B. The results of the analysis should be used to prioritize projects for development and implementation.
- C. The ECI Regional Planning District can assist with the facilitation of the visioning session and subsequently advise on project development and funding.

***Action Strategy Five: Identification of Local Attractors that Define a Place**

Every community has certain characteristics that make it unique. These characteristics give meaning to the place and greatly improve the quality of life by giving identity. These places also help the location thrive and prosper by serving as a regional draw or destination. These characteristics may be a place of employment, a sporting venue, a dining establishment, a tourist attraction, etc. These places need to be identified, preserved and promoted by the local communities.

Action Steps:

- A. Work with the local municipalities to identify the local characteristics that make it unique and give it identity.
- B. Develop a committee (if none exists) to start to work with the characteristic to preserve, promote and grow upon it.

***Action Strategy Six: Ensuring Excellence in Education, K-12, College, Vocational**

The importance of excellence in education at all levels in the community is a critical component of retaining residents and attracting young families. The states top schools are a natural attraction of where parents choose to live and often the number one reason why people relocate to a specific region. Furthermore, the development of programs to offer incentives to recently graduated entrepreneurs and other professionals needs to be developed. Lastly, certification based vocational training needs to be expanded upon.

Action Steps:

- A. Develop a committee of stakeholders including regional manufacturers, civic leaders, elected officials and school administrators.
- B. Visit with all school corporation superintendents to seek input/advice on needs that will assist in maintaining or achieving “A” rated school status.
- C. Develop an incentive based program to entice young entrepreneurs and recent graduates to stay in the region. (Consider expansion of Grant Co. based program)

D. Work with the career centers and Ivy Tech on promotion to the local school corporations of all certificate based vocational training for young adults. Ensure that training is in line with the needs of the manufacturers and employers in the region.

***Action Strategy Seven: Repurposing and Redeveloping Blighted Properties**

Work with county commissioners as well as city and town governments to identify those properties that are considered the worst blighted sites in need of cleanup and or redevelopment.

Action Steps:

- A. Share ECI's tax delinquent repurposed property program with elected officials.
- B. Identify sites that are multiple years tax delinquent and seek county assignment of tax certificates to ECI.
- C. Visit with neighboring property owners and issue "Request for Proposals" (RFP) for neighbors and or developers to repurpose/redevelop the site upon award by ECI.

***Action Strategy Eight: Diversified and Well-Rounded Business Community**

Having a well-rounded mix of commercial, retail, professional, manufacturing and industrial businesses in the region helps to diversify the regional economy. In the event that one sector is not doing well, the other sectors help to stabilize the economy. Efforts need to be put in place to identify diversification needs in each of the member municipalities.

Action Steps:

- A. Share with local chambers of commerce and local economic development officials (LEDO's) in the need to identify local gaps or needs for a variety of different types of business.
- B. Assist the LEDO's where needed in introductions to businesses that may fill the voids within their local communities.
- C. Assist in the development of incentives to entice businesses to locate in areas of need.

***Action Strategy Nine: Promoting Collaboration and Cooperation of Regional Leadership**

Recruit assistance with the CEDS implementation from leaders in all sectors of the region. This includes, but is not limited to, those experts/leaders in government, education, business, finance, civic, faith-based, chambers of commerce, non-profits, economic development professionals, planners, etc.

Action Steps:

- A. Ensure that everyone that participated in providing input to the CEDS is provided with an electronic copy.
- B. ECI staff shall contact key people to request assistance and participation with carrying out the listed projects.
- C. Help with the development of key committees based around the accomplishing common goals.

***Action Strategy Ten: Regionally Expand Entrepreneur and Co-Working Spaces**

The creation of spaces and technical assistance to help entrepreneurs and start-ups has had notable success in both Delaware and Grant Counties. ECI shall work to develop or expand upon programs to assist with providing affordable co-working office or commercial space as well as technical assistance in the underserved urban areas of the region.

Action Steps:

- A. Develop a regional committee to explore and oversee the expansion of best practices of assisting entrepreneurs, co-working spaces and start-ups in the region.
- B. Seek partnership with the regional Small Business Development Office as well as Innovation Connector in Muncie and the Refinery in Marion.
- C. Seek locations and available space in underserved urban areas to establish satellite entrepreneurial hubs and co-working spaces.
- D. Seek funding to assist with remodel/redevelopment of available buildings to house the programs.
- E. Develop a program to piggyback off of other available programs in the region to share services, expertise and business counseling.

