



RURAL PRIORITIES REPORT

JUNE 2007

**PREPARED BY
RURAL CITIZENS, COMMUNITY LEADERS,
AND SERVICE PROVIDERS**

**COMPILED BY
INDIANA RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, INC.**

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INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to present the *RISE 2020 Rural Issues Priorities Report*. In 2006, the Indiana Rural Development Council, Inc. (IRDC) became the organizational home for RISE 2020 – The Rural Indiana Strategy for Excellence. RISE 2020 is a fifteen-year cultural framework designed to help rural communities be great places to live, learn, work, and play. For this report, IRDC convened the RISE 2020 network to discover significant sector issues, identify crosswalking opportunities between sectors, and assist partner organizations and institutions in modeling RISE 2020 in Indiana’s rural communities.

The initial step for compiling the report was to invite the eight sector work groups to:

1. Identify sector issues;
2. Prioritize critical sector issues;
3. Determine the policy, programmatic, research and information, and education and awareness needs of each critical issue;
4. Identify critical issues that crosswalk with other sectors; and
5. Publish a report with the Sector Groups’ findings.

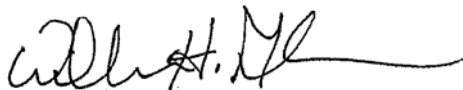
A second step called for IRDC to convene a RISE 2020 Congress in mid-2007 to:

1. Share the Sector Group Reports;
2. Prioritize critical issues into a Top Ten Rural Issues Agenda; and
3. Pursue the Agenda, sector work, and crosswalking opportunities.

This *RISE 2020 Rural Issues Priorities Report* completes the first step in the project and provides the baseline information for the RISE 2020 Congress.

We want to thank the Sector Group Chairs for their leadership in this effort and the rural leaders and stakeholders who participated in the sixteen meetings that were held from November 2006 through February 2007. Their insight, expertise, and passion for looking at issues differently are reflected in the report.

On behalf of the Sector Group Chairs and the entire RISE 2020 Network, I am pleased to offer this report to be used by governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, businesses, and rural leaders to strengthen communities throughout Indiana.



Mayor William Graham
Chairman
Indiana Rural Development Council, Inc.

RISE 2020 – THE OVERVIEW

The Rural Indiana Strategy for Excellence (RISE 2020), initiated by Lieutenant Governor Becky Skillman, is a broad cultural framework designed to help communities and regions pursue their economic and social opportunities in a globally challenging world. RISE 2020 provides citizens with the ability to own and execute a strategy to make rural communities great places to live, learn, work, and play. RISE 2020 will help communities forge new conversations, new collaborations, and new beginnings.

Hundreds of Indiana citizens helped create RISE 2020 and, in the process, recognized some unique characteristics about rural areas. First, there is a distinctive interdependency of rural, suburban, and urban communities that should be leveraged for the benefit of the entire state. The future of a vibrant rural Indiana must ensure the sustainability of communities of all types, sizes, and places. Rather than expending resources to determine who is and isn't rural, it is more important to take advantage of rural Indiana's diverse assets to improve communities and their citizens' lives. Second, while agriculture and rural communities were once synonymous, this is no longer the case. Realizing that agriculture is a significant economic engine for Indiana, a new, mutually beneficial relationship must be forged between farming and rural communities. RISE 2020 provides a platform for a new rural constituency to be organized.

Rural Indiana is home to small cities, towns, villages and scattered housing and farmsteads. While many new rural residents view it as a landscape, it is also a vibrant business-scape filled with farms, working forests, coal mines, other resource industries, small businesses, services and manufacturing. It's also home to Indiana's many beautiful natural places. Rural communities serve as the fabric that connects cities and towns to each other.

RISE 2020 is a road map, not a strategic plan, designed to help Indiana *redefine* rural culture, *reinvent* regional relationships, *renew* the commitment to community development, and *revitalize* rural involvement. Above all, RISE 2020 is an inclusive, people-driven process involving hundreds of citizens from non-governmental organizations, businesses, academic institutions, philanthropic groups, and government.

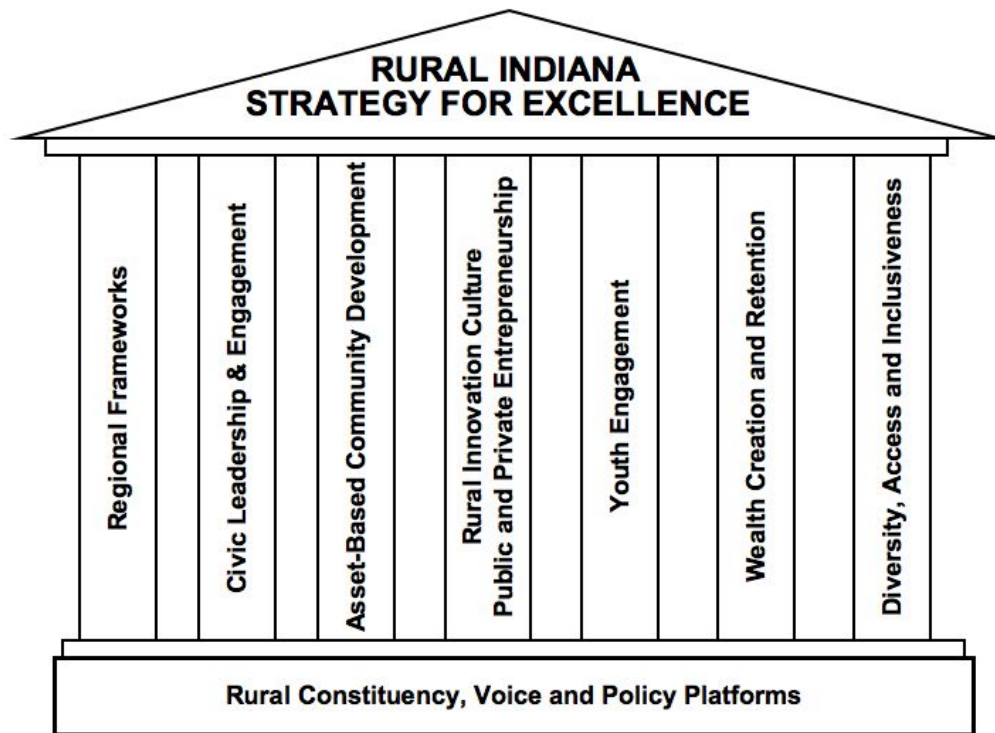
THE RISE 2020 FRAMEWORK

The RISE 2020 framework recognizes the holistic nature of communities that focuses community and economic development upon a Foundation and Seven Pillars, rather than silo-based sectors.

The RISE 2020 foundation for a local community requires the Building of a Rural Constituency including its Voice and Platform.

With a strong rural constituency, the development of the seven RISE 2020 pillars is used to create vibrant, sustainable communities that:

- *Nurture* Regional Frameworks;
- *Advance* Civic Leadership and Engagement;
- *Initiate* Asset-Based Community Development;
- *Promote* a Rural Innovation Culture through public and private entrepreneurship;
- *Foster* Youth Engagement;
- *Increase* Wealth Creation and Retention; and
- *Cultivate* Diversity, Access and Inclusiveness



Across the country, similar efforts are being made to strengthen rural communities, but too often the NGO (non-governmental organization) community is being relegated to a minor role. RISE 2020 is a unique framework that focuses and utilizes the leadership and staying power that is found in the NGO community. Numerous NGOs are involved in RISE 2020 and the relationship of these organizations with academic, governmental, and other institutions is critical to the framework's success. As the steward for RISE 2020, the Indiana Rural Development Council (IRDC) is a private–public partnership that advocates for the vitality of rural Indiana. The Council's purpose is to facilitate efforts of citizens and other stakeholders to meet the economic and social needs of rural Indiana by cultivating innovative ideas with rural communities to be great places to live, learn, work, and play.

