



# 2025 Annual Report



PIONEER STARTS *HERE*

# 11 COUNTIES ONE REGION

**This is Northeast Indiana. Pioneer Starts *Here.***

NEI exists to help Northeast Indiana compete in a fast-changing economy. Your investment supports the capabilities that no single community can build alone:

- Prospect generation and site selection support that converts interest into real projects, jobs, and tax base.
- A stronger regional brand that improves national visibility and attracts talent, entrepreneurs, and business leaders.
- Readiness efforts that help communities compete for state and federal resources (infrastructure, housing, and workforce).
- Convening and alignment across 11 counties so that Northeast Indiana can move faster, speak with one voice, and win more often.

## **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 being tomorrow's market leaders.

## **Our Values**

Integrity • Respect  
Accountability • Excellence

## **Our Communities**

Adams • Allen • DeKalb • Huntington • Kosciusko • LaGrange • Noble • Steuben • Wabash • Wells • Whitley

# A Letter from Stéphane Frijia, President & CEO

As we close 2025, I am proud of the momentum Northeast Indiana continues to build - and grateful for the investors, partners, and local economic development organizations who make this work possible.

This year, NEI's business development engine accelerated across multiple sectors. We exceeded our annual project goal, advanced a strong active pipeline, and supported major wins that reflect both Northeast Indiana's competitiveness and our partners' readiness to respond. We also deepened our sector positioning - especially in MedTech and defense - while expanding our national visibility through a consistent calendar of outreach, travel, and relationship development. In June, NEI also earned International Economic Development Council accreditation (AEDO), an internationally recognized validation of our professionalism, standards, and performance.

Marketing and communications amplified this progress. Our digital channels and media outreach expanded the Pioneer Starts *Here* narrative to new audiences, strengthened lead-generation support, and helped elevate the region's reputation for innovation, manufacturing strength, and global connectivity.

On the regional initiatives front, NEI continued to align leaders around priorities that matter: infrastructure readiness, capital access, housing, talent, policy, and long-term competitiveness. We also advanced execution across READI and SDC priorities, convened our councils to drive shared outcomes, and strengthened investor support for the work ahead.

Thank you for your continued partnership and trust. We enter 2026 with a clear focus and strong foundation - and I am honored to lead this work on behalf of Northeast Indiana.

**With warmest regards,**



**Stéphane Frijia**  
*PRESIDENT & CEO, NEI*



# Business Development

In 2025, NEI's business development efforts accelerated across multiple sectors, advancing Northeast Indiana's position as a standout market for investment and innovation. We exceeded our annual project goal and maintained a strong active pipeline supported by consistent prospecting, consultant engagement, and targeted outreach.

Key pillars of execution included:

- Project development and issuance: 67 total projects in 2025 and 35 issued to LEDOs, with 89 active projects in the pipeline.
- Major relationship-driven wins: including Bombardier's MRO operation and Slate Auto's strategic investment in the region.
- Sector positioning: continued traction in MedTech through the MedTech Global Gateway and participation in the Indiana Musculoskeletal Innovation Engine coalition.

## Project Announcements

- **Back 9 Golf & Entertainment** — a modern golf and entertainment venue. NEI supported a long-standing community interest in diverse, high-quality entertainment options, through strategic site research and data-driven marketing.
- **NeuroBell** — an Irish MedTech company that developed a pocket-sized, wireless EEG monitor with AI for detecting seizures in newborns. The company is among the first to establish operations through the NEI MedTech Global Gateway initiative in partnership with Parkview Health.
- **Lifejoint Orthopedic Solutions** — a medical device company creating innovative small joint implants (fingers, toes, elbows). Identified through Plug and Play Medtech partnership, the company relocated to Indiana to join our regional orthopedic cluster.
- **Inteva Products** — a global automotive supplier providing engineered components and systems for vehicles, serving major car manufacturers worldwide with innovative, lightweight, and reliable solutions. NEI supported the company, its consultant, and community with connectivity and research/data support during a competitive expansion site search.
- **Slate Auto** — an electric vehicle startup focused on an affordable, highly customizable, modular truck and SUV platform. Over the past three years, NEI maintained warm relationships with the company team

and supporting stakeholders, helping assess regional fit and keeping Northeast Indiana engaged as project development advanced.

- **Bombardier Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO)** — a Bombardier service facility that performs maintenance for Bombardier aircraft and supports additional platforms. NEI supported site visits, supplemented workforce data briefings, and helped align partners around a community support package. NEI also collaborated with regional partners to repurpose READI funds, helping secure additional airport construction funding to support project delivery.
- **Endeavor Orthopedics** — a medical device company focused on innovative implants for complex fracture repair. NEI supported the company's early-stage growth and regional landing, including connections to the orthopedic ecosystem and space solutions. As an initial step, Endeavor signed a lease with NEI for shared office space to establish a local operating base.
- **PF Scales** — U.S. subsidiary of German weighing technology leader PFREUNDT GmbH, offering a full suite of customizable weighing systems, designed to integrate into diverse operational environments from smart farming to heavy-duty industrial applications.