***Action Strategy Eleven: Regional Development of Business Retention & Expansion Programs**

Ensuring that existing local businesses remain in their current locations and have good opportunities for expansion is critical for the longterm stability of the region. Business retention and expansion (BR&E) programs need to be expanded upon to include those underserved rural areas or locations where additional assistance or existing programs are lacking.

Action Steps:

- A. Develop a committee of those in the region that are currently operating successful business retention and expansion programs.

- B. Compile best practices into a program that can be shared with LEDO's, economic development boards and local elected officials.
- C. Assist in the development of a specific entity or project leader to carryout the BR&E program in the underserved areas that has consistency and accountability.

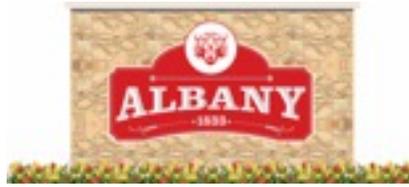
7. Summary listing of catalyst strategic projects, programs and activities:

Below is an individual listing of priority projects that were compiled during the information gathering portion of preparing this plan. The projects are in no particular order of importance. All projects are at varying states of implementation. The projects are intended to be representative of projects that are needed, show value in the individual municipalities and would quantifiably improve the local municipality and benefit the overall regional area.

Delaware County, City, Town Projects 2018-2022: Delaware County Projects

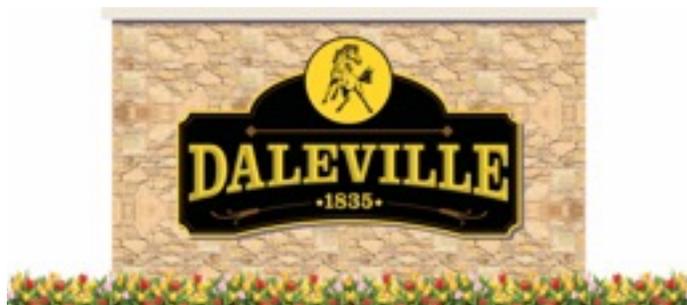


- Exit 45/I-69 and St. Rd. 28: Utilities need extended to this intersection to allow for new business attraction at this optimal interstate exchange.
- Park One Infrastructure Improvements: The development in the Park One Business Park has created the need for a stop light at the intersection of Executive Park Blvd. and SR 332. Nearly five hundred (500) employees and over one hundred (100) semi trucks daily navigate this intersection.
- Park One Utility Expansion: Water and sewer utility expansions are needed to accommodate future development in the Park. Work with the Town of Yorktown to expand utilities.
- Park One Rail Loading Dock: Truck access to the spur needs developed. Currently working with Good Industries as a trans load operator.
- Complete the road to AquaBounty and open up more available acreage for the Albany Industrial Park.
- Continue to market the Fuson Road and Daleville Shell buildings.
- Work to brand the South Muncie Industria Center with the development of signage and landscaping.
- Continue to get blighted, abandoned and tax delinquent properties back on the tax rolls. Work with the regional planning district to issue RFP's for developers and end users.



Albany Projects

- Acquire land for direct truck access from State Road 67/28 to Bell Aquaculture. ***Completed
- Complete annexation and zoning for Albany Industrial Park. ***Completed
- Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO): Corrective action to improve CSO problems and reduce pollution while improving public health and safety. ***In Process
- Complete Road entrance into the newly established Albany Industrial Park. *** In Process
- Complete Road through the Industrial Park connecting Aqua-Bounty to SR 67/28.
- Complete water/sewer/utility extensions to the Albany Industrial Park. *** In Process
- Complete storm water drainage improvements in the Albany Industrial Park.
- Consider land acquisition in the industrial park for a possible satellite sewage plant.
- Address new uses for vacant buildings in the Town.
- Continue efforts to address possible brownfield contamination at the former McCormick Building.
- Explore renovations and expansion of the former McCormick Building for new businesses.
- Address a new use for property currently occupied by the trailer park.
- Consider establishment of downtown facade grant program and main street enhancements.
- Explore the need for a town wide Comprehensive Master Plan.
- Work to repurpose the former Brahm/Littler Die Cast building.
- Continue to promote local businesses and provide assistance for growth.
- Address the intersection of SR 67 and SR 28 concerning traffic back-ups.
- Explore options for the installation of a retention basin for storm water near Albany Heights.
- Expand efforts to improve and reconstruct sidewalks to be ADA compliant.
- Complete plans to expand the shelter house in the park.
- Identify senior housing development opportunities
- Contact DNR relating to the log jam removal
- Study ways for the community to access the river
- Create a downtown beautification committee
- Create a parks board to address park needs
- Develop a youth programs committee
- Support existing programs and businesses (Library, hardware store, restaurants, etc.)
- Recruit more volunteer adult leaders
- Explore establishing a Main Street USA program.
- Seek engineering assistance to address flooding issues
- Consideration of a feasibility study for a town Community Center
- Expansion and promotion of community healthcare services
- Expansion of senior living options in the town