The implementation of RISE 2020 in a community should not focus on one pillar, but rather utilize the interconnected nature of the seven pillars used in our daily lives. We live the pillars, but often plan in sectors—missing the synergy that could be achieved by coordinating efforts within the community’s pillars.

The crosswalking nature of the RISE 2020 pillars provides a unique perspective to community development. It cultivates new relationships and new ways to pursue opportunities and address local needs. Through RISE 2020, local hospitals are more than medical facilities isolated in the health care sector. They crosswalk the pillars as they spur innovation, encourage entrepreneurship, provide careers to engage youth, serve regional needs, contribute to civic leadership, and create local wealth. They are also recognized for additional contributions as a key employer (local and regional), a hub of intellectual activity, driver of information technology systems, and multiplier of additional services. This crosswalking example is repeated over and over in communities by using the RISE 2020 framework.

This RISE 2020 framework will help rural communities maintain local heritage, while staying relevant and viable in a changing world. It will provide communities and issue-based regions the means to clarify their visions leading to more effective planning.

RISE 2020 is a marathon, not a sprint. But as in any race, we must begin today. Many specific projects can go on the fast track; but changing rural culture takes time, conversations, and commitment to better communities.

NEXT STEPS

A pivotal step is creating this new rural constituency – the Foundation upon which the RISE 2020 pillars is built. It demands that a new network of partners and communities come together to begin focusing communication, conversations, marketing, awareness, and celebration to reconnect citizens within their communities and regions.

Another key step of RISE 2020 involves the formation of resource teams focused around each of the seven pillars. A Civic Leadership and Engagement team has already been formed and continues to meet. The Youth Engagement team is being formulated to begin its work. Other pillar teams will be convened as well.

During the development of the RISE 2020 roadmap, people have related success stories about their communities, regions, and sectors. These stories, commonly called Best Practices, will assist others who are pursuing similar projects, face similar problems, or need some hope that small communities can find innovative solutions to meet local needs. The Shared Successes or Best Practices website will be available to community leaders on the RISE 2020 website. This searchable website will assist individuals, communities, and regions in learning from each other rather than having to reinvent the wheel each time.

The RISE 2020 partners will develop additional steps to assist communities and regions with local planning and implementation of RISE 2020 as the framework moves forward.

REPORT METHODOLOGY

The findings in these sector group reports were developed using a four-stage model.

- Identify sector issues
- Prioritize critical sector issues
- Determine the needs of each critical issue:
 - Policy
 - Programmatic
 - Research and information
 - Education and awareness
- Identify:
 - Crosswalking opportunities
 - Best Practices
 - Linkages to the RISE 2020 Foundation and Seven Pillars

The notes from the meetings were drafted in a consistent format and reviewed by the Sector Group Chairs and members.

The individual sector group reports compiled into this report will be used to create a *Top Ten Rural Issues Agenda* at the RISE 2020 Congress on June 13 at the Hendricks County 4-H Fairgrounds and Conference Complex in Danville, Indiana.

COMMUNITY CAPACITY SECTOR REPORT

CRITICAL SECTOR ISSUES

The group identified twenty-two sector concerns that were prioritized into these four critical sector issues.

- ✚ Develop an entrepreneurial and innovative culture focused on community capacity opportunities.
- ✚ Promote dynamic leadership development programs that better serve rural communities.
- ✚ Modernize and develop public and private frameworks to maximize limited resources for critical community services.
- ✚ Provide an effective technical assistance system to help communities develop capacity.

RESOURCE NEEDS

✚ **Develop an entrepreneurial and innovative culture focused on community capacity opportunities.**

⊙ *Awareness and Education*

- ◆ Encourage communities to be proactive by conducting assessments without being driven by local or regional crises:
 - Update comprehensive plans and that focus on community development instead of being limited to land development
- ◆ Recognize and address local policies and events that impact regions and vice versa
- ◆ Create a regional voice and regional structures to foster the risk-taking spirit that leverage innovative capacity solutions
- ◆ Strengthen rural community cultures and systems using both grassroots and top-down strategies

⊙ *Public Policy* (State Level)

- ◆ Redesign approval mechanisms for project planning and implementation that focus on outcome based solutions rather than prescriptive, process-based solutions
- ◆ Use public funding for pilot projects and innovative, emerging technologies that can be duplicated in other communities with similar needs
- ◆ Re-establish a state-supported, university-based planning agency to assist with local and regional planning efforts

(Local/Regional)

- ◆ Enhance local community planning efforts with the re-established state-supported, university-based planning agency
- ◆ Based on the RISE 2020 framework, design new tools and processes to assist communities and regions in establishing community development goals rather than sector-by-sector efforts

⊙ *Research and Information*

- ◆ Conduct a comprehensive statewide Rural Community Assessment to identify the level of basic services in each county and show the potential interconnectivity within regions, e.g., housing, drinking water, sewer/waste treatment, septic systems, broadband service, cellular phone coverage, and emergency systems coverage:
 - Access, Cost, Distance, etc.
 - Service areas
 - Installation and upgrade time sequence of systems
 - Level of planning in place for unincorporated communities
- ◆ Develop and maintain a searchable, best practices website
- ◆ Create tools to utilize the volumes of sector-specific data that are collected to improve decision-making in communities and regions
- ◆ Revitalize rural towns and small cities to minimize scattered housing which negatively impacts agriculture and the rural business-scape

 **Promote dynamic leadership development programs that better serve rural communities.**

⊙ *Public Policy*

- ◆ Modify state laws to encourage cross-jurisdictional efforts of contiguous and non-contiguous governments and other entities
- ◆ Encourage agencies to pursue collaborative solutions when working with adjacent communities addressing common problems

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Foster regional conversations by engaging local communities around regional issues, needs, and opportunities utilizing the RISE 2020 framework:
 - Cross-jurisdictional
 - Cross-sectoral
- ◆ Energize local leaders using the RISE 2020 framework to encourage communities to engage in regional conversations
- ◆ Establish a network of trained conveners and facilitators to help communities pursue opportunities beyond crisis management
- ◆ Create innovative implementation strategies to help communities and regions develop:
 - New structures which pursue regional opportunities
 - The “who, what, when and how” to address community needs

 **Provide an effective technical assistance system to help communities develop capacity.**

⊙ *Public Policy*

- ◆ Evaluate transportation planning efforts to ensure that dollars are effectively invested for new construction and maintenance
- ◆ Improve intra-regional coordination on transportation projects and priorities, especially county projects that connect to adjacent counties
- ◆ Encourage regulatory/administrative agencies to offer flexibility within establish to address local needs
- ◆ Decentralize agencies' locations to improve communication and coordination between decision-making bodies and affected communities

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Restructure IRDC's Environmental Infrastructure Working Group (EIWG) model to include key regulators, not just key funding groups, i.e. adding IDEM and Indiana State Department of Health to assist with guidance on water-related issues
- ◆ Establish technical assistance groups, using the EIWG model, to convene funders and regulators in critical capacity areas, e.g., housing, healthcare, broadband/IT, community leadership, and youth engagement
- ◆ Increase awareness of the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs' (OCRA) liaisons throughout state government to help communities find funding and technical assistance for local initiatives
- ◆ Promote technical assistance tools available through EIWG-modeled services to local officials and practitioners

 **Modernize and develop public and private frameworks to maximize limited resources for critical community services.**

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Establish a network of neutral conveners to provide safe civic discussion spaces to assist communities in pursuing local and regional opportunities
- ◆ Encourage conversations to address emerging local and regional opportunities
- ◆ Ensure local leadership development programs address broader community participation and leadership responsibility in addition to skill development

CULTURAL ASSETS AND AMENITIES SECTOR REPORT

CRITICAL SECTOR ISSUES

The group identified eleven sector concerns that were prioritized into these four critical sector issues.