## Fam Tours

**Spring FAM Tour (April):** hosted site consultants from Ernst & Young, Ginovus, and Vista Site Selection; visited 7 counties in one day.

**IPP Conference & FAM Tour (July):** hosted Indiana Power Partners' annual conference and tour in Fort Wayne - connecting utility providers, EDOs, and national site consultants around power and infrastructure readiness.

**Indiana On Top (multi-region):** hosted an extended trip across northern Indiana with partner regions, featuring national firms and sponsor support from AEP, Duke Energy, and NIPSCO.



## Travel By Quarter

### Q1 Travel:

1. CES - Las Vegas
2. VORYS Economic Development Incentives - Columbus, OH
3. RMI Bootcamp on Federal Incentives - Pittsburgh, PA
4. VIVE - Nashville, TN
5. NAATBatt 2025 Extending Range - Orlando, FL
6. Site Selectors Guild Annual Conference - Orlando, FL
7. ProMat - Chicago, IL

### Q2 Travel:

8. Aviation Week MRO Americas - Atlanta, GA
9. Power Partnership #1 - Dallas, TX
10. BAUMA - Germany
11. Roadshow #1 Dallas - TX
12. Select USA - MD
13. AUTOMATE - Detroit, MI
14. OMTEC - Chicago, IL
15. Italy Sales Mission - Rome, Italy
16. Area Development Spring Consultants Forum - Savannah, GA

### Q3 Travel:

17. AAAA - Nashville, TN
18. GEC 2025 - Indianapolis
19. Area Development Consultants Forum - Savannah, GA
20. IFT Food Expo - Chicago, IL
21. Logistics Development Forum - Beaver Creek, CO
22. Sagamore Midwest Defense Summit - Dearborn, MI
23. IEDA August Conference - Indianapolis, IN
24. FrameWorx - Warsaw, IN
25. Transatlantic International Business Council (TBIC) - Chicago, IL
26. Midwest Japan Association FDI - Japan
27. Indiana Power Partners #3 - Atlanta, GA
28. IEDC Annual Conference - Detroit, MI
29. MOVE America - Detroit, MI
30. RALLY Indianapolis - Indianapolis, IN
31. Site Selectors Guild Fall Conference - Indianapolis, IN

### Q4 Travel:

32. AUSA - Washington, DC
33. HLTH - Las Vegas, NV
34. MD&M Central - Minneapolis, MN
35. I.CON Central - Columbus, OH
36. Economix 2025 - Lake Nona, FL
37. SelectUSA Italy - Italy
38. Silicon Valley Summit - Sunnyvale, CA
39. IEDA Conference - Indianapolis, IN
40. Area Development Fall - Fort Lauderdale, FL



# Marketing

In 2025, NEI continued advancing the Northeast Indiana brand to increase visibility and engagement across digital platforms, media, events, and targeted campaigns - strengthening the region's presence with site selectors, investors, and decision-makers.

## Year-end channel performance

- *Website:* 56,347 total website views; 30,877 active users.
- *Email:* 56,699 emails sent; 22.61% average open rate; 2.47% average click; 7.75% average CTR.
- *YouTube:* 9,491 subscribers; 795,200 total video views (shorts/podcast/non-podcast).
- *Content:* 46 blog posts; 21 podcasts; 17 op-eds published.
- *Social:* 23,375 total followers; 879,206 total social reach; 29,969 interactions.

## Earned media highlights (selected releases)

- *Back 9 Golf & Entertainment:* 641 pickups; potential audience 214M
- *Down Payment Program:* 422 pickups; potential audience 80M
- *IEDC Accreditation (AEDO):* 628 pickups; potential audience 211M
- *NEI Nexus of Defense Industry:* 623 pickups; potential audience 159M

## National Recognition: IEDC Accredited Economic Development Organization (AEDO)

In June 2025, the International Economic Development Council recognized NEI as an Accredited Economic Development Organization (AEDO). NEI was the first regional economic development organization in Indiana to earn this designation - affirming that our structure, governance, programs, and performance meet nationally recognized standards. This milestone strengthens investor confidence, signals accountability to partners, and reinforces Northeast Indiana's credibility with site selectors and prospects.



# Regional Initiatives

In 2025, NEI's Regional Initiatives team advanced Northeast Indiana's competitiveness by aligning regional leadership, strengthening policy influence, expanding capital access, supporting housing and talent initiatives, and delivering high-impact research, convenings, and strategic coordination across the region.

## Revenue and campaign performance

- Generated \$182,750 in new private-sector revenue in 2025.
- Retained 97% on investment base.
- Exceeded the three-year comprehensive campaign goal (2023–2025), achieving 110% of the \$1M target.

## Investor Renewal

Final year of commitment cycle for 107 investor organizations. NEI completed its Investor Renewal Campaign securing 88% retention and generating more than \$2.28M in annual investor commitments.