Daleville Projects

- Daleville Water Treatment: Creation of a new water treatment operation and/or cooperative agreement for treatment with other entities. ***Completed
- Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO): Corrective action to improve CSO problems and reduce pollution while improving public health and safety. ***Completed
- Increase manufacturing businesses. ***Shell Building Constructed
- Make streets and roads more community friendly with the addition of sidewalks. ***Completed

Daleville Road

- Create a trail in Shellabarger Park and general improvements to playground equipment. ***Completed
- Continue to explore and develop projects as defined in the town comprehensive master plan.
- Further development of a trail connecting Shellabarger park to the Town Hall Park splash pad.
- Complete the gateway signage “Welcome to Daleville” project on SR 32 and SR 67.
- Continue to work with the DCRC on acquisition of blighted properties and redevelopment in the downtown.
- Continue to seek developers for the redevelopment of the downtown.
- Consideration of a plan to develop a dog park.
- Explore funding options to make infrastructure improvements to Walnut St. south of SR 67 to accommodate truck traffic from Bolt Trucking.
- Consider redevelopment projects for the hotel locations on SR 67.
- Seek a private developer to construct a residential housing subdivision with homes ranging in price from \$150-\$350k.
- Seek a private developer to construct an affordable senior housing complex/facility.
- Consider development of a 20,000-30,000 SF metal shell building.
- Continue to identify and remediate brownfield properties in the downtown.
- Continue to seek a developer to remodel/occupy the former Weiss Machinery building on I-69.
- Explore the acquisition of the masonic lodge for development of a police station.
- Explore options for the development of expanded parking in and around the splash pad.
- Obtain options on land south of the Heartland Business Center for future commercial/industrial development along I-69.
- Continue the residential blight elimination efforts.
- Development of a community center/conference center for community events.
- Complete a town storm water master plan.
- Seek funding for the Pugsley Park development on Daleville Road.
- Explore relocating the library into the downtown.
- Create a plan for a new fire station to service Daleville and Salem Township.



Eaton Projects

- Eaton Sewer: Planning grant application, construction for repairs/replacement to correct failing systems and control contaminants flowing into the Mississinewa River. ***Completed

- Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO): Corrective action needed to improve the CSO problems to reduce pollution and improve public health and safety. Engineering work underway.
- Replacement of lighting, windows/doors, HVAC at the Community Center/Town Hall.
- Eaton Sidewalks: Modify/repair sidewalks to be ADA compliant. Est. \$75-\$125K.
- Complete the Veterans Park at the corner of Harris and Hartford Streets. Est. \$20-\$40k.
- Rehabilitation of the Eaton Fire Station. Est. \$50-\$100k.
- Complete a town wide visioning session.
- Create and prioritize a list of downtown improvement projects for sidewalks, streetlights, beautification, facades, etc.
- Consider establishment of a Eaton TIF District.
- Expand opportunities for further development and rehabilitation of vacant industrial buildings.
- Expand infrastructure for future Eaton commercial/industrial developments and expansions.



Gaston Projects

A town wide visioning session was held on November 11, 2016. Various projects below are compiled from that meeting.