- ✚ Maximize the impact that Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage (TACH) assets have on Indiana's changing economy.
- ✚ Promote the growth of TACH businesses.
- ✚ Expand Indiana's TACH economy through community-based planning, regional frameworks, and improved statewide collaboration.
- ✚ Invest in communities to use their TACH assets to pursue economic and quality-of-life initiatives.

RESOURCE NEEDS

- ✚ **Maximize the impact that Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage (TACH) assets have on Indiana's changing economy.**

- ⊙ *Research/Information*

- ◆ Complete a state-funded comprehensive assessment of the Tourism, Arts, Culture and Heritage industries' contribution to the state's economy and its role in community development

- ⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Leverage Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage (TACH) assets for rural community development, especially in communities isolated from logistics corridors
- ◆ Pursue a balance between a community's economic development sectors, i.e., manufacturing, service, agriculture, technology, and TACH
- ◆ Track and report the economic impact of the TACH sector in Indiana state government economic reports
- ◆ Maintain arts education funding and staffing in primary and secondary schools

- ⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Improve understanding of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage's (TACH) role in quality-of-life and community development by organizing conversations among TACH groups
- ◆ Engage local and regional community leaders with TACH leaders to improve understanding of TACH and pursue new opportunities

- ◆ Create a positive discussion environment to maximize TACH's role in community and economic development
- ◆ Create a statewide network of TACH stakeholder groups, i.e., organizations, academic institutions, and agencies:
 - Organizations
 - Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana
 - Indiana Historical Society
 - Indiana Grantmakers Alliance
 - Indiana Planning Association
 - Indiana Humanities Council
 - Indiana Rural Development Council
 - Universities, colleges and post-secondary schools
 - State agencies
 - Office of Community and Rural Affairs (including Main Street)
 - Indiana Office of Tourism Development
 - Indiana Arts Commission
 - Indiana Economic Development Corporation
 - Indiana Department of Natural Resources
 - Indiana Department of Education
 - Indiana State Department of Agriculture

 **Promote the growth of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage (TACH) businesses.**

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Provide technical assistance to emerging and existing Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage (TACH) businesses:
 - Business Planning
 - Marketing
 - Financing
 - Skill development
- ◆ Foster collaborative/cooperative business and marketing groups, for example:
 - Ohio River Scenic Byway - Artisan Trail
 - Whitewater Canal Scenic Byway
 - Uplands Wine Trail
- ◆ Create a state-funded Mini-Grants Program for TACH artisans and entrepreneurs
- ◆ Establish a state-funded Micro-Loan Program for TACH business development
- ◆ Develop expertise within Small Business Development Centers to assist TACH enterprises

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Initiate state and local economic development incentives for Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage (TACH) enterprises
- ◆ Provide infrastructure systems to support existing and new TACH enterprises

- ◆ Protect local sources of TACH dedicated funding for local growth and promotion:
 - Food and beverage taxes
 - Innkeeper taxes
 - Admission fees and surcharges
- ◆ Update Indiana cooperative business statutes to encourage collaborative efforts to support TACH business initiatives

✚ Expand Indiana’s Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage (TACH) economy through community-based planning, regional frameworks, and improved statewide collaboration.

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Encourage collaboration among TACH interest groups and local communities to pursue regional opportunities
- ◆ Initiate bi-annual meetings of TACH-related state agencies to share issues, projects, and collaborative opportunities:
 - Office of Community and Rural Affairs
 - Main Street
 - Indiana Office of Tourism Development
 - Indiana Arts Commission
 - Indiana Economic Development Corporation
 - Indiana Department of Natural Resources
 - Outdoor Recreation
 - Parks & Recreation
 - Trails
 - Historic Preservation
 - Indiana Department of Education
 - Indiana State Department of Agriculture
 - Indiana Department of Transportation
- ◆ Complete a state-funded project to map the TACH-related organizational network at the local and regional levels
- ◆ Develop TACH-friendly signage policies with government entities, i.e., Indiana Department of Transportation and local agencies

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Build collaborative efforts among local and regional TACH groups to:
 - Work with Community Foundations on TACH initiatives
 - Pursue grant dollars collectively
- ◆ Encourage local and regional stakeholders to meet annually to share issues, projects and collaborative opportunities
- ◆ Encourage local communities to streamline administration of several local groups and focus more resources on programming duplicate administration
- ◆ Employ a state-funded TACH organizational map project to identify common interest areas and regional opportunities

- ◆ Utilize new technology options to strengthen collaborative efforts:
 - Web linking
 - Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
 - Traditional mapping (orthographic) systems

✚ Invest in communities to use their Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage (TACH) assets to pursue economic and quality-of-life initiatives.

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Increase state school funding for Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage (TACH) skill training
- ◆ Expand entrepreneurship education curricula and include TACH sector as an emerging field
- ◆ Ensure that TACH enterprises are key priorities of state community investment policies

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Improve marketing of new and existing local events to build community pride and asset awareness:
 - Festivals and fairs
 - Theatre
 - School programs
- ◆ Provide technical assistance to improve the quality of community programs:
 - Activities at County Fairs and Festivals
 - Local art education activities
- ◆ Support communities in creating public awareness campaigns of local assets, such as:
 - “What to do here” informational brochures at commerce points and convenience stores
 - Hamilton County “Cultural 360”
 - On-site training
- ◆ Encourage arts, culture, and heritage activities for local and regional residents, such as:
 - “Resident Raffle”
 - Jasper - “Chalk Walk”/Arts on Main
 - Kids show at festivals – local artists are judges
 - Fine arts and sculpture
 - Photography
 - Cemetery etching
 - Historical tours

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SECTOR REPORT

CRITICAL SECTOR ISSUES

The group identified thirty-four concerns that were prioritized into these six critical sector issues.

- ✚ Create a local leadership culture that sustains economic development through recruitment, retention and entrepreneurship strategies.
- ✚ Assist communities with economic development infrastructure planning.
- ✚ Implement innovative rural economic development strategies that maximize local assets to compete globally.
- ✚ Design financial resources driven by local decision-making that meet the needs of local communities.
- ✚ Increase the connectivity between workforce training strategies and rural economic development initiatives.
- ✚ Develop and interface land use policies that support local community and economic development efforts.

RESOURCE NEEDS

- ✚ **Create a local leadership culture that sustains economic development through recruitment, retention and entrepreneurship strategies.**
 - ⊙ *Policy*
 - ◆ Implement policies which encourage and incent inter-county revenue sharing
 - ⊙ *Programmatic*
 - ◆ Inform public officials and community leaders about rural economic development strategies, especially those leveraging rural assets
 - ◆ Utilize the RISE 2020 framework to ensure that county leadership programs foster greater understanding of economic development and its interrelationship with other community sectors
 - ◆ Leverage non-governmental organizations' (NGO) training programs to strengthen leaders serving rural communities as provided by Association of Indiana Counties, Indiana Association of Cities and Towns, Indiana Economic Development Association, and other organizations
 - ◆ Stimulate expatriate investment and participation in rural community development by working with secondary and post-secondary school alumni associations

- ◆ Utilize consistent operating principles in the planning and pursuing of economic development growth:
 - Regional frameworks
 - Collaboration
 - Metrics
 - Public awareness
 - Creativity
 - Realism

✚ **Assist communities with economic development infrastructure planning.**

⊙ *Research and Information*

- ◆ Educate community leaders in better understanding the business environment
 - Available local, state, and federal laws and regulations
 - Available policies and procedures
 - Available financial resources and technical assistance programs
- ◆ Create a tool to identify key community assets that can be leveraged for development
 - Educational specialties
 - Infrastructure services
 - Buildings and development sites

