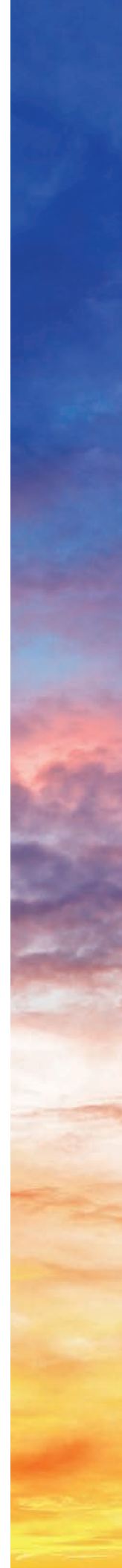


NORTHEAST INDIANA'S

ROLLING STRATEGIC PLAN | 2023 - 2025



Thank you to Trine University and Trine innovation 1

for donating its time and expertise to develop the 3D map of NEI that serves as the cover of this report.

GROWING WITH VISION

SIXTEEN YEARS AGO, CIVIC AND BUSINESS LEADERS LAUNCHED THE NORTHEAST INDIANA REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP - ENDEAVORING TO CREATE ONE COALITION THAT WOULD UNITE NORTHEAST INDIANA TO COMPETE FOR NEW INVESTMENTS AND SURPRISE INVESTORS WITH THE TRUTH ABOUT OUR COMMUNITIES.



Stéphane Frijia
CEO + President

With industrial roots deep in manufacturing, Northeast Indiana's economy has long ties to the production of goods built on innovative technologies for industries such as defense and aerospace, life science, automotive, agriculture and even more to come. Northeast Indiana is an **11-county region** with a diverse population of nearly **800,000**.

Our region includes Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Huntington, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells and Whitley counties. Our strength as a region means bringing these industries and communities together.

The Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership has overcome many challenges to become **a model for regionalism and collaboration** across Indiana. The world was changing around us: globalization and offshoring, the rise of the digital economy, multiple recessions and new domestic migration patterns increased competition and unleashed a jobs-war and a fierce inter-regional competition that changed the investment landscape. In this environment, **we established trust** between the private and public sector, overcame historical territorialism, agreed to a shared vision for the collective growth of our Northeast Indiana communities and defined an agenda to execute that same vision.

I chose to move to Northeast Indiana in October 2021 because I saw a region with a storied past of advanced materials and technologies, innovation and hard-working, dedicated people who take pride in what they do and have

a deep desire to be the best. I saw community and civic leaders committed to rising higher and taking bigger leaps to strengthen the region's global competitiveness and economic resiliency.

That pride and passion is exactly what we need to move forward. We need to strategize our own way into the new economy – capturing a larger share of development opportunities that will define tomorrow's manufacturing landscape and beyond. We need to build upon the strength of our communities and embrace a regional identity that welcomes knowledge-intensive economic rigor. We need to **build more capacity to support population growth, prioritizing good jobs and unsurpassed quality of life**, all while magnifying our region's character. **Northeast Indiana is a place of innovation** with integrity, where people choose to do hard work that we can all stand behind. The hard work ahead of us is to embrace competition and new ideas and take bold risks to build a bigger, bolder, brighter future.

I am so proud to be a part of our community.

A stylized, handwritten signature of Stéphane Frijia in black ink.

STÉPHANE FRIJIA
Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership



OUR MISSION

Drive business investment and strengthen the region's global competitiveness and economic resiliency.

OUR VISION

Be the location of choice for all businesses and people committed to be tomorrow's market leaders.

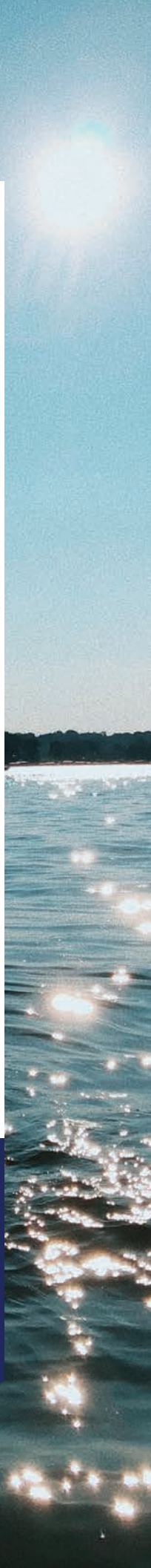
FOR THE PAST 16 YEARS, THE NORTHEAST INDIANA REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP HAS DEMONSTRATED A COMMITMENT TO ITS FOUNDING ROLE AS A DRIVER OF REGIONAL COLLABORATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.