- Storm and sanitary sewer improvements. USDA grant app. in process.
- Upgrade water and sewer lines within the town.
- Improvements to the water system for both the quality of the water and facilities in cooperation with the USDA.
- Expansion of utilities to Wes-Del High School and I69/SR 28.
- Work cooperatively with the County on expansion of the I69/SR28/Gaston TIF.
- Work with the county on a plan to develop utilities at the I69/SR28 interchange.
- Work to develop commercial/industrial development at the I-69/SR 28 interchange.
- Sidewalk repairs, upgrades, ADA compliance throughout town.
- Road and infrastructure repairs and updates.
- Completion of a Parks and Recreation Five Year Master Plan.
- Seek new playground equipment for town parks.
- Continue to develop programing within the parks.
- Complete construction drawings for the new town community center and develop a funding plan.
- Demolish the existing community center.
- Develop a trail from the Cardinal Greenway through the town.
- Continue to promote Gaston as the northern most trailhead destination in Delaware County.
- Develop new "Welcome to Gaston" signage.
- Complete the downtown street light project.
- Continue to foster the development of more businesses within the downtown and surrounding areas.
- Continue with the residential blight elimination efforts.
- Identify vacant/abandoned commercial buildings and meet with the respective owners.
- Identify town wide beautification projects that can be undertaken by local residents and businesses.
- Consider the development of a downtown facade grant program.



Muncie Projects: The City of Muncie is not an active participant in the ECI Regional Planning District. Projects listed below have been compiled by local news reporting sources and conversations with members of the local community.

- Former Borg-Warner Site: Reuse/redevelopment.
- Former Muncie Manual Transmissions Site: Environmental remediation and reuse/redevelopment of the site.
- Livable Cities Initiative: Expand on opportunities to create/promote competitive wage jobs, neighborhood councils, downtown plans, parks, neighborhood enhancement projects, mentoring programs and all educational opportunities.
- Continuation of the Blight Elimination BEP program.
- Reuse of Vacant Industrial Facilities/Brownfields: Promote further redevelopment and reuse of abandoned and underutilized industrial and brownfield locations within the City.
- Muncie Street and Sidewalk Issues / Special Consideration to ADA Compliance: Develop a sidewalk and recreational paths plan, as well as existing street and sidewalk infrastructure improvements. In many locations, sidewalks need to be brought up to ADA standards.
- Completion of the Sanitary CSO improvement project.
- Create and fund programs to increase employment skills and address the skilled labor shortage.
- Continue with the development of the MadJax maker space.
- Continue with the development of the former IS&W Kitselman Energy Park.
- Continue to foster, promote and develop businesses and residential spaces within the downtown.
- Development of the riverfront commercial/residential district.
- Update the Muncie Parks Department Five Year Master Plan.





Selma Projects

- Further investigation of improvements related to the storm water backup issue in the town.
- Further development of storm sewers where sewers do not exist.
- Development and revitalization of the downtown.
- Seek funds for building upgrades (specifically for ADA compliance).
- Develop a plan for downtown Albany Street improvements.
- Consideration of the development of a Selma TIF District.
- Continue with the town wide paving plan, install curbs and sidewalks where needed.
- Stripe all roads.
- Seek funding to upgrade and further beautify the Selma baseball diamond facility.
- Seek funding and development of a new Selma town sign with digital display.
- Continue efforts to demolish abandoned and dilapidated homes and structures.
- Develop a plan to repair/replace deteriorated sidewalks in the town and make all sidewalks ADA compliant.
- Seek funding to acquire the former Corner Cupboard commercial property.
- Develop a plan to convert the former Corner Cupboard into a senior activities center.
- Seek funding for a new generator at the Selma Volunteer Fire Department.
- Create a plan for the development of the Selma Industrial Park.
- Address trees that hang into the right of ways around the town.



Yorktown Projects

- Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO): Corrective action to reduce pollution and improve public health and safety. ***Completed
- Complete sewer extension to Park One at I69. ***Completed
- Expand the water production facility at Park One at I69.
- Downtown redevelopment including new town green space, new town hall/police station.
- Further development of the downtown including a multi-story retail/dining/commercial building.
- Connection of the downtown to Morrows Meadows via a walking/pedestrian bridge.
- Development of the downtown master plan and related projects.
- Seek developers for the development of commercial/residential mixed use buildings in the downtown.