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Manage expectations of what can be realistically done locally:
 - Existing and potential physical assets
 - Spec buildings
 - Technology Parks
 - Broadband infrastructure
 - Available buildings and sites
 - Access to interstates or other logistics corridors
 - Local financial resources
 - Social and intellectual capital
 - Quality-of-life amenities
- ◆ Sustain the communication process between local economic development organizations, especially those geographically connected


⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Encourage local and state leaders to develop the political will to pursue achievable economic development goals
- ◆ Increase state grant funding for rural economic development projects, including planning activities
- ◆ Create a state fund to help rural communities install fiber optic cable to ensure competitiveness in a digitally-based economy
- ◆ Update the matching requirements for project funding to ensure that policies do not discriminate against rural communities and are needs-based

- ◆ Require communities to have an economic development strategy or provide state assistance to create one
- ◆ Incorporate a funding criterion that considers the social strain on the affected community(s)

⊙ *Education and Awareness*

- ◆ Encourage state and regional organizations to constantly scan the changing business climate for opportunities and threats, e.g. home-based virtual economy, emerging technologies

 **Implement innovative rural economic development strategies that maximize local assets to compete globally.**

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Increase state support for local communities to hire consultants to assist with economic development planning, including land use planning
- ◆ Identify ways for rural communities to leverage the state economic development priorities to gain greater access to financial resources and technical assistance
- ◆ Provide state financial incentives for regional collaborations

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Focus initial rural economic development strategies on home-grown approaches
- ◆ Encourage regional conversations to pursue collaborative efforts:
 - Regional plan commissions
 - Jointly-hired consultants
 - Regional opportunities even in the absence of financial support from state and federal entities
- ◆ Identify growth opportunities using entrepreneurship, retention, and recruitment strategies
- ◆ Work with state agencies to seek opportunities in cluster-based economic development initiatives
- ◆ Encourage adjacent local communities seeking similar opportunities to discuss leveraging resources to gain a competitive advantage

⊙ *Education and Awareness*

- ◆ Work with state and regional organizations to constantly scan the changing business climate for opportunities and threats, e.g. home-based virtual economy, emerging technologies
- ◆ Strengthen the resources available to local leaders and practitioners to improve decision-making, such as:
 - Ball State University's *Toolbox Guide to Development Funds* maintained by the Center for Economic and Community Development
 - Indiana Business Research Center for local statistics

✚ Design financial resources driven by local decision-making that meet the needs of local communities.

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Provide local leaders with more control over local financing options
- ◆ Create a new rural financial policy that recognizes the differences in available rural resources
- ◆ Change the New Market Tax Credit program to reduce the penalties on rural communities
- ◆ Reduce the Indiana Department of Transportation's grant match requirements for rural projects
- ◆ Limit the use of the County Economic Development Income Tax revenue to economic development projects
- ◆ Increase the use of private developers for public service projects

⊙ *Research and Information*

- ◆ Assist community leaders in understanding existing business support services:
 - Available local, state, and federal laws and regulations
 - Available policies and procedures
 - Available financial resources and technical assistance programs

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Ensure that Local Economic Development Organizations (LEDO) have minimum annual budgets of \$250,000

✚ Increase the connectivity between workforce training strategies and rural economic development initiatives.

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Create a state workforce blog to keep economic development leaders connected to programs and opportunities
- ◆ Showcase successful projects of regional Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) on a best practices website
- ◆ Increase workforce and career education earlier in the K-12 system
 - Improve educational attainment to provide a skilled workforce to meet the needs of existing and emerging businesses
- ◆ Increase access for students and adult learners to educational resources and training technologies
- ◆ Emphasize existing school facilities as learning centers and maximize utilization of schools for life-long learning, especially in rural communities
- ◆ Assist high schools with ways to stay connected with their graduates attending college
- ◆ Broaden the range of course offerings at community colleges and vocational training sites
- ◆ Strengthen and expand apprenticeship programs in rural communities
- ◆ Develop and foster career mentoring programs in rural communities

- ◆ Improve the connectivity between entrepreneurship programs offered through Indiana colleges and universities and local communities needing entrepreneurial assistance

- ⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Modify state education policies to include job skills training and college-preparation

- ⊙ *Education and Awareness*

- ◆ Work with regional WIBs to determine local/regional workforce needs in order to match graduates with jobs
- ◆ Increase business-education partnerships and career awareness programs in schools

- ✚ **Develop and interface land use policies that support community and economic development efforts.**

- ⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Establish a policy that state funds will only be awarded to counties with planning and zoning in place and define a time period beyond which plans are considered outdated
- ◆ Create base professional requirements, including possible licensing, for local and regional planning directors

- ⊙ *Research and Information*

- ◆ Conduct an economic impact analysis of current regional planning models, such as Metropolitan Planning Organizations

- ⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Provide state incentives to encourage more regional planning by:
 - Creating decision-making structures that are equitable to rural and urban interests alike (equal votes per county)
 - Encouraging continuing education of local planning officials
 - Nitty-Gritty Workshops offered by Purdue and Ball State Universities
 - Indiana Planning Association's *Citizen Planner Training Manual*
 - Citizen Planner tracks at Indiana Planning Association conferences

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SECTOR REPORT

CRITICAL SECTOR ISSUES

The group identified twelve sector concerns that were prioritized into these five critical sector issues.

- ✚ Identify and market career opportunities in Indiana communities.
- ✚ Align educational funding systems to address students and their needs.
- ✚ Promote shared responsibility for education and career development of youth.
- ✚ Offer entrepreneurial training in the formal K-12 and post-secondary curricula to cultivate the development of homegrown businesses.
- ✚ Improve infrastructure and social service support systems to extend educational offerings for life-long learning.

RESOURCE NEEDS

✚ **Identify and market career opportunities in Indiana communities.**

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Modify the Core 40 Curriculum to meet the needs of high school graduates directly entering the Indiana job market:
 - Entrepreneurship offerings
 - Vocational and technical skills
- ◆ Provide AP/Honors classes in multi-school arrangements and through distance learning systems for rural students

⊙ *Research and Information*

- ◆ Conduct an assessment to determine which schools are offering entrepreneurship classes
- ◆ Determine the correlation between market skill needs and student training in schools
 - Examine the relationship between the downsizing of vocational training courses, academic mastery, and subsequent job performance

⊙ *Awareness and Education*

- ◆ Encourage local chambers of commerce and local economic development organizations (LEDOs) to conduct job fairs with middle schools to increase awareness of career opportunities
- ◆ Maximize the training relationship between Workforce Investment Boards and educational sites

- ◆ Utilize student internships and apprenticeships to prepare individuals for careers as skilled and/or technical trades people

 **Align educational funding systems to address students and their needs.**

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Identify more effective ways to prepare students for careers than focusing on Core 40 remediation funding
- ◆ Pursue private grant funding to assist innovative teachers, e.g. “Donors Choose” Program
- ◆ Utilize student internships and apprenticeships to prepare individuals wanting to pursue careers as skilled and/or technical trades people

⊙ *Research and Information*

- ◆ Initiate a tracking mechanism to determine how many students enroll in post-secondary training, earn degrees, and at what level – certificate, technical, associate, bachelor’s, or advanced

 **Promote shared responsibility for education and career development of youth.**

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Transition primary and secondary education from “teaching to testing and standards” to “learning and mastery”
- ◆ Improve school communications with the communities they serve, e.g., parents, business, community, government, and tax-paying public
- ◆ Engage broader range of stakeholders in education planning and training activities
- ◆ Develop K-12 teaching methods that focus on individuals first and the testing climate second
- ◆ Share best practices among service providers and community leaders:
 - Attendance assistance (Scott County)
 - The Work Ethic Certification
 - Additional funding for school communication
 - School counseling and other programs - Regional
 - Kiwanis “BUG” program (Bring Up Grades)
 - Adopt-a-class program