With this new three-year (2023-2025) strategic plan, the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership presents pragmatic and forward-looking strategies for positioning Northeast Indiana as the location of choice for all businesses and people committed to being tomorrow's market leaders.

Our region will pivot to competing on higher-value-added economic activities, not solely on cost or incentives. Competing on value requires stronger understanding of business challenges and willingness to develop true partnerships that offer a wide range of solutions, including workforce and talent, access to customers, supply chains, quality infrastructure and strategic partnerships with universities and colleges.

We will lead the effort to position the region for the next economy by executing specific strategies to:

- Capture business development opportunities and increase transactional capabilities;
- Accelerate innovation and technology; and
- Foster alignment for equitable and inclusive job creation and competitiveness efforts across Northeast Indiana.



THREE-YEAR OBJECTIVES

Northeast Indiana business and civic leaders have voiced a strong desire for action. Under the leadership of the Regional Partnership Board of Directors, we canvassed members of the Council of CEOs and Regional Opportunities Council, LEDO Council, and Mayors and Commissioners Caucus to formulate shared objectives, goals and strategic priorities.

TOP-LINE METRICS & MILESTONES FOR 2023-2025

190

NEW EXPANSION AND
RELOCATION PROJECTS
SUPPORTED

20

NEW EXPANSION AND
RELOCATION PROJECTS
WON

3,000

NET NEW JOBS IN
THE 11-COUNTY REGION

Reclaim the region's identity as an innovation and technology hub in the Midwest.





LAGRANGE

STEBEN

NOBLE

DEKALB

KOSCIUSKO

WHITLEY

ALLEN

HUNTINGTON

WABASH

WELLS

ADAMS

2023-2025 OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE #1: CAPTURE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND INCREASE TRANSACTIONAL CAPABILITIES.

The Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership will work to expand the efforts of its business attraction team to bring forth more business investment opportunities, while activating our business leaders to expand our regional transactional capabilities to win projects and reinforce the economic resilience of our 11-county region.

Identifying and bringing forth new business development opportunities to the region will depend on how well we can reach and engage with our targeted audiences with clear, value-based messaging. Our region's ability to win will depend on the region's capacity to support companies achieving speed-to-market with ready sites, and how well we can support their risk mitigation strategies with expert-led solutions and programs.

Therefore, stronger partnerships between business community, local and regional units of government will be crucial to secure new investments.

OBJECTIVE #2: ACCELERATE INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY.

The Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership will work to elevate the region's identity to be recognized as a premier center in the Midwest for accelerating innovation and technology in knowledge-intensive, high-value-added critical industries.

A clear, distinctive and genuine identity and value proposition matching the trajectory of the innovation economy is essential to cut through the noise, to connect and build relationships with key stakeholders and capture the attention of executives looking to make their next investment.

OBJECTIVE #3: FOSTER ALIGNMENT FOR EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE JOB CREATION AND COMPETITIVENESS EFFORTS.

The Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership will lead the way in advocating and promoting the business value and strengths of equitable and inclusive growth strategies and investments. We will expand and refine our offerings to communities and investors to help make Northeast Indiana an economically resilient region.

Demographic, social and technology changes are affecting the future of workforce. To compete for good investment and good jobs, the region will need to explore and develop stronger partnerships and new business models tapping more deeply into the full potential of Northeast Indiana. More coordinated, diverse initiatives and policy work will be needed to strengthen our clusters and increase their overall competitiveness and productivity in knowledge-intensive and high-value-added economic activities.

OBJECTIVE ONE



Capture business development opportunities and increase transactional capabilities.

PRIMARY GOALS

1.1:

Attract new capital investment in real and business property enabling “good jobs” creation.