- Continue efforts to develop the Canal Street area in relation to the master plan.
- Expand upon the North-South Transportation Study.
- Complete the River Road trail from 400 W. to 500 W. and connect to the White River Greenway from Morrison Rd. to Hawthorn Drive.
- Continue to support the development of commercial properties in the areas of 400 W. and 500 W. at SR 332.
- Continue to support the development and attraction of a new tenant for the former Brevini Wind building in Park One at I69 and SR 332.
- Continue to work to promote/attract residential development and subdivisions.
- Continue to work to promote and develop the area from the downtown to the Kilgore Business District.
- Continue to support the marketing and redevelopment of the former Marsh Warehouse properties.
- Continue and expand upon all business retention and expansion activities.
- Continue to promote and market the downtown facade grant program.
- Further equip the town parks to be ADA compliant.
- Update various park facilities and amenities.
- Complete/update the park five year master plan.
- Review design and overlay district standards during the zoning ordinance update.

Grant County, City, Town Projects 2018-2022:



Grant County Projects (Road Show Held Sept. 7, 2017)

- Explore seeking a housing developer for a new housing development in the area of I69/SR 18.
- SR 5 Extension: Local interest in extending SR 5 from north of Upland through Matthews, Gaston (Delaware County) and Yorktown (Delaware County) to State Road 67 in Daleville (Delaware County) – intersecting highways SR 28, SR 332, SR 32 and US 67. This project would create a state highway corridor to run parallel to I69 and could assist in releasing traffic congestion. Commercial, economic development, safety and geographic access are also benefits are reasons for the proposed project.
- Greenways/Trails Development: County wide projects and completion of connection to existing Cardinal Greenway in Delaware County.
- Complete a US EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant application in cooperation with Grant County, Marion and one other selected regional partner.
- Explore options to create “Welcome to Grant County” signage along I69.
- Infrastructure road/water/sewer at I69 and SR 18 and 35 in relation to potential new economic development projects.
- Work with INDOT to address options to improve road drainage on I69 south of mm 264.
- Work cooperatively with INDOT to widen I69 and improve the interchange ramps to better accommodate truck traffic.
- Continue to assist the towns with Community Crossing Grant applications for road funding.
- Develop a program to identify commercial/industrial properties with delinquent taxes that can be repurposed.

- Seek funding for blighted structure demolitions.



Fairmount Projects:

- Obtain OCRA Main Street improvement Grant. ***Completed
- USDA wastewater treatment project. ***Completed
- Demolish former high school – building is in extreme decline; adjacent Madison-Grant Youth Basketball League needs the property for parking and expansion of their program.
- Expanded travel lanes on I-69 and development of the intersection of I-69 and SR 26.
- Establish connectivity between the town and the I-69/SR 26 intersection.
- Complete the downtown Main St. project with awarded proceeds from OCRA (\$500,000) and town match (\$200,000).
- Explore creating a facade grant program.
- Continue blight removal efforts.
- Continue to grow and expand upon the new town TIF District.
- Seek a housing developer for both family and senior housing related projects.
- Identify a location and seek zoning and infrastructure improvements on a new housing subdivision.



Fowlerton Projects

- Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO): Corrective action to improve CSO problems and reduce pollution while improving public health and safety.
- Update park equipment, baseball diamonds and basketball court.
- Create a plan to improve the town park.
- Identify significant historic structures.
- Create a sidewalk improvement plan.
- Develop plan for infrastructure improvements/extensions to service the I-69/SR26 interchange.



Gas City Projects

- Street Rebuild: Total rebuild of First Street in Gas City (main route, heavily traveled by trucks) – from the high school on the north to South “H” Street – a total of 1.5 miles, including street, curbing and sidewalks.
- Street Repairs: On the east end, near I-69, repair street and add new streets to aid economic development.
- North Sloan Drive: Repair and install curbs along 1,350 feet of street.
- Wheelteck Drive: Rebuild, including base and curbing from Sloan Drive to the rear of an industrial building and bordering to north side of many acres of shovel ready land.
- New Water Meters: Upgrade water meters to radio-read meters.
- Water Lines: Loop 5100 feet of 6-inch and 8-inch water mains on the east and west sides of town at an estimated cost of \$264,000. An environmental assessment has been completed with findings of no significant impact.
- Combined Sewer Overflow(CSO): Corrective action to improve CSO problems and reduce pollution while improving public health and safety.



Jonesboro Projects

- Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO): Corrective action to improve CSO problems and reduce pollution while improving public health and safety.
- Develop a Main Street organization.
- Park improvements.
- Sidewalk, streetlight, signage improvements.
- Development of a facade grant program.