 **Offer entrepreneurial training in the formal K-12 and post-secondary curricula to cultivate the development of homegrown businesses.**

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Support communities in identifying potential areas for entrepreneurial growth
- ◆ Invest local resources, with state financial support, to implement K-12 entrepreneurship training modules

- ◆ Initiate a transition plan that identifies local business owners who will be retiring during the next 5-10 years and connect them with potential new owners to sustain the local investment
- ◆ Link colleges and universities teaching entrepreneurship with K-12 schools and communities seeking technical assistance
- ◆ Share best practices among service providers and community leaders:
 - NxLevel Program for Schools – “Buzz on Biz” in Hamilton County
 - Entrepreneur Development training at the Learning Center in Greensburg in collaboration with Purdue University
 - Small Business University – Columbus Entrepreneurship Program
 - SBA (Online entrepreneurship information)
 - Nebraska HomeTown Competitiveness
 - K-12 Business Learning:
 - Junior Achievement
 - FFA
 - Future Business Leaders Association (FBLA)
 - Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA)
 - Business Fairs
 - College camps – Entrepreneurship outreach programs:
 - Attend entrepreneurship classes at colleges/universities

 **Improve infrastructure and social service support systems to extend educational offerings for life-long learning.**

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Implement child care services at adult learning sites to enable greater participation of working parents, while:
 - Providing training opportunities for students interested in child care careers
 - Partnering with other community organizations to offer services
- ◆ Ensure access to broadband (high-speed internet) services to all Indiana communities through for-profit and other delivery systems:
 - Make service available at central service sites in “last-mile” towns and communities, including:
 - Schools
 - Libraries
 - Churches
 - Community centers

FINANCIAL RESOURCES SECTOR REPORT

CRITICAL SECTOR ISSUES

The group identified eleven sector concerns that were prioritized into these five critical sector issues.

- ✚ Provide prospective and growing businesses of all types access to capital resources.
- ✚ Transform public financing systems to encourage communities to share resources and develop multi-jurisdiction services.
- ✚ Commit public and private resources to entrepreneurship development systems that will create or strengthen homegrown businesses.
- ✚ Create strategies and programs which leverage local community foundation resources for economic and community development.
- ✚ Cultivate local leadership and civic engagement efforts to strengthen community development through planning, communication, and implementation.

RESOURCE NEEDS

✚ **Provide prospective and growing businesses of all types access to capital resources.**

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Improve funding and policies of government supported infrastructure
- ◆ Encourage greater use of “design-build” platforms to improve services, shorten planning windows, and reduce costs
- ◆ Update the definition of “rural” by USDA-RD and other agencies to ensure that communities are well-served by available programs
- ◆ Modify the 1031 exchange program so that capital gains from land sales can be reinvested over a longer period of time and in different projects (The current program encourages land development gains to be reinvested in farmland purchases within 180 days, thus artificially driving up land prices)
- ◆ Remove restrictions on tax reinvestments and re-channel through incentives/credits (1031 Exchange)

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Create non-traditional, local sources of funds for local investments

✚ Transform public financing systems to encourage communities to share resources and develop multi-jurisdiction services.

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Pursue enabling legislation to encourage cross-jurisdictional projects of connected communities
- ◆ Provide incentives and flexible administrative rules to encourage regional approaches to public needs

✚ Commit public and private resources to entrepreneurship development systems that will create or strengthen homegrown businesses.

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Initiate strategies that encourage local business succession
- ◆ Expand the use of micro-loans/enterprise programs to assist business start-ups
 - Approach charitable foundations about funding an entrepreneurship program similar to the Lilly Endowment CAPE Grant initiative

⊙ *Research/Education*

- ◆ Conduct local assessments of existing businesses to determine succession opportunities
- ◆ Partner with utility companies, the Indiana Economic Development Association and other organizations that are early contacts for entrepreneurs to promote Entrepreneur Development Systems
- ◆ Provide training programs to budding entrepreneurs about early stage investment needs
- ◆ Improve access to “Angel” financing for smaller, rural enterprises

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Allow Public Employee Retirement Fund (PERF) and Teachers’ Retirement Fund (TRF) participants to designate a portion of their 401k investment portfolio into entrepreneurial ventures in Indiana
- ◆ Analyze existing policy, and modify if necessary, to allow for private 401K funds to be invested in entrepreneurial businesses.

✚ Create strategies and programs which leverage local community foundation resources for economic and community development.

⊙ *Research/Information*

- ◆ Create a pool of state tax credits accessible to local foundations and other tax-exempt organizations to incent local businesses and individuals to endow economic development efforts

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Encourage local foundations to be more involved in community and economic development

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Establish estate tax planning credits in exchange for business investment contributions

 **Cultivate local leadership and civic engagement efforts to strengthen community development through planning, communication, and implementation.**

⊙ *Education and Awareness*

- ◆ Improve local, regional, and sector-based leadership programs to ensure they provide a holistic approach to community development

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Encourage local financial institution representatives to participate in both sector and community leadership programs
 - Expand the scope of county leadership programs to examine regional issues and meet with regional partners
 - Work with training programs to ensure they teach the intersecting pillars of RISE 2020, including but not limited to:
 - Indiana Youth Institute
 - Conservation
 - Local economic development organizations
 - Indiana Land Use Consortium
 - Indiana Agricultural Leadership Institute
 - Leadership Learning Laboratory (L3)

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SECTOR REPORT

CRITICAL SECTOR ISSUES

The group identified twenty-nine sector concerns that were prioritized into these four critical sector issues.

- ✚ Launch wellness and prevention programs to improve health and reduce healthcare expenditures.
- ✚ Promote and market the important role of medical services as key drivers in community and economic development.
- ✚ Expand training opportunities and marketing of medical professions to overcome the shortage of medical personnel and services available in rural communities.
- ✚ Ensure the availability of affordable medical services to rural residents, e.g. hospitals, clinics, emergency services, mental health, and dental.

RESOURCE NEEDS

- ✚ **Launch wellness and prevention programs to improve health and reduce healthcare expenditures.**

⊙ *Policy*


- ◆ Integrate health education into school curriculum:
 - Offer nutrition, food preparation classes in elementary or middle school
 - Offer Life Skills, including wellness and prevention, in high school
 - Initiate discussions about mental health
 - Discuss Methamphetamine use, addiction problems, and the judicial consequences
- ◆ Increase the taxes on cigarettes to fund wellness and prevention programs:
 - Childhood immunization
 - Uninsured citizens
 - Tobacco Cessation & Prevention
- ◆ Modify the elderly care funding formula so that money follows the patient to the most effective service providers:
 - Home and community based services
 - Change service delivery systems
 - Provide transportation
 - Encourage better nutrition
 - Provide for home modifications
 - Add and train personnel
- ◆ Expand the use of school-based clinics to serve most children

- ◆ Initiate a fitness facilities plan to provide public access to schools, churches and other spaces in rural communities
- ◆ Encourage health care facilities to collaborate with local parks and recreation groups, trails groups, and leverage *The Indiana State Trails, Greenways and Bikeways Plan* to promote physical activity and wellness
- ◆ Promote more physical education course requirements for K-12 students
- ◆ Expand privately supported health screenings to provide affordable health monitoring

