

A More Competitive City

Every day, local residents consider the economic opportunities available to them in Indianapolis and elsewhere. Every day, local businesses balance their desire to grow in Marion County with their ability to grow elsewhere. Many of Marion County's neighborhoods do not compete against one another. Instead, they often find themselves in direct competition with neighborhoods outside of Marion County. Our city as a whole is competing against other similarly sized cities. Communities next door and around the world are competing to attract our residents and our businesses.

Marion County needs to adopt a new attitude about its role in the Central Indiana region. We must better understand and communicate our roles and responsibilities to the larger region. As the largest city, the economic powerhouse, the postcard, the cultural hub and the capital city, Indianapolis must be a strong regional partner. Neither the Central Indiana region nor the state of Indiana can remain viable in a dynamic global economy without a thriving center.

We must continue to foster and project a strong desire to be the best city we can be. We must create a city that current residents and businesses do not want to leave and that new residents and businesses want to move to. This will require a thoughtful strategy; it will require change. We must invest in the full range of neighborhoods that exist in Marion County as consumer preferences move away from single-use (housing only) subdivisions. We must promote and develop a full range of places, including the distinct and vibrant

traditional neighborhoods in and around Downtown, established suburbs throughout Marion County's townships, and emerging and long-established commercial and industrial sites. We must invest in our existing industrial sites to stabilize Marion County's tax base. And we need to do all of this in such a way that we raise the bar in terms of aesthetic design and quality construction.

The Bicentennial Plan calls for the creation of places that support the people and businesses we already have, that draw new residents and businesses to the city, and that fuel a globally competitive economic system. Areas of focus include:

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

How do we strengthen the connection between employers and our educational resources so that more residents gain the **post-secondary education** and training – in technology, math, science and engineering – needed to strengthen the local workforce?

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

How could making more data available to more people – including elected and appointed officials, emergency responders, researchers, innovators, educators and service providers – make Marion County an even more attractive place to do business?

BEAUTY

What are the economic and societal benefits to a community in which the built environment is well-designed and artistic?

ENTERTAINMENT & CULTURE

How do we ensure that we continue to offer a wide range of cultural and entertainment offerings to residents and visitors?

HOUSING DIVERSIFICATION

How do we continue to ensure that the homes and neighborhoods throughout Marion County continue to cater to all lifestyles, all incomes and stages of life?

Post-secondary education includes: vocational schools; community colleges; independent colleges, such as technical institutes; and universities.



CONNECTIONS

The following are examples of some of the connections that were made throughout the planning process.

CENTRAL INDIANA COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

As part of the Indy Chamber’s ongoing efforts to make the metropolitan area as attractive and supportive as possible for small business growth, existing business expansion and new business relocations, it is leading the charge on a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, or CEDS. This element of Plan 2020 is a coordinated, aggressive, multifaceted, multiyear effort to advance economic opportunity throughout the nine-county Indianapolis region. Through honest and well-informed assessments of the region’s competitive position and economic growth, this process will result in a new, ongoing holistic strategy that focuses economic development resources to maximize efficiency and

effectiveness, enhance prospects for quality growth, and increase the well-being of businesses and workers throughout Indianapolis.

CENTRAL INDIANA CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP (CICP)

CICP was formed in 1999 to bring together the chief executives of Central Indiana’s prominent corporations, foundations and universities in a strategic and collaborative effort dedicated to the region’s continued prosperity and growth. In 2001, CICP released an ambitious blueprint for economic development in Central Indiana in partnership with the Battelle Memorial Institute, focusing on key industry clusters – life sciences, advanced manufacturing and

logistics, and technology, with an overall focus on entrepreneurship to diversify Central Indiana’s economy. In the years that followed, CICP launched several branded sector initiatives like Conexus, BioCrossroads and Techpoint that have been largely successful in generating awareness, investment, collaboration and identifiable progress for their industry sectors.

VISIT INDY TOURISM MASTER PLAN

Tourism is a key driver for the region’s overall economic development, quality of life and livability. Tourism generates \$4.4 billion in regional economic impact annually, supports 75,000 full-time-equivalent jobs, and generates \$265 million in state sales tax annually. Two key projects are the re-energizing of social gathering places such as the Indiana Avenue Cultural District and greater access to information on cultural offerings in Indy.