Marion Projects

- Construct a water tower at SR 18 & I-69. Need for a one million gallon tank in order to provide adequate water supplies and pressure to existing and potential employers in the SR18/I69 corridor.
- SR 18 corridor enhancements and beautification traveling in and out of Marion.
- Continue to develop and grow the Marion business incubator. Work to attract clients and recruit potential entrepreneurs from the local colleges.
- Develop plan to upgrade the Marion Municipal Airport facilities.
- Make SR 18 & SR 9 area pedestrian more friendly with the inclusion of sidewalks.
- Redevelopment of the Five Points Business Area.
- Expand Pedestrian crossing on Washington Street Bridge.
- Purchase of rail line to connect SR-9 & SR-18 to downtown and Cardinal Greenway.
- Construct water tower at SR 18 and I-69.
- Extend water and sewers to airport far side and to SR 22.



Matthews Projects

- Matthews Elementary School: Use closed school as a community center/town hall. ***Completed
- Sewer upgrades. ***Completed
- Complete a community visioning session to prioritize downtown redevelopment and beautification projects.
- Consider OCRA grants.
- Continue to update/repair sidewalks for ADA accessibility.
- Complete five year park master plan.
- Identify blighted properties and consider demolition or redevelopment opportunities.



Swayzee Projects

- Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO): Correct CSO problems to reduce pollution while improving public health and safety.
- Complete the Street and sidewalk repaving with Community Crossing grant award funding.
- Establish a downtown streetscape committee.
- Consider establishment of a formal park board and new park tax rate for park improvements.



Sweetser Projects

- Create a downtown streetlight map and apply to the USDA for streetlight funding.
- Obtain quotes and seek funding for a new town sign with digital display.
- Explore options for new housing projects.
- Continue to maintain and expand the Sweetser Switch Trail.
- Seek residential housing developers for neighborhood expansion.



Upland Projects

- Continue with downtown redevelopment projects.
- Expand upon the Ball State study/plan for community improvement projects.
- Prepare a plan for a north-south trail connecting the town to the university and an east-west trail from the ball diamonds to the lake.
- Establish a TIF district to capture revenue for downtown projects.
- Consider the development of a facade grant program.
- Continue with the blight elimination efforts.
- Consider expansion of the town to I-69 and SR 35.
- Explore more cooperative town/university projects.
- Seek prospective tenants for retail spaces in the downtown.



Van Buren Projects

- Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO): Correct CSO problems to reduce pollution while improving public health and safety.
- Sidewalk and Street improvements.
- Develop town beautification projects.

Jay County, City, Town Projects 2018-2022:



Jay County Projects Jay County is not an active participant in the ECI Regional Planning District. Projects listed below have been compiled by local news reporting sources and conversations with members of the local community.

- Develop a County-wide master plan to address the flooding issues throughout the County.
- Seek federal funding to assist with the elevation of flooding issues.
- Community Partnerships: Continue to build community partnerships that foster growth in Jay County.
- Renewable Energy Opportunities: Work with the Renewable Energy Task Force to create opportunities in Jay County.
- Jay County 20/20 Vision: Implementation of 20/20 Vision Plan for Jay County.
- Ag-Based Growth: Target value-added agriculture-based industries for growth in Jay County.
- Housing: Develop new stock in all categories of housing opportunities (single-family, apartments and condos) for future growth in Jay County.
- Spec Buildings: Develop spec industrial buildings.
- Zoning: Enforce current zoning regulations.
- Infrastructure Improvements: Fund key infrastructure improvements.
- Community Access: Examine and implement plans to improve access points into each community.
- Brownfield Redevelopment Initiatives: Further development of specific Jay County and area community brownfield projects and regional brownfield coalition projects, including, website development; site inventory and status; assessments; remediation; re-use of sites; grant sourcing; and public/private collaborations.
- Development and implementation of fiber optics into and within Jay County.
- Ag Sector: Develop, nourish and strengthen the agriculture sector of local economy.
- Develop leadership in alternative energy development.
- Encourage growth in the Jay County park system, trails (hiking, walking) in order to increase the health and vitality of the community and add to quality of life.
- Develop and promote further use of outdoor recreational facilities in Jay County.
- Assist with roads and other infrastructure projects needed in connection with 2011 completion of the wind turbine farm.
- Acquisition and installation of new computer system to provide electronic health records (EHR) for Jay County Hospital.
- Replacement of Jay County Hospital's 16-slice CT scanner within the next several years.
- Bring high-speed internet to the county.