 **Promote and market the important role of medical services as key drivers in community and economic development.**

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Promote the value of Critical Access Hospitals (CAH) to local communities:
 - Increase the awareness of the key contributions of CAHs:
 - Economic hubs – generate \$9 of economic activity for every \$1 spent
 - Locally-based health professionals and their support services
 - Key leader in bringing cutting edge information technologies to communities
 - Provider of medical services
 - A strata of social and intellectual capital
 - Often a top-tier, local employer
 - Usually locally or regionally owned
 - Market the story about CAHs’ local contributions through state elected leaders, agencies, and public officials

 **Expand training opportunities and marketing of medical professions to overcome the shortage of medical personnel and services available in rural communities.**

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Partner with the state Office of Rural Health in an effort to connect Critical Access Hospitals (CAH), Community Health Clinics (CHC), Federally-Qualified Health Clinics (FQHC), Rural Health Clinics (RHC), and Mental Health Clinics (MHC) to more effectively serve rural audiences
- ◆ Modify the requirements for establishing new health professional training sites to encourage expanded training opportunities, including accreditation requirements
- ◆ Change the medical insurance provision for transportation so that people can begin services in a CAH and, if and when they are transferred to a different facility, those costs are covered
- ◆ Adopt Electronic Health Records (EHRs), maintained by Regional Health Information Organizations (RHIOs), to improve portability of patient medical history

- ◆ Provide tele-health and tele-medicine delivery systems to expand access to services:
 - Develop an equitable cost reimbursement formula for both ends of the tele-health/tele-medicine service pipeline
 - Increase broadband access and bandwidth between service sites to accommodate delivery

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Educate local citizens to utilize CAHs and clinics in local communities as the first point of access to medical services
- ◆ Increase awareness of additional service providers to their target audiences, e.g. 211 Network, Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC)
- ◆ Provide tele-health and tele-medicine delivery systems to expand access to services:
 - Offer medical professionals continuing education and training to utilize new technologies
 - Promote the public acceptability of tele-health and tele-medicine services and new technologies
 - Recruit technology proficient medical personnel at regional medical centers to develop a critical mass of available service providers
 - Utilize tele-health and tele-medicine services for in-home care, correctional facilities, and other remote sites
- ◆ Strengthen Emergency Medical Services offered in rural communities:
 - Volunteer fire departments
 - Emergency responder training
 - Cost of training
 - Tele-training
 - Level of training
 - Provide secondary or back up services when local providers leave the service area
 - Support funding for contractual arrangements with Lifeline Services
 - Recognize that emergency medical services are rarely profitable or break-even enterprises
- ◆ Disaster preparedness:
 - Engage potential partners and engage them in developing a response plan for potential disasters
 - Strengthen emergency communication networks to link responders
- ◆ Encourage local employers to support locally-based health facilities and networks, rather than bypassing local hospitals for regional facilities
- ◆ Strengthen coordination of the state's trauma system

⊙ *Research and Information*

- ◆ Map the healthcare and social service providers by communities in order to identify gaps and opportunities for new services
 - CAHs
 - Clinics – CHC, FQHC, RHC, MHC

- 211 Networks
- Area Agency on Aging/Aging and Disability Resources Centers (ADRC)
- Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, Division of Family Resources
- Health Professionals Training Sites
- Mental Health
- Dental/Oral Services
- Unserved/Underserved communities
- ◆ Provide mapping study results to local community leaders to improve their community and economic development planning efforts

✚ Ensure the availability of affordable medical services to rural residents, e.g. hospitals, clinics, emergency services, mental health, and dental.

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Increase state funding for Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) to encourage youth to pursue careers in rural healthcare
- ◆ Change the Indiana Medicaid reimbursement levels so rural, suburban and urban areas can offer equitable care
- ◆ Invest public and private incentives in individuals willing to practice and live in rural areas:
 - Offset medical school bills for agreement to practice in community for set period
 - Offset the rural salary differentials to encourage rural practices
- ◆ Change the health professional licensing requirements so that mid-level professionals can serve as rural patients' first contact with local healthcare services:
 - Reactivate the state Health Professions Bureau to ensure that standards are being met, but services are offered locally
 - Adopt a team-based approach to care similar to that used by Managed Care Organizations
- ◆ Update the reimbursement formula for mental health care to encourage use of tele-health/telemedicine services
- ◆ Institute state and federal policies that provide full deductibility of health care premiums for self-employed workers and farmers

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Increase the number of Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) to stimulate more students to pursue healthcare careers:
 - Target job fairs and other events in secondary schools
 - Maintain a constant relationship between AHECs and schools
 - Leverage CAHs and clinics to promote health careers, including para-professionals

- ◆ Encourage greater collaboration between Mental Health Clinics and Community Health Clinics for greater public awareness and reduced costs
 - Establishes a healthcare services center versus the stigma that goes with mental health services
 - Offer expanded services to treat both mind and body
 - ◆ Expand health professional training opportunities through public and private accredited institutions
 - Encourage medical personnel training to be conducted in rural as well as urban settings to expose trainees to rural service opportunities
- ⊙ *Research and Information*
- ◆ Analyze data to determine if rural citizens are more or less dependent on Medicaid than urban citizens to ensure that funding formulas are equitable
 - ◆ Partner with medical professionals to develop ways to measure the quality of health care, and track health care outcomes

NATURAL RESOURCES ASSETS AND AMENITIES SECTOR REPORT

CRITICAL SECTOR ISSUES

The group identified twenty-one sector concerns that were prioritized into these five critical sector issues.

- ✚ Strengthen the planning mechanisms that communities, regions, and state agencies use to protect, promote, and develop land, water, and other resources.
- ✚ Educate local stakeholders to fulfill their roles and responsibilities in local resource planning – protection, promotion, and development.
- ✚ Initiate innovative funding programs for resource conservation projects.
- ✚ Build partnerships between natural resource organizations and agencies to effectively educate the general public about its responsibility for natural resources use and protection.
- ✚ Acknowledge the potential of natural resources assets for economic development while protecting these resources for future generations.

RESOURCE NEEDS

- ✚ **Strengthen the planning mechanisms that communities, regions, and state agencies use to protect, promote, and develop land, water, and other resources.**
 - ⊙ *Programmatic*
 - ◆ Update and market the Toolbox Guide to Development Funds offered by Ball State University's Center for Economic and Community Development
 - ◆ Encourage citizens to learn more about land use planning from available resources to participate in local decision-making
 - Indiana Planning Association's Citizens Manual
 - Indiana Land Use Consortium
 - ◆ Provide training programs for local planning officials
 - Nitty-Gritty Workshops offered by Purdue University and Ball State University
 - Video Training Series offered by Purdue University
 - Planning with Power program offered by Purdue University
 - Database services offered by the Indiana Biodiversity Initiative
 - ◆ Update local zoning ordinances with assistance from the Purdue Extension Land Use Team
 - ⊙ *Policy*
 - ◆ Require that state and local projects assign equal consideration to natural resources and development values alike

- ⊙ *Education and Awareness*
 - ◆ Create awareness of infrastructure needs required to access and use natural resources for community development
- ⊙ *Research and Information*
 - ◆ Develop mechanisms to determine the short-term and long-term costs of developing natural resources

📌 Educate local stakeholders to fulfill their roles and responsibilities in local resource planning – protection, promotion, and development.

- ⊙ *Programmatic*
 - ◆ Expand quality land use training programs for local planners, planning offices, and public officials
 - ◆ Require continuing education credits for people serving in local planning and zoning capacities
 - ◆ Assist cross-jurisdictional dialogue on joint planning and development issues

📌 Initiate innovative funding programs for resource conservation projects.