1.2:

Promote the region’s competitiveness in knowledge-intensive, high-value-added critical industries, and advocate for its advancement.

STRATEGIES:

01. Prioritize business attraction efforts within targeted advanced and critical industries, as well as selected geographies.

02. Expand our reach and capacity to engage with targeted audiences, both domestically and internationally, through tailored omni-channel marketing, media and in-person events to generate leads.

03. Expand in-house knowledge and expertise, and access to on-call experts, to offer consultative and concierge services to any potential investors.

04. Support the organization and growth of cluster-based initiatives in knowledge intensive, high-value-added industries.

05. Establish the Regional Partnership as an economic development thought leader.

06. Foster partnerships between business community and local and regional units of government to enhance local and regional infrastructure, community preparedness and competitiveness, necessary to secure new investments.

07. Support the Regional Development Authority’s efforts to execute the Growing with Vision Plan.

OBJECTIVE ONE

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Track and report on business attraction efforts by industry sector and geographies.
 - Number of domestic and international sales missions led by staff.
 - Number of domestic and foreign-owned relocation and/or investment prospects identified, hosted and assisted by staff.
 - Number of relocation and/or investment projects by market segment or sector (i.e. target sector, growth stage, etc.).
 - Number of direct jobs and CapEx created by corporate relocation and/or investment prospects.
 - Number of indirect and induced jobs created by corporate relocation and/or investment prospects.
- Track the number of stakeholder engagement projects, initiatives and policy projects associated with business attraction and competitiveness.
- Track the number of site development projects assisted by staff.

MILESTONES:

- Lead **100 domestic** and **international sales missions** by the end of 2025.
- Achieve a **30/70 percentage** split between **office** and **industrial projects**.
- Launch the **ROC Connects program**: a comprehensive referral and on-call network of experts, consultants, programs and organizations capable of offering consultative, concierge and wraparound services to newly relocated and expanding companies.
- Activate the **ROC's new Councils** to advance 1-2 projects, initiatives or policies per year.
 - **Built Environment Council**: to expand the region's site and building inventory.
 - **Workforce Competency & Competitiveness Council**: to improve the region's ability to attract, develop and retain talent.
 - **New Economy & Innovation Council**: expand regional assets and capability to enable innovation, technology and cluster development.

OBJECTIVE TWO



Accelerate innovation and technology.

PRIMARY GOALS

2.1:

Elevate Northeast Indiana's regional identity within domestic and international business communities.

2.2:

Attract and foster companies engaged in knowledge-intensive, high-value-added economic activities.

STRATEGIES:

-
01. Develop and forge the region's shared values, innovation and technology capabilities and potential into a clear, distinctive and genuine identity and value proposition.
-
02. Promote targeted-use case studies and testimonials aligned with the region's identity – emphasizing the region's innovation and technology story, as well as the region's advantages as a business relocation and expansion destination.
-
03. Create mechanisms to improve the online presence, messages and materials used by all the partners engaged in economic development efforts across Northeast Indiana.
-
04. Foster partnerships to develop and promote innovation assets and entrepreneurial programs that support efforts to attract capital investment and to strengthen entrepreneurship across the region.
-
05. Market directly to capitalized startups and scale ups in knowledge-intensive, high-value-added businesses as well as Venture Capital (VC) and Private Equity (PE) groups.
-

OBJECTIVE TWO

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Track and report on business attraction and marketing efforts both domestically and internationally (i.e., direct marketing campaigns, collateral assets, PR stories, media impressions, website traffic and direct web inquiries).
- Track and report on the number of capitalized start-ups and scale-ups in knowledge-intensive, high-value-added businesses engaged by the Regional Partnership.



MILESTONES:

- Refresh the Regional Partnership **brand** and **logo**.
- Develop and launch the new **regional identity** and associated marketing assets to support growth in the advanced materials industry.
- Upgrade the Regional Partnership's **website** and all **digital assets**.
- Measure and report on the **economic impacts** to the region of **start-up** and **scale-up companies** participating in local Entrepreneurial Support Organization (ESO) programs.

OBJECTIVE THREE



Foster alignment for equitable and inclusive job creation and regional economic resilience efforts.