Bryant Projects

- Continued infrastructure development.
- Downtown revitalization.
- Develop new industrial sites.

- Examine and implement plans to improve community access points.
- Develop shovel ready sites.
- Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO): Correct CSO problems to reduce pollution while improving public health and safety.



Dunkirk Projects

- Continued infrastructure development.
- Complete the Todd Building restaurant project.
- Examine the brownfield contamination at defunct manufacturing facilities.
- Create a downtown facade grant program.
- Create a business attraction plan for both the downtown and abandoned industrial sites.
- Continue blight elimination efforts.
- Develop city amenities to help attract and retain residents.
- Expand and upgrade parks.
- Update the five year park master plan.
- Develop downtown beautification projects.
- Develop a municipal water system improvement plan.



Pennville Projects

- SR 1 Street and Sidewalk replacement.
- Continued infrastructure (sewer/water) upgrades throughout the town.
- Complete a town wide visioning session for redevelopment of the downtown.
- Improve upon town signage and beautification.
- Foster local interest in the development of new businesses in the town.



2016
INNOVATOR
OF THE YEAR

City of
Portland
Water Park



Portland Projects

- Address flooding issues in the downtown business district. (Harrison Street and Retention Ponds)
- Continue to work with the engineering firm and FEMA on a longterm flood elimination plan on the Salamonie River.
- Expand efforts for bio-swale's, rain gardens and retention ponds.
- Continue to promote the downtown business district revitalization with targeted focus on 105-107, 201-207, 214-216 West Main Street.
- Address twelve (12) CSO's and upgrades to the Wastewater Treatment Plant and Separation of Sewer & Stormwater. Est. \$20 million.
- Develop project committees to assist with the implementation of the downtown/urban revitalization plan.
- Seek and attract residential developers and businesses to occupy downtown spaces.
- Seek downtown owners to participate in historic building renovation projects.
- Continued expansion and promotion of the facade grant program for the downtown.
- Assist in funding facade renovation plans for owners of buildings.
- Continue to develop and expand upon the industrial park.
- Seek right-of-way and funding for gateway signage.
- Work with INDOT on SR 27 to develop angled parking, bike lanes, street trees, outdoor furniture, raised and colored cross walks and condensed lane widths.
- Work with INDOT and the Redevelopment Commission on a funding plan for all state highway improvements.
- Improve streetscapes on N. Harrison, E. Walnut, E. Water, E. Main and Meridian Streets per the recommendation in the Ball State University/City of Portland Urban Revitalization Plan.
- Develop plans and seek funding for downtown alleyway revitalizations.
- Continue efforts to improve sidewalks and curbs.
- Expand upon community events to attract people into the downtown.
- Develop a committee to explore the development of a cultural loop connecting area destination points.
- Explore opportunities for the city/county to partner with housing developers to construct mid to upper income housing for the nearly 2,400 daily commuters to Jay County.



Redkey Projects

- Expand upon downtown revitalization efforts.

- Develop better connectivity between the downtown and SR 67/28.
- Examine and implement plans to improve community access points.
- Continue to expand development of commercial/industrial properties.
- Develop a sidewalk improvement plan.
- Continue to seek funding for park amenities and park improvement projects.
- Seek funding for downtown amenities and beautification projects.



Salamonia Projects

- Continued infrastructure development
- Promotion as a rural bedroom community in Jay County.
- Implement a town beautification committee.

Henry County, City, Town Projects 2018-2022:



Henry County Projects: (Road Show conducted in August of 2016) Henry County is not an active participant in the ECI Regional Planning District. Projects listed below were compiled at a public visioning session of all elected officials in Henry County. The session was lead by ECI staff.

- Infrastructure improvements needed at interchanges along the I-70 corridor through Henry County.
- Expand water and sewer service to the SR 109 and I-70 interchange.
- Expand water and sewer service to the Wilber Wright and I-70 interchange.
- Promote cooperation between Knightstown and the South Henry Regional Waste District.
- Develop a marketing plan for the I-70 corridor.
- Continued Park and amenity improvements- community wide.
- Development of trails/connections to county/city/town park and recreation infrastructure.