- ⊙ *Policy*
 - ◆ Create new state sources of dedicated funding to stabilize funds for local projects, while maximizing existing sources:
 - Indiana Heritage Trust
 - Clean Water Indiana
 - Timber sales percentage
 - Fees and licenses
 - Self-fees, e.g. paddlers
 - Non-Game Wildlife (tax check-off)
 - ◆ Pursue private management of State Park Inns if doing so can improve public access and services while managing costs
 - ◆ Maximize federal program funding by leveraging state funds necessary for match requirements, e.g. Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program
 - ◆ Provide funding match alternatives for disadvantaged communities
 - ◆ Provide for “payment in lieu of taxes” to ensure financial stability of counties with newly-acquired public lands, federal or state
 - ◆ Modify the state’s impact fee system by establishing base levels and expand the range of services funded
 - ◆ Improve disclosure of federal and state procedures that unintentionally add hidden costs to already funded natural resource development projects
- ⊙ *Education and Awareness*
 - ◆ Increase understanding of the economic, agricultural, natural resources, and heritage values of farmland protection
 - ◆ Promote corridor or specialty development by connecting easements controlled by agencies and NGOs, e.g. Knobstone Trail

✚ Build partnerships between natural resource organizations and agencies to effectively educate the general public about its responsibility for natural resources use and protection.

⊙ *Education/Awareness*

- ◆ Develop a clearinghouse to connect natural resource groups and leverage educational resources
 - Health and Wellness
 - Water resources
 - Agricultural education
- ◆ Ensure equitable access to public resources
 - Public access points
 - Disadvantaged audiences
- ◆ Engage youth through marketing and organized efforts
 - Schools
 - Non-curricular, e.g. 4-H, Scouts
- ◆ Expand mobile natural resource education to provide on-site instructional programs through partnerships with conservation groups, e.g. Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever

⊙ *Research and Information*

- ◆ Determine and evaluate the projected demand of publicly-accessible natural resources against the existing fees structures and funding streams to identify potential funding and/or service gaps
- ◆ Study usage and access trends of public and private natural resource assets
- ◆ Increase flexibility in school curricula to enable teachers to incorporate natural resources into coursework
 - Initiate Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for teachers attending programs that train how to use natural resources across curriculum
- ◆ Encourage local demand surveys to determine natural resource development and programming needs

✚ Acknowledge the potential of natural resources assets for economic development while protecting these resources for future generations.

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Update statutes and Indiana code governing oil and gas royalties
- ◆ Determine the length of contract (periodic review or perpetuity), buy back provisions, windfall taxes, generational options, etc. for farmland protection program easement
- ◆ Promote new technological developments for bio-fuels and other alternative energy sources to improve net energy production and meet Indiana's needs
- ◆ Increase public access to navigable waters (Motor/Non-Motor) and expand facilities
 - Upgrade information about access to resources, such as remote gauging of water levels on a website
 - Encourage users of resources to take steps to improve water quality

- ◆ Explore opportunities to reuse resource extraction sites for public recreational areas, e.g. reclaimed coal lands and limestone quarries
 - ◆ Enact legislation or rules that allow private/public partnerships where landowners with significant or "special" natural resource features to enter into agreements to "share" access to the public for "use fees" and liability protection for some well-defined segments of the year
 - ◆ Establish state and/or federal liability protection that encourages landowners to allow public access to natural resources assets on private lands
- ⊙ *Programmatic*
- ◆ Provide technical and financial assistance to farms to transition enterprises due to development pressure
 - ◆ Improve programmatic and marketing activities at public and private nature centers
 - Fish & Wildlife Areas
 - State and Federal Forests
 - Parks and Recreation
 - School Sites
 - Private Conservation Clubs
 - ◆ Expand for-profit natural resources venues and programs, including but not limited to:
 - Fair Oaks Dairy
 - Forest Discovery Center
 - Starlight Community
 - Eco-Education
 - Eco-Tourism
 - Agri-Tourism
- ⊙ *Research and Information*
- ◆ Study the immediate and long-term water needs for citizens, industry, and communities to plan resource development:
 - Reservoirs for water supplies and flood control
 - Transporting water, via pipeline, to existing underserved areas as part of a regional planning regime
 - Encourage planning to help locate future development in areas with adequate water and existing infrastructure resources
 - Inventory usable water resources by category, e.g. residential, public, industrial, recreational
 - Determine areas for protection and access
 - Project water demands for population centers
 - Identify needs and update outdated drainage code
 - Wildlife habitat
 - Wetlands restoration and mitigation

TRANSPORTATION SECTOR REPORT

CRITICAL SECTOR ISSUES

The group identified twenty-nine sector concerns that were prioritized into these five critical sector issues.

- ✚ Create a new system of Indiana Rural Regional Planning Organizations to coordinate regional planning, prioritizing, and decision-making to meet future transportation demands. (Identified as the highest priority issue by this sector group)
- ✚ Establish a state-supported, university-based planning organization to support local efforts to plan and manage transportation needs.
- ✚ Develop multi-modal systems specifically designed to more efficiently move freight.
- ✚ Strengthen transportation systems to support the growing Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage sector.
- ✚ Provide funding to maintain existing transportation assets and support new projects to address future demands.

RESOURCE NEEDS

- ✚ **Create a new system of Indiana Rural Regional Planning Organizations (RRPO) to coordinate regional planning, prioritizing, and decision-making to meet future transportation demands. (Identified as the highest priority issue by this sector group)**

- ⊙ *Research and Information*

- ◆ Conduct an assessment to determine jurisdictional or shared service territories

- ⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Create Rural Regional Planning Organizations, within INDOT, to coordinate planning, prioritizing, and decision-making of transportation projects (modeled after a program in Iowa)
 - Structure competition for projects within regions
 - Improve linkages between connected counties and regional initiatives
- ◆ Develop RRPO funding from existing transportation funding resources

- ⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Create a transition plan to establish Rural Regional Planning Organizations
- ◆ Initiate RRPO multi-modal planning and development in local communities
- ◆ Incorporate RISE 2020 into multi-modal transportation planning, including:
 - Inter-modal
 - Roads and bridges

- Railroads
- Waterways
- Rural airports
- Trails
- Bulk freight movement
- Tourism needs
- Schools
- High speed or light rail (passenger)
- Rural transit needs

✚ Establish a state-supported, university-based planning organization to support local efforts to plan and manage transportation needs.

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Create and provide funding for a State Planning Organization (SPO) within a university setting to support local planning efforts
 - Develop inter-agency agreements to support and collaborate with the new SPO
 - Determine parameters for the SPO, i.e. research needs, responsibilities to the state, and support services for local entities

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Formulate the mission and objectives of a State Planning Organization (SPO)
- ◆ Determine what services will be provided by the SPO
- ◆ Ensure that the SPO has appropriate authority and responsibility to provide support to RRPOs and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO)

✚ Develop multi-modal systems specifically designed to more efficiently move freight.

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Establish an ombudsman within the INDOT Rail System Division to support public policy and planning efforts on the following:
 - Maximizing utilities within rail corridors
 - Impact of railbed maintenance procedures on local infrastructure and community needs
 - Coordinating efforts between qualified local planners and railroads
 - Re-routing or relocating rails that run through small towns
- ◆ Provide RRPOs and MPOs funding from Federal Aviation Administration, port commissions and other entities

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Build leadership and financial support for qualified transportation planners in RRPO areas
 - RRPO Policy
 - Establish multi-modal RRPOs

- Determine local needs with support of RRPOs
- Align each county to be served by either an RRPO or an MPO
- Consider using existing government regions for RRPOs, e.g. Indiana Economic Development Corporation, Indiana Department of Workforce Development
- ◆ Inventory and develop transportation plan incorporating key freight elements:
 - Rail
 - Trucks (distribution vans, farm commodities, semi-trucks)
 - Water
 - Airports
 - Intermodal
 - Freight staging

✚ Strengthen transportation systems to support the growing Tourism, Arts, Culture and Heritage sector.