## Regional Convening & Leadership

### Regional Opportunities Council (ROC)

NEI hosted four ROC meetings convening senior public and private sector leaders around priority issues, including energy capacity, state legislative outcomes, federal priorities, and Indiana's evolving economic development landscape.

- *February:* Energy executives panel with Indiana Michigan Power, NIPSCO, Duke Energy, EDP Renewables, and Northeastern REMC (discussing generation/transmission needs and constraints)
- *May:* State legislative session recap and its economic development implications with Senator Travis Holdman and Representatives Craig Snow and Dave Heine
- *August:* U.S. Senator Jim Banks on federal priorities and opportunities
- *December:* Indiana Secretary of Commerce David Adams on the future of economic development and regional leadership

### Councils and leadership tables

- *Regional Initiatives Council + Business Attraction Council:* NEI convened four meetings each, aligning stakeholders around ROC priorities and tactical execution - supporting initiatives such as the regional SWOT analysis and the Angel Investor Network strategy.

- *Council of CEOs*: NEI hosted four Council of CEOs meetings, engaging executive-level investors to share legislative and economic development updates and leverage CEO insight to advance regional priorities.
- *NEI Colleges & Universities (NEICU)*: NEI hosted four NEICU meetings, supporting regional talent initiatives (including CAPET - now Learn More, Earn More) and advancing collaboration on veteran attraction and a potential applied-AI opportunity - culminating in ongoing planning for the Indiana Applied Intelligence Consortium (IAIC).
- *Angel Investor Network*: NEI advanced a structured Regional Angel Investor Network and established a partnership with VisionTech Angels (Indianapolis), connecting NEI entrepreneurs to a broader statewide angel ecosystem while building local investor capacity.

## Programs, Policy & Execution

**Community Impact Partnership Program (CIPP):** The newly established CIPP led completion of the Regional SWOT analysis to inform the Strategic Development Commission's five-year plan update, including ten in-person workshops and county-level surveys in partnership with LEDOs. The SWOT is now guiding the SDC's plan update and is being used by stakeholders across the region in their own planning efforts.

**State-Funded Program Support (RDA / SDC):** By the end of Q4 2025, 80% of READI 1.0 funds were disbursed or pending disbursement. For READI 2.0, NEI organized the review and obligation of 91% of available funds, with 28 projects awarded totaling \$39.8 million to date. The SDC submitted its third claim in 2025, with approximately 25% of funding still available for obligation, supporting momentum into 2026. Additionally, the NEI team helped secure an additional \$11 million from the Lilly Endowment Fund for blight and redevelopment as part of its \$250 million grant to Indiana's READI 2.0 initiative. Also, the team set the stage for about \$10 million to be returned to the RDA to support investment into new projects in the future.

**Housing Capacity Building:** In partnership with the SDC, NEI supported development of the Housing Optimizer Preconstruction Grant Program to reduce risk and strengthen long-term housing delivery capacity through early-stage support (planning, permitting, land acquisition, and organizational capacity).

**Talent Development and Veteran Attraction:** NEI partnered with the SDC, NEICU, and INVets to advance the Northeast Indiana Veteran Talent Attraction Initiative, leveraging federal education benefits to attract veterans and eligible dependents, grow enrollment, and retain talent in the region's workforce.

**Creative Economy:** NEI engaged Mount Auburn Associates to support a regional creative economy strategy across all 11 counties. The plan has been presented to state partners and will allow the region to access a portion of a \$65 million fund for arts and culture as part of its \$250 million grant to Indiana's READI 2.0 initiative.

**Huntington Creative Village:** NEI continued advancing the Huntington Creative Village public-private partnership, including equity partner work, phased development planning, and alignment of public and private commitments. The project received a READI award to initiate infrastructure development and advance phased implementation.

**State Policy Leadership:** NEI expanded its leadership role in shaping Indiana economic development policy. In collaboration with nine other regional organizations, NEI advanced a Regional Development Districts (RDD) framework during the 2025 session; while standalone legislation did not move forward, several recommendations were incorporated into amendments to Indiana Code related to Innovation Development Districts (IDDs).

NEI also supported groundwork for 2026 legislation to further enhance regional authority and regionalism in economic development.

**Federal Policy Agenda:** NEI continued development of a federal agenda focused on higher education, defense industrial base growth, Fort Wayne Air National Guard modernization, U.S. 30 improvements, housing, infrastructure, energy resilience, immigration reform, and trade/investment—supported by multiple meetings with federal officials and staff in-region and in Washington, D.C.

**Research & Data Services:** In 2025, NEI completed 75+ unique research projects supporting LEDOs, business attraction, investors, and regional stakeholders - delivering customized analysis, site selection support, policy research, and strategic insights that strengthened competitiveness and informed decisions across the region.





PIONEER STARTS *HERE*

## Contact

### Office

200 E Main St, Ste 910  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802

Phone: (260) 469-3469  
Fax: (260) 285-6293

[www.neindiana.com](http://www.neindiana.com)