New Castle

- Revitalization of the Henry County Memorial Park through construction of an event center/fairgrounds building.
- Reconstruction and expansion of existing facilities at the Henry County Memorial Park.
- Complete the construction of the downtown infrastructure improvements on SR 38.
- Work to attract businesses to the downtown and retain the existing businesses.
- Continue the city wide blight removal program.
- Continue to upgrade the park system.
- Complete the sports field expansion project.
- Develop a city trail plan to connect existing amenities.
- Expand marketing and exposure of the shell building.



Knightstown

- Expand cooperation with the South Henry Regional Waste District.
- Develop a plan to extend utilities and city services to the SR 109 and I-70 interchange.
- Create a downtown redevelopment plan.
- Expand blight removal efforts throughout the town.
- Develop a business retention and attraction plan.

- Address dilapidated park equipment.
- Continue ADA sidewalk enhancements.



Spiceland

- Development of a downtown streetscape committee.
- Plan for sidewalk, infrastructure and beautification improvements.
- Develop a downtown facade grant program.
- Plan for park improvements and equipment replacement.



Middletown

- Consider becoming a Main Street Community.
- Develop a downtown beautification committee.
- Expand upon the park and recreational areas.
- Develop a facade grant program.
- Consider creating a TIF district.

8. Benchmarking & Measurement of Impact

This section serves as the evaluation tool to benchmark the intended impact of the priority regional projects.

To measure the success of the projects, this plan uses a quantifiable methodology to illustrate the impact. With 2017 being the benchmark year, the following units of measurement are intended to be analyzed from 2018-2022 in



the Counties of **Delaware, Grant, Henry and Jay.**

- Total number of jobs created in the region
- Total number of jobs retained in the region
- Total population change in the region
- Total per capita income increase in the region
- Total new private investment in the region
- Changes to the regional aesthetic appearance in the region

	Benchmark Year 2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Jobs Created	520					
Jobs Retained	4,234					
Population Change	254,937					
Per Capita Income	\$36,322					
New Private Investment	\$368 Million					
Perceived Aesthetic Improvements	Pockets of improvement throughout the region					

9. Summary of Regional Action Plan

This CEDS plan was compiled through the Regional Planning District members as well as community input from citizens, business people, professionals, economic development directors and local elected officials and various other members of the local communities. The goal of this CEDS is to ensure implementation of the Action Strategies and Steps by the ECI Regional Planning District. Furthermore, the individual listings of projects from the member municipalities should be top priorities for local consideration from 2018-2022. The ECI Regional Planning District has expertise to assist with the implementation and execution of the various projects and can coordinate, advise and see

through to completion any of the needed projects. Furthermore, the ECI Regional Planning District is a reliable source to assist with preparing a financial plan to address the funding needs of projects. As listed in this report, there are various sources of funding from private/public to loans and grants. The success of this plan is measured by the benchmarks of seeing an increase in population, increased employment and wages, as well as improvements to transportation and beautification throughout the region.

Although the EDA refers to the document as a report, ECI has learned that the document serves much greater value as a planning document for all levels of government within the District – plus the economic development offices, workforce agencies, non-profits and other organizations that may be planning for the future.

10. Useful Websites and Sources

- www.ecirpd.org (ECI Regional Planning District)
- www.muncie.com (Muncie-Delaware County Economic Development)
- www.co.delaware.in.us/delawareeconomicdevelopment.gov (Delaware County Economic Development and Redevelopment)
- www.grantcounty.com (Grant County Economic Development)
- www.jaycountydevelopment.org (Jay County Economic Development)
- www.eci-brownfields.org (ECI Regional Planning District Brownfields Assessment Coalition)
- www.iarc.cc (Indiana Association of Regional Councils)
- www.bsu.edu/cber (BSU Center for Business Research)
- <http://cms.bsu.edu/About/AdministrativeOffices/BBC/> (BSU Building Better Communities)
- www.stats.indiana.edu (Stats Indiana)
- www.eda.gov (Economic Development Administration)
- www.iedc.in.gov (Indiana Economic Development Corporation)
- www.in.gov/ocra/ (Office of Community and Rural Affairs)
- www.usda.gov (U.S. Department of Agriculture)
- www.epa.gov (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)