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Incorporate convention and visitors' bureaus in planning efforts
- ◆ Expand the use of specialty designations to maximize traffic flow on key Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage routes while minimizing use of key freight corridors
- ◆ Modify current signage policies to assist in the marketing of local assets

⊙ *Programmatic*

- ◆ Encourage multi-county collaborations to improve marketability and directional signage
- ◆ Develop new map resources to help move tourists more efficiently and effectively throughout Indiana
 - GIS-like mapping through web search engines
 - Regional booklets instead of single format highway map
 - New electronic media – WiFi, CDs, mp3s
- ◆ Inventory and link marketable assets in key transportation corridors

✚ Provide funding to maintain existing transportation assets and support new projects to address future demands.

⊙ *Policy*

- ◆ Direct revenue streams to maintenance and construction needs
- ◆ Enforce existing freight laws

EPILOGUE

INTERSECTING OPPORTUNITIES ---

The process of identifying critical issues and resource needs by the eight sector groups clearly demonstrated the intersecting nature of rural community development. Teams of people are coming together around the RISE 2020 foundation and pillars to articulate their vision and create vibrant, sustainable communities. It is imperative that all sectors be represented and work together in those emerging discussions. If we are truly innovative, every community project crosswalks all seven pillars and helps build a stronger foundation. While crosswalking occurs in every sector here are just two examples.

There is a growing interest in tourism, arts, culture, and heritage (TACH). To many people they are simply leisure activities, unless you are the person producing the product or providing the service. TACH contributes to economic development, fosters entrepreneurship, creates homegrown businesses, builds upon community assets, engages youth, has infrastructure needs, and creates local wealth.

During one of the early transportation group meetings, someone asked, “Transportation for what?” That question carried great insight into the crosswalking nature of communities. Many sectors have transportation needs – retail businesses, industrial facilities, farms, tourism and recreation sites, distribution centers, and schools. Effective transportation systems can move products, services, bulk commodities, manufactured goods, school children, tourists, commuters, and residents. There is no transportation for transportation’s sake. It’s about the ways we live in the pillars.

BEST PRACTICES ---

Throughout the RISE 2020 initiative, individuals have shared local ideas and successes in the form of Best Practices. We have captured many of their ideas in the initial reports and are committed to creating a searchable website with consistent information about projects. The site will primarily focus on Indiana practices, although we will also try to learn from others beyond our borders. In addition, we will be linking this website to other sites which share Best Practices.

STRATEGIC OPTIONS ---

The heart and soul of the RISE 2020 process is empowering communities to use the framework to create and pursue their vision. In the early stages of RISE 2020, eight sector work groups identified key issues, strategies, and numerous tactical opportunities. These were elevated into the Foundation and Seven Pillars and captured in the *RISE 2020 Strategic Options Report*. It provides a broad range of ideas for communities to use.

In late 2006 and early 2007, the sector work groups met again and identified additional critical issues and their subsequent categorical needs – policy, programmatic, research and information, and education and awareness. Ultimately, this new information will be added to a new edition of the *Strategic Options Report*. This process ensures that innovative ideas emerge out of their sector silos and more accurately crosswalk the pillars that comprise our communities.

CRITICAL SECTOR ISSUES SUMMARY

The following list compiles all 38 critical issues, by sector, to be used at the RISE 2020 Congress for setting priorities.

COMMUNITY CAPACITY

- ✚ Develop an entrepreneurial and innovative culture focused on community capacity opportunities.
- ✚ Promote dynamic leadership development programs that better serve rural communities.
- ✚ Modernize and develop public and private frameworks to maximize limited resources for critical community services.
- ✚ Provide an effective technical assistance system to help communities develop capacity.

CULTURAL ASSETS AND AMENITIES

- ✚ Maximize the impact that Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage (TACH) assets have on Indiana's changing economy.
- ✚ Promote the growth of TACH businesses.
- ✚ Expand Indiana's TACH economy through community-based planning, regional frameworks, and improved statewide collaboration.
- ✚ Invest in communities to use their TACH assets to pursue economic and quality-of-life initiatives.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ✚ Create a local leadership culture that sustains economic development through recruitment, retention and entrepreneurship strategies.
- ✚ Assist communities with economic development infrastructure planning.
- ✚ Implement innovative rural economic development strategies that maximize local assets to compete globally.
- ✚ Design financial resources driven by local decision-making that meet the needs of local communities.
- ✚ Increase the connectivity between workforce training strategies and rural economic development initiatives.
- ✚ Develop and interface land use policies that support local community and economic development efforts.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- ✚ Identify and market career opportunities in Indiana communities.
- ✚ Align educational funding systems to address students and their needs.
- ✚ Promote shared responsibility for education and career development of youth.
- ✚ Offer entrepreneurial training in the formal K-12 and post-secondary curricula to cultivate the development of homegrown businesses.
- ✚ Improve infrastructure and social service support systems to extend educational offerings for life-long learning.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- ✚ Provide prospective and growing businesses of all types access to capital resources.
- ✚ Transform public financing systems to encourage communities to share resources and develop multi-jurisdiction services.
- ✚ Commit public and private resources to entrepreneurship development systems that will create or strengthen homegrown businesses.
- ✚ Create strategies and programs which leverage local community foundation resources for economic and community development.
- ✚ Cultivate local leadership and civic engagement efforts to strengthen community development through planning, communication, and implementation.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

- ✚ Launch wellness and prevention programs to improve health and reduce healthcare expenditures.
- ✚ Promote and market the important role of medical services as key drivers in community and economic development.
- ✚ Expand training opportunities and marketing of medical professions to overcome the shortage of medical personnel and services available in rural communities.
- ✚ Ensure the availability of affordable medical services to rural residents, e.g. hospitals, clinics, emergency services, mental health, and dental.

NATURAL RESOURCES ASSETS AND AMENITIES

- ✚ Strengthen the planning mechanisms that communities, regions, and state agencies use to protect, promote, and develop land, water, and other resources.
- ✚ Educate local stakeholders to fulfill their roles and responsibilities in local resource planning – protection, promotion, and development.
- ✚ Initiate innovative funding programs for resource conservation projects.

- ✚ Build partnerships between natural resource organizations and agencies to effectively educate the general public about its responsibility for natural resources use and protection.
- ✚ Acknowledge the potential of natural resources assets for economic development while protecting these resources for future generations.

TRANSPORTATION

- ✚ Create a new system of Indiana Rural Regional Planning Organizations to coordinate regional planning, prioritizing, and decision-making to meet future transportation demands. (Identified as the highest priority issue by this sector group)
- ✚ Establish a state-supported, university-based planning organization to support local efforts to plan and manage transportation needs.
- ✚ Develop multi-modal systems specifically designed to more efficiently move freight.
- ✚ Strengthen transportation systems to support the growing Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Heritage sector.
- ✚ Provide funding to maintain existing transportation assets and support new projects to address future demands.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We want to thank the Sector Group Chairs for their outstanding leadership in this project.

Community Capacity

William Graham, Mayor
City of Scottsburg

Cultural Amenities

Brian Blackford, Development Director
Indiana Office of Tourism Development

Economic Development

Greg Wathen, President & CEO
Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana

Education and Workforce Development

Steve Daily, Chancellor
Ivy Tech Community College - Kokomo

Financial Resources

Joe DeHaven, Chief Operating Officer
Indiana Bankers Association

Health and Human Services

Shawna Girgis, Executive Director
Indiana Rural Health Association

Natural Resources Amenities

Lynn Dennis, Director–Government & Community Relations
The Nature Conservancy in Indiana

Transportation

David Lips, Policy Director
Indiana Economic Development Corporation

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For more information about RISE 2020:

www.ruralindiana.org

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