PRIMARY GOALS

3.1:

Accelerate inclusive growth and economic productivity throughout the region.

3.2:

Change the paradigm among community and civic leaders to prioritize strategic and capacity-building investments.

STRATEGIES:

01. Foster diverse partnerships to evaluate and promote new business models demonstrating the region's potential in the following areas: Strategic land development and place-making, Workforce, and Environment, Social and Governance (ESG).

02. Strengthen Northeast Indiana clusters and supply chains through coordinated and diverse initiatives and policy work.

03. Conduct visits to select major employers headquartered outside the region and state in support of local business retention and expansion efforts.

04. Advocate the business case for inclusive economic growth through supporting and promoting partners' efforts to: increase investments that expand and diversify education systems for knowledge-intensive and high-value-added economic activities; amplify career awareness and talent attraction campaigns; and increase housing availability, choice and affordability; Promote quality of life, place and historic community character.

05. Support and convene the Northeast Indiana Colleges and Universities Network.

06. Continue efforts to diversify the Partnership's Board of Directors and increase industry representation.

OBJECTIVE THREE

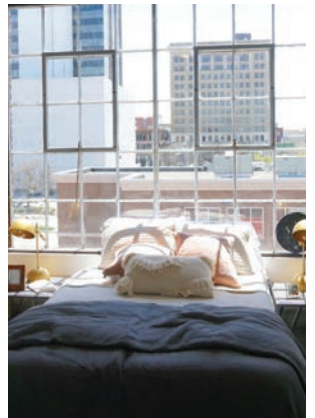
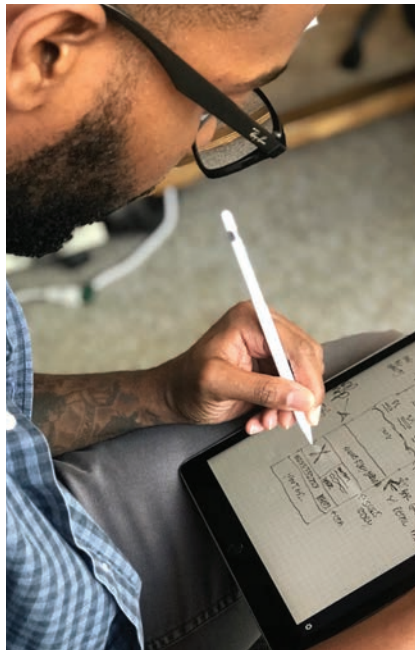
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Track and report the number of stakeholder engagement projects, initiatives and policy projects associated with:
 - Inclusive growth
 - Capacity building investment
 - Clusters and supply chains
- Track the number of visits to select major employers headquartered outside the region and state.



MILESTONES:

- Advocate for a Comprehensive Housing Development Toolkit for Northeast Indiana.
- Complete a workforce needs, competencies and skills assessment to support growth in the advanced materials industry in partnership with the Northeast Indiana Colleges and Universities Network.
- Develop a framework to position Northeast Indiana as a partner for meeting corporate responsibility and ESG goals in the site selection process.



BECOME PART OF THE CHANGE.

NORTHEAST INDIANA HAS BECOME A PATH OF OPPORTUNITY AND INVITES YOU TO CAPITALIZE ON OUR MOMENTUM AND GROWTH.

We are building our future, and we are just getting started.
Northeast Indiana is fertile ground for business growth.

We have the business climate, talent and infrastructure necessary
for your business to thrive, and the region is committed to
continuing the momentum. Experience the advantages and seize
the opportunities.

Welcome to Northeast Indiana, **where business is made better.**



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www.neindiana.com

NORTHEAST INDIANA 
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

NEI | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM



ABOUT NORTHEAST INDIANA

The Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership's mission is to drive business investment and strengthen the region's global competitiveness and economic resiliency. Founded in 2006, the private-public partnership strives to be the location of choice for all businesses and people committed to being tomorrow's market leaders. Serving as Northeast Indiana's primary point of contact for regional economic development, Northeast Indiana's 11 counties are made up of Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Huntington, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells and Whitley counties. For more information, visit www.neindiana.com.